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SAME AS IT EVER WAS:
AN EXPLORATION AND DEMONSTRATION OF TECHNIQUES
FOR REPURPOSING AND MODERNISING ADVANCED
MUSICAL VOCABULARY IN MAINSTREAM COMMERCIAL MUSIC

By
AIDAN SCRIVENS

A PRODUCTION PAPER

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Music in Commercial Performance
in the School of Music
of the College of Music and Performing Arts
Belmont University

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

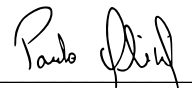
December 2022

Submitted by Aidan Scrivens in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Music in Commercial Music Performance.

Accepted on behalf of the Graduate Faculty of the School of Music by the Mentoring Committee:

12/08/22

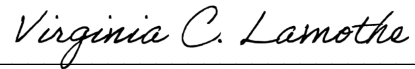
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Introduction

A few decades ago, the concept of a tertiary-level degree focusing on mainstream commercial music practices would have seemed farfetched. The implication being that mainstream commercial music lacked the complexity and pedagogical viability to warrant advanced study. Today, however, in response to ever-increasing demand, commercial music majors are offered at several highly accredited institutions across the United States of America. By their nature, the instructors in these programs are forced to walk a fine line between teaching the advanced harmonic, technical, and cultural material necessary for an advanced degree and the stylistic tendencies and techniques of music that, for the most part, eschew harmonic and rhythmic complexity in favour of simplicity, accessibility, and marketability.

This divide exists by necessity, as not all genres and styles are equally adept at providing a framework for analysis and demonstration of advanced theoretical concepts. Unfortunately, it does pose a problem in that it separates the more mainstream genres of music that many students enjoy and want to make professionally from the information that can help them expand their vocabulary for doing so. In the case of many undergraduate students (including myself at that age), this separation causes a motivational deficiency that undermines the progress one can achieve during a course of study. To bridge this pedagogical gap between the commercial genres most appealing to modern students and the foundational building blocks essential for creating it, my project

will outline and demonstrate the process by which musicians repurpose vocabulary from older genres and styles in more contemporary and mainstream applications.

Born from the desires to (a) improve my own vocabulary and fluency in a range of styles; (b) demonstrate my songwriting, production, arranging, and performance skills; and (c) leave behind a reference for teachers to show students that struggle to see the purpose in less mainstream transcription exercises, this recording project will provide a justification of the transcription, analysis, and faithful recreation of less commercially successful genres of music. This project will accomplish these aims by demonstrating how one can infer key idiomatic traits from the process of transcription and recreation that can be modernized and repurposed in more commercially mainstream applications. The project will consist first of transcribing, analyzing, and recording faithful reproductions of performances representative of genres with less mainstream appeal. Although many genres can be seen to fit this brief, I have chosen to pull from traditional small-group jazz, bluegrass, and progressive rock-fusion due to their well-documented influence on the sound of more mainstream musical genres in today's industry.

For a performance representative of traditional jazz guitar vocabulary, I have chosen Wes Montgomery's version of *Canadian Sunset*. Montgomery played with a technical freedom, expressive range, and melodic sensibility and daring that expanded upon the work of Charlie Christian to establish the sonic capabilities of the guitar as a soloing instrument. This solo contains examples of both Montgomery's effortless mastery of phrasing and of several melodic tropes he and his disciples used frequently. Analyzing these key elements, as this project will show, forms an ideal base from which I will build my own jazz-inspired vocabulary.

For bluegrass, I have pulled from the guitar breaks of pioneering bluegrass guitarist, Tony Rice in his performances of bluegrass standards *Blue Ridge Cabin Home* and *Foggy Mountain Rock* and his own original song, *Shadows*. Similarly to Wes Montgomery, Tony Rice, revolutionized the role of the guitar in bluegrass music, imbuing it with a vocabulary, style, and power previously left only to the clearer and higher-pitched instruments in the ensemble such as the fiddle and mandolin. Both Rice and Montgomery completely changed and expanded the role of the guitar in their respective genres, inspiring decades of tonal and melodic imitation and influence that invoke comparisons to that of Lester Young's influence on saxophonists or Louis Armstrong's influence on trumpet players.

Finally, to represent modern progressive rock-fusion, I have transcribed, analyzed, and recorded Guthrie Govan's instrumental, *Wonderful Slippery Thing*. Govan, along with impacting the design of many modern electric guitars used by musicians today, has amazed the guitar-playing world with repeated displays of unparalleled virtuosic capability replete with a signature liquid and flowing style of phrasing involving deft transitions between a myriad of advanced techniques. Nowadays, his fluid, vocal phrasing is heard in fusion-rock players' vocabulary as ubiquitously as his guitar specifications are seen on the instruments they play.

I chose these three guitarists as ambassadors of jazz, bluegrass, and progressive fusion very deliberately. Each revolutionary in their approach and contagious in their legacy, they have left indelible marks on the vocabulary of their respective genres. Montgomery, Rice, and Govan all redefined the sound of the guitar in their respective genres, reshaping the landscape of jazz, bluegrass, and progressive rock-fusion in their

image through their influence. In the second part of this project, I have demonstrated the worth of studying their work and the work of those like them when arranging, performing, and recording commercially mainstream styles of music today.

The latter half of my culminating project centers around the direct application of material and lessons learned from the transcription and analysis of the aforementioned solos. To achieve this, I have written and produced an original R&B song to make use of jazz approaches, an original country song to make use of bluegrass approaches, and an original live arrangement of a commercially successful pop song to make use of fusion-rock approaches. This is not an exercise in direct transplantation of material and specific vocabulary, rather the application of melodic approaches, phrasing, techniques, and rhythmic sensibilities gleaned from in-depth study of the work of Montgomery, Rice, and Govan respectively.

The first original will be a contemporary jazz-influenced R&B/hip-hop/neo-soul song entitled *Ringtone*. As contemporary R&B has been inspired not only by the combination of jazz material with that of gospel, blues, pop, and hip-hop, but also of hip-hop artists combining unique production techniques with the sampling of jazz records, the harmony and vocabulary of jazz are woven into the “DNA” of hip-hop and R&B, making it a perfect environment to tastefully apply the language of Wes Montgomery (Glasper 2017).

The second original song will be a modern country track entitled *Barflies*. The history of country music is inseparable from the bluegrass picking circles of the Smokey Mountains. The session players featured on country records throughout the 1980s and beyond hailed from bluegrass backgrounds and adapted many of the techniques seen in

Tony Rice's acoustic guitar breaks to the electric guitar to create a style of playing truly unique to country music. By following in their footsteps and combining this same vocabulary with more modern pop and rock influences along with modern country picking techniques and electric guitar tones, this song not only demonstrates the aptitude of bluegrass vocabulary in a fully electric and modernized setting, but also the importance of appreciating its original context to understand how to craft these unique-sounding melodic lines.

The third and final original recording is of a live arrangement for the original anthemic pop song, *The Middle*, originally performed by Maren Morris. The arrangement features rhythmic and timbral shifts along with exciting unison figures and extended sections for displaying virtuosity from the band whilst simultaneously allowing for crowd interaction. These moments afforded me ample opportunity to use the idiomatic phrasing traits and harmonic approach of Govan's playing to display virtuosic capability while injecting variety and excitement into the arrangement of what was previously a harmonically simple and electronically produced pop recording.

The core goal of this project is twofold, first to show how modernized sounds, effects, and performance/production techniques can help metamorphose musical material for new applications, and second to drive home the importance of studying material in its original context before attempting to apply it elsewhere. Through combining the transcription process with original creative endeavors, it is my intention that the process laid out in this paper will also act as a foundational example for how students may approach applying the lessons learned from transcription. In other words, this project will stand as a reference to future students questioning the helpfulness and utility of the study

of less commercially viable genres and hopefully serve to inspire them. In the case of this project, the less commercially viable genres in question are jazz, bluegrass, and rock-fusion, but the larger goal of this project is to inspire any reader to independently study beyond the contemporary music they currently listen to and aim to create and to delve into the older and more obscure genres that inspired it.

Chapter 1

Wes Montgomery

In order to modernize and recontextualize the vocabulary of traditional jazz guitar, one needs to distill the sound of jazz guitar into its most recognizable elements. In other words, we must understand what it is about a particular recording that would cause a listener to define it as “jazz guitar” when all other contextual clues were removed. To do this, we need to identify a musician who represents both key innovation and a nexus point of influence in jazz guitar’s history. Without this history, jazz guitar music would not be recognized as it is today. No jazz guitarist fits this bill more completely than Wes Montgomery.

Wes Montgomery did for the guitar what Louis Armstrong and Charlie Parker did for their respective instruments – that is, he established a standard of creative excellence that remains unchallenged on its own terms, a standard that can be referred to as it is circumvented. (Shoemaker 1993)

Bill Shoemaker’s praise for Wes Montgomery’s playing and legacy perfectly encapsulates this project’s goal and speaks to Montgomery’s influence on the sound of the guitar in the context of jazz music. Montgomery was first recognized nationally as a member of Lionel Hampton’s band in 1948, and from then until his death in 1968, his many varied recordings as both a sideman and bandleader cemented his position as one of the most influential guitarists of all time. Inspired by the work of his idol, Charlie Christian, and his recorded solos in Benny Goodman’s band from 1939 to 1942,

Montgomery assimilated horn-like idiosyncrasies into his playing. These idiosyncrasies allowed the inclusion of single-note guitar solos in the same vein as the horn solos featured on jazz records at the time. Montgomery rose to prominence at a time when the development of microgroove and magnetic tape recording technologies facilitated longer recordings and more opportunities for soloists to stretch out. Montgomery took advantage of this expanded platform to develop numerous novel techniques that would become staples of the sound of “jazz guitar,” recording countless iconic jazz guitar solos that are frequently cited as inspirations for every influential jazz guitarist since (De Stefano 2001). Simply put, it is impossible to consider the essence of what “jazz guitar” sounds like without giving credit to Wes Montgomery. Not only do Montgomery’s solos represent a branching-out point in the musical vocabulary of jazz guitarists throughout time, but the common assumptions made about the ideal jazz guitar tone come from the unique approaches Montgomery employed to generate his sound.

Before Charlie Christian’s emergence in 1939, the electric guitar had been fighting a losing battle in terms of dynamic and timbral range with the horns in a band setting. Known for both an unpleasantly brittle and “tinny” tonal quality when playing single-note lines and for not being as capable of cutting through a dense mix, the electric guitar had never been viewed as much more than an accompanying percussive instrument capable of carrying harmonic information. Even after Christian emerged as a capable and exciting soloist and improviser, the guitar was still valued only for its ability to mimic the idiosyncrasies of horn players rather than on the strength of its unique timbre. Wes Montgomery, however, was able to imbue the electric guitar with its own reputation for tone and approach through his novel right-hand technique.

Using the flesh of his thumb as opposed to the plectrum used by his contemporaries, Montgomery was able to embrace the subdued and more mellow timbre of the electric guitar, challenging the mindset of listeners about what an electric guitar sounded like. Although Montgomery would advise new players in interviews to learn with a pick for a greater facility for speed, the quality of his work created an indelible standard for subsequent players to honor. Almost all subsequent jazz guitarists have taken Montgomery's advice and used a pick, but even as they did so, they found workarounds to emulate Montgomery's signature sound. Jazz guitarists routinely favor the neck pickup for most of their work (most commonly with the tone knob rolled down significantly) to filter out pick noise and harsh treble frequencies. In doing so, they also embrace the warmth of the hollow-bodied archtop jazz guitars they play, many of which were modeled directly after the Gibson L5 model Montgomery used. Many players also favor larger gauge, flat-wound guitar strings—such as used by Montgomery—that are larger in diameter and reduce the amplitude of upper harmonics, further mellowing the tone of the recorded guitar.

