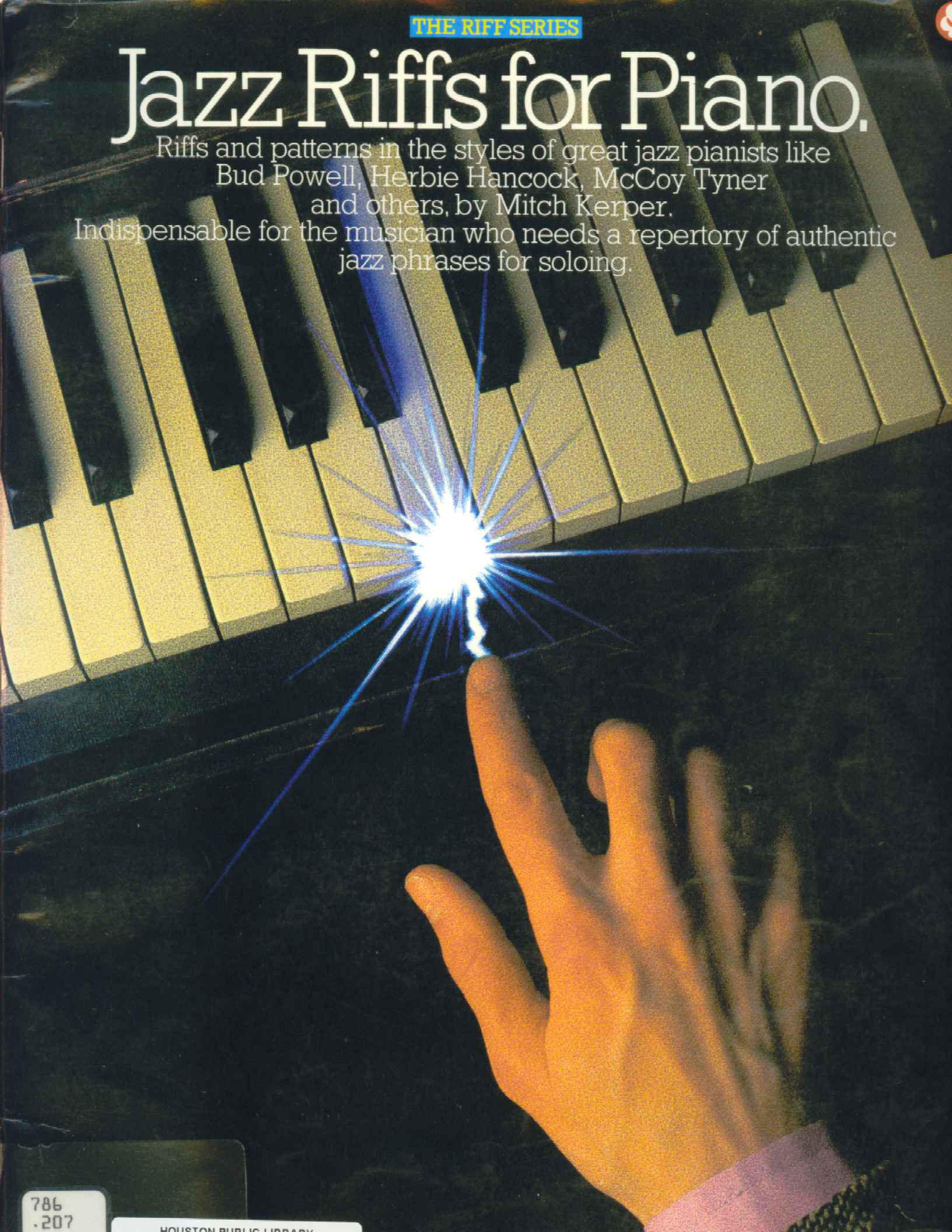
THE RIFF SERIES

Jazz Riffs for Piano.

Riffs and patterns in the styles of great jazz pianists like Bud Powell, Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner and others, by Mitch Kerper. Indispensable for the musician who needs a repertory of authentic jazz phrases for soloing.



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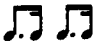
Introduction

One of my main purposes in writing this book has been to clarify the musical language of today's jazz musicians. The rhythmic, harmonic and melodic advances in jazz technique since the 1950's are presented in such a way that the reader will develop a strong sense of musical organization. Coherence is a key factor in achieving musical expression; structure and organization are emphasized throughout the book.

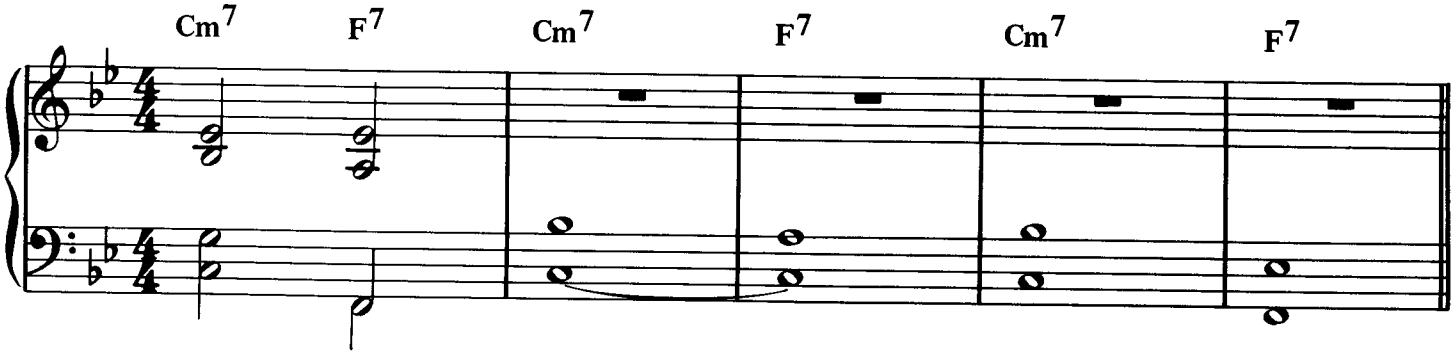
I suggest that you examine each of the musical examples in several ways: (1) Study the scales involved. (2) Check all the tones that are used. (3) Observe how the notes are combined to create the different riffs and melodies. (4) Search for the musical congruity. Some examples are longer than others, but all are composed of the same basic ingredients.

A word on interpretation: all notes written ( ), in even eighths, are generally played and phrased (), in dotted eighths and sixteenths; the strong accent (>) falls on the dotted eighth. The rhythmic expressiveness so essential to good jazz is greatly enhanced by playing this way.

Musical evolution occurs on each page of this book. Creative expression constantly grows; from one note to the next, the musical thought expands and flourishes. The creation of a musical solo is like the blossoming of a flower: a slow and steady process where every movement creates a new one, and each has its own relevance and integrity. Don't be discouraged or impatient. This book is designed to help anyone and everyone interested in playing jazz; the examples are clear, precise, and explore a wide range of musical thought. It can help any jazz student learn, grow and enjoy.

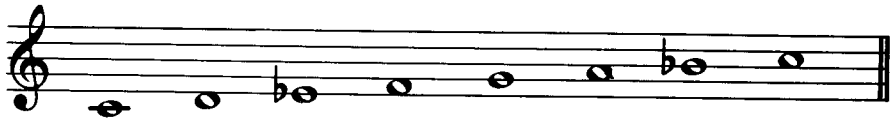
Jazz Riffs of the Be-Bop Era: The Early 1950's

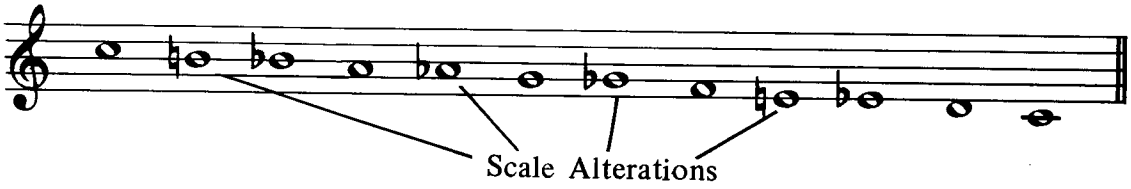
Chord Voicings



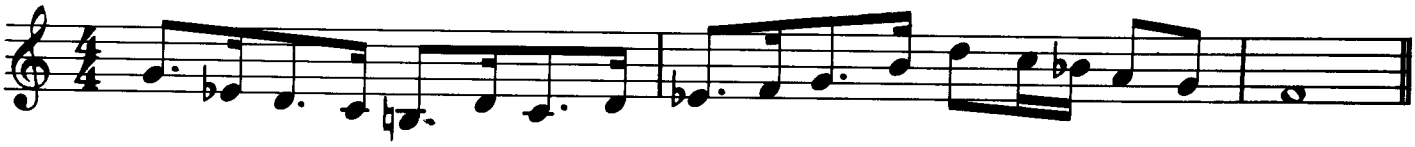
Scales Most Commonly Used

C Dorian Scale

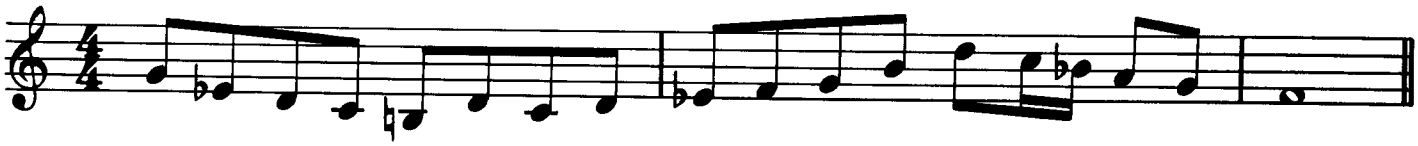




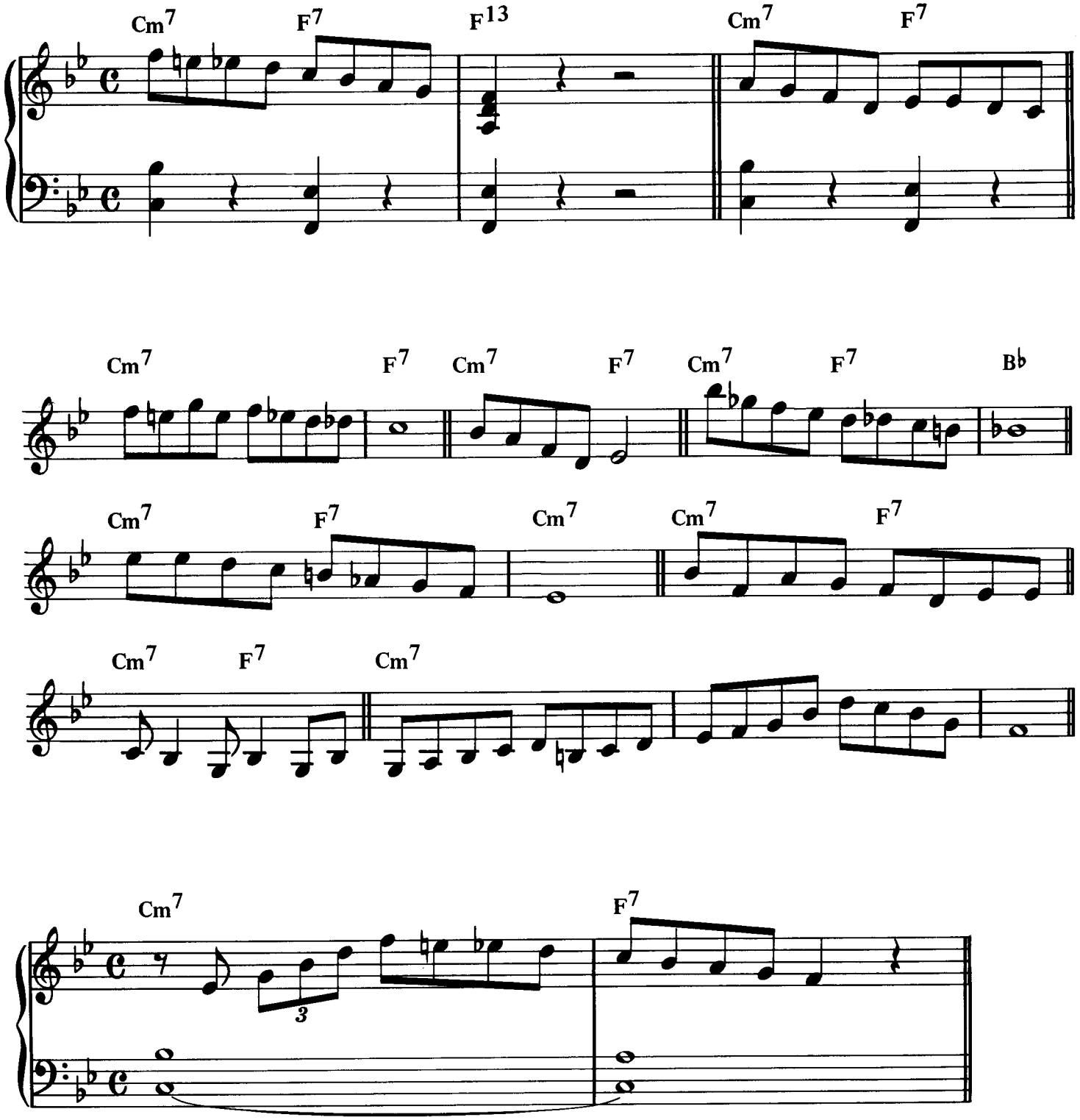
Jazz articulation requires that the eighth notes sound:

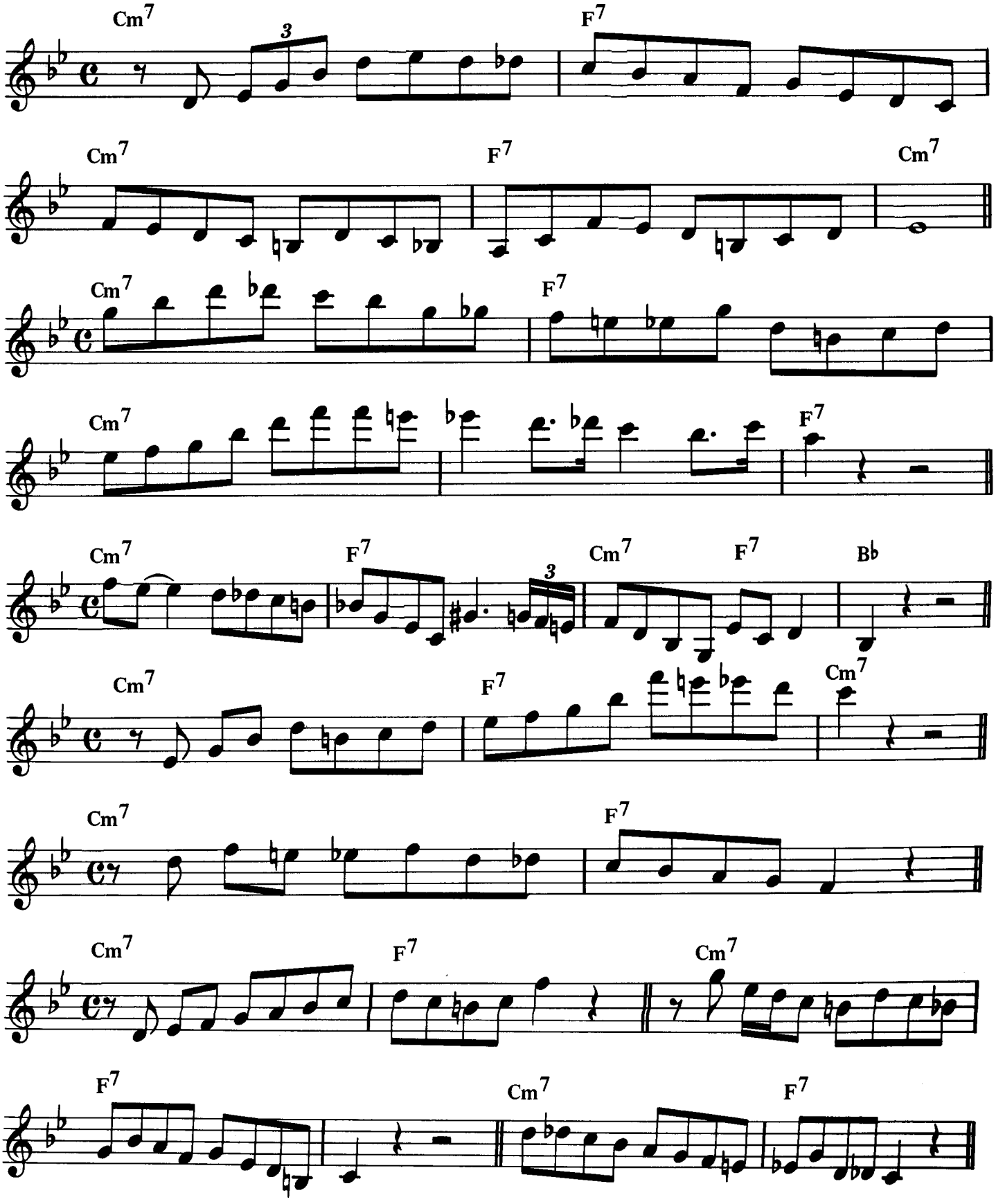


When they are written:



