

“SOUNDTRACK FOR THE IMAGINATION”: THE CAREER AND COMPOSITIONS
OF WAYNE SHORTER

by

JUDSON COLE RITCHIE

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Texas Christian University
Fort Worth, Texas

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“If anyone can sing me one of the tunes Wayne Shorter’s quartet played, I’ll give ‘em five bucks.” These are the words of the jazz band director at a local community college in East Texas a few years back. Having known this director for a few years, he allowed me play saxophone with his ensemble over the summer. The previous spring semester, his group had been invited to play at a jazz festival in Vermont where Shorter (b.1933) was one of the headliners. Needless to say, these musicians were a little unsure of to what to think about the music.

I had been exposed to Shorter only a year prior but my experience consisted only of his earlier recordings on the Blue Note label. The saxophonist had just formed an acoustic quartet for the first time in over three decades and released his album *Footprints Live!* At the time, I had not heard this CD and was confused as to why these musicians felt his melodies were both unsingable and unmemorable. The Blue Note tunes were unorthodox, but captivating in their quirky mannerisms. However, after I purchased his latest recording, I quickly realized I could not understand its message. It is possible with Shorter’s music that the deepest meaning still eludes me to this day and will for years. Like many musicians who first “discover” amazing musicians in a similar manner, I placed the disc on my shelf and ignored it. It was too new and sounded nothing like what I was accustomed to. At the time, I was listening to the blues-influenced playing of Cannonball Adderley and the big bands of Stan Kenton, Buddy Rich, and Count Basie. The only connection I saw between my preferred jazz music and Shorter’s was their location in the record store. Shorter’s songs were just random notes by someone trying to be too artsy for his own good. This was not music for the people. It was not even entertaining. It was just weird.

In the years since, my musical experiences have broadened my perception to embrace this style of composition, and my opinions about Wayne Shorter have changed. I credit my epiphany to his very next album, *Alegria* (Portuguese for “joy”), in particular track number four: Shorter’s interpretation of Hector Villa-Lobos’s *Bachianas Brasileiras* No. 5. If you ask any Wayne Shorter fan, they know this song well. The entire album is a masterpiece, garnering Shorter a Grammy for the first track, “Sacajawea.” He had played with the two biggest combo leaders of post-bebop jazz: Miles Davis and Art Blakey. He co-led a major jazz-rock fusion group that produced some of the very best of that particular style of music. His compositions line the books students from middle school through college and beyond study note-for-note. Still, promoting this tenor player to other musicians can be an arduous task. Why is he so often dismissed by musicians saying, “That stuff is too weird for me,” or, “This crowd is not the kind of crowd you play Wayne Shorter to?”

This musician has a mystique, a persona that often dominates the music. In his New Jersey high school, the slang term for something strange was, “As weird as Wayne” (Mercer 33). When my freshman year saxophone teacher introduced me to Shorter’s music, he commented on Shorter’s musical and philosophical ideas by claiming that Shorter was a “Space Astronaut.” However, everything Shorter has done musically has been in the name of progress. Shorter meets the same hostility that all musicians and artists face when presenting something that goes against the stand. His struggle is the same as Claudio Monteverdi’s when he applied the *seconda pratica* in madrigals like “Cruda Amarilli,” as the epic battle between Viennese music critic Eduard Hanslick and the Brahmsians against the Wagnerites, and the infamous receptions of the music of Igor

Stravinsky and of Arnold Schoenberg. Even jazz music went through this same battle numerous times. Bebop rebelled against the big band era and avant-garde (affectionately called the “New Thing”), headed by Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor. Another member of the jazz avant-garde, the venerable John Coltrane, rebelled against all conventions of musical structure. Today’s conflict stems from the jazz purists such as Wynton Marsalis against jazz progressives. Until Shorter’s return to the acoustic setting, critics often touted his creative works. His music, however, has continued to push the boundaries, and his voice, under his own direction once again, is finally being heard.

By analyzing Shorter’s compositions throughout the course of his career, a clear lineage of compositional techniques and intentions will become apparent. The predominant theme of creativity by the unconventional manipulation of elements established in the construction of all music explains many of the artistic choices his current group has developed. Throughout his career, Shorter’s ingenious harmonic progressions and formal constructions have helped him earn an iconic status in many jazz circles. His music is reputed as difficult and idiosyncratic yet often appears on recordings of other artists as proof of their own prowess in navigating the material. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the inner workings of Shorter’s musical journey and his compositions to better understand the saxophonist’s unique creative process.

While the young Shorter had always been interested in creating the world around him, he did not start this process with music. Born in Newark, New Jersey, in 1933, his mind concentrated on art, film, and books (Mercer, *passim*). His main access to the music world was when his father tuned into the radio show *Make Believe Ballroom*, hosted by Martin Block, but Block mainly stayed with the big band popular music of the

time (26). One night, the radio host hesitantly decided to branch out and play bebop recordings, including Thelonious Monk's "Off Minor" and songs by Bud Powell and Charlie Parker (27). The music changed Shorter's way of thinking immediately, but not his interests in playing it. He and his older brother, Alan, would still at that point rather go to the movies and memorize the soundtracks (Ibid.).¹

The Shorter brothers' creativity was always nourished by their mother, who often did the boys' chores for them so that they could continue to play with the water colors or clay she had bought for them (Mercer 13). Shorter and his brother were allowed to work in their own separate realm from the rest of the world. School was not a main interest, but his artistic talent was recognizable, and as such, he was enrolled in Newark's Arts High School (22). That school would spawn musical personalities such as singer Sarah Vaughan, trumpeter Woody Shaw and poet LeRoi Jones (who later changed his name to Amiri Baraka).

The first instrument Shorter practiced in school, like many saxophone players, was the clarinet, but he soon found aptitude for the saxophone, music theory, and ear training (Mercer 30). According to his classmates, Shorter also had an aptitude for bebop style and its eclectic mentality. Wayne Shorter and his brother delighted in both their music and their own outsider status (33). The Shorter brothers thought and acted how Wayne would later compose: pushing socially established boundaries and reveling in unsettling those in their comfort zone.

After leaving high school, Shorter moved to New York (a pilgrimage made by many aspiring jazz musicians) but his intention was to earn the education of both the jazz

¹ Alan Shorter was a serviceable trumpet player and even appeared on his brother's Blue Note record *The All Seeing Eye*. The two played together throughout high school, but Alan moved farther into the avant-garde jazz scene than his younger brother ever really considered.

clubs and New York University. Just as Shorter had graduated and was getting acclimated to the jazz world, he was drafted into the military (Mercer 53). It was peacetime, but for the promising saxophonist, “going into the army meant the River Styx, so [he] was playing like it was the last time” (54). After a successful stint with the army (he was asked to stay on as a sharp shooting instructor but rejected the offer), he returned to New York. There, he met, practiced, and absorbed ideas from John Coltrane and discovered that they both played out of technique books written for string instruments. Coltrane, who was playing with Miles Davis’ group at the time, wanted to pursue his own projects and urged the aspiring young tenor to call the enigmatic trumpeter and ask for a job. Davis was offended and profanely said ‘no,’ yet it would only be a few years later that Davis himself would be making the recruiting call. The rejection by Davis did little to deter Shorter (who was beginning to earn a reputation and received the nickname the “Newark Flash”) from playing and composing as his first opportunity with a jazz icon loomed on the horizon.

Chapter One: Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers

In 1959, the “Newark Flash” auditioned and won a job with Maynard Ferguson’s Big Band, due in part to an introduction by Ferguson’s piano player and Shorter’s friend and future bandmate of seventeen years, Joe Zawinul (Mercer 62). This gig, however, was destined to be only temporary as Shorter, Ferguson and bandleader of the Jazz Messengers, Art Blakey, all knew that Shorter was a small group saxophonist, not just another horn in a big band (65). At the Toronto Jazz Festival on July 24, 1959, Blakey managed to pry away his future musical director one month after Shorter joined Ferguson’s ensemble (64).

Shorter would ultimately spend five years with Blakey’s Jazz Messengers, and as previously mentioned, would receive the moniker of musical director due to his prolific, complex, and tuneful compositions. He would participate in over thirty-one recordings with Abdullah Ibn Buhaina (Blakey’s assumed name after converting to Islam), most of which, even from the beginning of his stay with the group, included songs composed by the saxophonist. The ever-changing lineup would feature such jazz luminaries as trumpeters Lee Morgan and Freddie Hubbard, trombonist Curtis Fuller, pianists Walter Davis, Jr., Bobby Timmons and Cedar Walton, bassists Jymie Merritt and Reggie Workman, along with the legendary Blakey on drums. The Messengers were the first group of professional musicians that would play Shorter’s elite compositions the way he envisioned them. This ensemble, the true first stop in Shorter’s illustrious career, allowed the composer to begin to stretch his compositional muscles.

Two weeks after Shorter’s initial recording with Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers on *Africaine* (Nov. 10, 1959, though not released for another 20 years), the Messengers

recorded a live album in Stockholm in which the drummer announced a new tune that was “hot off the griddle” (Goldsher 61). The song, “Lester Left Town,” is prototypical of Shorter’s early writing style, though the music was focused on the nostalgic feel of the early jazz pioneers. The genesis of his career-long experimentation manifests here in the relationship of the melody and the harmony. Chromaticism and abstract harmonic movements (in comparison to the established rules of harmony in Western music and jazz) in both of these aspects illustrates the composer’s emphasis on an aural depiction of a mental image. Shorter dedicated the piece to the late Lester Young, who had died in March of that year, and composed his melody around Young’s famous swinging style, ambience, and walk (Artist Transcriptions 1st edition 47).

He had a way of walking, and the descending chromatic notes, which have a tempo of their own, pictorialize [*sic*] Lester Young walking at a fast pace. His walk was something that people commented on quite a bit. They said he walked as if he was walking on eggshells. (47)

Shorter’s use of visual imagery in the music, a skill that would dominate most of his compositions, particularly his later works, is obvious in the Messenger’s U.S. recording of the song released on March 6, 1960, a Blue Note Records album entitled *The Big Beat*.

The form of the piece is in the standard AABA song form, but Shorter has doubled the typical number of measures used from 8 to 16. The song begins with a chromatic descent from a D to a G and emits a bouncy, light emotion that establishes the tone and impression of the music from the first downbeat (Example 1.1). Shorter’s apparent love for chromaticism is noticeable even at this early point in his playing career.

The opening riff, a technique tracing back to the Lester Young's early career in Kansas City with groups such as Count Basie's band, includes only three intervallic jumps larger than a half step: the pick up and the last two notes. The chordal harmonies Shorter chooses for the first eight bars are nothing out of the ordinary. The first three measures comprise a minor ii-V-i progression ($Dm^{7b5}-G^7-Cm^7$), and the fourth chord of the four-measure pattern moves down a minor third to an Am^{7b5} , setting up the repeat of the minor ii-V-I progression, as it is the dominant of the Dm^{7b5} .



Example 1.1 "Lester Left Town," measures 1-4.

After repeating the riff twice, Shorter uses an arpeggiated line to emphasize the third four-bar phrase of the A section. Measures nine through twelve of this part of the tune begin to demonstrate the harmonic talents of the young tenor player. The chord moves from the Am^{7b5} in the eighth bar down by a minor 3rd again to an Fm^7 chord in the ninth measure. This is followed with a leap to a C^bm^7 , emphasizing the diminished fifth or tritone. This technique, the tritone substitution, was commonplace during this time jazz history.² The composer uses the C^bm^7 substitution as a prolongation of the Fm^7 and as the link between the two before a descending chromatic chord progression of $E^7-E^bm^7-$

² A tritone substitution is a technique in which the improviser plays the scale that starts on the diminished fifth above the root of the written chord in order to facilitate improvisation on a larger number of altered chord tones from the actual chord and creates a solo outside the normal changes. This technique often works as a chromatic link in a ii-V-I chord progression. In the ii-V-I tritone substitution, the dominant is replaced with the chord based on the diminished fifth, allowing the descending chromatic motion (e.g., $Cm^7 - \underline{F^7} - B^bMaj^7 \rightarrow Cm^7 - \underline{B^7} - B^bMaj^7$). Shorter's use of the tritone substitution does not follow this rule.

D^{7#9}. Shorter has taken the descending chromatic motif from the opening riff and transposed it into the chord changes. Shorter accents the beginning of the chromatic descent by writing a note in the melody that sounds strongly against the chord progression. On the upbeat of three in the tenth measure, Shorter (and Lee Morgan on trumpet in the recording) plays a concert E^b against the written dominant F^{b7} chord, the major seventh interval rather than the indicated minor (Example 1.2). To accentuate the dissonance further, he approaches this note via an ascending perfect fourth. Given the way the line is written, with the E^b as the peak note of the melodic movement, the dissonance is naturally accented by the performer.



Example 1.2. “Lester Left Town” Measures 9-10.

The final chord of the third four-measure section uses the tritone substitution once again, and again Shorter bucks the traditional usage of the technique. The movement from a D^{7#9} to an A^bMaj⁷ sets up another descending minor third interval to begin the final four measures of the A section. Shorter uses the interval of a third seven times in the melodic phrase, and the framing of the measures by the use of the interval in the chord changes counters the previously emphasized chromaticism.

The final four measures of the A section not only extend the arpeggiated idea from the previous four measures but also begin the rhythmic transition into the B section, or bridge, by introducing notes of longer duration than a half note. Prior to that point, the A section contained one half note and one eighth note tied to a half note while the final

four measures have four notes that are at least a half note in length. The presence and prominence of the longer notes strengthens the argument for the rhythmic transition into the bridge. The B section features ten of these rhythmic durations, including the first note (omitting the pickup), which is held for seven-and-a-half beats. The chord changes are reasonably standard with a major ii-V-I progression in both the first and second endings, and a V-I in A with chordal alterations ($E^{7\#9}$ - A^{7b5}).

The transition from the fourteenth measure into both endings presents a remarkable sequential and intervallic movement. The first ending contains a ii-V-I in A^bMaj^7 , which requires a chromatic movement from the A^{7b5} in measure fourteen to the B^bm^7 in measure fifteen, and creates a tritone intervallic leap back to the beginning of the A section (A^bMaj^7 to Dm^{7b5}). For the second and subsequently final iteration of the A section following the bridge, Shorter changes the final ii-V-I to the tonal center of E^b major. This change allows a minor third intervallic movement in the fourteenth to fifteenth measures and creates a major second transition to the bridge: E^bMaj^7 - Fm^7 . Shorter's juxtaposition of the two intervallic types, the highly dissonant chromatic and diminished fifth, against the major and minor third, structurally eases the transition.

The B section follows this organizational formula in an opposite fashion, beginning with slower, tertian movement and transitioning back into the A section with rapid chromatic ideas. As mentioned above, the first important note of the bridge lasts nearly two measures, and an intervallic movement that is smaller than a minor third does not appear until measure twenty-four of the section. The first half-step movement of the bridge is in the twenty-eighth measure. The harmonic progression does, however, demonstrate secundal movement following another major ii-V-I. The chord progression

is exactly the same as the second ending from the A section, but it lasts three measures rather than two. The E^b dominant chord in the third measure begins a whole-step descending line that mirrors the chromatic descents located in the A section. From measure twenty-one to twenty-four, the chord progression descends into a position enabling Shorter to create another ii-V-i (though the one chord is minor) in the key of G.

Example 1.3 “Lester Left Town” Measures 19-34.

Shorter has once again used the melody purposefully to clash with the chordal structure, yet continues melodic sense when viewing the line horizontally. In the twenty-second measure, Shorter repeats the G that he had played in the twenty-first, but the location in the chord is drastically different. With the secunda descent in the harmonic changes, this note recreates the diminished fifth tonality. The pitch’s location adds a subtle dissonance for the listener as it resides at the beginning of the line, only a quarter note in length, and the lowest pitch in an ascending line.

Following the ii-V-I progressions use as a period on the end of the harmonic sequence, Shorter returns to descending chromatic chord changes. Similar to the use of whole step motion down to the ii-V-I, measures twenty-six through twenty-eight feature a

descent of $E^{m7b5}-E^{b7}-D^7-D^bm^7$, and the final chord serves as the supertonic of a ii-V-I in the key of C^b major. Shorter continues his use of the standard jazz compositional building block as a period at the end of his harmonic statements.

The final measures of the bridge, in contrast, feature the supertonic to dominant as the phrase itself. Measures thirty and thirty-one of the B section contain a ii-V-I in the key of A^b major, and after a half-step movement down to a G^{m7b5} in measure thirty-two, Shorter writes a “turnaround” or a series of supertonic/dominant/tonic movements where the tonic becomes the next supertonic in the series. Interestingly, the composer manages to conclude his bridge with a ii-V-I in A^b , which is incidentally the same chord progression used to return to the top of the A section in the first ending. This movement again establishes a tritone progression back to the final iteration of A.

The melodic movement over the last four measures of the B section serves as a transition back to the opening riff. Shorter changes the direction of the movement in measures thirty-one and thirty-two by ascending to a G, the root of the chord, and then descending into a sequential pattern. The last two measures of the bridge, along with the fourth beat of measure thirty-two, focus on the movement of an ascending major second followed by a minor third. This sequence furthers the idea behind the “turnaround” back to the A section.

“Lester Left Town,” while an early example of the compositional methods of Wayne Shorter, does demonstrate a number of techniques he uses extensively in his later writings. He explores the juxtaposition of textures and forms, such as the chromatic melody and harmonies, and places the same notes in different contexts to illustrate the chordal motion. The melodic movement is not nearly as oblique as many of his later

tunes, but his intense use of chromaticism in both the melody and chord changes, his expansion of the standard form, and his use of conventional jazz compositional ideas (i.e., tritone substitutions and ii-V-I progressions) in unconventional ways, are all staples of the Shorter repertory.

The inclusion of Curtis Fuller on trombone in 1962 not only expanded Blakey's horn line and hard bop sound, but also the breadth of Shorter's compositional options. Prior to the introduction of the third horn, the composer, who according to Fuller was prolifically writing two to three songs each week but abandoning most, could not fully voice his chords in the melodies (Goldsher 63). Shorter immediately put his newly acquired ability to compose melodic triads in the Messenger context to use.

One year after Fuller's recorded debut with the group on *Mosaic* (Oct. 2, 1961 for the Blue Note label), Shorter submitted a composition for their next recording: *Caravan* (Oct. 23, 1962 for Riverside/OJC). Shorter's thickly orchestrated "This Is for Albert" served as the tenor player's tribute to bebop pianist Earl "Bud" Powell (Goldsher 62). The reasoning behind the title of this dedication is really only known to Shorter, but the tune itself serves as a strident chordal exercise for composer and band alike. This piece displays an early example of Shorter's style of orchestration that showcases a simple harmonization over the composer's developing sense of unconventional harmonic movement.

Following eight-measure introductions for both the bass and then the piano, the form is standard AABA song style with each phrase eight measures in length. The A section of this piece is broken into two separate four-measure ideas. The first division features a unison line in all the horns, while the second half splits into chords with the

trumpet on the top note, trombone on the bottom, and Shorter in the middle. The composition begins simply, a trend carried over from the introduction. Shorter only uses four chords in the first half of the A section, but not surprisingly, he manages to work in his personal harmonic ideas. The chromaticism of the chord changes (GMaj⁷-A^bMaj^{7#11}-Am⁷-D⁷) accents the sequential melody (Example 1.4).

The opening melodic statement of “This Is for Albert” focuses around an “off-beat” rhythmic idea and a four-note phrase, the top note of which is repeated. Shorter writes the chords to fit the melody, hence the presence of the augmented fourth (sharp eleven) in the second measure to accommodate the repeated D over the A^bMaj⁷. Similar to the writing in “Lester Left Town,” the intervals in the melody are close, as the minor third is the largest leap in either direction. The D dominant seventh chord in the fourth measure acts in a variety of ways. It is the dominant chord to the tonic GMaj⁷ from the first measure and it is the tonic chord in the V-I progression from the third to the fourth. This chord also parallels the heavily altered D^{7#5(b9)} that concludes the A section. A D chord serves as the ending of the B section as well, placing a specific emphasis on this note as the tonal center.

The second half of the A section begins with homorhythmic chordal harmony in the melody, but the chord changes played in the rhythm section are not overly complex. Shorter follows the D⁷ in measure four with a descending whole step from to Cm⁷, which begins a turnaround to an A^bMaj⁷ chord: Cm⁷-F⁷-B^bMaj⁷-E^{b7}-A^bMaj⁷. He uses the first four chords to speed up the harmonic rhythm behind the chordal texture in Blakey’s front line by changing the harmonies every two beats. The final movement from the A^b major

chord to the altered $D^{7\#5(b9)}$ adds a tritone movement, with Shorter's technique of writing them in unexpected situations such as this one.

Example 1.4 “This is For Albert,” measures 1-8

In terms of the melodic chords used in the A section, Shorter writes only ternary triads in root or in second inversion except for the final chord. In the first two chords, the placement of the trombone within the chord determines the inversion written. For the second two chords, Shorter writes them in root position so that Fuller would play the seventh and root of the F^7 rather than the thirteenth (sixth) and the seventh. Shorter avoids the upper extensions of the chords in this manner as they do not fit into the traditional Jazz Messenger style, which is closer to Rhythm and Blues than the ethereal sounds that voicing a melody so far away from the chordal structure often creates.

After following the sequential melody through its second iteration, the penultimate measure of A features a harmonic movement of a descending fifth and repeats the same movement in the final measure. The second chord of the pattern, however, changes from its first instance to the second in the trombone. The seventh measure displays the movement of an E^\flat triad to an A^\flat triad on top of an $A^\flat Maj^7$: the basic V-I chord progression. The tritone movement in the chord changes, coupled with the trombone decent (this time descending to an F^\sharp) complicates the established harmonic

pattern from measures five through seven. Over the $D^{7\#5(b9)}$, the chord voiced contains an E^b in the melody, a C^\natural in the tenor harmony, and the above mentioned $F^\#$ (enharmonically a G^b). The chord highlights the third, seventh, and flatted ninth, but may also be interpreted as a diminished triad built upon the seventh, which is flatted in this chord (subtonic). While a subtonic diminished chord is not necessarily out of the ordinary, ending a phrase (specifically the A section of a song form) with this chord most assuredly is. This chord's link into the bridge explains this bizarre ending to the A section. The initial chord of the B section is composed of E^b , G^b , and B^b , the same chord that was before the C diminished sonority. What is noticeable is the presence of two of the same chord tones: E^b and G^b . The only real movement between the chords is B^b to C and its return. Shorter has managed to move beyond the traditional jazz and classical chordal movement and explains it away with a simple secundal idea. While this motion is counteractive to the standards of western theory, there is logic in the idea that emphasizes Shorter's preponderance for intuitive composition.

The bridge of "This Is for Albert" is entirely composed of homorhythmic chordal movement in the horn line. The chord changes in the B section are not any more erratic than the changes found in the A section, but Shorter's idea of using larger intervallic leaps in between the V-I progressions continues. The first four measures of the bridge include two dominant-tonic relationships revolving around interconnections of the tertian interval. Measure nine's A^bm^7 is a major third from measure eleven's Em^7 and the D^{b7} in measure ten is a minor third from measure eleven and a major third from measure twelve (A^7). The A^7 then changes positions and assumes the role of dominant to the chord in the first half of measure thirteen: $DMaj^7$. Shorter completes this measure with a turnaround

ending to the B section, moving the band down from a Bm⁷ in the second half of measure thirteen to the GMaj⁷ in the beginning of the A section's reiteration. The D^{7b9} as the final chord of the bridge mirrors the final chord of the A section with the exception of the augmented fifth.



Example 1.5 "This Is for Albert," measures 9-12.