Montgomery's tonal influence immediately became ubiquitous across the jazz guitar world. Despite the slow de-homogenization of jazz guitar tone through the era of jazz-rock fusion in the 1970s and 1980s, when jazz guitar is referenced in modern commercial music, it is not thought of with a modern, distorted sound. Instead, it is the clean, smooth, and mellow approach of Wes Montgomery that is still the point of reference for the sound of jazz guitar. Whether a guitarist employs the warm, smooth timbre reminiscent of Montgomery or the bright and gently distorted, tortured tone of a

player like John Scofield, the indelible influence of Montgomery's unique vocabulary and soloing approach has proved enduringly inescapable.

As I recorded my transcription of Montgomery's take on *Canadian Sunset*, I used an archtop jazz guitar strung with flat-wound strings through an emulation of a vintage fender super reverb. By using gear as similar as possible to Montgomery's recording rig from 1963 (Schiebel 2022) and by playing with my thumb as opposed to a pick wherever I was physically able, I aimed to remain true to the unique approach and context of Montgomery's recording to understand better the origins and mentality behind his melodic and rhythmic decisions. These decisions were, of course, not merely a product of physical limitations and context but rather a combination of those and Montgomery's specific priorities for improvising. Montgomery laid out these priorities in an interview with Ralph Gleason in 1975.

My aim is to move from one vein to the other without any trouble. Like, if you're going to take a melody or a counterpoint or a unison line with another instrument, do that, then maybe drop out at a certain point, then maybe next time you'll play phrases and chords, or maybe you'll take an octave or something. That way you'll have a lot of variation there. The only difference is if you can control each of them. Still, the biggest thing to me is keeping a feeling, regardless [of] what you play. So many cats lose their feeling at various times, not through the whole tune, but at various times, and it causes them to have to build up and drop down, and you can feel it. (Gleason 1975)

Unfortunately, the scope of this project does not allow for an exhaustive harmonic and melodic analysis of Wes Montgomery's seminal solos; rather, for this section of my project, I will focus on specific approaches used in Montgomery's recorded solo on "Canadian Sunset" from his 1963 organ trio album *Boss Guitar* to demonstrate how one can take usable influence and inspiration from a single transcription. This solo provides an excellent example of Montgomery's approach to improvisation, emphasizing

consistency of feel while continuously passing between different melodic and stylistic tropes using many of Montgomery's idiosyncratic fingerings and phrasing ideas. In my performance, I endeavored to honor the nuance of Montgomery's playing as precisely as possible. As I did so, I took note of several techniques and idiosyncrasies that warrant deeper discussion in this chapter on account of their importance for recreating the "sound" of jazz guitar in another context.

Before the solo even begins, we hear the most immediately recognizable technique attributed to Montgomery, the dexterous and daring use of octave harmonization of melody. Montgomery plays the whole melody of this song in octaves, a technique born from battling inconsistencies in intonation on a beginner's guitar during Montgomery's formative playing years (Huart 2021). This technique not only bolsters the volume and depth of a melody line played on guitar but also when employed by any guitarist using a warm, clean guitar tone it immediately conjures the image of Wes Montgomery in the listener's mind (or simply of "jazz guitar" in the mind of a listener less knowledgeable of the genre). Interestingly, Montgomery eschews his signature octave sound for almost the entirety of this solo, creating a stark contrast between the melody and his passages of improvisation. He only returns to the octaves to bookend his solo section, signifying the end of one part by returning to the sonic footprint of what came before it. This use of contrast is, in fact, a common theme in Montgomery's improvisational style, as the body of this solo suggests.

Montgomery's phrasing embodies the conversational approach of "call and response" throughout, and key to this concept is the contrast between antecedent "calls" and consequent "responses." Montgomery utilizes several means of contrast in this solo,

not least of which being the contrast between jazz phrasing that targets guide tones (the thirds and sevenths of chords, key to understanding chord quality) and follows chord changes rigorously and more traditional blues phrasing, which favors specific ostinatos and pays less attention to the specifics of the chords beneath them. He masterfully controls the dynamics and articulation throughout, pitching louder passages against quieter ones and more staccato phrases against freer-flowing ones. Most worthy of further analysis is his melodic lyricism, key to which is the balance of wide and narrow intervals that represent a trademark element of his improvisational style. These intervallic differences can be seen between longer phrases, such as on page 3 of the transcription, where arpeggios punctuated by jumps of a sixth in one phrase are answered by a repeated ostinato of closely related notes in the next, still punctuated by the same 6th interval to bind the phrases together as call and response. However, what is even more fascinating (and crucially, more applicable to modern commercial music) is how even within shorter time frames, Montgomery juxtaposes passages of differing interval sizes against one another to inject a sense of momentum and excitement into his playing. The following excerpts (written in treble clef) show a selection of instances throughout this solo of this contrast in action, in which Montgomery sets more static collections of notes such as chromatic enclosures or stepwise or chromatic motion against arpeggios and other larger interval jumps to provide intrigue, variation, and energy, sometimes even within the same bar.

Example 1.1: Measures 60-62 of *Canadian Sunset*

Example 1.2: Measures 42-44 of *Canadian Sunset*Example 1.3: Measures 37-38 of *Canadian Sunset*Example 1.4: Measure 41 of *Canadian Sunset*Example 1.5: Measures 7-8 of *Canadian Sunset*

Arpeggios are used as a means of traversing a tremendous intervallic distance quickly throughout this solo, and they are used in the faster passages as a means of achieving greater speed throughout specific runs in certain positions on the fretboard. The use of arpeggios for speed is again a result of Montgomery's unique right-hand thumb technique, where continued downward strokes striking one note per string are preferable to alternate-picked notes on the same string for consistency, speed, and accuracy.

Performing alternate picking lines at this speed is significantly more difficult when the performer uses the thumb for an upstroke instead of a pick. Arpeggios also offer Montgomery an additional function that he uses most clearly in bars 48 and 49, as seen in example 1.6 (again, notated in treble clef). In this case he uses arpeggios to express triads, most notably triads containing upper structures of the underlying chords to express more colorful extensions:

Example 1.6: Measures 48-49 of *Canadian Sunset*

In example 1.6, Montgomery plays a chromatically descending arpeggio shape (a personal favorite minor triad arpeggio shape of his using the G, B, and high E strings) over a descending iii–VI–ii–V turnaround. Over the Am7 and the Gm7, this arpeggio position simply spells out the core triadic harmony of these chords, but over the D altered dominant chord, the Ab minor triad represents the sharp-11, the 13, and the flat-9. This contrast of chord tones to colorful extensions is repeated in the following bar where Montgomery plays the same arpeggio of chord tones at the beginning of the bar, but this time marries it with a chromatic enclosure around the root before moving via the flat-7 to an A on the ensuing downbeat, a guide tone (the third) of the F chord in the next bar. Whether played as arpeggios or block chords, triads as upper structures are a consistent hallmark of Montgomery’s playing, as well as the diligent targeting of important chord

tones and specifically guide tones to entwine his melodies with the chords supporting them.

One crucial element of Montgomery's playing that endures throughout every medium of contrast he employs is his dedication to landing phrases on important guide tones, chord tones, and the occasional tasteful extension, all clearly outlining the harmony beneath them. This dedication is most clearly exemplified at the end of purely scalar runs in this solo, such as the lead-in to the first bar of his solo where a simple ascending F major scale is played with the clear intention of landing on the major third of the F chord in measure 1. Even in the fastest passages of this solo, such as measures 19-24, Montgomery punctuates the start of every bar with a clear expression of a chord tone or guide tone, often through stepwise motion. Outside of repeating blues ostinatos used for effect, every chord change in this solo is reflected through intentional targeting of key notes that make every decision feel deliberate and informed.

Wes Montgomery is inseparable from the sound of jazz guitar. From his impact on the tone of electric jazz guitar players to his influence on the melodic and rhythmic tendencies of every generation of jazz guitarists since, he is undeniably responsible for what comes to mind when the layman or professional alike envisions the sound of "jazz guitar." As a result, by selecting him as an ambassador and case study for the art of jazz guitar and by analyzing the unique approaches he took in his work, I have not only equipped myself with some of the vocabulary of jazz guitar but the understanding and respect necessary to use the sound of "jazz guitar" in a way that displays a more authentic understanding.

Chapter 2

Ringtone

With a deeper understanding of Montgomery's approach, technique, and tone ascertained from the transcription and subsequent recreation of his take on *Canadian Sunset*, we can now set about repurposing these approaches in a more modern, commercially viable context. Because one of my key takeaways from Montgomery's soloing approach was his tendency to target the guide tones of 7th chords in his melodic lines, it would be wise to ensure that the modern style chosen is no stranger to richer, more colorful chords than simple triads. R&B music has made use of harmonies lifted directly from jazz since the 1940s, and the harmonic landscape in its most modern iterations is no different. While Montgomery's melodic approach could theoretically be used over simple chords to imply more complex movement, the existing presence of these harmonic tropes in R&B music makes for a more willing host.

The immediate challenge that one faces when recontextualizing vocabulary within the conventions of any different style is that the orchestration is often wildly different. The task of arranging and performing *Canadian Sunset* was challenging in the sense of technical execution, however an organ trio performance mimicking a live recording setup used in the 1960s requires very little activity from an arranger or orchestrator. When playing *Canadian Sunset*, all three instruments were played consistently throughout, and volume levels were adjusted in the moment by the musicians themselves. In the case of a

modern R&B recording, however, there are far more moving parts to respect and due to the disparate influences on display in modern R&B, many of them are not capable of communicating with one another in the tracking room.

R&B was initially born of the combined influences of jazz, blues, and gospel music in the 1940s. Since its inception, it had embraced numerous advances in recording technology but was still fundamentally based around the industry standard practice of recording real instruments in sectional recording sessions (Handyside 2006). The shift away from a purely instrumental and live-tracked iteration of R&B towards what can be heard on pop and R&B radio today began in the late 1980s when record producer Teddy Riley began combining the smooth characteristics of R&B vocal performances with the production techniques pioneered by hip-hop in the 1970s and 1980s (Williams, 2020). Helpfully for the interests of this project, this marriage of styles, while potentially jarring at first glance, was supported by a shared deep influence of jazz music.

The harmonic content of hip-hop was directly shaped by jazz in that many beats used by artists were built upon samples taken from jazz records (Glasper 2017). As a result, although the harmony may not have always played a particularly important role in the arrangement of the music in hip-hop, the language of jazz was deeply embedded in its sound. The result of Riley's combination of these genres, known as "New Jack Swing," saw R&B vocal performances complemented by hip-hop production and performance techniques such as sampling, looping, the use of drum machines, and the featuring of rapped verses and guest verses by popular hip-hop artists. Through the 1990s, acts like Bel Biv Devoe and Janet Jackson would push the worlds of hip-hop and R&B closer

together, changing not only the sound of R&B but pushing the branding and imagery of R&B artists closer to the edgier reputation of hip-hop as well (Williams 2020).

Today, modern R&B music typically mixes hip-hop drumbeats built from a combination of sampling and digital drum programming with jazz-inspired chord progressions, smooth R&B vocals, and polished pop production. This sound provides an ideal opportunity to explore the process by which I can recontextualize and modernize the approach of Wes Montgomery's playing in a commercially viable way.