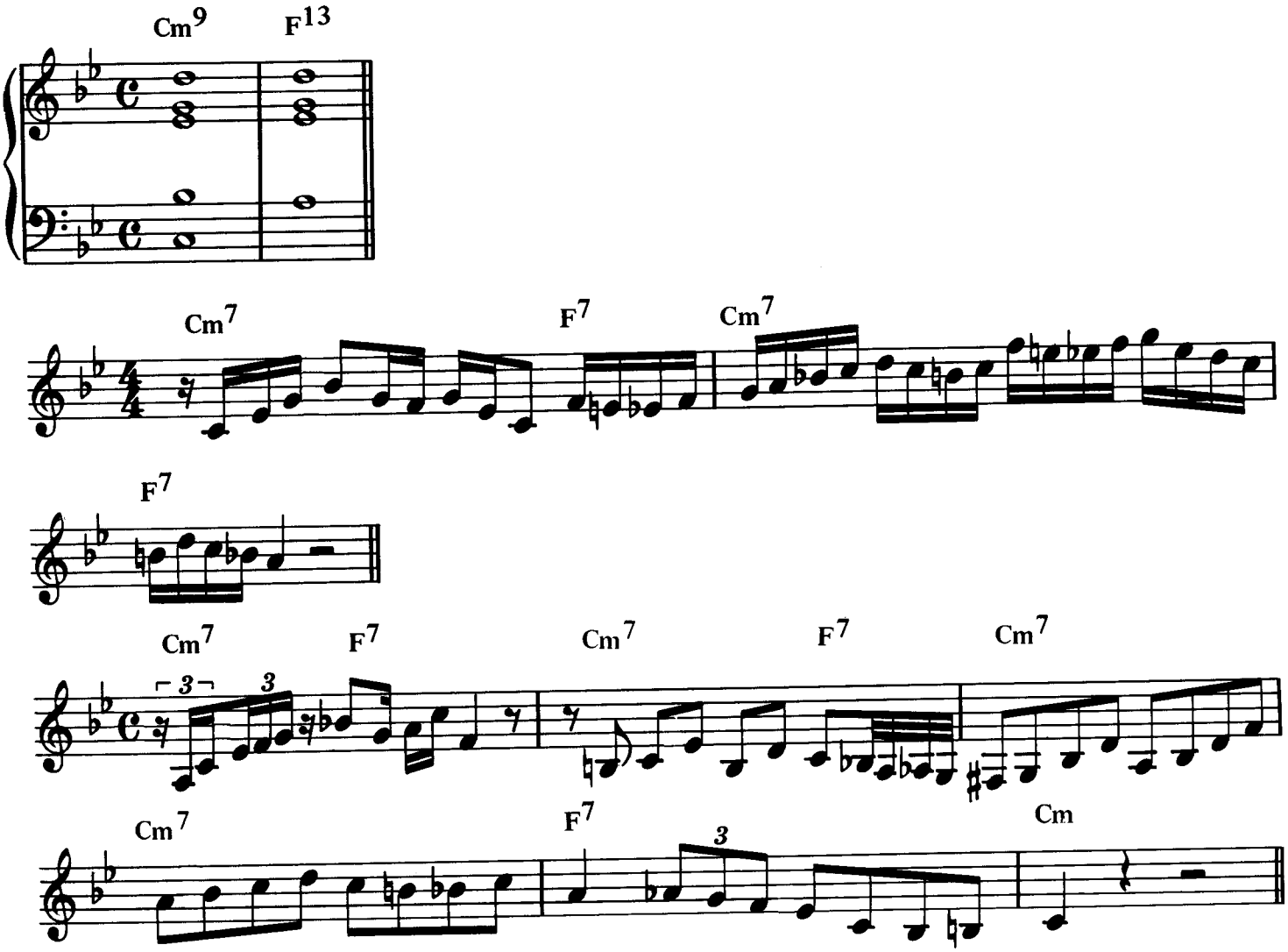
II-V Riffs


Cm7
F7
F13
Cm7
F7
Cm7
F7
Cm7
F7
B♭
Cm7
F7
Cm7
Cm7
F7
Cm7
F7
Cm7
Cm7
F7
3

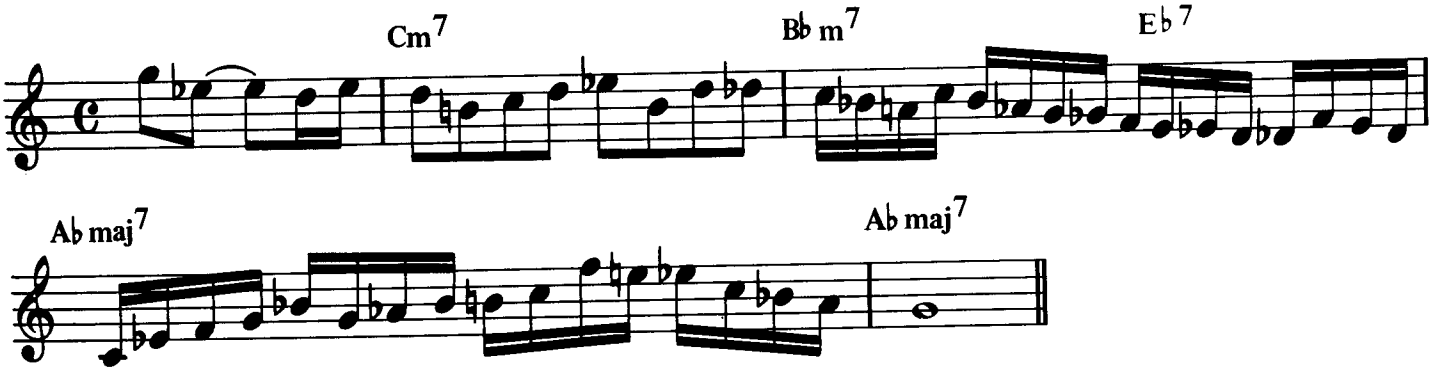


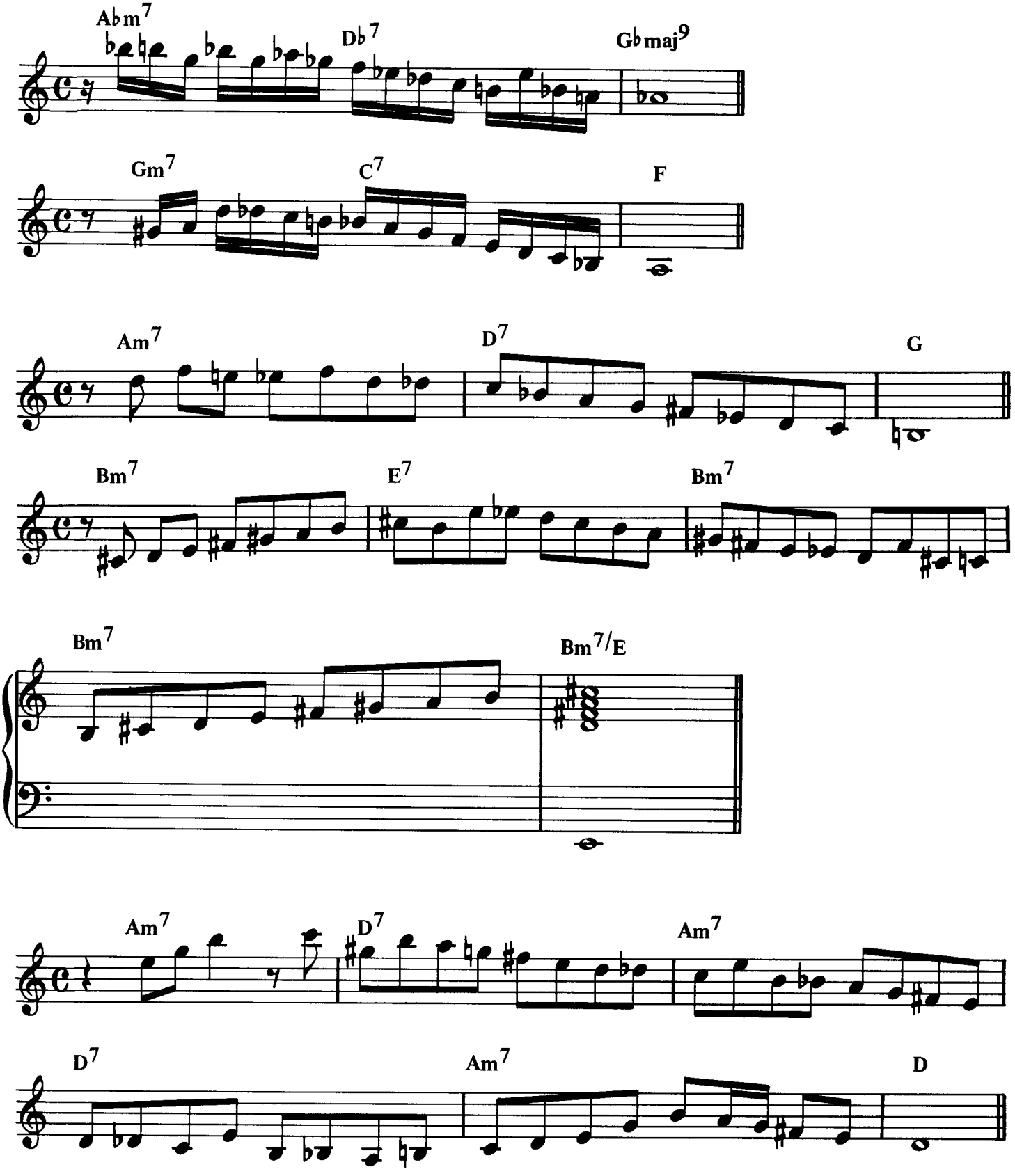
For maximum effectiveness these riffs should be played in all 12 keys.

Riffs of the Late 1950's



II — V Riffs In Other Keys

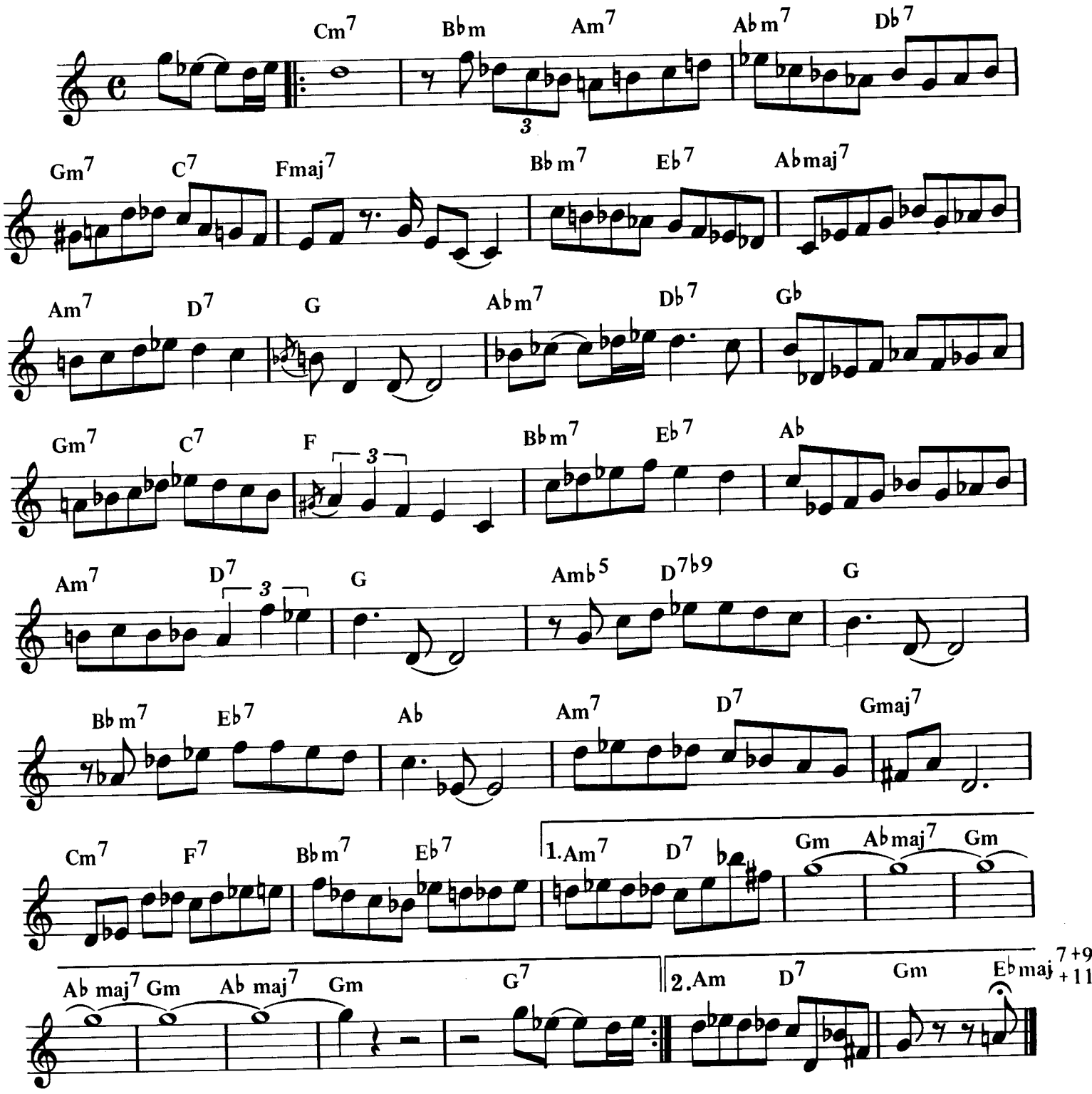



Abm7
Db7
Gbmaj9
Gm7
C7
F
Am7
D7
G
Bm7
E7
Bm7
Bm7
Bm7/E
Am7
D7
Am7
D7
Am7
D

Here is a tune combining several be-bop riffs.

The Baron Returns

Mitch Kerper



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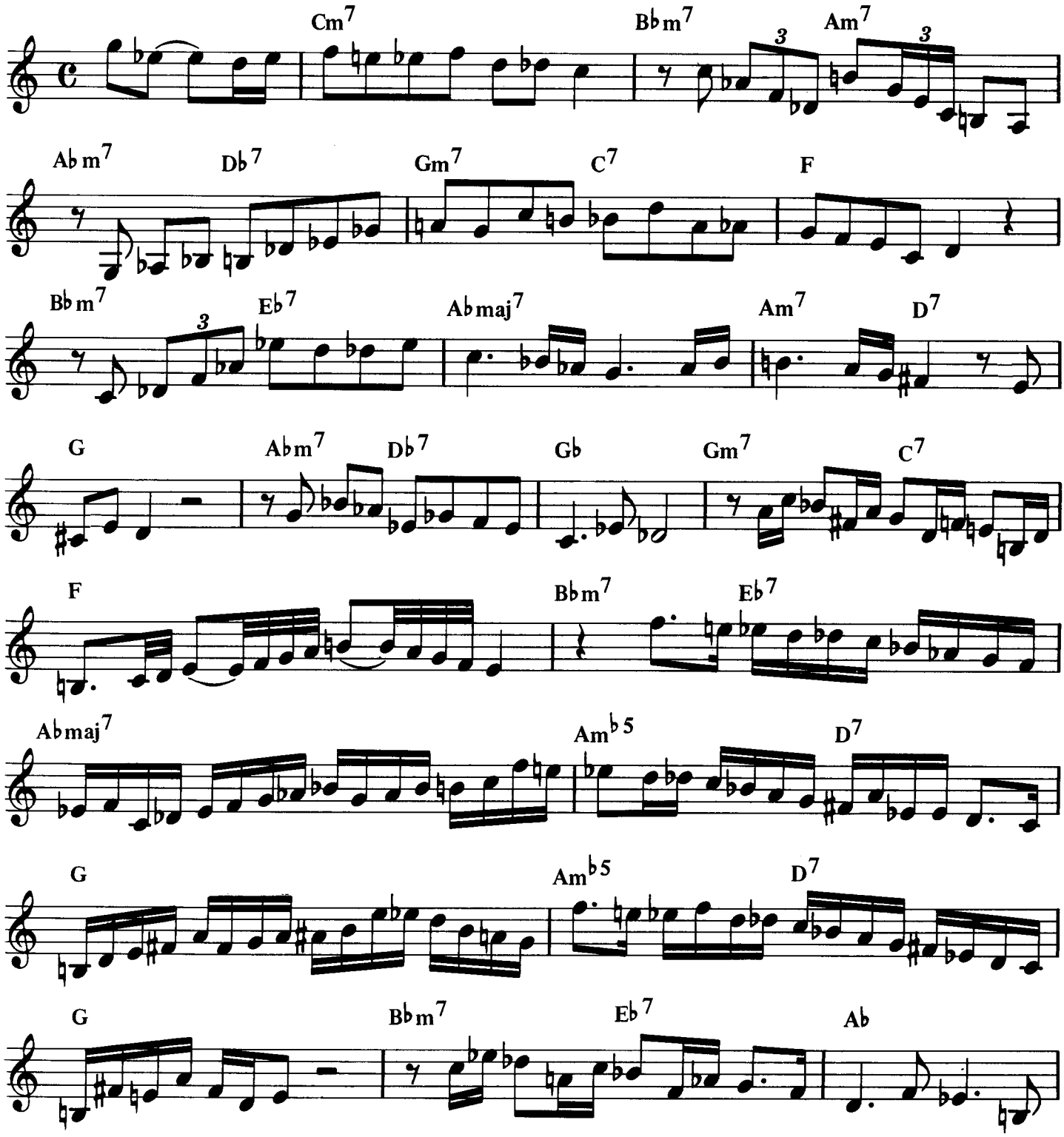
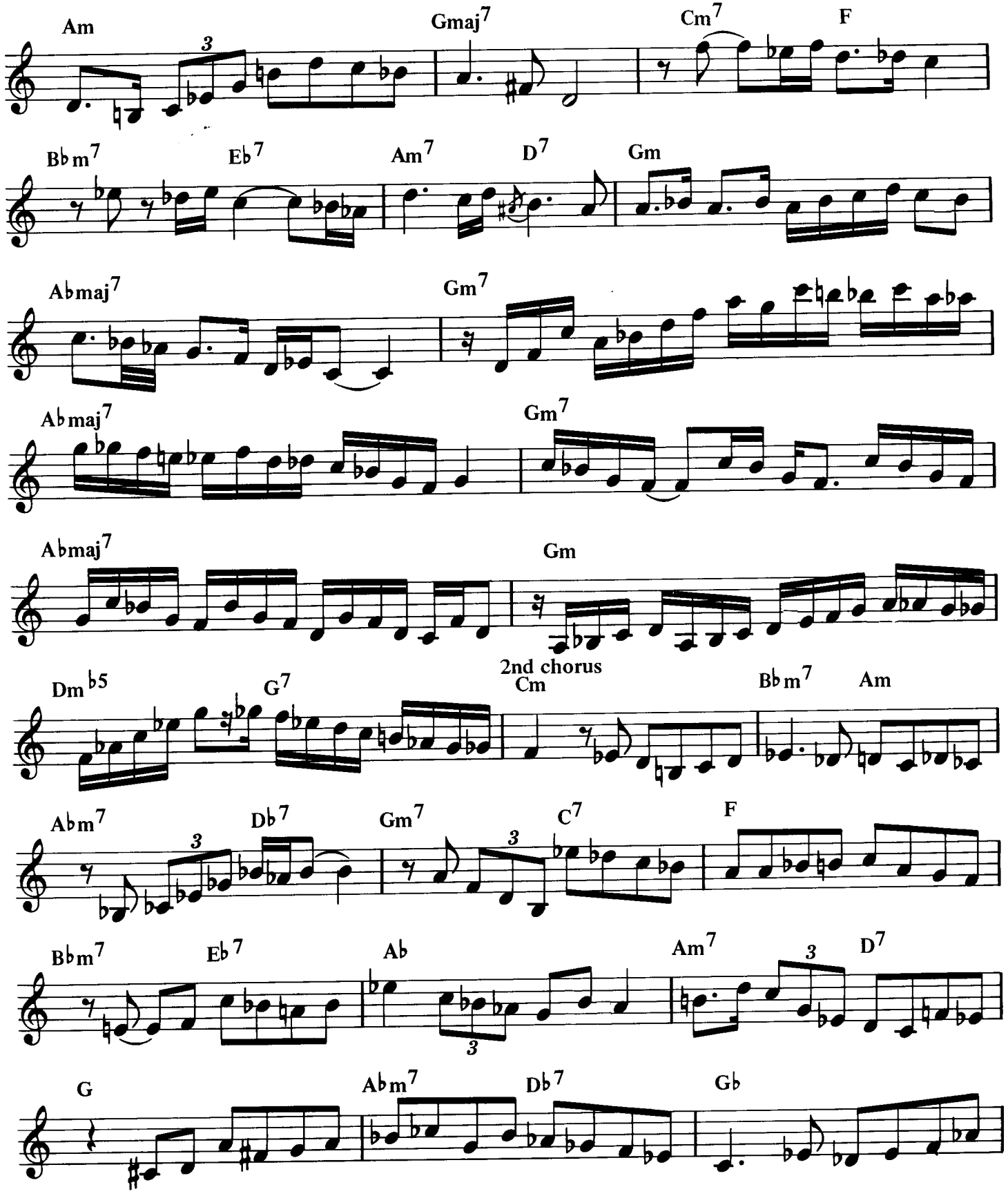
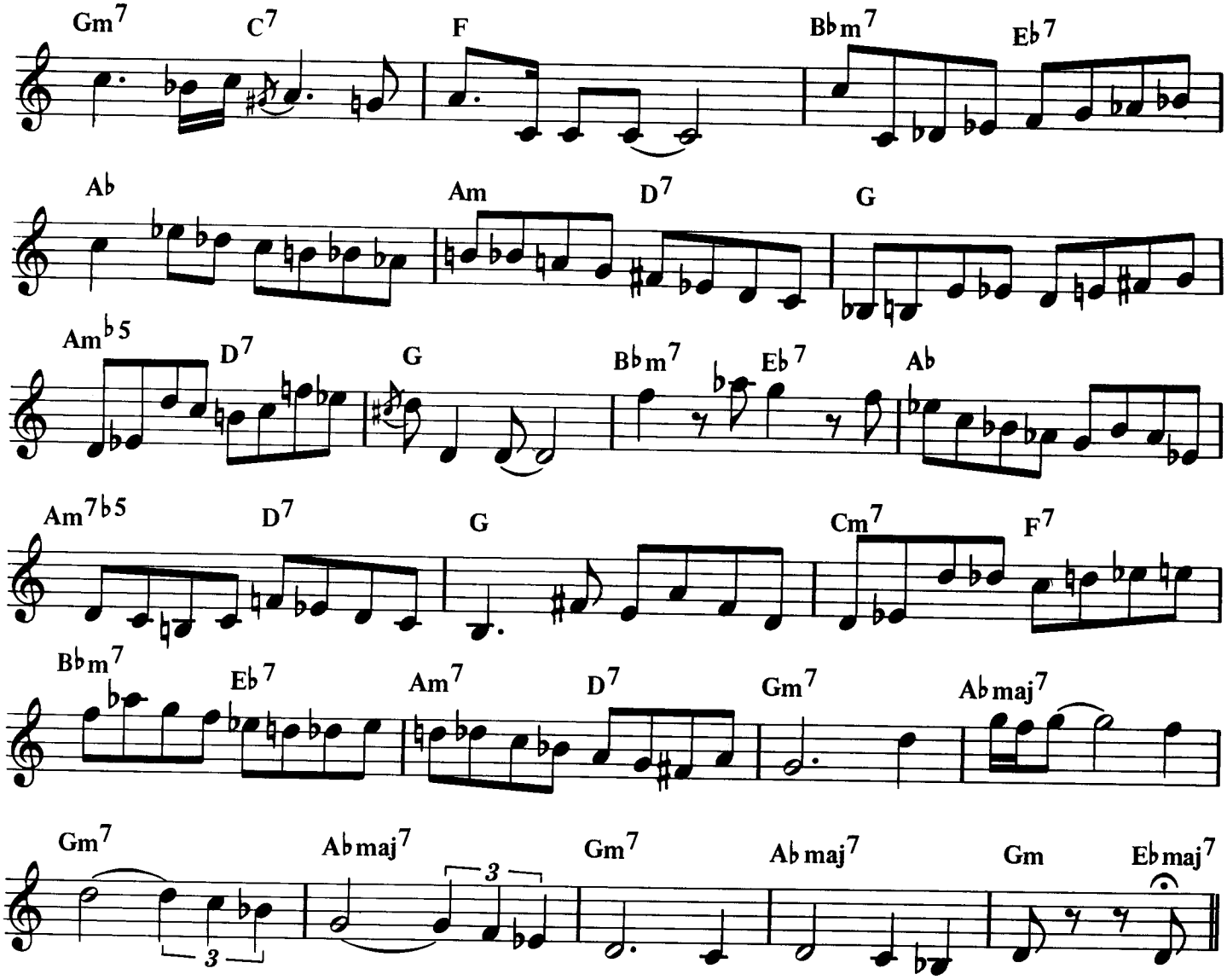
The following material consists of typical improvised choruses on "The Baron Returns." Each of the phrases can be singled out as a useful riff to apply to the chord type indicated above it.

