

Spring 4-10-2009

# Marshall University Music Department Presents Sean Coughlin, tenor saxophone

Sean Coughlin

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## Recommended Citation

Coughlin, Sean, "Marshall University Music Department Presents Sean Coughlin, tenor saxophone" (2009). *All Performances*. Book 630.

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DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

presents

**Sean Coughlin, tenor  
saxophone**

with

**Dr. Sean Parsons, piano  
Jimmy Lykens, bass  
Johnathan Wright, drums**

**Friday, April 10, 2009  
Jomie Jazz Forum  
7:00 p.m.**

**Program**

*Trinkle, Tinkle*

Thelonious Monk  
(1917 – 1982)

*Confirmation*

Charlie Parker

*Ceora*

Lee Morgan  
(1938 – 1972)

*Una Muy Bonita*

Ornette Coleman  
(b. 1930)

Chris Clark, tenor saxophone

*Blues for Jomie*

Sean Coughlin  
(b. 1984)

**Intermission**

*Omorfia*

Sean Coughlin  
(b. 1984)

Austin Seybert, trombone

*Joy Spring*

Clifford Brown  
(1930 – 1956)

*Epistrophe*

Thelonious Monk  
(1917 – 1982)

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This program is presented by the College of Fine Arts through the Department of Music, with the support of student activity funds. For more information about this or other music events, please call (304) 696-3117, or view our website at [www.marshall.edu/cofa/music](http://www.marshall.edu/cofa/music).

*My One & Only Love*

Guy Wood  
(1912 – 2001)

*Home Fries*

Joshua Redman  
(b. 1969)

*All arrangements by Sean Coughlin*

## NOTES

### Trinkle, Tinkle

First recorded in a trio setting in 1952, the title intended by Monk was actually “Twinkle, Twinkle” but was misunderstood in the studio by supervisor Ira Gitler. He later understood what Monk meant when he said “like a star” after telling Gitler the composition’s title.<sup>1</sup> The way “Body and Soul” became a showcase for tenor saxophonists in the swing era, Monk’s “Trinkle, Tinkle” has become the modern test of one’s worth for tenor saxophonists ever since John Coltrane recorded it with Monk in the 1950s. Monk recorded it with 2/4 bars in the form and also with 4/4 swing throughout. It has been arranged here with 2/4 bars in the head and straight swing for the solo section. One of Monk’s more intricate and difficult melodies, it shimmers like stars twinkling in the night.

### Confirmation

“Confirmation,” a Charlie Parker original, was written circa 1945 and first recorded by Dizzy Gillespie and his Tempo Jazzmen in 1946. The form is AABA and has become one of the most performed and recorded bebop tunes in history. While Parker wrote 49 compositions, only 6 of them had an original construction, Confirmation being among them.<sup>2</sup> John Coltrane’s “26-2” and Horace Silver’s “Juicy Lucy” are both contrafacts on Parker’s chord progression. Others have been written by Miles Davis, Stan Getz, and Sonny Rollins. The origin of the introduction from this arrangement is unknown. Although not used by Parker, it was used by the majority of bebop musicians and continues to be recorded regularly today as the standard introduction.

### Ceora

One of the most enduring elements of Lee Morgan’s legacy is his beautiful bossa-nova, “Ceora”, written for a female friend. Comprised of two sixteen-bar sections, the tune implies four different keys by employing ii-V movement. The opening theme and progression clearly resembles “If Someone had Told Me”, a song with music by Peter De Rose and lyrics by Clarence Tobias.<sup>3</sup> Morgan may have been familiar with this relatively unknown song because it had been previously recorded by trumpeter Thad Jones, who Morgan was a disciple of.

### Una Muy Bonita

*Una muy bonita*... a very pretty girl: a seemingly appropriate choice of title for one of Ornette Coleman’s prettiest melodies. However, Coleman claims that

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Dr. Sean Parsons.

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<sup>1</sup> Ira Gitler, *Thelonious Monk: Trio, Remastered*, liner notes, Prestige 7027, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Lawrence O. Koch, *Yardbird Suite: A Compendium of the Music and Life of Charlie Parker*, Bowling Green: University Poplar Press, 1988, 283.

<sup>3</sup> Jeffrey S. McMillan, *Delightfulee: The Life and Music of Lee Morgan*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008. 150-154.

he wrote the piece for no female in particular.<sup>4</sup> Although renowned for his contributions to the philosophy of jazz performance through freedom music, Coleman is often overlooked as one of jazz's greatest composers. "Una Muy Bonita" is among his best, employing use of mixed meter and tight harmony. Originally from Coleman's 1959 recording, *Change of the Century*, I was first introduced to this piece by the 2005 SFJazz Collective recording which showcased the compositions of Coleman. Arranged here for bass, drums, and two tenor saxophones, the soloists are given more responsibility and liberation than in an average piece. The solos are over a Db major tonality, allowing an informed musician endless opportunities to stretch harmonically.

### Blues for Jomie

This piece was written as an assignment for jazz theory class in the spring of 2008 and named for the Jomie Jazz Center of Marshall University. It is a complex blues, based on many chord substitutions that were written by Charlie Parker in his 1951's "Blues for Alice." Bars 6 – 8 take the improviser through ii-V7 progressions in 3 keys, descending chromatically. The peaks of the melody in these three measures follow suit with a descending chromatic contour. This progression provides straight-ahead bebop change-running with more harmonic challenges than a typical blues.