In building the core rhythmic elements of my original R&B track, I used layered individual drum samples ("one-shots") in a sequencer to provide an 8-measure loop inspired by trap music. This would form the core rhythmic basis of the track and it is present for most of its duration. To provide variety and to control momentum, I used short samples of individual auxiliary percussive material to supplement this groove at different points, each with their own levels of time-based effects and modulation. The bassline was also doubled an octave below by a heavily affected and pitch-tuned analog synthesized drum sound. This technique, often referred to as an "808 bass" (named after the first drum sequencer sampled to create this effect) creates massive-sounding extended depth in the lower register. This resultant rhythmic ensemble is a far cry from the simple mono overhead mic'd sidestick, brush snare, and hi-hat drum pattern heard throughout the recording of *Canadian Sunset*.

This massive increase in rhythmic density and low-frequency information only part of a major issue facing the guitar when hoping to make use of Montgomery's vocabulary in this new context. There are also multiple keyboard parts, manipulated vocal samples, and crucially, the lead vocal fighting for space in this track. It was

immediately clear when arranging this session that not only would the guitar parts need to be sonically updated to match the ambience of the rest of the recording, they would also need to be inserted into the track with surgical precision to not interfere with the many other elements present in this song.

Fortunately, the solution to this first problem can go a long way towards fixing the second. Through the use of EQ, a guitar pick as opposed to my thumb, and by switching away from the humbucker-loaded archtop guitar used on *Canadian Sunset* to a Stratocaster with single-coil pickups, I was able to reduce the build-up of lower frequencies and produce more clear and articulate parts. Reducing the bass and low-middle frequency response in this way was essential because not only was the guitar itself going to cloud the material in the lower end of the frequency spectrum if not addressed, but the lush, ambient time-based effects I needed to apply would have magnified that effect several times over.

The use of reverb originated in recording studios as a way of artificially placing instruments recorded separately and in isolation into the same space to create a more cohesive-sounding recording. For exactly this reason, guitar parts with limited or non-matching reverb sounds feel particularly out of place amidst a musical backdrop of rich, ambient textures created by digital reverb units. As a result, for my guitar parts to sit comfortably in this mix, I needed to replace the modest amount of spring reverb found on my interpretation of Montgomery's tone with a long, rich hall reverb like those used on the auxiliary percussion and vocal samples found throughout the track. Although these surgically sculpted and artificially enhanced sounds feel arguably less pleasant in

isolation, in the context of the full mix this updated guitar tone fits neatly into its designated frequency pocket.

While this limited frequency range of the electric guitar does help the audience more clearly comprehend the specifics of any parts played, it should not be overlooked that in this new context, the guitar is no longer the principal instrument on this track. The main melody and lyrical content, both handled by the lead vocals, must be honored and supported, at all times, by accompanying instruments. To that end, I needed to take a step back and approach the application of many of the lessons learned from my transcription of *Canadian Sunset* on a larger scale, sometimes transcending the perspective of the guitar alone.

A technique of Montgomery's that adapted effortlessly to the guitar's new rhythmic and supportive role in this commercial context was the use of triads as upper structures. As useful as this technique is when soloing, it proved invaluable when composing ancillary rhythm parts. As the drums and bass held a monopoly on the low frequencies and keyboards were handling a great deal of information in the middle of the harmonic spectrum, the guitar was well suited to sitting above in the upper-mids, lending subtle atmospheric extensions and movement to chords. To get across more of Montgomery's personal melodic approaches, however, the guitar needed to find space to play melodic lines as well.

As there was no room in the arrangement for a guitar solo full of extended call and response phrases, the guitar would have to play in shorter increments, acting as either a call to another instrument or as a response to a vocal melody. This still allowed the use of idiomatic traits of Montgomery such as the blending of wide and narrow intervals, the

targeting of guide tones, and the use of repeating blues ostinatos where appropriate while simultaneously allowing the guitar to honor its role as an accompanying texture that elevates the lead vocal rather than distracting from it. However, I did want to make at least one clear homage to Montgomery's influence in this song.

Partly inspired by the nature of this project and partly because I simply enjoyed the marriage of textures, I wanted to leave space in the arrangement for an instrumental tag that could showcase Montgomery's legacy. This tag, occurring after each of the first two choruses, still uses the modernized guitar tone curated for this song, but makes deliberately unadulterated use of octaves just as Montgomery used them. The goal of this was to pay respect to the enduring legacy left by Montgomery not just on the guitar but also on the genre of jazz that went on to inspire the evolution of music that led to the development of so many of the distinct elements present in this song.

The process of transcribing and faithfully recreating Montgomery's performance of *Canadian Sunset* was a hugely valuable one. The vocabulary and approaches displayed in his original improvisation have helped develop a larger vocabulary and better understanding of how to set about creating a melodically satisfying jazz solo. It has also helped me develop more interesting melodies by giving better insight into the individual elements that combine to form unique lines that effectively outline the harmony beneath them. It is clear how this increased facility can be used to help in any musical context, however obscure or mainstream. However, what I did not expect this exercise to show me was the value of digesting Montgomery's approach to music-making as a whole and how that could inform not just my guitar playing but my arranging and production as well. The melodic idiosyncrasies of Wes Montgomery can absolutely be used in a

commercially mainstream genre to evoke a more colorful palette of sounds, but the melodic sensibility and respect of dynamic, melodic, and rhythmic contrast that made Montgomery one of the most influential guitarists of all time will make any guitarist who studies his work a better musician.

Chapter 3

Tony Rice

In the same way that how hip-hop and R&B have their roots in jazz, the history, culture, and vocabulary of country music is intrinsically tied to that of bluegrass. This foundational relationship makes bluegrass music fertile ground from which to pull vocabulary and idiosyncrasies well-suited to adapting to modern country music. To identify the “sound” of bluegrass guitar, an ambassador must once again be chosen. Tony Rice’s superior flatpicking technique and melodic boldness have represented the gold standard to which all bluegrass guitarists have been compared since his emergence in the 1970s. Building on the influence of his bluegrass guitar hero Clarence White and utilizing idiomatic traits unique to the guitar to match speed with his fellow musicians, Tony Rice created the “sound” that both the layman and the professional alike would recognize as a “bluegrass guitar solo.”

When Rice began, the guitar in bluegrass was an unassuming member of the rhythm section. Like Charlie Christian in jazz, Rice brought the guitar to the front of the stage. Other bluegrass guitar players have to deal with him the way I have heard tenor saxophone players say that they have to deal with Coltrane. You either sound like Tony Rice, or you’re trying to figure out how not to sound like him, but you aren’t able to avoid him. (Wilkinson 2021)

Similarly to that of Charlie Christian and Wes Montgomery, Tony Rice’s guitar playing was unlike anything previously existing in his field. First heard publicly in 1971 playing with J.D. Crowe and the New South and first achieving national renown with the

David Grisman Quartet in 1975 (Royko 2015), Rice's unmatched fluidity, consistency, and sheer pace set him apart from his contemporaries and precursors alike. Before Tony Rice, no acoustic guitar player had matched either the mandolin or fiddle in terms of speed when improvising. Rice, however, had transcribed fiddle melodies and fiddle solos from records brought to him by his father throughout his childhood and early career, and had built up a revolutionarily fast command of the fretboard (Tuttle 2021). He did so by working out how to utilize open strings to bridge the gaps in runs otherwise too fast-paced for the fret-spacing of the acoustic guitar to accommodate. Unlike how the torch of pioneering jazz guitar as a lead instrument was passed from Charlie Christian to Wes Montgomery, Tony Rice built upon the foundations laid by Clarence White. David Grisman would later remark of Rice, "I really hadn't heard Tony until [1975], but it was life-changing for sure. He had a very similar approach but a more powerful sound. In some ways, I'd say he picked up where Clarence left off" (Tuttle 2021).

Grisman's reaction was not an outlier either, as Rice enjoyed success and notoriety in the bluegrass sphere from the mid 1970s until his retirement in 2010. He was awarded the International Bluegrass Music Association's "Guitarist of the Year" award in 1990, 1991, 1994, 1996, 1997, and 2007. He was also awarded the Association's "Instrumental Group of the Year" award twice for his solo project, The Tony Rice Unit, and twice again for the bluegrass supergroup he formed in 1980, The Bluegrass Album Band. His contemporaries viewed him as the most technically accomplished bluegrass guitar player across numerous decades. His influence bled into all manner of bluegrass musicians who grew up hearing him play both old standards and new originals alike.

Ricky Scaggs, a bluegrass legend and collaborator of Rice, described his influence as such:

Today, he's the gold standard. Younger guitar players like Tim Stafford, Kenny Smith, Jim Hurst, David Grier, Bryan Sutton, Clay Hess, Cody Kilby, and so many others grew up listening to him. These are all great players who are at the top of their game today. I think they can all look back and say that Tony Rice had a deep impact on their playing style. Even musicians known for playing other instruments and in other genres – including Allison Krauss, Béla Fleck, and Chris Thile – have been moved and inspired by his peerless taste, tone, and timing. (Stafford and Wright 2010)

Traditionally, bluegrass music is identified by short “breaks” as opposed to lengthy solos. As a result, to isolate several of the trademark techniques of Rice’s soloing approach that so effectively permeated the bluegrass vocabulary, I have transcribed and recorded faithful recreations of three of his guitar “breaks” across three different recordings: *Blue Ridge Cabin Home* (Bluegrass Album Band, 1981), *Foggy Mountain Rock* (Bluegrass Album Band, 1989), and *Shadows* (Tony Rice, 1992). Each of these transcriptions showcases a key innovation found in Rice’s playing style and revolutionary approach to improvising. These innovations revolutionized bluegrass flatpicking, and it is Rice’s soloing style and the use of these idiomatic traits that became fundamental to the “sound” of bluegrass guitar as a result of his impact on the genre.

Blue Ridge Cabin Home perfectly exemplifies Rice’s relentless core rhythmic and melodic approach when improvising. The instinctive first reaction to this guitar break is to marvel at the speed and consistency with which he is playing. At a tempo of around 245 bpm, Rice maintains a constant flurry of eighth notes, many of which are individually picked. He incorporates slides and pull-offs to entertain a degree of variation in articulation where desired and maintains optimal hand placement—centered around open chord positions. In most cases, the eighth notes are picked clearly and consistently.

This consistency is especially notable when considering the mixture of open strings and fretted notes included in these runs. It is essential when playing in the style of Tony Rice to know that while open strings are frequently used to facilitate greater speed and maneuverability, they are rarely articulated differently or allowed to ring out longer than any of their neighboring fretted notes. By doing this, Rice can focus on the transitions between chords with greater weight behind the first note over the new chord as he reaches a new chord tone, leaving all other notes over that chord consistently below that accent level. The result is a consistent, driving rhythm in the solo that rarely breaks stride except to push off again in a different direction with the change in harmony.

Complimentary to this rhythmic speed and consistency is Rice's undulating melodic contour. Built primarily out of straight eighth notes and stepwise or chromatic motion, this solo has a distinctive feeling of gradual rise and fall throughout each phrase that would be lost were he to employ the use of arpeggios and more significant intervallic jumps. The smooth movement back and forth from crest to trough throughout this solo provides balance to the otherwise relentless barrage of rhythmically consistent note lengths. This allows the solo to be rhythmically driving, melodically satisfying, and pleasantly predictable. Rice plays almost all of these runs within the optimal hand positions for the upcoming chords in open position without requiring many positional shifts with his left hand. In doing so, he is able to avoid wasted energy as well as targeting key chord tones very deliberately. This practice is especially important on the acoustic guitar due to its higher string tension and greater reliance on physical assistance for sustain (as opposed to time-based effects afforded to electric guitarists). To help him achieve these goals, Rice employs the use of open strings within the runs and ostinatos of

this solo, but as the other two transcriptions will illustrate, the open strings are also crucial for facilitating speed when shifting hand positions and injecting further excitement into improvisational phrases.

