Compositions for Combos

"Better Get Hit In Your Soul"
"Blue Cee"
"Boogie Stop Shuffle"
"Celia" (only in C package)
"Diane"
"Dizzy Moods"
"Duke's Choice" (only in C package)
"Duke Ellington's Sound Of Love"
"East Coasting"
"Ecclusiastics"
"Eclipse" (only in C package)
"Fables of Faubus"
"Goodbye Pork Pie Hat"
"Haitian Fight Song"
"Hora Decubitus" (aka "E's Flat Ah's Flat, Too") (only in C package)
"Jelly Roll"
"Moanin"
"Noddin' Ya Head Blues" (only in C package)
"Nostalgia in Times Square"
"O, Lord, Please Don't Let Them Drop That Atomic Bomb On Me"
"O.P. (Oscar Pettiford)"
"Opus 4"
"Orange was the Color of Her Dress, Then Blue Silk"
"Peggy's Blue Skylight"
"Pithecanthropus Erectus"
"Portrait" (only in C package)
"Self-Portrait in Three Colors" (only in C package)
"Slippers"
"Slop" (only in C package)
"So Long Eric" (only in C package)
"Sue's Changes"
"Us is Too"
"Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting"
"Weird Nightmare" (only in C package)
"Work Song"
BETTER GET HIT IN YOUR SOUL

CHARLES MINGUS

\[ \frac{d}{4} = \text{ca. 86} \]

A

\[ G \]

C7

G

C7

A_m7

D7

1. G

2. G

G

C7

G

A7

D7

C7

G

C7

G

C7

G

A_m7

D7

G

to solos (Blues)

1. G

2. G

last time

slower (directed)

A_m7

D7

G

C

G

* Ab in 1977 recording

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Bb lead sheet

BETTER GET HIT IN YOUR SOUL

1977 version (Mingus' opening Bass solo)
1963 version (counter melody)
3 1359 version (background riffs)

etc.

3a

mf

4 1959 version (hand clapping)
“This was one of the first times I ever stole from myself. I had a record date coming up for Columbia and I wanted to do another 6/8 thing so I just wrote another piece with a different melody and the same feeling—because Atlantic had never released the one I did. And I was trying to get a waltz out on the market—especially because I knew Cannonball wanted to do my tune. He got out This Here before me and made a lot of money.”

Mingus played *Better Get Hit In Your Soul* many times after he first recorded it for Columbia on May 5, 1959. Other versions were issued by:

- **Atlantic**: July 13, 1960, from the Antibes—Juan-les-Pins Jazz Festival
- **Impulse**: January 20, 1963, a studio version
- **Atlantic**: March 1977, another studio version

Almost equal in popularity to *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*, this driving gospel piece always seems to inspire musicians and audiences. The stop-time handclapping, shouts, collective improvisation and background riffs reflect Mingus’ church music roots. Spontaneous stop-time rhythms, changing metrical gears, impassioned solos and exhortatory shouting are some of the techniques Mingus utilized in his dynamic performances of this soul-inspiring classic.

Mingus’ opening bass solo, originally improvised, has become part of the composition. Example 1 notates the 1977 version which evolved from earlier performances.

**Better Get Hit In Your Soul**

1. 1977 version (Mingus’ opening Bass solo)
Strong counterlines should accompany the melody. Example 2 is heard on the repeat of A on the original recording.

Example 2
1963 version (counter melody)

Mingus often used riffs like the ones shown in examples 3 and 3a to back up the soloists.

Example 3
1959 version (background riffs)

Example 3a

The hand clapping rhythm goes:

Example 4
1959 version (hand clapping)

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**Better Get Hit In Your Soul**

-Alben Name: Mingus Ah Um
-(Better Get It In Your Soul)
-Label: Columbia

-Alben Name: Mingus At Antibes
-Label: Atlantic

-Alben Name: Mingus Mingus Mingus
-Label: Atlantic

-Alben Name: Three Or Four Shades Of Blues
-Label: Atlantic
"It was written for Celia, my ex-wife, although I wrote it before she was my ex-wife. I used the Key of C; also a one-note form like Duke had done on C-Jam Blues."

In the notes for the album *The Clown* recorded by Atlantic on March 13, 1957, Mingus said of his repertoire: "Some of the guys had been saying that I didn't swing. So I made some (compositions) that did. This album (*The Clown*) is a standard blues. It's in two keys - C and Bb - but that's not noticeable and it ends up in C, basically. I heard some Basie in it and also some church-like feeling." While Mingus never did play *Blue Cee* again, he went on to write many more compositions based on the blues.

Mingus' use of repeated notes helps create the blue mood of this piece. Also note the effective use of bitter dissonances in the last phrase. The second chord in bar 10 may also be played as Db9. The above example notates the wailing riff which is played after all solos and before the return of the head.
4th chorus ensemble melody

2nd time swing

(D/Bb)

fine

1. to solos

f
Boogie woogie may be older than jazz itself. We know that the first recording in 1928 of *Pinetop’s Boogie* was simply a documentation of a piano style that had long been popular in the tonks and barrelhouses throughout the southwestern United States. Although Mingus played a lot of boogie while he was with the Lionel Hampton Orchestra in 1947-48, the boogie had been a prominent part of his repertoire before that. By 1945 he had recorded at least three boogie titles and in 1946 wrote and recorded a seminal piece entitled *Shuffle Bass Boogie*. His 1959 composition, *Boogie Stop Shuffle*, may be seen as an ultimate tribute to that driving, infectious music.

*Boogie* is predicated on an eight-to-the-bar bass line. The *stop* was an important part of a boogie performance, as for instance when Pinetop Smith would call to his audience “now hold yourself.” Mingus incorporates stops in bars 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9 of his fundamental bass line. The *shuffle* was an updating of the boogie. Rhythm sections today are still judged on how well they groove on a shuffle.