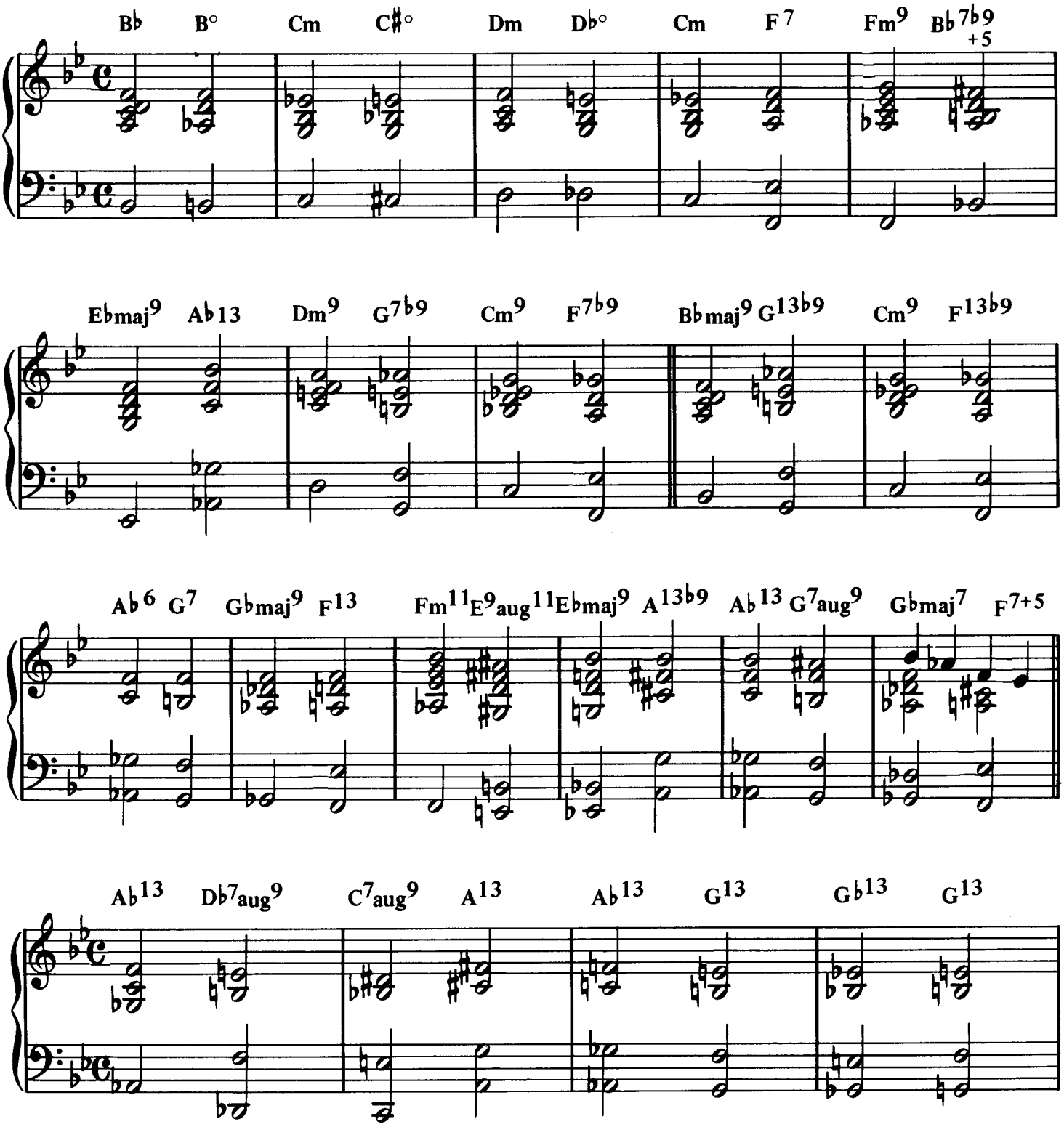


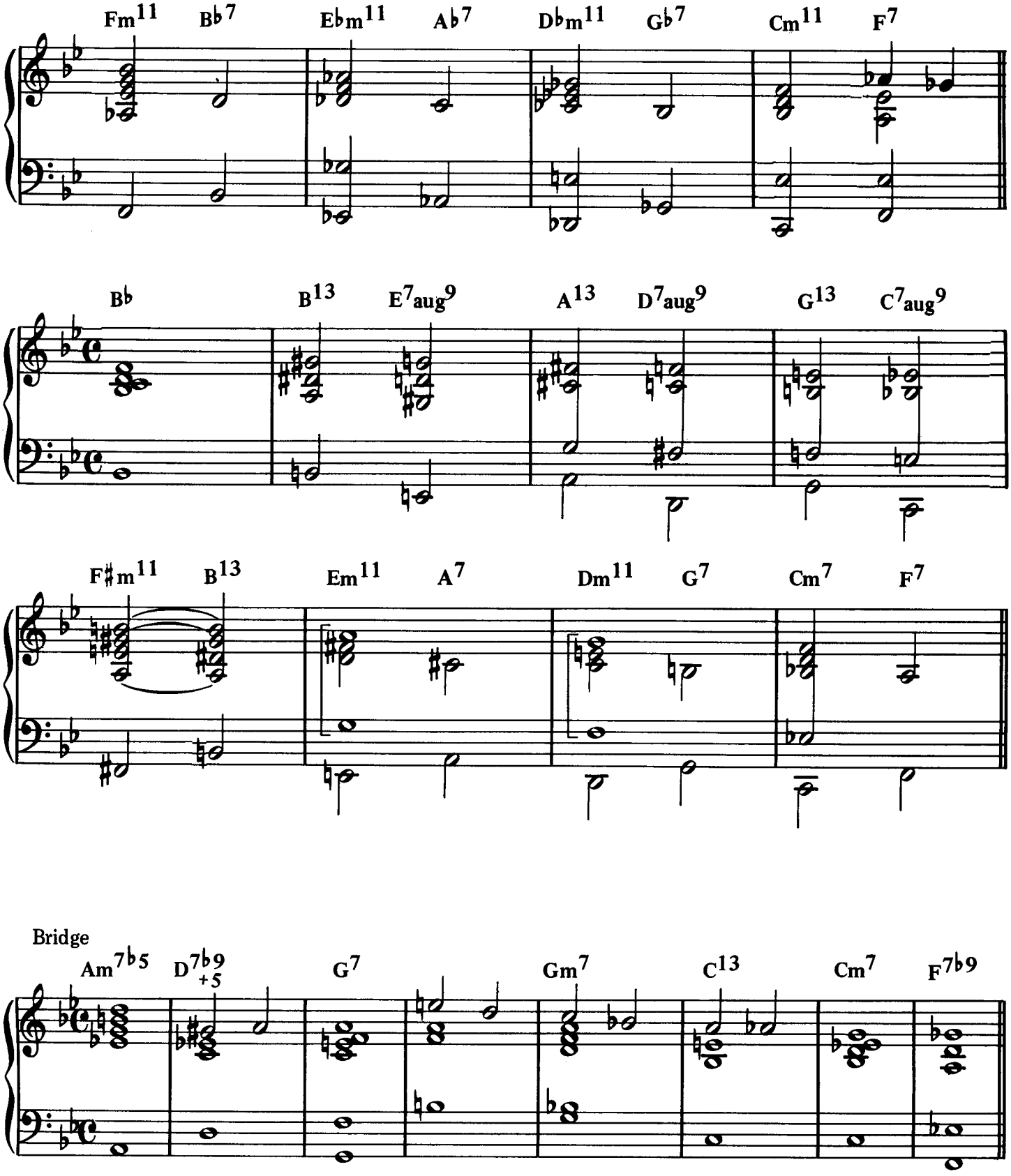

Am
Gmaj7
Cm7
F
Bbm7
Eb7
Am7
D7
Gm
Abmaj7
Gm7
Abmaj7
Gm7
Abmaj7
Gm
Dm b5
G7
2nd chorus
Cm
Bbm7
Am
Abm7
Db7
Gm7
C7
F
Bbm7
Eb7
Ab
Am7
D7
G
Abm7
Db7
Gb


Gm7
C7
F
Bbm7
Eb7
Ab
Am
D7
G
Am♭5
D7
G
Bbm7
Eb7
Ab
Am7♭5
D7
G
Cm7
F7
Bbm7
Eb7
Am7
D7
Gm7
Abmaj7
Gm7
Abmaj7
3
Gm7
Abmaj7
Gm
Ebmaj7
3

