

The Music Of New Orleans

America's Most Important Musical City



It's From Everywhere, and It Is Everywhere

- ☐ **There is not a single genre of American popular music that was not, in some way, influenced by the music of New Orleans**
- ☐ **Jazz, Blues, Rock, R&B, Funk, Rap, Pop, Country, and more all have elements of New Orleans music**
- ☐ **These elements were distilled from three basic sources: sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and Western Europe**

Development of Rhythmic Grooves

Contradanza



Tresillo



Clave Pattern

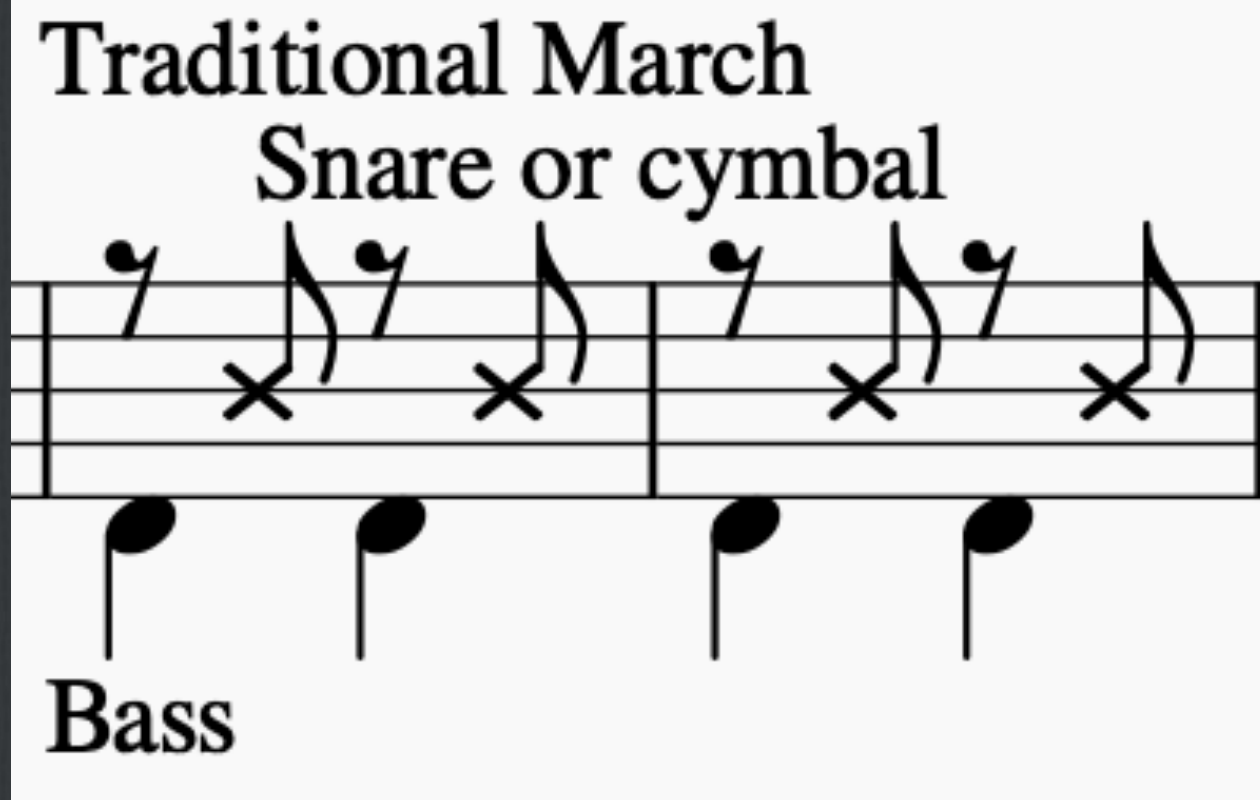


- ❑ Basic rhythmic patterns of NOLA music, and later, many other genres, are Tresillo and Clave
- ❑ Contradanza has cloudy origins, but was likely French or Spanish in origin
- ❑ Made its way to Cuba, became the tresillo through the influence of enslaved Africans
- ❑ Developed by Cubans into the clave pattern, which got to NOLA later