In terms of the melodic line, which due to the homorhythmic persistence should be analyzed as a whole instead of individual instruments, the sequential or repeated ideas from the A section give way rhythmically and harmonically to a dramatic climax in the eleventh measure. The presence of the quarter-note triplet in the tenth measure, a rhythmic idea that has not surfaced thus far in the tune, draws immediate attention as Shorter builds to the GMaj⁷ chord in whole notes on top of the Em⁷. The F[#] played by the trumpet is the peak note of the piece, and the openness of the chord itself (a seventh chord in root position omitting the third) contrasts the two consecutive first inversion seventh chords, which voiced dissonances in the higher-ranged instruments. Shorter heightens the significance of this three-measure phrase by writing this idea as the tag ending to the piece.³ Shorter elongates the whole-note chord in the final measure so that the band ends on the highest tone in the melody.

³ A tag ending is an added group of measures to the end a song used as a conclusion similar to a coda, but is often an exact repetition of material used in the melody.

The bridge of “This Is for Albert” features a greater number of dominant seventh chords, many of which are in third inversion. This voicing places the dissonance between the trombone and tenor saxophone parts and allows the melodic line in the trumpet to soar over the top. The third inversion seventh chord idea takes precedence in the second half of the B section: only two chords (the penultimate and the first, which is held over from the twelfth measure) are expressed in root position. The purpose of the penultimate chord is to draw attention to the trumpet’s role as the melodic retransition back into the A section. This is an E minor chord in root position over an Am⁷ chord change with the trumpet voicing the B as the fifth. That specific note serves as both the ninth of the chord expressed in the rhythm section and the melodic idea coming to a close. The next chord also has the trumpet on a B above the staff, but the chord has changed to a D^{7b9}, and the instrumental harmonies present a B⁷ in third inversion. The band returns to the harmonic texture of the second half of the bridge and moves the trumpet’s B from the ninth scale degree to the thirteenth. Shorter presents this note for two measures as an upper extension and then plays this same note again, displaced by an octave, as the unison B at the beginning of the return to the A section.

Rhythmically, the bridge has no sequential ideas, a stark contrast to the A section. Shorter uses harmonic motion and heavy syncopation to draw attention to the most important chords in the line. As mentioned above, the ascending triplet moves the melodic line up to the GMaj^{7(omit 3)} in the eleventh measure. A drum flurry in this measure from Blakey accents the importance here as well. Coming out of this chord in measure twelve, Shorter uses a descending sixteenth-note run to maintain the energy after Blakey’s solo. The other chord the composer wishes to accent (outside of the final chord

which is enhanced harmonically rather than melodically) is a half-note chord on the second beat of measure fourteen. It is essentially the same harmonies as the chord before it with the exception of the descending half step in the trumpet, but it is expressed on the beat as opposed to off. The previous three chords are all presented on an upbeat, yet this chord fools the listener by waiting a full beat of rest and entering strongly on the second beat. This slight pause serves as the pivot point for the rhythmic dynamic in the final four measures of the bridge.

Before returning to the head (the melody of the tune) to end the song, Shorter has written a shout chorus that retains many of the elements of the bridge. It is essentially an alternative melodic idea for all horns over the same chord changes. The changes used here are slightly simplified in that there are fewer alterations, but the general movement is the same as the original chords. Often in larger ensemble music, the shout chorus can be the loudest section of the music, but in “This Is for Albert,” its usage creates a different effect. The soothing emotions emitted in this section are created through the wave-like motion in the chordal movement and transition well into the main melody. The A section moves up in pitch, as a group, and then descends from the climax which, parallel to the bridge section, is in the third measure. The B section of the shout chorus does evoke more energy in the syncopated and repeated chords, particularly in the thirteenth measure. The natural phrasing is similar to that of the previous segment, but the motion is less dynamic and relies more on the rhythm to accomplish the emotional goals of the music.

Like the majority of the melody, the entire shout chorus is written homorhythmically and chordally, but several of the voicings Shorter elects to write in this

section are not as conventional as those harmonics in the melody. Shorter begins with a quartal/quintal chord that accents the fifth, ninth, and thirteenth extensions of the written G major. The use of this chord is to intensify the dissonance between the two lower instruments and create an easy stepwise movement in the upper two voices to the next chord: a B minor in first inversion. The voice leading in both the shout section and in the tune itself minimizes large jumps to create the intricate progression in the chords. The largest intervallic leap in the shout section (the trombone with a descending fifth) helps create the most bizarrely constructed chord of the piece. Shorter writes the trumpet on an F natural, the saxophone on a C natural, and the trombone on F[#]. This voicing places the interval of a perfect fourth between Shorter and Freddie Hubbard (the trumpet player in this recording) and a tritone from Shorter to Curtis Fuller. The interval of a major seventh between trumpet and trombone further complicates a chord that contains the third, flatted third, and flatted seventh scale degrees. This highly dissonant chord contrasts not only the flowing feel of the shout section but also the conclusion of its A section. The chord here is the same in the tenor and trombone, but the trumpet plays an E natural. This voicing makes the chord a supertonic half-diminished seventh chord omitting the third scale degree to the D^{7#5(b9)}, which is a chord that is much easier to analyze harmonically. Shorter, however, has managed to make an acceptable half-diminished seventh chord to conclude an eight-measure phrase.

Wayne Shorter's compositional ideas, which developed through his education in New Jersey and at NYU, progressed quickly in the Jazz Messengers and began to foreshadow his future works. "This Is for Albert" especially looks forward to Shorter's days in the jazz-rock fusion band Weather Report, which he co-led, and his own groups,

where the accompaniments are through-composed and dictated rather than left up to the improvising musicians. In a way, this is the composer's first step toward treating the instruments in jazz as his own orchestra playing "a soundtrack for the imagination" (Mercer 142).

Chapter 2: Shorter's Blue Note Records

Following his tenure with the Jazz Messengers and during his time playing with Miles Davis, Shorter led a number of recordings, eleven to be exact, for Blue Note records. He had become familiar with the label during his tenure with Blakey's band as the drummer recorded seventeen albums with Blue Note in those five years. Shorter could take his compositions in a different direction away from the rhythm and blues-influenced style of jazz of the Messengers and towards his experimental ideas with form and harmonic progressions would finally be under his name completely and would enhance his reputation. During his time with Blue Note, Shorter was never able to lead a group of his own out on the road, as Miles Davis quickly snatched up the tenor player to complete his Second Great Quintet.

Playing with Davis, however, did provide ample time for Shorter to organize prominent musicians for his sessions such as pianist Herbie Hancock and bass player Ron Carter from Davis's band, McCoy Tyner (piano), Paul Chambers (bass), and Elvin Jones (drums) from John Coltrane's working groups, and his friends from the Messengers (Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard, Curtis Fuller, and Reggie Workman). Shorter also tapped into future talents that would play in Davis's electric bands and his own group with Joe Zawinul (Weather Report): John McLaughlin (electric guitar), Chick Corea (synthesizer and drums), Miroslav Vitous (bass), Jack DeJohnette and Alphonse Mouzon (drums), and Airto Moreira (percussion). With these illustrious names in the jazz world, Shorter could write, perform, and record a vast number of what would become standard tunes played today in jazz clubs around the world. In *The Real Book*, the tune compilation that is the cornerstone from which jazz musicians learn and perform, twenty-six of Shorter's

compositions appear. Of those twenty-six, fifteen were recorded on the Blue Note label with Shorter as the leader.

In early August of 1964, Shorter entered the studio for his second recording with Blue Note: *Juju*. For this session, Shorter recruited McCoy Tyner, Reggie Workman, and Elvin Jones to fill out the rhythm section. *Juju* contains a number of critically acclaimed songs including, “Deluge,” “House of Jade,” “Mahjong,” and “Yes Or No.” However, the title track, “Juju,” is the most experimental and innovative of all the songs on the recording. Its awkward chord progression and aggressive melody have drawn Shorter to play this song even with his current touring quartet discussed in chapter 7.

“Juju” is a twenty-four-bar form comprising three clear divisions of ideas although no boundaries are established. Each melodic phrase is four measures long and immediately repeated. The form of the piece and its 3/4 time signature hearken back to the waltz or minuet, but the melody is not one that is usually accepted as danceable. The first section flashes back to modal jazz concepts that began in 1959 with Miles Davis’s *Kind of Blue* and progressed through the music of the avant-garde movement and John Coltrane’s forays into energy jazz. Shorter writes only one chord for this first melodic concept: B^{7#5} (Figure 2.1). The rhythmic line is an alternation between a quarter note and an eighth note and is syncopated as the line starts on the upbeat of three in the pickup measure.



Example 2.1 “Juju,” measures 1-3 with pick-up measure.

This line contains both a riff and sequence concept, but what is so striking about the line is the emphasis on particular scale degrees. The augmented chord here is not merely used to explain an accidental in the melody. Shorter revels in the unsettling nature of the raised fifth by ending his phrase on the note and making it a key part of the sequence. The augmented fifth serves another purpose as well; it allows the melody and improvisers to make use of the whole-tone scale. The whole-tone scale is a resource that was introduced into jazz music by bebop innovators, specifically Thelonious Monk. Throughout the first eight measures, including the sixteenth-note run that serves as a lead into the second, the whole-tone scale is used exclusively. The alternating flatted seventh against the augmented fifth gives this piece the whole-tone characteristic, but the entire line moves the idea down in a scalar fashion, outside of the one major third interval in the penultimate note of the idea. The whole-tone sixteenth-note run as a lead into the second section of the line is the last use of the scale in the piece, but the presence of the whole-tone texture continues in other areas. While this run is only in Shorter's own ornamentation, his usage of the scale is a strong indication that this technique is intended to be in the forefront of the performer's mind.

In stark contrast, Shorter elects to focus on chromatic elements in the second eight-measure phrase. This chromaticism is mainly displayed in the descending chord changes that encompass the first six measures and in strategic placement of important notes in the melodic line. Starting with a $B^{b7\#5}$, which is in itself a descending half step from the $B^{7\#5}$ compromising the first third of the piece, the chord changes descend every two measures through an A^7 and A^{b7} before dropping another major third interval to set up a chromatic move from the Em^7 to the $FMaj^7$ at the beginning of the third section. The

harmonic movements here are logical, and the melody never strays into the higher extensions of the chords, but the presence of the augmented fifth scale degree in the B^{b7#5} leads to some confusion. The melody is strictly diatonic and only incorporates the root, second, and third scale degrees during the two measures where the chord is prominent. Shorter was probably looking at improvisation over the chord rather than the melody. By augmenting the fifth, Shorter is accenting a note that will continue the whole-tone tonality that he established in the beginning of the music. This same note, F[#], will serve as the thirteenth (sixth scale degree but read as an extension) in the next measure, a note that does not work in the whole-tone pattern. With the increase in chromaticism and the absence of extensions in this section, Shorter has used the first two bars and the augmented fifth as a transition away from the whole-tone idea.

Melodically, like the previous and the following section, Shorter composes a riff-like motif which he repeats. While the other two eight-bar phrases use a direct repetition due to their chordal structure, this phrase moves somewhat sequentially in order to stay within the written changes. The direction and rhythm mainly retain the piece's style between the first and second statements in this phrase, as the descending major third in the harmonic progression does not allow for a perfect sequential idea. The half-step descent in measure eleven further highlights a similar movement in the chordal harmonies and allows for the standard melodic motion of the third to the fifth, resolving to seventh scale degree.

The sixteenth-note run in measure twelve may be reminiscent of the whole-tone scale four measures prior, but the idea outlines the arpeggio of the A^bMaj⁷ in measure thirteen – further proof of the switch from the scalar whole-tone into chordal emphasis.

The melody begins the same, although this time it is on the seventh of the chord instead of the root. The intervallic jump in the second and third beats of measure fourteen (A^b to C) brings Shorter into position to repeat the accentuation of the descending half-step to B: the fifth of the chord.

The final interval of the phrase is that of a minor seventh, a contrast to the minor sixth that keeps the melody on all chord tones: fifth, flatted-seventh, and the root. The conventionality of the melody makes this section the most logical of the three eight-measure groups, but these melodic techniques carry over and continue to complicate the piece.

The final eight-measure section features simple melodic ideas and minimal chord changes similar to previous sections, but the chordal harmony in the final grouping creates both melodic and improvisatory interest. Shorter changes chords every two measures in the manner of the middle group, and he alternates here between an FMaj⁷ and a Bm⁷ developing a tritone movement. The melody features the increasing intervallic development of three repeated notes, followed by a descending minor third, an ascending perfect fourth, and finally a descending perfect fifth. Shorter is able to fit this melodic motive into the unconventional harmonies by making the second chord minor. The location of the melody, beginning on the ninth scale degree in the FMaj⁷ chord, actually allows the final two notes (which move over the bar line that carries the chord change) to play the third of the first chord and the flatted third of the second. The vacillation between these two primary chordal textures makes “Juju” extremely appealing for improvisers as it naturally supports the tritone substitution. A musician such as Shorter could elect to read the changes as they are, read the entire passage as one chord accenting

the upper extensions in the other, or possibly play them backwards relying solely on the chordal extensions for improvisation.

“Juju” is an improviser’s treasure as it features an undemanding melody but allows the performer to experiment with chromaticism, the whole-tone scale, and tritone substitutions. Its triple-meter waltz-like figure offers another trait that can provide a challenge for the soloist, forcing a reinterpretation of ideas originally created for a 4/4 time signature. The emotional feel of the music itself is uneasy at times, as it values unconventional harmonies like the alternating tritone and ten measures featuring an augmented fifth. “Juju”’s quirkiness makes this piece a favorite for musicians as it provides a change of pace and an opportunity to stretch their ideas farther than many jazz standards permit.

Four and a half months later, in Shorter’s next session for Blue Note records, the saxophonist would record one of his most critically acclaimed albums: *Speak No Evil*. Retaining only Elvin Jones on drums from the previous recording, Shorter draws upon the help of two of his newest band mates with the Miles Davis band, Herbie Hancock and Ron Carter. He also recruits Freddie Hubbard to fill out the front line of the group, but on Shorter’s ballad, “Infant Eyes,” the trumpeter does not make an appearance. While Shorter did write ballads during his time with the Blakey band, the drummer’s “explosive” style was not as accommodating as the mood established with Davis’s group (Cook 54). “Infant Eyes” was written for his daughter, Miyako, with then wife, Irene Nakagami. Shorter’s claims that his inspiration came from the idea that “[he] saw all infancy in Miyako’s eyes, everyone who’s ever been an infant. People reminisce about past stuff and let it take over the present, but with every moment, you’re reborn” (Mercer

87). Shorter's philosophical description of the music demonstrates that the level of profundity in his explanations often matches that of his compositions.

Always an experimenter with musical forms, Shorter constructs "Infant Eyes" in ABA form: a fairly conservative choice in terms of melodic content. The key difference between "Infant Eyes" and the typical jazz ballad is the nine-measure phrase construction. Shorter generally ends his melodies in the eighth measure of each grouping and increases the duration of the final note, so as to move two beats into the ninth. By keeping the same note in the eighth and ninth bars, Shorter can change chords and emphasize a different chord tone in the melody.

As with all ballad tunes, the focus on the harmonic movement is crucial since the musician has more time to think and embellish his ideas. For the most part, Shorter has decided to forgo most of the standard harmonic movement outside of the occasional ii-V or V-I progression. Shorter generally traces the harmonies around the lyricism of the melody, often moving in major or minor seconds from one chord to the next. The first nine chord progressions (one for each measure in the A phrase) feature one minor second and three major second intervallic movements. That emphasis switches in the bridge section to that of the minor second where it is used as six of nine possible intervallic movements including the return to the A section. The chromatic motive in the B section reinforces the sequential motives that serve as the basis for the melody in this section, while the A section's chordal movement works in conjunction with the more dynamic line.



Example 2.2 “Infant Eyes,” measures 1-5

After a short four-bar piano introduction, “Infant Eyes” proceeds with an unaccompanied pickup measure into the tenor saxophone melody. While there is no chord written over this pickup, there are enough similarities to the final measure of the bridge to assume that the composer is looking ahead to the D^{7b9}. Since the nineteenth measure of the music serves as the transition into the A section, it would make sense that this measure works in a similar manner (Example 2.5). In the transcribed version of Shorter’s recording on *Speak No Evil* from the Artist Transcriptions Series *The New Best of Wayne Shorter* published by Hal Leonard his ornamentations are featured.⁴ He focuses on the flatted seventh of the assumed chord and then slides chromatically up to the first note of the phrase. The idea of concentrating on the seventh scale degree to begin the phrase is continued as Shorter plays an F in the Gm⁷ chord. The composer emphasizes the descending major second interval in the harmony by moving to an Fm⁷ and an E^bMaj⁷ in the third and fourth measures respectively.

Thematically, Shorter writes multiple triplet figures in these measures. A listen to the recording provides the support for the saxophonist’s written interpretation. In a slower piece such as this one, it is stylistically normal for the triplet figures to drag slightly behind the beat; however, Shorter takes liberal advantage of this technique, enhancing the anticipation in the audience, but continues to draw out the music beyond its normal standards. As for the melodic notes chosen in comparison to the changes, there is an extensive usage of the ninth scale degree as it is emphasized in the fourth

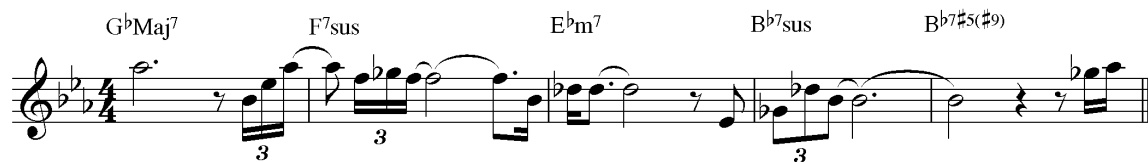
⁴ All the pitches in the Artists Transcription Series are pedagogical transcriptions and thus are written in the tenor or soprano saxophone’s transposed B^b to replicate what Shorter actually played. For the purpose of this thesis, all musical examples are presented in concert pitch.

measure, and the first use of the thirteenth in the music. Both of these scale degrees will grow in prominence throughout the piece.

In the fifth measure, Shorter adds the tritone (by now clearly established as a favorite technique) to move to an A dominant chord with an augmented (and flatted) ninth. The dramatic jump in the chords is echoed in the melody, but it mainly provides the composer with altered melodic tones. Though the written chord places the significance on the augmented ninth, the melody stays on the flatted ninth for all but the final sixteenth note of the measure. If there is one alteration to the ninth scale degree, it is automatically assumed that both possible alterations (flatted ninth and sharped ninth) are present, but it seems odd that the harmonic changes reflect the modification that is not stressed in the measure. Shorter avoids the clashing tendency of the note by using it as a lead into the next measure, where it serves as the major seventh scale degree in the $G^b\text{Maj}^7$.

Measure six employs the triplet figure once again and creates a quartal arpeggiated movement that emphasizes the third, thirteenth, and ninth scale degrees. Shorter introduces linear quartal movement in the previous measure in the B^b to F and draws upon this theme for this measure as well. Changing chords behind longer notes here again accents a peculiar scale degree. The A^b at the conclusion of the sixth measure, following the half-step descent in the harmonic changes to an F^{7sus} chord, moves from the ninth scale degree to the flatted third. As there is a B^b in the previous measure, Shorter is correct in using that note as a suspension in the next. However, due to its brief mention in measure six and the delayed appearance in measure seven, the B^b might sound questionable when it is first played. Placing significance into the flatted third scale

degree appears to establish an alternative tonal center around this note. The presence of the chord with the suspension and the melodic notes in this and the preceding measure (an $E^b m^7$ in measure eight) make up a B^b minor seventh chord. The idea of the melody built around the chord tones of the suspended fourth is reiterated on the next use of the suspension in measure nine. That measure's B^{b7sus} is undermined by the E^b minor chord, which begins on the pickup of the previous measure. Shorter's roundabout use of harmonic organization fits in well with the overall brooding mood of the piece as the same ideas are expressed over the same type of chords.

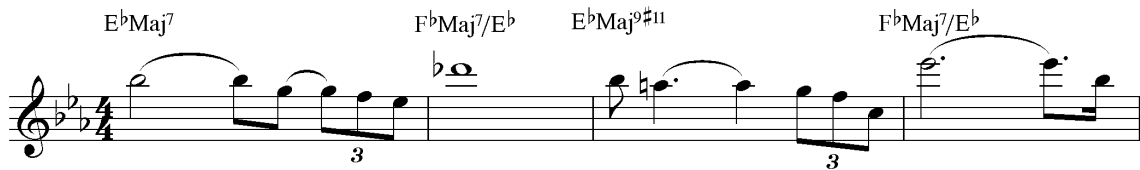


Example 2.3 "Infant Eyes," measures 6-10

The final measure of the A section provides a fascinating set of chordal alterations to move into the bridge. The tenth measure, $B^{b\#5(\#9)}$, highlights both an augmented fifth and an augmented ninth, which provide the voice leading into the $E^b Maj^7$ in the next measure. Aside from the natural dominant-to-tonic pull, these alterations provide leading tones to the third and seventh scale degrees. The leading tone to the fifth scale degree is also assumed with the augmented ninth alteration, as this indicates the presence of the flatted ninth as well. The augmented fifth serves to accommodate the first of the two sixteenth-note pickups to the bridge. The end result of this pull toward the next measure allows the B^b s that conclude the first two phrases to have vastly different emotional functions for each.

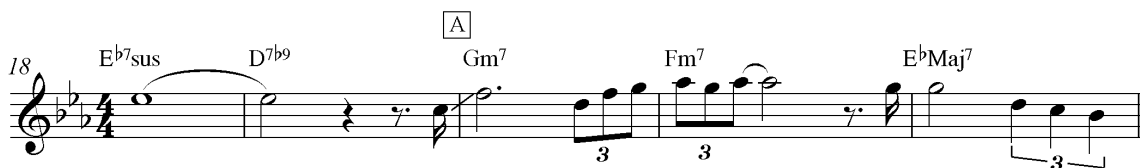
The harmonic movement in the bridge sets up a pattern that alternates between chromaticism and dominant-tonic motion. This is not, however, a strict alternation, in that the number of chromatic moves between the V-I sections decreases with each set. The pattern is initiated with three minor second movements ($E^b\text{Maj}^7$ - $E\text{Maj}^7/E^b$ - $E^b\text{Maj}^{9\#11}$ - $E\text{Maj}^7/E^b$) followed by the V-I to a $C^b\text{Maj}^7$. This next section consists of two minor seconds, both descending, and another V-I. This second dominant to tonic progression returns to the E^b as the tonal center, only this time, Shorter writes it as a suspension. The final chord change of the bridge is a minor second that moves the E^{bsus} into the D^{7b9} , which is the dominant of the Gm^7 that begins the return of the A section. The result of the harmonic pattern is the increased presence of the upper extensions of the chords. There are four specific occasions in the bridge where the melodic note is on a scale degree of the flatted ninth or higher held out for a duration equal to or longer than a half-note.

The first instance of this elongated chordal extension characteristic appears in measure twelve (Example 2.4). Following an eighth-note triplet set in beat four of the previous measure, the melodic line concludes on a D^b over the $F^b\text{Maj}^7/E^b$, a prominent display of the thirteenth scale degree. Shorter also sets up a rhythmic motif that will precede many of the significant notes in the bridge. Throughout “Infant Eyes,” the triplet figure is followed by a note of substantial value, and thus this figure anticipates important structural melodic notes. This idea appears again at the end of the thirteenth measure leading into the fourteenth as Shorter writes another triplet (using the same two notes at the beginning but changing the third to prevent an intervallic leap of an octave) that drives the soloist into the climactic high E^b .



Example 2.4 “Infant Eyes,” measures 11-14

The next two uses of the triplet technique hearken back to Shorter’s treatment of the four-three suspension in the A section. Measure sixteen features a B^{b7sus} chord with the melody containing the root. Despite this apparent emphasis on the B^b as the tonal center, the sixteenth-note triplets that precede the note illustrate that Shorter is actually stressing the minor chord built on the fourth scale degree. The soloist plays an E^b , G^b , and a D (the third, fifth, and ninth scale degrees in C^bMaj^7 written for that measure) which, when added to the dotted half-note duration B^b in measure sixteen, creates an E^bm^7 chord. Measures seventeen and eighteen reiterate this dynamic as the triplet highlights an A^b , C^b , and G^b that lead to the subsequent E^b in the next measure. The E^b is, once again, the root of the written harmonic change: E^{b7sus} . The composer combines altered chordal extensions with a minor suspension by holding the E^b (the last note of the bridge) but shifting the chord down the half-step to the D^{b9} . This last motion before the return to the A section not only moves the chord into position as the dominant of the Gm^7 , but switches the E^b from the root to the flatted ninth.