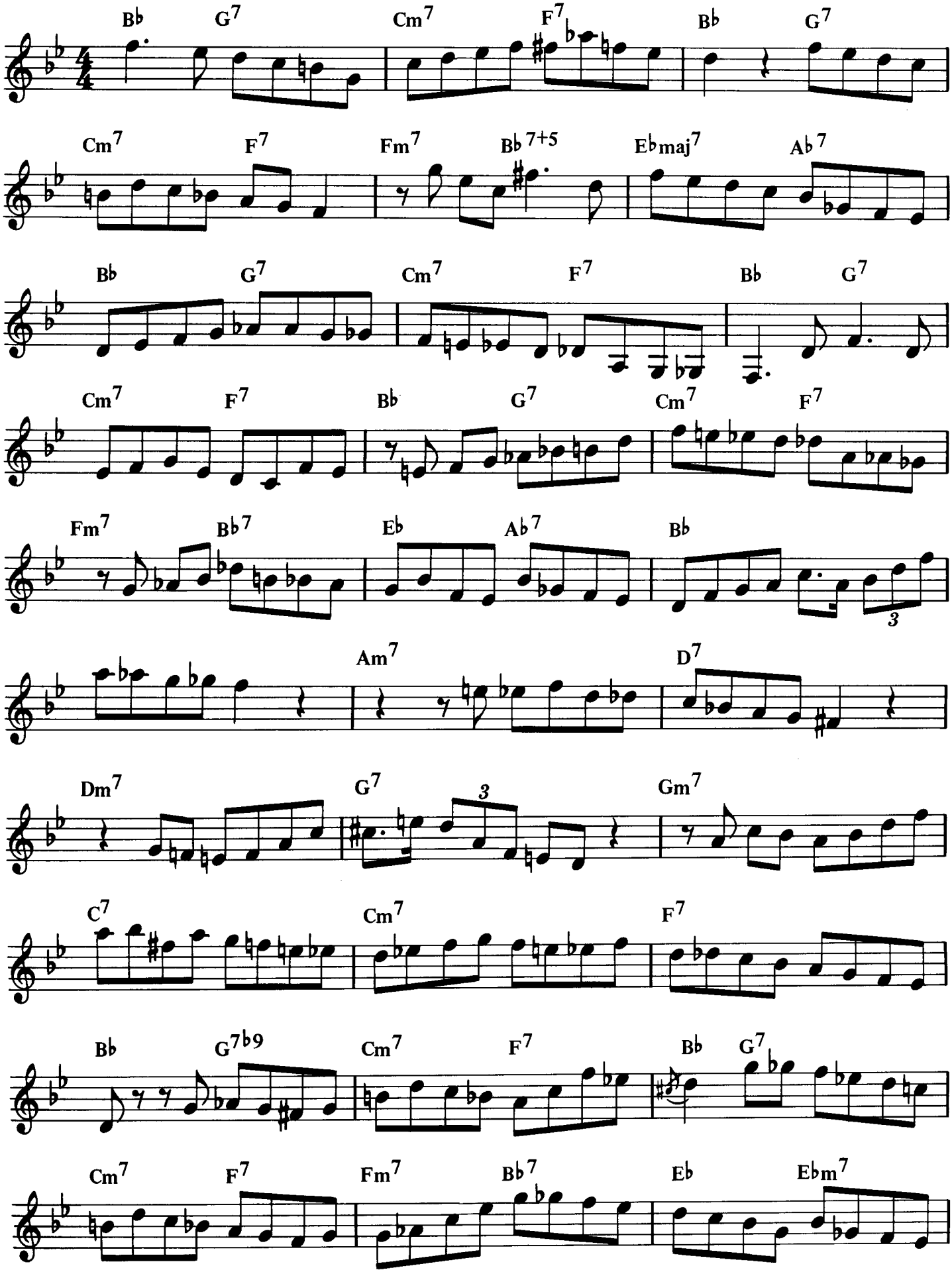
Rhythm Changes

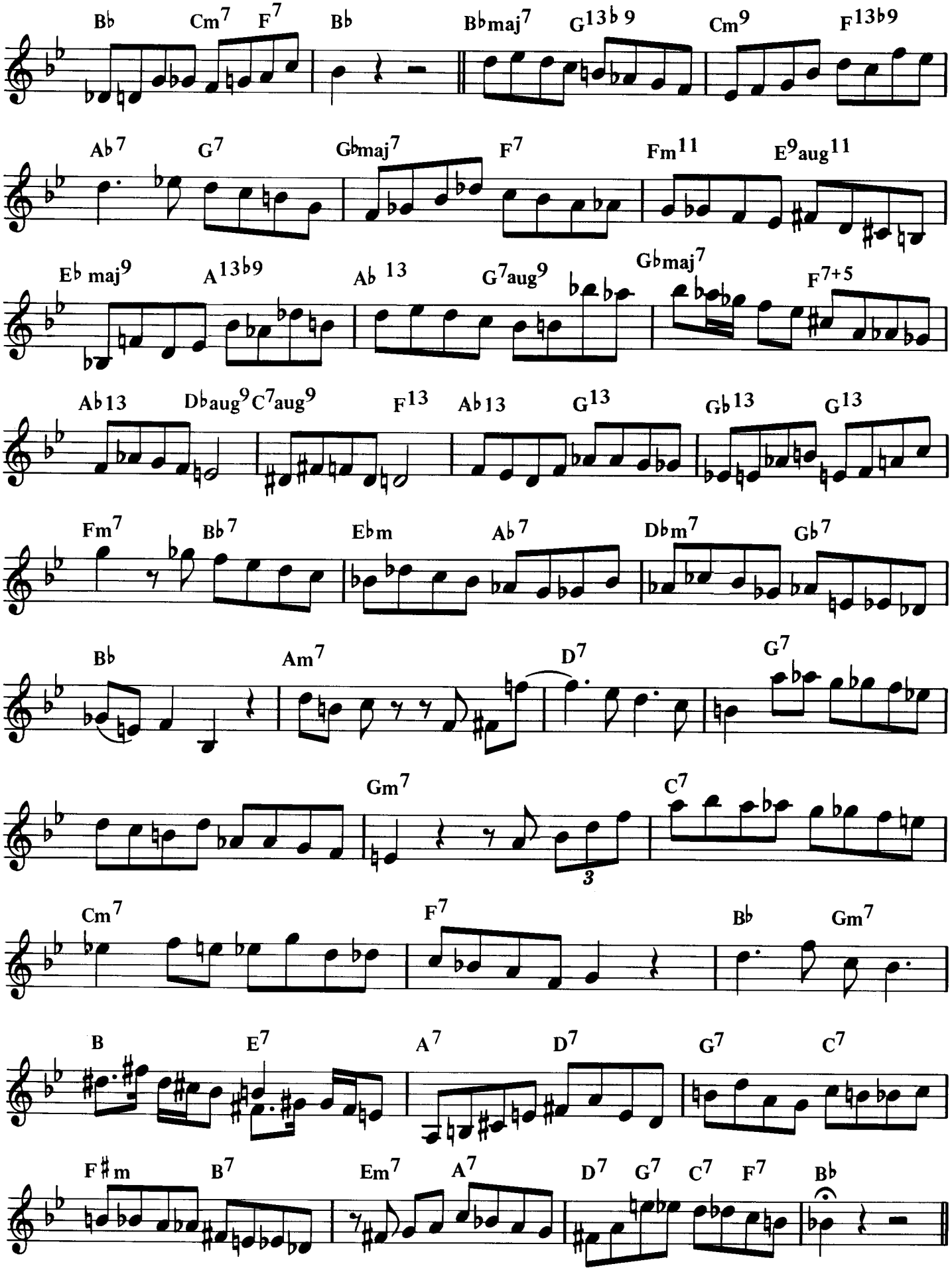
Here are four possibilities for the first section of a standard jazz progression, called "rhythm" changes after its use by Gershwin for the tune "I Got Rhythm." They are followed by the chord changes for the bridge section of the progression.




Fm11 B♭7 E♭m11 A♭7 D♭m11 G♭7 Cm11 F7
B♭ B13 E7aug9 A13 D7aug9 G13 C7aug9
F♯m11 B13 Em11 A7 Dm11 G7 Cm7 F7
Bridge
Am7♭5 D7♭9 +5 G7 Gm7 C13 Cm7 F7♭9

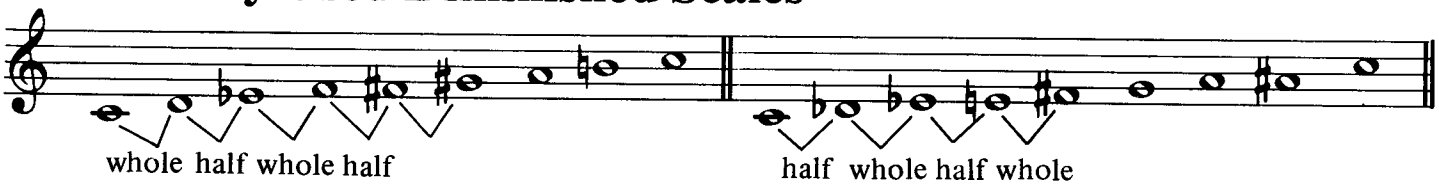
Applying riffs to this chord progression offers the following possibile combinations:



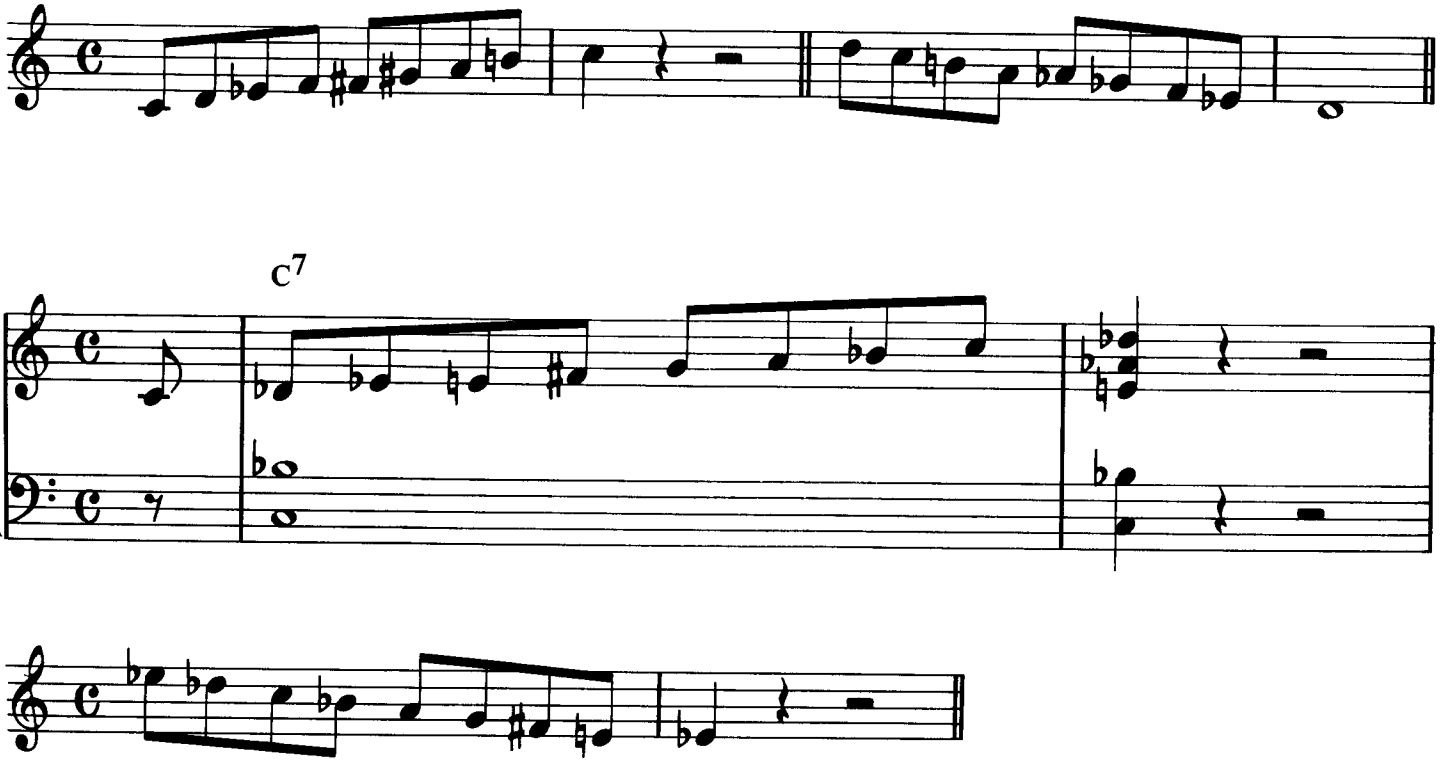

B♭ Cm7 F7 B♭ B♭maj7 G13♭9 Cm9 F13♭9
A♭7 G7 G♭maj7 F7 Fm11 E9aug11
E♭maj9 A13♭9 A♭13 G7aug9 G♭maj7 F7+5
A♭13 D♭aug9 C7aug9 F13 A♭13 G13 G♭13 G13
Fm7 B♭7 E♭m A♭7 D♭m7 G♭7
B♭ Am7 D7 G7
Gm7 C7
3
Cm7 F7 B♭ Gm7
B E7 A7 D7 G7 C7
F♯m B7 Em7 A7 D7 G7 C7 F7 B♭

Jazz in the 1960's

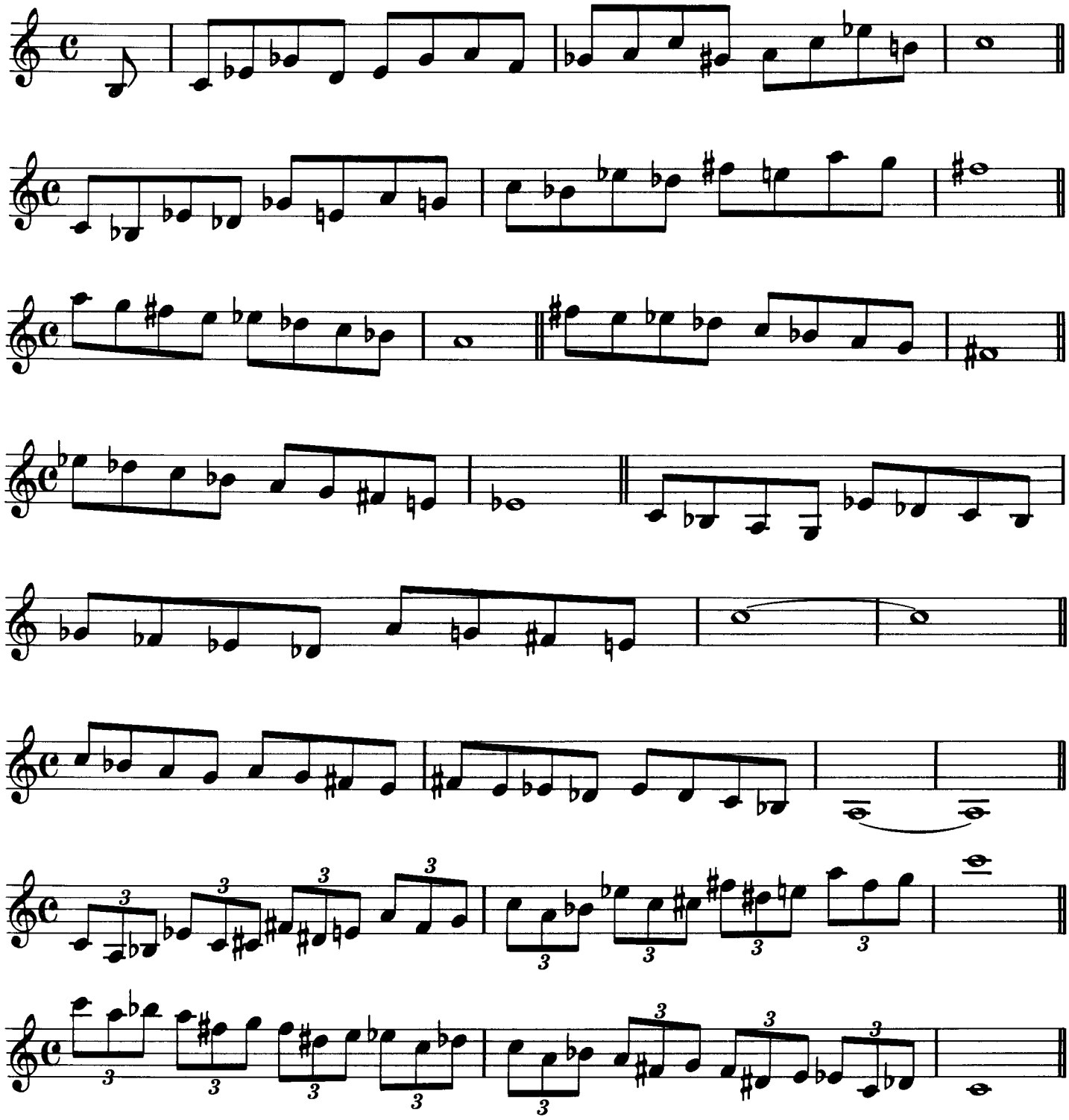
Two Widely Used Diminished Scales

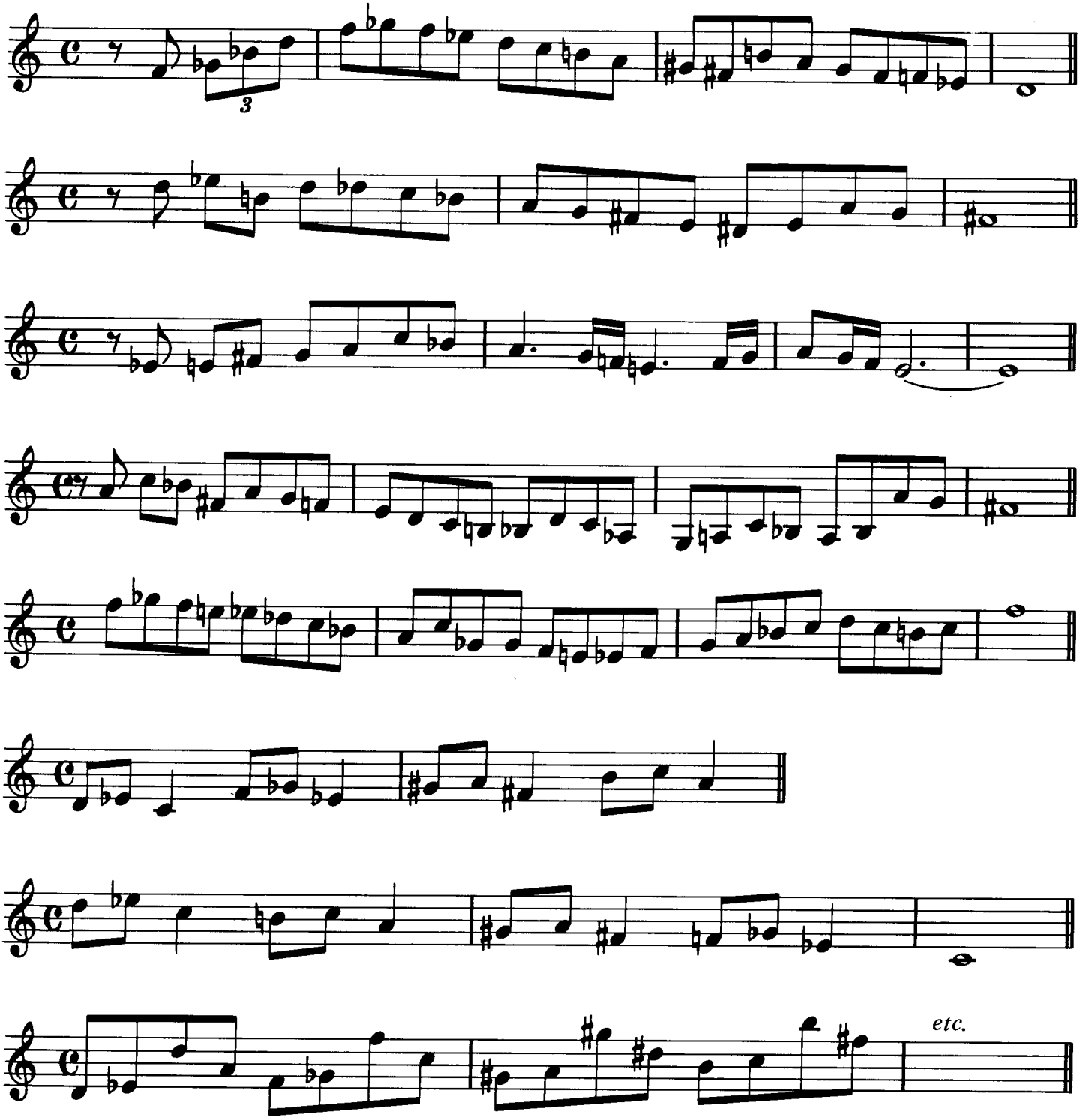


Common Patterns for the Diminished Scale



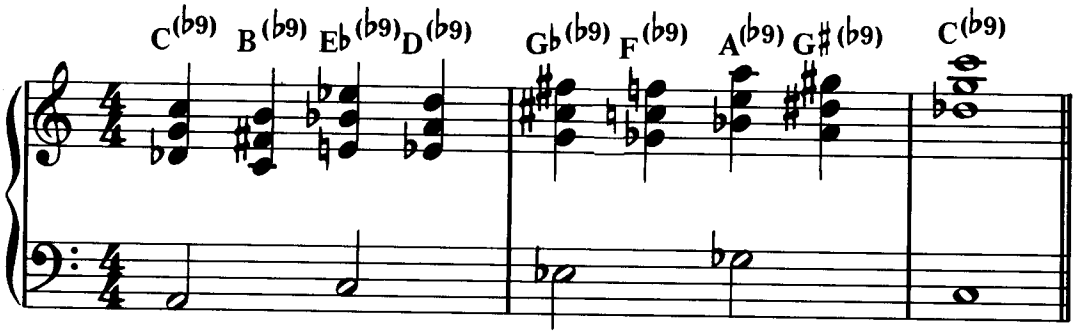
You can use the following riffs with a C pedal-tone in the bass:



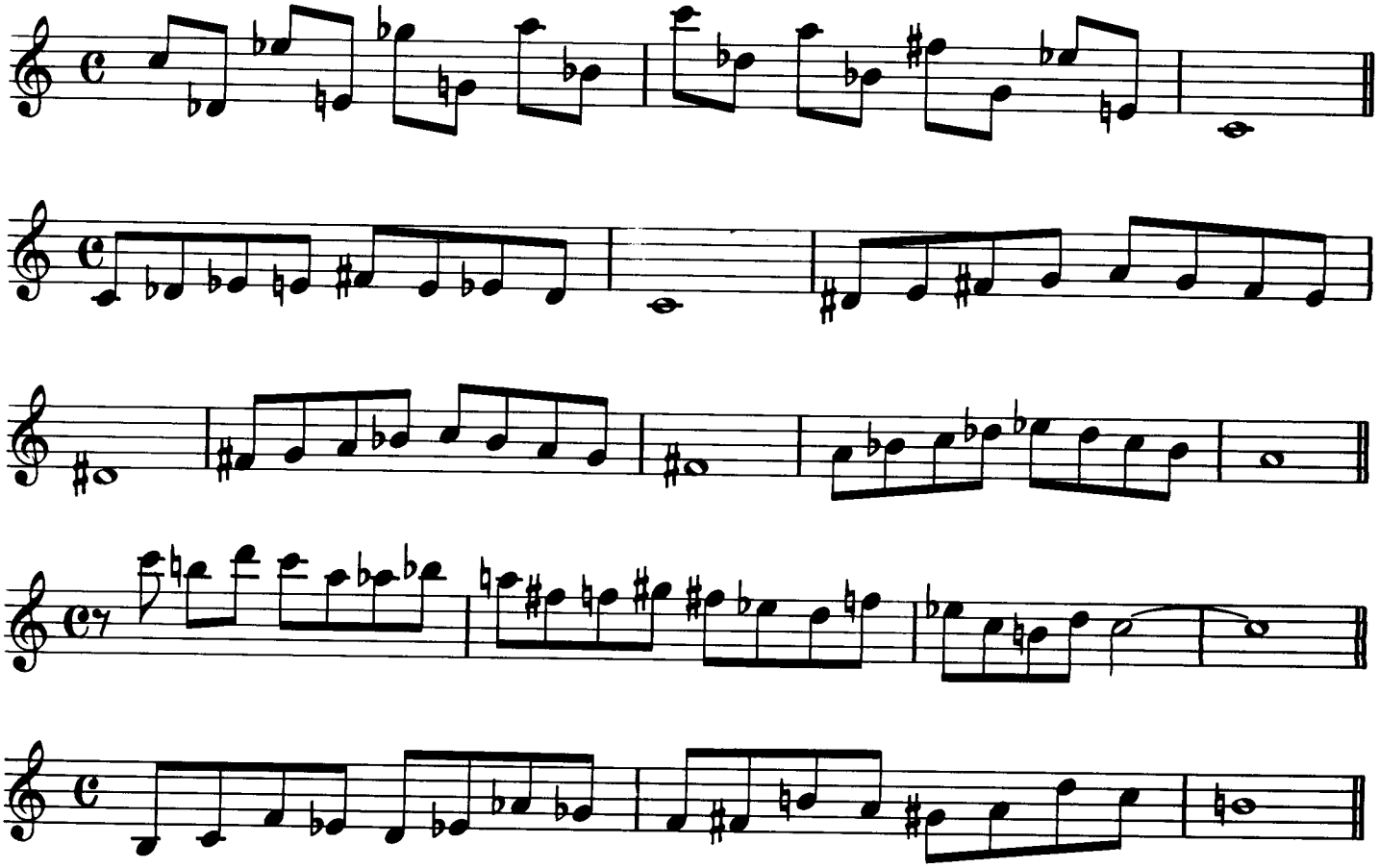

3
etc.