More Rhythmic Development

Traditional March

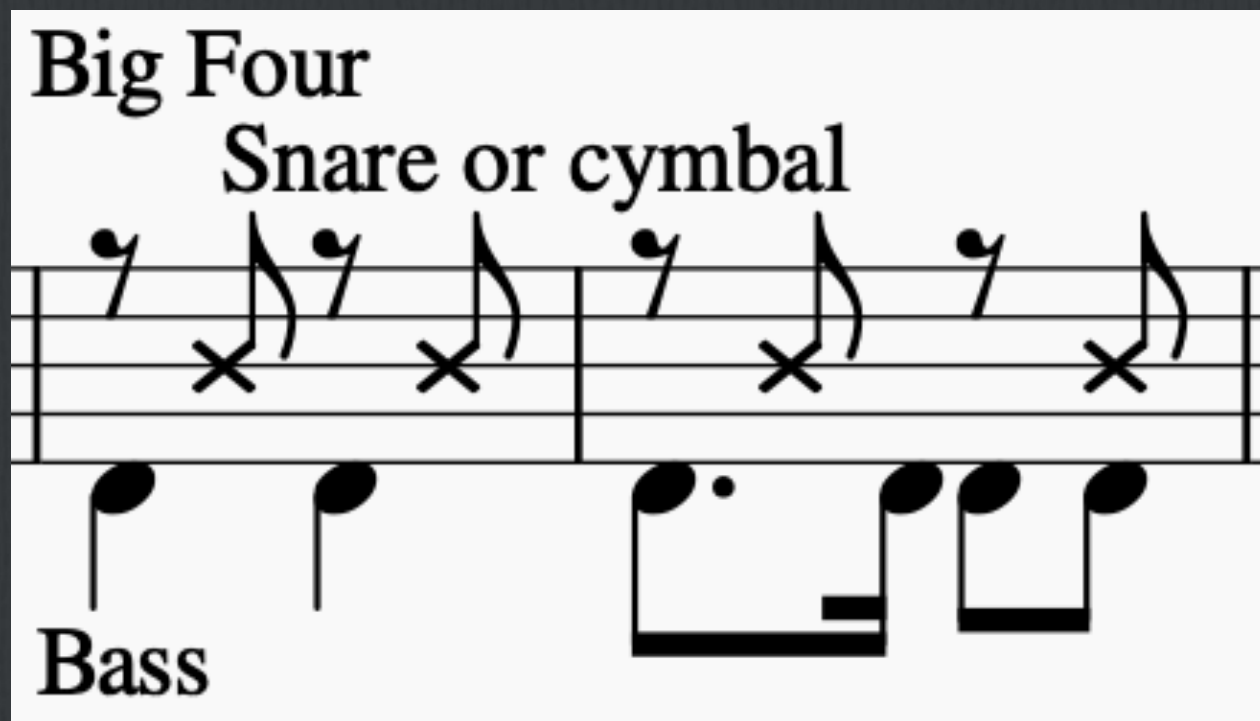
Snare or cymbal



Bass

Big Four

Snare or cymbal



Bass

- ☐ Tresillo/clave were combined with European influences in late 1800's NOLA due city's diversity
- ☐ European military bands played marches with on-the-beat bass drum patterns (top)
- ☐ Buddy Bolden is credited with the "big four" feel, adds contradanza to the European march
- ☐ This is a possible start to syncopation in jazz

Didn't He Ramble/Poinciana

**Buddy Bolden's "Big Four" pattern in a NOLA standard from the 1800's
and a jazz standard from Ahmad Jamal in the 1950's**

Second Line Parades

- ☐ **1800's musicians would play on daily ferries running from NOLA to Havana, where the tresillo/contradanza rhythms came from**
- ☐ **Enslaved people in NOLA spent Sundays in Congo Square, where they held ring shouts**
- ☐ **French and Spanish style military brass bands were a major presence in NOLA at this time**
- ☐ **These three cultures coalesce in the second line**

Second Line Continued

- ☐ **Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs formed assist black residents with medical and burial costs, as white insurers refused to cover them**
- ☐ **This led to what is now known as a jazz funeral**
 - ☐ **Starts with a dirge, with brass and snare/bass drum**
 - ☐ **Once buried, the deceased has then been “cut loose” and a celebratory parade begins**
- ☐ **The parade is led by the brass (European) and followed by the drums playing tresillo rhythms (Cuba) and people dancing steps similar to those from Congo Square with the “big four” rhythms (Africa)**
- ☐ **Now, second line parades occur for all sorts of events - marriage, graduations, etc., as well as most Sundays in NOLA**

First: The Dirge



- ☐ A trumpet player will communicate what song is to be played by playing the first few notes of the song
- ☐ This will be followed by a perfect fourth bugle call to indicate the key
- ☐ The snare drummer will then do a press roll, and the bass drummer will indicate the start of and tempo of the song with four hits
- ☐ From there, the band joins

Just a Closer Walk With Thee

Extremely slow march, can also be used for the celebration portion

Then: The Celebration

27

Snare

Trumpet

Big Four

- ☐ Once the casket is in the ground, the drummer turns the snares on and plays a traditional street beat to set the tempo
- ☐ The trumpet player then plays a melodic line indicating an up tempo song, plus the bugle call to indicate the key
- ☐ The bass drummer, often with a cymbal attached to the drum, will then play the big four beat to start the band up