Quincy Jones once told Mingus that he had a potential hit with this tune and even went so far as to record his own version for *Mercury*, in 1962, as a *Boogie Bossa Nova*. Gil Evans, always a champion of Mingus’ compositions, used *Boogie Stop Shuffle* in a hot dance routine which opened a British film called *Absolute Beginners*, starring David Bowie.

Mingus recorded *Boogie Stop Shuffle* only once: for *Columbia* on May 12, 1959. He dictated this piece (and most of the others on the album) vocally, or from the piano, to his musicians. As a result no scores or parts exist in his own hand. Note how he was able to get three saxophones and one trombone to sound like a brass section, using plunger mutes at B & C. Also note the boppish line of D which logically develops out of the previous choruses and concludes with a bi-tonal chord. As the unedited *Columbia* version issued on the Lp *Nostalgia In Times Square* shows, Mingus expected his soloists to play two choruses in the boogie groove followed by two choruses over a bop swing.

Trombonist Jimmy Knepper suggests the following notation to illustrate the rhythm of the brass player’s plunger movements:
Medium Swing \( \frac{\text{ }}{\text{ }} \) \( \text{= ca. 144} \)

Dizzy Moods

CHARLES MINGUS

Bb Lead Sheet

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“This was based on some chord changes Dizzy wrote—not all of ‘em—from Woodyn You. I used part of the changes so I called his name.”

According to Nat Hentoff, Mingus called up Dizzy Gillespie and played him an original melody written over an altered chord progression of Woodyn’ You. Dizzy, who acknowledged the flattery in this sincerest form of imitation, blessed the new work. First recorded in a trio version with Hampton Hawes on July 9, 1957, the better known sextet version of Dizzy Moods was recorded eleven days later for RCA (July 18, 1957).

In a typical deviation from the standard AABA form, Mingus engaged his musicians in some New Orleans inspired collective improvisation instead of merely repeating the A theme. Alteration and independence continues in a more subtle fashion through the bridge (in 3/4 time) by way of echo and hocket, the device medieval composers used in which a melody is tossed among several voices.

Mingus constructed an interesting introduction from what sounds like composed 4-bar breaks for horns, bass drums and piano. If the bass, drum and piano breaks were not written out, they would nonetheless carry the composer’s stamp by virtue of the continuity and consistency of the musical language. This process of composer-directing-improvisor reaches back to the innovations of Jelly Roll Morton. After the solo choruses Mingus uses the introduction material once more as an interlude to bring in the recapitulation of the theme.
Duke Ellington's Sound of Love

CHARLES MINGUS

A
Ballad \( \frac{3}{4} \) ca. 60

\[
\begin{align*}
E(7b9) & \quad E(\text{b}9) & \quad B(\text{b}13b9) & \quad E(\text{b}9) & \quad G(7\#5b9\#9) \\
\text{Piano} & \quad mf & \quad \text{Bass} & \quad \text{Even 8th} & \\
C(7b9) & \quad B(9b9) & \quad E(\text{b}9) & \quad G(7\#11) & \\
F(m9) & \quad B(13b9) & \quad F(#6) & \quad E(\text{b}9) & \quad E(\text{b}9) \\
\end{align*}
\]

B

\[
\begin{align*}
G(m7b5\#11) & \quad G(7\#11) & \quad F(#6) & \quad F(m7b5) & \quad B(7\#11) & \quad E(\text{b}9) \\
\text{Even 8th} & \quad E(m7) & \quad A(7) & \quad D(\text{b}7) & \quad D & \quad F(m7/D) & \quad A/\text{C#B} & \quad m7/C & \quad B(13\#11) & \quad C(m7\#11) & \quad F(13b9) \\
\text{Even 8th} & \quad B(\text{b}9) & \quad G(7b9) & \quad C(7b9) & \quad F(7\#11) & \quad B(\text{b}9) & \quad E(\text{b}9) & \quad A(\text{b}13\#11) \\
\text{Even 8th} & \quad G(m7\#11) & \quad C(7\#11) & \quad F(m7b5\#11) & \\
\text{Even 8th} & \quad B(13b9) & \quad F(7) & \quad F(6) & \quad E(\text{b}9) & \quad E(\text{b}9) & \quad E(13\#11) & \\
\end{align*}
\]
Duke Ellington's Sound of Love

Ballad \( \frac{3}{4} = \text{ca. 60} \)

words and music by
CHARLES MINGUS

A
\[ \text{Eb Maj9} \quad \text{Bb13(9)} \quad \text{Eb Maj9} \quad \text{G7\#5(9)9} \]

I was young and care-free, not a song had found my soul. Lost in blues, jazz and rag-time, no sound had got to my mood. I was searching for my melody, love blues that gets me wooed.

B
\[ \text{G#m7b5(11)} \quad \text{G7(11)} \quad \text{F# Maj7} \quad \text{F6} \quad \text{F#m7b5} \quad \text{B7(11)} \quad \text{E Maj7} \]

All alone, sad clown with his circus closed down.

C
\[ \text{Bb Maj7} \quad \text{G7(9)} \quad \text{C7(9)} \quad \text{F9(11)} \quad \text{Bb Maj7} \quad \text{E9} \quad \text{Eb Maj9} \]

Lost on my merry go-round came a melody in my heart so yearning. Taught me to hear music out of love, from the soul, for this life we all live infinite with the lover, and be loved.

D
\[ \text{A7(11)} \quad \text{Gm7(11)} \quad \text{C7(11)} \quad \text{Fm7b5(11)} \]

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I was young and carefree

My song had found a place

Lost in blues and jazz

Ragtime no sound had got to my mood

I was searching for my melody

Lost in my memory

Woed all alone

Addressed with his circus closed

Down in lost on my merry go round

A love song all alone

Hoarse voices for this

The hills will echo long

I was addressed in love

Write with love and be

Original score of Duke Ellington's "Sound of Love"
After its premiere at Max Gordon’s Village Vanguard Club in New York City, *Duke Ellington’s Sound Of Love* was recorded twice for Atlantic in late December, 1974. On Changes One it was performed as an instrumental; on Changes Two, Jackie Paris sang the lyrics. Inspired by such Ellington and Strayhorn pieces as Lush Life and The Star Crossed Lovers, this rich ballad remained in Mingus’ repertoire until its last recording on November 6, 1977, for a label produced by Lionel Hampton.