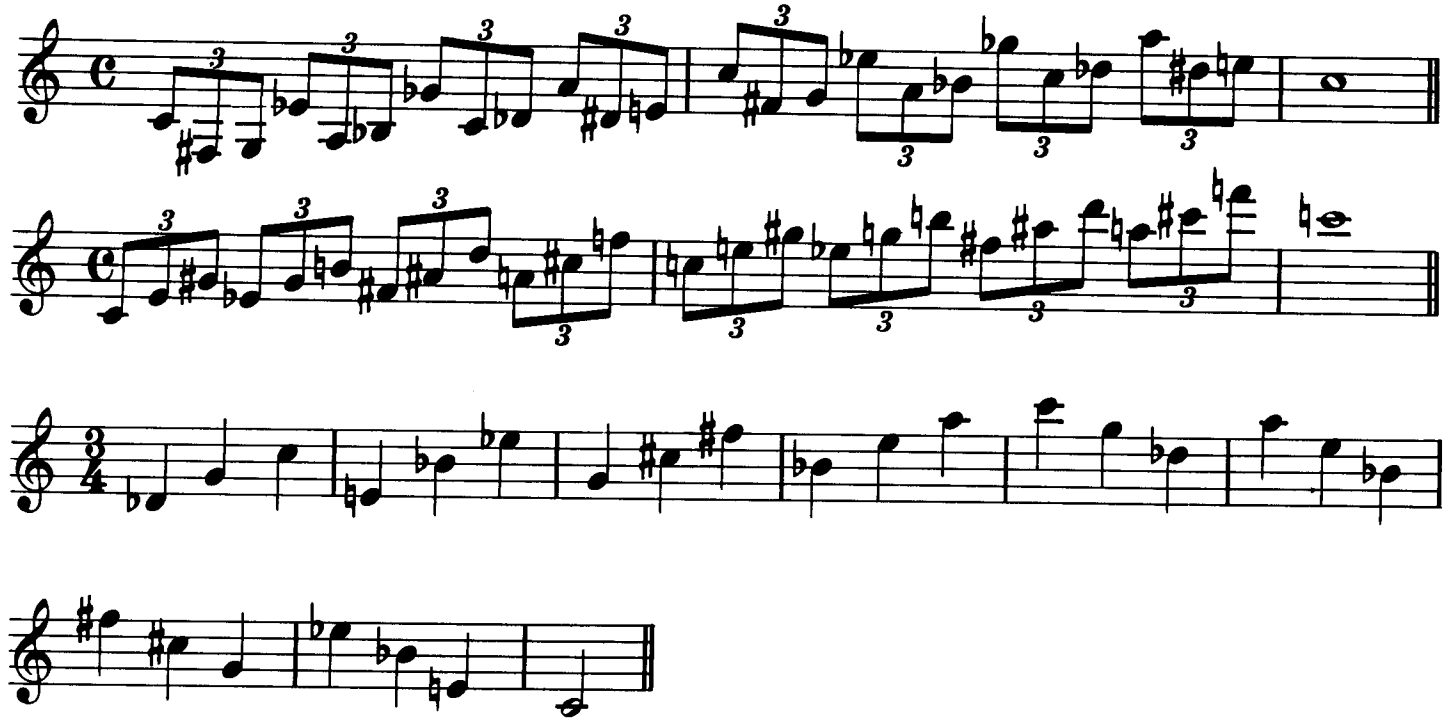
1960's Chord Progressions

Progression Number 1:

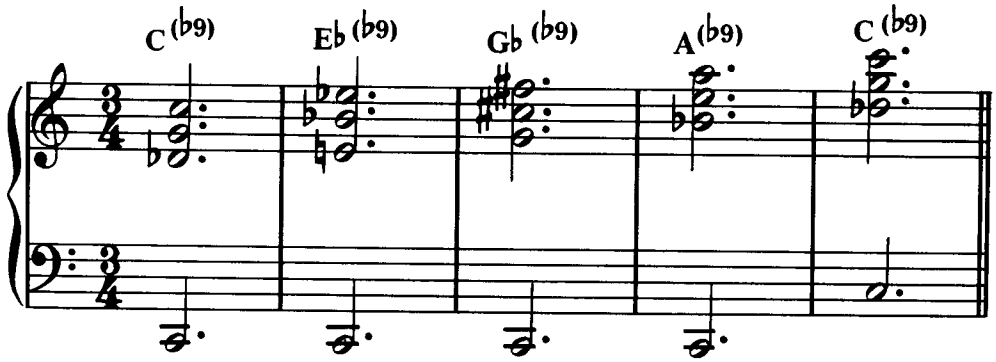


Riffs

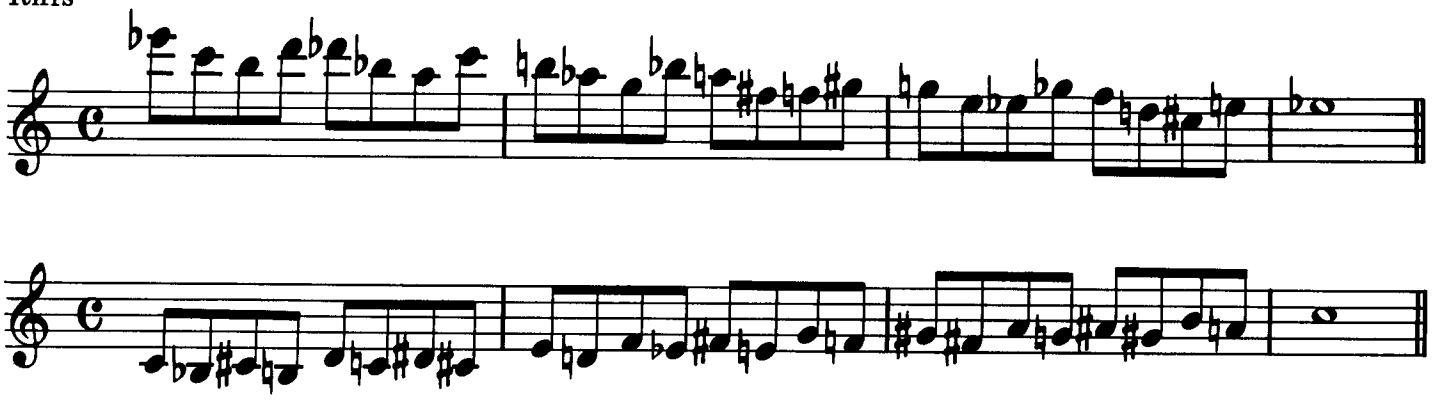




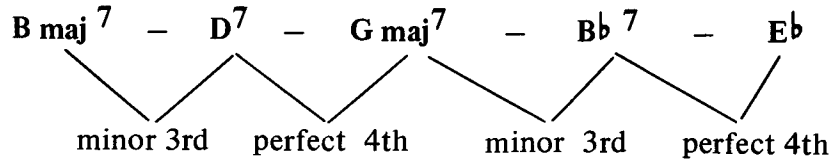
Progression Number 2

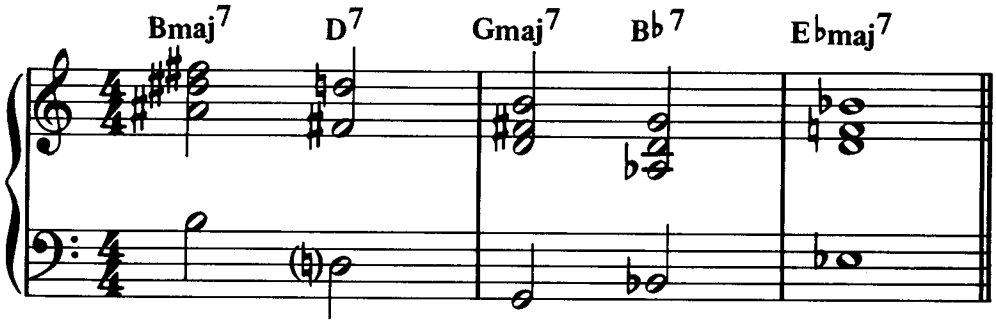


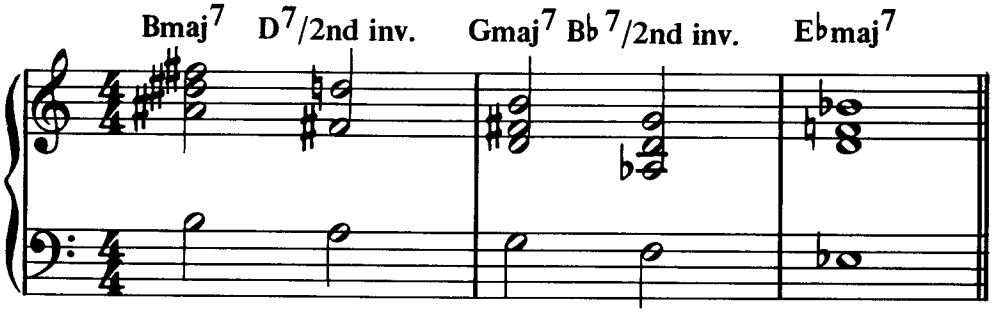
Riffs



Progression Number 3

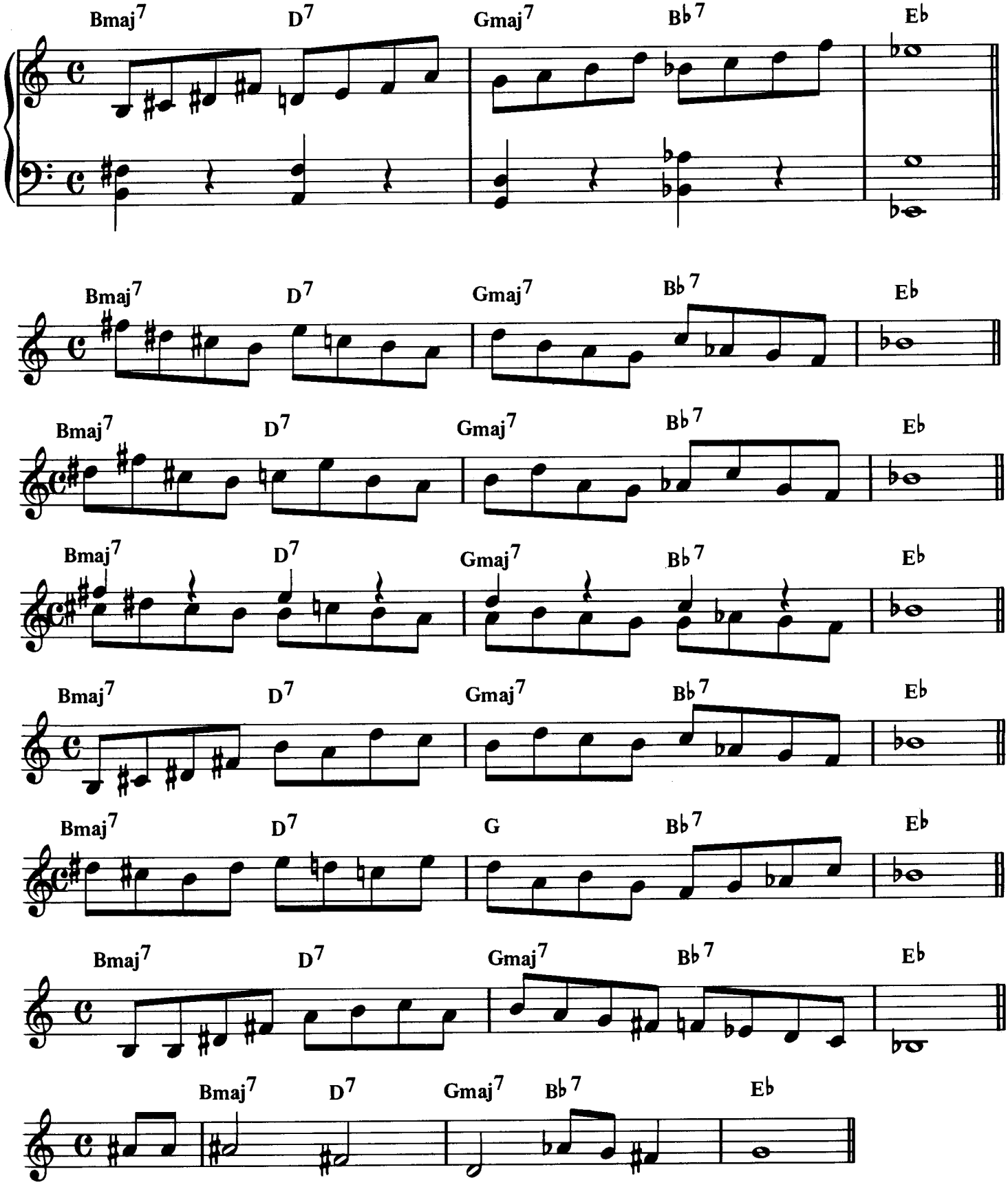


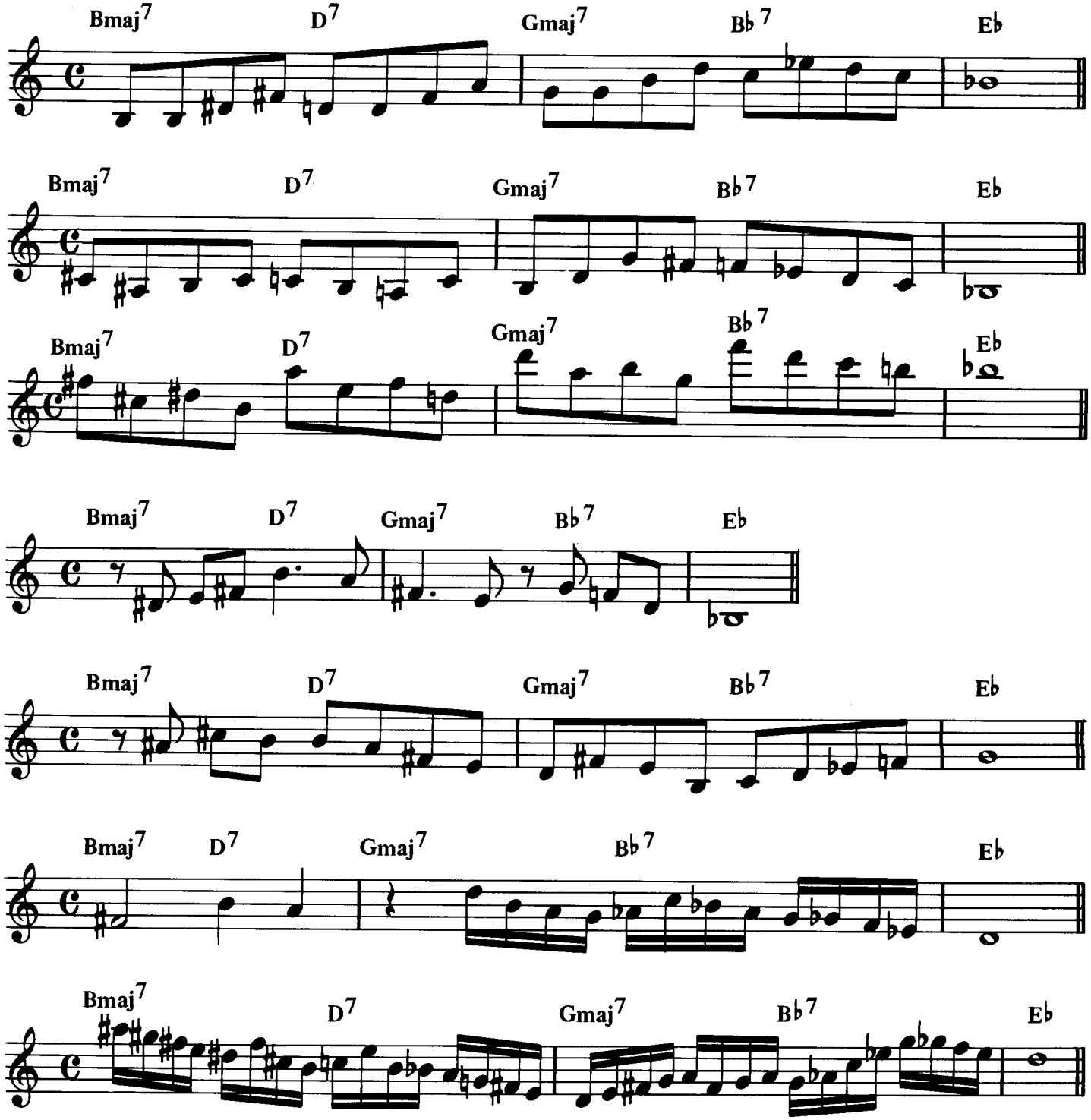




This progression can be applied to several well-known tunes, including "But Not For Me," "Giant Steps," and "Night and Day."

