

Brecker and Patterns

An Analysis of Michael Brecker's Melodic and Instrumental Devices

Thesis for the degree of Master of Music
Sibelius Academy (Helsinki, Finland)
Department of Composition and Music Theory
Autumn 1998 - Spring 1999

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ABSTRACT

Only a few scientific studies or articles exist on Michael Brecker's improvisational style. The present work approaches Michael Brecker's style through a detailed analysis of his solos in the compositions "Straphangin'," "Nothing Personal," and "Peep." The approach to this analysis is similar to that of which jazz musicians use themselves. The analysis is based on selected audio material and transcriptions. David Baker's "Giants of Jazz" series was applied as a model for the form of the study. The applied theoretical framework of contemporary jazz improvisation is based on David Liebman's "A Chromatic Approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody," and various other works.

In this study, the aim was to define and describe certain melodic and instrumental devices which are characteristic of Brecker's expression. In the analysis, attention was given to the melodic devices which are based on the diminished, altered, pentatonic, and augmented scales, and on the superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progressions. For the instrumental devices, the focus of the analysis was on alternate fingerings, multiphonics, and fingering mannerisms. The use of these devices was divided into functional and non-functional. Some of the devices and their usage could not be discussed deeply enough in the three solo analyses alone, and further examples were therefore traced from Brecker's other performances.

Through the analysis it was discovered that most of the chosen devices appear as patterns. The patterns which are based on the aforementioned melodic and instrumental devices define a characteristic part of Michael Brecker's melodic vocabulary. In addition to the discussion of such devices, some additional comments were made about Brecker's chromaticism and his playing inside the changes.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Objectives of the Present Study

Michael Brecker is one of the most influential jazz tenor saxophonists of our time. His live performances are praised all over the jazz music world and his album releases always draw the attention of jazz audiences and the media. Michael Brecker's enormous recording catalogue encompasses a variety of pop, rock, and jazz styles. He has won numerous Grammy awards.

Michael Brecker is a technically brilliant player with an extraordinary command of his instrument. His approach is original in its conception, although it still employs elements from within the framework of the traditional jazz idiom. Michael Brecker is celebrated, among other things, for his melody lines, for his time feel and phrasing, for his sound quality and for his classic collaborations with other significant jazz artists. For a long time Brecker's solos have featured in the studies of younger saxophonists, but students of other instruments have also found it valuable to familiarize themselves with his improvisations.

On a practical level, several musicians have extensively studied Brecker's solos and playing. However, on a more theoretical level, it seems that only a few scientific studies or articles have been conducted. This present work approaches Michael Brecker's style and playing through analysis. The aim is to define and describe certain melodic and instrumental devices which are characteristic of Brecker's improvisation and then to investigate more carefully how he uses these devices. Discussion is focused on Brecker's improvised melody lines and their harmonic component. Rhythmic analysis is excluded from this present study.

Primary consideration has been given here to that improvisation which is based on scales. This is an improvisational approach thoroughly typical of jazz. For example, the theory books "Patterns for Jazz" (Coker, Casale, Campbell & Greene, 1970), "Jazz Theory and Practice" (Lawn & Hellmer, 1993), "The Jazz Piano Book" (Levine, 1989), and "The Jazz Theory Book" (Levine, 1995) all approach improvisation and harmony through scales. Usually the major scale, the melodic minor scale, the diminished scale, the whole-tone scale, and the pentatonic scale harmonies are discussed as the basis of the jazz scale vocabulary. Furthermore, some of the more specific scale harmony categories, like the harmonic minor scale and the augmented scale, are to be found in jazz literature.

The present study does not attempt to cover Brecker's style as a whole but concentrates on his more advanced harmonic and scalar devices, and the specific devices originating from his principal instrument, the tenor saxophone - for example, the use of multiphonics, alternative fingerings and

fingering mannerisms. Analysis is devoted to scalar and pattern based phenomena which are derived from the diminished, altered, pentatonic, and augmented scales. Consideration is also given to the superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progressions. All of the aforementioned melodic and instrumental devices are an important part of Michael Brecker's expressive vocabulary and he applies them particularly to the construction of melodic patterns. These melodic patterns, especially the sequential ones, stand out clearly in his improvisation, and their frequent use is one of his best known characteristics. Additional comments have also been made on Brecker's chromaticism and his playing inside the changes.

In order to define how Brecker uses the various features mentioned above, three improvised solos were analyzed in detail. The solos included were "Straphangin'" (from The Brecker Brothers album "Straphangin'", 1981), "Nothing Personal" (from Brecker's debut solo album titled "Michael Brecker", 1987), and "Peep" (from Brecker's third solo album "Now You See It...(Now You Don't)", 1990). Occasionally, to allow greater depth of discussion about some of the devices, it was deemed useful to call upon further examples from other performances than these three. The analytical approach used by David Baker in his "Giants of Jazz" series (published in the 1980s), one typically employed by students of jazz, was also applied as a model for this present work. The theory of contemporary jazz improvisation was based on David Liebman's book "A Chromatic Approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody" (published in 1991).

Throughout the text the music examples are transcribed for Bb tenor saxophone and therefore sound a major ninth below the written pitch. Similarly, all chord symbols will sound a major second lower. Chord symbols follow the logic found in the "The New Real Book" series (published by Sher Music Co.). In addition to these, the abbreviation "alt" is used for altered dominant chords.

1.2 Literature on Brecker and Brecker's albums

Severe limitations are apparent with regard to the existing literature on Michael Brecker and his style, and the formulation of a general advanced theory applicable to improvisation of Brecker's sophistication is similarly limited. The gathering of information and basic references for this study was problematic and the available sources varied considerably in their quality.

Parts of the analysis are based on the transcription collection titled "Michael Brecker - Artist Transcriptions" by Carl Coan and published by Hal Leonard (1995). Most of these solo transcriptions are from the 1980s, although the 1970s and the early 1990s are also represented. Many of the most valued of Brecker's solos can be found from the periods of The Brecker Brothers, Steps, and Steps Ahead, and from his solo recordings made on the Impulse! label. The Hal Leonard

transcription collection covers all of the aforementioned periods with nineteen solos. The quality of the transcriptions is high and this publication is readily available.

Another collection of Brecker's solos was published about ten years ago and includes solo transcriptions from the recordings made with Jack Wilkins ("You Can't Live Without It", 1977), Chick Corea ("Three Quartets", 1981), and The Brecker Brothers ("Straphangin'", 1981). This issue has been out of print for several years and, as the material is older and the selection more limited, I have preferred to rely on the later Hal Leonard collection.

Eric Allen has published, in the Woodshed section of *Down Beat* magazine (1998), an analysis of Michael Brecker's tenor saxophone solo on "Body and Soul". This solo appears on "The Saxophone Featuring Two T's" album (Bob Mintzer with Peter Erskine Trio, 1992). Allen's short article concentrates on some of the melodic and harmonic phenomena which are also discussed in this study. Owing to the space limitations of a single *Down Beat* issue, Allen's coverage of some of the devices is, of necessity, rather superficial. Nonetheless Allen offers valuable comments on Brecker's use of altered scales, substitutions, enclosures, and also on the solo's rhythmic character.

Niels Lan Doky (assisted by Jeff Gardner) has included an analysis of Brecker's "Bathseba" solo in his transcription collection titled "Jazz Transcription: Developing Jazz Improvisational Skills through Solo Transcription and Analysis" (1992). "Bathseba" can be found on the Brecker Brothers' "Straphangin'" album (1981). Doky's analysis is extremely concise. First he shows a couple of examples of the solo's motivic development, then he discusses the use of diminished scales in two further examples.

Apart from *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, magazine articles, related Web sites, and CD liner notes, I was able to find only relatively minor references to Brecker in the music literature. It was therefore essential to gain as much information as possible directly from Mr. Brecker himself. I interviewed him during one of his visits to Finland for the Pori Jazz Festival. The interview took place in Helsinki on July 18, 1998.

During the Helsinki interview, Mr. Brecker informed me that his recordings now number "close to six hundred...or a little over six hundred". This is an enormous figure and it would have been impossible to gain access to and explore such a vast amount of material. For the purposes of this study, the musical sources were necessarily limited to jazz recordings (excluding all pop and rock oriented material) and, even then, only a relatively small proportion of those available could be considered.

To find recordings that would best represent Brecker's playing style, attention was first of all paid to those recordings led by Brecker himself. His first solo album was released in 1987 and, to date, he has made a total of five solo recordings. His role on The Brecker Brothers' recordings has naturally also been of considerable importance and all the recordings from the periods covered by The Brecker Brothers (1975-1981) and the Return of The Brecker Brothers (1992-1994) have been included in the selection.

Brecker commented some twenty years ago, "Whenever it's someone else's record, though I always play it my own way, I fit in with what is required " (Bloom, 1979). This would suggest that some critical care should be exercised concerning those recordings that he has made as a sideman. However, it is quite obvious that the artistic level of his playing has been consistently very high, whatever the context. The audio material selection has therefore included his recordings made with Steps and Steps Ahead as well as some of those made with various other jazz artists.

1.3 Biography

Michael (Mike) Brecker was born in Philadelphia, on March 29, 1949, into a very musical family. Both of his parents loved jazz. His father was a jazz enthusiast who also played a lot of piano, although he was, in truth, more of a lawyer than a musician. Michael Brecker's early influences came directly from the family. There was a large jazz record collection at home. His four-year-old brother Randy was also deeply into jazz and Michael was taken by his father to hear many jazz masters live. In the interview Michael Brecker noted, "Thinking back, it's very unusual... Instead of going to a ball game, we went to concerts" (interview with author, July 18, 1998). Michael Brecker started with the clarinet at the age of seven and stayed with that for about four years. Eventually the saxophone took over. At first it was the alto, but he soon switched to tenor.

Among others, Vince Trombetta was Brecker's teacher and Brecker spent about three years with him. In Nolan's article (1973) Brecker tells: "He [Trombetta,] showed me a lot of really valuable things....Most of what I've learned, I'll have to admit, comes from listening to records and from a few people in New York, who really influenced me a lot like Dave Liebman and Steve Grossman."