I'll Fly Away

Common jazz funeral song, as are many Christian hymns and spirituals

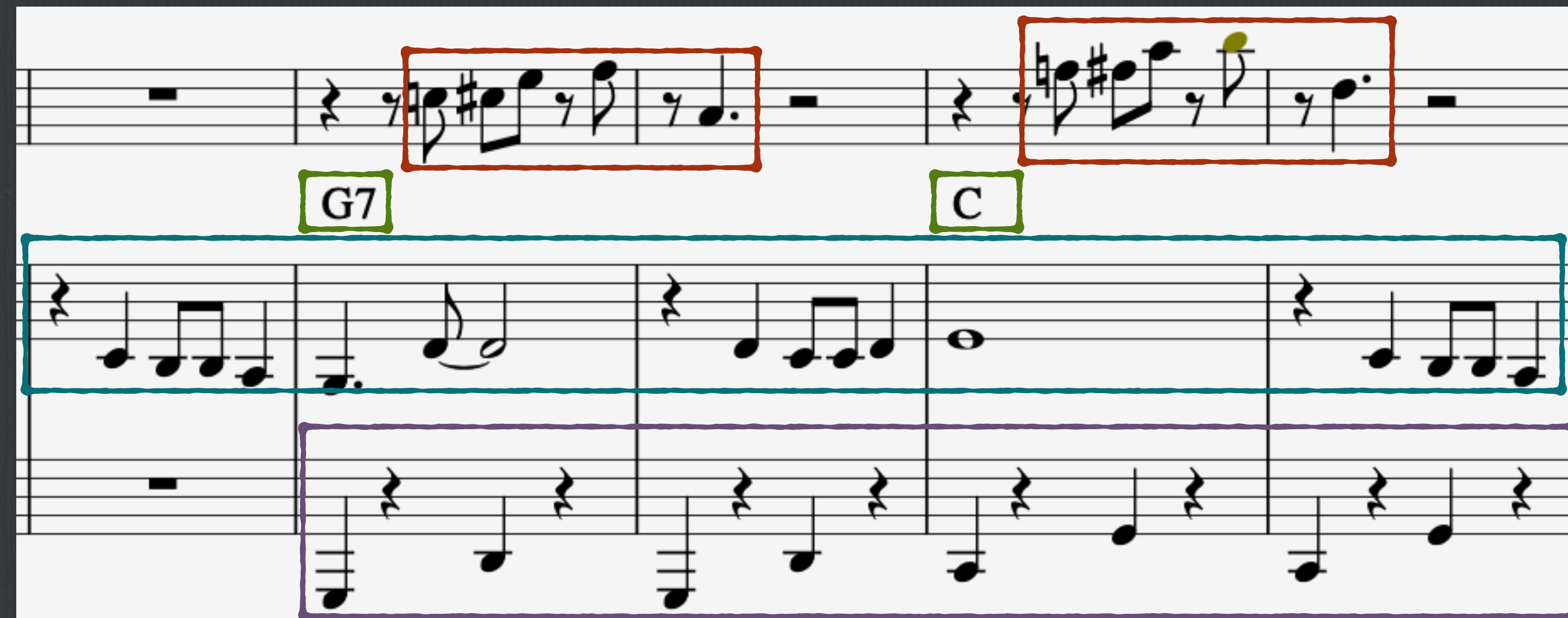


Louis Armstrong



- ☐ One of the most important figures in 20th century music
- ☐ Born in NOLA, grew up in the time of Bolden, second lines, and more
- ☐ Was taken under the wing of King Joe Oliver, also cut his teeth on riverboats
- ☐ Eventually would take music from collective improvisation to solo improvisation
- ☐ One of the pioneers of scat singing

Second Line Style Improvisation



The image displays a musical score for a jazz ensemble, illustrating the 'Second Line Style' of improvisation. It consists of three staves. The top staff features a melody with two phrases highlighted by red boxes. Below these phrases are green boxes containing the chord symbols 'G7' and 'C'. The middle staff, enclosed in a blue box, shows a variation of the melody. The bottom staff, enclosed in a purple box, provides a rhythmic accompaniment using eighth notes and rests. The notation is in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

- ☐ Second line music would feature collective improv
- ☐ Trumpet would play variations on the melody (blue), clarinet would play small phrases around it (red), tuba and trombone would play accomaniments (purple) based on the chords (green)

Armstrong's Improvisational Style



- ☐ Armstrong took the second line style and eliminated the clarinet and the melody
- ☐ Instead, he'd use the chords (provided by the rest of the band) and improvise entirely new ideas around them as the only soloist (above)
- ☐ This led to jazz becoming a music for solo playing, rather than ensembles

On the Sunny Side Of The Street

New Orleans and Louis Armstrong Standard

NOLA Piano Style



- ☐ One of the most distinct exports of NOLA
- ☐ Combines elements of ragtime, tresillo, blues, boogie woogie
- ☐ Earliest progenitor of the style was Louis Gottschalk, NOLA born classical pianist
- ☐ Among the first to combine Creole, European, African, and Latin rhythms in the mid-1800's
- ☐ Next was Jelly Roll Morton
 - ☐ Combined the tresillo rhythms with parade rhythms and ragtime
 - ☐ One of the first jazz pianists

Professor Longhair and Dr. John

- ❑ Professor Longhair came to prominence in the 40's
- ❑ Played a lot with Caribbean/Cuban musicians, which led him away from the tresillo and towards the clave
- ❑ Requires immense coordination between hands and a particularly agile left hand
- ❑ Relied on right hand blues licks



