In her book *Saying Something*, Ingrid Monson asserts that “musicians’ discussions of the higher levels of improvisational achievement frequently emphasize time and ensemble responsiveness as the relevant framework rather than, for example, large-scale tonal organization.” Analysis of jazz improvisation, however, has traditionally emphasized parameters relating to “large-scale tonal organization,” to a far greater extent than “time and ensemble responsiveness.” Monson does not mean to devalue these parameters, but rather to point out that elite performers “take for granted the harmonic and melodic competence of the player.” Jazz analysts have therefore often ignored an aspect of improvised performance that musicians themselves prize most highly. These two interrelated concepts of time and ensemble responsiveness combine to produce the “groove.” In order to re-center jazz analysis toward the groove, I propose the use of a finely honed tool in the analyst’s kit: topic theory.

As first set forth by Leonard Ratner, musical topics are “subjects for musical discourse … [that may] appear as fully worked-out pieces, i.e., *types*, or as figures and progressions within a piece, i.e., *styles*.” In Classic music, Ratner identifies a variety of dance types that composers import into other works (such as the use of *sarabande* rhythms in a string quartet). Ratner states that “[d]ances, by virtue of their rhythm and pace, represented feeling.”

Wye Allanbrook expands on this notion with her idea of “rhythmic gesture”: “rhythm—the number, order, and weight of accents and, consequently, tempo—is a primary agent in the projecting of human postures and thereby of human character.” Allanbrook creates a spectrum of dance meters ranging from ecclesiastical or exalted passions to gallant or terrestrial passions, and subsequently identifies these dance meters in Mozart’s operas. In doing so, Allanbrook models a way in which rhythmic gestures influence our perception and understanding of Mozart’s
characters, plots, and potentially other musical parameters. In Classic music, the dance topic allows for vague and ephemeral ideas of rhythmic feel to be pinned down with greater accuracy, allowing for richer interpretive meanings to emerge from analysis.

Analogously to the dance topic in Classic music, many of the rhythmic patterns of modern jazz stem from those of the swing and dance bands of the 1920s and ’30s. The small-group jazz of the bebop modernists in the mid-1940s and onwards deviated from swing in that it was intended for listening, not dancing. The faster tempos, greater rhythmic complexity, and focus on improvised solos over notated ensemble passages all point to this shift from the dancehall to the nightclub. Numerous continuities between modern jazz and swing remained, however. Both styles emphasized a core group of musicians—the rhythm section—who were largely responsible for the creation of the groove. Rhythm sections continued to consist primarily of piano, bass, and drums, and they remained an interrelated unit defined in contrast to the role of the improvising soloist.

Dance bands performed a wide variety of dance types. Don DeMichael and Alan Dawson’s 1962 drum manual presents the various possibilities: two-beat, 3/4, lame duck, shuffle, ethnic, Latin, tango, beguine, bolero, conga, rhumba, samba, calypso, mambo, cha cha cha, merengue, and nanigo. These dances are rather strictly defined, with exact rhythmic patterns a drummer would repeat and intersperse with notated ensemble figures. In addition to drum parts, these dances would also dictate specific styles of accompaniment for the bass and chordal instruments.

In modern jazz, elements of these dances are distilled into the grooves I will discuss. As the musicians no longer need to articulate a stable and repeating rhythmic pattern for dancing, the expression of a groove is far more complex and variegated than that of a dance. Furthermore, Monson notes that the term groove has two complementary meanings, one of which uses the word as a noun and the other as a verb. Grooves as nouns are “particular sets of rhythm-section parts that combine to produce particular rhythmic patterns.” Larry Zbikowski expands on this definition, writing that a groove is “a large-scale multi-layered pattern that involves both rhythmic and pitch materials,” and can include contributions from any member of an ensemble, not just the rhythm section. In my formulation, every member of a jazz ensemble, not just the rhythm section, participates in the creation of a groove.