Example 2.5 “Infant Eyes” Measures 18-22

Throughout the bridge, Shorter has toyed with the listener as his chord changes and melody work in prescribed but unanticipated fashions. The pronounced use of the upper extensions of the chords, altered tones, and situation of the melody against what is written into the chord changes demonstrates the ethereal and spiritual idealism Shorter elicits as his theme and inspiration. Each note is “reborn” with a different connotation depending upon the harmonic structure underneath the melody.

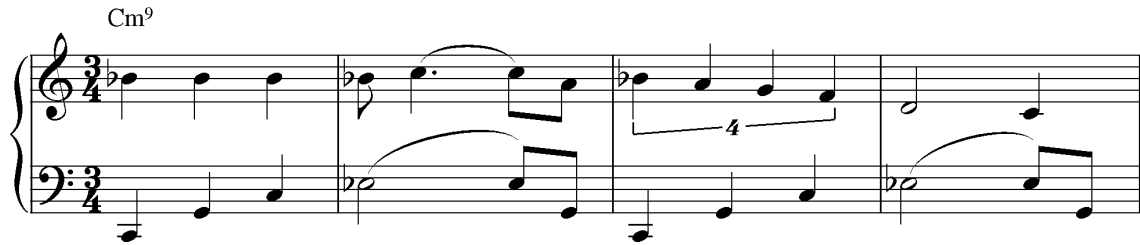
The nature of a ballad such as “Infant Eyes” allows Shorter to paint with different colors in his compositional palette. He uses techniques similar to those found in the other pieces presented as examples in this study, but their presence emits emotions unlike those of the vivacious “Lester Left Town,” the majestic “This is for Albert,” or even the eccentric “Juju.” This song helps the listener see through the music toward what the composer was imagining during the writing process. The melody is delicate as it courses over the carefully chosen harmonic changes. Shorter’s composition can move from affirmation to questioning with a single subtle move in any of the instruments playing the tune. This sense of graceful wonder draws the music toward his intent to portray a father’s love through the music.

The lofty ideals that inspired “Infant Eyes” illustrated the composer’s romantic leanings, but for Shorter’s most famous and recorded song, the music only needed to be “a simplified vehicle for improvisation, mainly geared for club audiences” (Artist Transcription Series 1st ed. 36). Shorter’s “Footprints” (1966) is his quintessential composition. Though he first released the piece on Blue Note 4232 “Adam’s Apple” featuring the talents of Herbie Hancock, Reggie Workman, and drummer Joe Chambers,

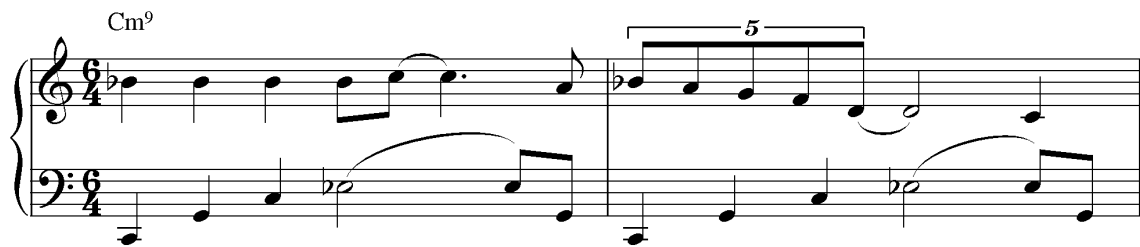
it was subsequently recorded by the Miles Davis Quintet on “Miles Smiles” and with Shorter’s current touring quartet (Cook 257). The song is used as the title for both the first recording of the quartet entitled *Footprints Live!* and for a two CD collection of his “greatest hits.” Shorter’s biographer Michelle Mercer elected to name her book after this specific song as well. Needless to say, “Footprints” has thus far defined the legacy of the composer. Fittingly, it revolves around Shorter’s ingenious application of the standard blues form.

In the jazz world, there is often a debate about the time signature of the piece. Many versions of the music are written in 6/4 while several other publishers maintain that 3/4 is correct.⁵ Both arguments have their merits. The 3/4 time signature is easier to read as the waltz figure is more familiar to musicians. The triple meter also avoids the awkward 5:3 quintuplet that is prominent in the 6/4 version. The 3/4, however, still features this rhythm as a somewhat less awkward 4:3 that lasts over an entire measure. The 6/4 time signature does give merit to the idea that Shorter wrote the piece in twelve-bar blues form rather than in twenty-four measures. Fortunately, in Shorter’s biography, the frontispiece is a handwritten copy of “Footprints” revealing his intent that the song be performed in 6/4. Shorter’s original draft also shows that the piece was originally meant to include an introduction in 4/4, but it was apparently abandoned in subsequent revisions as it is omitted from the February 1966 recording (Mercer).

⁵ This quarrel is a very similar to a discrepancy about the true time signature of Miles Davis’s “All Blues” from *Kind of Blue*. Many jazz musicians still argue about whether the piece is to be played in 3/4 or in 6/8.



Example 2.6 "Footprints," 3/4 Meter



Example 2.7 "Footprints," 6/4 Meter

Though this introduction (which does not seem to fit with the mood of the rest of the tune) is not recorded on any of the major issues of the work, Shorter retains the original version's bass figure that is written immediately after. This one-measure vamp on the C minor chord is repeated extensively and modulates sequentially with the chord changes. On the whole, this ostinato-like figure appears in the bass and piano for ten of the twelve measures in the melody. The motif itself is a simple outline of the chord played. The bass player begins with a pick-up eighth-note G followed by three ascending quarter notes of C, G, and C (Examples 2.6 and 2.7). A half note tied to an eighth note holds the E^b, completing the chord, and leads to the final note that serves as the pick-up note to the next measure. When the chord changes to F minor in the fifth bar of the head, the notes change to F, A^b, and C accordingly. Above the repetitive and hypnotic bass ostinato, the pianist plays only a triad followed by a staccato on the root of the chord. The chord (scale degrees eleven, flatted seven, and nine from the bottom up) generates

what is essentially a B^b triad in first inversion. Its placement in the measure (an eighth note on the upbeat of three tied to a half note) permits the chord to sound against both the C briefly and the E^b in the bass and left hand of the piano. When stacked, these notes focus on the sustained dissonance between the E^b, the lowest note in the chord, and the D, the highest. In this manner, the chord played here is interpreted as a B^{b11} over the measure's Cm⁷. The subtonic relationship resolves with the staccato C on the sixth beat and the G on the upbeat of six in the bass. With this vamp, Shorter uses a technique similar to the rocking motion between two chords, the unconventional relationship found at the beginning of the bridge in "Infant Eyes" or the third eight-bar section of "Juju," as he manipulates the tonality within the measure between the tonic and the subtonic.

Chordally, "Footprints" is essentially the twelve-bar blues progression with added complexities. Jazz musicians, particularly in the bebop era with Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Thelonious Monk, were known for taking the standard blues concept and complicating it to provide expanded improvisational options. With Shorter's composition, he gives the illusion that the progression is working as it should until the ninth measure where he intends to disarm both the soloist and the audience. The first eight measures harmonically are the standard four bars on the root (Cm⁹), followed by two measures on the subdominant (Fm⁹), and then the return back to the root for two more measures.

As previously mentioned, the ninth and tenth measures are nothing like the simple minor chords presented thus far. The idea to use a ii-V harmonic movement in the blues is not really an experimental gamble for the tenor player, but jumping to the tritone (F[#]m⁹) instead of the expected dominant (G) is. Shorter accelerates the harmonic motion

to two chords per measure and uses the ii-V as a turnaround. The F^\sharp half-diminished chord moves to a $B^{7\sharp9\sharp5}$ to conclude measure ten, then repeats the ii-V on $E^{7\sharp9}$ and A^{7alt} (meaning that the ninth, eleventh and fifth/thirteenth are all altered: b9 and $^\sharp9$, $^\sharp11$, and b13). This last chord, however, is highly debatable and appears differently among many publications of the music. The sixth edition of *The Real Book* has the chord as $A^{7b5\sharp9}$ (*The Real Book* 144). The Artist Transcription Series depicts the chord as just an A^7 (Artist 2nd Ed.). Even the Aebersold play-along series provides two possibilities: an $A^{7\sharp9\sharp5}$ and (parenthetically) an $E^{b7\sharp11}$ (Aebersold Vol. 33). With a number of different examples, one could question why there are so many choices. Melodically, Shorter only uses the flatted seventh, raised ninth, and the thirteenth, so fitting the chord to the melody does not explain everything the improviser could play with the other extensions. One possibility is that the purpose of these alterations is to lead this chord into the final iteration of the tonic Cm^9 in measures eleven and twelve. Shorter's chordal extensions in the A^{7alt} (B^b , C , E^b , and F) are equivalent to the flatted seventh, root, flatted third and the eleventh of the next chord, all of which (with the possible exception of the F) are significant chord tones. This could be the best way Shorter can relate the period of ambiguous chordal movement back to the main blues-centered idea.

The appearance of the $E^{b7\sharp11}$ as an alternate chord in the Aebersold version of "Footprints" is even more puzzling. It almost seems as if the publisher knew of Shorter's preference for the tritone and the tritone substitution and created his own addition. As this is unlikely, one needs to look at the purpose of the Aebersold series to determine the probable causes of this parenthetical harmonic proposal. First, as this series is designed as an educational tool, the $E^{b7\sharp11}$ is much easier for a student to read than an $A^{7\sharp9\sharp5}$ (as it

is presented in this version). The aspiring improviser only needs to think of one alteration (or the Lydian scale) as opposed to the many chordal differentiations of the altered original. Aside from the increased readability made possible by this change, the natural tendencies of the tritone substitution, i.e., emphasizing the extension of the written chord, are even further accented. The notes in the $E^{b7\#11}$ scale, when compared to the scale from the $A^{7\#9\#5}$, create a series of notes that, in order, imply numerous extended scale degrees: tritone- $\#5$ - $b7$ - 1 - $b9$ - $\#9$ - 3 and the return to the tritone. The scale hits all the significant notes of the written chord.

Given the complexity of the chordal structure in those two measures, it should come as no surprise that, outside of the initial uncomfortable five over three quintuplet, the melody is similarly intricate. The main thematic idea is similar to a riff adapted to blues changes. The first instance accents the flatted seventh scale degree with four repeated B^b 's followed by the root and an eighth-note A that serves as the pick up to the quintuplet feature. The descending quintuplet hits the seventh, thirteenth, fifth, eleventh, and ninth scale degrees in that order. The last note of the rhythmic idea is tied to a half note and ends with a staccato note on the tonic pitch. Notably, when the quintuplet reappears in measure six with an F minor tonal center, Shorter uses the same scalar pattern adapted to the new chord in that section. He also immediately follows the quintuplet in F minor with another in C minor when the blues-progression dictates the chord's return to the tonic. The last note of the quintuplet followed by a staccato note is a purposeful doubling of the piano motif. The soloist plays the top note in the right hand in the triad followed by the reiteration of the tonic. He echoes this idea in measures three, four, and eight, but this subtle whole step movement was not written in Shorter's original

version. While the saxophonist included them at the *Adam's Apple* recording session (as well as an added trill), they are often omitted in subsequent recordings.

Example 2.8 “Footprints,” measures 9-11

The ninth and tenth measures, given their intricate harmonic structure, would require a more dynamic melodic approach than the previous eight measures. Shorter begins with the same rhythmic pattern of three quarter notes and an eighth note, followed by another eighth note tied to a dotted half note (Example 2.8). The composer shifts the repeated note up a half step to accommodate the F[#] half diminished, and the ascending note ascends a minor third instead of a half-step as it leads into the B^{7#9#5}. Shorter ends the measure with an eighth-note on G which fits into the chord as the augmented fifth and works to further alienate the listener from the original tonal center. The next measure of the melody is not a mere modification to the main idea like previous sections. Shorter writes a half-note B^b, the tritone of the written E^{7#9}, and slides back down to the G, the ^{#9} in this chord and the flattened seventh in the next, as it holds over the chord change. The melody then moves in three eighth notes, C-G-F[#], down to the dotted whole-note F that concludes the melody over the C minor chord in measure eleven. This repeated descending movement in measure ten appears to evoke the opposite design of the measures six and seven. While these measures descend down the quintuplet pattern,

measure six starts higher than seven. The two faster patterns in measure ten work contrary to the higher starting point in the second half of the measure. Slight juxtapositions in the melody provide the variety to keep a relatively straightforward melody interesting and allow Shorter to weave his ideas through the distorted chord changes.

Saying that “Footprints” is Wayne Shorter’s lasting legacy is an understatement. By 1996, thirty years after its recorded premiere on *Adam’s Apple*, the piece had been recorded on at least fifty-four different records by jazz luminaries such as Larry Coryell, Ahmad Jamal, Lee Konitz, Dave Liebman, Cyrus Chestnut, Phil Woods, David Sanborn, and Stan Getz (Aebersold Vol. 33). Why is it that such a simple yet idiosyncratic take on the standard twelve-bar blues progression can capture the imaginations of so many of the masters of the genre? This piece, among all others, portrays the essence of the composer. He takes a building block of the genre, tweaks the form just enough to make it his own, and creates a new idea. The two measures of ingenuity (nine and ten) understate the basic idea of the piece: never get too comfortable in the music.

Alfred Lion and Frank Wolff, the founders of Blue Note Records, gave Shorter the chance both to play the music and to play with the music. His recordings both as a leader and with the Jazz Messengers provided ample opportunity for the composer to experiment. This trend of letting Shorter be himself, which started with his mother and continued through his band leaders in the 1960s, gave him musical confidence, and allowed him become his own person in the jazz world. Shorter, from the beginning, wanted individuality, and the fame garnered through his tour with Miles Davis’s second

great quintet gave him the notoriety (and the expectations of the future of jazz music)
from which all his future projects would be judged.

Chapter 3: The Second Great Quintet

Following 1961 when John Coltrane left Miles Davis's group, Shorter started receiving phone calls from the enigmatic trumpeter. "You happy where you at," were usually the first words over the speaker from the raspy voiced jazz icon (Mercer 94). While working with the most prestigious jazz group in the country would be enticing to any musician, especially to the burgeoning career of the twenty-eight-year-old tenor saxophonist, the unwritten rule of loyalty between jazz musicians held Shorter back from jumping ship: "Nobody likes a Benedict Arnold, Miles" (94). Unable to secure the tenor player who had offered to join a few years prior, Davis had to look to other options. Following Coltrane, Davis employed Sonny Rollins, Hank Mobley, George Coleman, and Sam Rivers; however, it was Shorter who Davis really wanted to fill the role of his sideman. Sonny Rollins was too big of a talent and capable of leading groups on his own, Mobley's drug problems made him unreliable and impossible to tour with due to his parole limitations, Coleman clashed with the other band members, specifically drum prodigy Tony Williams, as he played too cleanly and never made mistakes, and Rivers (Williams's suggested replacement) was more into the "New Thing" of avant-garde jazz than the Davis repertory permitted. The result of Davis's search for the perfect tenor complement to his style would have to be Wayne Shorter.

Though deterred from leaving by his loyalty to Art Blakey, Shorter started seeing Davis at Messenger shows, usually right on the front row (Mercer 94). The phone calls to Shorter's New York apartment eventually were not enough and Davis became so desperate as to call the backstage dressing rooms at a Messengers' concert (95). Unfortunately, it was Blakey, and not Shorter, who answered (95). Blakey, who had

worked with Davis for years (and according to his Davis's autobiography, ratted him out to the police about drugs for a leniency in his own sentencing), instantly recognized the voice on the other end of the phone (Mercer 95, Davis 139). As the drummer was pacing and muttering "Miles is trying to steal my tenor player," to himself, Shorter, somewhat embarrassed at the audacity of the trumpeter, declined the offer once again (Mercer 95).

While loyalty to the Messengers was indeed a strong reason for Shorter to remain in the lineup, he understood the business aspects that would come from accepting the offer to complete the Davis quintet. Blakey allowed the members of his group to compose and have their pieces integrated into the group's nightly sets, while Davis continued to play the same music he had for over a decade. Shorter's marketability and future income relied as heavily on his compositions as it did on his performing. At that time, the Messengers actually provided a better arrangement for Shorter to develop, refine, and record his music than would the Davis group. In 1964, when Shorter left the Messengers after his five-year tenure, he finally relented to the recruiting by Davis and other members of the Davis quintet, pianist Herbie Hancock and Tony Williams. In Davis's typical "trial by fire" technique for new band members, Shorter was given the name of the trumpeter's tailor and a plane ticket to fly out to Los Angeles to meet the band for his first performance (Mercer 97). This first performance happened to be at the Hollywood Bowl (97).

It did not take long for Shorter's material to become mainstay in the Davis book. Shorter's first recording session with the Second Great Quintet (composed of himself, Davis, Hancock, Williams, and bassist Ron Carter) in the latter part of January 1965 featured two of the saxophonist's compositions, including its title track: "E.S.P." The

album itself held artistic leanings even going so far as to include an “abstract and impressionistic poem” by Ralph J. Gleason, a columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle* (Gleason). The poem was created from the titles of Davis’s recordings and tracks and came with the instruction that it was to be read aloud to the music (Ibid.). Six of the seven tunes on this record appear in the poem: “E.S.P.” and “Iris” by Shorter, “Agitation” by Davis, “R.J.” by Carter, and “Eighty-One” and “Mood” by Carter and Davis (only Hancock’s “Little One” is omitted). Poignantly, all appear in the final column as if Gleason is expressing that these songs are the cutting edge and the new direction for the Miles Davis Quintet. Indeed, it immediately separated itself from the myriad of Davis recordings with the noted absence of the trumpeter’s signature styles: pop songs and ballads (Szwed 252).

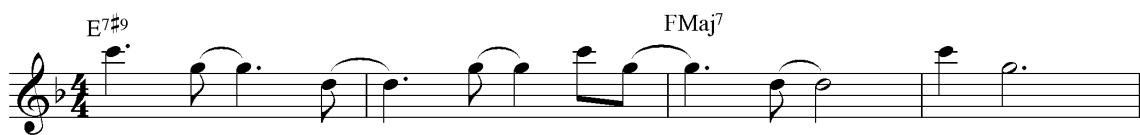
“E.S.P.,” an abbreviation for extra sensory perception, typified the overall feel of the Second Great Quartet. When the nebulous new compositions by Shorter and his band mates combined with Davis’s policies of limited instruction and minimal recording takes, the result was a spontaneous evolution in the music. The musical ideas communicated between the rhythm section and the front line can give off the impression that they were meticulously composed rather than improvised. Davis knew he had created not only a great group but an even greater chemistry within the band.

I knew that Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter, and Tony Williams were great musicians, and that they would work as a group, as a musical unit....If I was the inspiration and wisdom and the link for this band, Tony was the fire, the creative spark; Wayne was the idea person, the conceptualizer of a whole lot of

musical ideas we did; and Ron and Herbie were the anchors. I was just the leader who put us all together. Those were all young guys and although they were learning from me, I was learning from them, too, about the new thing, the free thing. Because to be and stay a great musician you've got to always be open to what's new, what's happening at the moment. (Davis 273)

The tune "E.S.P." serves as a perfect vehicle for "the idea man" to experiment with rhythms and textures.

Performed at a blistering tempo of mm. 265 (or faster as the group gained familiarity with the song), this tune is comprised of a repeated sixteen measure form with first and second endings. The most notable aspect of the work is immediately audible after the first intervallic movement. The first six measures of the work contain only three different notes (C, G, and D) and each is separated quartally (Example 3.1).



Example 3.1 "E.S.P." Measures 1-4.

The note placement makes the fluctuating melody sound disjointed. Complicating this effect are the asymmetrical rhythmic ideas. Shorter emphasizes syncopation on the off-beat as the opening three measures feature consecutive movements of a dotted quarter note, two groupings of an eighth note tied to a dotted quarter note, an eighth note tied to a quarter note, an eighth note, another eighth note tied to a dotted quarter note, and finally an eighth note tied to a half note. The dominant rhythm displayed (which appears three

times) is a half note duration placed on an upbeat. In the first three measures, and similarly in measures five through seven, the melody is played eleven times on the off-beat in contrast to the four times on. The temporal effect is unsettling and, as the measures speed by, the listener can struggle to grasp at anything similar to a steady beat. Shorter obliges with two downbeats in measure four: a quarter note and a dotted half note. The dotted half-note punctuation to the statement on the second beat is then revisited in the eighth measure and again in the final measure of the second ending.

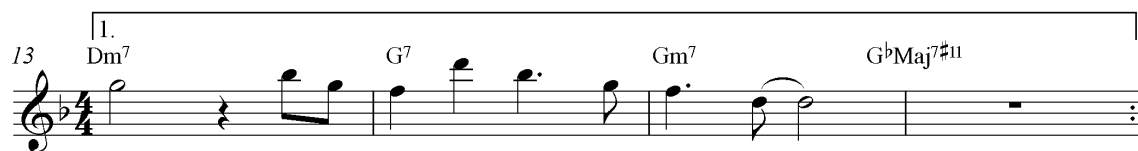
As the melodic content is relatively minimal during the first half of “E.S.P.,” one would expect the chords to reflect a similar concept. Shorter decides to amplify the dissonance by moving the chordal structure in linear half-steps. When moving chromatically, the note that would fit neatly inside the previous chord will create musical tension in the next measure. The C, G, and D each play a different role as the chords begin with an $E^{7\#9}$, ascend to an $FMaj^7$, return to the $E^{7\#9}$, and finally descend to an $E^bMaj^{7\#11}$. The three melodic notes represent the flatted third, seventh, and thirteenth in the $E^{7\#9}$, and the fifth, ninth, and thirteenth in the $FMaj^7$. Most notable is that while the C, G, and D all fit neatly into the $FMaj^7$, including the upper extensions, only the D can be found in the $E^{7\#9}$. In the seventh and eighth measures, only the G returns from the beginning and it works as the strongest chord tone of the first half of the song and as the third in the $E^bMaj^{7\#11}$. The opening figures of “E.S.P.” disorient the listener as the composer combines quartal movement in the vein of Hindemith with ambiguous rhythms, subtly shifting tonal structure, and a rapid tempo.

The step-wise motion in the chordal structure continues on until the twelfth measure where the pattern is interrupted by the comparatively colossal movement of a

descending major second between the root chords. The melodic notes from measures nine through twelve are more varied; thus the juxtaposition is not as pronounced as in the first half. In this section, Shorter's melody continues some quartal movement and the syncopation, but the overall line is a variation on the original fluctuating motif. All three notes appear in order, but Shorter has added what amounts to passing tones to create a pentatonic scale for the first three measures. He begins the melody on a high D, moves through the C of the motif, and down to an A. This is followed with the G and an F which would serve as the root of the established pentatonic descent. Oddly, this note, which is so important within the structure of the composition, is the ninth of the given chord ($E^{9\#11}$) and is merely an eighth note on the up beat of four. Shorter completes his variation on the quartal theme with a D played twice in measure eleven.

With a G as the next note in the measure, one could assume that the melody is returning back to C, yet that specific note is denied in both endings. Instead, Shorter has quartal intervals compete against tertian for dominance in the remainder of the tune. Ultimately, the tertian is strongest in the first ending while quartal movement is reestablished in the second. The prevalence of the tertian chordal structure is exemplified in measure fourteen where Shorter outlines the G^7 chord. After the initial quarter note of F (the flatted seventh chord tone), the melody ascends to a D (the fifth), then changes direction through the third and root of the chord, B and G respectively. This is the first time in the piece that has the chord that serves as the harmonic basis outlined directly in the melody. With the two unabashed tertian movements in this measure and another three in the first ending, the third is solidified as the dominant interval in this section. As there are only six such movements in the prior twelve measures, the difference is

noticeable. The interval of a fourth appears nowhere in the four measures that comprise the first ending.