In *Foggy Mountain Rock*, Rice utilizes an open string as a pedal note in a lick that adds significant variance and excitement to this guitar break. The lick in question is shown in example 3.1 in both treble clef and guitar tablature.

Example 3.1: Measures 18-21 of *Foggy Mountain Rock*

The image shows musical notation for measures 18-21 of 'Foggy Mountain Rock'. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. The melody consists of eighth notes and triplets. Above the staff, the chords G and D are indicated. Below the staff is a guitar tablature with six lines, showing fret numbers and techniques like triplets and bends.

In typical Tony Rice fashion, his solo liberally applies many consistent eighth notes. In measure 19, however, Rice breaks from this rhythmic consistency by playing an even faster succession of notes in sequence. This tune was played at around 240 bpm, making eighth note triplets a technical challenge on an electric guitar, let alone an acoustic one. Fortunately, Rice can use an idiomatic trait unique to the guitar to facilitate this speed increase. Using the open G string as a pedal tone of the root of the underlying chord, he can shift his hand in a static position, repeating the same left-hand motion for each triplet. He picks the first note of the triplet, pulls off to the open string pedal tone, and then picks the note a minor third below on the D string below. By doing this, Rice can target the flat third, fourth, and flat fifth of G to give a distinct minor blues feel with limited left-hand contortion and without having to pick every note moving at such speed.

Not only does the use of an open string here facilitate greater speed with a fixed hand position, but it also allows for horizontal movement across the neck without sacrificing consistency. Key to this feeling of consistency is the resultant lack of an audible signifier of this horizontal movement, such as a slide between two notes wherein the change of hand position is achieved.

While Rice returns to the same position in which he began his guitar break in *Foggy Mountain Rock*, in his solo in his original composition, *Shadows*, Rice exemplifies twice how one can also use open strings to bridge the gap between different hand positions along the fretboard. These two occasions are shown below (both written in treble clef and matching guitar tablature) in examples 3.2 and 3.3.

Example 3.2: Measures 13-14 of *Shadows*

Example 3.2 shows two measures of music in F major. The first measure contains a melodic line starting on the 5th fret, moving up to the 7th, 8th, and 7th frets, then down to the 5th and 7th frets, ending on an open string (0). The second measure continues with notes on the 2nd, 1st, and open string, followed by a triplet of notes on the 3rd, open string, and 3rd fret, ending on the 1st fret.

Example 3.3: Measures 18-19 of *Shadows*

Example 3.3 shows two measures of music in E minor. The first measure features a melodic line starting on the 2nd fret, moving to the 4th, open string, 2nd, open string, 4th, and 7th frets. The second measure continues with notes on the 5th, 7th, 8th, 7th, 5th, 8th, and 8th frets.

In example 3.3, Rice uses an open B string to keep a consistent rhythm of eighth notes going while he shifts his hand from a position anchored to the second fret to one

anchored at the fifth. It may seem odd that Rice repeats the B note as opposed to playing a C, but Rice famously did not like performing overdubs in the studio on solo takes if he felt that it was not necessary (Tuttle 2021), so it stands to reason that the importance in using the open string in this run was less about adding stepwise motion and more about keeping a consistent eighth note rhythm with an ascending feel overall. In other words, the particulars of whether he played a B or a C on beat four of measure 13 were significantly less important to him than the melodic contour and rhythmic consistency. Rice employs the same tactic when descending in measure 18, playing an open G string (this time preserving something closer to stepwise motion) to bridge the gap between the A and E notes as he shifts his hand back from the position anchored at the fifth fret to one anchored in open position.

Using open strings in this way is initially counterintuitive and required some re-tooling of my muscle memory when performing this transcription. This technique only works between notes lower than the open strings. As a result, it is understandable that players more accustomed to soloing on electric guitars capable of greater sustain and body of tone in the upper register (like myself) would never discover this technique or learn how to employ it without transcribing and trying to match the tone of an acoustic performance. It is for precisely this reason that it is so essential to study the origins of vocabulary material within the original instrumental context and constraints. Like Wes Montgomery, Tony Rice redefined the guitar's function and sound in the genre he played. Therefore, by transcribing and analyzing the innovations he employed to develop this new standard of playing within the original context, I have prepared myself to not just replicate licks but also approach new musical contexts creatively. This preparation has

equipped me with a more authentic understanding of the “bluegrass sound” and the idiomatic traits of Tony Rice's approach to the guitar.

Chapter 4

Barflies

Nashville, Tennessee is known colloquially as “the country music capital of the world.” Although the formative sounds that have combined to create the signature characteristics of modern country records come from far and wide, Nashville is widely considered the ultimate destination for country artists and songwriters. Another name by which the city is known, one that speaks volumes about country music’s inexorable link to the guitar as a foundational instrument and its relevance to this project, is “guitar town.” In a one-mile span of Eighth Avenue, for example, one can find three separate legendary music stores all specializing in the guitar: Gruhn Guitars, Rumble Seat Music, and Carter Vintage Guitars. Guitar solos are still commonplace in recent releases on country radio and many of the past decade’s most successful country artists have been accomplished players who feature both instrumentally and vocally on their songs. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that modern country music readily meets the brief for a commercially viable genre that can play host to the musical vocabulary lifted from Tony Rice and bluegrass music.

Although recent critics may feel frustrated with the influence of electronic pop music in recent country releases, the spectrum of orchestration covered by country music throughout its history is vast and seldom shy to embrace outside influence. From its initial roots in gospel and acoustic-driven “hillbilly music” at the Bristol sessions in

1927, country music has seen itself pulled in different musical directions for almost a century. In the 1950s and 1960s there was competition between the “Nashville sound” and the “Bakersfield sound”—the former marked by polished production, rich string arrangements, and elements of smoother big band jazz, and the latter known for its fully electric orchestration, gritty and imperfect production style, and heavy influence of rock and rockabilly music (Burns 2019). In the decades since, the appearance and subsequent omnipresence of distorted guitars in rock and pop music have bled into country music’s sonic landscape too, along with recent forays into the use of trap drumbeats and manipulated vocal samples accompanying acoustic guitars and traditional folk instrumentation. This is all to say that the key identifying features of country music have arguably never been the specifics of a song’s orchestration, but rather the lyrical content and the presence of some form of guitar—summed up eloquently by the old country songwriting mantra of “three chords and the truth.” These three chords are played, crucially, on a guitar.

Of these countless tonal iterations of country music, to show my adaptation of Rice’s bluegrass vocabulary most clearly, I have written, recorded, and produced an original pop-country blues track in the style of 1990s and early 2000s country recording artist, Vince Gill. Gill had begun his career as a bluegrass musician playing with Ricky Scaggs and later, none other than Rice’s old bandleader, David Grisman. His blend of authentic songwriting and captivating virtuosity on the electric guitar would earn him twenty-two Grammy awards, proving that the blend of bluegrass vocabulary and electrified instrumentation had immense commercial potential.

To effectively recontextualize the vocabulary of Tony Rice for the electric guitar, several calculated decisions had to be made regarding the equipment used to record guitar parts for this track. First and foremost, the guitar used to record every part on this recording was a telecaster. Ubiquitous in electric country music, the telecaster's strident and clear tonal footprint is ideal for adapting vocabulary developed on the acoustic guitar. The brighter and clearer nature of the single-coil bridge pickup on a telecaster provides a defined transient attack to notes without the sometimes excessive lower-middle frequencies and sustain provided by humbucking pickups. This is essential when playing fast-paced flatpicking lines in the lower register of the instrument that blend the use of open strings with fretted notes. Because of the clear transient attack, each new note is afforded ample initial clarity and definition and because of the limited sustain, each note can meaningfully decay before the attack of the next one. The resultant combination is more definitive separation between notes than would be possible with a different guitar and pickup combination. The lower overall volume output of single-coil pickups also helps encourage less compression and distortion from amplifiers that could otherwise prevent this attack and decay as well.

This is not to say that compression is not a valuable tool in the arsenal of the country guitarist. In fact, a compressor is used almost as ubiquitously in country guitar setups as the telecaster itself and my recording was no exception. The desired effect when compressing country guitar is to even out the volume of the individual transients to set them all to a more equivalent level, thus achieving the signature consistency of bluegrass flatpickers such as Tony Rice. While bluegrass musicians are forced to perform this volume control with their hands alone on acoustic instruments, the larger dynamic range

of a fully electrified guitar rig requires further assistance to ensure this trademark consistency.

The final element of my guitar's signal chain was the amplifier used to record these guitar parts. To avoid the aforementioned distortion and compression within the amplifier stage, I used a Fender Blackface Twin Reverb (another country music staple). This amplifier was designed in the early 1960s to be a higher volume and higher headroom (the level of volume output before distortion occurs) option for guitarists who sought to compete with larger ensembles without distorting their signal. This was essential when recontextualizing Rice's bluegrass vocabulary because too much distortion—particularly in the lower mid-range frequencies—not only muddies the signal and makes the crucial single-note lines too indistinct, but also clashes with the fundamental frequencies of the drum kit, piano, and Hammond B3 organ also included in the orchestration of this more modern-sounding track.

The electrified setup used for this recording carried with it certain benefits regarding ease of use. The lighter gauge strings and increased sustain of electrified instruments facilitate the bending of notes far more frequently and effortlessly than on their acoustic counterparts. As a result, I was able to employ bends akin to those heard in Rice's solo on *Foggy Mountain Rock* across not only the guitar solo but in many of the licks in between vocal phrases as well. These lighter strings also require less physical exertion to effectively execute hammer-ons and pull-offs, making the use of legato very tempting. However, to stay true to the vocabulary of Tony Rice and the goal of this project I made the deliberate effort to leave these legato techniques as much as possible only to occasions in which Rice would use them. This was only in the cases of pulling off

to and hammering on from open strings and excepting that, only in situations requiring excessive speed.

With that said, effective management of energy was still important even when using lighter strings and electrical amplification. To that end, it was crucial to base the undulating “open-string centered” run at the beginning of the guitar solo around the open chord hand positions, exactly as Rice and his bluegrass colleagues used to and continue to do. Basing hand positions around chord voicings rather than scale shapes was also crucial to executing the passages wherein I shifted chord positions down the neck of the guitar in between open string pedal tones. Even with the increased ease of use associated with the electric guitar over the acoustic, achieving the correct articulation and sound required the same hand positioning, picking technique, and approach lifted from my transcriptions of Tony Rice. This realization was yet further evidence of the importance of transcribing and reproducing a faithful recreation of our source material’s musical context in order to better understand how to implement it.