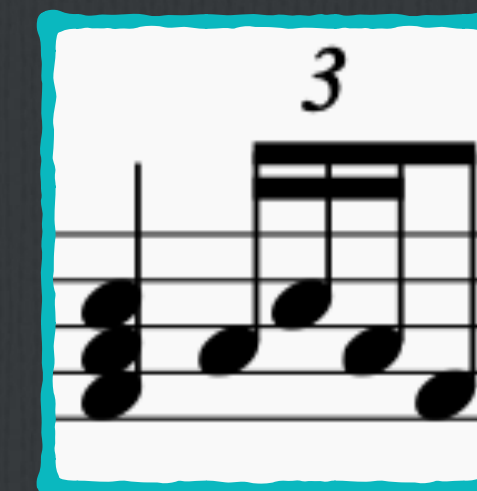
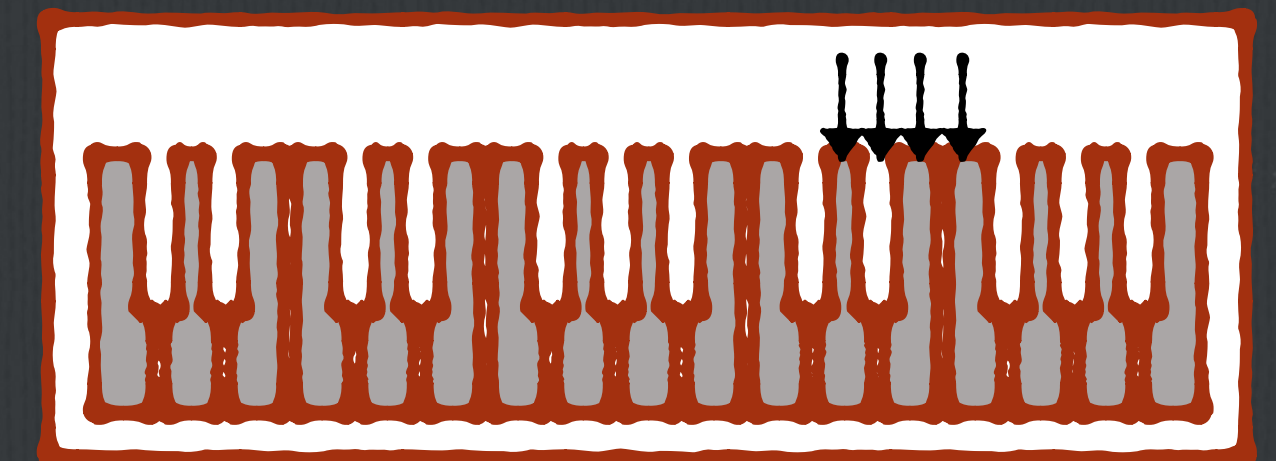
Dr. John

- ☐ Professor Longhair influenced many pianists, with Dr. John being one of his closest adherents
- ☐ Born Malcom Rebennack, he started as a guitarist until an injury led him to the piano, where he developed a Professor Longhair like style
- ☐ Was one of the “Wrecking Crew” musicians, played on hits by Cher, Canned Heat, and Frank Zappa
- ☐ Became a blues legend, appeared in movies, musicals, commercials, etc.
- ☐ His integration of New Orleans voodoo culture into his act made him one of the most important promoters of New Orleans culture



Dr. John/Professor Longhair Style Playing

- ❑ Example on the next slide is from Professor Longhair's "Tipitina"
- ❑ Important elements include:
 - ❑ Walking up chromatically (without skipping any notes) to a new chord (red)
 - ❑ Extremely active left hand (green)
 - ❑ Sixteenth note triplets breaking up the chord (blue)
 - ❑ Right hand thirds (orange)
 - ❑ Octaves on the fifth and sixth notes of a chord (purple)



44

Measures 44-46 of a musical score. Measure 44: Treble clef has two eighth notes (D4, E4) boxed in purple; Bass clef has eighth notes (D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3). Measure 45: Treble clef has a triplet of eighth notes (F4, G4, A4) boxed in teal and a pair of eighth notes (B4, A4) boxed in orange; Bass clef has eighth notes (D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3). Measure 46: Treble clef has a complex chordal structure with multiple flats boxed in red; Bass clef has eighth notes (D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3).

47

Measures 47-49 of a musical score. Measure 47: Treble clef has a triplet of eighth notes (D4, E4, F4) boxed in orange; Bass clef has eighth notes (D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3). Measure 48: Treble clef has eighth notes (D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4) with a triplet bracket; Bass clef has eighth notes (D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3). Measure 49: Treble clef has a pair of eighth notes (D4, E4) boxed in orange; Bass clef has eighth notes (D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3).

50

Measures 50-52 of a musical score. Measure 50: Treble clef has a pair of eighth notes (D4, E4) boxed in purple; Bass clef has eighth notes (D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3). Measure 51: Treble clef has a pair of eighth notes (D4, E4) boxed in purple; Bass clef has eighth notes (D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3). Measure 52: Treble clef has a pair of eighth notes (D4, E4) boxed in purple; Bass clef has eighth notes (D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3). A dashed box with an arrow points to measure 52.