Example 3.2 “E.S.P.” Measures 13-16.

The first ending also contains the first “conventional” harmonic progression as the chords in measures thirteen and fourteen reflect a supertonic-dominant relationship. Not only is the movement from Dm⁷ to G⁷ the largest harmonic movement to that point, but the D to G is a suggestion of the quartal motif. Shorter consciously draws attention to that fourteenth measure, as it completely abandons the traits that were established tonally, harmonically, and rhythmically (three consecutive notes are on down beats). It is almost as if the final two measures conclude as a result of the displacement from fourteen.

There is only a descending third from F to D in the fifteenth measure and a whole rest in sixteen. A fifth diatonic scale step as the final note alludes to a half cadence-like idea of ending on the dominant. The presence of the augmented eleventh scale degree in the final chord (G^bMaj⁷#¹¹) serves another purpose insofar as it voices the C before the return of that same note in the reiteration of the melody.



Example 3.3 “E.S.P.” Measures 17-20.

The second ending has similar elements to the first and is equally disorienting, but the placement alters the direction of the piece as it moves toward either improvisations or the conclusion. Harmonically, Shorter elects to move from the $E^b\text{Maj}^7$ in the second half of measure twelve to a $D^{b9\#11}$ in measure seventeen, the first measure of the second ending. This harmonic development is a continuation of the descending major second idea from measure twelve ($F\text{Maj}^7$ - $E^b\text{Maj}^7$ to $D^{b9\#11}$ in seventeen) and works against the return to chromatic harmonic movement seen in the first ending ($F\text{Maj}^7$ - $E^b\text{Maj}^7$ to Dm^7 in thirteen). The $D^{b9\#11}$ serves as the basis for a tritone movement harmonically, as measure eighteen moves to a Gm^7 , a related chord to the G^7 found in the parallel measure fourteen. To further emphasize the importance of the tritone movement, measure nineteen begins with another D^b chord: D^bm^7 . Shorter then concludes the piece with a recall of the chromatic harmony idea. Two beats after the second D^b chord, the harmony changes to a G^b7 , a half-step away from the Gm^7 in measure eighteen, and “E.S.P.” concludes with an unaltered F triad. On further repetitions of the form, the F moves swiftly into the opening chord as it continues the descending chromatic progression to the $E^{7\#9}$.

As measure fourteen created an odd feeling of conventionalism, measure eighteen develops the emotion further. Only the notes that comprise the triad are used in three arpeggiated quarter-note triplets on beats three and four. This display of intervallic thirds seemingly generates the illusion that the second ending is centered on tertian movement similar to the first. The final two measures, however, demonstrate otherwise. The melody ascends from the D at the end of measure eighteen, to an E, moves down a fourth to a B^b , descends again to an A, and finally leaps up a fourth to return to the D. These

two prominent uses of the quartal melodic technique are a fitting conclusion to a piece that relies upon this concept for the majority of its construction.

When Davis made the decision to pursue Shorter for his group, he knew what kind of music the saxophonist would compose. Before Shorter joined with Davis's group, Freddie Hubbard would go to his fellow trumpeter's house and hear a song on the record player written by Shorter (Mercer 94). Hubbard said that, "Wayne had some weird chord changes that he wrote. Miles liked those chords, like he liked Bill Evans's chords" (94). "E.S.P." was just the beginning of the new direction in which Shorter and his fellow band mates would lead the music of Miles Davis, much like Bill Evans and George Russell had impacted his forays into modality. Shorter's compositions embodied the experimentation and freedom that had enveloped jazz since Ornette Coleman emerged, yet still kept a foot in the old style and in modern Western art music. "E.S.P." is a prime example of the synthesis of modern jazz, Twentieth-century classical music, and Davis's bebop past.

The Second Great Quintet was only able to make one recording in the studio before being forced into a hiatus because of its leader's pair of hip surgeries in April and August 1965 (Davis 282). During this break, which lasted into November of that year, the other members of the quintet would record albums under their own names that would allow even more freedom than the Davis quintet was used to (282). During this break from touring together, the quintet unleashed a myriad of influential recordings. Herbie Hancock released his critically acclaimed *Maiden Voyage*, and Tony Williams recorded the equally lauded *Spring* (Mercer 105). Even Shorter's ex-band mate, Lee Morgan, created the hit record *Gigolo* with the tenor saxophonist joining him for the session (105).

Shorter, for his part, recorded three albums for Blue Note Records during this time away: *The Soothsayer*, *Etcetera*, and *The All Seeing Eye*. With each new album, Shorter progressed musically and philosophically and seemed to buck the conventions of jazz music as he moved toward an aesthetic message.

The liner notes for *The All Seeing Eye*, which were written by legendary jazz writer Nat Hentoff after Shorter described the works, included the fact that the tenorman was pursuing, “a wider range of colors and textures” (Hentoff). The music contains a much deeper purpose for the composer as well:

The *All Seeing Eye* depicts God looking over the universe before His act of Creation. The eye, missing nothing, sweeps all over the universe. The structure of the piece . . . came out of [an] attempt to feel how such an eye would move, how such a mind could be so all-knowing. [Shorter explains] ‘I didn’t pre-plan the form; it emerged.’ (Shorter/Hentoff)

Clearly, Shorter’s compositional drive is very different from the Tin Pan Alley-style songs that permeated jazz music. His spiritual intentions echo the works of Shorter’s former practice mate John Coltrane during this period, as Coltrane had released his suite, *A Love Supreme*, a dedication and even aural depiction of a poem to God, earlier that year. Shorter’s “music of the spheres” approach to creating music for the unexplainable embodies some of the ideas of the Second Great Quintet upon Davis’s return to the stage.

After a few concerts with Davis back in the lineup, the rest of the band knew that they had moved too far into modern jazz to retreat back to the trumpeter’s book of standards (Mercer 108). Davis recognized this, even stating in his autobiography that

“the band wanted to play the tunes we were recording which we never did live, and I know that was a sore point with them” (Davis 278). To prevent the group from returning to the stasis of “Kind of Blue,” “My Funny Valentine,” and “Round Midnight,” the rest of the band decided that they would take action, without the knowledge or consent of its leader (Mercer 109). Tony Williams approached Shorter, Carter, and Hancock with the prospect of “anti-music” (Mercer *Ibid.*). The idea was to sacrifice their final gig of 1965 for the “betterment of the band” and play the opposite of whatever the other musicians expected each other to play. The resulting live recording at a jazz club in Chicago, *Live at the Plugged Nickel*, produced in a newfound freedom for the Davis quintet. After the first set, which initially befuddled Davis, the trumpeter began to catch onto the “game” and eventually molded his signature style even to these extreme circumstances.

Following the concerts at the Plugged Nickel, Davis and his group resumed their former position on the forefront of innovative music, jazz or otherwise.

This newfound allowance for further explorations within the confines of one of the most popular mainstream jazz groups in the country affected Shorter’s compositions. Though all his compositions essentially had a green light from Davis already, Shorter now felt he had carte blanche for expanding his music in all directions (Davis 273). The quintet’s next studio recording in late October 1966, *Miles Smiles*, includes three songs by Shorter out of the six on the album: “Orbits,” “Dolores,” and an updated version of “Footprints.” “Orbits” was chosen as the opening track for side one of the album, as it was a quick tempo swing to start off the album with energy. The song itself, however, echoes the other worldly sentiment the title implies.

As seen in the earlier examples of Shorter's music, such as the nine-measure phrase groups of "Infant Eyes," the composer has been interested in the exploration of form. Miles Davis explains Shorter's intentions best:

At first, Wayne had been a free-form player, but playing with Art Blakey for those years . . . had brought him back in somewhat. He wanted to play freer . . . but he didn't want to be all the way out, either. Wayne has always been someone who experimented *with* form instead of someone who did it *without* form. (Davis 273)

The construction of "Orbits" is one of Shorter's more idiosyncratic compositions. The twenty-nine measure piece can be divided differently depending on the structural component one chooses: aural clues or motivically. The score of the music appears to be separated into three distinct sections. The first nine measures are created from a motive in measures one through three, then two ensuing two variations. This is followed by a new idea that takes precedence for the next eight measures. Shorter concludes with a four-measure motive that is somewhat divergent from its first repetition and the second version is duplicated directly to end the work. The construction (nine-measure A section, eight-measure B section, and twelve-measure C section) is not echoed in the rhythm section.

The principal textural indication of the structure when merely listening to the work would be the drums. Williams splits up the tune into three separate sections as well, but his approach is anticipatory in comparison to the established dividers in the written music. Three drum techniques form the boundaries in his interpretation: arrhythmic cymbals, a snare drum roll, and the standard uptempo swing feel that has been

the backbone of jazz drumming since the early years of the art. The first two styles create the absence of a solid beat. Williams relies on the cymbal concept, which is complimented with an equally sparse bass line from Carter, for the first eight measures. The drums then segue into the roll that lasts until the end of measure fifteen. The sixteenth measure abruptly shifts into the typical swing feel. Williams's divisions are indeed similar to the thematic groupings created by Shorter, yet they precede the change by a number of measures each time. It is possible that this is consciously used as a guideline to keep the band from deviating from the form as its construction is angular and asymmetrical. However, given the drummer's propensity for experimentation in musical chaos, the opposite, his drum cues purposefully muddling the construct, is equally possible. The absence of a steady beat in the rhythm section during the first two motives, which lean on syncopated rhythms, supports this idea.

Formal Structure of "Orbits"			
	A	B	C
Melodic Line	1-9	10-18	19-30
Rhythm Section	1-8	9-15	16-30

Table 3.1 "Orbits." Formal Structure

Another way of determining the purpose of the specific textural combinations in "Orbits" would be to approach the rhythm section's interpretation when the melody returns at the end of the recording. The final improvised solo belongs to Hancock who clearly demarcates the return to the melody with a concluding figure that emulates the C section. The melody then picks up at measure nine, omitting the free form section and adhering closely to Williams's groupings. The drums here combine the rolls and the

cymbals but still neglect the solid beat of the swing section, which begins in the same approximate area.⁶ The liner notes for *Miles Smiles*, written by Anthony Tuttle, end the description of “Orbits” by saying that the song is “space-bound” but that it “gradually return[s] the song to earth” (Tuttle). This description explains the direction of the music both in the melody and the rhythm section as “Orbits” moves from free to straight-ahead within the twenty-nine measure span.

Since Hancock plays only during his solo, the rhythm section’s sole chordal representation is Carter’s bass. This instrument generally outlines the chords or acts as a time keeper, particularly when working with Williams’s manic drumming. In essence, by removing the chordal structure from the group and creating a piano-less quartet, the improvised solos from Davis, Shorter, and eventually Hancock are not limited to the written chord changes. The idea of the piano-less jazz group was popularized by Sonny Rollins in the late 1950s and was used extensively by Ornette Coleman, though he would often use two basses. The result, of course, was a freedom from conventional harmony, an idea that played perfectly into the Second Great Quintet’s experiments into the “New Thing.” Shorter’s chords for “Orbits” still retain many of the techniques his compositions have emphasized, but in this interpretation, they play a secondary role to the melody and the rhythm.

The majority of Shorter’s usual chordal gymnastics are located in the first two motivic ideas. Behind a forward-leaning four-note figure that accents the second note and “ghosts” the first, the composer prominently displays the tritone sonority from

⁶ Davis’s policy of minimal takes in the studio at this point in his career affected the ending of the piece as Davis, Shorter, and Williams all noticeably stumble through the return of the melody. If not for his desire to make the recordings sound live, another leader would more than likely have re-recorded the song to correct the mistakes. Williams’s forgiveness of mistakes probably influenced this as well.

progression C^7 - A^{7b9} in the first measure to an $E^b\text{min}^7$ in the next.⁷ The sequence repeats again in measures four and five; however, the third variation deceives the listener. In measure seven, Shorter repeats the C^7 - A^{7b9} one final time, only to move the chord to $D^{7\#9}$, a half step down from the expected chord. This change is hardly distinguishable, as the expected chord and the new chord are extremely similar. The augmented and subsequently diminished ninth scale degrees, when coupled with the third scale degree of the $D^{7\#9}$ chord are an E^b - F - $F^\#$ (G^b), an echo of the first three notes of the $E^b\text{min}^7$ chord. Shorter's reasoning here is not merely to add variety to the pattern, but also to anticipate the chordal structure of the second section.

Example 3.4 “Orbits” Measures 7-19.

In this section, where the drum rolls continue to conceal the beat, the composer has decided to borrow an idea from a piece discussed earlier, “E.S.P.,” and make the chordal texture equally ambiguous. The $D^{7\#9}$ in measure eight leads to a $G\text{min}^7$ in measure nine and creates a supertonic to dominant progression before another tritone

⁷ According to the Grove Dictionary a ghosted note is defined as: “A weak note, sometimes barely audible, or a note that is implied rather than sounded. Ghost notes may be produced intentionally as a subtle means of articulating a phrase, or they may occur accidentally when a player “fluffs” notes (that is, fails to produce them cleanly with a full tone). The term is also used of phantom notes, implied by the internal rhythmic and melodic logic of a line or by voice leading but not actually sounded” (“Ghost(ed) Note”).

movement to a $D^b\text{Maj}^7$ in measure ten. From measure ten until measure fifteen, the chords meander around the $D^{7\#9}$: $D^b\text{Maj}^7$ - $E^b\text{Maj}^7$ - $E^b\text{min}^7$ - $D^{7\#9}$ - $D^b\text{min}^7$ - $C\text{min}^7$. Like in “E.S.P.,” the chords in this section move in minimal steps to accommodate the melody as its tonal center continuously shifts.

Shorter’s method of completing this section should come as no surprise, as he again uses the tritone movement to a G^b chord in the sixteenth measure. The part that is surprising is the identical treatment of the intervallic motion from this G^b until measure nineteen, and measures ten to thirteen. The movements in the earlier measures outline an ascending major second, a switch from major to minor within the same chord, and a minor second descent. This is the same motion found from the G^b - $A^b\text{Maj}^7$ - $A^b\text{min}^7$ - $G\text{min}^7$ in the next idea. The movement is due in part to the sequential nature of the work, as it modulates up a fourth from the original statement, but as the idea straddles both the motivic sections and itself, Shorter’s chordal construction once again mutates the form of the music.

“Orbits” is one of the many studies in form Shorter composed during this incarnation of Miles Davis’s group, but it also one of the most complex sounding. Each of the significant parts of the music (the melody, the harmony, and the rhythm section’s interpretation) has its own formal construction. The resulting music is nebulous and could make a listener uncomfortable. At this point in his career, Shorter delved into the artistic side of jazz music, more in line with his solo records instead of the R&B influenced Jazz Messengers.

In Davis, Shorter found a kindred spirit for dynamic music. Davis allowed his “idea man” to compose nearly unchecked and this autonomy produced a number of Shorter’s most creative compositions.

“Miles influenced me as a writer by leaving the doors open – he didn’t even say anything. He said [...in the famous Miles whisper], ‘What you got?’ He didn’t say do this and do that....When he saw it, he would look at it, play it a little on the piano, and say, ‘You ready to record now?’ Like that....The influence Miles had was to leave the damn door open. In fact, he took it off the hinges.” (Shorter/Garelick)

Davis’s permissive compositional guidelines are evident in the melodic, harmonic and formal ideas of tunes such as “E.S.P.” and “Orbits” along with a slight reworking of Shorter’s signature song “Footprints” and the even more outlandish “Nefertiti,” where there is no improvisation in the trumpet or saxophone and the music stems from the rhythm section’s frenetic accompaniment under the static melody. Even with the rapid metamorphosis of jazz under Davis and his group, the trumpeter felt the need to change his style and his music once again. Shorter and the rest of his band mates willingly followed Davis into the next generation of music.

Chapter Four: Electric Endeavors

Miles Davis and his groups pioneered numerous trends in jazz music. The trumpeter helped popularize the idea of playing songs from musicals and other popular tunes in a jazz style. He played in the bands of Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Thelonious Monk, the fathers of Bebop. The “Cool School” style of jazz, popular with white musicians specifically in California, drew direct influence from Davis’s aptly named “Birth of the Cool” album recorded in 1949-1950. His “Kind of Blue” album ushered in a new simplicity in the music as Davis worked to develop modal jazz with the assistance of pianist/theoretician George Russell and pianist Bill Evans who plays on the album. Even the trumpeter’s experiments with composer/arranger Gil Evans on numerous albums, such as “Sketches In Spain” and “Porgy and Bess,” bordered on Third Stream jazz which attempted to create a hybrid of jazz and modern classical music. None of these ventures, including those made later by Shorter and his fellow quintet members Hancock and Williams, caused as much controversy as his decision to incorporate electronic instruments.

By 1968, rock music had a firm grasp on album sales among young audiences, and jazz was quickly falling into the art music category that plagued the classical styles. Davis’s choice to “plug-in” was two-fold: he wanted to keep making records that would sell, and he wanted to emulate the music of other black rock musicians, notably James Brown, Jimi Hendrix, and Sly Stone. The trumpeter’s fascination with these musicians is well documented, and through his third wife, model/songwriter Betty Mabry, he was able to meet them. Davis was looking to incorporate the ideas he derived from rock and funk music into his own style and at first, did so without the band’s knowledge.

For the Second Great Quintet's fifth album, *Miles in the Sky*, Davis added two new elements to his acoustic group, a electric guitar played by George Benson for a Shorter composition entitled "Paraphernalia," and an electric piano and bass for "Stuff." However, on May 17, 1968, when the band entered the studios at Columbia records, Hancock did not know that he would be playing on a Fender Rhodes electric piano (Freeman 19). This recording was the first released music under the direction of Davis to include electronic instruments.⁸ This marked the beginning of the dynamic change in the music of every member of the quintet.⁹ Shorter felt the oncoming paradigm shift and noticed the inadequacy of composition as conception:

Playing with Miles, importance was placed on everything you did . . .

There was that tendency to think that the whole evening was the composition. As far as everybody in the group thinking that way, it was up to each individual to be on his own to help create images and illusions . . . In any one chord exists all other chords. Why go through all the other chords and keep repeating a song form over and over again . . . So we started doing something that some people called experimental . . . some called it modal, some people called it . . . taking chances. By the late sixties, we knew we were onto something. (Shorter/Szwed 265)

The Davis Quintet would continue to tentatively explore the electric realm with their next album, *Filles de Kilimanjaro*, but it was with the next two studio albums, and incidentally Shorter's final two with the group, that altered the landscape of jazz permanently.

⁸ While "Stuff" is the first music released to public, Davis had actually recorded a tune in December of 1967 entitled "Circle in the Round" with Joe Beck playing a droning guitar figure in and Hancock had knowingly recorded "Fun" on electric piano in January of 1968 (Freeman 20). These tracks were later released on *Circle in the Round* and *Directions* in 1976 and 1981 respectively (20).

⁹ Carter was the most resistant to the style change and was the first to leave the group.

On February 18, 1969, Davis brought the band in to record *In a Silent Way*. By this time, the group had experienced a radical change in personnel. Ron Carter had left the group and been replaced by Englishman Dave Holland. Hancock was joined both by electric pianist Chick Corea and electric pianist and organist Joe Zawinul. The most startling change though is the inclusion of another Englishman, John McLaughlin, on electric guitar. McLaughlin's guitar served a different purpose than Benson's where the instrument's role was droning and textural. This guitar was at the forefront of the music and plays a considerable part in the construction of the piece.

The other substantial alteration in the group's sound was not even listed on the original liner notes (Glenn). Shorter was featured for the first time on record playing the soprano saxophone.¹⁰ The switch, while echoing John Coltrane's forays with the instrument that also began while in Davis's employ, served a different purpose in these new electric ensembles. As the amplification grew to unprecedented heights, Shorter required an instrument that could slice through the density. It is for this reason that Davis himself played higher and with sharper phrases in the period from 1969 until his pseudo-retirement in 1975.

Shorter's work on *In a Silent Way* was purely that of a band member, as the music is mostly derived from a profoundly edited composition by Joe Zawinul. The original version was somewhat traditional and written with a complicated chordal structure, floating melody, and an ever-changing bass line. Davis retained only the melody and developed a modal jam underneath (Freeman 24). Shorter states the main theme of the second track of the album, "In a Silent Way/It's About That Time," following

¹⁰ Shorter's recording of the song "Ascent" in 1968 was actually his first use of the instrument, but at the time of the release of *In a Silent Way*, "Ascent" had not been made public (Ephland).

McLaughlin's initial interpretation, and the meditative temperament of the piece allows both the saxophonist and Davis to solo "endlessly over oceans of electric piano, bass, and drums. This is predawn music" (26).

Soothing and minimalist in comparison the previous works of the Second Great Quintet, Davis's new group and style received lofty praise, but not from jazz critics or musicians. *In a Silent Way* garnered its honors from rock critics (Freeman 26). Each side saw this music as rock-oriented and thus reacted accordingly. Rock critics were ecstatic that a jazz legend would acknowledge their music while jazz critics attached the most derogatory statement one can call a musician: sell out. Jazz critics and musicians alike felt that Davis and his group, at one time the vanguard of modern jazz music, was abandoning them in pursuit of financial gain. Even old friends, such as bass player Charles Mingus, would condemn the trumpet player's endeavors. When asked about Davis's new music for a radio program, Mingus responded with:

Mingus: Who?

Sharif Abdus-Salaam (the interviewer): Miles Davis.

Mingus: Never heard of him. I knew a guy by that name who used to play with Bird (Charlie Parker), but I thought he was dead.

Sharif Abdus-Salaam: You don't like his playing?

Mingus: I don't think he's around anymore, unless you mean this guy who had a trumpet that I saw with pictures of naked white girls. I gave a trumpet to my four-year-old nephew, and he made better sounds than this guy (Szwed 313).

Even with the glut of ill will from his jazz colleagues, Davis continued to pursue the next level of his sonic ideas, with an album that made *In a Silent Way* appear tame by comparison. Given the subtitle “Directions in Music by Miles Davis,” *Bitches Brew* takes the electric and studio manipulation of jazz, funk, and rock, to new extremes. Calling any of the tracks on the record a “song” is a loose interpretation of the word. Mainly, Davis and his group expanded on the modal vamp experimentation that was prevalent on *In a Silent Way*, and made small motives and a bass line groove the distinguishing characteristics of each piece. Outside of those basic guidelines, Davis’s army of musicians (at least fifteen band members contributed to the recording) roamed freely with unstructured improvisation. Solos are constantly interrupted by a crashing of the rhythm or a sound effect emanating from the electric pianos or McLaughlin’s guitar. The majority of the music sounds as if a soloist is trying to find his way across the rest of the band’s amoeba-like pulsation. This was a sound that did not seem organically created. That was because it could not have been recorded live; the sound was created from extensive studio editing by Columbia producer Teo Macero.

The recording session for *Bitches Brew* took place in Columbia Studio B in New York City from August 19 to August 21, 1969, and was mainly a collection of jam sessions run by Davis with Macero in the booth.¹¹ When the music was recorded, it was then Macero’s job to combine the takes into the music, then obtain approval of the final version from Davis before the release. This was the standard procedure for Davis’s recordings since *In a Silent Way*, but as the producer’s editing skill and technology improved, he was able to “[transform] amorphous jam sessions into epic poems, filled

¹¹ A slightly different band returned to the studio on January 28, 1970, to record “Feio,” a song written by Shorter that was not issued on the original double LP. “Feio,” which sounds like jazz improvisation over a subdued electronic music soundtrack, is now a “bonus track” on the compact disc incarnation of the album.

with bluster and bravado but also tender, plangent beauty” (Freeman 6).¹² The result of this artificiality of the product is that the music of the band is difficult to publish. While the songs in the Davis book and those of the Second Great Quintet could be transferred easily into notation and performed by anyone who wanted to purchase them, the electronic music produced by Davis and his band did not conform quite as easily. The results of this complication are that the majority of Shorter’s music from *Bitches Brew* through his work with Weather Report and his own electric and current ensembles are unpublished. One such piece is Shorter’s contribution to *Bitches Brew*: “Sanctuary.” One of only two songs on the album not credited to Davis (The first selection, “Pharaoh’s Dance,” was written by Joe Zawinul), “Sanctuary” balances between the unstructured music on the rest of the album and the rhythmically driven melody concept that permeated *Nefertiti*. While the piece itself was named after a novella by Edith Wharton, the concept of “Sanctuary” stemmed from Davis and Hancock’s duets on “I Fall in Love Too Easily” (Mercer 133/Freeman 121). Shorter took the interplay between the two instruments and electrified it, literally, to replicate the heroic melodies for the new band’s texture.

