

Key Takeaways from John Swana's Solo on Jitterbug Waltz

After the opening of the solo, Swana favors long phrases of at least 4 bars.

Ex. 1:

9

13

Fma⁷

Ami⁷ D⁷ Ami⁷

Long 1/8th note lines use employ the bebop dominant scale, and employ figures that delay the descent such as chromatic passing tones and sequences of thirds.

Ex. 2:

17

21

G⁷

B^bmi⁷ E^b7

D⁷

Thinks delay the descent

Swana use the upper register as a dramatic device to descend into key landmarks in the form. The peak is normally approached by arpeggio.

Ex. 3:

Example 3 consists of four staves of musical notation in a single system, all in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The first staff starts with a treble clef and a 7/8 time signature. It features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes. Above the staff are the chord symbols A_{mi}^7 and D^7 . A red arrow points from the peak of the phrase down to the right, with the text "Arpeggio plus descent from the peak into contrasting section" below it. The second staff begins at measure 49 and contains a triplet of eighth notes. A green arrow points from the start of the phrase up to the peak, with the text "Arpeggio to peak of phrase" below it. The third staff starts at measure 53 and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The fourth staff starts at measure 57 and features three triplet markings over eighth notes.

When Swana uses alterations on dominant chords, they are used in sequence.

Ex. 4:

Example 4 shows a single staff of music starting at measure 29. The key signature has one flat. The chord sequence is A_{mi}^7 , D^7 , G_{mi}^7 , and C^7 . The G_{mi}^7 and C^7 chords are highlighted with red boxes. The C^7 chord has a triplet of eighth notes.

Swana exploits the ambiguity of the opening voicing for the tonic chord (scale degrees 3, 6, and 9) to play pentatonic phrases that incorporate fourths.

Ex. 5:

Example 5 shows a single staff of music starting at measure 33. The key signature has one flat. The chord symbol F_{ma}^7 is written above the staff. The melody consists of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a triplet of eighth notes near the end of the phrase.

Swana ends the solo using blues language, a common bop trope.

Ex. 6:

The image displays two staves of musical notation in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff begins at measure 57 and features a sequence of eighth-note triplets: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. This is followed by a quarter rest, then a triplet of eighth notes: G5, A5, B5. The second staff begins at measure 61 and contains the following notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. Above the first staff are the chords G⁷ and C⁷. Above the second staff are the chords Fm^{a7}, E^{b7}, Fm^{a7}, and E^{b7}. The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The piece concludes with a double bar line.