Through the process of recording and producing a modern country track, the importance of paying close attention to the contextual origins of the musical vocabulary lifted from bluegrass became increasingly apparent. Although the musical landscape had changed dramatically with the addition of a full acoustic drum kit and fully electrified keyboards, bass, and guitar, the presence of bluegrass vocabulary was completely natural. It can be argued that the rhythmic chop of a fiddle and/or percussive strums on a mandolin on beats two and four are essentially the same as a drum kit’s simple backbeat. This natural similarity in groove and feel, however, does not cover up the fact that the transplanted bluegrass vocabulary felt completely out of place when not articulated in the

same fashion as it would be on an acoustic guitar. It is clear when analyzing the common pieces of equipment used by country guitarists that each piece is chosen because of how effectively it can transfer the melodic and harmonic material from the varied sources of inspiration. It is for this reason that I can confidently say having troubleshot the issue myself through the course of this project, that it is fundamentally important to transcribe, analyze, and crucially, perform specific material in its original musical context to effectively modernize and recontextualize it later.

Chapter 5

Guthrie Govan

In a genre defined by the unique technical brilliance of every musician taking part, it can be difficult to single out any one guitarist as being more indicative of the style than another. With that said, I have selected Guthrie Govan as an ambassador for jazz fusion less on the basis of pure blanket influence but rather on his instantly identifiable playing style yet complete command and willing application of myriad musical influences. In many ways, Govan's unique approach reflects the goal of this project. So much so that in the piece I have transcribed and performed of his, *Wonderful Slippery Thing*, Govan includes a distinct homage to the playing and sound of Wes Montgomery with a section including an octave melody that evolves into a block-chord-harmonized one. He blends all of this seamlessly into the complex tapestry of disparate influences on display which I set out to match in this recording. Below, legendary guitarist Joe Satriani presents a thorough summary of Govan's playing style:

What sets Guthrie apart, is that no matter what he's doing – picking, tapping, slapping, playing legato, whatever – he mixes everything up gracefully and absolutely nails each approach. And all the while the music sounds natural. (last.fm 2013)

The title of the track, *Wonderful Slippery Thing*, was inspired by a review of Govan's playing style from then editor of *Guitarist* magazine, David Meade, who described Govan's articulation as "slippery." This is the result of his innovative

combination of sliding and bending techniques. This approach can be heard in the playing style of numerous players on large-scale pop tours today, such as Mateus Asato, whose solo breaks on tour with Tori Kelly and Jessie J often consisted of both fast-paced rock lines and these same “slippery” melodic lines. This heavily vocal sound that so captivated the guitarist community can be heard clearly in the main melody of this piece. First heard in measure 19 (see appendix B for transcription), this melody makes ample use of bending and sliding to melody notes. The key moment, however, is when Govan’s precise bends are matched with rhythmically precise slides in measures 21 and 22, creating his idiomatic “slippery” phrasing style. The passage is shown in example 5.1 in both treble clef and guitar tablature.

Example 5.1: Measures 21-22 of *Wonderful Slippery Thing*

The image displays musical notation for measures 21-22 of the song "Wonderful Slippery Thing". The top staff is a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It shows a melodic line with bends and slides, with chord symbols Gmaj7, F#alt, E7sus4, and E7 above it. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature staff with six lines, showing fret numbers and slide/bend markings.

This technique relies on heavy levels of compression and distortion in his guitar tone, facilitating long sustain through these new techniques and notes without requiring further disturbance of the string from the right hand. To match this technique when recording the transcription, I made sure to match Govan’s recording signal chain from the original track—a humbucker-equipped “super-strat” guitar, into a high-gain emulation of a Cornford amplifier with a healthy dose of compression in the mixing stage as well.

This heavily saturated distortion sound is common in Govan's blazing-fast lead work, but equally idiomatic is how he effortlessly transfers back and forth from this heavily distorted progressive rock sound to a completely different guitar tone and style. In this case, the juxtaposed style of choice is a clean jazz-funk tone and approach reminiscent of George Benson and other funk-influenced disciples of Wes Montgomery. To achieve this guitar tone, I used the same guitar but recorded these parts through the same Fender amp emulation that I used for my Wes Montgomery transcription recording, albeit with more compression added afterward.

Throughout this track, Govan slips effortlessly back and forth between genres seemingly worlds apart. Doing so keeps the listener on their toes and prevents any sense of monotony from setting in. Any tools at a musician's disposal to avoid monotony are applicable in the world of live pop-arranging and musical directing as most of the pop music today uses the same short chord progressions looped across the entirety of the song. In the studio recording process, this can work because an infinite number of new synthetic elements can be added and removed at will to vary the orchestration of a track, but live, the same effect cannot be achieved with the instrumentation of a traditional backing band. As a result, the way Govan chooses to shift the tone of this song is worth investigating for inspiration.

The first instance of this jarring shift in tone occurs at measure 27. A new unison section replaces the light-hearted jazz-funk fusion groove with a starkly contrasting, aggressive prog-rock modal vamp. In doing so, Govan catches the listener completely off guard and injects an entirely different aesthetic into the track. This new section is also harmonically static as opposed to the repeated progression existing in the prior sections,

with the guitar and bass playing a single-note riff in unison, tied together with the drums in a unison rhythm figure in measure 30. As a result, when Govan returns to the melody and groove that existed before with a blisteringly fast four-octave tapping lick, it once again feels fresh and exciting. The effectiveness of varying the feel of a piece of music to retain the listener's attention cannot be overlooked when arranging a piece of music live. Retaining attention is all the more important when catering to the attention spans of a pop audience used to hearing new elements being added and subtracted every eight measures in the recorded version of a song.

Govan also uses one more tool in this piece to unsettle the status quo and avoid monotony, and in this case, it can be accomplished with the same tones and feel. At measure 53, Govan reintroduces the principal melody of the piece in a similar position to the first instance in measure 19, but this time he transposes the melody down a whole step. Oddly enough, however, the transposition is only half of the formula for this technique in subverting the preexisting material and the audience's expectations of it. What is more worth examining is the reharmonization. I have included the comparable sections below (notated in treble clef). The first from the original iteration of the melody in measure 19, and the second, directly below the first, from the transposed and reharmonized iteration in measure 53.

Example 5.2: Measures 19-22 of *Wonderful Slippery Thing*

The image shows a musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation consists of a sequence of notes and rests across eight measures. Above the staff, chords are indicated: Bm7, D9, Gmaj7, F#alt, E7sus4, E7, Gmaj7, and F#alt. The notes are primarily eighth and quarter notes, with some beamed eighth notes. The rhythm is consistent throughout the measures.

Example 5.3: Measures 53-56 of *Wonderful Slippery Thing*

The musical notation shows a single melodic line on a staff. Above the staff, the following chords are indicated: Am7, C/G F#m7(b5), F13, Bb7(#11), Am7, Fm7(b5), and F13. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes with slurs and ties, showing chromatic movement in the bass line.

The first measure of both occurrences is essentially the same harmony shifted down a whole step, but in the second measure, what would have been an Fmaj7 chord is replaced by an F#m7(b5). While this is mostly the same harmony as a Fmaj7 with just a different bass note, this now allows Govan to use the half-diminished chord as part of a minor 2-5 (with a tritone substitution)-1 cadence in E—the eventual target for the modal vamp section that is revisited at measure 57. Govan delays resolution at measure 55, using another tritone substitution of Bb7(#11) for E7 before moving the bass chromatically to an Am7 chord. Finally, the Am triad requires only a change in the bass note to reestablish the F#m7(b5) chord to reiterate the minor 2-5-1, this time reaching the now familiar territory of the modal vamp on E in measure 57. The specifics of this reharmonization are fascinating but what is more important than copying this precise progression is appreciating the emphasis on chromatic bass movement. Chromatic bass motion is particularly useful for building tension and momentum towards target chords and melodic high points.

In pop music, melodies are designed to be as memorable as possible. Regardless of the popularity of an artist, the music is designed to be simple and repeatable enough for the crowd to sing along by the second or third iteration of a melody. While this repetition is key to the appeal of pop music, when crafting an exciting live arrangement,

it is essential to be aware of as many tools as possible to subvert the crowd's quickly-building expectations. It is important to remember that a crowd can still sing over a reharmonization just as they can appreciate a tonal and rhythmic shift if the return to the preexisting and more familiar, simpler material is telegraphed clearly enough. Govan himself proved this when touring with UK-based rap artist Dizee Rascal in 2009, playing not only his unique brand of jazz-rock fusion but also acoustic slide blues and fretless guitar solos throughout a set of UK grime and garage rap music. Recreating Govan's signature "slippery" phrasing style and absorbing some of his spectacular technical acrobatics can provide a vocabulary for the brief moments where an instrumentalist is afforded time to stretch out, but *Wonderful Slippery Thing* also presents a plethora of valuable tools for the modern pop musical director worth internalizing through transcription and analysis.

Chapter 6

The Middle

This third exercise in transcription and application is slightly different in scope than the previous two and deserves a modicum of qualification. While the application of traditional jazz vocabulary and bluegrass vocabulary fits in well when used sparingly and tastefully in commercial R&B and country music respectively, the art of the recorded pop song in today's musical climate exists with its own unique set of priorities. Modern pop music encompasses influences from every corner of the musical spectrum, but sonically, the most considerable orchestrational influence existing in most pop music is that of electronic dance music (EDM). Few modern chart-topping pop singles display this influence more clearly than, "The Middle" by Maren Morris and Zedd. EDM is a modern amalgamation of techno, house, dubstep, drum & bass, trance, and many more eclectic subgenres of electronically conceived music. The constant factor between these often disparate genres is the reliance on electronic instruments such as synthesizers, drum machines, samplers, and heavy amounts of manipulation inside a digital audio workstation. As a result, much of modern-day recorded pop music will not function as a home for lead guitar work of any ilk. However, live pop music presents a unique opportunity for outside influence.

In live applications, pop music sells itself on its production value and ability to provide a sensational spectacle for its patrons. The most coveted positions among session

musicians and hired guns are those on tour with the highest-grossing pop acts. The musicians making up the supporting bands of these pop stars are some of the most technically skilled players on the planet. The reason for this is that pop acts often choose to fill the stage with musicians to appear more legitimate and exciting; otherwise, the entirety of the musical accompaniment would come from a disembodied playback identical to the recording, leaving the artist alone onstage. Because these instrumentalists will be onstage, they need to find parts to play that do not currently exist in the recorded version of the track to avoid miming onstage. They also need to justify their presence with displays of virtuosity befitting the scale of the show of which they are a part. This is where the influence of our third commercially underrepresented genre comes into play.

Jazz fusion was a genre conceived in the 1960s, blending jazz vocabulary and harmonic density with numerous other disparate influences, chiefly rock instrumentation and funk grooves. The collective brainchild of Miles Davis and his collaborators, jazz fusion quickly became the frontline from which to advance the technical and theoretical boundaries of recorded music. Ever changing with advances in each genre that fed into it, fusion became the de facto “musicians’ music.” It presented an opportunity for technically accomplished musicians to stretch out and express themselves instrumentally, entirely unaffected by a need to market themselves to the commercial market centered around broad appeal (MasterClass 2021). With that said, however, the sound of jazz fusion was, by definition, anything but removed from the sonic landscape of the commercial market.

From the perspective of the electric guitar, jazz fusion’s earliest pioneers were John McLaughlin and Larry Coryell, both exemplary jazz guitarists who were heavily

inspired by the sonic innovations of Jimi Hendrix. By blending their jazz vocabulary and grasp of more advanced harmonic concepts with the changing landscape of guitar tone in pop and rock music, they created the foundation of jazz fusion guitar. Rock and pop music would themselves blend throughout the next few decades with the early influences of Jimi Hendrix being expounded upon by increasing levels of virtuosity and pop appeal by Van Halen and the league of acts who followed in their footsteps. As a result, the perception of what the guitar sounded like in popular music through the 1980s shifted towards a heavily distorted, saturated guitar tone displaying superhuman technical acrobatics. In the decades since the 1980s, the guitar has seen less time in the spotlight in popular music, but the enduring image of a live guitarist remains that of a long-haired soloist displaying impossible feats of virtuosity.