The use of groove as a verb relates to Charles Keil’s concept of “participatory discrepancies.” Participatory discrepancies are slight inconsistencies occurring between players in performance that cause
music to “be personally involving and socially valuable.” Keil defines two types of participatory discrepancies: (1) processual, and (2) textural, or timbral. Processual discrepancies are the slightly unsynchronized or unique note placements occurring between players in an ensemble that give a groove its particular feeling. Textural discrepancies are the differences in timbre or intonation between players that give an ensemble its own unique sound. Monson sums up the concept of groove-as-verb by noting that most musicians she interviewed “described grooving as a rhythmic relation or feeling existing between two or more musical parts and/or individuals,” a perspective that corresponds with Keil’s original formulation.

According to Keil, participatory discrepancies are musicians’ default ways of relating to their fellow performers. Certain performers might play slightly ahead of, or behind, the beat. Keil does not consider the possibility that musicians might alter their participatory discrepancies throughout a performance, however. In fact, experimental research conducted by J. A. Prögler suggests that many musicians adopt a shifting and inconsistent approach towards these discrepancies. I will demonstrate through an analytical example that musicians often alter their performance of a groove for expressive effect throughout an improvisation.

My concept of groove relies on both meanings of the term—groove as noun and verb. Grooves are therefore both the common rhythmic patterns played by the rhythm section and soloists, as well as the particular ways of playing those patterns (i.e., Keil’s participatory discrepancies). Matthew Butterfield, in dialogue with Keil, writes that “participatory discrepancies interact with aspects of syntactical pattern in systematic ways in the production of engendered feeling in jazz and other groove-based musics.” To study groove, one must therefore consider both the noun and the verb.

As the foregoing discussion demonstrates, grooves have been given fairly comprehensive treatment by previous commentators. Reconceptualizing grooves as topics, however, adds to the conversation the idea that the expressive correlations of various grooves can be imported into specific improvisations. These expressive correlations are elements of style that listeners and performers understand implicitly. Correlations, according to Robert Hatten, “typically involve general cultural units … or expressive states defined by basic semantic oppositions in a culture.” The basic oppositions expressed by groove correlations in jazz are hot and cool, excitement and relaxation, forward motion and stasis. Grooves express these values through a combination of rhythmic patterns and participatory discrepancies. As Butterfield has
shown, an identically notated drum part for a swing groove might be perceived as “relaxed” or “laid back” when beats 2 and 4 are delayed, whereas anticipating beats 2 and 4 slightly will result in a heightened feeling of anacrusis and increased energy. Similarly, grooves with different rhythmic patterns situate themselves on different regions of the scale from hot to cool.

The most fundamental characteristic of a jazz groove is its manner of rendering eighth notes. Almost all jazz is notated (when it is notated) and conceptualized with the eighth note as the primary rhythmic subdivision, but it is assumed that a player will perform eighth notes with varying degrees of inequality. A rhythmic spectrum therefore exists with equal, evenly spaced eighth notes on one extreme, and very unequal, dotted rhythms on the other. Example 9-1 illustrates this spectrum of eighth-note inequality. It is important to note that the example represents continuous rather than discrete points along the spectrum. Musicians regularly inhabit the space between the evenly spaced “straight eighths” and the triplet-based eighths, for instance. Each musician tends to have a default way of playing swing eighths that plays a large role in that performer’s unique style. Improvisers may also choose to alter their swing eighths depending on specific expressive situations.

Example 9-1, Spectrum of Eighth-Note Inequality and Expressive States

In general, the spectrum of equal to unequal eighths correlates with a range from relaxation to excitement. Grooves with even eighths tend to correlate with more relaxed and static expressive states while grooves with unequal eighths correlate with more excited and energetic expressive states. While each groove allows some degree of leeway in the specific expression of eighth-note inequality, tempo imposes certain limits on this flexibility. At faster tempos, eighth notes tend to be played closer to the even side of the spectrum, mostly due to the extremely short amounts of
time such minute differences would involve. Slower tempos, consequently, allow for a greater range of eighth-note expressions. Example 9-2 illustrates the greater range of eighth-note inequality at slower tempos compared to faster tempos.