Over the years, Brecker has referred to quite a roster of influences. However, certain names keep reappearing. From the pop and rock scene he has mentioned James Brown, Jimi Hendrix, and the groups Cream and The Beatles. "I played with a rock and roll band in school....I never really got serious about music until I was in college, although it really started to grab me in high school," Brecker has declared (Nolan, 1973). From the realm of jazz, he has mentioned John Coltrane, Wayne Shorter, Joe Henderson, Stanley Turrentine, Sonny Rollins and Dave Liebman. Of these, John Coltrane was the most important. "I went through a serious Coltrane period. And that was

really the reason I chose music...and that was the reason I became a musician... Particulary the [Coltrane's] Impulse!-records...those were my favourite" (Brecker, interview with author, July 18, 1998).

Brecker went to college at Indiana University for a year and a half to pursue liberal arts, but the school did not satisfy his needs as he became more and more involved in music. At the age of nineteen, he decided to move to New York. "[It] seemed like the only place to go to be able to learn and be around people who could really play. I just went with the intention of living there and assimilating what I could and trying to work a little - that worked out fairly well," he recalls (Nolan, 1973). The first group he played with was an R&B band called Birdsong, led by Edwin Birdsong. Michael's big brother, Randy, was already well-established in the music circles of New York as a trumpeter, and he helped Michael build up the necessary contacts.

With their musician friends, Michael and Randy formed a funk-rock-jazz group called Dreams (featuring John Abercrombie, Billy Cobham, Don Grolnick, Will Lee, Barry Rogers, and others), which recorded two albums for Columbia before disbanding in 1973. In Bloom's interview Brecker commented on Dreams, "It was a band ahead of its time...We incorporated a lot of R&B...It was a crazy concept...we just went in and played our sort of out-funk. Unfortunately, the two albums never lived up to the live performances" (1979). Soon the brothers became a tight trumpet-tenor saxophone unit, whose sound would later come to be known as the Brecker Brothers. After Dreams, the brothers joined Horace Silver's group for a while. It was Michael's first established jazz gig. He saw it as a kind of training ground where he got to "stretch out" (Nolan, 1973). They then got together again with drummer Billy Cobham for a year (1974). The music was good, but the brothers felt they wanted to start building their own name, too.

The first Brecker Brothers album came out in 1975 by the name of "The Brecker Bros.". It entered the pop and R&B charts on the strength of the single "Sneakin' Up Behind You", and word soon spread about this convincing blend of jazz and rock. The Brecker brothers created the most widely recognized and most influential horn sound of the 1970s. The Brecker Brothers recorded six acclaimed albums, quitting temporarily at the beginning of the 1980s. All this time, the brothers had, both separately and together, been doing a lot of fine session playing, and their reputation was thoroughly established as hard working, much sought-after, top-quality session musicians.

The brothers opened the "Seventh Avenue South" jazz club in Manhattan, New York, in 1977. Among its goals the club aimed to be an excellent place to play and, in this sense, it was highly successful. Evolving out of the club's jam sessions, was Steps - initially an acoustic group (featuring Steve Gadd, Eddie Gomez, Don Grolnick and Mike Mainieri), but it later moved in the direction of electric jazz-fusion with Steps Ahead (featuring, among others, Eliane Elias and Peter

Erskine). "Since we're all from diverse backgrounds, we've been able to attract some people who never understood or liked jazz, but identify with what we're playing", Brecker pointed out to Mandel in 1983. During the Steps Ahead period, Brecker added the EWI (Electric Wind Instrument, developed by Nyle Steiner and manufactured by Akai) to his arsenal, and has ever since been recognized as one of its foremost exponents. Brecker has noted, "I experimented with some electronic outboard devices to put on the tenor, but I didn't really find anything I liked....I always felt it cheapened the sound to put a box on it....[EWI is] an instrument unto itself....The unique thing about [the EWI] box is the warmth of the sounds you can get" (Milkowski, 1987). Michael Brecker appears on the three albums of Steps and on the first three albums of Steps Ahead. He dropped out to begin his solo career in 1986.

In 1987, Brecker's solo debut album was released and he began to tour with his own band. The album was a critical success, and has been followed by a series of similarly acclaimed solo albums. In an article written by Milkowski (1987), Brecker tells frankly about the fear and the challenge of recording for the first time solely under his own name. His close friend, pianist Don Grolnick (the producer of the album), participated in the preparation and composing of the material. For Brecker "it was a question of less is more, of making an album that would really hold together as a complete statement....to sustain interest, be able to be listened to a lot of times..." (Milkowski, 1987). Brecker's first three solo albums were a mix of electric jazz-fusion and acoustic material. After the third album, Brecker has mostly used acoustic instrumentation.

As mentioned earlier, Brecker has done a lot of studio sessions for many, many artists and, during the seasons 1983-1984, he played in the weekly "Saturday Night Live" show. Because of his unique playing he has been hired alone, or been teamed up with other musicians including, of course, his own brother. His catalogue is enormous – I have personally seen a listing of 547 recordings. To attempt listing the highlights of his cooperative career would be impossible within the limits of this present work. Since Brecker's achievements have been so multifaceted, the selection would ultimately be no more than a matter of taste. I prefer to just mention a few of those collaborations with which I am personally well-aquainted: John Abercrombie, Chick Corea, Donald Fagen, Don Grolnick, Herbie Hancock, Pat Metheny, Joni Mitchell, Jaco Pastorius, Paul Simon, Mike Stern, McCoy Tyner, Jack Wilkins, and Kenny Wheeler.

The pianist-composer-producer Don Grolnick (1948-1996) deserves a special mention here. As Brecker himself put it in my own interview with him: "He was my best friend... He was the most intelligent person I've ever met - in my milieu... I used to say he'd smooth out my rough edges, and I would roughle up some of his edges, which were too smooth sometimes. And we worked well together, we were almost like an art couple. Personally we were very tight, - and had been for years" (July 18, 1998). In the album notes for Grolnick's "Complete Blue Note Recordings" (1997)

Brecker writes: "His power derived from his tremendous intelligence and his wonderful sense of humor. It drew me towards him and made me want to remain in his company." Brecker has said that he seems to need pianists as a counterpart. Into this category he also places Joey Calderazzo and George Whitty.

At the beginning of the 1990s, Brecker was featured as a soloist in Paul Simon's "Rhythm Of The Saints" project, and 1992 saw the Return Of The Brecker Brothers. After two albums and extensive world touring, the brothers parted again. Brecker has continued with his solo career, but he has recently recorded and toured with, for example, McCoy Tyner, Herbie Hancock and Bob Mintzer. Although he has also been playing soprano saxophone on some of his dates, the tenor has retained its place as his main instrument. His very latest release is "Two Blocks From The Edge", a mainly acoustic quartet album, featuring Joey Calderazzo, James Genus and Jeff Watts. In 1973, at the age of twenty-four, Brecker told Nolan:

"The only thing I want to achieve is always changing, which makes it kind of complicated. My direction changes a lot, which is a drag, and I find myself wanting to play a lot of different ways, while part of me wants to have a really individual style. I want to sound like myself. I want to be able to get my feelings out through playing - I really want to express myself."

The positive spirit expressed in this statement clearly lives on.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Related Literature

Jazz research is a growing area of musicology. Because jazz has established its position as an art form, the interest in discussing jazz on a scientific level has rapidly increased. However, the quality and depth of jazz research is another matter. In her dissertation "Procedures for Style Analysis of Jazz", Carol Louise Heen noted, that "many books and articles on jazz suffer from romanticism, popularized tone and content, subjectivism, idealism, and expressionism" (1981, 17, as cited in Gold, 1995, 7). Much of this is due to the fact that, so far, most articles and studies have been written by journalists, music critics, and other enthusiasts, whose personal knowledge and experience concerning jazz or music in general, are largely based on literary and oral sources.

It is not realistic to try to study, understand and describe the musical phenomena of jazz without any experience of jazz as a practicing musician. The education of musicologists in the field of traditional Western music has always included personal music studies, i.e. singing or the playing of an instrument. This should also be the case in the education of jazz musicologists especially as jazz is a music genre that definitely needs to be learned by doing - by playing and listening - not just by reading. Paul F. Berliner, the writer of "Thinking in Jazz", acknowledged that using himself as a subject for his study (Berliner played and practiced the trumpet during his research) offered him the kind of detailed insight into the processes of musical development and creativity that would be virtually impossible to obtain by any other means (Berliner 1994, 10).

Jazz research has also suffered to some extent from a lack of suitable approaches to its analysis. Attempts to adapt approaches from classical musicology have not always produced satisfactory results. Differing styles of music may require differing analytical methods and traditional techniques may prove unsuitable for the analysis of jazz improvisations (Järvinen, 1997, 12). Greater success has been achieved when the approach has paralleled the way in which jazz musicians themselves discuss their music. Jazz has already produced a fully functioning theory and terminology and its adoption provides a direct and natural link to the genre itself.

Naturally, there already exists a significant quantity of valuable, skilfully written and conducted jazz studies and writings. Especially over the last couple of decades, some excellent jazz literature has been produced and the situation seems to be constantly improving. The quality of jazz research is steadily becoming established. Nonetheless, it has not been easy to gather the basic theoretical references I needed for this study. Books which teach ways of studying and practicing certain aspects of jazz improvisation offered the most useful information for the present work.

David Baker, the well-known jazz educator and author, has written a series of "Giants of Jazz" books. Like many of Baker's other publications, this "Giants of Jazz" series is designed as self-study material. Each of its six parts focuses on a specific classical jazz artist and his style. The artists included are Cannonball Adderley, Clifford Brown, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Fats Navarro, and Sonny Rollins. In each part, the characteristic areas of the artist's style are introduced, described and carefully studied. Stylistic phenomena and characteristic devices are traced by similar methods in each of the parts. For the purposes of my own study I acquainted myself with the volume titled "The Jazz Style of John Coltrane: A Musical and Historical Perspective" (Baker, 1980).

The approach which Baker employs in the "Giants of Jazz" series includes solo transcriptions and their analysis. Baker has selected solos which represent the stylistic period (or periods) for which the artist is especially known. For example, Baker analyzes Coltrane's solos from "Countdown", "Little Melonae", "Milestones", and "Straight, No Chaser". All of these solos are excellent examples of Coltrane's hard-bop oriented period.