Riffs


Bmaj7 D7 Gmaj7 Bb7 Eb
Bmaj7 D7 Gmaj7 Bb7 Eb
Bmaj7 D7 Gmaj7 Bb7 Eb
Bmaj7 D7 Gmaj7 Bb7 Eb
Bmaj7 D7 Gmaj7 Bb7 Eb
Bmaj7 D7 G Bb7 Eb
Bmaj7 D7 Gmaj7 Bb7 Eb
Bmaj7 D7 Gmaj7 Bb7 Eb


Bmaj7
D7
Gmaj7
Bb7
Eb
Bmaj7
D7
Gmaj7
Bb7
Eb
Bmaj7
D7
Gmaj7
Bb7
Eb
Bmaj7
D7
Gmaj7
Bb7
Eb
Bmaj7
D7
Gmaj7
Bb7
Eb
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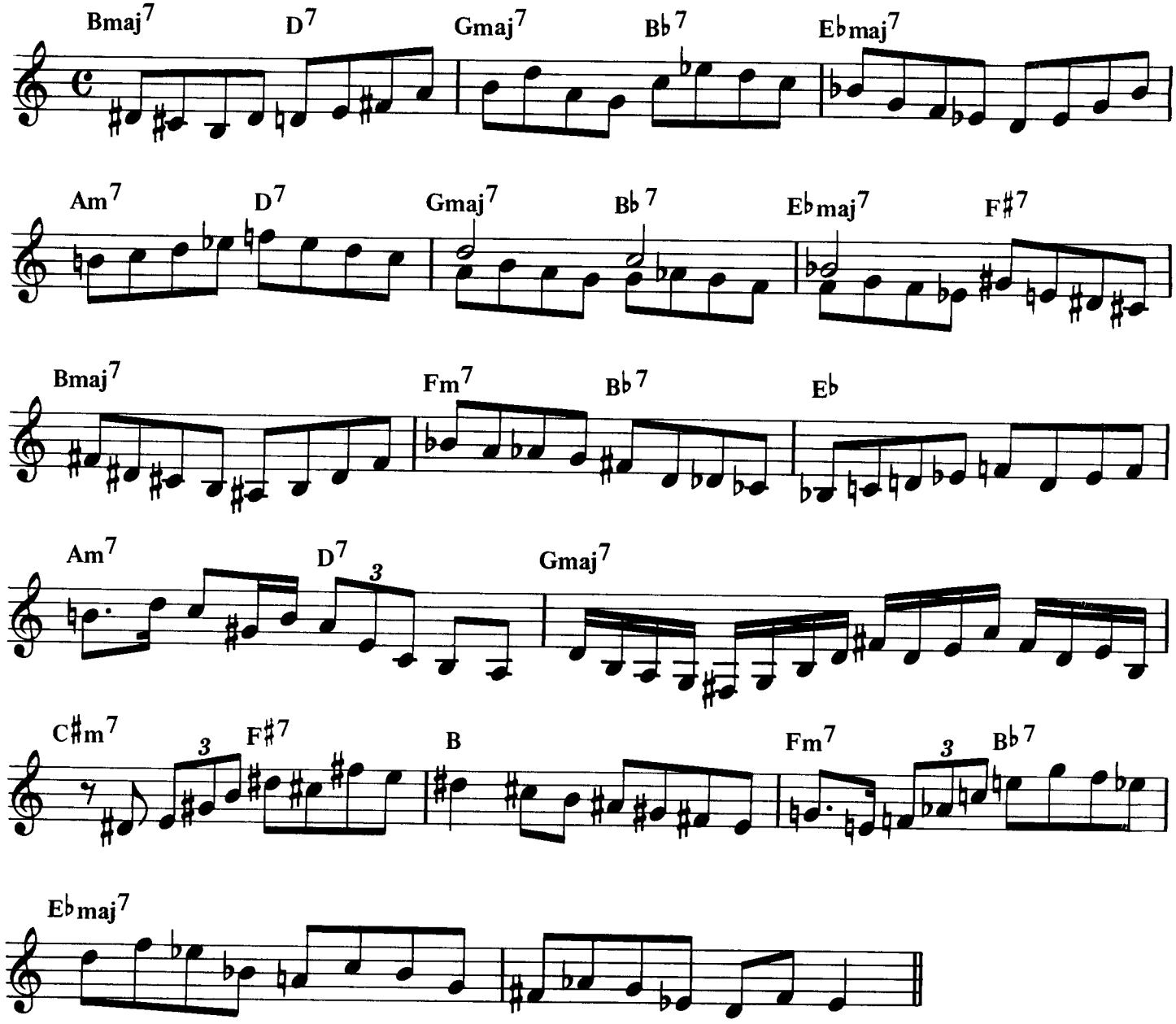
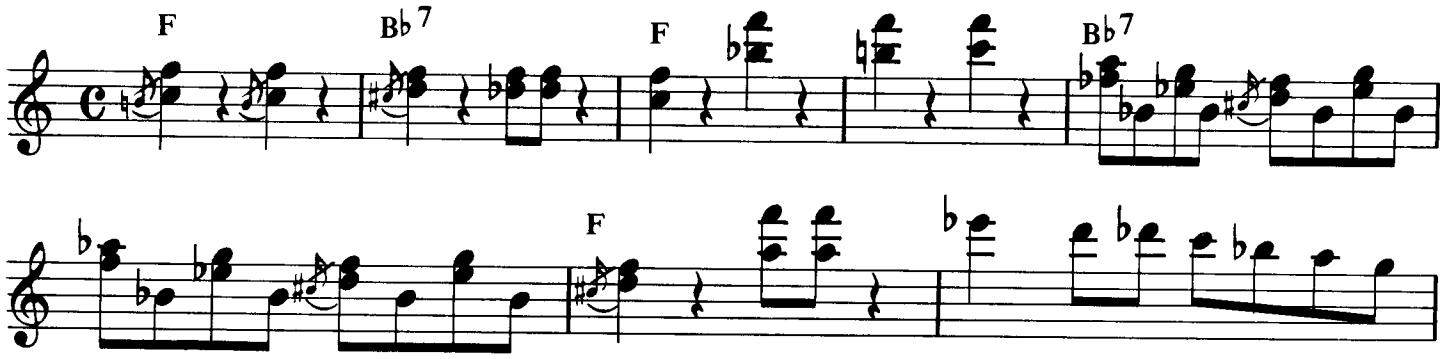
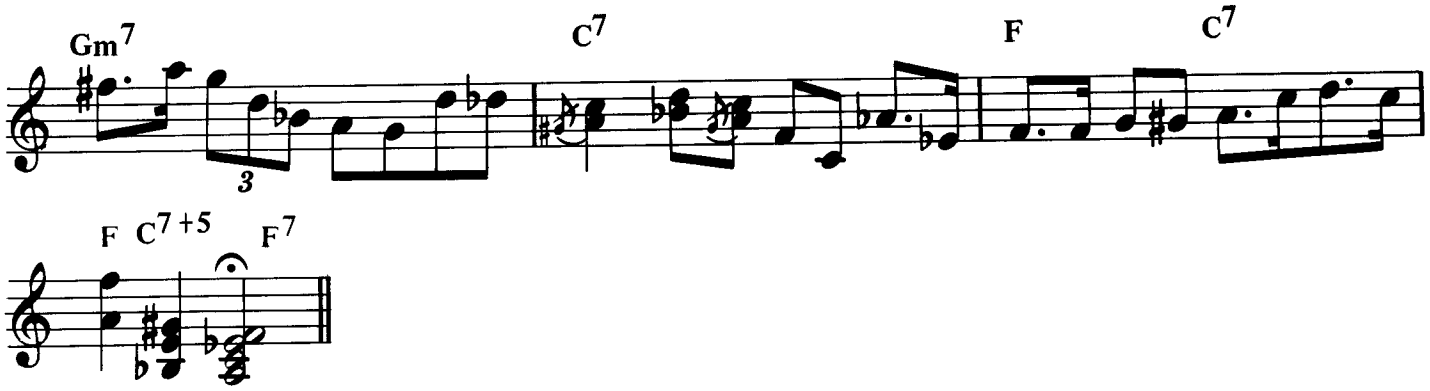
Eb
Bmaj7
D7
Gmaj7
Bb7
Eb

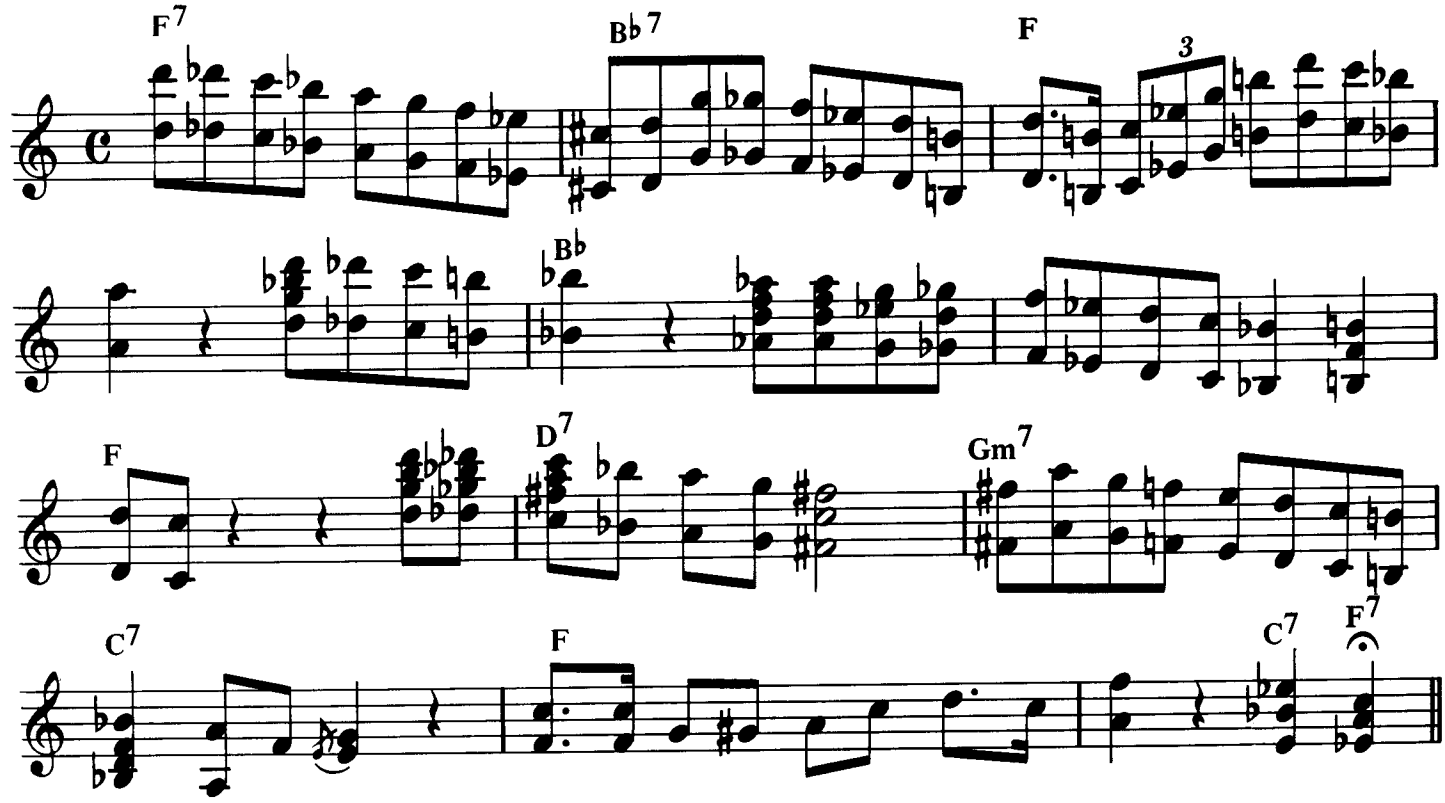


Two - Finger Chordal Riffs : Blues in F



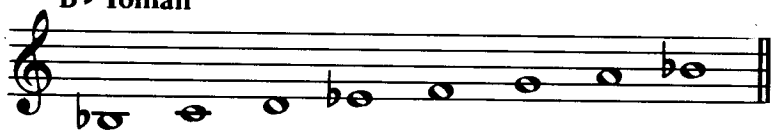


Solo in Octaves and Chords: Blues in F

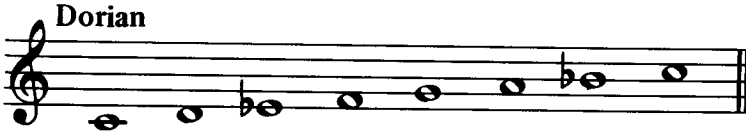


Modal Jazz

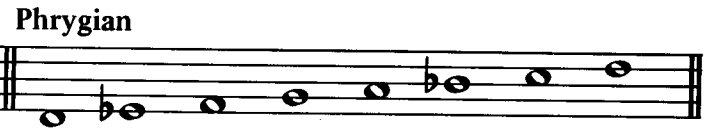
B♭ Ionian



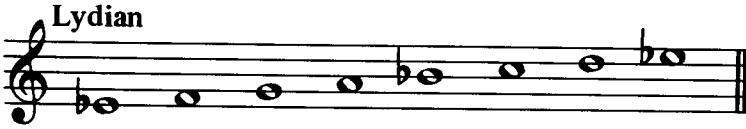
Dorian



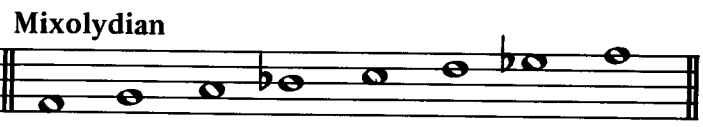
Phrygian



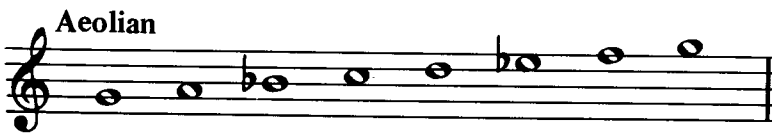
Lydian



Mixolydian



Aeolian



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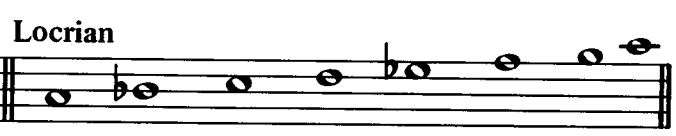
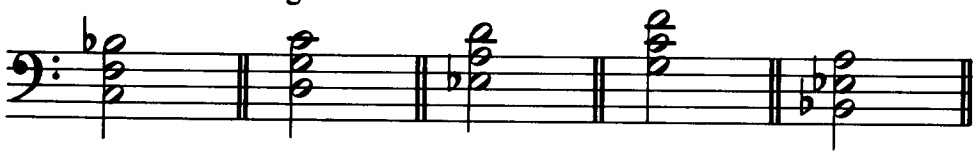
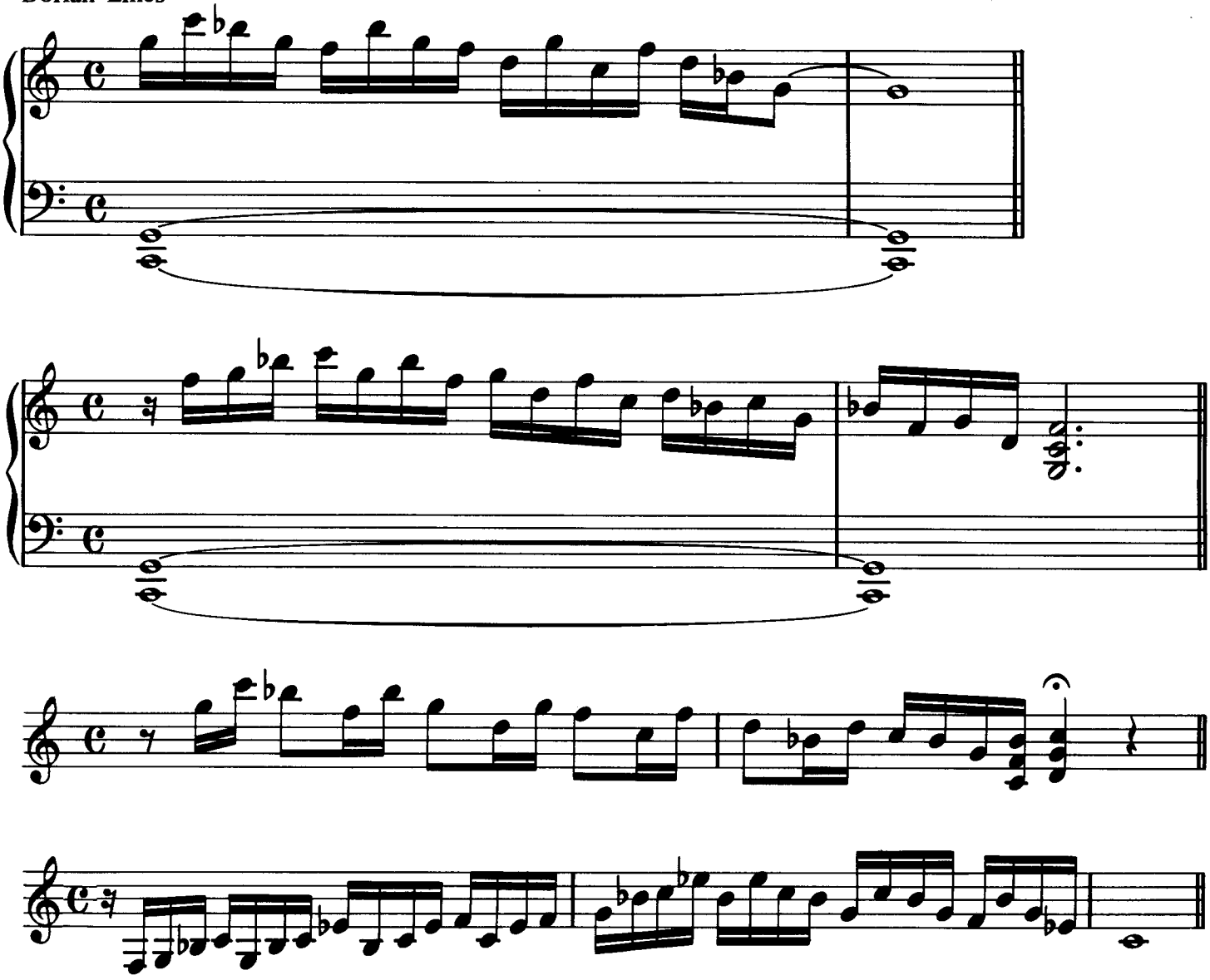