Example 9-2, Relationship of Tempo and Eighth-Note Inequality

The specific jazz grooves to be discussed throughout this chapter fall somewhere on the spectrum of eighth-note inequality given in Example 9-1. Example 9-3 summarizes the fundamental features of these grooves. Common rhythmic patterns for the drums will be notated for each of the grooves, and accompanimental roles for the bass and piano will be discussed as well. To begin, the swing groove is the standard groove of most jazz music. It permits a wide variety of eighth-note inequalities and expressive states. Example 9-4 gives a common drum pattern for swing. The essential features for the drummer are the hi-hat accents on beats 2 and 4, known as the backbeat, and the swing pattern in the ride cymbal. This pattern is inflected in various individual ways, with certain drummers playing the eighth notes closer to the even side and others closer to the triplet or dotted-eighth side. The drum patterns notated for each of the grooves would not be repeated unchangingly throughout a performance, but would serve as the basis from which elaboration and communication with the rest of the ensemble would take place. Bassists improvise what is known as a “walking” bass line. This line consists of quarter notes on each beat that, in addition to emphasizing chord tones, include elaborations such as passing tones, neighboring tones, and appoggiaturas. Pianists add to the groove by “comping,” a technique whose name derives either from the words “accompanying” or “complementing.” Comping consists of
adding chordal accompaniment to the ensemble that may perhaps lock up with a repeated rhythmic figure or fill in gaps in the musical texture. Pianists serve this role in all of the grooves, and so pianists’ roles in expressing a specific groove rely more on their choice of eighth-note inequality and activity level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groove</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Eighth-Note Inequality</th>
<th>Drums</th>
<th>Bass</th>
<th>Piano</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swing</td>
<td>Slow-Medium-Fast</td>
<td>Even to dotted</td>
<td>Ride pattern, hi-hat on 2 and 4</td>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>Free comping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuffle</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Triplet to dotted</td>
<td>Shuffle beat, repeated triplet eighths</td>
<td>Repeating patterns</td>
<td>Riff-based comping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltz 3/4</td>
<td>Medium-Fast</td>
<td>Even to dotted</td>
<td>3/4 pattern in ride</td>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>Comping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballad</td>
<td>Slow</td>
<td>Even to dotted</td>
<td>Ballad “stir”</td>
<td>Sustain, 1 and 3</td>
<td>Legato comping, sustain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Medium-Fast</td>
<td>Even</td>
<td>Constant eighths/sixteenths, clave patterns</td>
<td>Repeating patterns, emphasis on roots and fifths</td>
<td>Rhythmic comping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 9-3, Table of Modern Jazz Grooves

The swing groove gradually transforms into a few other grooves depending on various methods of inflection. If an ensemble consistently performs triplet eighth notes, effectively producing the sound of 12/8 meter, the groove shifts into a shuffle. This groove is the standard groove of blues, and of rock styles based on blues. Example 9-5 gives a common drum pattern from a recent drum manual. While the specific combinations of bass, snare, and cymbal articulations vary, the quintessential shuffle elements are the repeated triplet-eighths in the ride cymbal, heavy emphasis on the 2-and-4 backbeat, and incorporation of the bass drum into the pattern producing a darker, more grounded feeling in contrast with the lightness of swing. Some musicians will take the triplet eighths even further, producing an even more unequal dotted rhythm. Rather than walking, bassists in a shuffle groove generally play repeated motives, often called “riffs,” that are then altered to fit the chord progression. Pianists comp in a similarly riff-based manner, often choosing to lock up with the drums and bass rather than interacting with the soloist. The shuffle groove thus represents an intensification of swing.
It produces greater levels of energy and is therefore often used at high points in a solo.

Example 9-4, Drum Pattern for Swing Groove

Example 9-5, Drum Pattern for Shuffle Groove

Another groove related to swing is the 3/4 jazz waltz. This less common groove in the jazz style places swing into a triple-meter context. Its primary elements are summarized in Examples 9-3 and 9-6. As many of its features are similar to those of swing, a detailed discussion of the jazz waltz will not be given here.