There may be several ways to analyze the phrase structure of the melody. Notice how it is grouped into 13, 8, 6, and 5-bar phrases in the instrumental version: the pianist should always play the chordal figure in the first measure. In the vocal version, however, the first measure serves as a pick-up. Thus we have shown A in relation to the implied structure of each version.

Trumpet player Jack Walrath, who was in Mingus’s band during the time that *Duke Ellington’s Sound Of Love* was being performed in the mid-seventies, says that in the first bar of B the first chord is $F^\#m11(5)$. These chords are specifically voiced from root position, as follows:

1. $F^\#m11(5)$
   
   ![Chord Diagram](image)

   The third bar of B, first chord, is Em7. The first bar of D is $Em11(5)$. The descending chords each time are: EMaj7, $E^\#Maj7$, DMaj7, B9(#11). As time went on, Walrath continues, the last four eighth notes in the sixth bar of B became C, C, B7, B9. He also notes that the last chord of the piece is DMaj7(5) add 9 & 13, or as shown in the following example for the last two measures:

2. $Dm9(6)$
   
   ![Chord Diagram](image)

3. $Dm9\#5(6)$
   
   ![Chord Diagram](image)

As Walrath points out, Mingus wrote small band arrangements as if he were writing for a big band, including specific piano voicings and counter lines within the middle or “meat” of the chords.
East Coasting

CHARLES MINGUS

Uptempo Swing (\(\text{\textfrac{4}{4}}\) = ca. 200)

Intro

\[\begin{align*}
\text{A\textsuperscript{b} Bass*} & \quad \text{F Bass*} & \quad \text{B\textsuperscript{b} Bass*} & \quad \text{E\textsuperscript{b} Bass*} \\
\text{Piano} & \quad \text{2-feel} \\
\text{Trombone \& Trumpet}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{A\textsuperscript{b}} & \quad 4 \text{ measure Piano break} \\
\text{modulate to E}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{A} & \quad \text{E\textsuperscript{maj7}} & \quad \text{C\#m7} & \quad \text{F\#m7} & \quad \text{B7} & \quad \text{G\#m7} & \quad \text{C\#7} & \quad \text{F\#m7} & \quad 3 & \quad \text{D7} \\
\text{G\textsuperscript{maj7}} & \quad \text{B\textsuperscript{m7b5}} & \quad \text{E7} & \quad \text{A\textsuperscript{m7b5}} & \quad 3 & \quad \text{D7} & \quad \text{G\textsuperscript{maj7}} \\
\text{B} & \quad \text{C\#m7b5} & \quad \text{F\#7} & \quad \text{B\textsuperscript{m7b5}} & \quad \text{E7} & \quad \text{B\textsuperscript{b}m7} & \quad 3 & \quad \text{E\textsuperscript{b}7} \\
\text{C\#m7b5} & \quad \text{F\#7} & \quad \text{B\textsuperscript{m7b5}} & \quad \text{E7} & \quad \text{B\textsuperscript{b}m7} & \quad 3 & \quad \text{D7} & \quad \text{G\textsuperscript{maj7}}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{C\#m9} & \quad \text{C\textsubscript{m9}} & \quad \text{B\textsubscript{m9}} & \quad \text{A\#m9} & \quad \text{F\#m7b5} & \quad 3 & \quad \text{B7} \\
\text{Trumpet} & \quad \text{Trb. \& Tenor}
\end{align*}\]

*Bass notes only. (not chords)
After *East Coasting* was composed for a *Bethlehem* recording date in August, 1957, Mingus seems never to have played it again. Although Mingus grew up on the West Coast, critics and historians have associated his approach with those living near the Atlantic shore. However, the composer has stated:

"Whatever coast he's on, a man should be himself.  
I don't write in any particular *idiom*, I write Charles Mingus."

In this piece Mingus devises an unusual form in which boppish phrases traverse through a labyrinth of tonalities. Within each phrase are internal and cross references which distinguish most of Mingus' melodies. Its structure may be represented as:

8 bars  A  
4 bars  B1  
4 bars  B2  
4 bars  C (derived from the intro)  
4 bars  D  
8 bars  A  
4 bars  B1  
4 bars  B3

The desired effect of the introduction and C is created by *doodle tonguing* on brass instruments. Saxophonists should utilize Lester Young's trademark technique of rhythmically applying alternate fingerings to one note.
Slowly \( \frac{3}{4} \) ca. 52

**A**

\[
\begin{align*}
G7 & \quad A_m7 & \quad B_m7 & \quad C7 & \quad C#7 & \quad F#7 \\
B_m7 & \quad E7#5 & \quad C7 & \quad E7 & \quad F7 & \quad A_Maj9
\end{align*}
\]

**B**

\[
\begin{align*}
D7 & \quad G7 & \quad C7 & \quad F7 \\
Bb7 & \quad E7 & \quad A_m7b5 & \quad D7#5
\end{align*}
\]

**C**

1. G7(9)
2. G7(9)

"wail"

"wail"

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"The second part was church—between the saints and the devil."