Left Hand Voicings



Dorian Lines



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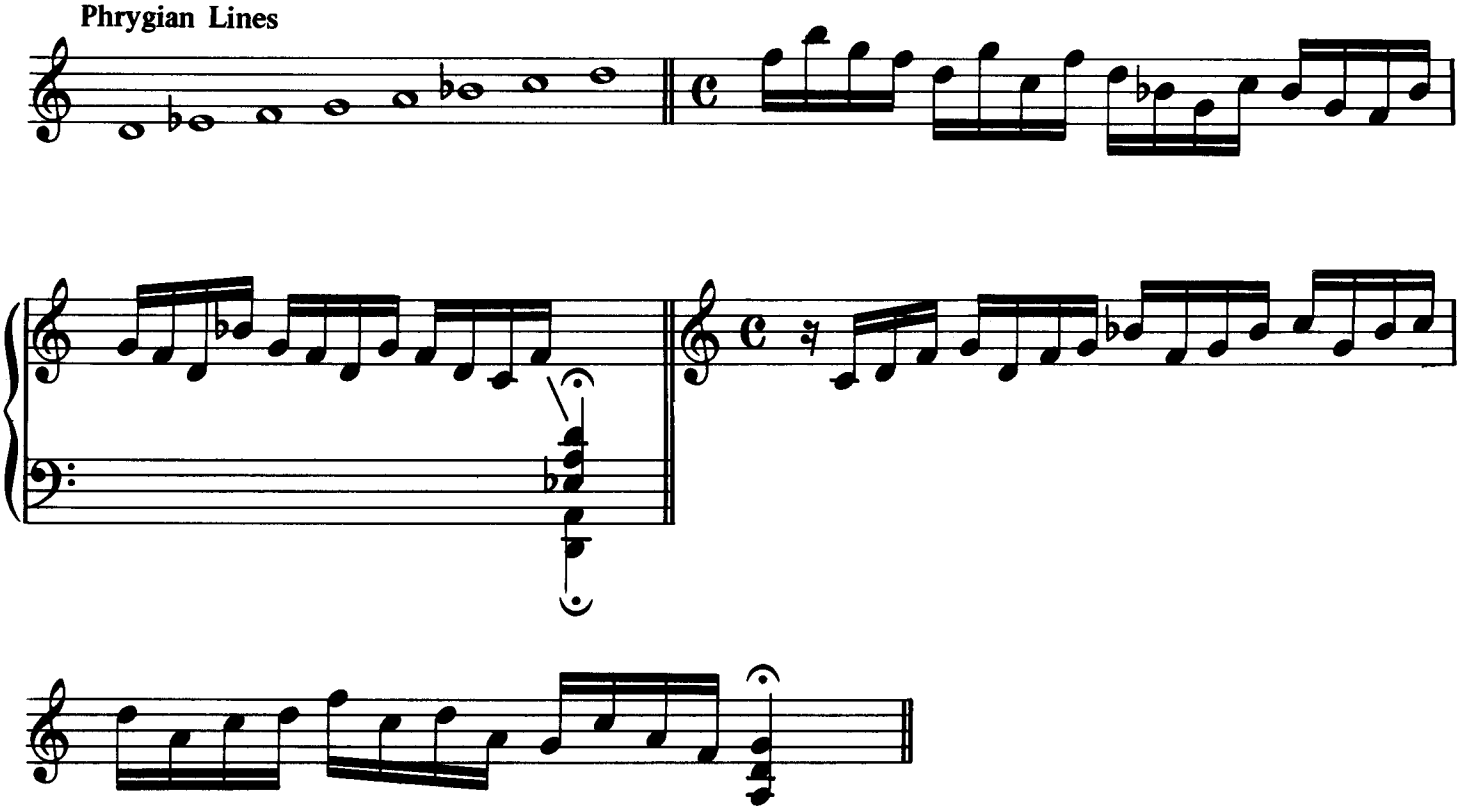

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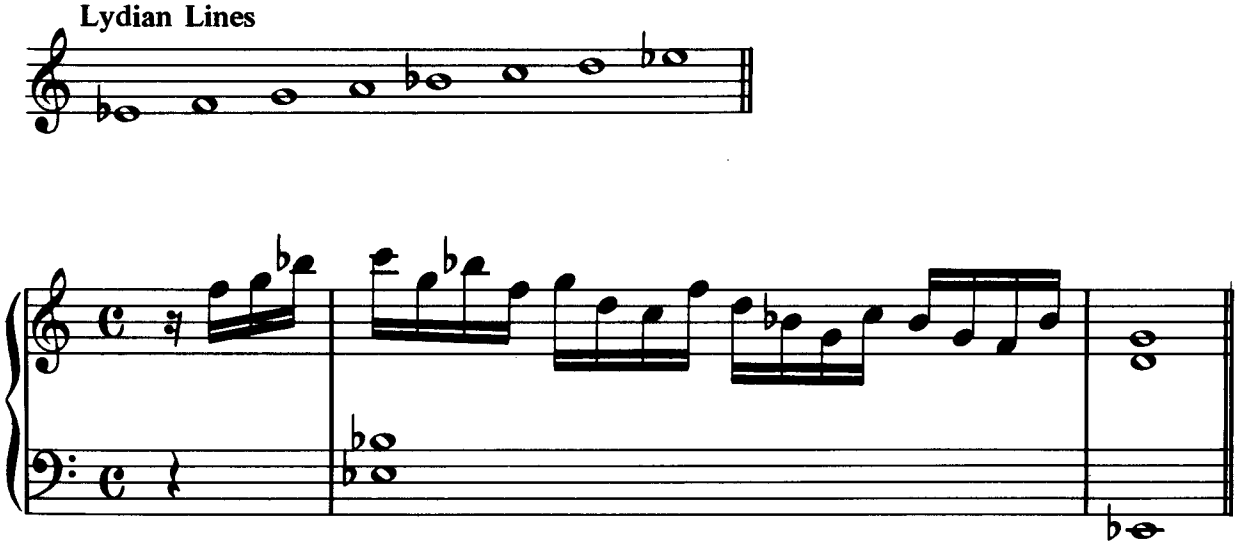

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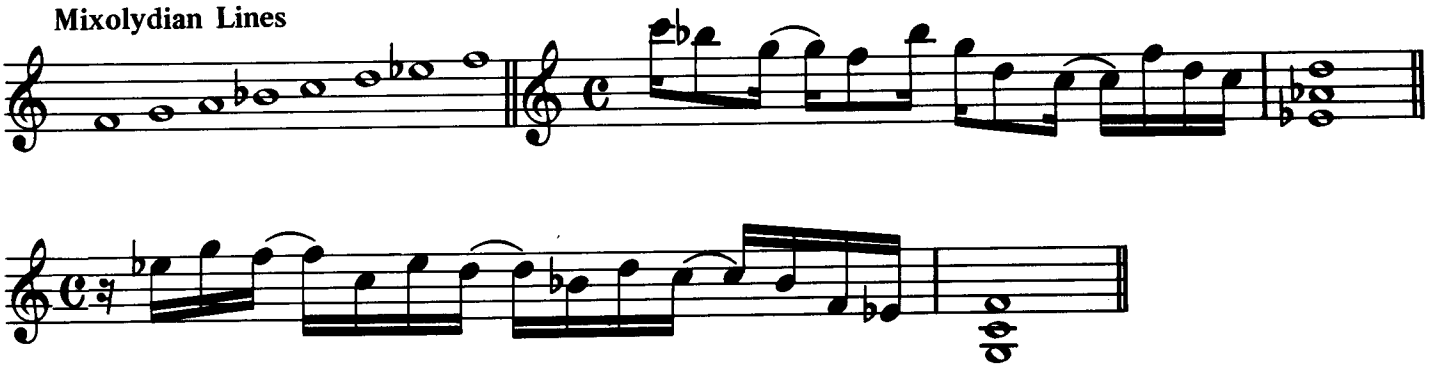

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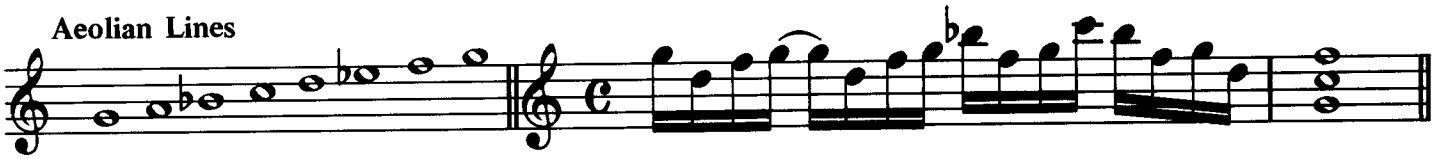

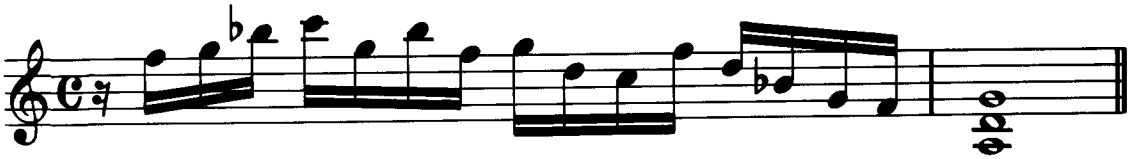

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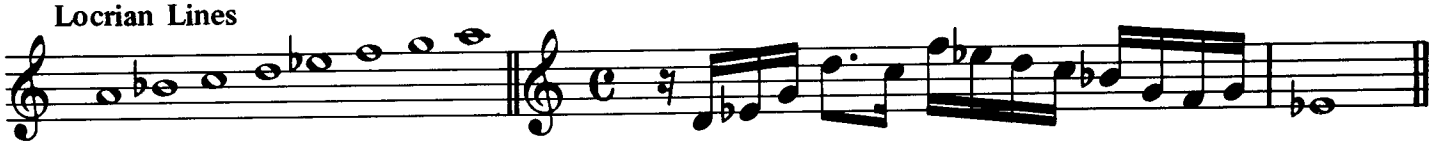

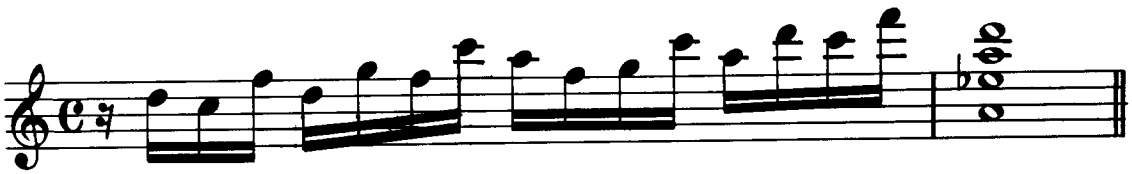

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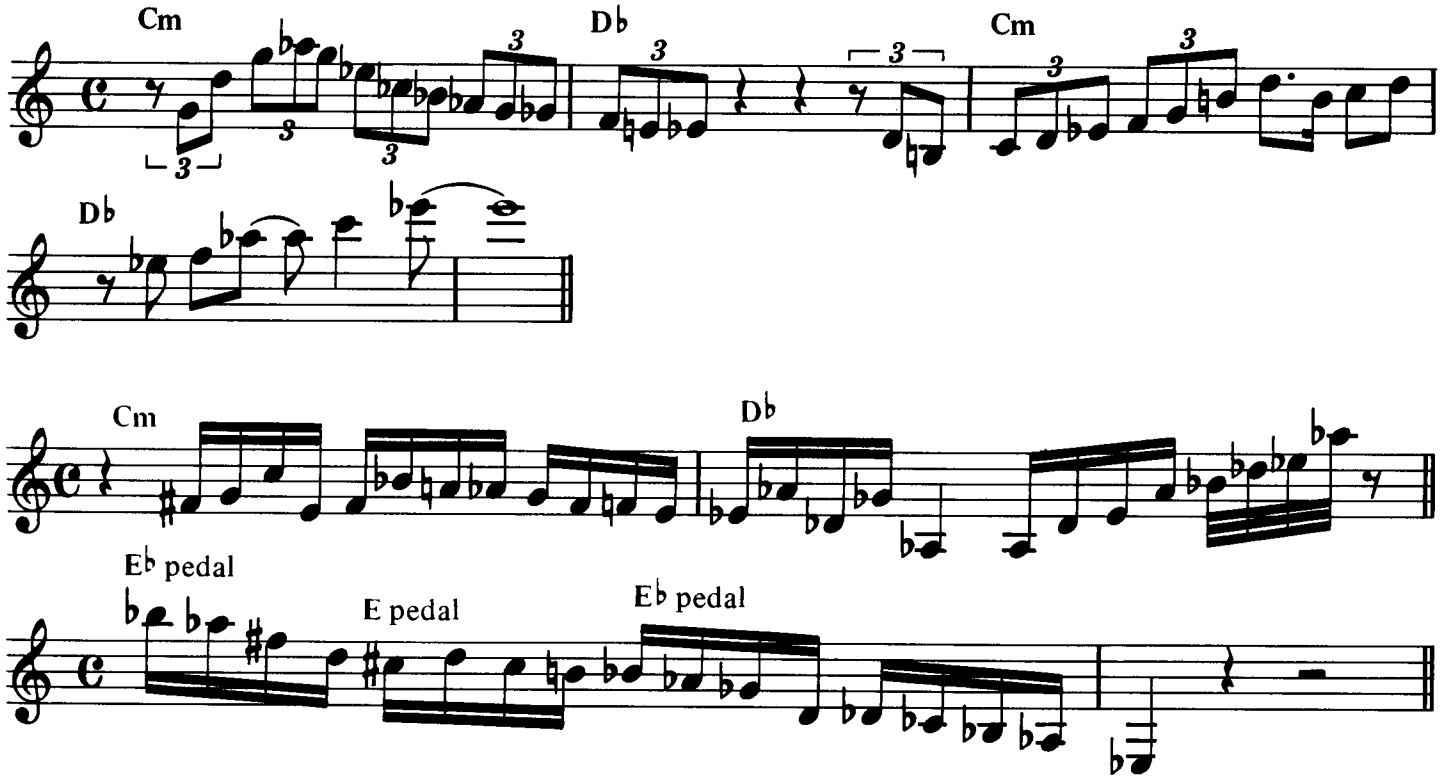
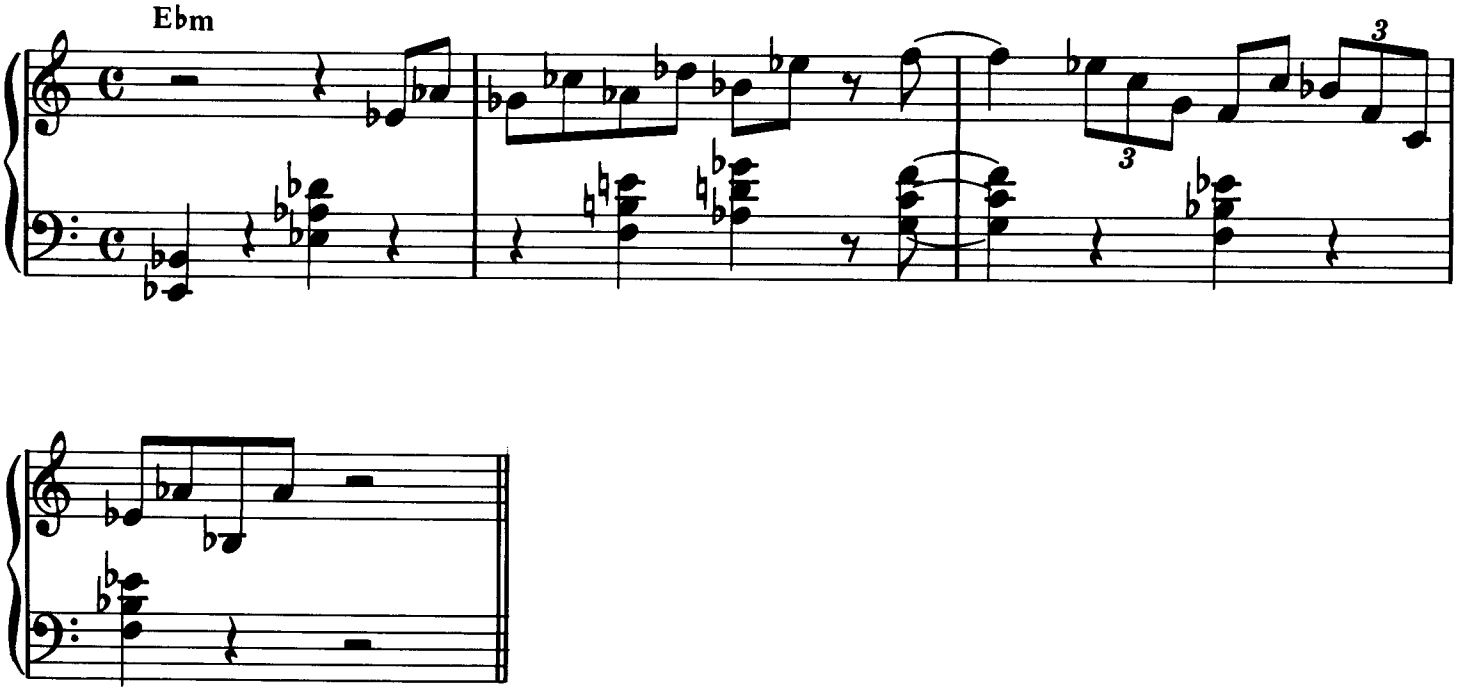


In the style of McCoy Tyner:



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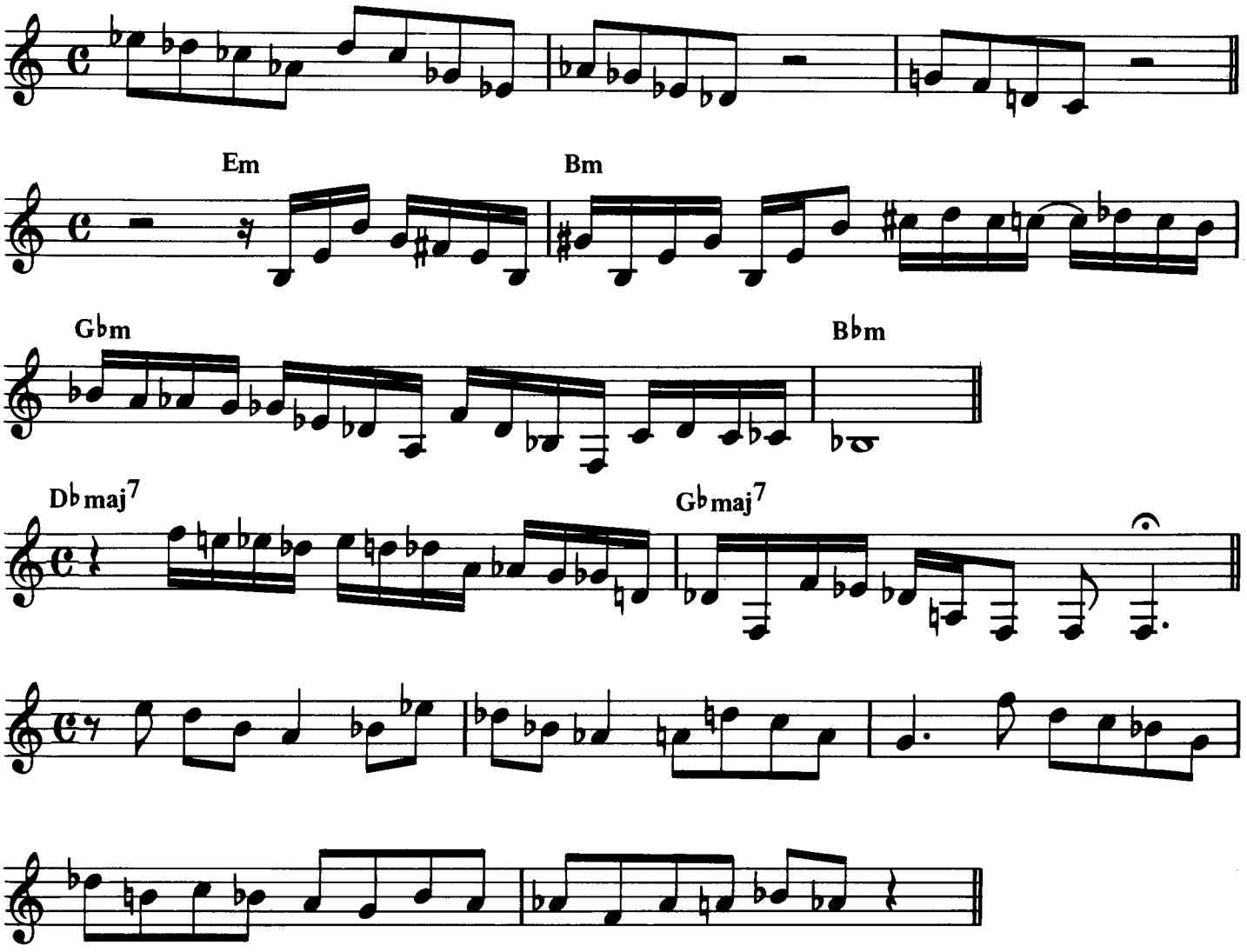
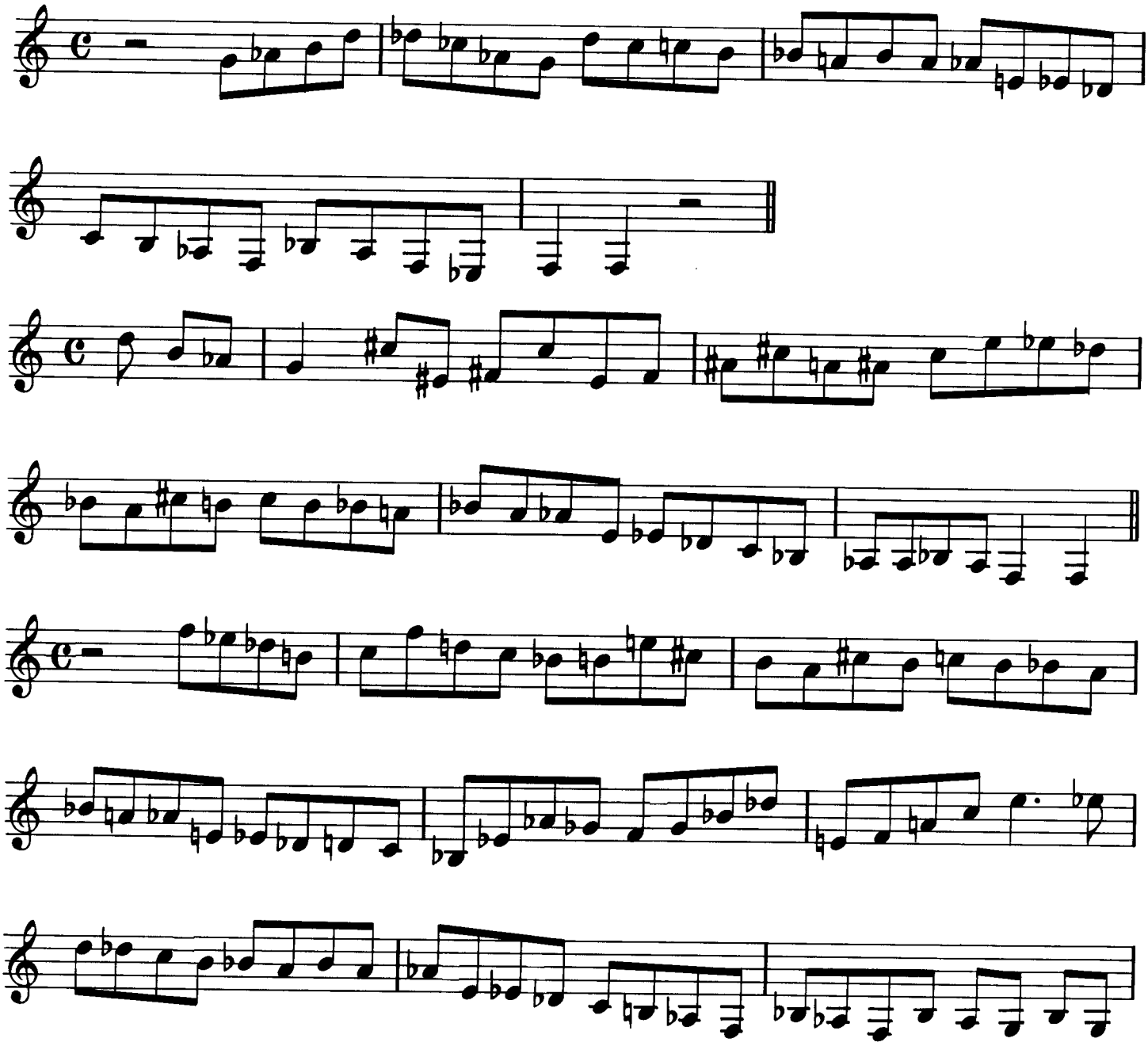
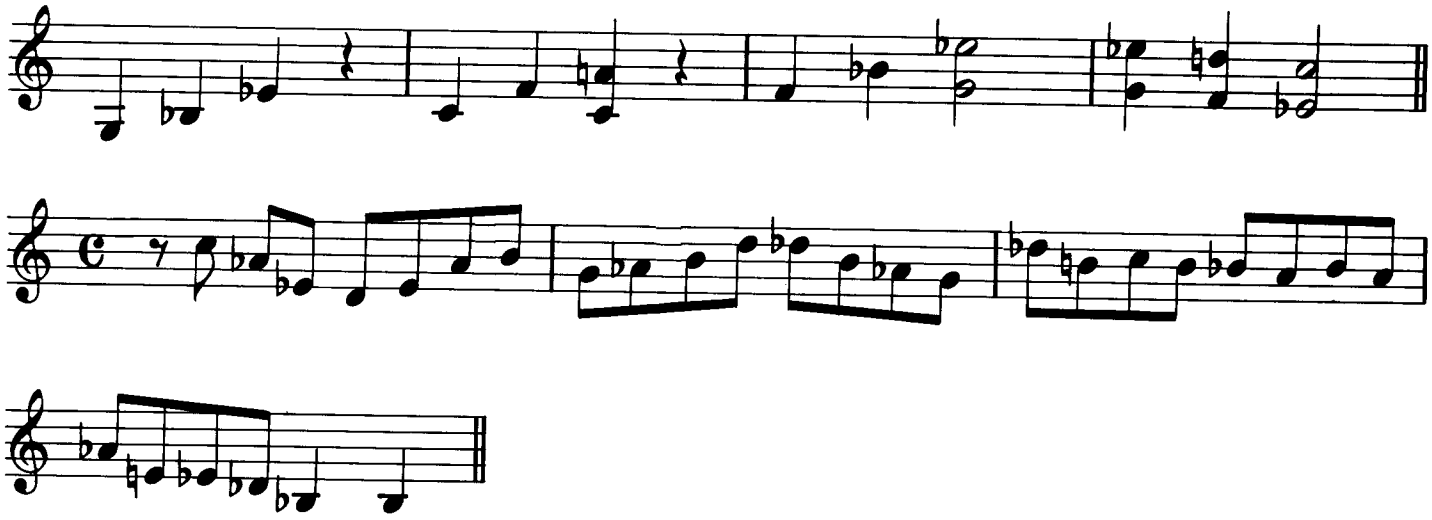
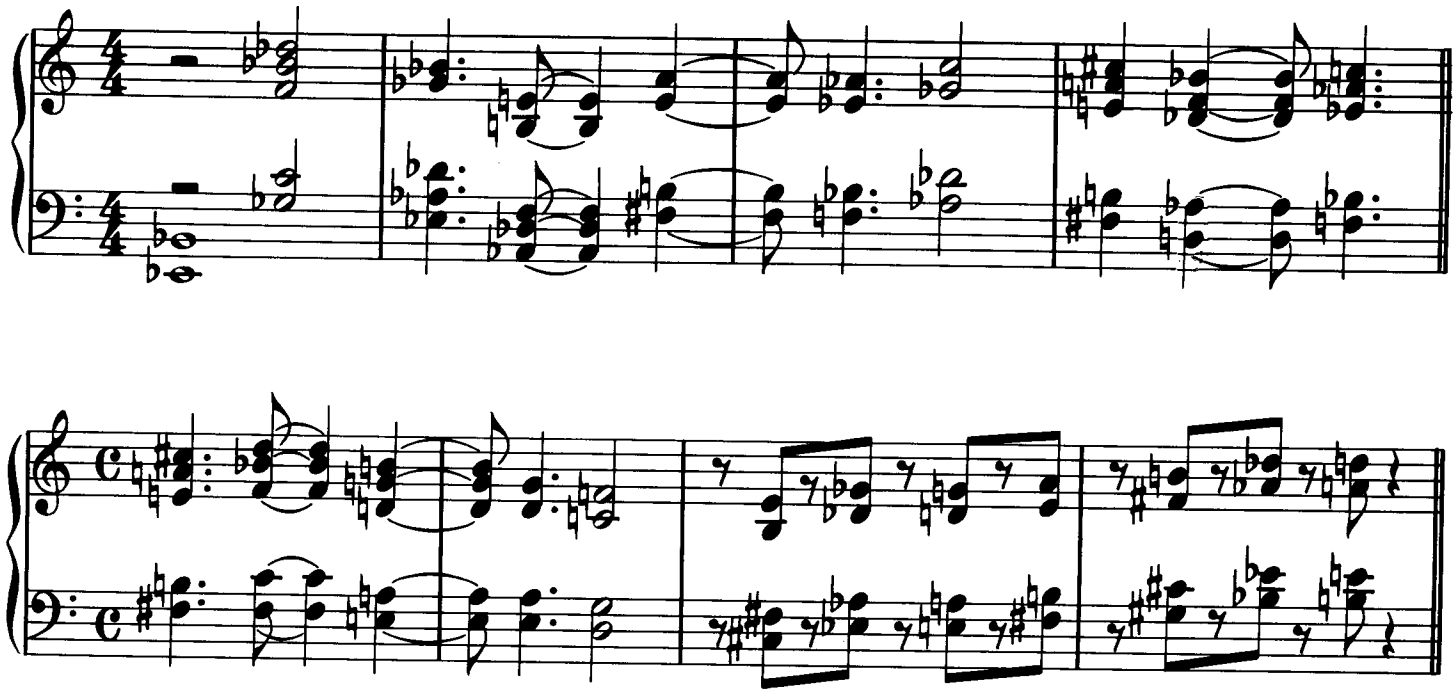
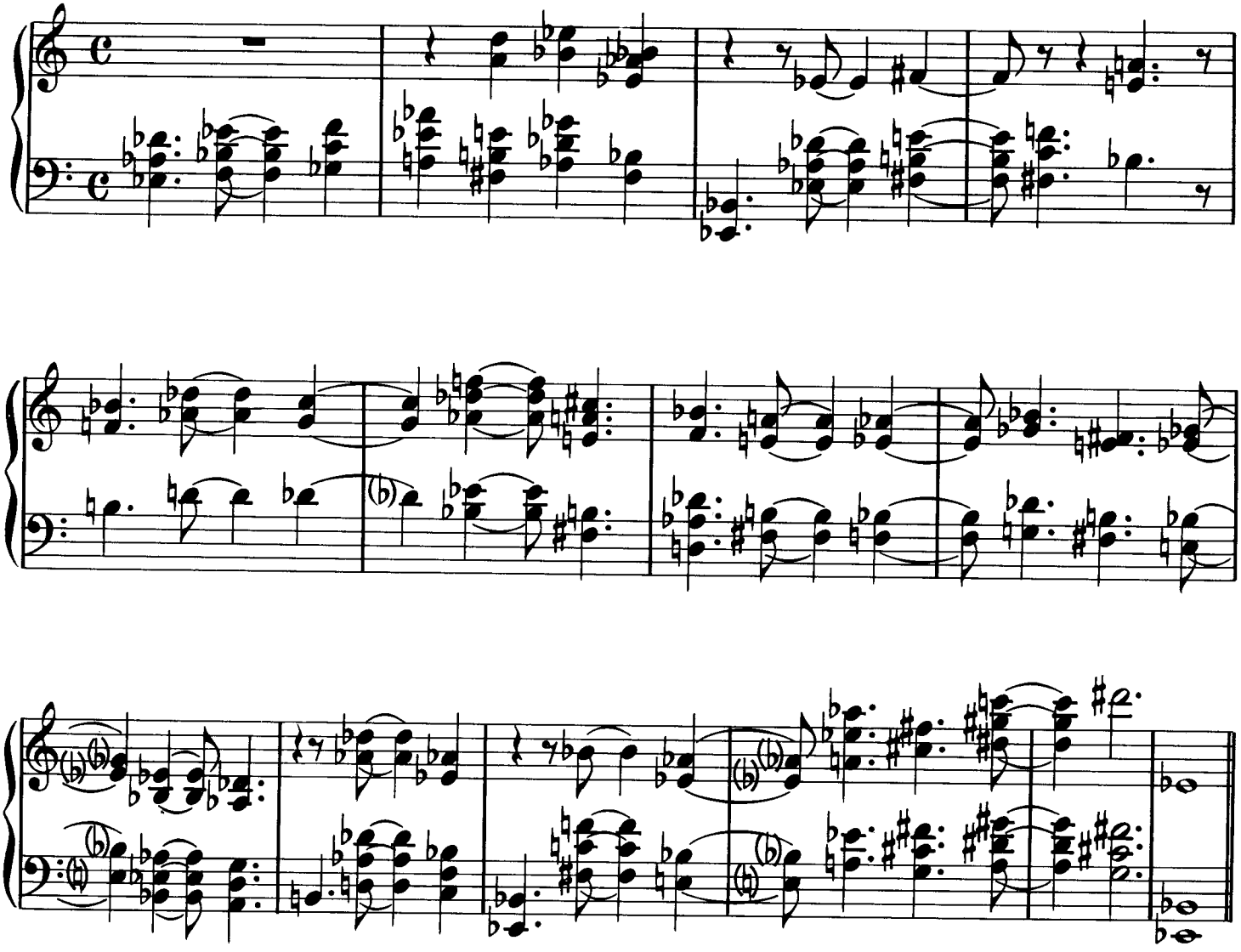






Chordal Riffs in the Modal Style





Discography

(Records marked with an * are especially recommended)

Charlie Parker, Fats Navarro and Bud Powell	*Kings of Jazz*, vol. 1	KLJ-20010
Pepper Adams	*Pepper Adams, Donald Byrd Quintet*	Warwick 2041
Red Garland Quintet	*Red Garland Quintet*	Jazzland 987
Dizzy Gillespie Sonny Rollins Sonny Stitt	*Dizzy, Rollins & Stitt*	Verve 8477
Wynton Kelley	*Wynton Kelly*	Riverside 12-254, 12-298
John Coltrane	**Live at Birdland*	Impulse A-50
	**A Love Supreme*	Impulse A-77
	Crescent	Impulse A-66
	Olé	Atlantic 1373
	Believer	Prestige 7292
	Bahia	Prestige 7353
	**Giant Steps*	Atlantic 1311
	Black Pearls	Prestige 7316
	**Impressions*	Impulse A-42
	**Stardust*	Prestige 7268
	Plays the Blues	Atlantic 1382
Chick Corea	*Hymn of the Seventh Galaxy*	Polydor 5536
	Return to Forever	Polydor 1022
	**Romantic Warrior*	Columbia 34076
Miles Davis	**"Four" & More*	Columbia 9253
	In Europe	Columbia 8983
	**Kind of Blue*	Columbia 8163
	**Miles Davis* (2-record set)	Prestige 24001
	Miles Smiles	Columbia 9401
	My Funny Valentine	Columbia 9106
Bill Evans	*Everybody Digs Bill Evans*	Riverside 6090
	**Explorations*	Riverside 6038
	**Portrait in Jazz*	Riverside 12-312
	**Village Vanguard Sessions*	Milestone 47002
Charlie Parker	*Bird on 52nd Street*	Jazz Workshop 501
	**Charlie Parker vol. 2*—BeBop	
	Charlie Parker vol. 3—Le Jazz Cool	
Sonny Rollins	**Night at the Village Vanguard*	Blue Note 1581
McCoy Tyner	**Trident*	Milestone 9063
Art Tatum	*Discoveries*	Ultraphonic 3029