Example 9-6, Drum Pattern for 3/4 Jazz Waltz

A number of grooves inhabit the region closer to the even end of the eighth-note spectrum. The ballad groove is the one used in performing both newly composed ballads and standard ballads from the American songbook tradition. Ballads have slow tempos and generally employ even eighth notes. A shift to more unequal eighths often results in increased energy levels and potentially a shift into a slow shuffle. Being slow and even, ballads tend to project the most relaxed and static expressive state of all the grooves. The drummer commonly plays with wire brushes rather
than sticks and usually performs a “stir” on the snare drum. To produce this quintessential timbre of the ballad groove, drummers press brushes on the snare drum and circle them around the drumhead slowly and evenly, producing a constant “shhh” sound. Additionally, the drummer often snaps the hi-hat on 2 and 4 to maintain the backbeat. Example 9-7 summarizes this pattern. Rather than walking, bassists tend to play in a “two-feel,” with half notes on beats 1 and 3. This increases the feeling of relaxation in the ballad groove and gives the bassist the option of walking to increase the energy level of a performance. Pianists similarly comp in a more subdued manner, often sustaining chords for longer periods of time than they might in a swing groove. As with all of the grooves, greater eighth-note inequality will inject activity into the ballad’s more static background texture.

Example 9-7, Drum Pattern for Ballad Groove

One common shift of groove that occurs in ballads is to double time. When an improviser cues such a shift, the tempo doubles, producing a medium-to-fast swing groove. The repeating harmonic framework of the tune usually does not double, however, so that each harmonic change now lasts twice as many measures (though this results in approximately the same duration) as it did in the slower ballad groove. While the tempo shift brings about a significant increase in energy, the now leisurely harmonic pace continues to temper the energy level of the groove. Common aspects of the swing groove discussed above apply equally to the double-time feel.

The only groove that rarely permits any sort of eighth-note inequality is the Latin groove. Actually a category of specific grooves, Latin includes a wide variety of rhythmic styles imported into jazz from Latin America. While many musicians carefully study authentic forms of specific grooves such as the Brazilian samba, the catchall term “Latin” is often used to describe grooves that emphasize even eighth notes over swing eighths. Due to their location on the even side of the spectrum, Latin grooves correlate with a more relaxed expressive state. That is not to say that the rhythmic complexities of certain authentic Latin grooves cannot express extremely energetic and excited states, but that in the generic form usually
referenced by modern jazz, Latin grooves evoke a calmer, more serene manner than swing. 

Son Clave:

Rhumba Clave:

Example 9-8, Standard Patterns for Latin Claves

While there is no single drum pattern that applies to all of the various expressions of a Latin groove, many Latin grooves often include either the son or rhumba clave, a rhythmic pattern that may be articulated throughout the drum set. These two standard patterns are notated in Example 9-8. The two are very similar to one another, with the rhumba adding an additional syncopation on the third note of the “3” grouping. Both claves are heard in 3+2 and 2+3 versions, the difference being whether the group of three articulations falls in a hypermetrically stronger or weaker position than the group of two. Drummers can play rhythmic figures that either do or do not stress these clave patterns, depending on the situation. Merely shifting to even eighths will often be enough for a drummer to imply a Latin groove. Bassists usually play a repeating rhythmic pattern that emphasizes roots and fifths of chords. Additionally, the bass commonly accents the first and third beats in a measure. Pianists comp freely in even eighths, either repeating rhythmic patterns or responding to a soloist.