The notation used here approximates the rhythmic patterns of the melody, which seems to approximate the church-house moans, humming and shouts which inspired this piece. "At section B," Jimmy Knepper points out, "there should be an underlying double-time feel from the rhythm section." Moreover, double-time may apply to an entire solo chorus. Also in this section suspended chords may be used on the first beat as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
C7(\text{sus 4}) & - C7 & F7 \\
Bb7(\text{sus 4}) & - Bb7 & E7 \\
Ab7(\text{sus 4}) & - Ab7 & Db7
\end{align*}
\]

Mingus effectively utilized the amazing and under-rated Rahsaan Roland Kirk as a self-contained saxophone section for the Atlantic version of *Ecclisiastics* on November 6, 1961. Kirk must have been impressed with this powerful ecumenical piece, as he later recorded it himself for Mercury in June, 1963 using a big band arrangement by Benny Golson. Mingus would return to *Ecclisiastics* on February 4, 1972, for a concert recording by Columbia that featured a big band arrangement by Sy Johnson.
Fables of Faubus

CHARLES MINGUS

Intro  \( C_m7 \)

2-feel  \( mp \)

2-feel  \( mp \)

2-feel  \( mp \)

C \( m7 \)

E\( ^b7 \)

\( \text{in octaves} \)

\( \text{(octaves)} \)

Am\( ^b5(9) \)

D\( 7(9) \)

G\( m7 \)

F\( 7 \)

E\( 7 \)

\( \text{Bass Walks} \)

E\( ^b7 \)

D\( 7(9) \)

C\( 7b5 \)

\( \text{Bass Walks} \)
solos only:

Bass and Drums double time

sweetly
Of all his compositions, Mingus returned to *Fables Of Faubus* most often. The first version, recorded for Columbia on May 5, 1959, sets out the structure most clearly. It is cast in a form similar to the multi-thematic strains of Ragtime. Excluding bootleg issues, other commercial recordings include the following:

Candid - October 20, 1960 (re-titled Original Faubus Fables).

America/Prestige (semi-bootleg) - April 18, 1964, from a concert in Paris.

Enja - April 26, 1964, from a concert in Wuppertal, Germany.

Fantasy/Debut - June 3, 1964, at The Jazz Workshop in San Francisco (re-titled New Fables).

Orval E. Faubus was a governor of Arkansas who, in 1957, sent out the National Guard to prevent a few black children from entering Little Rock’s Central High School. Mingus’ condemnation of this action was apparently too strong for those in charge at Columbia Records, who prohibited Mingus and his drummer Dannie Richmond from singing the following lyrics:

Oh, Lord, don’t let ‘em shoot us!
Oh, Lord, don’t let ‘em stab us!
Oh, Lord, don’t let ‘em tar and feather us!
Oh, Lord, no more swastikas!
Oh, Lord, no more Ku Klux Klan!

Name me someone who’s ridiculous, Dannie.
Governor Faubus!
Why is he so sick and ridiculous?
He won’t permit integrated schools.
Then he’s a fool!

Boo! Nazi Fascist supremists!
Boo! Ku Klux Klan (with your evil plan)

Name me a handful that’s ridiculous, Dannie Richmond.
—Faubus—Rockefeller—Eisenhower
Why are they so sick and ridiculous?
Two, four, six, eight: They brainwash and teach you hate.

H-E-L-L-O—Hello
“I always thought that no matter what kind of work people did, they should involve themselves totally with all the discrimination they ran into. I remember once in Yugoslavia we played ‘Faubus’ and ‘Remember Rockefeller at Attica’ and this U.S. Embassy cat came running up and told me not to play songs with titles like that. I told him, ‘You know, man, we’re from a free country. We’re supposed to show people over here how great our country is by telling them we’re able to talk about the wrongs and the rights of our country, whereas they’re not allowed to.’ He wasn’t nasty, but he sounded like he forgot he was from America.”

FABLES OF FAUBUS

Album Name:
Mingus Ah Um
(Better Get It In Your Soul)
Label: Columbia

Album Name:
Charles Mingus Presents
Charles Mingus
(Stormy Weather)
Label: Candid

Album Name:
Right Now: Live At The Jaz
Workshop
Label: Fantasy
The reader/performer is advised to listen first to the Columbia version of *Fables Of Faubus* where the form is clear and concise; then to study the Candid version which introduces the lyrics and more extended solos; and finally to follow the remarkable Fantasy/Debut recording featuring Clifford Jordan which is an example of true innovation and clearly shows that Mingus was in advance of all his contemporaries, including John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman and John Cage.

Pepper Adams was the first musician to devote a whole album to Mingus’ compositions. The great baritone saxophonist commissioned Thad Jones to write an arrangement of *Fables Of Faubus* for a session issued by Motown Records in September, 1963. Unfortunately, the disc was poorly distributed and is considered a collector’s item today.

In later performances, Mingus changed the title to celebrate other political leaders, such as: *Nix On Nixon* and *Oh, Lord, Help Mr. Ford*. Recently, French poet and troubadour Claude Nougaro recorded *Fables* under the title *Harlem*.

Often, Mingus used the following background lines—played or sung by his musicians—to support the soloists. In example 1, with two or more background horns, X may be repeated by one voice while the other continues at Y.
Goodbye Pork Pie Hat

Ballad $= \text{ca. 56}$

$Bb$ lead sheet

CHARLES MINGUS

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"That was for Lester Young. I was playing the Half Note Club the night we heard he died and we went to the bandstand and played a Blues for Lester. I knew the guys would never do that again. I went home and wrote a blues the way I thought they were playing, with different types of chord changes—not just the regular blues—and it became part of the book.”

More people know Mingus’ music through his beautiful and haunting tribute to Lester Young than through any of his other compositions. Goodbye Pork Pie Hat was first recorded for Columbia on May 12, 1959—less than two months after the tenor saxophonist’s death on March 15th. Many musicians recorded cover versions of Goodbye Pork Pie Hat. One unusual performance came from the folk-rock group Pentangle in 1966. Other versions were recorded by John McLaughlin, Rhasaan Roland Kirk and Jeff Beck. Mingus himself returned to this piece in recorded versions for Impulse on September 20, 1963 (where it was called Theme For Lester Young) and again for Atlantic in March, 1977. In 1978, Joni Mitchell recorded Goodbye Pork Pie Hat with her own lyrics on her Mitchell/Mingus album for Asylum.