Jazz fusion's inexorable ties to pop music and pop music's desire to embrace virtuosity in a live context creates an unlikely marriage that makes the vocabulary of Guthrie Govan and his contemporaries surprisingly useful, even in songs bearing seemingly no initial sonic resemblance to that of Govan's music. In the case of this project, I have selected *The Middle* by Maren Morris and EDM-inspired producer, Zedd. The original recorded orchestration of this song contains almost no recognizable appearance of the guitar aside from a few subdued moments. "The Middle," therefore, offers the perfect opportunity to illustrate how one can use Guthrie Govan's approaches highlighted in the previous chapter to rearrange, reorchestrate, and reinvigorate an EDM-influenced pop song for a live show featuring a traditional band of drums, bass, keyboard, and two guitarists. I have achieved this demonstration by arranging and recording a new performance of *The Middle* using the original vocals from the recorded track to create a

“work tape.” “Work tape” is an industry term used by musical directors to describe a recorded guide track. Musical directors will produce work tapes and send them to band members ahead of the first rehearsals before a tour to give them a demonstration of the unique arrangements for the songs in a set.

As was the case with each of these projects’ exercises in recontextualization, tasteful application of the lessons learned from transcription is key. Fortunately, as already discussed in the case of live pop music, the “sound” of a live guitar is readily accepted by audiences as a distorted and heavily compressed signal. This means that in terms of equipment and the settings thereof, Guthrie Govan’s live setup requires little modification to fit the needs of a live pop performance. A heavily distorted rock guitar tone is perfect for injecting the music with a sense of excitement and energy in choruses. This is also important because the sustain offered by this guitar tone is essential for Govan’s “slippery” phrasing style, which will be on full display in the outro solo featuring the guitar as the primary melody device, allowing time for the vocalist to engage with the crowd and depart the stage before the music reaches its final climax and ending rhythm figure. This is not the only time that I have employed Govan’s unique vocal, phrasing style throughout this recording, however.

Chiefly important to the sound of modern EDM-inspired pop music is the digital manipulation of samples to create unique textures and melodic fragments that keep the listener’s attention. Very often, vocal samples are used to achieve this, often with heavy changes made to pitch and tempo which render the lyrics incomprehensible. Zedd does precisely this in the choruses of “The Middle,” where he takes a sample of Morris singing the titular phrase “the middle” and uses pitch manipulation to transform the sample into a

high-pitched and synth-like texture that offers a countermelody to the main vocal melody in every odd-numbered measure. In order to leave as few key melodic parts to disembodied tracks during a live performance as possible, this part can be played instead by the lead guitar. The vocal quality of Govan's "slippery" articulation lends itself perfectly to this role as it retains the duality of vocal and instrumental texture so crucial to the sound used in the original recording.

As important as it is to remain faithful and recognizable to the original track when performing a rearrangement of a simple pop tune, the most impactful live performances are often ones that can take sections of otherwise familiar music into completely unforeseen territories. This subversion of expectations can—if executed effectively—take an otherwise benign section of music and render it the emotional climax of a live set. This is precisely why Govan's approach of transitioning back and forth between seemingly disparate musical styles for dramatic effect is so useful to digest. The bridge section of the original recording is a subdued affair, allowing a dip in momentum and energy ahead of the final chorus. While this is an effective tool when one song is taken in isolation, in the context of a full live setlist, one song no longer needs to encompass such a broad array of energy levels. Furthermore, "The Middle" is Maren Morris' most commercially successful song to date and it stands to reason that it would function as the closing number to a live set of hers. Considering its position in the setlist, it stands to reason that the live performance of this song should avoid a serious drop in energy levels so close to the end of the set. As a result, I have replaced the previously relaxed feel of the bridge section with an aggressive progressive rock/metal feel in the interest of

surprising the audience and elevating the energy level of the piece above that of its previous maximum.

This entirely novel bridge feel serves as a clear departure from the recorded track in the interest of momentary shock and awe. However, to make a live pop show worth the price of admission, several more variations on the recorded track are useful for creating a unique experience for the audience. Such dramatic feel changes as I have used in the bridge only work in moderation, but what can be distributed throughout an arrangement more liberally is subtle reharmonization of the melody. Govan displayed the effectiveness of reharmonization in “Wonderful Slippery Thing” and I have taken a similar approach in this arrangement to add variety.

To subvert expectations, it is first important to establish them. To that avail, both the first verse and the first two choruses are harmonically identical to the original. The second verse provides us with the first option for a small reharmonization, using the static melody note in measure 35 as a pedal around which the harmony can move to recontextualize the melody. This reharmonization quickly returns to normal, thus acting as a brief indicator (along with some rhythmic variation during this verse) of the other changes to come. The final chorus, complete with vocal embellishments, offers the band the opportunity to stretch the harmony further, using chromatic bass motion to build suspense and momentum to emphasize the finality of this section of the song.

It should be noted, too, that when the band comes back in after two measures of rest to vamp until the end of the show (allowing the artist to thank the crowd and walk offstage), the harmony returns to the simpler progression of the original chorus. The reason for this is that while the outro serves as an opportunity to display the virtuosic

capability of the guitarist, attention should not be taken too far from the artist as they are still onstage. The energy level for the entire live set ought to peak when the artist is still a part of the show rather than after they have ceased performing. This timing allows for one final moment of harmonic deviation at the very finale of the performance, just after the artist has left the stage, to capture the attention of the audience one final time before the show's end.

Through this exercise, the unique vocal phrasing, genre-blending versatility, and harmonic dexterity exemplified by Guthrie Govan in "Wonderful Slippery Thing" have each found a place in the live adaptation of an electronic pop song bearing no initial sonic similarities. This exercise has thus proven the worth of transcribing and analyzing jazz fusion even if, as a performing musician, I never see myself playing it professionally full-time. Drawing from myriad musical styles and eclectic techniques provides one with a far more varied pool of resources with which to distinguish a live performance from its recorded counterpart which fundamentally, is one of the most important roles of a musical director.

Conclusion

Ultimately, it stands to reason that all commercially successful genres today owe their sonic characteristics to their precursors. It also stands to reason that these precursors should—over time—become less novel and less interesting to later generations as time and taste move inexorably onward. Fundamentally, however, commercial music has always evolved by blending outside influences into established tropes. Modern genres contain the largest and most diverse spectrums of influence by virtue of musicians having the largest amount of access to different music on demand now than at any other point in human history. As a result, it is tempting to believe that one need not look outside of their musical comfort zones because, within the boundaries of modern commercially viable music, one ought to find the important remnants of these influential genres already. However, to do this is to fail to appreciate the true goal of transcription and analysis.

The purpose of transcription is not to simply learn precise vocabulary that can be replicated in the event of an identical chord progression. Instead, the true objective of transcription, as this project has aimed to illustrate, is to gain an appreciation for the approaches that go into creating different styles of music. This can be both from a genre standpoint and from an individual standpoint. In the professional realm, musicians are often given vague direction towards a desired sonic aesthetic by their clients. In these scenarios, they need to draw upon their knowledge of certain stylistic or individual idiomatic traits which they can employ to convey the “sound” of specific genres or

musicians. In other words, transcription is not done to learn specific vocabulary, but rather to learn how one might create similar vocabulary, often in a totally different context.

Through the course of this paper, I have exemplified how a musician might use a combination of transcription and historical context to identify idiomatic traits in any players' performance. I have then exemplified how this newfound understanding can be applied to different musical contexts from both a performance and production standpoint. The benefits of this process are not simply limited to musical vocabulary. In addition to developing a wider technical skillset and comfort level in different styles, this project exemplified many other examples of the lessons transcription and recreation can yield.

In the case of pop R&B production, the analysis of Wes Montgomery's wholistic musical approach yielded a stronger understanding of how different parts in a musical arrangement can work together. In the case of modern country music, the practice of recreating Rice's consistent flatpicking style in its original context (on an acoustic guitar in an entirely acoustic ensemble) before switching to an electric guitar helped me deliver a more effective performance of those learned idiomatic traits, even in a new and fully electrified context. In the case of musical directing and live pop music arrangement, analyzing Guthrie Govan's harmonic, stylistic, and rhythmic versatility and how he effectively transitions between feels provided a vast array of tools to excite and vary arrangements.

As well as supporting the usefulness of transcription as a process, this project's core goal was to encourage and exemplify the benefits of looking outside commercially mainstream genres for inspiration and information, using the potential application in

commercially mainstream contexts as motivation. Over the course of this project, I have noticed a significant increase in my level of comfort not only in traditional jazz, bluegrass, and jazz fusion music, but crucially, in R&B, country, and pop music as well. By searching outside of their comfort zone and, indeed, outside of the genres of music they might want to pursue creating professionally, musicians stand to gain not only unique vocabulary and beneficial insight, but also a greater level of confidence with which to communicate musically. By combining both the practice of transcription and recreation with the motivating promise of commercial application, this project has proven that any musician stands to gain from drawing on influences outside the music they want to create directly.

Appendix

Transcriptions and charts in order of appearance:

- *Canadian Sunset* guitar solo transcription.....52-55
- *Ringtone* studio numbers chart 56
- *Blue Ridge Cabin Home* guitar solo transcription57-58
- *Foggy Mountain Rock* guitar solo transcription59-60
- *Shadows* guitar solo transcription.....61-62
- *Barflies* studio numbers chart..... 63
- *Wonderful Slippery Thing*.....64-70
- *The Middle* live arrangement lead sheet71-73

Canadian Sunset

Eddie Heywood
Wes Montgomery

♩ = 84

Electric Guitar

Guitar

E. Gtr.

Gtr.

E. Gtr.

Gtr.

E. Gtr.

Gtr.

Chords: F maj7, G m7, F maj7, G m7, F maj7, G m7, G 9, Bbm7, Eb7, F maj7, D7alt, G m7

Tablature: T, A, B, 7-8-10, 7-9-10, 8, 10-10, 8, 8, 10-8, 9-7, 9-9-9, 10, 8, 10-8, 10, 9-7, 7-5, 5-7, 5-7, 5, 7, 7-8, 5/7, 10, 9/10, 7, 6, 14, 15, 13-16-17-13, 10, 9, 9-6, 6\5, 8, 8-8, 6, 8, 5, 7-8, 5, 6-8, 10-10, 7-9-10, 8-10, 10, 10-8, 10-11, 8-7-5, 8, 7, 7-4-5, 7-6

The score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 84 beats per minute. It consists of four systems, each with an Electric Guitar staff and a Guitar staff. The Electric Guitar staff uses a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The Guitar staff uses a standard six-string layout. Chords are indicated above the Electric Guitar staff. The tablature is written on a six-line staff with fret numbers and bar lines.

Canadian Sunset

E.Gtr. *C7alt* *F maj7* *G m7*

Gtr. *C7alt* *F maj7* *G m7*

E.Gtr. *F maj7* *G m7* *F maj7*

Gtr. *F maj7* *G m7* *F maj7*

E.Gtr. *G m7* *F maj7* *G m7* *G9*

Gtr. *G m7* *F maj7* *G m7* *G9*

E.Gtr. *G9* *Bbm7* *Eb7*

Gtr. *G9* *Bbm7* *Eb7*

E.Gtr. *F maj7* *G m7* *F maj7* *F maj7*

Gtr. *F maj7* *G m7* *F maj7* *F maj7*

Canadian Sunset

34

E.Gtr. *G m7 C7 F maj7 D7alt*

Gtr.