Groove topics may be used to provide unique analytical insights into collectively improvised performances. As an example, I will investigate a recording of a live performance given by the Miles Davis Quintet in 1964 of “My Funny Valentine.” This recording consists of almost all of the members of his well-known second quintet: Herbie Hancock on piano, Ron Carter on bass, and Tony Williams on drums, though with George Coleman on tenor sax in place of Wayne Shorter. The tune itself plays an important role in the expression of groove topics, so before examining the performance I will turn to the tune.
“My Funny Valentine” was composed by Richard Rodgers with words by Lorenz Hart for their musical *Babes in Arms* (1937). Example 9-9 provides a “lead sheet” version of the tune, which imparts the melody, as well as the harmonic framework in the form of chord symbols. The lead sheet also delineates formal divisions. In the first two A sections, the tune stays in its tonic key, C minor. The B section shifts to the relative major, E-flat. The final A’ section returns to C minor but with an interesting twist. Rather than continuing with eight-measure section lengths, four extra bars are added to produce a concluding twelve-bar section. These added four bars function tonally to effect a shift back to E-flat major, the key of the B section. The tune's form thus concludes away from tonic, in E-flat major, a highly unusual quality in a jazz standard. There is yet another interesting feature having to do with linear structure. In the B section, an ascent from Bb4 to Eb5 is implied by the stepwise connections between the first notes in mm. 17, 19, and 21. As the melody reaches closer to its Eb5 goal, the appearance of C5 in m. 23 suddenly interrupts this motion. As the A’ section returns in the key of C minor, a series of new linear ascents begins. These ascents culminate with the achievement of the Eb5 desired earlier, though undercut by C minor harmony. In light of this expressive crux of the tune, the added four measures may be regarded as a conciliatory gesture, bringing back Eb major, though notably without the high Eb5. Davis’s quintet interacts with these unusual tonal,
formal, and linear aspects of the tune as they collectively improvise their performance.

This analysis will investigate Davis’s solo that opens the recording. Throughout this investigation of the various grooves used in the recording, refer to Example 9-10. This chart maps out the groove topics each musician projects, and indexes their appearances to time points in the recording as well as locations in the tune’s form. In the example, each groove is labeled by an abbreviation given in the key to symbols. Three additional markings are important to note. First, grooves followed by a question mark are suggested by a performer but do not emerge fully throughout the whole ensemble. Second, dotted lines indicate the span of time in which each performer projects each groove. Third, snippets of text appear above these lines to highlight a noteworthy element of a player’s expression of a groove.

The performance begins with an “out-of-time” introduction played by Hancock. Jazz musicians call these sections “rubato,” a sense of the term that conflicts somewhat with the term’s meaning in the Classical repertoire. Rather than a temporary relaxation of tempo, rubato in jazz often refers to extended passages that have no metric pulse. The musicians interactively cue chord shifts in these passages. While rubato is not a “groove” in the sense defined above, it often contains qualities of the ballad groove due to its feeling of slower unfolding.

Davis enters at 0:30 and initiates the tune proper. Hancock and Davis perform the A section together, merely hinting at aspects of the tune’s harmony and melody. After stating the first four measures of the melody, Davis departs from the melody, never to return to it in his five-minute solo. Carter’s entrance at 0:59 cues the first real groove of the performance. His articulation of beats 1 and 3 along with an emphasis on the chordal root and fifth suggests a Latin groove, though with a triplet feel. Williams, however, snaps the hi-hat on beats 2 and 4 setting up a slow ballad. Due to the slow tempo and lack of additional support in the drums, ballad takes precedence over Latin, but Carter’s utterances do give the music a Latin inflection. Williams strengthens the ballad feel at 1:15 by beginning the ballad “stir” on the snare. At the same time, Carter halts the root-fifth motion and takes up the usual ballad style. When the musicians reach the B section at 1:31, Hancock begins to inflect the slow ballad groove with swung double-time rhythms. The tune’s active harmonies at 1:50 inspire further double-time hints from Hancock, with his active rhythms, and Carter, with his walking quarter notes. Double time does not immediately emerge, however, as the two immediately sustain their notes following this outburst.
### Groove Topics in Improvised Jazz