In his analysis, Baker first points out the artist's characteristic approach on the basis of the transcriptions. The emphasis is on melodic and harmonic devices, such as II-V-I patterns, substitutions, scale choices, and so on. After the analysis a special "Model Analysis Sheet" of Baker's own design is filled out with important musical phenomena and devices. The contents of the sheet concentrates on the melody and harmony of the solo, but some attention is also paid to dramatic devices and technical aspects of the performance. By applying the same sheet to every solo analysis, as well as to the various different artists, Baker aims to show the reader how to locate the basic differences between different styles of improvisation.

Though Baker's solo analysis is extensive, it does not cover an artist's style as a whole. Baker has therefore collected examples of the artist's melodic devices at the end of every volume, listing such items as alternative II-V-I patterns and other characteristic melodic lines and patterns. These examples are taken from other solos which he has studied for the purpose. At the beginning of every volume he also presents the artist's biography, his place in jazz history and a general summary of his style.

David Liebman, one of the foremost exponents of contemporary jazz, has described in detail the theory of contemporary jazz harmony in his book "A Chromatic Approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody" (1991). Liebman approaches his subject in two ways. The first half of his book presents theoretical explanations with precise examples. The second half includes assorted musical examples concerned with various aspects of this theory, and contains a few complete solo transcriptions and

several other samples of contemporary jazz improvisation. Liebman analyzes this material in detail and his methods are here reminiscent of Baker's.

In order to cover some more specific areas of contemporary jazz theory, I have used some other resources. For example, the books, "Coltrane: A Player's Guide to His Harmony" (1991), and "The Augmented Scale in Jazz" (1993), written by Weiskopf and Ricker, have been of value and importance. These books concentrate on very specific areas of jazz improvisation. The former focuses on the harmonic innovations introduced in John Coltrane's "Giant Steps" composition (Coltrane, 1960). It also shows how these melodic devices are used in contemporary jazz. The latter book introduces augmented scale harmony and its theory. Numerous historical examples of the use of the augmented scale are included in the text and the reader is further familiarized with its sound by means of specially written etudes and exercises.

It is common to all of the editions mentioned above that the theory, terminology and methods which they encompass are derived directly from jazz. In order to define Michael Brecker's style and his melodic and instrumental devices, this present work adopts the same approaches found in the aforementioned literature. Baker's "Giants of Jazz" series has especially served as a model. However, the highly contemporary nature of Brecker's improvisation sometimes made Baker's approach inapplicable and certain extensions to the terminology and theory were sometimes required. It was necessary, for example, to draw augmented and pentatonic scales into the theoretical framework. These two scale harmonies are not discussed in Baker's analysis because they did not exist as concepts in the improvisation of those jazz periods which Baker's series covers. In general, the analysis conducted in this study concentrates more on sequential patterns which reach beyond the underlying functional harmonies. The basic functional tonal patterns (e.g. various II-V-I patterns) are not the focus of this study. The terminology was further enlarged with such theoretical concepts as the superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression.

2.2 Key Terminology and Concepts

Here follow definitions of the key terminology and theoretical concepts applied in the present study.

Substitution

According to Steven Strunk, when generally defining substitutions, "Jazz performers often replace an original chord in a progression with another chord called a 'substitute chord'. Such a substitute is part of the improvisatory character of jazz and can be more or less complex....The main requirement for improvisatory substitutions is that the new chord preserve the essential lines of the original progression" (1988). One of the most common substitutions is the tritone substitution

where the true dominant chord is replaced by another dominant chord a tritone interval away. A substitution can also include a sequence of chords, as shown below on the third line of Example 2.2.b (Example 2.2.b can be found under the heading "Superimposed 'Giant Steps' Chord Progression").

In scale quality substitutions the normally associated scale (or mode) for a given chord is substituted by another type of scale built on the same root (Liebman, 1991). An example: D Phrygian substitutes D Dorian over Dmi7 harmony.

Diminished Scale

Diminished scales are symmetrical scales. In principle there are only three different diminished scales, but jazz theory actually recognizes six: Three diminished scales (with alternating whole steps and half steps) and three dominant diminished scales (with alternating half steps and whole steps). The difference between these two groups lies in their function in the jazz harmony. A diminished scale beginning with a whole step is used for diminished chords. A diminished scale beginning with a half step is used for dominant seventh chords and is thus called a dominant diminished scale. The difference is summarized in the following example (2.2.a).

Example 2.2.a

<u>Notes</u>	<u>Chords</u>
F, G, Ab, Bb, B, Db, D, E, F	Fo7, Abo7, Bo7, Do7
G, Ab, Bb, B, Db, D, E, F, G	G7b9, Bb7b9, Db7b9, E7b9

Tonicization

In harmony, tonicization means the treatment of some other scale degree than that of the key note as a tonic, usually by means of an applied dominant or a leading-note relationship (The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 1980, Vol. 19, p. 61). In jazz, tonicization can be quite transient. For example, just a single chord, or a scale (or a mode) can be tonicized. The tonicization may be applied within the improvised melody and it need not be supported by the chordal accompaniment. Enclosure is an example of a melodic phenomenon of this kind.

Enclosure

Enclosures are common devices for creating delayed resolutions. In his book "How to play bebop 1", David Baker points out that "the bebop line may be extended by enclosing the root or the 5th of the chord. This is accomplished by delaying the arrival of the chord tone by inserting the notes one

half step above and one half step below the tone in question..." (1985, 7). In general jazz theory, an enclosure consists of the notes a whole step above and a half step below the target note (diatonic enclosure), or a half step above and a half step below the target note (chromatic enclosure), or a series of notes approaching the target note in a similar manner. The target note can be any of the chord tones. Furthermore, as chromaticism has increased in jazz, the use of enclosures has become more liberal. In contemporary jazz improvisation, a local enclosure of almost any of the notes of the scale is possible.

Superimposition

In the words of David Liebman, superimposition means "the placement of one musical element over another to be sounded simultaneously with the original. This is not to be confused as substitution, which means replacement of the original. Superimposition is quite obvious when accomplished harmonically where two or more key centers are simultaneously sounded. Of course, superimposition also applies to rhythm and melody" (1991, 14). The internal logic of a superimposition can sometimes be clearly identified. For example, a superimposition can follow the chord progression known as "Giant Steps".

Superimposed "Giant Steps" Chord Progression

The type of chord progressions John Coltrane introduced in his composition "Giant Steps" and its variations are a well known substitution device. The "Giant Steps" cycle was an early example of chromatic superimposition (Liebman, 1991, 20). In this study I apply the term "Giant Steps" chord progression as a well-established concept in jazz theory.

The following example (2.2.b) shows four chord progressions which all resolve to Eb major.

- 1) is a traditional V-I cadence.
- 2) is a basic turn-around progression (III-VI-II-V-I).
- 3) the tritone substitutions replace the above turn-around.
- 4) a superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression.

All of the examples begin and arrive back at the same key, Eb major. The rhythm is not specified.

Example 2.2.b

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------|---------------------|
| 1. Ebma | Bb7 | Ebma |
| 2. Ebma | Gmi7 C7 | Fmi7 Bb7 Ebma |
| 3. Ebma | Dbmi7 Gb7 | Bmi7 E7 Ebma |
| 4. Ebma | Fmi7 Gb7 | Bma D7 Gma Bb7 Ebma |

Pentatonic Scale

In jazz, pentatonic scales refer to the types of major or minor pentatonic scales shown in Example 2.2.e below. The fifth mode of the major pentatonic scale is played so often that it has acquired its own name: the minor pentatonic scale. The following example also shows the basic chords related to these two scale types. Pentatonic scales are very melodic because they lack the chromaticism of the half steps. Consequently they are used in jazz in a multitude of manners and contexts.

Example 2.2.e

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Chord</u>
C major pentatonic scale	C, D, E, G, A, C	C6/9
A minor pentatonic scale	A, C, D, E, G, A	Ami7

Augmented Scale

Augmented scales are also symmetrical and only four different ones exist. In augmented scales the alternating intervals are the minor third and the minor second. The six note augmented scale can also be thought of as two augmented triads a minor third apart. The augmented scale is usually associated with altered dominant chords or augmented major seventh chords. The C (or E, or G#) augmented scale and its related chords are shown in the following example (2.2.f).

Example 2.2.f

<u>Notes</u>	<u>Chords</u>
C, D#, E, G, G#, B, C	Cma7#5, Ema7#5, G#ma7#5
	C7#5, E7#5, G#7#5

Alternate [fake, false, substitute] Fingerings

Alternate fingerings are non-standard fingerings on a wind instrument. They alter the timbre of the instrument and often produce notes with slightly differing intonations. Since they add variety and nuance to a line, they are often used in jazz, principally by saxophonists. A common practice is to close the tone-holes below those needed to produce a certain note. Shifting between conventional and alternate fingerings in the course of a note or on successive reiterations of a single pitch can create a wah-wah-like effect (Kernfeld, 1988).

Multiphonics

The simultaneous sounding of several pitches on an instrument normally considered capable of producing only one note at a time. Multiphonics sound quite different from the instrument's normal timbre. On saxophones they are produced by alternate fingerings, and a change of embouchure and air pressure (Bevan, 1988).

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS

3.1 Approach to the Analysis

The initial idea was to transcribe all of the material needed. However, this would have been impractical for a study of this size, taking too much time from the main interest, the analysis. Furthermore, as transcriptions of Brecker's solos had already been published, it seemed pointless to ignore such ready-made sources. Therefore the previously published material and self-made transcriptions were combined.

First of all, the selected audio material was listened to extensively in order to locate the solos which would be analyzed. The choice settled on the solos in "Straphangin", "Nothing Personal", and "Peep". The guiding principle in the winnowing-out process was to locate solos which included sufficient examples of the chosen phenomena. Once the tunes and the solo transcriptions were found, the albums from which each of the tunes had been drawn were studied more carefully. Then just the selected titles were listened through several times, and those places in the solos which would be the main focus of attention were marked. The next step was to study the melody and the harmony of each composition. When this was done, the solo analysis began. Each chosen solo was analyzed phrase by phrase, and where necessary, the more complex phrases note by note.

The main objective was to formulate an explanation for most of the note pitches of the solo, and to locate the chosen melodic and instrumental devices according to the following simple criteria:

1. If the playing appeared to be working within the chord(s), i.e. it clearly expressed the background harmony, without adding any special color to it, I designated the passage as being "in" (inside the background harmony).
2. If the motion appeared to be scalar, I attempted to specify the scale or mode that was being used.
3. If substitution or superimposition was evident, I tried to determine the logic behind it by naming the arpeggios, scales or other characteristic phenomena.
4. If the material (the phrase) did not fit obviously into any of the previous categories, I tried to find a descriptive definition which would most clearly characterize the passage.