Mardi Gras In New Orleans

**One of Professor Longhair's most influential songs, covered by Dr. John,
among many others**

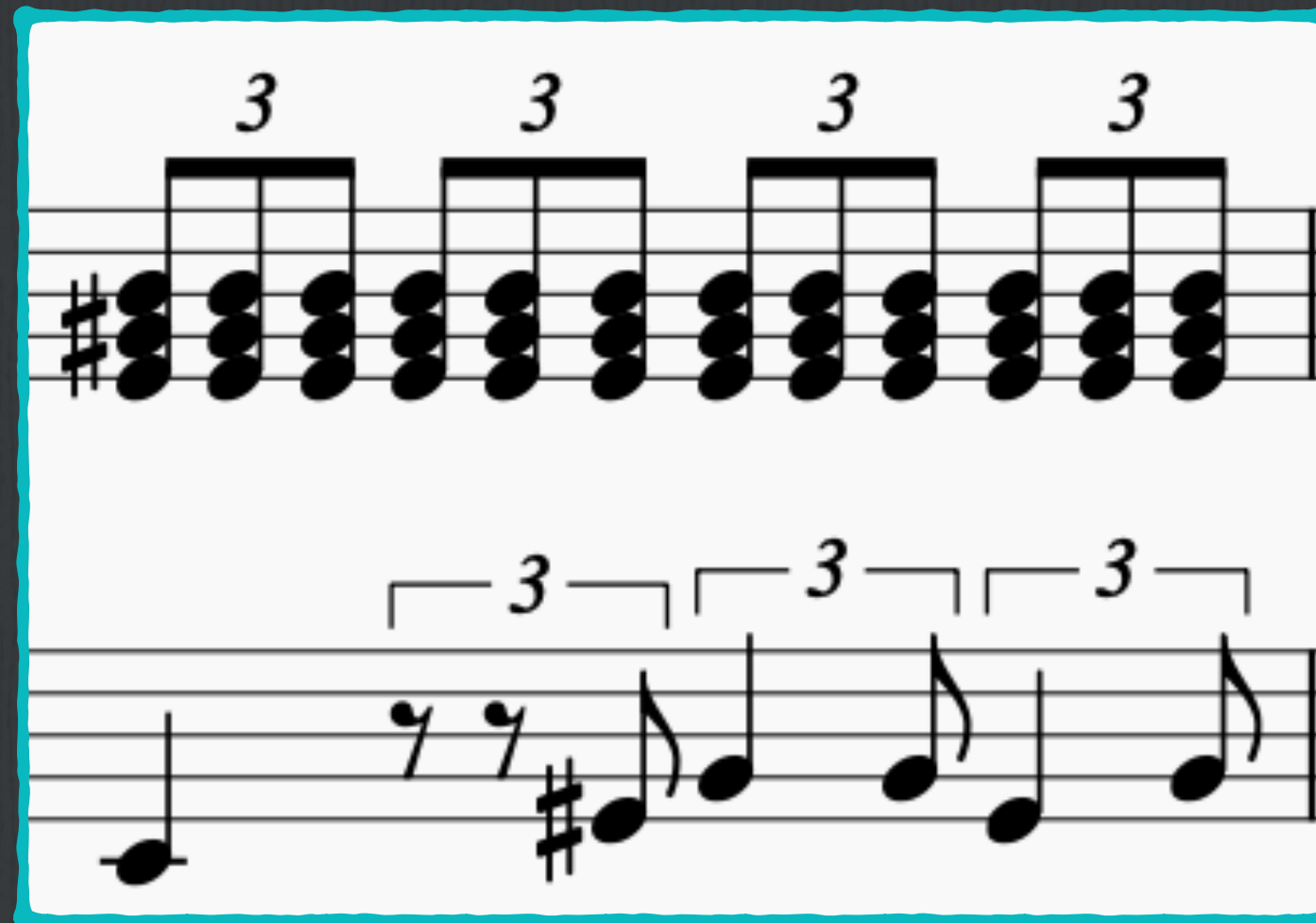
Other Professor Longhair Descendents and Early R&B and Rock and Roll



- ☐ They used the tresillo rhythm in the bass (above), which became the foundational rhythm of early rock and roll
- ☐ Professor Longhair had the influence, Fats Domino made the money with his inspiration
- ☐ Elvis took these concepts for “Hound Dog” and got the most credit and attention

- ☐ Dave Bartholomew - jazz trumpeter, influenced by Armstrong
- ☐ Important figure in the transition from jump blues and swing to R&B and rock and roll
- ☐ Best known for his work with Fats Domino, also extremely influenced by Professor Longhair

Fats Domino and Professor Longhair



- ☐ Fats Domino's piano playing was simpler than Dr. John's or Professor Longhair's
- ☐ Relied less on hand independence
- ☐ Plays consistent right hand rhythm against an easily aligned left hand rhythm

Walkin' To New Orleans

**Fats Domino hit by Bobby Charles with a Dave Bartholomew arrangement
Later covered by many zydeco artists**

New Orleans and the Origins of Funk

- ☐ **Funk music largely came from different applications of New Orleans rhythms, especially the tresillo and second line rhythms**
- ☐ **Key NOLA artists that aided the development of funk music were Allen Toussaint (a producer and pianist musically descended from Professor Longhair) and the Meters**
- ☐ **Toussaint and the Meters worked together in the mid-60's, playing second line rhythms and jazz influenced chords to create funk**
- ☐ **James Brown, the first popularizer of funk music, was largely successful because his rhythm section was using these NOLA based concepts**

Second Line Rhythms in Funk

- ❑ The tresillo rhythms in NOLA R&B was placed in two bars of 4/4, and in the clave pattern (green)
- ❑ Each note of the pattern served as an accent point, and the eighth notes were swung while the sixteenth notes remained straight
- ❑ The Meters would condense this pattern to a single measure and put strong emphasis on beat one, slow down the tempo
- ❑ Took the clave pattern out of the drums, accented 2+4