As was typical in dealing with Davis, acquiring the rights to the songs sometimes proved difficult as any revision was often considered enough (by Davis anyway) to count as at least co-composing credits if not full credit. As writing the music would earn more royalties, band members occasionally had fights with Davis to have the track listing

¹² For *In a Silent Way*, Davis completed recording on the first track “Shhh/Peaceful” too short to complete the first side of the LP (Szwed 281). Macero was forced to use the first half of the music and repeat it verbatim at the end (281). Critic Martin Williams of *The New York Times* not only noticed the somewhat shoddy editing, he took exception to it saying, “I decline to comment on Columbia’s release, *In a Silent Way*, except for the warning that, through no fault of the musicians involved, the editing, annotating, and packaging are horrendous. Through faulty tape splicing, a portion of the music inadvertently gets repeated at one point!” (Freeman 91).

correctly identify the composer. Following the disputes of Bill Evans for his work on *Kind of Blue* and Joe Zawinul for “In a Silent Way,” Shorter was forced to write a letter to Columbia’s licensing department to correct Davis’s attempt to grab partial credit (Mercer 134).

This is to inform you that the enclosed license bearing my name as 50% writer of the composition entitled Sanctuary has been rightfully adjusted. Henceforth, my future releases of compositions owned by Miyako Music, have been created from my mind (Wayne Shorter).

I am certain you are very familiar with this kind of “misunderstanding” in the business, therefore, I shall not attempt any further explanation for the readjustment.

Cordially yours,

Wayne Shorter

Miyako Music

I know you understand. (Shorter/Mercer 134)

Shorter’s subtlety in this handwritten letter (“in a twelve-year-old’s good penmanship that aspired toward businesslike formality”) implies that Elizabeth Martone, a member of Columbia’s copyright department, knew of the rampant attempts of band leaders taking credit for their musician’s works and would make the correction swiftly without pursuing this issue further (Mercer 134). It seems fitting that Shorter’s childlike curiosity in music and life is even reflected in his handwriting.

“Sanctuary” was first released on this album, but it was actually recorded on February 15, 1968, with the acoustic quintet with the tracks from the *Miles in the Sky*

album. This version was not released until *Circle in the Round* (1979), Columbia's attempt to perpetuate the presence of Davis's music even though, by that time, the trumpeter had not played for four years (Freeman 119). The collection issued previously unreleased music dating from 1955's "Two Bass Hit," through "Guinnevere," Davis's interpretation of a song written by David Crosby of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young and the Byrds, which was recorded with during the later *Bitches Brew* sessions.

The original version of "Sanctuary" adheres to the Second Great Quintet's traditional sound and style. Described as "lonely" in the original liner notes, the melody is stated in concise ideas from Shorter and Davis in unison at the octave (Issacs). The primary motion stems from either a two-note elongated rhythm or a three-note grouping that emphasizes the second of the three notes. The subtle surge in the three-note pattern drives the swaying motion of the triple-meter waltz that is implied but never outwardly acknowledged. The sextet performance appears as if they are wandering aimlessly through the tune, yet the slow, meditative mood fits Shorter's spacious melody perfectly. Each member of the enlarged rhythm section only adds to the ensemble sound when they deem it absolutely necessary. The piano, bass, and guitar essentially fill in the silences between the succinct melodic motives in the trumpet and saxophone. The added ideas serve as expressions and tonal depictions of the scene. The peace of the music is occasionally interrupted by a rapidly repeating bass note from Carter or Hancock's waterfall of sound during the repeat of the melody at the end, but these intrusions are rarely unwelcome. Williams, who normally drums with a gradually increasing ferocity in similar tunes, prefers a minimalist approach to "Sanctuary," often sitting in silence for long stretches of time. Overall, the aura of Shorter's original "Sanctuary" is melancholy

and never reaches the apex of emotion a listener would expect. Instead, the band reveres the song's ethereal, meditative state.

For *Bitches Brew*, "Sanctuary" was recorded on the first day of the sessions. Aside from Shorter and Davis, the group contained Bennie Maupin on bass clarinet, Joe Zawinul and Chick Corea on electric piano, John McLaughlin on guitar, Dave Holland on bass, Jack DeJohnette on drums, Don Alias on congas, and Jumma Santos (also known as Jim Riley) on shaker.¹³ Shorter's penchant for spiraling melodies is at once even more noticeable than in the first recording of "Sanctuary". Considerably lengthened from the original version to eleven minute duration, Shorter leaves no space for improvisation from the melodic instruments. The melodic content is, in actuality, through-composed, a technique Shorter would adapt for his later compositions (Mercer 135). The saxophonist's decision to orchestrate this particular part of the music and in subsequent works allows him total control over that which he determines is the essence of the composition. This latest version of the tune is far more dynamic than the original, as the emotions of the music are exaggerated. Shorter, however, did not elicit any specific directions for the rhythm section; the dramatic direction changes of the work generally determined the swells of the improvised background.

This "Sanctuary" is clearly in the mold of "Nefertiti," in that the improvisational elements do not extend from the spiraling and subdued trumpet and soprano saxophone unison (who never stray from one another except when Shorter drops out intentionally), but rather from the rhythm section. Shorter plays slightly behind Davis and creates a

¹³ One of Macero's editing tricks was to change the speaker from which certain instruments sounded. On "Sanctuary," the electric pianos utilized this technique as Zawinul was voiced in the left channel and Corea in the right (*Bitches Brew*). The drums with DeJohnette and Lenny White, Don Alias, or Billy Cobham would receive this treatment on other tracks, and the third day of recording had three electric pianos with Larry Young assuming the "center" position (*Bitches Brew*).

textural echo, but precision never seems to be the highest priority for the piece. Similar to the treatment Tony Williams gave to “Nefertiti,” the expansive backgrounds, beginning with the interjections from Corea’s piano transforms into full blown funk-chaos when Davis and Shorter make their dramatic minor third interval ascent [4:20]. This climax, and its reiteration near the end of the song, functions as the distinguishing characteristic of the tune. It is here that the framework of the Davis and Hancock (later Corea) duet of “I Fall in Love Too Easily” provided the basis for this structural change (Belden). “Sanctuary” was actually the piece often played after the duet and created a minor intensity change of its own (Ibid.). After the first recorded version of “I Fall in Love Too Easily” on *Seven Steps to Heaven* in 1963, Davis’s rendition of the song increasingly left out notes in the melody in order to allow the pianist in the duet to reharmonize the tune at will. Davis applied this freedom to exaggerate Shorter’s updated, more “operatic,” through-composed version. The technique created a greater spectrum of emotion for the song as the spacious opening could reach new heights with the increased ensemble size and volume of the electric instruments. The sonic power of his electric group produced the energy required to create the force envisioned by Davis, Macero, and Shorter.

This vigorous reworking of “Sanctuary” for the final track on *Bitches Brew* still retains much of the mysterious charm of the former. While the trumpet and saxophone improvised solos are gone, the metamorphosis of “Sanctuary” is emblematic of the change of compositional procedure of both Shorter and Davis. The *Circle and the Round* and *Bitches Brew* versions embody the searching nature of the music, but introduce new aspects that would affect all of Shorter’s future compositions: theatrical scoring, post-

production editing, and perpetual composition. As mentioned above, a significant amount of Shorter's forthcoming works are through-composed, removing some improvisatory freedom; however, as a composer, this allowed him to control the emotions of the piece closer to Western classical music sensibilities. As Shorter's works continue to evolved further into music that evoked moods and environments, keeping control over the piece's direction recreated the "operatic" feel of "Sanctuary" (Belden).

Particularly throughout the three decades following *Bitches Brew*, Shorter used a producer mentality to create music that would otherwise be impossible. "Sanctuary"'s climatic third ascension is a prime example of the technique Shorter learned from Teo Macero. The music was recorded in two separate groups in order to achieve the apex of the music; first with Davis's working quintet and Don Alias (an allusion to the original recording), and the second with the other band members added (Belden). These two takes were then edited together to create one idea (Belden).

Perhaps the most significant lesson of "Sanctuary" is the idea that music is never finished; that the music continues to change with the composer. Within two years, Shorter had produced two very different sounding songs with the same name and melody. "Sanctuary" would be recorded again in 1988 in a collaborative group with guitarist Carlos Santana, and a fourth time in 2002 with Shorter's current acoustic quartet. Each version of the music retains the essence of the song but often little else. On an interview for the DVD of the 1988 concert with Santana at the Montreux Jazz Festival, Shorter explained how some of his compositional changes come about:

I went to Japan with the group, my small group you know, and we would do "Sanctuary" and they were just kind of floating around, I said to the

drums “Hey, put a back beat in, like a chop-chop on wood, man” and you know, the Japanese audience ::cranes neck with wide-eyed expression:: ‘cause we did it the floating way first . . . and it was happening. See, I’m still working with “Sanctuary,” it ain’t done yet. There’s part two. It’s not done yet (Santana/Shorter).

With “Sanctuary,” Shorter began a continual process of reinventing his music and himself. Over the last two decades, Shorter’s earlier compositions reappeared in his nightly sets, but in a profoundly different style. As every prior composition was available to voice his latest ideas, Shorter would take his already complex and innovative music and delve even deeper into the composition; analyzing and molding each element into a new direction for jazz.

Since jazz music’s split into the two camps of Big Band Swing and Bebop in the middle of the 1940s, its musicians have struggled to walk the fine line between commercial success and their artistic integrity. *Bitches Brew* was, without a doubt, a huge success commercially, having sold 70,000 copies in its first month of availability, a major accomplishment in the jazz world (Freeman 29). Music this conceptual needed the help of a multitude of factors for its prosperity: the provocative title, its equally stimulating cover art (an apparent monument to the beauty of blackness painted by Mati Klarwein), and its aggressive marketing toward the acid-rock, hippie culture (Freeman 29, *Bitches Brew*).¹⁴ As for maintaining his artistic integrity, Davis, Shorter, and the rest of the band definitely felt they were moving in the right direction, much to the displeasure of a disproportionately large segment of jazz musicians. Over the next five

¹⁴ The decision to promote the album toward hippies is ironic in that was recorded shortly after the Woodstock festival which featured two of Davis’s latest inspirations: Jimi Hendrix and Sly and the Family Stone.

years, before his sabbatical, Davis would go on to make five more studio records and twelve live recordings (not including the collections assembled from recording sessions during that period released from 1975-1981). Members on Davis's first two electronic albums would split into several of the most commercially successful jazz-rock fusion bands. Herbie Hancock would first create Mwandishi and later Headhunters. Tony Williams, John McLaughlin, and Larry Young formed the first version of Tony Williams Lifetime. McLaughlin would also start the Mahavishnu Orchestra, and Chick Corea created both Return to Forever and Circle.

As for Shorter, he had completed his five-year tenure with Davis and decided it was time for him to move forward. Complicating his relationship with Davis is that while he was on the road, his newborn daughter, Iska (with second wife, Ana Maria Patricio) reacted badly to her vaccinations and developed brain damage (Mercer 135). Shorter needed to have more autonomy with the touring schedule in order to assist his wife as much as possible with Iska's seizures (136). It was time for Shorter to have his own jazz group, and he joined with current bandmate Joe Zawinul and bassist Miroslav Vitous to form their own jazz-rock fusion band: Weather Report.

Chapter Five: Weather Report

When Shorter decided he needed more control over the direction of his career and start his own group, partnering up with his old friend and current collaborator, Joe Zawinul, made perfect sense. Since introducing Shorter into his brief post as tenor saxophonist for Maynard Ferguson's big band, the Austrian-born Zawinul had made a name for himself with Julian "Cannonball" Adderley's group, but was ready to leave his own high profile position (Mercer 140). The two found a mutual companion to add as the group's third co-leader, Miroslav Vitous, who had worked with the other two men on separate occasions: Shorter's *Super Nova* (1969), and Zawinul's self titled 1970 release, *Zawinul* (140).

The group decided their somewhat bizarre name in a brainstorming session where Shorter suggested the title should stem from something that people are confronted with on a daily basis such as "The Six O'Clock News" or the eventual "Weather Report" (Mercer 141). Their musical identity was an obvious progression for the three when examining the music Shorter and Zawinul had contributed to the recording sessions for the two electric albums they had recorded with Davis. Zawinul recognized the similarities in the compositions of Shorter and his own endeavors. He noticed that, "[he and Shorter] both started changing the form of music around, away from the song form . . . we were very much alike and simply opened up a melody and let it expand where it went" (141). Shorter concurred with this assertion adding a dramatic image to their intentions:

We were talking about doing music that had mountains and streams and valleys and going over hill and dale. We were trying to do music with

another grammar, where you don't resolve something, like writing a letter where you don't use capitals. We wanted to have a fanfare and a chase and an announcement. It was close to film music. Music for films that would never be made. (Mercer 142)

The trio's high minded ideals, much like many of the fusion groups, also included approaching a much larger audience than the jazz club circuit (142).

The group would achieve modest success over their fourteen years of existence and would feature a perpetually changing personnel that varied with each recording. After Vitous left the group, presumably because of a feeling of inferior recognition in comparison to Shorter and Zawinul, a stylistic shift in the music, and the constant clashes between himself and Zawinul (a common theme due to Zawinul's fiery temper), Weather Report would employ three different bass players: Alphonso Johnson, Jaco Pastorius, and Victor Bailey (Mercer 161). The number of different musicians behind the drum set and the auxiliary percussion is more staggering: twelve drummers (including Peter Erskine, Omar Hakim, Leon "Ndugu" Chanler, and a guest appearance from Tony Williams) and nine percussionists (including Airto Moreira, Dom Um Romão, Don Alias, and Minu Cinelu). The interchange through the group could either be seen to demonstrate the level of commitment Shorter and Zawinul had to constantly adapt their style or as the embodiment of each band member's uncertainty in finding that sound. Regardless, from Weather Report's inception in 1970, through fifteen commercial recordings, and until their final record 1985 (fittingly entitled *This is This!* as it was essentially recorded after the members of the group had moved onto other projects), Zawinul's and Shorter's presence are constants (Mercer 208). During the latter years of Weather Report's

existence, his presence may have been the majority of Shorter's contribution as his compositional output declined steadily, but during first half of the 1970s, he and Zawinul developed a music with, according to one *Downbeat* writer, "roots in jazz but ideas in the universe" (Mercer 158).

By many accounts, Weather Report was hindered by another of jazz elitism's insults in that it was too accessible to the general public. The music, after their initial release entitled *Weather Report*, which served as an emulation of the electronic, groove-based experiments the leaders had embraced in Davis's group, drifted into the realm of a jazz-rock-pop fusion: "Most of their music just tried too hard and wanted too badly to be liked" (Freeman 54). Eventually, Shorter grew disillusioned with the commercial direction Weather Report developed and often retreated into the background of the group. This allowed the alpha-male personality of his co-leader to take full command both on and off the stage. Shorter, who increasingly relied upon the soprano saxophone to represent his voice, also found solace in his religious pursuit, as his wife, Ana Maria, and his best friend, Herbie Hancock, helped to convert him to Nichiren Buddhism (Mercer 153-155). An image of Zawinul arguing with club owners for the band's pay while Shorter sat and chanted "Nam Myoho Renge Kyo" is an accurate depiction of the contrasting styles and personalities of the group's leaders.¹⁵

Shorter's strongest compositions emerged in the early years of the group where their artistic explorations were applied to a higher importance than their purported pandering to rock audiences. Shorter's solo projects during and immediately following

¹⁵ Nichiren Daishonin was a thirteenth century Japanese monk who focused upon the final teaching of Buddha: the Lotus Sutra, which explains that all living beings can reach enlightenment (Mercer 151). The sect also stresses interconnection in all things including personal responsibility (Mercer *Ibid.*). "Nam Myoho Renge Kyo" is the title of the Lotus Sutra and is chanted in order to obtain its wisdom. Nichiren Buddhists are controversial in that they actively promote the teachings of the monk.

his time with Weather Report can be considered a reaction to his discomfort with the material, but his compositions, particularly on *Mysterious Traveller* [sic] (1974), and the artistic and profitable success *Heavy Weather* (1977), illustrate that Shorter's compositional reservoir had not run dry.

Mysterious Traveller was a stylistic modification for Weather Report, and the change to a more audience-friendly popish brand of jazz-rock opened new doors in their direction but left bassist Vitous out of the equation. He still contributed to the recording of the album, but Shorter and Zawinul had already found Alphonso Johnson, a new bass player to add a funk stylized groove that had been mostly absent in the group's music up to that point. Johnson played a crucial role on the title track: Shorter's "Mysterious Traveller." His purpose was essentially to establish the first beat of each measure. As the piece was meticulously arranged with Shorter's new level of complexity, finding that first beat could be a bigger challenge than expected. The music is constantly shifting time signatures between triple, quadruple, and quintuple meter. The nebulous feel is consistent as there are nineteen changes in the first twenty measures (Example 5.1). This music is clearly not intended for a group of amateur musicians. Shorter designed "Mysterious Traveller" for performance by the musicians of Weather Report.

It could be argued that Shorter's compositional work with his new band is no longer jazz music. Jazz music's distinguishing elements are, among other factors, the swinging eighth-note pattern and improvisation. "Mysterious Traveller" does not swing, and its only improvisation is structured into the conclusion. Chord changes are not even written in until measure sixty-eight of its eighty measure duration. Shorter replaced these most common elements of jazz style with a funk groove and a layering of orchestrated

musical ideas upon each other. In this respect, the saxophonist has drawn upon his classical training at NYU and paired it with popular music to create his own sound, which is inspired as much by these exterior elements and his own musical experiences as it is by jazz.

3x

Piano

Bass Guitar

Percussion

Cymbals

Snare

4

Pno.

Bass

Perc.

7

Pno.

Bass

Perc.

2

The musical score for 'Mysterious Traveller' Measures 1-11 is presented in three staves. The top staff is for Piano (Pno.) in 5/4 time, the middle for Bass in 4/4 time, and the bottom for Percussion (Perc.) in 5/4 time. The Piano part begins with a continuous syncopated line of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Bass part follows with a similar syncopated line. The Percussion part provides a rhythmic foundation with a pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The score is marked with measure numbers 10 and 11, and a '10' above the first measure of the Piano part.

Example 5.1 “Mysterious Traveller” Measures 1-11.

Shorter’s experimentations in textural layering overlap with his ongoing venture into the characteristics of formal structure. “Mysterious Traveller” begins with an unstructured synthesized sound effect that is described as “eerie” in the score and serves to set up an ambience. He then opens the piece with a two-measure vamp featuring only Zawinul’s piano playing both his part (syncopated chords which grow increasingly complex as the work continues) and the eventual bass line. After the vamp is repeated three times, Shorter writes in a drum part that blends with the asymmetrical groove and accents the rhythm by hitting the snare drum on the second and fourth beats in the 4/4 measures and the second beat in three-beat measures. This polyrhythm develops for another six measures before the introduction of a second motif consisting of two measures over a 4/4 and a 5/4 measure that features a continuous syncopated line in the piano and the newly entered bass. This figure appears three more times, each time after twelve measures of the established rhythmic idea. Shorter’s other musical concepts enter at irregular intervals throughout the piece, but for the first fifty-six measures, he has created a clear pattern of fourteen-measure phrases.

29

Soprano Saxophone

Loco

Organ

Piano

Bass Guitar

31

S. Sax.

Org.

Pno.

Bass

Example 5.2 “Mysterious Traveller” Measures 29-33.

The second section introduces two new components to the work: the bass figure (which is a subtle adaptation of the piano’s figure in the left hand) and an increasing freedom in Zawinul’s chordal syncopation. As with the melody in “Sanctuary” and many of Shorter’s later pieces, each musical idea is written out, creating an orchestration that would allow the pianist to replicate the sonorities the composer intended rather than rely on chord symbols. It is not until the third section that Shorter’s soprano saxophone enters with four measures of minimal material as he adds short and tonally ambiguous eighth notes and sixteenth notes to the polyrhythmic interaction. In the recording of the piece, Shorter begins each iteration of the note (always an A above the treble staff) below pitch and slides into the correct tuning quickly, almost as a subdivision of the quick beats. This pattern is interrupted by an overdubbed organ that plays a four-note descending pattern of

E-C[#]-B-E (this second E is an octave below the first) looped together through rapid collections of sixteenth-note quintuplets that constantly alter the location of the naturally accented upper octave E (Example 5.2). This idea lasts for five measures, but in keeping with the four-measure divisions of this phrase, Shorter reenters with a line underneath the organ during the final measure of the quintuplet figure. He concludes the idea in the following measure as he bends a pitch down from a C to a B under the staff.

The final fourteen-measure grouping focuses more on Shorter's technical acrobatics and basic studio editing skills as he overdubs himself to create perfect fifth and major third intervals in the soprano. This is followed shortly by a streaming thirty-second note pattern that emphasizes interplay between A-natural and A-flat. Shorter's chromatic and tonal distortion tendencies are most present in his own part.

The musical score for Example 5.3, "Mysterious Traveller" Measures 44-46, is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 44-46) includes parts for Soprano Saxophone, Piano, and Bass Guitar. The second system (measures 45-46) includes parts for S. Sax., Pno., and Bass. The music is in 4/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth-note quintuplets and chromatic lines.

Example 5.3 "Mysterious Traveller" Measures 44-46.

Following the completion of the four fourteen-measure phrases, Shorter establishes a new level of excitement above the intermittent technical segments in the

primary instruments of the group. As Shorter records melodic ideas on both his tenor and soprano and splices them together, they lead to a brisk alternating sextuplet pattern in the Rhodes piano, Zawinul's third different keyboard timbre of the music. Measure fifty-five in the score begins this rhythmic pattern, and this idea works through several permutations over Johnson's bass line that moves from an A pedal tone into his most complex pattern of the piece in measure sixty-two. Here the metrical oscillations cease and the music finally locks into 4/4. Unlike Shorter's previous collaborations with drummers such as Art Blakey and Tony Williams, when the harmonic din rises from saxophone, Rhodes piano, and bass, the drummer Ishmael Wilburn's rhythms are exceedingly simple as they revolve mainly around eighth-notes in the cymbal and the snare drum pattern from its first entrance.

This all accelerates into the first true improvisation of the music: a six-measure break for Zawinul to solo modally over an F[#] Dorian scale. Shorter layers his tenor over the top with more technical melodic ideas that focus on half-step movements and finally culminate with ascending quarter notes covering a minor third from G[#] to B. This final section is a release for the musicians as they reach the vamp for improvisations. The band plays through the structured form of collective improvisation until a return of the eerie sound effects that began the work.