Example 9-10, Map of Groove Topics in "My Funny Valentine"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chorus 1</th>
<th>Time: 0:00 0:30 0:59 1:15 1:31 1:50 2:02 2:21 2:35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form:</td>
<td>Intro A C minor A C minor B Eb major A' C minor Eb major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key:</td>
<td>C minor C minor Eb major C minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis (tp):</td>
<td>R............... B................. DT?................. DT?................. B...............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hancock (pno):</td>
<td>R................. B................. DT?................. DT?................. B...............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter (bass):</td>
<td>L............... L............... DT?................. DT?................. L...............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams (drums):</td>
<td>B.......... &quot;at&quot;................. B...............</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form:</td>
<td>A A' C minor C minor Eb major C minor Eb major (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key:</td>
<td>C minor C minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis (tp):</td>
<td>S.................. L.......... S............... L...............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hancock (pno):</td>
<td>S................. L.......... S............... L...............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter (bass):</td>
<td>L............... L............... L...............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams (drums):</td>
<td>L?....... L............... L............... L...............</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key to Symbols:
- R: Rubato
- DT: Double-time
- ?: Groove suggested
- B: Ballad
- S: Swing
- L: Latin
- : Groove projected
- Groove element
At 2:02 the musicians return to the Latin-inflected ballad groove from the earlier passage at 0:59. Hancock’s sudden utterance at 2:21 seems to inspire Davis to move unexpectedly into the high range. The following passage sounds like it is just on the cusp of a change in groove, with all of the musicians listening very intently to one another to see who will step in and provide a definitive cue for a shift. Davis’s shriek at 2:35 and subsequent swing figure offers the expected cue, and the musicians gradually work their way into a double-time swing groove. An interesting aspect of this shift is that it occurs during the “extra” four bars at the end of the tune’s final A’ section. The musicians thus use these unorthodox additional measures as a kind of pivot point, allowing a shift of groove to take place between the first and second choruses of Davis’s solo.

When the second chorus begins at 2:52, the musicians are “in full swing,” with all of its attendant increase in energy. Williams performs the standard ride cymbal pattern, Carter walks, and Hancock comps rhythmically. At 3:18 Williams gives a brief hint at straight eighth notes, a hint of Latin that, for the time being, goes unanswered. At 3:26, however, a subtle shift in groove does occur. Davis’s solo line becomes soft, yet swings intensely. His eighth notes move toward the right side of the spectrum provided in Example 9-1. Williams follows suit and adds a similarly hard-swinging rhythm on his tom-toms. Hancock’s comping suggests more of a riff-based style rather than the rhythmically freer stance he had earlier adopted. All of these elements combine to create an intensification of the swing groove, despite the lowered dynamics of this passage. Indeed, the quietness of their utterances serves to make the groove even more powerful; the very act of producing such a powerfully swinging groove at such a soft dynamic level adds a whole new dimension to the passage. The musicians depart from this soft and intense swing at 3:42, returning to the more typical swing groove they previously employed.

Nearing 3:58, a succession of straight eighths in Williams’s part suggests a shift to Latin. Following his utterance, the group shifts almost simultaneously to a Latin groove, a shift that coincides with the beginning of the tune’s B section. The use of the more relaxed Latin feel here complements many aspects of this musical moment. Tonally, the tune shifts from the minor mode to its relative major. Combined with the shift in groove, the music takes on an otherworldly character, as if suddenly imported from somewhere else. Davis supports this feeling with sustained pitches, although interrupted by strange harmonic divergences. Carter sustains a repeated pedal throughout much of this passage, and Hancock holds sustained chords. Between 4:17 and 4:28, swing gradually creeps
back in as the tune shifts away from E-flat major. Swing reemerges with C minor at 4:28.

The swing groove that appears at 4:28 is again inflected with the various intensifying devices used in the passage at 3:26. Whereas the shift from this soft-and-intense swing passage to Latin was mediated by a passage of standard swing at 3:42, now the two are directly juxtaposed, and their conflicting expressive correlations meet abruptly. Following 4:58, Williams begins to hint at straight eighths in the same manner he did previously. Latin reemerges at 5:06, and nicely supports Davis’s more easygoing sustained utterances along with the brief return of major-mode harmony. Formally, the musicians again find themselves in the extra four measures added to the A’ section, the strange point at which E-flat major returns to conclude the tune. This last vestige of relaxation and stasis in Latin-major does not get the final word, however, as an abrupt ascent in Davis’s part cues a shift back to swing-minor. As a result of this return to swing, Davis’s solo actually extends by four (double-time) measures into George Coleman’s, which follows directly. Thus the topical needs of the groove supplant standard jazz practice here, that of concluding one’s solo before the start of the next player’s chorus.