In the analysis I decided to divide the use of the melodic and instrumental devices into functional and non-functional. When the device had a tonal relation to the background harmony (for example, it outlined the background harmony or tonicized a chord or a scale), the use of the device was defined as functional. If the device did not have a tonal relation to the background harmony (in other words, it was used in order to create a dissonant tension), I considered its use as non-functional.

After analyzing the three solos it was necessary to compile more data about the melodic and instrumental devices. This was done by listening further to the selected audio material in order to find examples of the devices which were not covered in the three solo analyses. In this process, I received help from tenor saxophonist Joonatan Rautio, who has specialized in Michael Brecker's improvisation on a very practical level.

The following three sub-chapters include the detailed analysis of the three Brecker solos. Some of the melodic and instrumental devices are introduced and discussed there. A deeper discussion and musical examples of some of the devices are placed in the fourth chapter.

3.2 Analysis

3.2.1 "Straphangin"

This tune, composed by Michael Brecker, opens the Brecker Brothers' album "Straphangin", released on the Arista label in 1981. It immediately received widespread acclaim from the critics. Of the earlier Brecker Brothers' albums, this one is respected among the younger generation of jazz musicians because it includes several energetic and fascinating compositions (for example "Straphangin", "Not Ethiopia", "Bathsheba"). The playing, the sounds, and the feeling in general, are admirable and brilliant.

Michael Brecker's solo on "Straphangin" represents an ideal example of the funk-based saxophone solo. The band has a solid groove and Brecker adds to it his strong melodic phrases and virtuosity. For the purposes of this study, the solo has been especially chosen for its use of altered scales on the dominant seventh chords. The solo also includes, for example, one superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression and lines derived from augmented scales.

The composition itself can be divided into three sections: The fanfare, the theme (form: A1, A2, B), and the solo section (form: C, D). Here I will discuss the composition as it was written in half time (one quarter note equals one half note in real tempo), as Carl Coan does in "Michael Brecker - Artist Transcriptions" (1995). The fanfare melody that opens the tune is thus eight bars long. There

is a strong ritenuto in the last bar and Brecker embellishes the melody over the sustained B7#5 dominant. There is a pick-up bar in 2/4, which leads to the opening vamp. The opening vamp introduces the bass line and the harmonies of the oncoming melody. The A1 and A2 sections of the theme last eight bars each, and the B section lasts eight-and-a-half bars (the last bar being in 2/4). The B section is also used as a bridge between soloists and the final statement of the melody. It is to be mentioned here that some of Coan's interpretations of the melody chords in "Michael Brecker - Artist Transcriptions" are very problematic.

Each solo chorus lasts sixteen bars. The first part of the solo chorus is oriented around a pedal E (the 8-bar C section); the second part includes functional harmonies (the 8-bar D section). Michael Brecker is the first soloist on the album version, taking three choruses (three times sixteen bars). His brother, trumpeter Randy Brecker takes the second solo, again for three choruses. After the solos, the A1 and A2 sections of the melody are replayed and then the fanfare returns for a further eight bars. A short "freaking-out" section follows the last composed chord.

The solo form and its chords are as follows:

C

:	Emi7		Fma#5/E			Emi7		B7#5	
	Emi7		Bb7/E			Emi7		B7#5	

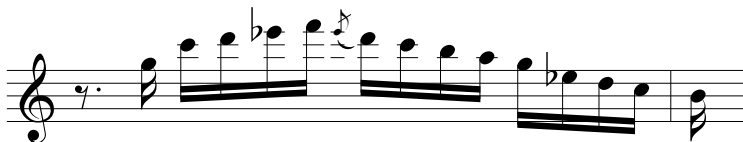
D

	Emi7		Dmi7	G7#9		Cma		B7#5	
	Emi7		Dmi7	G7#9		Cma		B7#5	:

Brecker's first C section of the first chorus lies strictly within the chord changes. Brecker leads the horizontal melodic motion through the important chord tones and simultaneously creates very strong and melodic lines. The scale choice for Cma chord is reminiscent of C Lydian, but the appearance of an F# must here be considered more as a leading note to the G in C major. B7#5 chords are colored with the B altered scale. During the D section of the first solo chorus, Brecker already introduces the two altered scales that he will use frequently throughout the solo: The other dominant chord, G7#9, has its G altered scale. The G altered line in the sixth bar of the D section is ideal: Brecker places the altered chord tones on the beats and the chromatic passing notes between the beats.

augmented scale pattern is functional: the pattern tonicizes the Emi7 chord. In the following bar, Brecker uses the E altered scale. The next Emi7 is approached by a II-V progression, F#mi7 - B7alt. The final bar is again the B altered scale on B7#5. This B altered line follows the idiomatic logic of the bebop style: the chord notes are on the beats, the chromatic passing notes between the beats.

Example 3.2.1.c "Straphangin", 3rd chorus, C section, bar 8



The beginning of the D part of the third and final solo chorus is strongly "in". The second bar contains the start of the superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression (see Example 3.2.1.d). The logic of the sequence is here: Eb7, Abma, B7, Ema, G7, Cma. Thus the use of the progression is functional. The sequence resolves on to C major, where this rapid phrase continues, the C major triad being tonicized by G7. The last four bars are "in", except for the dominant chords (G7#5, B7#5), which get their altered scales. The B7#5 harmony is anticipated as Brecker plays the B altered scale over the Cma chord.

Example 3.2.1.d "Straphangin", 3rd chorus, D section, bar 2



3.2.2 "Nothing Personal"

This tune, composed by Don Grolnick, has already become a jazz standard. Although it is not easy to allot credit for this fact, what appears to be its recording debut on Michael Brecker's first solo album must surely have played an important role in the process. Younger jazz musicians all over the world know and play the tune, and it is used widely as teaching material - a fact which Jeanne O'Connor-Grolnick mentions on the album notes for "Don Grolnick - The Complete Blue Note Recordings" (1997). The collection includes Don Grolnick's "Weaver Of Dreams" album, where "Nothing Personal" also appears. Grolnick's and Brecker's versions are both very original and, if a tune inspires musicians of that level to play it again and again, it has an excellent chance of being

accepted and adopted by jazz musicians at large. Brecker's solo in "Nothing Personal" on his debut solo recording was chosen to this study because it includes delicate modalism, a pattern based on alternate fingerings, fingering mannerisms, scale quality substitutions, and interesting melodic patterns. On Grolnick's own album, Michael Brecker does not solo in "Nothing Personal".

"Nothing Personal" is a twenty-four-bar minor blues. The composed bass line is used as an introductory vamp. On Michael Brecker's album, the vamp lasts twenty-four bars and Kenny Kirkland plays a short piano solo. The melody is played twice, with the piano filling the last eight bars on both choruses. After Pat Metheny's solo (three choruses), Michael Brecker plays his own five choruses. The bass line is used as a bridge (eight bars) to the last two melody choruses, where Brecker fills the final eight bars. The tune ends with one repetition of the last eight bars (Brecker fills), and then a repetition of just the cadential four first bars (F7 - E7). The tune ends abruptly on the fourth beat of the twentieth bar of the structure, the A minor chord is anticipated. See the Appendix for a complete transcription of Brecker's solo.

The solo form and its chords are as follows:

```

||: Ami      |          |          |          |
|  Ami      |          |          | (A7)     |
|  Dmi      |          |          |          |
|  Ami      |          |          |          |
|  F7       |          | E7       |          |
|  Ami      |          |          | (E7)     :||

```

As the minor blues is often played modally (i.e. many different scales can overlay the tonic, subdominant and dominant chords), I have here used only the basic functions for the chord symbols.

Brecker's first chorus is an example of this kind of modalism. He begins by using A melodic minor for the first sixteen bars. This means that he also uses A melodic minor for the D minor section. This changes the D minor (or D Dorian) in the direction of D Lydian. However, this scale quality substitution does not create strong dissonances, because the comping harmony instrument (piano) is quiet for a while, leaving only the bass and the soloist to define the harmony. As Brecker arrives into the cadential part (F7 - E7) he changes the scale for the first time. The notes for the F7 are "in". Over the E7, he plays notes chosen from the E dominant diminished scale. After the following

seventh D#. The E altered resolves to A minor for a while (bar twenty-one). In the last two bars Brecker uses a pattern (see Appendix, 3rd chorus, bars 22-24). The pattern starts as an E7 (the second half of the twenty-second bar), but in bar twenty-three (the second beat) the pattern already moves outside the E7 harmony. Each pattern has four eighth notes. Because the beginning of the pattern is always on the second or fourth beat the pattern line sounds complex. However, the logic of the pattern is based on triads: F#ma, Fma, Ema, and Ebma (Ebma is incomplete). It resolves to A Dorian at the beginning of the fourth chorus.

For the first five bars of the fourth chorus Brecker stays in A Dorian. The sixth bar side-slips (according to Liebman (1991, 51), side-slipping describes the device of slipping a half step up or down from the established key center as the phrase evolves) into Bb Dorian, with A minor changing to A altered (Brecker applies the "Bb Dorian" fingering mannerism). The tension resolves back to A Dorian in bar nine. Subsequently, a lot of chromaticism is added in the form of a pattern (see Appendix, 4th chorus, bars 9-14). The pattern begins on the third beat of the ninth bar. Each pattern has four eighth notes and the patterns begin on the first or the third beat. The pattern consists of a descending triad (major or minor, in root position or in second inversion), and the first note of the pattern is always a leading note to the highest note of the triad. The pattern ends and resolves on to an A minor triad in bar fourteen. In bar fifteen the Ami is once tonicized by an E7 arpeggio. On the third beat of the sixteenth bar the mode changes to C Dorian. Brecker expresses the mode by playing arpeggios, based on the Cmi11 chord. The Cmi11 resolves to the A of an F7 chord just before the E7 in bar nineteen. This E7 is now altered by F Mixolydian. The notes Brecker uses in his fast repeated line create an E7#5b5 sound. By changing the Bb into a B he transforms the E7 altered into E7b13.