Like Duke Ellington, Mingus was able to compose over the blues structure with such strength, beauty and sophistication that the listener is not aware of the music’s humble origins.
Haitian Fight Song

CHARLES MINGUS

Medium Swing \( \frac{3}{4} = \text{ca. } 152 \)

Bass Intro

\begin{align*}
\text{Bass} & \quad \text{mp cresc. poco-a-poco} \\
\text{Bass} & \quad \text{f} \quad \text{ff}
\end{align*}

Tenor tacet 1st time, 2nd time start playing from bar 13, then play twice

T. Sx.

\begin{align*}
\text{T. Sx.} & \quad \text{mf} \\
\text{Tbn.} & \quad \text{p} \quad \text{(gets louder each time)} \quad \text{Tbn.} \\
\text{Bass} & \quad \text{Bass plays 4 times}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{T. Sx.} & \quad \text{p} \quad \text{plunger half-valve} \\
\text{Bb Tpt.} & \quad \\
\text{Tbn.} & \quad \\
\text{Bass} & \quad
\end{align*}
Solo (A Minor Blues)

After Bass solo D.C. and ritard to end
After 5 choruses of the Blues, Mingus plays an open solo before setting up letter A again.
The horns re-enter as before, eventually slowing down and stopping.
“I was always doing revolutionary things, things that would alert people, so they would stop being so subservient.”

Compositionally, there is not much to *Haitian Fight Song*. Yet, as in Duke Ellington’s simple pieces, it is apparent here that a composer’s greatness is often defined by an independence from the tiring pursuit of complexity. Tempo changes, stop-time, dynamics and freedom of expression should be encouraged in every performance of this piece. Ellington also paid tribute to the Haitians in his *West Indian Dance*, a section of *Black, Brown And Beige*, composed in 1943.

*Haitian Fight Song* was first recorded at *The Café Bohemia* for Mingus’ own *Debut* label on December 23, 1955. It was subsequently recorded by *Atlantic* on March 13, 1957, and finally by *Impulse* on September 20, 1963, under the title *II B.S.*

On the Atlantic recording, after Mingus’ opening cadenza, he plays the bass melody in tempo exhibiting an astonishing dynamic range from *ppp* to *fff*. Only the last eight bars of that line are shown here. We can appreciate this range all the more because Mingus was not using an amplifier.
Medium New Orleans Swing \( \rightarrow \) ca. 132

Alto

\[ C_m7 \quad F_7 \quad C_m7 \quad F_7 \quad C_m7 \]

mf

2-feel (slap bass style)

F7

Bb7

Trb. fills

Eb7

Bb7

A7

A7

G7

C7

F7

1.

Bb7

2.

Bb7

last time

Trb. Fill

Bass

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Tag Ending

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{F}_7^{f9} & \quad \text{Bb} & \quad \text{F}_7^{f9} & \quad \text{Bb} \\
\text{smear} & \quad & \text{smear} & \quad \text{Drum solo} \\
\text{Cm7} & \quad \text{F7} & \quad \text{Cm7} & \quad \text{F7} \\
\text{Bass solo} & \quad & \text{Bass solo} & \\
\text{walk} & \quad \text{Cm7} & \quad \text{Cm7} & \quad \text{Bb7} \\
\text{Bass and Drums} & \quad & \text{fine} & \\
\end{align*}
\]
“It must have had to do with how I heard Monk interpret Jelly Roll, or thought that’s what he was doing. I never studied a history of jazz, beyond listening to the guys I worked with. I find it gets in the way. You can’t play yourself.”

Mingus recorded a more compact version of his Jelly Roll tribute for Columbia on May 5, 1959. Of particular interest is trombonist Jimmy Knepper’s introductory chorus which sets up the melody. Like Cootie Williams’ solo on Duke Ellington’s *In A Mellotone*, Knepper’s improvised statement is just as much a part of the composition which inspired it. Mingus intended the soloists to play their first chorus in a vintage or New Orleans jazz style and then shift gears to a boppish idiom. Knepper has also noted that “when required to play Dixieland or ‘old style’, many musicians often just play corny or ricky-tick rather than being respectful to the idiom.” In fact, Jimmy Knepper was one of the few musicians who understood the development of styles Mingus was attempting to divide.
Moanin'

Medium up swing $\downarrow = 208$

A. Total playing time: 6 choruses

Play only at 4th chorus w/ Piano comping

D7

4th chorus
Alto Sax 2

5th chorus
Alto 1 & 2

6th chorus
Altos

All 6 choruses:

Tenor Sax

Baritone Sax

Trombones: tacet first chorus

Trombone

Rhythm Section

Bass comes in (walk) at 3rd chorus.
Piano comes in at 4th chorus.

4th chorus
Alto 2

5th chorus
Alto 1 & 2

6th chorus
Altos

Ten

Bari

Trbs

Rhy Sec.

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This dynamic wailing piece is known to us through a single version recorded by Atlantic on February 4, 1959. In the same way that Ellington wrote for Harry Carney, Mingus often took advantage of Pepper Adams' deep-voiced baritone saxophone to anchor his compositions. Here, in another of Mingus' additive pieces, (see also E's Flat, Ah's Flat Too and Haitian Fight Song) the baritone saxophone repeats the opening line six times with little variation. Notice, however, on the recording, Adams simplifies his line when the other voices enter, thus allowing our ear to focus on the new melodies more easily. The notation of this part reflects the simplified choruses.

Chromatic cross-relations, such as the C natural in the baritone sax against the Cb in the tenor in bar 1, within and among voices, create the strong independent lines which identify a Mingus composition.

Also, this piece may be taken as an example of how Mingus was able to expand the musical parameters of his sidemen, as well as to make them play to their utmost potential. On the one hand, Mingus was able to introduce form and style to staunch avant-gardists, such as Eric Dolphy, by requiring them to respect musical traditions and to have fun with the music. On the other hand, the composer was able to sail common practice boppers into uncharted waters by demanding that they free themselves from convention and cliché. In a generalization of this concept, turned around to describe his own playing in 1975, Mingus said, "I used to play avant-garde bass when nobody else did; now I play 4/4 because none of the other bass players do."