38

E.Gtr. *G m7 C7 F maj7 D7alt*

Gtr.

42

E.Gtr. *G m7 C7 F maj7 B m7 E7*

Gtr.

46

E.Gtr. *A m7 E7alt A m7 D7alt G m7 C7alt*

Gtr.


50

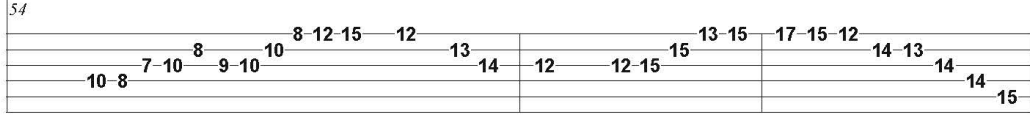
E.Gtr. *F maj7 G m7 F maj7 G m7*

Gtr.

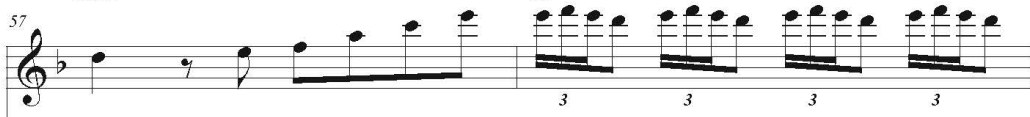
Canadian Sunset

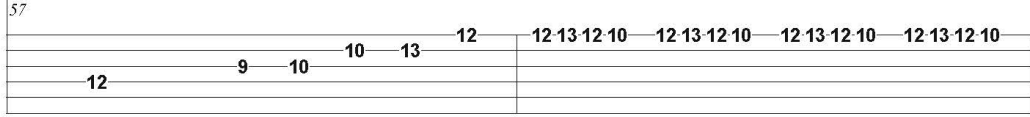
54 Fmaj7 Gm7 Fmaj7

E.Gtr. 


Gtr. 

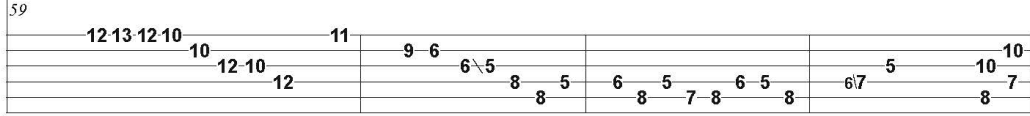
57 Gm7 G9

E.Gtr. 


Gtr. 

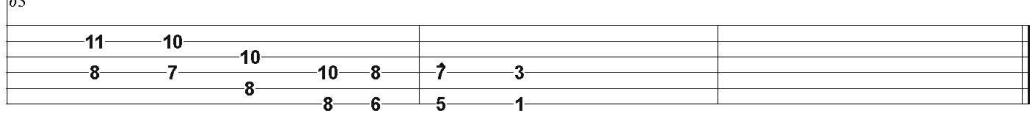
59 G9 Bbm7 Eb7 Fmaj7

E.Gtr. 

Gtr. 

63 Gm7 Fmaj7 Fmaj7

E.Gtr. 

Gtr. 

Ringtone - Aidan Scrivens

① $\frac{4}{4}$ $\text{♩} = 126$

I: $4^{\Delta 7}$ $\overset{\curvearrowright}{3}^{\#9}$ 6^{-7} 2^9
 $4^{\Delta 7}$ $\overset{\curvearrowright}{3}^{\#9}$ $\underline{6^{-7} \flat 6^{\#11}}$ $\underline{5^{-7} \flat 5^{\#11}}$

V1 % (x2)

PC: %

Ch: %

inst: %

V2: %

PC: %

Ch: %

Br: $\parallel: 4^{\Delta 7}$ 6^{-7} $\overset{1. 2. 3.}{\underline{2^{-7} \quad 2^{-7}}}$ $\overset{4.}{\parallel: \underline{6^{-7} \flat 6^{\#11}}}$ $5^{-7} \flat 5^{\#11}$

Ch: $4^{\Delta 7}$ $\overset{\curvearrowright}{3}^{\#9}$ 6^{-7} 2^9
 $4^{\Delta 7}$ $\overset{\curvearrowright}{3}^{\#9}$ $\underline{6^{-7} \flat 6^{\#11}}$ $\underline{5^{-7} \flat 5^{\#11}}$

Ch: % swell + hard cut at end.

Blue Ridge Cabin Home

Tony Rice

Capo on 3rd Fret G C

Acoustic Guitar

Guitar

T
A
B

0 0-2 0 0-2 | 0 1 2 3 3 1 2 1 | 3 1 3 4 0 3 0 | 0 1-0 3 0 1 2 0

D G

Ac. Gtr.

Gtr.

2-0 1 | 0-2 4 2 | 3-5 2 3 5-3-2 3 | 3-2 3-0 3 2 0 2 | 0 2 0 2 0 0

G C

Ac. Gtr.

Gtr.

0 2/3 3-6 3 | 3/4 0 0 0 3/4 | 0 3-0 1/2 0 1-2 | 3 0 1-2 0-2 1 3

D G

Ac. Gtr.

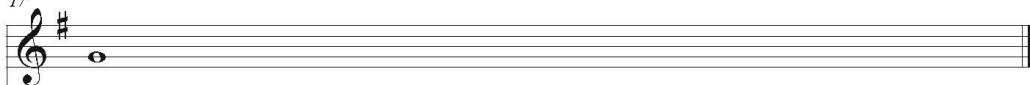
Gtr.

2-0 2-0 0 2 0 3 | 3 5 3 0 3/4 0 2 | 0 1-0 1-0 1-0 | 1-0 3 0 1/2 0-2 0

Blue Ridge Cabin Home

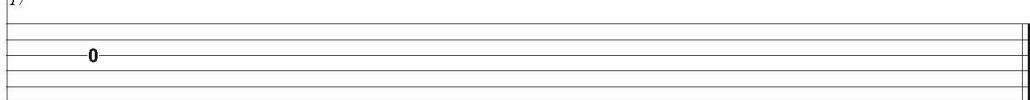
17

Ac.Gtr.



17

Gtr.



The image shows two musical staves. The top staff is labeled 'Ac.Gtr.' and features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a single quarter note on the G line (G4). The bottom staff is labeled 'Gtr.' and features a single whole note on the open string (0). Both staves are marked with the number '17' at the beginning and end with a double bar line.

Foggy Mountain Rock

Tony Rice

Acoustic Guitar

1 2 3 4

T
A
B

2 2 1 3 1 3/4 0 3 0 0 3 0 0 1/2 0 2 0 2 0 0 1 0 3

Ac. Gtr.

5 5

C G

0 3 3 0 3/5 5 0 3 4 5 5 3 4 0 3 0 0 5 2 5 2 3

1 1 1 1 3 3 3 0 5 5 3 4 0 3 0 0 5 2 5 2 3

Ac. Gtr.

9 9

D G G

3 1 3 1 2 1 3 1 3 4 0 3 0 0 3 0 3 0 0 10 10 12 11 10 10

4 0 3 4 1 3 1 2 1 3 1 3 4 0 3 0 0 3 0 0 0 0 10 10 12 11 10 10

Ac. Gtr.

14 14

loco C C

6 3 6 3 6 5 3 5 5 3 4 5 3 0 0 0 3 0 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 4 3 3 5

6 3 6 3 6 5 3 5 5 3 4 5 3 0 0 0 3 0 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 4 3 3 5

Foggy Mountain Rock

Ac.Gtr.

18

G D

18

3 5 5 3 4 0 3 | 0 5 3 0 5 0 7 6 0 8 | 5 0 7 3 0 5 5 2 5 | 2 3/4 3 1 1 3 1

22

G C

22

1 2 1 3 1 3/4 0 | 3 0 0 1 2 0 2 0 | 0 2 0 2 0 1 0 2 | 3

Shadows

Tony Rice

Acoustic Guitar

F F C C/B

Guitar

T
A
B

0 2 3 0 2 0 1 3 0 1 5 3 1 0 1 0 1 4 5 3 7

Ac. Gtr.

Am Am/G F F F

Gtr.

5 3 5 3 5 5/7 5 6 8 7 8 5 6 8 5 6 5 6 5 4 5 5 7 4

Ac. Gtr.

D7 C C Em Em

Gtr.

10 7 5 7 9 7 0 2 1 3 0 1 0 2 4 0 2 0 4 7 5 7 8 7 5 8 8

Ac. Gtr.

Am Am/G F F

Gtr.

15 8 5 8 5 8 7 5 7 5 7 5 8 8 10 8 7 5 7 7 8 7 5 7 0

Shadows

Ac.Gtr. ¹⁹ F F C

Gtr. ¹⁹

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Shadows'. It consists of two staves. The top staff is for the acoustic guitar (Ac.Gtr.) and is written in treble clef. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody starts at measure 19, marked with a '19' above the staff. The first measure has a chord of F major (F, A, C) indicated above the staff. The second measure has a chord of F major (F, A, C) indicated above the staff. The third measure has a chord of C major (C, E, G) indicated above the staff. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The bottom staff is for the guitar (Gtr.) and is a fretboard diagram. It also starts at measure 19, marked with a '19' above the staff. The diagram shows the fret positions for the strings in two measures. The first measure has fret numbers 2, 1, 0, 3, 0, 3, 0, 1. The second measure has fret numbers 2, 0, 2, 1, 3, 0, 1, 5, 3.

Barflies – Aidan Scrivens

I: 1 1 1 1

V1:

1	1	4	1
1	1	5	5
1	1	4	1
1	line 5	1	1 ↗

Ch:

4	4	1	1
1	1	5	5
1	1	<u>6-5</u>	<u>4</u> ↗
1	5		

inst: 1 1 1 1

V2:

1	1	4	1
1	1	5	5
1	1	4	1
1	line 5	1	1 ↗

Ch:

4	4	1	1
1	1	5	5
1	1	<u>6-5</u>	<u>4</u> ↗
1	5		

Solo:

4	4	1	1
1	1	5	5
4	4	1	6-
4	5		

inst: 1 1 1 1

Br: $\hat{b} \overset{\wedge}{7} \overset{\wedge}{4} \overset{\wedge}{1}$ $\hat{b} \overset{\wedge}{7} \overset{\wedge}{4} \overset{\wedge}{1}$

$\hat{b} \overset{\wedge}{7} \overset{\wedge}{4} \overset{\wedge}{1}$ $\hat{b} \overset{\wedge}{7} \overset{\wedge}{4} \overset{\wedge}{5}$

5

Br dwn:

1	1	1	1
1	1	1	1 ↗

Ch:

4	4	1	1
1	1	5	5
1	1	<u>6-5</u>	<u>4</u> ↗
1	5		

4	4	1	1
1	1	5	5
1	1	<u>6-5</u>	<u>4</u> ↗
1	5		

inst: 1 1 1 1

$\overset{\wedge}{\text{tr}} \overset{\wedge}{\text{tr}} \overset{\wedge}{\text{tr}}$

Wonderful Slippery Thing

16th note swing ♩ = 96

Guthrie Govan

Electric Guitar

E. Gtr.

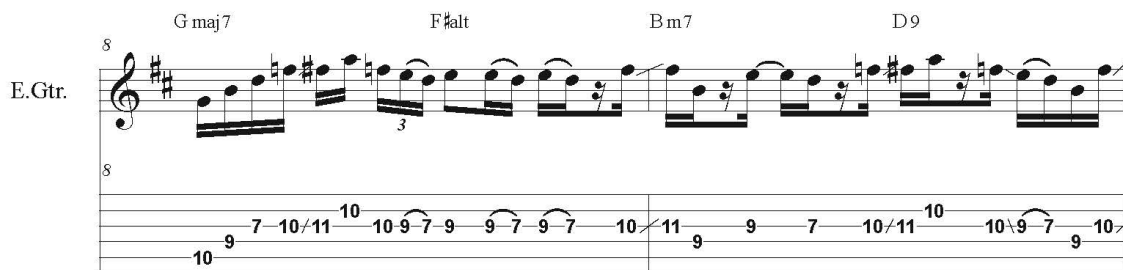
E. Gtr.