The E7b13 resolves to A minor at the beginning of the fifth chorus. Brecker stays on the high D for two beats and then continues in A Dorian. The high D is repeated in bar three. The suspension it generates is resolved by a long chromatic phrase which includes a lot of repetition and alternate fingerings. The Dmi is already anticipated in the eighth bar. Enclosures and chromaticism follow, but the notes of D Dorian appear on the beats. At the end of bar ten, A Dorian anticipates the approaching Ami. This A Dorian run leads again to the high D. Brecker plays the whole Am11 arpeggio in bars fourteen and fifteen. Bar sixteen is a C Dorian run, which leads to F7. The E7 is altered by F Dorian. The fifth chorus, and thus the whole solo, ends in A Dorian.

After Brecker's solo, the bridge (eight bars) and two choruses of melody follow. In the cadential part of the first melody chorus Brecker uses C Dorian over F7, and the E altered scale over E7. As the cadential part of the second melody chorus is played the first time, Brecker begins by playing inside the F7 harmony for a bar, but during the second F7 bar he anticipates the E altered scale. The use of the E altered continues over the E7. Four bars of Ami follow before the repetition of the

cadential part. Over the last bar in Ami Brecker plays an ascending E dominant diminished run, which leads to the high Eb. After the high Eb Brecker uses the notes of F minor thus creating the E altered color over the E7. The last repetition of the cadential part is anticipated with Bb Dorian. The last four bars express the E7 harmony in general, but it is difficult to define the exact scales. For example, the sound of the fifth mode of the A harmonic minor is heard during the second bar of F7 harmony. The chromatic descending run to G (based on the E altered scale) finishes the tune effectively.

3.2.3 "Peep"

This tune appears on Michael Brecker's third solo album "Now You See It...(Now You Don't)" on the Impulse! label. Very soon after its release (1990) it won a place in the hearts of jazz listeners worldwide, not least for its exciting opening track, "Escher's Sketch", which rhythmically challenges the ears. "Peep" is the fifth track on the album and, like "Escher's Sketch", it was composed by Brecker. The band's performance on "Peep" is powerful and frenzied but the composition itself is also extremely appealing. Brecker's solo is very rich and it includes, for example, modalism, scale quality substitutions, superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progressions, an interesting use of augmented triads, one diminished scale pattern, and strong blues phrases.

The form of the piece is complex and its arrangement sophisticated. Since the solo transcription I have studied (Coan, 1995) is in half time (one quarter note equals one half note in real swing tempo), the solo chorus, as presented below, lasts twenty-four bars. The solo chorus in "The New Real Book" version (1991) lasts forty-eight bars as it is in real tempo. In both issues the C section (the bridge) and the coda are in half time. All other symbols that I have used (for example for the form) are from "The New Real Book".

The form is as follows:

Melody

introduction	16 bars	(the first 8 bars just drums, the second 8 bars drums, bass, keyboard and EWI; EWI fills)
A	19 bars	(both EWI and piano on the melody, F9sus lasts 3 bars)
B	19 bars	(EWI, piano and saxophone on the modified A melody, chords added, F9sus lasts 3 bars)
C	8 bars	(bridge; saxophone and EWI on the melody)
B	19 bars	(same as the previous B)

Solos

B	24 bars	(saxophone solo on the B chord progression, F9sus lasts 8 bars)
B	24 bars	(same as above)
open	24 bars	(no pre-composed chord progression, only saxophone and drums)
B	24 bars	(on the B chord progression, F9sus lasts 8 bars)
C	8 ½ bars	(the solo continues on the C harmonies, one 2/4 bar as a bridge just before the piano solo; filled by EWI and piano)
open	indefinite	(piano solo, with bass and drums, no pre-composed chord progression, piano plays a 2-bar cue before the melody)

Melody and ending

B	19 bars	(same as at the beginning)
C	6 bars	(as the F13#9 arrives, coda begins)
coda	indefinite	(saxophone fills till the end, beat changes between shuffle and swing, fade out)

The major part of this composition (and the solo chorus as well) is based on modal changes of the harmony over the rhythmic pedal tones. The horizontal melody line carefully follows the modal changes. The interpretation of the chord progressions found in Carl Coan's "Michael Brecker - Artist Transcriptions" is problematic at times. The exact chord progression and voicings for the melody can be found in "The New Real Book" (1991, C Version). Some of the changes are treated very freely during the solo, by the soloist and the pianist.

The solo chord progressions are as follows (The New Real Book, 1991, Bb Version):

: Ebma7#11/D	Dmi6/9 (ma7)	Dmi9 (ma7b5)	Bbma9/D	
[C#/D] Bbma7#5/D	Dmi6/9 (ma7)	Dmi9 (ma7b5)	Dmi11	
C#7 (#9#5)	Cmi13	G (add9)/B	Cmi11	
C#7 (#9#5)	Cmi13	Asus/B	Cmi11	
F9sus	(altogether 8 bars)	:		

In "The New Real Book", the given amount of F9sus chord in the solo choruses is only three bars. That is equal to the amount of F9sus in the melody chorus. The editor has probably wanted to save

space. In the recorded version that I have studied, the F9sus lasts (as above) eight bars. The first of the two chords given in "The New Real Book" for bar five, I have here put in brackets because it is not played or indicated by the pianist in any of the three accompanied saxophone choruses.

Brecker ends the last melody chorus (the second B section) with a descending G pentatonic run on F9sus, changing the color in the direction of F Lydian. Brecker's solo begins with an anticipation of the Eb Lydian, which matches the first chord of the chorus. For the first eight bars, Brecker stays mostly within the changes. D harmonic minor appears twice. It is not the most closely related scale for the chords Dmi9 (ma7b5) and Dmi6/9 (ma7). It creates some tension and adds a new color, as it is a scale quality substitute for the D diminished and D melodic minor scales. The notes of D melodic minor appear over the Dmi11 chord in bar eight.

As the bass line starts to move (bar nine) Brecker plays inside the changes. The C# altered scale appears in the thirteenth bar (C#7 (#9#5)). The melody line beginning at bar fourteen is in C melodic minor. The F9sus section (beginning at bar seventeen) is at first "in", but already by the end of bar nineteen, Brecker changes to the notes belonging to F#mi7. A II-V progression, F#mi7 - B7, begins and it resolves to an E major triad at the end of bar twenty. For the rest of the first chorus, Brecker stays in E major harmony, tonicizing it with the chord notes of Bmi7. In bar twenty-four, E major resolves to Eb Lydian. This Eb Lydian anticipates the second chorus, as occurred previously before the beginning of the first chorus.

The second chorus begins with a high Bb, from which Brecker descends with an Eb major pentatonic run. The run overlaps the Dmi6/9 (ma7) chord. In bars three and four, Brecker colors the harmony with the notes of the A altered scale. This A altered soon resolves to Dmi on the third beat of bar four. Bar five is in F# altered, the eighth note line at the end of the bar leads back to the Dmi on the first beat of the sixth bar. The next two-and-a-half bars (from the end of bar six to the end of bar eight) Brecker tonicizes the D minor, firstly with the A7 arpeggio, and then with the substitutions Eb7, Ab7, and Db7. As the Dmi11 is reached at the beginning of the eighth bar, Brecker tonicizes it with A7 again.

The following two-and-a-half-bar chromatic line is in C Dorian. Some chromatic passing notes weaken the Dorian sound but, on the strong beats, the chord tones of Cmi11 are clearly placed. In bar twelve, after the Cmi (ma7) arpeggio, Db7 and Gbma appear briefly, where they substitute for C minor. The C#7 (#9#5) is altered again. The tension is released with a return to Cmi11 in the following bar (bar fourteen). The scale used, C melodic minor, continues over the Asus/B in the shape of a G major triad. In the last Cmi11 bar before the F9sus section (bar sixteen), the Cmi7 is tonicized by the G7.

Brecker continues to play C minor over the F9sus. This is one of the many ways to approach this suspended chord. In bar eighteen, Brecker begins a superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression (see Example 3.2.3.a). The logic is F#mi7, B7, Ema, G7, Cma, Eb7 and Abma, the first six chords lasting one quarter note each and the Abma two quarter notes. The use of the progression is non-functional. Brecker applies it in order to play "out" (outside the background harmony). After the Abma, Brecker plays a two-bar descending pattern, starting from the high C# (bar twenty). Each pattern has four notes and the intervals between them are a perfect fifth, a major second, and a perfect fourth. The interval between every pattern is a major second and the sound of the pattern is similar to that of a whole-tone scale. After this pattern, Brecker tonicizes the Gmi7 for a moment by D7 (bar twenty-two). From the Gmi7 he moves to the A altered scale (by using the "Bb Dorian" fingering mannerism). Chromaticism follows but the distinctive color of the altered scale remains. The high D#, which begins the open chorus, is anticipated by a fast run which includes the notes of the F whole-tone scale.

Example 3.2.3.a "Peep", 2nd chorus, bars 18-19

The following open section, where only saxophone and drums are playing, lasts twenty-four bars, just as in the two previous choruses. This allows us to speculate about how far Brecker follows the harmonies of the solo chorus. Actually, at the beginning, most of the material appears to be inside the harmonic structure, but the discrepancies between the chord progression and the internal logic of Brecker's lines soon become too great to make a reasonable comparison feasible. I consider the harmonic similarities between the open chorus and the accompanied ones to be quite minimal.

The first three bars are mostly A altered. Brecker briefly tonicizes the Bb with a II-V progression (Cmi7 - F7) and continues then as if in Bb Dorian (he applies the "Bb Dorian" fingering mannerism). However, the notes placed on the strong beats create an A7alt color. The following three bars incorporate chromaticism, the origins of which are very hard to trace. Nonetheless, clear Ami7 arpeggios are reached by the end of bar five. For bars seven to fourteen, Brecker provides a motivic arpeggio. The use of this augmented major triad arpeggio is very interesting. It appears four times in root position (F #5, Bb #5, and C #5), three times inverted in second inversion (F #5), and once as a descending arpeggio from root to root (C #5). Between these augmented triads, Brecker places triads and major seventh and dominant chords. Furthermore, he provides some enclosures and chromatic lines to add variety, for example in bars nine and ten. This working with augmented

triads ends on the A altered scale in bar fifteen (the "Bb Dorian" fingering mannerism appears). The A altered resolves to D minor (which is approached by the A7) in bar sixteen. This rapid and extended run reaches its energetic culmination on the high Bb, which Brecker approaches with a Bbma arpeggio.