Drum accents

Bass accents

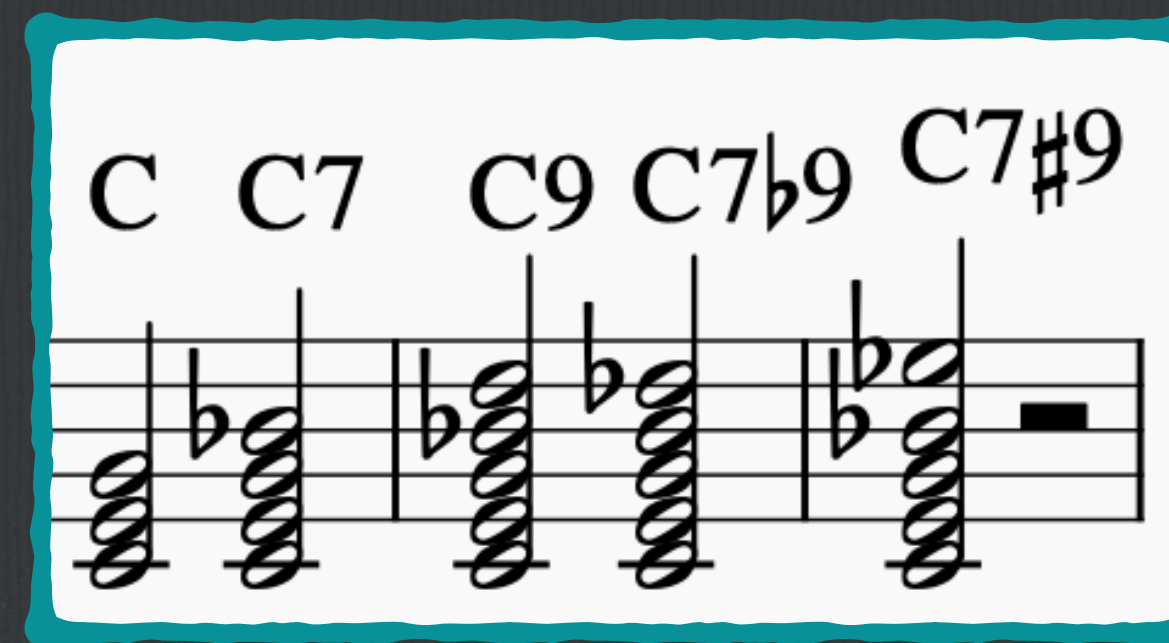
The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled 'Drum accents' and features a series of rhythmic marks: a quarter note, a quarter rest, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The bottom staff is labeled 'Bass accents' and features a series of rhythmic marks: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. Both staves are enclosed in a blue rectangular border.

Funk Harmonies and Chords

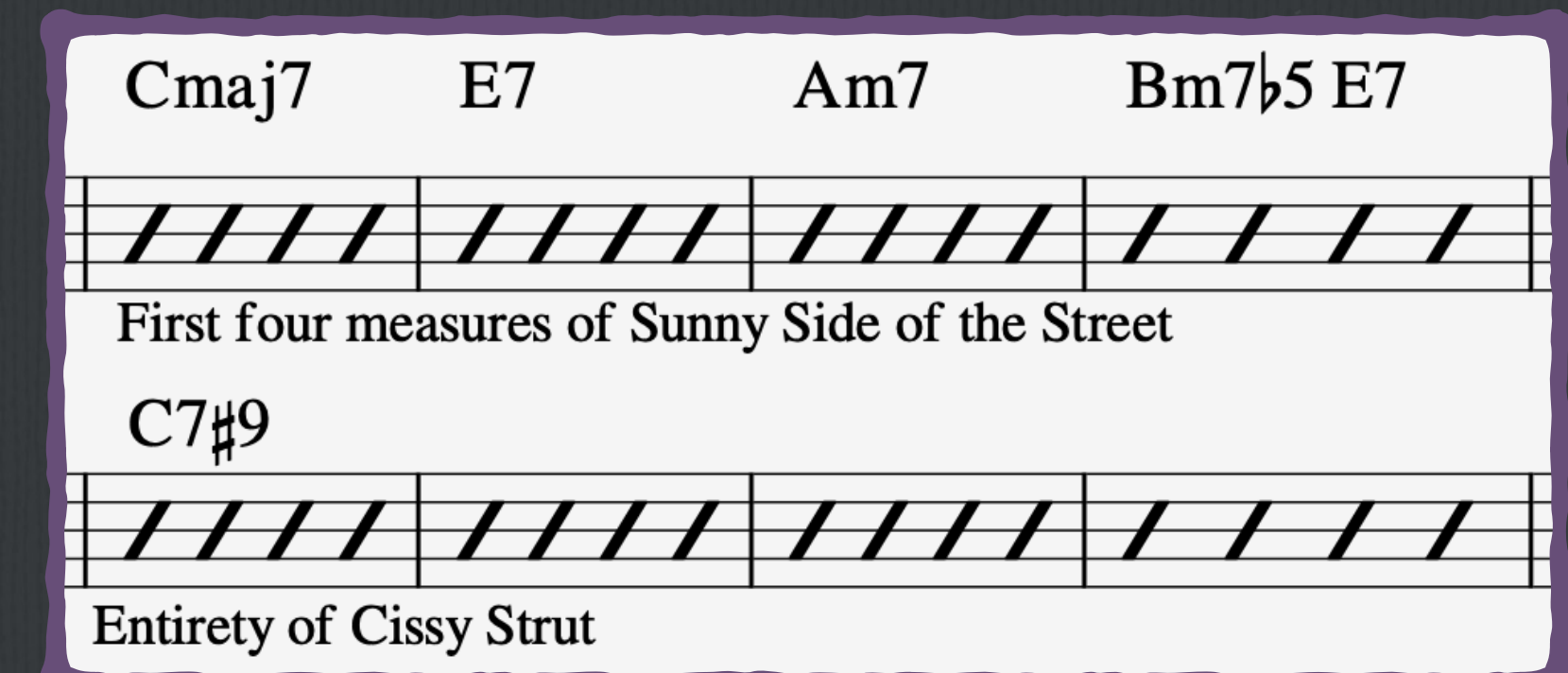
- ❑ The notes used in funk chords are borrowed from jazz chords that originated with many NOLA musicians
- ❑ Jazz musicians took regular chords based on major scales (red) and stacked other notes on top to make more interesting chords (blue)
- ❑ Funk musicians took those more interesting chords and sat on them for minutes at a time (rather than rapid fire chord changes like in jazz)