### Omorfia

"Omorfia" is Greek for beauty, making the title a perfect fit for the good friend (who hails from Greece) for whom this was written and who encompasses this quality on many levels. The compositional process began approximately 7 years ago, with the chord progression of the B section. Written on guitar with a swing feel, the progression was:

G<sup>Δ</sup>      G<sup>m7</sup>      F<sup>#m7</sup>      F<sup>o7</sup>      E<sup>m7</sup>      D<sup>bΔ</sup>      D<sup>Δ</sup>

Realizing its potential but not capable of fitting a melody over it, I put this away for years, knowing it would be useful in the future. The opening melody came years later on the guitar, and I easily found a progression to use underneath. The most interesting aspect of this piece harmonically may be that the V chord appears as major, minor, and dominant in different places of the A section. I was then in need of melody to use over the last 7 measures. I was able to sketch ideas that worked with the chords, but everything seemed more of an improvised line than a *cantabile* melody. Although I had listened to it many times, I recently had revisited to Sonny Rollins' recording of "Tenor Madness" and

<sup>4</sup> Ornette Coleman, *Ornette Coleman: Change of the Century*, liner notes, Atlantic 1327, 1959.

realized one of his improvised lines over a blues might fit over my chord progression. In typical Rollins fashion, this line is extremely lyrical:

Initially, I had planned on starting the tune as a bossa-nova and kicking into a swing feel for the final 8 measures. After working it out with a rhythm section, I decided to keep the entire form as a bossa -nova, which required some re-working of the rhythms presented in Rollins' line. I felt unsure of its success as a tune until meeting with Renato Vasconcellos who gave me a feeling of validation after pointing out that a true bossa-nova has extensive use of anticipation. The anticipation found most often in Brazilian bossa is melody consistently being an eighth note ahead of the barline.<sup>5</sup> This rhythmic anticipation happens ten times throughout the melody of Omorfia. Tenor and trombone seems a suitable pairing for this piece, which in a way, is also written for Sonny Rollins (who has performed with his trombonist nephew, Clifton Anderson for decades).

### Joy Spring

A landmark recording of his career from 1955, Clifford Brown's "Joy Spring" is among the greatest contributions of the short-lived trumpeter. It has been said that the greatest joy he had in the spring of 1954 was meeting his future wife, LaRue Watson.<sup>6</sup> Watson was a self-admitted music snob, who was writing a thesis to prove that jazz was not a form of art music.<sup>7</sup> Through Brown, she learned a great deal about jazz and married both him and his music. The melody is simplistically beautiful, although technically demanding. The form contains ii-V7 progressions in 6 different keys, with the majority of the piece focused on F and Gb major.

### Epistrophe

Performed as early as 1941 at Minton's Playhouse in Harlem with co-author Kenny Clarke, this is among Monk's best and most modern sounding works due

<sup>5</sup> Renato Vasconcellos, personal communication, Huntington, WV, October 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Nick Catalano, *The Life and Art of the Legendary Jazz Trumpeter*, Oxford University Press, 2000, 118.

<sup>7</sup> LaRue Brown Watson, *The Complete Blue Note and Pacific Jazz Recordings of Clifford Brown*, liner notes, Blue Note 207021, 1995.

to its angular melody and dominant chord movement by half step. This became the opening and closing theme for Minton's house band in the early 1940's (for which Monk was the pianist) and became the melody with which Monk would end many of his live performances. Due to this, Epistrophy also came to be known as "The Theme". At other times, it was called "Fly Rite" and "Iambic Pentameter."<sup>8</sup> The word "epistrophe" is defined as the repetition of a word or phrase at the end of consecutive clauses or sentences for rhetorical effect.<sup>9</sup> Monk used his very personal language of dissonance to create this effect, and then likely changed the spelling to make it even more unique and distinctive. "Epistrophy" has been claimed by many to be the first "classic, modern jazz composition."<sup>10</sup>

### My One and Only Love

In the liner notes for *Ella Swings Gently with Nelson*, jazz critic Benny Green comments, "My One and Only Love" is one of the most finely wrought ballads to be written in the postwar period." While many would agree with him now, the song was not an overnight success.

It was first written in 1947 as "Music from Beyond the Moon," with lyrics by Jack Lawrence. The following year, it was recorded by Vic Damone and Tony Martin but did not find success until Robert Mellin set new lyrics to Guy Wood's music. The song was then recorded by Frank Sinatra in 1953 and rose to number 28 on the charts.<sup>11</sup> Whether this should be attributed to Frank Sinatra's crooning, Mellin's new lyrics, or a combination of both is up to debate. The AABA song is very active melodically and harmonically in the A sections, while the more stagnant bridge allows the improviser to apply a more vertical approach.

### Home Fries

Recorded in 1996 on his fifth effort as a leader, Joshua Redman's "Home Fries" is among originals that encompass an album celebrating the diversity of styles within jazz. The melody is a playful cat-and-mouse-like call & response between the piano and tenor saxophone. After the initial run through the head, the two voices switch parts and the melody culminates with the entire quartet together at the turnaround. Like "Blues for Jomie", this is a blues in F, but it is 16 measures long instead of the standard 12. This blues has more of a "down home" sound thanks to the well placed diminished chord in the 12<sup>th</sup> measure.

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<sup>8</sup> Scott DeVaux, "Nice Work if You Can Get It": Thelonious Monk and Popular Song, *Black Music Research Journal*, 2000.

<sup>9</sup> Encarta Webster's College Dictionary, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v. "Epistrophe."

<sup>10</sup> Anthony Brown, "Modern Jazz Drumset Artistry," *The Black Perspective in Music*, Vol. 18, No. 3(1990), pp. 39-41.

<sup>11</sup> Jeremy Wilson, "Jazz Standards",

<http://www.jazzstandards.com/compositions-0/myoneandonlylove.htm>  
(accessed March 4, 2009)