In Moanin' Mingus' uses a favorite chord progression which shows up in other pieces such as Jump Monk, Eulogy For Rudy Williams, Reincarnation Of A Lovebird, and Pithecanthropus Erectus. The basic form is AABA in which each segment is sixteen bars long.
originally written for the soundtrack of John Cassavettes first film, “Shadows,” United Artists issued a recording from a concert at the Nonagon Art Gallery on January 16, 1959. A fully orchestrated and extended version was later recorded by Columbia on November 1, 1959, as Strollin’ which features a vocal by Honi Gordon. This expanded arrangement was last performed on April 17, 1972, at The Village Vanguard.

The thickening of the melody, due to the major-second harmonization, and the interesting alteration of the blues progression, contribute to the Mingus Effect heard in Nostalgia In Time Square. The stop-time chorus is an essential part of the composition. Note that one may sustain an Eb as an inverted pedal point, ciphering (as an organist might call the effect) throughout the entire progression.
Oh Lord, Don't Let Them Drop That Atomic Bomb On Me

CHARLES MINGUS

Slow Blues \( \frac{1}{4} \) ca. 68

Bass: one-to-the-bar feel
**OH LORD, DON’T LET THEM DROP THAT ATOMIC BOMB ON ME**

Slow Blues \(\text{d} = \text{ca. 68}\)  

**CHARLES MINGUS**

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Don’t let them drop it! Stop it! Be-bop it! Ventilating concern for the tensions caused by the Cold War, Mingus vocalizes around a decidedly traditional melody which was far more expressive than some of the blues lines composed by his contemporaries.

Recorded commercially for *Atlantic* on November 6, 1961, Mingus plays piano while Doug Watkins (who died in an automobile accident shortly after the session) masterfully succeeds in the unenviable task of filling the bass chair. Using the alternate title of *Oh Lord, Don’t Let Them Drop That Atomic Bomb On My Head*, Mingus featured this piece while working at *Birdland* in pre-Gorbachev New York.
O P. refers to the great bassist Oscar Pettiford. Like Monk, Bunk… it was never recorded commercially during Mingus’ lifetime and was first known as a result of a broadcast recording which took place on October 26, 1962. Mingus played this piece occasionally until 1971. He sometimes called it O. P. Junior or Osmotin’. Almost twenty-five years later it, too, was re-discovered as a portion of Mingus’ monumental suite Epitaph. Of interest is the structure AABAC in which C functions as a second bridge. This section, built over a Charleston inspired stop-time rhythm, was not used on the Epitaph version.
Opus Four

CHARLES MINGUS

Medium Swing (\( \frac{3}{4} \) = ca. 176)
Latinish (\( \frac{3}{4} \) = ca. 88)

(Em)

A

\( Gm7\)
\( Eb\text{Maj}7\)
\( Am7b5\)
\( Ab7\)
\( Gm7\)

Swing

E\( \text{b}\text{Maj}7\)
\( Am7b5\)
D\( 9\)
\( G\text{Maj7} \)

Latinish

G\( \text{Maj7} \)

B

\( Ab\text{Maj7} \)
\( Am7\)
\( B\text{Maj7} \)
\( C\text{Maj7} \)
\( C\#\text{Maj7} \)

F\#7
\( F\text{Maj7} \)
\( F\#\text{m7} \)
\( B7 \)
\( E\text{Maj7} \)
\( Em9 \)

C

Latinish

(Em)

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Opus Four features phrase lengths of 2, 5, 6 and 10 bars. Structurally, the Latinish interlude serves to conclude each of the A B A sections. At A and D, Mingus slips us his favorite progression in his favorite key -

Gmin | EbMaj7 | Am7(b5) | D7/Ab7 |

The upwardly chromatic major-seventh chords support a melody ranging over two octaves. The Latinish figure may be used as a fade-away vamp to end the piece. Officially recorded by Atlantic on October 29, 1973, Opus Four may have been premiered at the Village Vanguard on August 4, 1973, as No Name.
Orange Was The Color of Her Dress, Then Blue Silk

Medium Swing (see notes)

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Album Name: Mingus Plays Piano, Spontaneous Compositions and Improvisations Label: Impulse
Album Name: Mingus At Monterey Label: Jazz Workshop
Album Name: Changes Two Label: Atlantic
Album Name: Charles Mingus Sextet Label: East Coasting

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"It was written for a Robert Herridge television show. It's about a talented composer who meets a rich girl that tries to ruin his life. She doesn't have anything to offer him but money, so she asks him to write a song and dedicate it to her dress, which was orange. She knew that nothing rhymes with 'orange'."

Orange... was first recorded on July 30, 1963, by Impulse as a piano solo. However, neither this nor another composition, Song With Orange, of which Mingus speaks in the quote above, shares many similarities with the version later played as an ensemble piece in Scandinavia at the start of a European tour in the spring of 1964. The earliest commercial recording of the band arrangement is from a concert in Paris on April 17, 1964 (Salle Wagram) which was issued by America. However, the best version was recorded at the Monterey Jazz Festival on September 20, 1964, by Jazz Workshop. The only studio version was recorded by Atlantic on December 30, 1974. Orange remained in Mingus' repertoire until the end of the European tour in the fall of 1976.

This is another neglected Mingus composition - probably because many found it too difficult to play. The notes themselves are not difficult, but the conception is complex. Usually the opening chorus represents the standard rendition of a jazz theme. However, on the Jazz Workshop recording from the Monterey Jazz Festival, Mingus launches into a free and creative stretching of tune and tempo. Only after the solo choruses does Mingus give us a clear demarcation of the melody. This transcription is based on that final chorus, or re-capitulation, where the melody is played in tempo and en forme. Returning to the opening chorus, one now understands:

A is played at a medium tempo the first time but much slower on the repeat; the first two bars of B can be played in a double-time Latin rhythm and may become a repeated vamp as well; C may be stretched out by pausing on each tonal center or by giving each chord more beats. Mingus uses an arsenal of devices during the solo choruses, including: stop time figures, tempo changes, mood changes and the aforementioned stretching of form.

Throughout the performance, a hook figure \[\text{figure}\] becomes a rallying point for the ensemble.