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
(1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8)



C C7 C9 C7 \flat 9 C7 \sharp 9



Cmaj7 E7 Am7 Bm7 \flat 5 E7

First four measures of Sunny Side of the Street

C7 \sharp 9

Entirety of Cissy Strut

Cissy Strut

The Meters, 1969 - Reached number 4 on the R&B chart, produced by Allen Toussaint

Later Combinations of Brass Bands and Funk

- ☐ Musicians and bands like Trombone Shorty, Rebirth Brass Band, Dirty Dozen Brass Band, and Preservation Hall Jazz Band added elements of funk music to the traditional brass band sound in the 70's, 80's, and 90's
- ☐ Preservation Hall in particular is an excellent example of a traditional brass band expanding their horizons with funk music
 - ☐ Originally, the band played religious songs and old NOLA/jazz standards, like "I'll Fly Away," "Mood Indigo," or "My Bucket's Got A Hole In It"
 - ☐ These often featured simple but regular chord changes and a traditional instrumentation of all wind instruments, drums, banjo or piano, and solo voice
 - ☐ Later pieces by the band feature group singing, electric bass, and static chord changes, like "Keep Your Head Up"

Old Pres Hall V. New Pres Hall

B♭ 7



Vamp 1 continues under horn lines

B♭ 7

For more vamp



B♭ 7



Keep your head up high

keep your head up high

B♭ 7 Clarinet



Trumpet

Trombone

Banjo/Piano



Tuba

Keep Your Head Up High

Preservation Hall Jazz Band - 2019

New Orleans Standards

- ☐ Despite NOLA's heavy association with jazz, the jazz standard rep and NOLA rep are very different
- ☐ Jazz standards:
 - ☐ Written in Tin Pan Alley in the 30's and 40's or by NYC based jazz musicians in the 40's-60's
 - ☐ Typically include complex chord changes and intricate melodies
- ☐ New Orleans standards:
 - ☐ Written by NOLA natives like Armstrong, Professor Longhair, King Oliver, etc.
 - ☐ Simple repetitive melodies and chord changes, or pre-1930's jazz standards
 - ☐ Later NOLA standards were not necessarily jazz ("Iko Iko," "Cissy Strut," or "Little Liza Jane")

New Orleans Standard

- Three chords: C7, F7, G7
- Repeated melody on first two lines

The musical score for 'New Orleans Standard' is presented in three staves. The first staff, labeled '13 A C7', contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The second staff, labeled '17 F7', continues the melody. The third staff, labeled '21 G7', includes the instruction 'On Cue To Coda' and features a repeated melody on the first two lines. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots. Chord symbols C7, F7, and G7 are placed above the staves to indicate the harmonic structure.

Jazz Standard

- ❑ Melody with many notes
- ❑ Chord changes every two beats, many different chords

A A \flat 6 A dim \flat 7 B \flat m 7 E \flat 7 A \flat 6 E \flat m 7 A \flat 7 D \flat maj 7 G \flat 7

5 A \flat 6 F m 7 B \flat m 7 E \flat 7 **1.** Cm 7 F 7 B \flat m 7 E \flat 7 **2.** A \flat 6 G \flat m 7 B 7

Little Liza Jane

**New Orleans Standard - performed by Harry Connick Jr., Preservation Hall
Jazz Band, Professor Longhair, Fats Domino, and others**

Lousiana Ballads

- ☐ Much of the early folk music of Louisiana were ballads brought by the Acadians, Spaniards, and Frenchmen, and passed on in Creole and Cajun culture
- ☐ These ballads were largely unaccompanied, but were later played on two fiddles, then on diatonic accordions, and then various other instruments
- ☐ Lyrical content was often sad, about loneliness, the hardships of life on the frontier, and failed romances. This is where much of the basis of country music comes from
- ☐ This ballad tradition made its way into blues music as well, and many songs were written about the devastation caused by hurricanes

Louisiana 1927

Ballad by Randy Newman (born in LA but partially raised in NOLA) about the Great Mississippi Flood of 1927, which displaced 630,000 and put nearly 27,000 square miles underwater in LA, AR, and MS

Mardi Gras

- ☐ The best known example of NOLA culture
- ☐ Essentially a carnival celebration, occurring between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday, culminating in the two weeks before Ash Wednesday and on Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras Day)
- ☐ Known for the parades, put on by Krewes and SAPC's. Each Krewe and SAPC puts on a parade at some point over the course of the two weeks, with the biggest and most elaborate coming during the final week
- ☐ The Krewes also put on masquerade balls, though they are typically private
- ☐ Parades have floats, "throws," music, masks, flambeau, doubloons, and more and take place throughout the city
- ☐ The music associated with Mardi Gras is largely based in the brass band tradition from the SAPCs