To summarize, Davis’s solo is shaped primarily by the shift from the beginning ballad groove into double-time swing. This shift brings about a concomitant increase in energy and excitement. Once this primary shift occurs, however, Davis inflects the prevalent swing groove into an unusual and intense soft swing. Additionally, the musicians contrast minor-key swing in Davis’s second chorus with major-key Latin. The contrasting expressive correlations of these grooves create a great deal of variety and pose a problem: which one will ultimately win out? The answer to this question is not quite as simple as it might appear, due to the fact that E-flat major returns at the end of the tune. Despite the brief return of Latin for this final major-key swerve, minor-swing has the last word, notably resulting in a bit of spill over into Coleman’s solo. The ensemble’s use of the competing swing and Latin grooves also parallels the linear tension of the tune itself. Latin groove, the goal of the second chorus’s B section, does not emerge as a permanent change, but rather succumbs to swing as the minor-key A’ section is reached. Latin reappears briefly with the final E-flat major phrase, but this achievement is undercut by a fall back into swing. Thus, just as the linear ascent to Eb5 is undercut by C minor harmony, so is the Latin groove’s attempt to conclude the second chorus.

The groove topic allows us to refocus jazz analysis on a set of musical parameters often overlooked by jazz analysts. This emphasis on groove
and the ways in which it is interactively cued coincides closely with the musical value placed on these parameters by jazz musicians. The compendium of grooves discussed here is by no means exhaustive. There are undoubtedly more expressive correlations to be discovered in these grooves as well. In its relatively short history, topic theory has revealed aspects of Classical style to which music theorists were formerly less attuned. Similarly, it has the power to reveal expressive aspects of improvised jazz that analysts have neglected to highlight. In this way, topic theory shows that, whether through dance or groove, musicians separated by hundreds of years have always been interested in making music move.

Notes


2 See, for instance, Henry Martin, *Charlie Parker and Thematic Improvisation* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996) and Steve Larson, *Analyzing Jazz: A Schenkerian Approach* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2009). I do not mean to denigrate the Schenkerian approach adopted by both Martin and Larson, but rather I intend to emphasize that such an approach often implicitly values tonal coherence over other parameters that may be foremost in the minds of musicians, particularly during the moment of a performance act.

3 Monson, p. 29.


7 Owens describes the bebop style as “the lingua franca of jazz;” see Thomas Owens, *Bebop: The Music and Its Players* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 4. While numerous small-group styles have emerged since the 1940s, bebop serves as the basis from which these other styles depart or against which they are defined. To a significant extent the term “jazz” refers to this “lingua franca,” while the term “swing” is used when discussing the earlier style.

8 Guitarists, while quite common in swing rhythm sections, became somewhat less common in modern jazz. That is not to say that the guitar was an aberration in bebop, but rather that the typical rhythm section usually included only one chordal instrument, and more often than not that instrument was the piano.


10 Monson, p. 67.

13 Ibid., p. 275.
14 Monson, p. 68.
18 Butterfield 2006.
19 Benadon uses the term “beat-upbeat ratio,” or BUR, to describe this eighth-note inequality; see Fernando Benadon, “Slicing the Beat: Jazz Eighth-Notes as Expressive Microrhythm,” Ethnomusicology 50/1 (2006): 73–98.
20 Benadon 2006 offers empirical evidence in support of this assertion.
23 Of course, rock grooves also feature even eighth notes, and they begin to be used in jazz performances starting later in the 1960s. Rock and Latin grooves may be distinguished from one another based on their unique rhythmic and accompanimental patterns used by the rhythm section.
24 The association between Latin grooves and a relaxed expressive state stems mainly from the prevalence of the bossa nova in jazz. Bossa nova arose as a cross pollination between Brazilian samba rhythms and jazz harmonies during jazz’s turn toward the “cool sound” in the 1950s, and thus reflects this subdued character. For more on the bossa nova, see Chris McGowan and Ricardo Pessanha, The Brazilian Sound: Samba, Bossa Nova, and the Popular Music of Brazil (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009).
25 As shown in Finn, pp. 32–33.
27 In this lead sheet, “−” indicates minor triads, “△” major, and “ø” half-diminished. Superscript numbers add upper extensions that may be altered by accidentals.