E. Gtr.

Chords: E7, Bm7, D9, G maj7, F#alt, Bm7, D9, G maj7, F#alt, Bm7, D9.

Tablature includes fret numbers (0-14) and 'x' marks for muted strings.

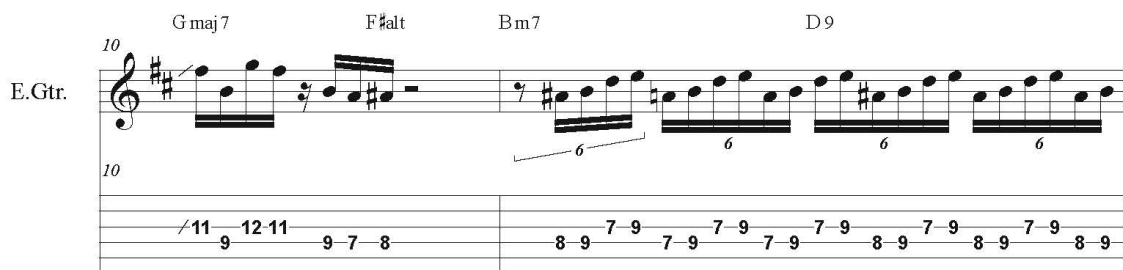
2 Wonderful Slippery Thing

E.Gtr. 

8 G maj7 F#alt Bm7 D9

8

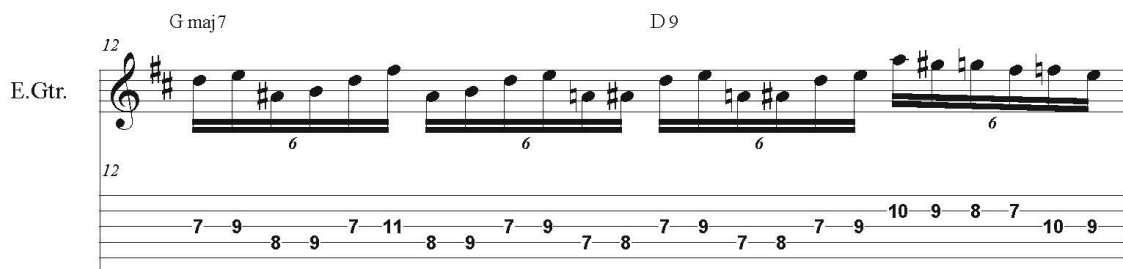
10 9 7 10/11 10 9 7 9 9 7 9 7 10 11 9 9 7 10/11 10 9 7 9 10

E.Gtr. 

10 G maj7 F#alt Bm7 D9

10

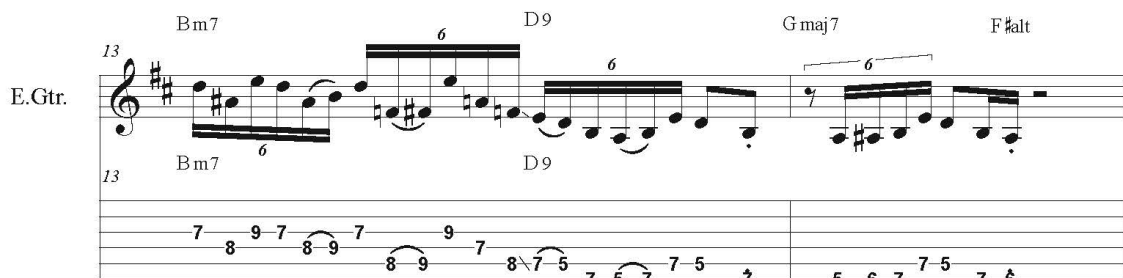
11 9 12 11 9 7 8 8 9 7 9 7 9 7 9 7 9 8 9 7 9 8 9 7 9 8 9

E.Gtr. 

12 G maj7 D9

12

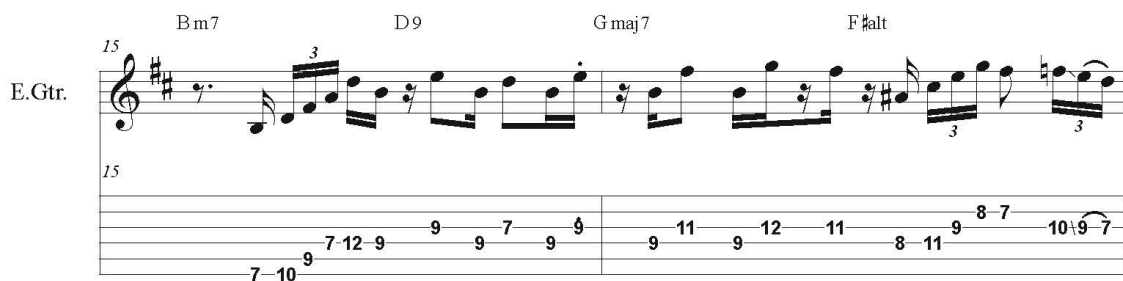
7 9 8 9 7 11 8 9 7 9 7 8 7 9 7 8 7 9 10 9 8 7 10 9

E.Gtr. 

13 Bm7 D9 G maj7 F#alt

13

7 8 9 7 8 9 7 9 7 8 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 6 7 7 5 7 6

E.Gtr. 

15 Bm7 D9 G maj7 F#alt

15

7 10 9 7 12 9 9 9 7 9 9 9 11 9 12 11 8 11 9 8 7 10 9 7

Wonderful Slippery Thing

3

E.Gtr.

17

Bm7 D9 G maj7 F#alt

17

9 7 10/11 12 10:9 12 10:9 7 9 7-10:9 7 9 11 7 9 8 6/9 9 12 11 12

E.Gtr.

19

Bm7 dist. D9 G maj7 F#alt E7sus4 E7

19

10 12 11 12 14 12 11 10 12 10 9 7 9 9 11 9 11 11/15 16 19 11

E.Gtr.

22

G maj7 F#alt Bm7 D9 G maj7 F#alt

22

7/9 7 9 11 9 11 9 9 11 7 4 7 7 7/9 7 9 11 9 11 9 7 9 9

E.Gtr.

25

E7sus4 E7 E7

25

11 9 11 7 4/6 6 4 7 5/7 5 7 9 7 7 5 7 0 0 4 5

E.Gtr.

28

1.

28

6 7 5 7 6 7 6 4 7 5 4 7 7 5 7 0 0 4 5

4

Wonderful Slippery Thing

E.Gtr.

30

6 7 × 5 7 10-11-10-9-7 9-7 6 7-5 7-4 7 7 5-7 0 0 × 4 × 5 6

E.Gtr.

32

9-10-17-14-10-9-10-14-17 11-12-16-19 9-10-14-17-14-10-9-19 24-19-14 17 16 22-17-12 15 14 12

E.Gtr.

33

Bm7 D9 Gmaj7 F#alt E7sus4 E7

33 Bm7 D9

9 12-14-12 11 10-12-10 9 7-9 9 11-9-11 11/15-16-9-11

E.Gtr.

36

Gmaj7 F#alt Gmaj7 clean Bm7

36 clean

7/9 7-9-11 9-11-9 9-11/7 9 9 9 7 6-7-6-7 56 9 7-7-9 97

E.Gtr.

39

Em11 Bm7 D9

39

5 7 5 7 4 7 7 5-9 7 6-7-6-5 7 5 7/8-10 7

Wonderful Slippery Thing

5

E.Gtr.

41 G maj7 Bm7

41

E.Gtr.

43 Em D/F# G Bm G/A

43

E.Gtr.

45 Bm7 D9 G maj7 F#alt E7sus4 E7

45

E.Gtr.

48 G maj7 F#alt Bm7 D9

48

E.Gtr.

50 G maj7 F#alt E7sus4 E7

50

6 Wonderful Slippery Thing

G maj7 F#alt dist. Am7 C/G F#m7(b5) F 13

E.Gtr. 52

52

10 10 12 11 11 12 12
12 12 11 10 10 11 11
11 11 12 11 11 12 12

22 24 22 21 20 22 20 19 17 19 19

E.Gtr. 55

Bb7(#11) Am7 Fm7(b5) F 13 E7 loco

55

21 19 21 21 23 19 21 17 19 17 19 21 20 19

7 7 5 7 0 0 x 4 x 5 x

E.Gtr. 58

58

6 7 x 5 7 x 6 7 6 4 5 7 4 7 7 5 7 0 0 x 4 x 5 x

E.Gtr. 60

60

6 7 x 5 7 x 6 6 5 8 8 6 7 7 5 7 4 x 5 x

E.Gtr. 62

62

6 7 x 5 7 x 6 7 6 4 7 5 4 7 7 5 7 7 6 7 5 7 7 4 7 7 4 7 6 9 9 7 9 6

Wonderful Slippery Thing

7

E.Gtr. Bm7 D9 Gmaj7 F#alt Bm7 D9

64

64

16-15-14-12-13 14-12 14-12 14-13-12-11 14-11 12-11-10

E.Gtr. Gmaj7 F#alt Bm7 D9 Gmaj7 F#alt

68

68

14-15 14 15-14-12 15 12 12-14-12 11 10 12-10 9 7-9 9

E.Gtr. E7sus4 E7 Gmaj7 F#alt Bm7 D9 Gmaj7 F#alt

71

71

11-9-11-11/15-16/9-11 7/9 7-9 11-9 11-9 9-11/7 4 7-7 7-9 7-11-9 7

E.Gtr. G/F

75

75

10 12 13-15 15 13-17-19 17-19 17 17-18-17 14-16 14-17-19-21

E.Gtr. Bm7

77

77

14-17-19-22-19-17-14 19-21 21-19-16-14 16 21-19-17-14

The Middle

Aidan Scrivens

C G D C G D

5 C G D C G D

9 C G D C G D C

14 G D D/A C G D D/A C

18 G D D/A C G D C

22 G D C C Em D C C

26 G D C C Em D N.C.

30 N.C. C G D C

The Middle

34 G D Cadd9 Ebmaj7/Bb Ab7(#11) G D C
Bm7 Am11

38 G D C G D N.C.

42 G D C C Em D C C

46 G D C C Em D

half time feel
49 A5 B5 C5 G5 N.C. A5 B5 C5 Em D

57 A5 B5 C5 G5 D5 E5 D5

61 A5 C5 Em D5

regular feel
65 C G D C G D

69 C G D C N.C.

The Middle

73 C G D C C Em D C

77 C G D C Em D

81 C G Em7 G Am7 Em11 Bm7 Bb7

85 Am9 Em F#dim C/G E7/G# Am C Em D

91 C G D C Em D C G D C

98 Em D C Gm7(b5) C7(#9) Fmaj7 Am

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