When The Saints Go Marching In

**The most famous NOLA standard - associated with brass bands, Mardi
Gras, Louis Armstrong, and more**

Zydeco, Creole, and Cajun Music

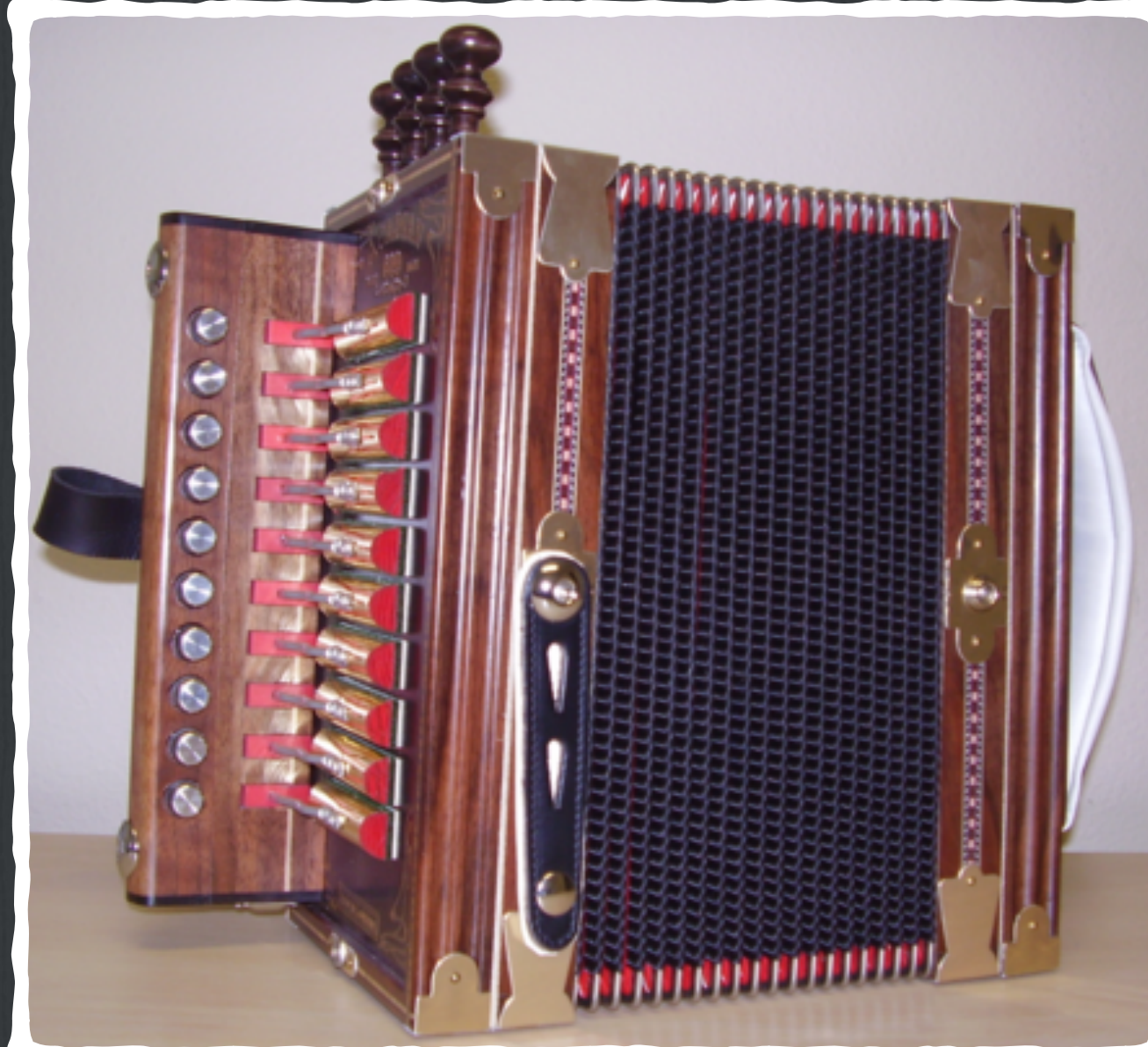
- ☐ **Cajun music: came from Acadians, a French ethnic group deported to NOLA from Canada by the British after the French-Indian War**
 - ☐ **First noted in early 1800's - largely accordion and fiddle based, started as ballads but became dance music, heavily influenced country music**
- ☐ **Creole music: comes from French Louisiana. Complicated cultural history - Africans, Spaniards, and Native Americans, music is influenced by all three musical traditions, and is more accordion and percussion based**
- ☐ **Zydeco music: dance music descended from Creole and Cajun music. Accordion and washboard based, with a full rhythm section. Also took influence from the blues, R&B, and soul**

Zydeco, Creole, and Cajun Music

**Buckwheat Zydeco on
a keyboard accordion**



**A diatonic cajun
accordion**



**A washboard (aka
vest frottoir, rub board)**



Throw Me Somethin' Mister

Zydeco standard by Buckwheat Zydeco - based on a twelve bar blues form