The overall form AAB may be analyzed as follows:

A = a (4 bars) b (2 bars) c (vamp - 2 bars) a1 (3 bars -includes hook) Note: The entire 11-bar A section follows the geneal tonal structure of the blues.

B = d (2 bars) e (2 bars) f (2 bars) a2 (adds a bar in front)

For the ending Mingus vamps the hook figure and then reprises the introduction. The following shows the background figure used on the A and B section. Remember: these Mingus performances serve as inspiration - it is not necessary to re-create them note-for-note.

In the following examples, A gives the background riff used for the first six bars and B shows another riff which is used to accompany both melody and solos. Note that this riff is written in cut-time as Mingus would often have the rhythm section go into a double time Latinish rhythm here. During solos, these measures might be vamped extensively on to the hook figure.
Peggy's Blue Skylight

CHARLES MINGUS

Medium swing \( \frac{4}{4} = \text{ca. 144} \)  

A \begin{align*}
A m 7 b 5 & \quad D 7 \# 5 \\
G m 9 & \quad C 13 \\
B b M a j 9 & \quad E 7 \\
B b M a j 7 & \quad E 7 \quad A m 7 \\
G m 7 b 5 & \quad C 7 (9) \\
E b 7 s u s & \quad D 7 (9) \quad G M a j 7 \\
E b 7 & \quad D 7 (9) \quad G 7 (9) \\
F m 9 & \quad B b M a j 7 \\
F M a j 7 & \quad B b M a j 7 \quad E 7 \\
E b 7 s u s & \quad D 7 (9) \quad G 7 (9) \\
F m 9 & \quad B b 1 3 (9) \\
E b M a j 9 & \quad \text{fine}
\end{align*}
"I wrote it on the piano at Peggy Hitchcock's house. We were friends. She wanted to take the blue plastic shield from the cockpit of a fighter plane and replace her skylight with it, so the sky would always be blue. The government wouldn’t let her do it."

Another interesting example of how Mingus altered basic song forms occurs in *Peggy's Blue Skylight*, which brings back only the second half of the 16 bar A theme after the bridge. First recorded for *Atlantic* on November 6, 1961, this piece remained active in Mingus’ repertoire through November 6, 1977, when he last recorded it on an album produced by Lionel Hampton. Other versions include a pirated recording from a concert in Stuttgart on April 28, 1964, and a studio session in Paris recorded on October 31, 1970.

*Peggy's Blue Skylight* was also intended as a part of the monumental *Epitaph* suite which met with disaster at New York’s Town Hall on October 12, 1962. As part of the resurrected opus, scored for more than 30 musicians, this arrangement was finally heard at the premiere performance of *Epitaph* on June 3, 1989 which was recorded by *Columbia*.

On the first recording, Mingus plays piano, demonstrating not only his unique style on that instrument but the fact that he could have become a major jazz voice on piano, as well. This performance shows again his flexibility of interpretation in five consecutive repetitions of the A section:

1. Piano solo introduces the theme.
2. Unaccompanied manzello (Roland Kirk’s version of the soprano sax) picks up the theme in a free rubato.
3. Rhythm section enters playing a stop time figure.
4. Trombone is added playing a counterline while the rhythm section swings straight ahead.
5. Tenor sax enters with a *Salt Peanuts* riff.

The bridge is then picked up by the trombone as a languorous wail, accompanied by the two saxes. The last section is then played in unison at a medium swing tempo. The solo choruses and recapitulation continue in this tempo.

*Peggy's Blue Skylight* offers a good illustration of the problems involved in preparing a lead sheet of a Mingus composition. Unlike the pieces by his contemporaries, there is no fixed format in a Mingus composition. This lead sheet therefore is a composite rendering, a rebuilding of the basic components to assemble a practical (and simplified) representation of the music. When playing Mingus’ music, today’s musicians should exercise the same creative and exploratory modes of interpretation as did the composer.
Bass walks

Piano and Horns ad lib on cue

Interlude
2. Fm7

\[ \text{Interlude} \]

on cue Gm7b5

Horns \( \frac{C}{G} \)

C7\#5(#9) Fm7

* On solo choruses, replace Interlude with a 2 measure turnaround: \( \frac{Gm7b5}{C7\#5(#9)} \)

Considered by many to be a watershed work for Mingus in his development as a composer, *Pithecanthropus Erectus* programmatically depicts—in the composer’s own words—“Man’s Evolution, Superiority Complex, Decline and Destruction.” This dark and stormy piece was first recorded by Atlantic on January 30, 1956. Although it remained in the repertoire, Mingus never gave us another recorded version until November 31, 1970, when it was recorded by America and later issued by Prestige. The 16 bars of melody in *Pithecanthropus Erectus* were also used for the opening of *Epitaph*. As such, it exists not only on the United Artists recording at Town Hall on October 12, 1962, but far more successfully on the Columbia version of the June 3, 1989, première in New York City.

Well in advance of the Free Jazz movement spearheaded by Ornette Coleman or the Modal Jazz idiom promoted by Miles Davis, *Pithecanthropus Erectus* boldly established new directions for development in the jazz idiom.

Note: In contrast to what may be heard on the original recording, trombonist Jimmy Knepper recalls that the melody was notated by Mingus in the following manner:

\[
\begin{align*}
&: \quad \text{etc.} \\
&: \quad \text{etc.}
\end{align*}
\]

"I had this imagination going. Since the white man says he came from the evolution of animals, well, maybe the black man didn’t. The white man has made so many errors in the handling of people that maybe he did come from a gorilla or a fish and crawl up on the sand and then into the trees. Of course, evolution doesn’t take God into consideration. I don’t think people learned to do all the things they do through evolution.”
Slippers