The musical score for measures 77-80 of "Mysterious Traveller" features three staves: Soprano Saxophone, Piano, and Bass Guitar. The Soprano Saxophone staff is labeled "G# Dorian Open Improv." and contains a melodic line starting with a half note G#4, followed by a quarter note A#4, and then a series of eighth notes (B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G#5) with a final quarter note B5. The Piano staff is labeled "F# Dorian" and contains a series of chords: F#4 (half note), G#4 (half note), A4 (half note), B4 (half note), and a final chord of C5 (quarter note), D5 (quarter note), E5 (quarter note), F#5 (quarter note). The Bass Guitar staff contains a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes: G#2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), B2 (quarter), C3 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G#3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G#4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), E5 (quarter), F#5 (quarter), G#5 (quarter), A5 (quarter), B5 (quarter), C6 (quarter), D6 (quarter), E6 (quarter), F#6 (quarter), G#6 (quarter), A6 (quarter), B6 (quarter), C7 (quarter), D7 (quarter), E7 (quarter), F#7 (quarter), G#7 (quarter), A7 (quarter), B7 (quarter), C8 (quarter), D8 (quarter), E8 (quarter), F#8 (quarter), G#8 (quarter), A8 (quarter), B8 (quarter), C9 (quarter), D9 (quarter), E9 (quarter), F#9 (quarter), G#9 (quarter), A9 (quarter), B9 (quarter), C10 (quarter), D10 (quarter), E10 (quarter), F#10 (quarter), G#10 (quarter), A10 (quarter), B10 (quarter), C11 (quarter), D11 (quarter), E11 (quarter), F#11 (quarter), G#11 (quarter), A11 (quarter), B11 (quarter), C12 (quarter), D12 (quarter), E12 (quarter), F#12 (quarter), G#12 (quarter), A12 (quarter), B12 (quarter), C13 (quarter), D13 (quarter), E13 (quarter), F#13 (quarter), G#13 (quarter), A13 (quarter), B13 (quarter), C14 (quarter), D14 (quarter), E14 (quarter), F#14 (quarter), G#14 (quarter), A14 (quarter), B14 (quarter), C15 (quarter), D15 (quarter), E15 (quarter), F#15 (quarter), G#15 (quarter), A15 (quarter), B15 (quarter), C16 (quarter), D16 (quarter), E16 (quarter), F#16 (quarter), G#16 (quarter), A16 (quarter), B16 (quarter), C17 (quarter), D17 (quarter), E17 (quarter), F#17 (quarter), G#17 (quarter), A17 (quarter), B17 (quarter), C18 (quarter), D18 (quarter), E18 (quarter), F#18 (quarter), G#18 (quarter), A18 (quarter), B18 (quarter), C19 (quarter), D19 (quarter), E19 (quarter), F#19 (quarter), G#19 (quarter), A19 (quarter), B19 (quarter), C20 (quarter), D20 (quarter), E20 (quarter), F#20 (quarter), G#20 (quarter), A20 (quarter), B20 (quarter), C21 (quarter), D21 (quarter), E21 (quarter), F#21 (quarter), G#21 (quarter), A21 (quarter), B21 (quarter), C22 (quarter), D22 (quarter), E22 (quarter), F#22 (quarter), G#22 (quarter), A22 (quarter), B22 (quarter), C23 (quarter), D23 (quarter), E23 (quarter), F#23 (quarter), G#23 (quarter), A23 (quarter), B23 (quarter), C24 (quarter), D24 (quarter), E24 (quarter), F#24 (quarter), G#24 (quarter), A24 (quarter), B24 (quarter), C25 (quarter), D25 (quarter), E25 (quarter), F#25 (quarter), G#25 (quarter), A25 (quarter), B25 (quarter), C26 (quarter), D26 (quarter), E26 (quarter), F#26 (quarter), G#26 (quarter), A26 (quarter), B26 (quarter), C27 (quarter), D27 (quarter), E27 (quarter), F#27 (quarter), G#27 (quarter), A27 (quarter), B27 (quarter), C28 (quarter), D28 (quarter), E28 (quarter), F#28 (quarter), G#28 (quarter), A28 (quarter), B28 (quarter), C29 (quarter), D29 (quarter), E29 (quarter), F#29 (quarter), G#29 (quarter), A29 (quarter), B29 (quarter), C30 (quarter), D30 (quarter), E30 (quarter), F#30 (quarter), G#30 (quarter), A30 (quarter), B30 (quarter), C31 (quarter), D31 (quarter), E31 (quarter), F#31 (quarter), G#31 (quarter), A31 (quarter), B31 (quarter), C32 (quarter), D32 (quarter), E32 (quarter), F#32 (quarter), G#32 (quarter), A32 (quarter), B32 (quarter), C33 (quarter), D33 (quarter), E33 (quarter), F#33 (quarter), G#33 (quarter), A33 (quarter), B33 (quarter), C34 (quarter), D34 (quarter), E34 (quarter), F#34 (quarter), G#34 (quarter), A34 (quarter), B34 (quarter), C35 (quarter), D35 (quarter), E35 (quarter), F#35 (quarter), G#35 (quarter), A35 (quarter), B35 (quarter), C36 (quarter), D36 (quarter), E36 (quarter), F#36 (quarter), G#36 (quarter), A36 (quarter), B36 (quarter), C37 (quarter), D37 (quarter), E37 (quarter), F#37 (quarter), G#37 (quarter), A37 (quarter), B37 (quarter), C38 (quarter), D38 (quarter), E38 (quarter), F#38 (quarter), G#38 (quarter), A38 (quarter), B38 (quarter), C39 (quarter), D39 (quarter), E39 (quarter), F#39 (quarter), G#39 (quarter), A39 (quarter), B39 (quarter), C40 (quarter), D40 (quarter), E40 (quarter), F#40 (quarter), G#40 (quarter), A40 (quarter), B40 (quarter), C41 (quarter), D41 (quarter), E41 (quarter), F#41 (quarter), G#41 (quarter), A41 (quarter), B41 (quarter), C42 (quarter), D42 (quarter), E42 (quarter), F#42 (quarter), G#42 (quarter), A42 (quarter), B42 (quarter), C43 (quarter), D43 (quarter), E43 (quarter), F#43 (quarter), G#43 (quarter), A43 (quarter), B43 (quarter), C44 (quarter), D44 (quarter), E44 (quarter), F#44 (quarter), G#44 (quarter), A44 (quarter), B44 (quarter), C45 (quarter), D45 (quarter), E45 (quarter), F#45 (quarter), G#45 (quarter), A45 (quarter), B45 (quarter), C46 (quarter), D46 (quarter), E46 (quarter), F#46 (quarter), G#46 (quarter), A46 (quarter), B46 (quarter), C47 (quarter), D47 (quarter), E47 (quarter), F#47 (quarter), G#47 (quarter), A47 (quarter), B47 (quarter), C48 (quarter), D48 (quarter), E48 (quarter), F#48 (quarter), G#48 (quarter), A48 (quarter), B48 (quarter), C49 (quarter), D49 (quarter), E49 (quarter), F#49 (quarter), G#49 (quarter), A49 (quarter), B49 (quarter), C50 (quarter), D50 (quarter), E50 (quarter), F#50 (quarter), G#50 (quarter), A50 (quarter), B50 (quarter), C51 (quarter), D51 (quarter), E51 (quarter), F#51 (quarter), G#51 (quarter), A51 (quarter), B51 (quarter), C52 (quarter), D52 (quarter), E52 (quarter), F#52 (quarter), G#52 (quarter), A52 (quarter), B52 (quarter), C53 (quarter), D53 (quarter), E53 (quarter), F#53 (quarter), G#53 (quarter), A53 (quarter), B53 (quarter), C54 (quarter), D54 (quarter), E54 (quarter), F#54 (quarter), G#54 (quarter), A54 (quarter), B54 (quarter), C55 (quarter), D55 (quarter), E55 (quarter), F#55 (quarter), G#55 (quarter), A55 (quarter), B55 (quarter), C56 (quarter), D56 (quarter), E56 (quarter), F#56 (quarter), G#56 (quarter), A56 (quarter), B56 (quarter), C57 (quarter), D57 (quarter), E57 (quarter), F#57 (quarter), G#57 (quarter), A57 (quarter), B57 (quarter), C58 (quarter), D58 (quarter), E58 (quarter), F#58 (quarter), G#58 (quarter), A58 (quarter), B58 (quarter), C59 (quarter), D59 (quarter), E59 (quarter), F#59 (quarter), G#59 (quarter), A59 (quarter), B59 (quarter), C60 (quarter), D60 (quarter), E60 (quarter), F#60 (quarter), G#60 (quarter), A60 (quarter), B60 (quarter), C61 (quarter), D61 (quarter), E61 (quarter), F#61 (quarter), G#61 (quarter), A61 (quarter), B61 (quarter), C62 (quarter), D62 (quarter), E62 (quarter), F#62 (quarter), G#62 (quarter), A62 (quarter), B62 (quarter), C63 (quarter), D63 (quarter), E63 (quarter), F#63 (quarter), G#63 (quarter), A63 (quarter), B63 (quarter), C64 (quarter), D64 (quarter), E64 (quarter), F#64 (quarter), G#64 (quarter), A64 (quarter), B64 (quarter), C65 (quarter), D65 (quarter), E65 (quarter), F#65 (quarter), G#65 (quarter), A65 (quarter), B65 (quarter), C66 (quarter), D66 (quarter), E66 (quarter), F#66 (quarter), G#66 (quarter), A66 (quarter), B66 (quarter), C67 (quarter), D67 (quarter), E67 (quarter), F#67 (quarter), G#67 (quarter), A67 (quarter), B67 (quarter), C68 (quarter), D68 (quarter), E68 (quarter), F#68 (quarter), G#68 (quarter), A68 (quarter), B68 (quarter), C69 (quarter), D69 (quarter), E69 (quarter), F#69 (quarter), G#69 (quarter), A69 (quarter), B69 (quarter), C70 (quarter), D70 (quarter), E70 (quarter), F#70 (quarter), G#70 (quarter), A70 (quarter), B70 (quarter), C71 (quarter), D71 (quarter), E71 (quarter), F#71 (quarter), G#71 (quarter), A71 (quarter), B71 (quarter), C72 (quarter), D72 (quarter), E72 (quarter), F#72 (quarter), G#72 (quarter), A72 (quarter), B72 (quarter), C73 (quarter), D73 (quarter), E73 (quarter), F#73 (quarter), G#73 (quarter), A73 (quarter), B73 (quarter), C74 (quarter), D74 (quarter), E74 (quarter), F#74 (quarter), G#74 (quarter), A74 (quarter), B74 (quarter), C75 (quarter), D75 (quarter), E75 (quarter), F#75 (quarter), G#75 (quarter), A75 (quarter), B75 (quarter), C76 (quarter), D76 (quarter), E76 (quarter), F#76 (quarter), G#76 (quarter), A76 (quarter), B76 (quarter), C77 (quarter), D77 (quarter), E77 (quarter), F#77 (quarter), G#77 (quarter), A77 (quarter), B77 (quarter), C78 (quarter), D78 (quarter), E78 (quarter), F#78 (quarter), G#78 (quarter), A78 (quarter), B78 (quarter), C79 (quarter), D79 (quarter), E79 (quarter), F#79 (quarter), G#79 (quarter), A79 (quarter), B79 (quarter), C80 (quarter), D80 (quarter), E80 (quarter), F#80 (quarter), G#80 (quarter), A80 (quarter), B80 (quarter).

Example 5.4 "Mysterious Traveller" Measures 77-80.

Shorter had become more adept at combining his playing styles within the music as he recorded many of the faster musical interjections on the tenor and added an echo effect to the mix that placed this technical voice in the background. His soprano soloing is far more straightforward and is sonically unaltered, thus constructing the illusion of two different players or a conversation between two sides of himself. “Mysterious Traveller” seems to be a conversation between Shorter’s work in the 1960s and his newer pursuits. The music of Weather Report is structured and composed more like popular music; it allows for the individual’s creativity, but within the predetermined confines.

“Palladium” from the 1977 release *Heavy Weather* examines these same formal structures but gives his fellow musicians far more liberty to explore the music, as there are numerous improvisatory sections within the confines of the grand structure that is developed around the strident saxophone melody. This album, which contained Zawinul’s “Birdland” (Weather Report’s most overwhelmingly successful popular hit), is usually included in lists of the best jazz recordings ever. *Heavy Weather*, however, features more personnel changes as all but Shorter and Zawinul are replaced.¹⁶ Weather Report added drummer Alex Acuña, percussionist Manolo Badrena, and bass prodigy Jaco Pastorius. Pastorius’s skill and exuberant personality (which could often come across abrasively) made him the most noted name, outside of Shorter and Zawinul, to spend a large amount of time with the group. Often credited with redefining the role of the electric bass as a melodic and solo instrument, Pastorius was a welcome edition as

¹⁶ The ever changing drummer and percussionist positions began take its toll on the band. Alphonso Johnson, who had grown tired of his demotion to timekeeper as the drummers never seemed to accomplish such a feat on their own said that: “We would be on tour and we would land in a city. I would be at the airport watching Joe at the gate greeting the new drummer who was coming in that day while Wayne was at the baggage check saying good-bye to the drummer who’d played the previous night, saying ‘Well it was good,’ or whatever Wayne said in his Wayne way” (Johnson/Mercer 175-176).

he often contributed as many compositions, if not more, than Weather Report's senior members. On *Heavy Weather*, his second album with the group (the first being 1976's *Black Market*), Pastorius is credited with two tunes, to accompany Shorter's two, Zawinul's three, and Badrena and Acuña's co-composition of one song. As Pastorius's star shined brightly and Shorter faded into the background, a common theory developed during this time that the bassist was purposefully driving a wedge between the original leaders of the band. Shorter later explained his withdrawal and perceived growing lack of interest in group as a self-imposed exile (Mercer 178).

Everyone talked and wrote about the onslaught of my partners, Jaco and Joe, but that's wrong. It was something I was going through myself.

Other aspects of my life were developing. I was going through metamorphosis, like the pain of being born . . . If value is being created in your life, you meet a lot of resistance. A lot of resistance came in the form of "Hey, you're not taking care of your music . . ." But I let everything go, I didn't try to do some forced music, which would have been catastrophic, to commit that kind of suicide." (Shorter/Mercer 178)

As Shorter retreated into his religion as a means of coping with his daughter's continuous seizures, the music that he did not force still adhered to his normal, lofty standards.

Shorter's compositions during Pastorius's reign in the bass chair took full advantage of the self-proclaimed "greatest bass player in the world."¹⁷

"Palladium," a song named for a club on New York's Fifty-Second Street next door to Birdland where Shorter had played in a band opposite Tito Puente in the 1950s,

¹⁷ Pastorius's legend includes not only his Mozartean ability to listen to a concert and memorize the bass part during the show, but his audition for Weather Report: "My name is John Francis Pastorious the Third, and I'm the greatest bass player in the world" (Mercer 176).

does not utilize Pastorious's improvisational skills, but his robust playing style and lightning-fast fingers articulate the repeated figure that rests at the heart of the piece (Mercer 177).

12 CMaj7 G°Maj7 DMaj9 Dmin9

Piano

Bass

Example 5.5 “Palladium” Measures 12-13.

The pattern, disjointed and rhythmic, spans an octave and a half. Pastorious takes numerous liberties but retains the character of line. The introduction of “Palladium” sounds like an electronic fanfare as the densely stacked piano rhythms, coupled with the root doubled at the octave in the bass and Shorter’s tenor resting above the foundation all strongly present the chordal progressions centered around an Fm^9 chord. The group moves uniformly through a Shorteresque progression that emphasizes the flow of the music over traditional harmonic movements (measures five through seven are Fm^9 - $Em^{7(+4)}/F^\sharp$ - $C^\sharp m^9$ - $B^b m^9$ - Fm^9 and the variation in measures seven through nine is Fm^9 - $E^{7/6}$ - $BMaj^9/C^\sharp$ - $C^{13(b9)}$ - Fm^9). Shorter’s love for complex chordal structures is apparent here as he composed numerous alterations to what is a fairly simple yet untraditional harmonic movement.

“Palladium”’s formal construction is extremely similar to that of “Mysterious Traveller” in that following an introduction (the former’s introduction is far more conventional in comparison to the synthesized sound effects that herald the beginning of

the latter), Shorter spins the melody with several background permutations and concludes with an open vamp section for improvisations by Weather Report's co-leaders. This piece, however, borders on popular music structure as the melodic section (measures fourteen through fifty-one) is repeated directly, emulating a strophic format. A two-measure presentation of the groove in measures twelve and thirteen before Shorter's entrance on the melody presents the primary chordal focus of this division. Accompanied by a drum section that belongs more in a discotheque than a jazz club, Shorter's chord changes accent the first beat and the final sixteenth-note subdivision of the second beat, each with a different chord: CMaj⁷-G^oMaj⁷-DMaj⁹-Dm⁹. The most notable difference in the writing of this section as compared to the score of "Mysterious Traveller" is the lack of orchestration. Outside of the introduction, which is through-composed, the bass pattern is written once at the beginning and the primary rhythm is stated in the keyboard. This piece, despite its obvious popular rock music leanings, is written closer to the jazz lead sheets that Shorter would produce for Blakey or the Second Great Quintet. Giving the accompanying instruments a greater amount of freedom recalls the work of the initial Weather Report album and to Shorter's work with the Davis electric ensembles.

Following the establishment of the groove, Shorter comes in with his syncopated melody, which adds to the already complex polyrhythmic foundation established in the band.

14 CMaj7 G°Maj7 DMaj9 Dmin9 CMaj7 G°Maj7 CMaj7 G°Maj7

21 DMaj9 Dmin9 CMaj7 G°Maj7 DMaj9 Dmin9 Harmony Ad Lib.

Example 5.6 “Palladium” Measures 14-25.

The melody itself generally moves in thirds and adheres closely to the written chords.

This is a different style than that found in some of Shorter’s earlier writing and reflects his emphasis on the commerciality of the music. On the repeat of the melody, Shorter is doubled by Zawinul creating a new textural quality that, if anything, actually brightens the sound. This second iteration of the theme leads Weather Report into the vamp section (Example 5.7).

53 Bmin9 D/E AMaj9+4 DMaj9 Bmin9 D/E Amin11

57 Bmin9 D/E AMaj9+4 DMaj9 Ebmin9 Ab7 DbMaj9 C13b9

Example 5.7 “Palladium” Measures 53-60.

The final eight measures of “Palladium” (more than any other section in the music) read as a return to Shorter’s jazz writing. Essentially a set of changes for improvisation, the melody in this final segment is composed of half and whole notes that move through the upper extensions of the chord progression, particularly the ninth scale degree. The fifth of the chord appears twice, and the eleventh and thirteenth are played once, but the

remaining twelve notes are ninths. The harmonic progression itself revolves around a dominant/tonic relationship between A and D. The two chords, in numerous configurations, are directly linked five times, and the same relationship a half step lower is accented in the final two measures. “Palladium”’s final call demonstrates the synthesis of Shorter’s inventive harmonic corridors and Weather Report’s popular style into music that can bridge either’s repertory.

Shorter’s career with Weather Report was lengthy and prolific, having produced in the group’s fourteen years more albums with Zawinul than any other group in which the saxophonist was associated. While at times it seemed as if Shorter’s heart was not in the music that he helped to create, his compositions continued to have his trademark qualities and would introduce other techniques that would proliferate his future endeavors. His experiments with electronic instruments would dominate, and some would say doom, his next recordings under his own name. The vamp-heavy grooves he relied on extensively in these pieces had been a part of his repertory since compositions such as “Footprints.” Weather Report allowed Shorter to reach a broader audience outside the increasingly elitist and diminishing groups of jazz aficionados. The success was respectable by rock industry standards but staggering for jazz. However, after fourteen years and Zawinul’s usurpation of the music, it was time for the two remaining co-founders to part ways. Complicating the final years of the group was the death of Shorter’s daughter and growing alcohol problems in both Shorter and his wife as they struggled with their daughter’s pained existence (Mercer 206-207). Regardless, Weather Report, and more specifically the complex relationship between Zawinul and Shorter,

created an amorphous music that often changed from album to album but maintained a consistent core sound that had been identified with Shorter throughout his career.

Chapter Six: Individual Projects

While the majority of Shorter's professional time in the 1970s was occupied with Weather Report, he did manage to complete an inspired solo project. A festival promoter who Shorter described as a "hip little Chinese girl" informed the saxophonist of Milton Nascimento, a popular musician from Tres Pontas in the Minas Gerais region of Brazil (Mercer 165).¹⁸ Brazil has always been a land of rhythmic fascination for jazz musicians, particularly with the bossa nova style. The inclusion the bossa nova in the jazz repertory is associated with fellow tenor saxophonist Stan Getz, who produced a number of recordings (*Getz/Gilberto* and *Jazz Samba* among others) featuring the leading artists in the genre like Antônio Carlos Jobim and João Gilberto. These recordings spawned several jazz standards including "Garota de Ipanema (Girl from Ipanema)," "Desafinado," and "Corcovado (Quiet Nights of Quiet Stars)."

Shorter himself dabbled in Brazilian rhythms, partially due to the presence of his Portuguese wife, as early as 1965 on "El Gaucho" released on the Blue Note album *Adam's Apple* (Milkowski). *Supernova* (1969) featured his version of Jobim's "Dindi" with Portuguese vocals by Maria Booker and Brazilian percussionist Airto Moreira performing on the berimbau and the cuica, traditional Brazilian instruments (Milkowski). Shorter even covers a song by Nascimento himself on 1970's *Molto Grosso Feio*, his last solo album before his collaboration with the Brazilian singer/songwriter (Mercer 168). Herbie Hancock had actually met Nascimento while in Brazil for his honeymoon with

¹⁸ Minas Gerais translates to "general mines" and is named for the wealth of gold and gemstone mining in the area. The area's culture is vastly different from the coastal cities of Rio de Janeiro and Bahia as it is isolated by a mountain range. This area's divergence from the perceived culture of Brazil is similar to Appalachia and New York (Mercer 165).

wife, Gigi, and, when Nascimento traveled to the United States in 1974, he and Shorter jumped at the chance to record with the genre-blurring artist (Mercer 164,169).

From his introduction into fame due to his appearance in a 1967 International Song Festival, Nascimento separated himself from the rest of Brazilian music (Mercer 166). Unlike the *tropicalista* movement (a musical development that combined bossa nova, American rock, and folk songs from the Bahia region of Brazil) that emerged at the same time as Nascimento, the singer's influences encompassed jazz, folk music, church melodies, the psychedelic sound of the Beatles among others (167). To this equation, he added his own level of subtlety and melancholy to create a musical style that could only be called "Milton" (167).¹⁹ An artist of this level of originality would naturally attract the attention of Shorter and Hancock. With Nascimento's jazz background, the Brazilian was equally intrigued and intimidated by the two men.

I knew Herbie and Wayne and all those musicians because they played with the Miles Davis Quintet. For me, Miles was above everything and everyone, Miles was a god, and anyone close to him would be at the same level. I felt that I could die just by being touched by one of those musicians. (Nascimento/Mercer 165)

When Flora Purim, the Brazilian Queen of Jazz and wife of oft-collaborator with Shorter, Airto Moreira, decided to bring Nascimento to the United States to perform in her subsequent performance at Montreux, Shorter offered to split the expenses and have Nascimento and his companions stay at his house in California in order to make a

¹⁹ For a festival poster in Copenhagen in which Nascimento performed, all the acts were labeled according to their style, however, beside Nascimento's name, the promoter's merely wrote "Milton" as he really had no stylistic precedent (Mercer 167).

recording (Mercer 169). The result was Shorter's first release for Columbia records: *Native Dancer* (1974).

The composition of the personnel for the recording adequately depicts the various musical forces at work to create this transnational music. Along with jazz legends Shorter and Hancock and the chief collaborator Nascimento, the group included two of Nascimento's associates, Wagner Tiso on keyboards and Robertinho Silva on drums, musicians from popular music, bassist Dave McDaniel and guitarist Jay Graydon, Flora Purim's guitarist Dave Amaro, and Purim's husband Airtio Moreira (Mercer 169). This unique collection of musicians that generally stretched their own genres would create a style unique to this record as Shorter vehemently proclaimed that this would not be a pure Brazilian emulation (170). Regardless, this album was a monumental pairing of the genres that demonstrates a significance of the South American country's individuality in the music of prestigious American artists. This was an album designed to appeal not just to fans of Shorter and Hancock; *Native Dancer* was aimed toward the Brazilian audience as well. Each of the main figures in the music contributed to recording as there are five compositions by Nascimento ("Ponta de Areia," "Tarde," "Miracle of the Fishes," "From the Lonely Afternoons," and "Lilia"), three by Shorter ("Beauty and the Beast," "Diana," and "Ana Maria"), and one by Hancock ("Joanna's Theme"). As much as the three added to the album, they added even more to each other, with each track containing their defining musical traits.