After a short break, Brecker returns to D minor in bar eighteen. Material in the A altered scale follows. The tension again culminates with high notes, from which Brecker descends via a Bb #5 arpeggio. The rest of the open chorus (from bar twenty-one to twenty-four) is more or less in D minor. A large number of enclosures, tonicization and passing notes are in evidence. The beginning of the fourth chorus (the third harmonized chorus) is anticipated with the notes of Bbma.

The way in which Brecker uses and resolves the Bbma in the first bar of the fourth chorus creates an A7alt feeling. D melodic minor follows and, in the last two beats of bar three, we notice the reappearance of the "F minor" fingering mannerism already mentioned in the analysis of the "Straphangin" solo. This is followed by A7 and Dmi7 in the fourth bar. The end of the fourth bar lies inside the Bbma chord. Bars six and seven are in D minor and, in bar eight (Dmi11), Brecker uses a pattern based on the diminished scale (see Example 3.2.3.b). The form of the pattern is reminiscent of the diminished scale pattern that Coltrane used in his classic "Moment's Notice" solo (Coltrane, 1957). Brecker has made a slight modification when adding it to his own vocabulary: the last interval of the pattern is a perfect fourth (Coltrane used a major second). The use of the pattern is non-functional. The pattern resolves on to the major third of C#7 (#9#5). The following four bars lie within the changes.

Example 3.2.3.b "Peep", 3rd harmonized chorus, bar 8



In the thirteenth bar begins a long and very chromatic line, which creates the sound of the A altered scale. It resolves to D minor on the third beat of bar fourteen, but the fourth beat is already in C minor. Once Brecker has arrived in C minor, he stays there until the F9sus. The first six bars of the F9sus section he plays inside the chord, and makes considerable use of the glissando effect. The last two bars include another superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression in this solo (see Example 3.2.3.c). The logic is: Gma, F#mi7, B7, Ema, G7, and Cma. Actually, as Brecker gets to the C major, he turns it into C7, the dominant for the following F major of the bridge. Thus, here the "Giant Steps" chord progression is used functionally.

Example 3.2.3.c "Peep", 3rd harmonized chorus, bars 23-24



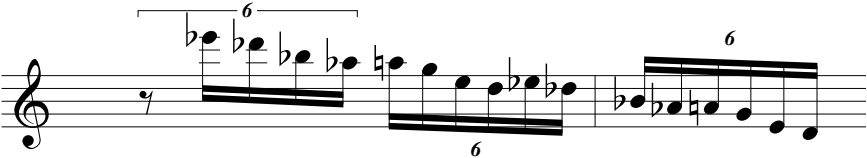
In the first two bars of the bridge, Brecker plays very chromatically. He arrives at D minor via A7 (over G7sus/D chord). For the rest of the bridge, Brecker embellishes the written melody. The last arpeggio is an inversion of the Dbma#5 chord. After the piano solo, the melody is replayed in its original form. However, when the F9sus is again reached after the bridge, the coda begins immediately. The form and the chord progressions of the coda are as follows (in half time) (The New Real Book, 1991, Bb Version):

F13#9	(altogether 9 bars)	Bb13sus	Ab (add9)/C Eb13#11
F13#9	(altogether 6 bars)	Bb13sus	Ab (add9)/C Eb13#11
(in 12/8) F13#9		(in 4/4) Bb13sus	Ab (add9)/C Eb13#11
(in 12/8) : F13#9		:	

An eighth note equals an eighth note as the time signature changes between 12/8 and 4/4. In another words - two bars in 12/8 equal three bars in 4/4. As the 12/8 shuffle beat is reached for the second time, it is maintained and the music fades out. The shuffle bass line has, in fact, already been introduced in the C sections of the composition.

The coda begins with strong bluesy phrases. As Brecker reaches the sixth bar, he uses a few notes from the F dominant diminished scale. The two short phrases that follow are rather strange. The idea is perhaps to embellish the interval between A and E, both notes receiving a chromatic leading note. With the third time, the idea follows on to an Ab triad, and the next bar (bar ten) is "in", using the notes of an Ab pentatonic scale. In bar eleven of the coda, Brecker side-slips to F# minor, which he subsequently resolves to the F blues scale. For a while (bars thirteen and fourteen) he uses a pentatonic scale pattern; descending Eb minor and A minor pentatonic scales alternate (see Example 3.2.3.d). The use of the pentatonic scale pattern is non-functional. Brecker uses the Bbma arpeggio as he climbs to the high C. For the subsequent descending motion he employs the notes of a G major pentatonic scale (bar seventeen). For the rest of the coda, Brecker more or less makes use of the F blues scale.

Example 3.2.3.d "Peep", coda, bars 13-14



CHAPTER 4

MELODIC AND INSTRUMENTAL DEVICES

In this chapter I shall discuss the melodic and instrumental devices in more detail. I will also comment upon Brecker's playing inside the changes and upon his chromaticism. Most of these devices have already been introduced during the analysis found in the preceding chapter. However, the three solos discussed there did not, in every case, include sufficient examples. It has therefore been necessary to gather further material from other Brecker solos. I wish to thank tenor saxophonist Joonatan Rautio for his invaluable help in compiling this additional data.

Since individual patterns may appear in several different rhythmic interpretations, I have aimed to express them in a form which delineates only their quintessential structure. As a result, various examples of the same pattern may, at first hearing, sound very different because of their use of such features as rhythmic replacement.

4.1 Playing Inside the Changes

As mentioned earlier, Brecker's original approach to improvisation still employs elements from within the framework of the traditional jazz idiom. His individual expression is based on a powerful ability to melodically outline the harmonic structure of every composition he plays. The tonal basis of jazz improvisation is often called the "bebop idiom" because most of the melodic and harmonic principles of jazz were established during the bebop era. The "bebop idiom" is based on the voice-leading principles of traditional Western music; various II-V-I patterns, substitutions, enclosures, and scales that imply functional harmony. In the "bebop idiom", chord tones are placed on the beats and other scale tones and chromatic passing notes are positioned between the beats. This approach is especially evident in the case of the bebop scales.

Brecker's mastery of the "bebop idiom" can be clearly heard when he plays inside the changes in the solos of "Straphangin'", "Nothing Personal", and "Peep". His techniques of resolving melodic tension resulting from more sophisticated chromatic improvisation, indicate how thoroughly familiar Brecker is with the jazz tradition. It would have been extremely fruitful to concentrate solely on Brecker's playing inside the changes. His individual application of the bebop scale approach (where he places scale notes on the beats and chromatic passing notes between the beats) to achieve a more dissonant and chromatic line is of especial interest. However, the focus of this study lies elsewhere.

4.2 Diminished Scales

A diminished scale pattern appears in the "Peep" solo, which is a variation of the diminished scale pattern used by John Coltrane. Brecker has also used this pattern in "My One and Only Love" (Brecker, 1987) and "Lyricosmos" (Ogerman, 1991). In "Lyricosmos", although the pattern employs different pitches, its underlying form is identical.

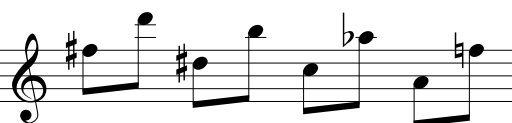
The following diminished scale pattern appears in, for example, "Tea Bag" (Steps, 1981), "Sponge" (The Brecker Brothers, 1978) and "El Niño" (Michael Brecker Quartet, 1998). As in the previous example, this pattern consists of four-note groups but with quite different intervals. "Sponge" and "El Niño" share the same basic pattern (see below), but the pitches in the "Tea Bag" pattern are different.

Example 4.2.a



Another kind of diminished scale pattern can be seen in the following example. The use of minor sixth and minor third intervals is fascinating. This pattern appears with exactly matching pitches in "My One and Only Love" (Brecker, 1987), "The Meaning of the Blues" (Brecker, 1990) and "Naked Soul" (Brecker, 1996).

Example 4.2.b



In most of the above cases the diminished scale pattern is used functionally (i.e. over a dominant chord) and the scales upon which they are based are thus dominant diminished scales.

4.3 Chromaticism and Enclosures

There are some extremely chromatic passages to be found in the three analyzed solos, where the internal logic is more or less impossible to define. Such lines are sometimes based simultaneously on a mixture of scales and the harmony may be effectively blurred by numerous chromatic passing

notes and enclosures. The direction of motion itself often appears to be the main point and these lines are obviously not intended to outline any specific structure of functional harmony. They rather exist as energetic outbursts and splashes of color whose tension and extreme dissonance contribute enormously to the dramatic power of the solos. This chromatic aspect of Brecker's improvisation is another area which clearly deserves further investigation.

4.4 Superimposed "Giant Steps" Chord Progressions

The superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression aims primarily at a dissonant, chromatic sound. Since the progression includes functional chord relationships (V-I or II-V-I), it is also employed as a functional tonicizing device. In such cases, the chord progression is positioned so that it can resolve on to the succeeding harmony through one or more of its chords. The end of the progression may receive slight modifications of a cadential nature. For example, a major seventh chord in the progression might be changed into a dominant seventh chord leading into the following harmony. Naturally, the chords of the progression must not bear any relation to the background harmony. Alternatively the superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression may be applied non-functionally, again as a dissonant and chromatic device for creating tension and drama. When such tension is resolved on to the following harmony (for example, through chromatic passing notes) the line between functional and non-functional uses may become difficult to draw.

The superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression device appears once in "Straphangin'" and twice in "Peep". In the former solo, the "B7, Ema, G7, Cma" part of the superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression (see Example 3.2.1.d) exactly matches equivalent moments in "Syzygy" (Brecker, 1987) and "Don't Try This at Home" (Brecker, 1988). The first superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression in "Peep" also includes the pitches of the aforementioned "B7, Ema, G7, Cma" part, but in this case one octave lower. Among these examples the superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression was used functionally only in "Straphangin'".

Example 4.4.a presents another kind of superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progression. Brecker has used this same example in the solos of "Not Ethiopia" (The Brecker Brothers, 1981) and "Another Jones" (The Hal Galper Quintet, 1991), and it also makes a partial appearance in "Syzygy" (Brecker, 1987). The logic of this line is "F#7, Bma, D7, Gma". In the case of "Another Jones" and "Not Ethiopia" its use is functional.