Uptempo swing \( \frac{1}{4} = \text{ca. } 320 \)

\[ \text{C Maj7} \quad (\text{Bb7sus}) \quad \text{Bb7} \quad \text{Ebmaj7} \]

\[ \text{Dm7} \quad \text{G7(5)} \quad \text{G7(5)} \quad \text{C Maj7} \quad (\text{Eb7} \quad \text{Dm7} \quad \text{G7(5)} ) \]

\[ \text{Fm7} \quad \text{Bb7} \quad \text{Ebmaj7} \]

\[ \text{Fm7} \quad \text{Bb7} \quad \text{Ebmaj7} \quad (\text{G7(5)} ) \]

\[ \text{C Maj7} \quad (\text{Bb7sus}) \quad \text{Bb7} \quad \text{Ebmaj7} \]

\[ \text{Dm7} \quad \text{G7(5)} \quad \text{G7(5)} \quad \text{1. to solos} \quad \text{C Maj7} \quad (\text{Eb7} \quad \text{Dm7} \quad \text{G7(5)} ) \quad \text{2. last time} \quad \text{C Maj7} \]

\[ \text{fine} \]
This tune should become a jam session classic once musicians learn of its existence. Slippers' obscurity may be attributed to the fact that the only known version was recorded by Bethlehem in October, 1957, and never received major distribution. Here Mingus has given us a simple 32-bar AABA tune in which the bridge is derived from the A section, and which includes a simple but interesting chord sequence to inspire improvisations.
Sue's Changes

CHARLES MINGUS

Medium slow swing \( \frac{\text{a}}{\text{c}} = \text{ca. 76} \)

\( \text{A} \) Cm7 Bb7 Gm7 F# Maj7 Fm7 3 E7(#10)

\( \text{Emaj7 Dm7(11) C#7} \) C7 Bm7 Bb7(9)

-- even 8ths

very slow

Fm7b5 Bb7\( ^9 \) E\( ^b \)(9) E(9) Fm9 Bb13(9)

\( \text{B} \) swing \( \frac{\text{a}}{\text{c}} = \text{ca. 92} \)

E\( ^\text{ Maj7} \) C#7 F#m7 B7(9) G#m7 C#7 3

A\( ^\text{ Maj7} \) Dm7 G7(9) C\( ^\text{ Maj7} \) E\( ^9 \) Dm7b5 G\( ^b \) 3

\( \text{C} \) steady four \( \frac{\text{a}}{\text{c}} = \text{ca. 112} \)

C\( ^\text{ Maj7} \) Gm7/C C\( ^\text{ Maj7} \) 3 G\( ^b \)/C

B\( ^\text{ Maj7} \) E7 Bb\( ^\text{ Maj7} \) E7

--simile--

E\( ^b \)/Maj7 D\( ^\text{ Maj7} \) 3 Dm7 3 G13(9)

slower and rit.
SUES CHANGES

by CHARLES MINIATO
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ne of several pieces dedicated to his wife Sue Graham Mingus, Sue’s Changes is a complex, strong, yet tender tribute to a dynamic woman. Inspired, Mingus invokes a ballroom/dance hall atmosphere with sing-able melodies and a four-square accompaniment. A Tango rhythm seems implied at C. The concluding 2-bar vamp, however, should develop into an appropriate frenzy as did the many Mingus performances of this piece. The fermata just before letter D develops into a full-fledged cadenza for the soloists. For an ending, Mingus vamped the last four bars, gradually slowing down. He also had trumpet and tenor sax alternate, one playing the written line while the other improvised intensely.

On his quintet recording, Mingus has the saxophone play guide tones which accompany the melody, as shown below:

1. Tenor Sax

2. Tenor Sax

At C, Mingus’ special touch—simple effective plucking on a high B♭—imparts a unique rhythmic feeling to this section.

3. Bass

Sue’s Changes was first played at the Village Gate in spring, 1974. It was recorded by Atlantic on December 27, 1974, and performed frequently until 1977.
"In a way it's a tribute to Duke."

Depending on the occasion, Mingus has said that the title *Us Is Two* referred to the United States and its contradictions (vis-a-vis black/white, rich/poor, saint/devil, two-faced and so on.) Or that it referred to himself as a black citizen demanding recognition (the alternate spelling *Us Is Too*). Or that it was a tribute to Duke Ellington. Or that it was all of these.

Premiered at the Village Vanguard on September 14, 1971, and only recorded in concert by Columbia on February 4, 1972, *Us Is Two* never became well known among Mingus' works. Perhaps its inclusion in this collection will bring its attention to more musicians.

**Us Is Two**

*Album Name:* Charles Mingus And Friends In Concert

*Label:* Columbia
"This was based on a form of music I heard as a kid. My mother used to go to church on Wednesday night. There was always clapping of hands and shouting. Methodist or Holiness Church. Holiness was a little louder in order to stir up the spirits, the dead spirits. People went into trances. Women shouted and rolled on the floor. My mother never did that, but she went."

* after solos, both voices enter together and play both times

Wednesday night prayer meeting must be the grandfather of all triple-meter, gospel-soul-funk-jazz compositions. The elder cousin of Better Get Hit in Your Soul and Slop. Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting was first recorded for MGM/Verve on March 18, 1958, in order to accompany a poetry reading by Langston Hughes. Extended versions were later recorded in a studio for Atlantic on February 4, 1959; at a jazz festival concert in Antibes -Juan-les-pins, France on July 13, 1960; and once again in the Atlantic studios on January 23, 1978. For this last recording, Mingus composed a new counter-melody, in addition to the two themes included in this lead sheet.
Work Song

Medium swing \( \frac{\dot{\dot{\dot{\cdot}}}}{} = \text{ca. } \frac{112}{\text{Bb}} \)

Coda

F Pedal

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One of the simplest pieces in this collection, *Work Song*, is perhaps best described as an eight-bar blues. Note how Mingus once again uses the device of a canon but alters the articulation of the answering voice. Although there is a similarity to Mingus’ 1973 piece entitled *Canon*, the connection is tenuous in the sense that many pieces composed in a minor key begin by outlining the tonic triad. In the only known performance of *Work Song*—recorded on December 23, 1955, at the Café Bohemia by Debut/Fantasy—the folk-like quality of the theme is offset by ominous piano clusters by pianist Mal Waldron.