The second piece on the album, "Beauty and the Beast," is the perfect synthesis of their ideas. The introduction is a combination of Weather Report's groove and an influence by Hancock's forays into popular funk music and a touch of Brazilian rhythm

and percussion driving the keyboard and bass figures. The lyrical and sequential melody draws upon the folk songs Nascimento embodied. The harmonies, however, adhere to Shorter's typically unorthodox progressions.

The formal construction of this work is creative in that there is a primary eight-measure theme that is bracketed with four-measure phrases. Following an eight-measure introduction, which fixates the music on the downbeat and immediately announces the funk influence in the work (the melody actually begins in the seventh measure, but acts as an elongated anacrusis that encompasses all but three-quarters of the first beat), a sequential melody that emphasizes both chromaticism and quartal relationships slowly unwinds. The focal point of the two-measure phrases is found at the beginning and is then accented on successive movements of increasing chromatic intervals returning to the focal point on the final sixteenth-note of each beat in the first measure. In measure eight, the pickup to the A section, this focal point is a G followed by ascending intervals of a major second (A), a minor third (B^b, which also serves as the tritone to the E^{7#9} harmonic chord), and a major third (B) before descending back to the G and then yet another major third to an E (Example 6.1). This pattern is repeated first identically in measures ten and eleven (though with a slight rhythmic variation) and then sequentially up a fourth in measures twelve and thirteen. On the return to the A section after a four-measure interlude, the sequence returns again three times, making this the predominant motive of "Beauty and the Beast."

8 F⁷ E⁷^{#9} A^{min}⁷ B^{min}^{7b5} E^{#9} A^{min}⁷

12 G^{min}⁷ C⁷^{#9} F^{min}⁷ E^b^{min}⁷ A^{b7} D^b^{Maj}⁷ C⁷^{#9}

Example 6.1 “Beauty and the Beast” Measures 8-16.

The final two intervals of the sequence allude to one of two main harmonic elements Shorter used to create the chord changes for this work. The augmented triad F, A, and C[#] comprises the majority of the emphasized chords in the work. This is due to the repeated presence of the triad as the ending the sequence and several other phrases are built on one of these three chords. This organizational tactic is further accented via the use of the dominant to tonic progression that proceeds each: C^{7#9} (with the exception of one occasion) moves to F⁷ or F^m⁷, E⁷ or E^{7#9} always move to A^m⁷, and A^{b7} always moves to D^b^{Maj}⁷ (enharmonic to the C[#]).

The V-I progression, though one of the most important harmonic movements in all of Western music, is atypical at times in Shorter’s work since conventionality is often purposefully avoided in his compositions. Outside of the structural use of the augmented triad, the harmonic movement of “Beauty and the Beast” is one of the most standard of his career. This ordinary progression occurs twenty times over the course of thirty-two chord changes. The overwhelming presence of the V-I, many of which come in the form of the jazz cornerstone ii-V-I progression, illustrates the more basic elements of jazz, popular, and folk music that preside over Shorter’s interpretation. Shorter and Hancock’s work in the popular vein coupled with Nascimento’s folk music background combine to determine in the music’s direction.

Despite his best efforts to make the music predominantly simple in harmonic terms, Shorter's preference for the tritone relationship appears throughout the work in several locations. As mentioned above, the melody features a tritone interval between the root of the harmony (F) and the chromatic escalation in the music (B); however, as this is essentially a passing tone, its impact is relegated mainly as a wrenching dissonance. The other prominent use of the tritone sonority is found in the harmonic motion and serves a two-fold purpose: as a tritone substitution and as tonal manipulation to change the character of the melody. The placement of the B half-diminished seventh chord, which contains a tritone, is juxtaposed as an alternative to the three-chord progression underneath the tonic statement of the melody: $F^7-E^{7\#9}-Am^7$ followed by $Bm^{7b5}-E^{7\#9}-Am^7$. With this substitution, the melodic chord tones over the first three notes change from the third and the ninth scale degrees into the flatted seventh and the thirteenth scale degrees. Shorter is again setting his melody in the extended range of each scale.

Shorter's treatment of the four-measure breaks that follow A sections provide structure to the foundation established in the introduction and the melody. The first interlude is essentially a repetition of the funky, rhythmic based introduction. This recall of the opening pattern, which is more reminiscent of Hancock's style than Shorter's, creates a dialogue between the two old friends and in some way is a competition for supremacy on the piece. The second four-measure interlude, however, removes all doubt as to whom is the focus of "Beauty and the Beast." Shorter's harmonic changes act as a turnaround figure, moving in dominant-tonic movements from Bm^7 back to the F^7 tonal center of the piece. This progression acts as another instance of the tritone interval performing a significant role in the composition of the piece as it compliments the

saying that, “when the album was near to completion, we all knew that authenticity and honesty had won.” Shorter and Nascimento had created a music that stands alone in either of the musicians’ repertoires, but the impact they had on each other comes alive in the music. The two still occasionally guest star on the other’s tours if they happen to be in the same area, and Shorter even appeared on one of Nascimento’s own records. This album was, however, be the last solo album Shorter produced for over a decade.

While immersed in relentless touring and recording that was assumed in co-leading one of the most important jazz-rock fusion bands during the 1970s and 1980s, attempting to further understand his own spiritual journey into Nichiren Buddhism, and worrying over his daughter’s health problems, Shorter understandably had little time to compose. When he left Weather Report in 1985, his contract with Columbia Records stipulated that he was required to produce three solo albums to fulfill his side of the deal (Mercer 211). After nearly eleven years away from the recording studio under his own name, Shorter unleashed a flurry of records over the next three years – *Atlantis* (1985), *Phantom Navigator* (1986), and *Joy Ryder* (1988) – that expanded on the ideas he began to explore with Weather Report, but was more along the lines of his own thinking rather than the popular/rock music demographic.

Now, with the freedom of writing for a group solely under his name, Shorter felt like, “I was a kid working with clay again. I said, ‘That’s where I am again now, and I’ve got to make all the things I can, and get back to that whole world perspective’” (Mercer 210). Once again, Shorter was able to reinvent his music and his own role in the compositions. This latest brand of music clearly had the elements he had explored with Weather Report, Miles Davis, Art Blakey, Milton Nascimento, and his in other solo

albums, but this music sounded nothing like anything Shorter had ever recorded before. This music, also, generally does not sound like jazz, or at least not what one would expect from someone with such a rich jazz heritage. Shorter's saxophone solos are still the dominant force tying these records to the history of his music, but his goal in these three records for Columbia was not to play music like he had played before. This music allowed Shorter

to 'break away' from known formulas of presenting the 'song' to the world. Some of the selections herein are miniature movies that may never be made into stories on film. The challenge here was to use the limited elements on hand and spin the "creative wheel" so as to produce something as grand as a Lucas or Spielberg production. (Shorter/Mercer 211)

Through Shorter's love of the cinema, he was now envisioning himself as film composer of his own mental images.

While Shorter claimed to be working with "limited elements," it certainly did not show in the size of the groups he brought into the studio: fourteen members on *Atlantis* and *Phantom Navigator* and nine on *Joy Ryder*. He recruited several of his old band mates from Davis's groups and Weather Report including Hancock, Alphonso Johnson and Alex Acuna. Other notable presences on these albums include drummer Terri Lynne Carrington, pianists Patrice Rushen and Jim Beard, vocalist Diane Reeves (for one song), and current member of the Wayne Shorter Quartet, John Patitucci. The composition of Shorter's band reflected many of the trends in popular music during the 1980s with the presence of drum machine-like sound effects and a wealth of keyboards creating

everything from ambient noise to a simulated chorus. He even includes the sound effect of a roaring monster that simultaneously surprises the listener and draws him or her further into the environments Shorter was creating. For the recording of *Phantom Navigator*, Shorter employed four keyboardists to fill out the symphonic texture of his writing.

Another noted appearance on these albums is Ana Maria Shorter, who is credited for vocals and is featured at the beginning of the piece “Yamanja.” Her bizarre introduction (she speaks the name of the song in a breathy tone with an echo effect) adds to the creative, if somewhat outlandish, direction in which Shorter took his music in the late 1980s. Shorter even decided to forgo the standard liner notes on *Phantom Navigator*, opting instead to print excerpts from a comic he had written and illustrated as a fifteen-year old entitled *Other Worlds* (Figure 6.1) (Mercer 218).



Figure 6.1 *Phantom Navigator* Liner Notes.

Though the illustrations are crude and the story even more so, the concept behind one of Shorter's earliest creative works inspired the music of the record. With the knowledge that Shorter was literally taking the listener into another world, the soundtrack-like environments no longer sound like an immutable drum machine with a din of keyboards emulating popular music led by a saxophone melody. Shorter used this bevy of electronic instruments as his orchestra.

The final song on *Phantom Navigator*, "Flagships," was written as a musical depiction of a scene. The cover of the album alludes to the piece with a surrealistic illustration of a realistic-looking ocean liner floating above the ocean with a small child standing on the shore observing at sunset.

This piece of music was actually meant to be cinematic," Shorter claims, "to conjure . . . visual images. If you want to paint a picture: It's a large field, late evening, a big huge UFO descending and hovering over this field. Two children actually starting to play and ending up getting entangled in something that is totally alien to them, but at the same time, experiencing, from a listening point of view, something that's warm with excitement (Artist Transcriptions Series 32).

Shorter's music has always had a storytelling element, but with "Flagships" and many of the other songs he composed for his final three solo recordings for Columbia, this creative visualization is almost literal.

Continuing the trend Shorter started back on "Sanctuary," "Flagships" was through-composed outside of a few predetermined (and at times indiscernible) places for improvisation. "Flagships"'s formal outline is not conventional in any medium outside

of symphonic works. The composition is an amalgamation of a number of themes and musical effects which seem to develop on their own. Prominent among these musical images are the synthesized chorus and an exaggerated swing eighth-note feel. The chorus effect, which provides the basis of the ominous feel behind music, is present throughout the entire song and moves in erratic whole notes. This undulating current that acts as the chordal structure of the piece, in essence, has no structure. The development often tempts the listener into believing that there is a pattern to the movement, but Shorter quickly dissipates the notion and move the primordial choir in another direction. As the music continues to develop, rather than repeat a predetermined form, “Flagships” is clearly not written using a preexisting song form found in jazz music.



Example 6.3 “Flagships” Measures 23-29.

Another unifying trait is the loping swing melody (Example 6.3). This technique, which is written in the score as a series of eighth-note triplets with the second beat of each group omitted, appears twice as the melody, and again later in the piece in unexpected locations. Shorter uses this rhythm, rather than the actual notes, as the melody, since he alludes back to the idea even after the asymmetrical seven-measure phrase is repeated. This rhythmic quality is part of Shorter’s storytelling element and fits in with the theme of the piece. Shorter claims that “when you hear the tenor and soprano

doing some sort of skipping-like melody, *di dit da dit da dit*, that's like a young boy and an older boy running through a field" (Shorter/Artist Transcription Series). Knowing Shorter's intentions and his past, one could interpret this story now, as not just any two brothers, but the composer himself and his older brother, Alan, running through the fields to meet the aforementioned UFO in his story.²⁰

While the seven measures of the skipping melody could be considered the melody, the majority of Shorter's playing never actually sounds improvisatory; which is not surprising as the majority of the music is through-composed. The result, however, is another wandering melodic passage that relies upon a constantly shifting tonal center and variations of the movement within the loping swing section. Several of the passages are extremely chromatic and many patterns appear throughout this fortspinnung style of composition. Behind the meandering soprano reminiscent of "Sanctuary" and the insistent synthesized choir, Shorter layers a complex piano part, throbbing rhythm, and simulated timpani to add drama and density of the scene. Neither of these elements seems openly melodic as the timpani accentuates the music as it climaxes, the drums act as a timekeeper, and the piano is mainly underneath the rest of the music. These musical tiers color the music, adding to "Flagships"'s ambience. The resulting style resembles leitmotifs as the emphases on specific patterns, ideas, and instruments incessantly drift into the foreground and just as quickly, sneak to the back. Shorter's mysterious themes never hold the listener's attention for too long before they are replaced by something else.

His irregular switching between soprano and tenor saxophone establishes each instrument as a separate voice in his soundtrack with a different location within the sound

²⁰ In a life already filled with tragedy, Alan Shorter died a year after *Phantom Navigator* was released from an aortic rupture before his impending marriage to Herbie Hancock's cousin, Ruth Ann (Mercer 229).

pyramid. When the tenor voice is presented, it either replicates the soprano line an octave below or adds a short musical statement beneath the choral wave. The soprano, possibly the other brother in Shorter's narrative, cuts through the ensemble and never shadows the melodic idea like the tenor. With the majority of the melodic material presented in the soprano, Shorter's voice is clearly that of the storyteller as opposed to the rest of the ensemble which develops the environment.

Shorter's final recordings for Columbia allowed him to compose like he thinks: in large, sweeping narratives. His compositions were literally telling the stories that he had created even as a teenager nearly four decades prior. Particularly in live concerts, a story that began in one night may be carried over to the next (Mercer 219). The music was extremely challenging for the musicians in that it combined the orchestration of a cinematic soundtrack with the harmonic depth and complexity of the most progressive directions of electronic jazz music. Shorter would try to ignite creative inspirations for the other musicians with riddle-like instruction such as, "The ship's pulling into the harbor" or "Sometimes the rabbit runs down the hole, and sometimes the rabbit falls down the hole" (219-220). He was asking his band, and himself, to "[write] a story with only verbs" (219). Shorter's new music seemed to be an artistic response to the popular music vein of Weather Report, and to create vast cinematic-style landscapes and environments for his saxophone to venture into, an allusion to the heroic impression of the saxophone solo as an adventure.

As inspired as this music was, its public reception did not equal the accolades Shorter was used to with the Messengers, Miles Davis, or Weather Report. Often the listeners were unwilling to explore past the legion of overbearing synthesized sounds and

erudite subject matter to hear the artistic qualities of this music. While Shorter did not quit playing after 1988 (he notably created a touring group with Carlos Santana after *Joy Ryder* was released that yielded his 1988 live recording at Montreux), he did not complete another album until 1995. During the interim, Shorter encountered his old band leader, Davis, for a tribute concert. Held coincidentally on Shorter's fifty-eighth birthday, August 25, 1991, the visibly emaciated Davis imparted some career advice to his former sideman. His old mentor looked into Shorter's eyes and said, "You know, you need to be more exposed" (Mercer 232). This would seem an odd statement to someone who had been a member of such legendary groups as the Jazz Messengers, Davis's Second Great Quintet, and Weather Report, but this statement was not a comment on Shorter's musical associations. At each stop in his career, Shorter played a significant role in musical direction of the group with his enigmatic compositions and is still renowned for cryptic instructions achieve the desired results in his music. The problem was, however, that the saxophonist's introversion, a quality he maintained from his childhood, would allow others within the group to overshadow him. Granted, attempting to take the limelight away from personalities such as Art Blakey, Miles Davis, Joe Zawinul, and Jaco Pastorius, is not an easy task. What Davis was telling Shorter was that he needed to become the master of his musical vision that is more in line with what had made his talent stand out to the multitude of celebrated band leaders when he first came to New York to be a jazz musician. While Shorter's experimentations in electronic and Brazilian music were accurate depictions of the music in Shorter's mind, their presentation would lead many a critic to exclaim that he had not released a quality record under his own name since his time recording with Blue Note in the 1960s.

Three years later, Shorter decided to follow Davis's advice and even employed the man behind many of the trumpeter's recordings from the 1980s: Marcus Miller.²¹ Miller, primarily an electric bass player but proficient on numerous instruments, was in demand equally for his prowess with editing programs. Shorter and Miller were joined by Rachel Z (Nicholazzo), a keyboardist/sequencing expert. The presence of Miller and Rachel Z give Shorter's first Verve recording as a leader, *High Life*, a definite urban, hip-hop feel to several of the tracks. Joining the trio in the primary group of musicians are guitarist David Gilmore, percussionists Lenny Castro and Shorter's old friend Airto Moreira, and Will Calhoun on drums. For the song "Midnight in Carlotta's Hair," Terri Lyne Carrington reunites with the saxophonist, an element of continuity from Shorter's Columbia recordings of the late 1980s. However, in addition to the bevy of sound designers, rhythm programmers, and sequencers, Shorter's imaginative compositions finally received an element absent from even his most ambitious prior works. For the recording of *High Life*, Shorter had access to a thirty-two piece orchestra running the gamut from six violinists and three flautists to two contrabassoons. With this new piece of musical clay, Shorter's vivid cinematic images could find a new voice that none of his previous recordings could produce.

High Life, like most of Shorter's albums, is an experiment in one of the primary conventions of music. This record, more than any other before or after, explores textural and stylistic combinations. While much of the music is in a profoundly popular style, the concept was to combine a studio orchestra, a drum machine, and Shorter's jazz solos on all four of the most used instruments in the saxophone family (soprano, alto, tenor, and

²¹ The recording hiatus was due in part to a contract dispute with a recording company called Elektra since Shorter had not produced any music for the company and instead elected to record for Verve records (Mercer 237).

baritone). The resulting material alternates between a retrospective of formal ideas in Shorter's compositions stemming as far back as his time with Art Blakey and the dense harmonic material that comprised his works from the previous twenty-five years. Often the concentration of the chords would raise questions from the orchestra, which was composed of members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic (Mercer 239). One violinist asked, "On bar seventy-six, I'm on an A-natural, and the gentleman sitting next to me is on an A-flat. Is that correct?" (239). The response to his question was laughter and assurance that not only was this correct, but that they should both play their notes confidently (239). This unorthodox music, coupled with Shorter's penchant for musical instruction distributed through riddles and cinematic references, created a confusing atmosphere for the classically trained musicians who would feel more comfortable under the control of a conductor rather than one of jazz music's mad scientists.

Unlike his work with his electronic imagination soundtracks, the music on *High Life* uses increasingly conventional forms and more organized layering. The fifth track on the recording, "Pandora Awakened," clearly delineates the transitions for each individual section. Following an orchestral introduction that flows seamlessly into the tenor saxophone melody, the music essentially follows an ABCAB formal construction with improvisation over the B sections [approximately 2:05 and 4:44 on the track respectively]. Miller's bass line grooves are reminiscent of anything from Alphonso Johnson or Jaco Pastorius when Shorter was with Weather Report, and emphasize simplicity and rhythm underneath the sweeping strings and woodwinds. The majority of the formal changes are obvious within the bass line and lead the transitional shifts between the different motives within the work. The composer's through-composition has

evolved from a combination of the rock-influenced sectioning he used with Weather Report and the winding soundtracks of his 1980's solo albums into music that sounded dramatic and contained structure.

Shorter's choice of harmonic movement and chordal voicing in "Pandora Awakened" is exceedingly simple in comparison to his earlier works and even to the other pieces on the album. The majority of the harmonies in the orchestra are triads. The voicings chosen by Shorter are generally inversions and do not feature his typical complexities with alterations and extensions. However, he uses the sonorities of the chords and the intervallic movement within the backgrounds to add his personality to the music. The primary motive of the piece is found in three consecutive half notes. As both the A and B sections are divided into four-measure groupings, the three-note rhythm pattern begins on the third beat of the third measure. Throughout the A section, the intervals shift according to what best compliments the tenor melody. The intervallic distances, however, remain the same as the first two notes are a half step apart, and the first and third notes are either a major third or its reciprocal minor sixth. Upon reaching the second thematic section, where Shorter solos over an ostinato-like rhythm section followed by a counter melody in the orchestra, the construction of the three-note pattern changes. The initial interval of a minor second remains the same, but the distance between the outer notes of the pattern has changed to the tritone. As a surprising compliment to this motion, the chords do not reflect a similar shift. Instead, Shorter elects to take the traditional ii-V-I progression, and switch the standard sonorities around. The normal ii-V-I pattern, when used diatonically, is expressed with the supertonic as a minor chord, the dominant as a seventh chord with the seventh scale degree flatted, and

the tonic as a major chord. Shorter maintains the sonorities but switches their locations. Shorter's version of the chord progression is $AMaj^7-Dm^{13}-G^7$, which shifts the sonorities over one chord.

The melodic content of the piece is closer to his music written for the Second Great Quintet as he takes a pair of ideas, a short-long alternation that results in syncopation followed by arpeggiation, and continuously adapts it to the backgrounds. Shorter sets his melody in opposition to the orchestral backgrounds, drawing upon call and response, an element crucial to jazz music since its inception. With "Pandora Awakened," Shorter takes the artistic conceptualizations from his last Columbia recordings and orchestrates them to create accessibility for both the listeners and his fellow musicians. The introductions of new technology as well as different instrumental textures give him the freedom to compose a synthesis of the latest styles.

High Life also established a new trend in Shorter's recordings. The first song on the album is "Children of the Night," a song that Shorter had initially written for Art Blakey and the Jazz Messenger's album *Mosiac* in 1961. Revisiting and reinvisioning music is not something new to Shorter, as already discussed with the rapid transformation of "Sanctuary" within two years of its composition. Shorter's original rendition of "Children of the Night" was obviously written for a much smaller ensemble and without the technological advances from the following three decades. The original abounds with stereotypical Shorter compositional elements: a wealth of chromatic movements, several of which lead into ii-V-I progressions, and sequential melodic motives that seemingly transition without predetermined direction. The asymmetrical form uses a twenty-measure opening section with two separate ideas and interrupts it with a bridge that is

only eight measures and has many similar elements to the second theme of the larger division. The opening track of *High Life* hardly sounds like the same song, particularly at the outset of the music. The majority of the melody and backgrounds are produced via synthesizer, and tempo is significantly slower. Blakey's hard driving swing is replaced with a smooth R&B beat. The orchestra's purpose is to enhance the melody and provide a textural foundation for Shorter's improvisation. Every portion of the original melodic material is present in the work, but the order is far from the initial form. The harmonic progression is very similar, but is often shrouded by the wealth of synthetic layering. The descending chordal textures from *Mosaic* act as afterthoughts underneath the sustained melodic notes. Shorter added a few new motives as well, including a syncopated rhythm on a repeated note book-ended with perfect fifth interval leaps.

Shorter's reworking of "Children of the Night" from *Mosaic* to *High Life* is drastic. The piece, inspired by a line of dialogue from the movie *Dracula*, no longer retains the driving hard-bop and thick harmonic clusters but instead replaces it with peppy, popular music style (Mercer 90). Continuing in the same musical direction since his final albums with Davis, "Children of the Night", similar to the criticism of Weather Report, tries to cater to the increasingly divergent audience. The reinvention of his early compositions on Shorter's first album for Verve served him well in his next endeavors, as did his continued practice of through-composition. Shorter's compositional output for this album was extremely proficient as Marcus Miller was often burdened with trying to force the saxophonist to complete the music (238-239). A habit since his days in Weather Report, Shorter would often continue to compose a work until someone like Miller or Zawinul would say, "We really only need this" (238). The stacks of music for

this record, along with Shorter's ideas, were limitless; however, this would be his last album in this style. Following *High Life*, Shorter would "unplug" from his electronic experiments and remove his popular music leanings; replacing funk grooves with introspective improvisation and more freedom within the confines of his compositional forms. His next ventures would coalesce ideas from all his earlier ventures, yet he would create a sound unlike anything he had ever recorded, and with a much smaller ensemble.