Example 4.4.a

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef. Above the staff, four chords are labeled: F#7, Bma, D7, and Gma. The melody consists of quarter notes and eighth notes. The first measure (F#7) contains notes: F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The second measure (Bma) contains notes: B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4. The third measure (D7) contains notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4. The fourth measure (Gma) contains notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. The notes are connected by stems, and there are some accidentals (sharps and naturals) indicating chromatic movement.

4.5 Altered Scales

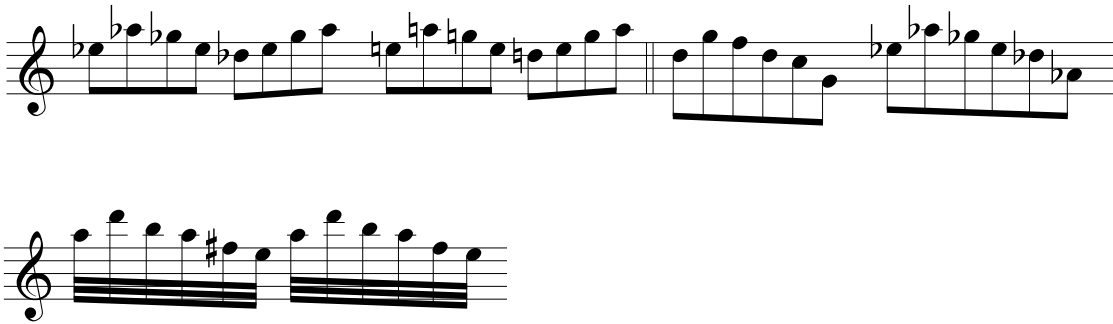
In "Straphangin" Brecker frequently plays the relevant altered scale over each of the two altered dominant chords of the solo chorus (B7alt and G7alt). All of these altered lines follow the ideals of jazz tradition: the chord tones of the harmony are placed on the beats and other scale tones or chromatic passing notes between the beats. The rhythmic forms of Brecker's altered phrases in "Straphangin" are admirable, and their resolutions are ideal since the lines curve downwards to resolve on to the chord tones of the tonicized harmony (see the examples in Chapter 3).

Brecker also uses altered scales in "Nothing Personal" and "Peep". The changes in the solo choruses of these two tunes do not display as clear functional dominant-tonic relations as the solo changes in "Straphangin". Also the improvisational and performance context in "Nothing Personal" and "Peep" is more chromatic and the aim is not to simply express the basic functions of the harmony. Brecker's use of altered scales in these solos are thus more modal. Because the altered dominant color is often not directly suggested by the solo chorus changes, Brecker superimposes the altered scale over the background harmony. The use of altered scales brings more tension to the melody line, and often sounds less functional than in "Straphangin".

4.6 Pentatonic Scales

The analysis of "Peep" brought to light a pattern based on the alternation of the Eb minor and A minor pentatonic scales. This same pattern can also be found in "Searching, Finding" (Patitucci, 1988) and "Furs on Ice" (Abercrombie, 1988). In "Searching, Finding" Brecker builds the pattern by alternating the Db minor and G minor pentatonic scales, and in "Furs on Ice" the F minor and B minor scales. Of these three examples, only "Searching, Finding" presents the pattern inside the background harmony. In the other two cases Brecker uses the pattern in order to play "out" (outside the background harmony).

In the following, three further pentatonic approaches can be seen. Most of these patterns bear a close relationship to the side-slipping device. The term side-slipping describes the technique of shifting a half-step up or down from the established key center as the phrase evolves (Liebman,



The following approach to the pentatonic scale breaks it into arpeggios. This pentatonic device can be found in "Swunk" (Stern, 1994), "Cabin Fever" (Brecker, 1996), and "African Skies" (Brecker, 1996). The same pattern appears in every one of these tunes and Brecker uses it to slip downwards and play outside the background harmony.

Example 4.6.c



Pentatonic scales are very melodic and can easily express the basic colors of major and minor. Pentatonic patterns can be found in a variety of jazz contexts. The examples above show Brecker using them to play both inside and outside the background harmony, although the majority of them belong to the latter category.

4.7 Augmented Scales

In their book "The Augmented Scale in Jazz" (1993), Weiskopf and Ricker mention Michael Brecker as an example of a player who consciously uses augmented scales in his improvisation. In my interview with Mr. Brecker (July 18, 1998), while discussing scales and different approaches to them, he in fact referred to the augmented scale as one of his favourite symmetrical scales.

Weiskopf's and Ricker's book includes a few examples of Brecker's lines which could be derived from augmented scales and, in every case, they are related to dominant chords. In "Straphangin", Brecker uses the augmented scale pattern functionally. The same pattern (though at a different pitch) appears in his "Fawly Tenors" solo (Steps, 1981) and its use there is also functional. Oliver Nelson used this triadic permutation of the augmented scale as a compositional device in the bridge section of "Hoe-Down" on his album "Blues and the Abstract Truth" (1960). Example 4.7.a shows Brecker's interpretation of it in "Fawly Tenors".

Example 4.7.a



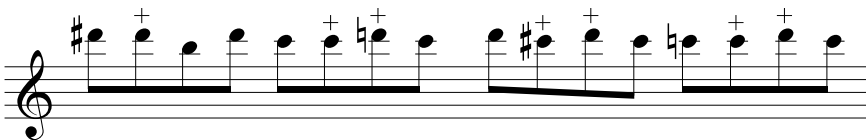
The following example, which shows another of Brecker's approaches to the augmented scale, comes from the beginning of his solo introduction in "Everything Happens When You're Gone" (Brecker, 1988). In this case the melodic ideas are based directly on the Bb augmented scale. The first of the two marked sections lie clearly within the Bb augmented scale. The third section is also based on the Bb augmented scale, but Brecker enriches the scale sound with two extra notes - G and B.

Example 4.7.b

4.8 Alternate Fingerings and Multiphonics

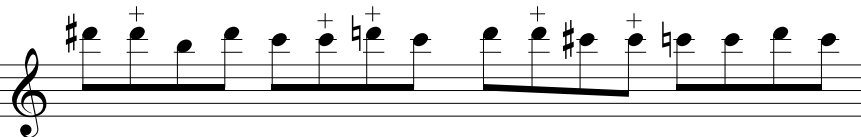
Michael Brecker uses alternate fingerings frequently and they are an easily identifiable feature of his style and sound. He usually applies alternate fingerings in small note values (for example, in double-time phrases) and to multiple repetitions of the same pitch. Alternate fingerings often appear in phrases which include a lot of chromaticism and whose motion is descending. Although Brecker's use of alternate fingerings varies considerably, some clear mannerisms may be detected. He succeeds in avoiding monotony by the masterful use of rhythmic variation and replacement. The line in the following example appeared in the solo of "Nothing Personal". It can also be found in the "Syzygy" solo (Brecker, 1987).

Example 4.8.a



With some slight variation, this same line appears in the solos of "Don't Try This at Home" (Brecker, 1988) and "Roppongi" (The Brecker Brothers, 1992).

Example 4.8.b



These lines are used modally. They are very chromatic and do not express the functional harmony of the background. Brecker uses them to play "out" and to create a strong dissonant tension over the background harmony.

Multiphonics are another component in Brecker's arsenal of instrumental devices. Carl Coan suggests fingerings for four different multiphonics in the "Michael Brecker - Artist Transcriptions" (1995, 9). According to Coan, three of these multiphonics appear at the very end of "Straphangin'" during the "freaking out" section. It is not easy to trace the exact fingerings for such multiphonics because Brecker also approaches the multiphonic sound through changes of embouchure. Multiphonics are special effects and are seldom used for melodic material. However, Brecker's opening to "Delta City Blues" (Michael Brecker Quartet, 1998) is an example of this kind. More

often multiphonics are used in solo climaxes. An example of this can be found at the end of Brecker's solo in "Tea Bag" (Steps, 1981) where he plays multiphonics in abundance.

4.9 Fingering Mannerisms

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 3, fingering mannerisms are typically comfortable and easily-executed. They may be used both consciously and unconsciously. The "F minor" fingering mannerism appeared once in "Straphangin" (Example 3.2.1.b) and once in "Peep". The "Bb Dorian" fingering mannerism appeared altogether five times in the analysis; twice in "Nothing Personal" (third chorus, bar seven; fourth chorus, bar five), and three times in "Peep" (second chorus, bar twenty-three; the open chorus, bars three and fifteen). In each case Brecker applied the "Bb Dorian" mannerism to express the A altered scale and color. The rhythmic placement of the "Bb Dorian" fingering mannerism varied a great deal.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study began with the observation that very few scientific studies or articles have been written on Michael Brecker's improvisational style, in spite of the fact that his solos have been for many years an important part of the younger jazz musicians' education especially, of course, in the case of saxophonists. Michael Brecker is clearly one of the leading figures and influences of the contemporary jazz scene and his improvisations offer many rewarding directions for study.

The present work approached Brecker's original style through the analysis of his improvised solos in "Straphangin", "Nothing Personal", and "Peep". It concentrated especially on the advanced harmonic and scalar devices which can be found in Brecker's improvisation, but also on the melodic lines and melodic phenomena derived from specific instrumental devices. The focus for the melodic devices was on the scalar and pattern based phenomena derived from diminished, altered, pentatonic, and augmented scales, and on the superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progressions. The melodic lines and melodic phenomena arising from the use of alternate fingerings, multiphonics and fingering mannerisms formed the focus for the instrumental devices. Many of these devices appeared as patterns - patterns which represent a clearly distinguishable and characteristic part of Brecker's melodic vocabulary.

The approach chosen for the analysis was similar to that typically used by jazz musicians when studying jazz. First the selected audio material was listened to extensively in order to locate the solos which would be analyzed. After the winnowing-out process was complete the analysis began. The analysis was based on transcriptions and ready-made sources, like Carl Coan's "Michael Brecker - Artist Transcriptions". David Baker's approach in his "Giants of Jazz" series was applied as a model for the form of this present study. The theory of contemporary jazz improvisation was based on David Liebman's "A Chromatic Approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody" and other sundry resources. The focus of the audio material was placed on Michael Brecker's solo recordings, and on the recordings of The Brecker Brothers, Steps and Steps Ahead. However, the audio material selection was further extended by the available jazz recordings which Brecker has made as a sideman with various other jazz artists.