Chapter Seven: The Next Voice

The next two years of Shorter's life were some of his darkest. In 1995, the October 15 edition of the *New York Times* printed a scathing article from jazz critic Peter Watrous (Porter 242). The article, entitled "A Jazz Generation and the Miles Davis Curse," was prompted by the release of *High Life* and according to an editorial in the November 1996 issue of *Downbeat* by John Ephland, was the "'perhaps the worst' critical broadside 'leveled at Shorter'" (242). In the article, Watrous argues that while, "Mr. Shorter, 62, is arguably the most influential living jazz composer . . . he has spent the last quarter century flashing bits of his grand talent, then finding the nearest drain down which to dump the rest" (Watrous/Porter 238). He then goes on to lambaste the entirety of the fusion movement as its commercial leanings no longer yield the results obtained in recordings such as *Bitches Brew* and Herbie Hancock's *Headhunters* (241). He then implies that the driving forces behind the fusion movement, Shorter, Hancock, Davis, and Chick Corea have "lost their nerve" and retreated from mainstream jazz (241). He even claims that Shorter's fusion soprano saxophone playing spawned the career of Kenny G [Gorelick], a major slap in the face to the vast majority of jazz saxophonists (240). He concludes his article by writing:

Mr. Shorter's "High Life," with its reliance on the most obvious pop back beats and its sentimentalism, is quite likely a commercial mistake. The real money nowadays is in acoustic music with intellectual weight . . . Yet that's one of the enduring legacies of Miles Davis: not only did it wipe out the serious aspirations of a generation but when the time is ripe for Mr. Shorter to return to mainstream jazz, the place of his greatest

achievements, he's blind to see it. And he's losing money too.

(Watrous/Porter 242)

Shorter was quick to respond to Watrous's claims that he had strayed from the music that elevated him to his artistic status. In an interview with the *Boston Phoenix* in November of 1995, he defended his musical career in his typical fashion:

To play or write or act or do anything culturally, artistically, that alludes to a legacy, that alludes to something in its purity or tradition, you have a duty to remain in that place so that you can instruct young people who are coming up behind you. It's a duty to them. But to present yourself in only that known style, that's dangerous, because the people who are coming up behind you have to know what individualism is about and to branch off and not be corralled into an army that . . . follows the head in front of them, blindly . . . You can cut the arms and legs off and talk about the torso and make everybody believe that's the whole body.

(Shorter/Garelick)

This veiled attack on the thinking of not only Watrous but also the "young lion" movement in jazz under the leadership of Wynton Marsalis and critic Stanley Crouch (which had long decried fusion as jazz) demonstrates Shorter's determination to make the music he was capable of.

In 1996, Shorter had already formed a new band featuring keyboards (Jim Beard), electric guitar (Dave Gilmore), electric bass (Alphonso Johnson), and Rodney Holmes on drums (Mercer 245). His set lists did contain several of his old songs like "El Gaucho," "Chief Crazy Horse" (both from *Adam's Apple*,) and "Footprints" (245). This band's

touring time was cut short. On July 17, 1996, his wife Ana Maria and the Shorters' niece Dalila, were onboard TWA Flight 800 from New York to Paris (246). The plane exploded. Shorter, who had already lost his father in a car accident after his parents had driven to see him play with the Jazz Messengers, a daughter to brain damage from a tetanus shot, and his brother from an aortic rupture, had now lost his wife, the driving force of his life, of twenty-six years (Mercer *passim*). He did go back and finish his tour with his band, but it was because he felt Ana Maria would have wanted him to continue as she had championed his career since they met (248). The next time Shorter would enter the studio, his music was profoundly different from the raucous, popular-jazz fusion he had played for over two-and-a-half decades. The next album was acoustic, with only Shorter's soprano and Hancock on the piano.

I+I was a simple concept recording: take the two old friends and jazz legends, have them each take a number of selections from each of their repertoires, three by Shorter ("Meridianne – A Wood Sylph," "Aung San Suu Kyi," and "Diana"), three by Hancock ("Sonrisa," "Joanna's Theme," and "Hale-Bopp, Hip-Hop"), three jointly composed ("Manhattan Lorelei," and the inventively paired "Visitor from Nowhere," and "Visitor from Somewhere"), and a final song from their mutual friend, Dutch pianist Michiel Borstlap ("Memory of Enchantment"). The liner notes of the record explained the purpose of the album:

In this recording, the artists call upon the full palette of their musical resources to paint life's stories with all the texture of emotion and intensity of color – a process demanding the performance equivalent of a leap into

the unknown. Musical images emerge and evolve into character and story, leading the listener on an inner journey (Lucien and Kuslan).

This purposefully esoteric statement leans toward the pair's Buddhist beliefs as well as the musical journey that each has attempted throughout his career. The music is just as adventuresome as Shorter's electric albums, if not more so, but with the minimalistic texture, the skill of these jazz musicians is no longer cloaked behind the mass of sound each surrounded himself with since the Davis quintet began to explore jazz-rock fusion on *Miles in the Sky*. Shorter's choices for his compositional contributions lean toward his works during the 1970s and 80s. He revives "Diana" from *Native Dancer*, and the piece "Aung San Suu Kyi," which was dedicated to a Burmese Nobel laureate, was adapted from a gamelan-style melody Shorter wrote for his modern harmony class at New York University in 1952 (Gordon/Mercer 248). Shorter briefly revisited this theme earlier in his career "Atlantis" (Mercer 248).²² Without the smattering of instruments distracting the listener from the primary melody, the newer versions of the music display the possibilities these musicians can create with just the basic statement. Shorter and Hancock consolidated their nearly seventy years of combined experience and replicated the emotion the two created if they had performed a solemn duet while with the Davis quintet three decades prior.

The choice of "Diana" was appropriate for a conversion into this intimate style as the original recording was minimalistic in comparison with the other tunes on *Native Dancer*. The piece was originally written in honor of the newborn daughter of Airto Moreira and Flora Purim and, like Diana herself, Shorter's composition had grown up as

²² Hancock's "Joanna's Theme" also appeared on *Native Dancer*, as it seems both composers reached back into their archives to extract music from the past.

well (Mercer 172). Gone were the shimmering cymbals and simulated surge from synthesized strings. These purported artificial methods of drama were replaced by Shorter and Hancock, creating the emotion current within themselves. While the *Native Dancer* version omitted any improvisation, Shorter heavily ornaments this version with numerous technical devices, emotional wails on the upper end of the normally abrasive soprano saxophone, and Coltrane-like arpeggiations.

Unlike Shorter's adaptation of "Children of the Night" or "Sanctuary," "Diana" is structurally consistent with the original and its mood has been elevated from a solemn tribute to a celebration. This style of aggressive reimaginings was to become the new standard for Shorter's most recent music from *High Life* through his work in the 2000s. Instead of adding instruments and heavily orchestrated chords, Shorter returns to the lyricism of his eclectic melodies and accents the musical possibilities within each. *I + I* was a critical and personal success. "Aung San Suu Kyi" was awarded a Grammy in 1998 for Best Instrumental Composition, and Shorter had found his latest voice. Ironically, he had moved into the realm that the critic Watrous had insisted he return to: "acoustic music with intellectual weight" (Watrous/Porter 242). However, Shorter had arrived on his own terms and with his particular style of intellectualism. Somehow, the saxophonist was simultaneously recalling his past and looking into the future. In his next three recordings for Verve, *Footprints Live!*, *Alegría*, and *Beyond the Sound Barrier*, Shorter revisited twelve compositions that were recorded earlier and were composed for ensembles other than his personal small group. Most of these pieces receive a similar treatment to that of "Diana" in that their latest release maintains the essence of the music,

but the communication of the theme is indirect and requires a level of concentration and diligence from the audience that rivals the performers’.

In the liner notes of *I+I*, Shorter and Hancock posed for two pictures and the saxophonist’s body language clearly explains his goal for the next decade. The cover photograph shows the two with a black background and a white counter in which only their head and arms are visible. In this picture, Shorter looks and smiles directly into the camera and points at the viewer. The second picture on the inside shows the two sitting backwards in chairs. Shorter has his eyebrow cocked and points to his head. It seems Shorter wants the listener to think about the music. He is no longer pandering to the popular audience, and instead is now producing intelligent jazz music.

By 2001, Shorter had solidified his new group and musical direction. Much like Davis and Blakey, Shorter recruited a band much younger than him to inject new life into his old compositions. The only member of his new group that had recorded with Shorter before was bassist John Patitucci who appeared on *Phantom Navigator*. The rest of his quartet (another sign of Shorter’s return to “mainstream” jazz was the typical group size of four members rather than the enormous groups he had brought into the studio since *Supernova* in 1969) was comprised of drummer Brian Blade and pianist, Panama’s cultural ambassador, Danilo Perez (Mercer 260). With this group, Shorter finally took charge the way that Davis had insisted he should back in 1991. He brought in his older compositions and described how he envisioned the new interpretation, mainly with his trademark image riddles, cinematic references, and even physical depiction of the mood (261). As challenging as this music was for the rest of the quartet, the instructions often created more mental stress. While revisiting the tune “Water Babies,” a song which was

recorded with Davis on an album with the same name, Shorter ironically told Perez to “put more water in those chords” (256). After hearing the pianist’s interpretation, Shorter replied, “but the water has to be clean” (256).

The level of dialogue within the music is unprecedented in any of Shorter’s previous works outside of *I+I*. Shorter’s vision of the sound was, fittingly, drawn from a scene from the movie *Superman* (1978). “Remember when Lois Lane was falling from the building, and Superman swooped down and grabbed her? He said, ‘I’ve got you.’ And she said, ‘Who’s got *you*?’ That’s what I like to play music with, something like that” (Shorter/Mercer 256). *Village Voice* critic Gary Giddins reviewed a concert given by the newly formed group and echoed Shorter’s intention by stating that each member of the group was, “not merely backing the soloist, but collaborating with him on each measure” (Giddins/Mercer 259). The Wayne Shorter Quartet, Shorter’s longest lasting group as a single, unchanged unit, was created to satisfy the saxophonist’s thirst for adventure within the music. Simultaneously Shorter took control of both his music and career and yet gave more freedom to his fellow musicians than he had in years.

The first recording of this new group was on the album *Footprints Live!*, the title of which combines “Footprints” (Shorter’s most famous composition from the early stages of his career) and the word “live,” implying that this product is not the polished, heavily-edited recordings from his time since the dissolution of the Second Great Quintet. All the music was recorded from a trio of jazz festival performances in Europe over an eleven-day span. The track list reads like a retrospective of his compositional output: “Sanctuary,” “Footprints,” “Atlantis,” “Juju,” “Aung San Suu Kyi,” “Masquelero” (a piece Shorter wrote for Weather Report), and a readaption of his original arrangement of

Sibelius' "Valse Triste" which Shorter had recorded on his album *The Soothsayer* for Blue Note Records. The compositions all retain the primary melodic structure of their first editions, but Shorter embeds his improvisational ideas within the theme itself and lets the emotions of the group guide them through the music. Most of the music sounds utterly spontaneous as do several of the band's unconventional performance techniques. In the introduction of "Juju," Perez alternates between playing on the inside of the piano or harsh, chromatic accent chords, Patitucci bows long, lingering lines on his bass, Blade drums intermittently on a number of instruments more suited to a percussion ensemble than to a jazz drummer, and the group's leader whistles into the microphone. This is jazz music as art music, an intellectual style that reflected the personalities of the group. The actual tune remains largely intact though it takes just over two minutes before the whole-tone inspired melody makes an appearance. This music is not what most jazz listeners would consider the archetype of the music. *Footprints Live!* could be seen as the next evolution of Miles Davis's Second Great Quintet had he not introduced electronic instruments into his music. The music at times seems chaotic, but it never reaches the levels of atonal oblivion created by Ornette Coleman or Cecil Taylor. The musicians are playing within the music and within themselves, which is the next evolution of Shorter's thought.

The most recent album from the group, *Beyond the Sound Barrier*, is another recording along the same lines. While he uses far less of his earlier works ("Joy Ryder" and "Over Shadow Hill Way," both from his groups in the 1980s), the fundamental style of spontaneous creation remains the dominant trait. With this album, he continues adapting Western classical music into his personal style that he began with his use of

Sibelius's "Valse Triste." This time, Shorter takes the theme from Mendelssohn's "On Wings of Song," and deconstructs it into its most basic elements. The composer's ability to dramatically change his own music applies equally as well to music from over one hundred and fifty years prior. He retains the melody and then alters the undercurrent of the original piece to suit his distinctive style of music. This song displays Shorter's arranging skills as he accents the premier qualities of Mendelssohn's original piece while enabling the skills of the members of his quartet to permeate the music. Perez's subtle piano accompaniment, which often emulates nineteenth-century counterpoint, drives Shorter's soprano rendition of the tune, while Blade and Patitucci accent the mood rather than provide the beat.

Shorter's delicate touch with Mendelssohn is not always reflected in his own works. "Joy Ryder," originally released on his 1988 recording of the same name, acts as an avant-garde acoustic rendition of his synthesized groove-laden original. The 1988 version uses keyboards to create simulated orchestration as the background hints of brass lines that, were it not for the obvious popular music style, would not be out of place for a modern big band. On *Beyond the Sound Barrier*, Shorter retains the rhythmic dominance of the work, yet it is presented with saxophone squeals, an exceedingly active bass line provided by Patitucci, and equally percussive elements from all four members of the group. The level of communication often has short motives running from one instrument to the next with spontaneity.

Since experimentations in formal construction have been one of Shorter's main compositional characteristics throughout his career, his placement of the melody within the piece is typical of his peculiar style. In a track that encompasses over eleven minutes,

the first full statement of the melody (which in the 1988 version is at the outset of the music) is not until five minutes and eighteen seconds. The decision to place the main melodic material only near the middle and at the conclusion of the work while saturating the rest of the music with motives and patterns of the theme draws an allusion back to a conversation Shorter had with John Coltrane before the younger saxophonist joined with Art Blakey. In one of their practice sessions, the two jazz innovators discussed their desire to speak “backwards”: start a sentence in the middle and then go toward the beginning and the end at the same time (Mercer 59). While “Joy Ryder” could be said to have an extended introduction and then follow the normal style of jazz music with the standard melody-improvisation-melody formula, the introduction of various elements, including the melodic allusions in the beginning and the mutated version of the melody at the conclusion, Shorter may have actually spoken backwards. The theme from “Joy Ryder” is encapsulated within development sections. Possibly alluding to Charles Ives’s cumulative construction technique, Shorter’s quartet germinates the melody with small statements and eventually it evolves into a far more complex version than was originally written.

The second album of the three released by the Wayne Shorter Quartet, *Alegria* (2003), is different from the other two, as it was produced entirely in the studio rather than pieced together from live recordings and the occasional studio session. The album is arguably Shorter’s greatest critical success since his work in the 1960s. It earned him two Grammys the year of its release: Best Jazz Instrumental Album and Best Instrumental Composition for the opening track “Sacajawea.” The word *Alegria* is Portuguese for joy, as a remembrance to Ana Maria and for his new wife, Brazilian-born

Carolina dos Santos.²³ In addition to his regular quartet, Shorter brings in a number of rising musicians as well as former collaborators Alex Acuña and Terri Lyne Carrington. The music selections are a combination of the internationalism of *Native Dancer*, the orchestrations of *High Life*, and the communication of his work with his quartet. Surprisingly, Shorter only composed half of the dozen tunes. One of the most memorable tracks on the album is not by his pen, yet it serves as a perfect example of the culmination of his music as well as his level of sentimentality.

Heitor Villa-Lobos's position as one of the most significant Brazilian classical composers makes his music extremely appealing to Shorter's increasing penchant for adapting classical music for his ensembles. For "Bachianas Brasileiras No.5," Shorter duets with cellist Charles Curtis for what initially sounds like a straight-forward interpretation of Villa-Lobos's theme. After both Curtis and Shorter present the melody (Shorter adapts the melody in a similar manner to his quartet style with an emphasis on the improvisatory elements and ornamentation) over the percussion background featuring a number of Latin instruments and a six-member cello ensemble, the arrangement switches into an alternate atmosphere not unlike the dramatic stylistic changes from *High Life*. Patitucci's strident bass line has centered around an A tonal center with consistent half-note walking movement; however, after two iterations of Villa-Lobos's melody, Patitucci's bass drops a major third into a drone on F. Over this pedal tone Shorter has dubbed an improvisatory conversation with himself similar to his work on "Mysterious Traveller," only this time there are two distinct yet interweaving solos that could deceive

²³ Carolina dos Santos was Ana Maria's best friend and lived in the Shorter house for years before Ana Maria's death. She wanted to return to Brazil, but before Ana Maria was to leave to travel on her ill-fated flight, she made Carolina promise to stay (Mercer 244). Ana Maria's reasoning was, "I don't know why, but you just have to" (244). Shorter and dos Santos were married in 1999.

the listener into believing Shorter is not the only saxophonist on the song. “Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5” concludes in a manner similar to the duet before the pedal; however, Shorter’s improvisatory counterpoint is more lyrical. Unlike the first duet where Shorter focuses on his interpretation of the melody, in the concluding statement, Shorter accents the cello.

Villa-Lobos’s intention in writing his *Bachianas Brasileiras* series was to write Brazilian style classical music with the influence of compositions of Johann Sebastian Bach. Shorter’s interpretation seems to draw as much upon the inspiration of the music as upon the song itself. This track exudes a number of musical qualities that were present during the Baroque period. Between the improvisatory counterpoint over the ostinato figure, Shorter’s profoundly ornamented version of the melody after its original statement, and Patitucci’s walking bass line that moves either in patterns or stepwise movement (leading into the second presentation of the melody, the bass slowly ascends the octave chromatically before returning the previously established pattern), elements of Bach’s influence on music are adapted into a modern Brazilian jazz style.

Over the last decade, jazz music has seen the “return” of one of its greatest compositional talents. The music created by the Wayne Shorter Quartet, in the studio recording *Alegría*, and even with his duet album with Herbie Hancock, exemplifies the reason why jazz legends Art Blakey and Miles Davis sought Shorter’s sound and compositions earlier in his career. While this music does contain elements of the musical narrative he had experimented with over for nearly three decades, Shorter is now composing and playing within each song. With constant returns to music written and recorded years prior and equally retrospective interpretations of music by classical

composers such as Sibelius, Mendelssohn, and Villa-Lobos, Shorter is finding new aspects of music as well as linking jazz to the history of art music both from Europe and the Americas. His latest growth parallels his mentor Davis in that he takes young talent into his ensembles to revitalize his old works, create new directions of creativity in jazz music, and kindle Shorter's own creative fire. Now, as suggested by Davis over sixteen years ago, Shorter has reclaimed a space at the forefront of music and is beginning to regain the notoriety he deserves.

Conclusion

The place of a jazz composer in comparison to the lineage of Western classical music can be difficult to determine. A new song for a jazz musician, especially for small groups, generally encompasses a melody and chord changes. It is not required for the jazz musician to compose the expansive amounts of counterpoint or even compose what the other members of the ensemble play. However, the jazz composer has the difficult job of expressing his own musical personality yet he needs to leave enough space for every person who will play the piece to inject their individuality into the music. Wayne Shorter's personality is constantly present in his works in ways that few other musicians could replicate. He has managed to instill his unique voice into every composition for nearly fifty years. Even when writing music that seemed beneath his talents to certain areas of his fan base, Shorter remained with his musical vision.

Few members of the jazz community can claim a level of notable collaborations similar to Shorter's employment with Art Blakey and Miles Davis, co-leading a commercially successful jazz-rock fusion group with Weather Report, recording with Brazilian popular music superstar Milton Nascimento and American musicians Carlos Santana, Joni Mitchell and Steely Dan (all of which during the late 1970s and 1980s), and now leading his own Grammy award winning quartet. His compositions line the set lists of jazz groups throughout the world, and his through-composed works demonstrate the depth of skill with orchestration beyond the typical jazz composer.

As seen in this study, many of the reasons for Shorter's lasting status as one of the most important living jazz musicians stem from his idiomatic treatments of melody, awkward lyricism, and unconventional chord progressions. His early works read as

etudes in combinations of classical music theory and jazz music. “Juju” was written to explore the whole tone scale and triple meter; “E.S.P.” demonstrated melody in quartal relationships, and tritone sonorities, harmonic, and melodic movements seemingly litter every composition, often in the most unexpected locations. As he experiments “*with* form instead of . . . *without* form,” even standard constructions like those of “Lester Left Town,” “This Is For Albert,” and pop-stylized “Palladium” transform (Davis 273). Less conventional forms like those found in “Orbits,” “Infant Eyes,” and “Mysterious Traveller,” however, displayed the composer’s imagination for creating music that is instantly recognizable as part of his catalog. His formal diversity even encompassed styles that forced the music surrounding the melody to change (“Nefertiti” and the version of “Sanctuary” found of *Bitches Brew*) and cinematic visions not unlike the soundtracks of a progressive science fiction film (his electric albums (*Atlantis*, *Phantom Navigator*, *Joy Ryder*) and *High Life*). With such diversity in styles and innovations, a complete study of the work of Shorter is difficult.

Surprisingly, given Shorter’s reputation within the jazz community, which can alternate between genius, madman, visionary, enigma, philosopher, and weirdo (often within the same sentence), there is only one biography: *Footprints: The Life and Work of Wayne Shorter* by music commentator for National Public Radio, Michelle Mercer. Shorter’s lack of publications, particularly with his work post-Weather Report, poses an even greater issue with an intensive study. While his compositions from the first decade of his career abound in many jazz sheet music publications, locating the official sheet music for “Aung San Suu Kyi,” and “Sacajawea,” both Grammy award winners for Best Instrumental Composition, is impossible. Transcription is a possibility, but it requires

guess work that, particularly with through-composed music, could miss out on crucial nuances in the composition. Until Mr. Shorter publishes this music, many studies will be forced to read much like this one: a combination of a record review and a biodiscography. Fortunately, with continuously improving recording technology and issues of unreleased music, charting the career of a musician through his albums can provide a comprehensive evolution of style and skill. As Shorter has appeared in or led well over one hundred recordings, the volume of recorded material alleviates some of the issues with lack of published material. Shorter's critical return as one of jazz music's leading innovators and compositional voices will hopefully entice the composer to allow generations of music scholars, jazz and classical alike, to study the intricacies of his creativity.

As for now, Shorter continues to write and record from his home in Aventura, Florida, as well as to appear on several recordings (Mercer 254). His most recent appearance on a record was Herbie Hancock's 2007 album *River: The Joni Letters*, a musical tribute to the work of Shorter and Hancock's friend and collaborator Joni Mitchell. The album, which includes a version of Shorter's "Nefertiti," was recently awarded Album of the Year during the 2008 Grammy Awards, an honor that has only twice been bestowed upon a jazz album in the award's fifty year history.²⁴ This award hopefully represents the return of jazz music into American culture even though it will probably never regain the popularity it held prior to 1950. Musicians such as Shorter and Hancock, who had long been the subject of ridicule by jazz critics for purportedly abandoning the music and "selling-out" to commercialism, continue to make a mark on the landscape of the modern jazz movement.

²⁴ The previous occurrence was the Stan Getz's album *Getz/Gilberto* in 1964.

Wayne Shorter's career reads much like the hero's journey so often used in the movies and comic books he loved as a child. As a budding artist, he received instruction from the icons of the previous generation including John Coltrane, Art Blakey, and Miles Davis. At the height of his popularity in the jazz world, he took artistic chances that at times paralleled his personal struggles plunging him into despair despite moderate success. During the time that he felt this compositional well had depleted, he found new life in his religion and philosophy and incorporated them into his music. After struggling initially with finding an outlet to present his new ideas that would reach the whole of his jazz audience, he has finally returned to the acoustic world that had made him legendary decades before. Now, even as he leads the charge for the next generation of jazz musicians, he never ceases to experiment and bring his inquisitive personality into his music. It is for this very reason that the music of Wayne Shorter will continue to be transcribed, played, and idolized.

“Beyond the sky we fly, perchance to see some greatness there:
eternal wonder! that which is born of courage here.”

– Wayne Shorter (*Footprints Live!*)

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VITA

Judson Cole Ritchie was born July 19, 1983, in Dallas, Texas. He is the son of Larry Wayne and Vicki Lynn Ritchie. After graduating in 2001 from Garland High School in Garland, Texas, he received a Bachelor of Music Education from Texas Christian University in 2005. In August of 2006, he returned to Texas Christian University in order to receive a Master of Music in the field of musicology. While working on his masters, he received the Anna Harriet Heyer scholarship and the Michael Winesanker Award. He is a member of Golden Key and Pi Kappa Lambda and Kappa Delta Pi honors fraternities.