In the analysis Brecker's improvisations in "Straphangin", "Nothing Personal", and "Peep" were discussed in detail. Most of the melodic and instrumental devices and their use were introduced in this solo analysis. The use of the devices was divided into functional and non-functional categories. However, some of the devices and their usage could not be explored far enough in the three solo analyses and further examples were therefore traced from Brecker's other performances. Examples

of the devices found from the detailed solo analysis and other performances were reconsidered and discussed in greater detail in the fourth chapter.

The examples collected in the fourth chapter indicate that Brecker's use of diminished scale patterns is largely functional. Brecker uses patterns derived from the dominant diminished scale over background dominant chords. Three different diminished scale patterns were introduced and discussed. Brecker applied the pattern shown in Example 4.2.b only in one key and in only one harmonic situation. The other two patterns also appeared transposed into another key. All the examples of these three individual patterns differed rhythmically from one another. I believe that Brecker in fact uses still more different diminished scale patterns.

The superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progressions found in the three solos and other performances proved that Brecker applies these progressions both in order to outline the background harmony and to play outside of it. This advanced device was introduced with two different patterns. They appeared as "licks" in which Brecker applied exactly the same pitches to different tunes. However, when using these "licks", he varied them rhythmically and combined them with other melodic material in such a way as to produce a very different result in each case. The superimposed "Giant Steps" chord progressions easily stand out as a characteristic superimposition device and Brecker certainly also uses other chord progressions as superimposition devices. An example is the descending pattern in the second solo chorus of "Peep", whose sound is similar to that of a whole-tone scale. Only through a thorough style analysis could Brecker's other commonly used superimposition devices be defined.

Brecker's use of altered scales was discussed in sub-chapter 4.5. In basic jazz theory, four varying scale-approaches to a functional dominant chord are generally discussed. These approaches are: Bebop scales (derived from the Mixolydian), dominant diminished scales, altered and overtone scales (derived from the melodic minor), and the whole-tone scale. Of all the aforementioned, the altered scale approach is the one most applied in contemporary jazz and, in this, Brecker is no exception. Furthermore, Brecker makes much use of the altered scale when he reaches beyond the background harmony. The analysis demonstrated that Brecker's use of altered scales is highly innovative and creative.

The same can be said of Brecker's use of pentatonic scale patterns. Because pentatonic scales lack the chromaticism of the half-step, they are very melodic. Pentatonic scales can easily and clearly delineate major and minor tonalities and, for this reason, it can be difficult to build them into melodically interesting patterns. This pentatonic "simplicity" always carries with it a danger of repetitiveness which must be avoided by different forms of variation. Brecker's variation is mostly rhythmic, but he continuously makes slight modifications to the pattern structure as well. In fact it

was rather difficult to find the examples of pattern repetition collected for the fourth chapter. As mentioned in sub-chapter 4.6, Brecker's use of pentatonic scale patterns is associated with side-slipping device. He applies pentatonic scale patterns in order to play outside the background harmony and transforms this usually very melodic scale type into a chromatic, dissonant device.

Augmented scales are still a marginal area in jazz performance. Although used since the 1960s, they have only been explored by a minority of musicians. The augmented sound has not played a significant functional role in Western tonal music but perhaps, with the development of jazz harmony in which the augmented dominant chord color has established a more substantial position, this situation is changing. Despite the fact that Michael Brecker is (like John Coltrane) one of the best known exponents of the augmented scale (Weiskopf and Ricker, 1993), rather few examples of his augmented scale patterns were found for the fourth chapter. They nonetheless indicated that Brecker uses the augmented scale functionally, over augmented or altered dominant chords. Brecker's opening solo in "Everything Happens When You're Gone" offered an interesting sample of improvisation based purely on the Bb augmented scale (see Example 4.7.b).

Brecker is widely identified with the sound and frequent use of alternate fingerings, a device which prominently stands out from his improvisation. In jazz history its development is associated with saxophonists Jimmy Dorsey, Lester Young and Stanley Turrentine (Kernfeld, 1988). Brecker is probably the best known contemporary practitioner of this technique and he has employed it extensively in his fusion jazz and in his pop and rock oriented recordings. Alternate fingerings have a powerful impact on the instrumental sound. Those patterns discussed in sub-chapter 4.8 demonstrate how Brecker employs this device to create a dissonant tension over the background harmony. Naturally Brecker can also use alternate fingerings when he outlines a chord or a progression of chords. One of Brecker's favorite applications of this coloristic instrumental technique is to build up tension in dramatic solo climaxes.

Every instrument has its own idiomatic phrases or musical structures which are easy and comfortable to play. Part of the vocabulary of an improvising instrumentalist is based on structures of this kind and, for a jazz musician, it is quite natural to rely on and adopt material which best suits his or her instrument. All jazz saxophonists have individual fingering mannerisms. This study picked out two from Brecker's improvisations; the "F minor" and the "Bb Dorian" (see Chapters 3 and 4).

Most of the melodic and instrumental devices discussed in this study exist as patterns. Patterns, especially sequential patterns, are easily discernible in the improvised melody line. When a pattern is based on a scale, it can often acquire a modal color. It can thus be said that most of the devices introduced in this present study are modal devices. David Liebman writes in his book "A Chromatic Approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody", that "a pattern can act as a kind of *filler* material to be

used as a connecting phrase between main musical ideas" (1991, 109). Therefore the function of the pattern can be more rhythmic than melodic. Several of the examples introduced in this work fit snugly into this definition. The use of patterns as rhythmic "fillers" is one of the most conspicuous characteristics of Brecker's improvisation.

Although Brecker uses patterns, it in no way detracts from the artistic excellence of his improvisation. Aside from his technical virtuosity, Brecker's rhythmic awareness is extraordinary. He continually varies and modifies the rhythmic form and placement of his patterns. Though certain patterns may bear similarities as they make their appearance in different solos, Brecker avoids repeating himself by applying changes to his phrasing. His improvisation sounds fresh, even though the material he uses may not always be entirely new. In this respect Brecker is a remarkable artist.

I do not offer this study as a complete description of the melodic and instrumental devices found in Brecker's improvisation. Nonetheless I believe that it gives clear and valuable examples of Brecker's improvisational style and of his melodic vocabulary and even succeeds in locating and defining the underlying principles which guide his playing. A more careful investigation into Brecker's melodic devices would demand extensive study of his admirable rhythmic expression (phrasing, timing, time feel, accentuation, etc.). Melody and rhythm are powerfully interactive and are therefore difficult to isolate as separate phenomena. Especially in jazz, rhythm is a vital component and it shapes most of the music. Although the rhythmic component was excluded from this study, I believe this exclusion did not distort the results or invalidate the interpretation.

Brecker's use of uncommon groupings of five, seven and nine notes, and his exploitation of polyrhythms and rhythmic superimposition in his improvisations and compositions offer other potentially interesting areas for study. Brecker's tonal style, i.e. his playing inside the changes, would also be a fruitful subject to explore; so would searching out the internal logic and schematic structure behind his advanced chromaticism. Brecker's more dissonant melodic ideas are sometimes clearly based on a combination of different scales, or on a mixture of different melodic ideas and patterns. Brecker continuously interweaves the various parts of his vocabulary. Penetrating such subjects successfully will demand a high level of musicianship on the part of the researcher. It is my opinion that the value of jazz research will necessarily correlate with the fundamental ability of gaining effective feedback from such musicianship.

Jazz research usually leans heavily on audio material and Michael Brecker's virtuosity presented this researcher with considerable challenges. It was sometimes difficult to distinguish the pitches of single notes in extremely fast solo passages. I found it extremely useful to study the material by playing it on my own main instrument (5-string viola). I believe that jazz research should be

primarily based on jazz musicianship. The most effective way to avoid falling into problematic musical interpretations and conclusions is to, in a sense, play through your musical arguments on your instrument and justify them by careful and objective listening. The ears should always take an authoritative role. My personal experiences as a jazz musician proved to be essential in the production of this work. From the opposite point of view, the whole process carried with it its own educational rewards and offered me many valuable insights into the art of jazz improvisation.

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APPENDIX: Complete transcription of Michael Brecker's solo in "Nothing Personal"

I Ami

1

5 *delayed*

9 Dmi

13 Ami

17 F7 E7 *delayed*

21 Ami

II Ami

1

5

9 Dmi

13 Ami

17 F7 E7

Musical staff 17-20: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Staff 17 starts with a whole note chord F7. Staff 18-19 contain eighth-note runs. Staff 20 ends with a whole note chord E7.

21 Ami

Musical staff 21: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Starts with a whole note chord Ami, followed by eighth-note runs.

III 1 Ami

Musical staff 1-4: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Staff 1 starts with a whole note chord Ami. Staff 2-4 contain eighth-note runs with various accidentals.

5

Musical staff 5-8: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Staff 5 starts with a whole note chord Ami. Staff 6-8 contain eighth-note runs.

9 Dmi

Musical staff 9-12: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Staff 9 starts with a whole note chord Dmi. Staff 10-12 contain eighth-note runs.

13 Ami

Musical staff 13-16: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Staff 13 starts with a whole note chord Ami. Staff 14-16 contain eighth-note runs.

17 F7 E7

Musical staff 17-20: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Staff 17 starts with a whole note chord F7. Staff 18-19 contain eighth-note runs. Staff 20 ends with a whole note chord E7.

21 Ami E7 F#ma Fma Ema

Musical staff 21: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Starts with a whole note chord Ami, followed by eighth-note runs. Chord changes are indicated by dashed boxes: E7 (measures 21-22), F#ma (measures 23-24), Fma (measures 25-26), and Ema (measures 27-28).

IV 1 Ami

Musical staff 1-4: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Staff 1 starts with a whole note chord Ami. Staff 2-4 contain eighth-note runs with triplets.

5

Musical staff 5-8: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Staff 5 starts with a whole note chord Ami. Staff 6-8 contain eighth-note runs with triplets.

9 Dmi

13 Ami

17 F7 E7

21 Ami

V 1 Ami

5

9 Dmi

13

17 F7 E7

21 Ami

F7 E7

F7 E7

Ami

F7 E7

Ami

F7 E7 Ami

Transcribed by Joonatan Rautio.

Michael Brecker (1987). *Michael Brecker*. GRP Records, GRP01132.