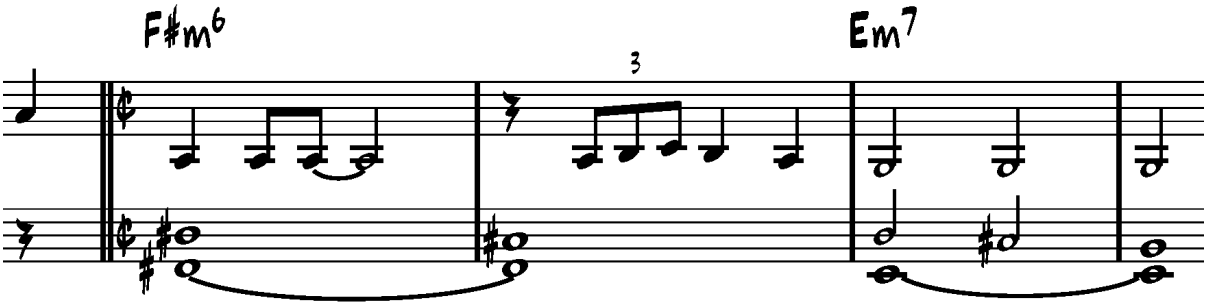
For Bernie – Andrea Keller

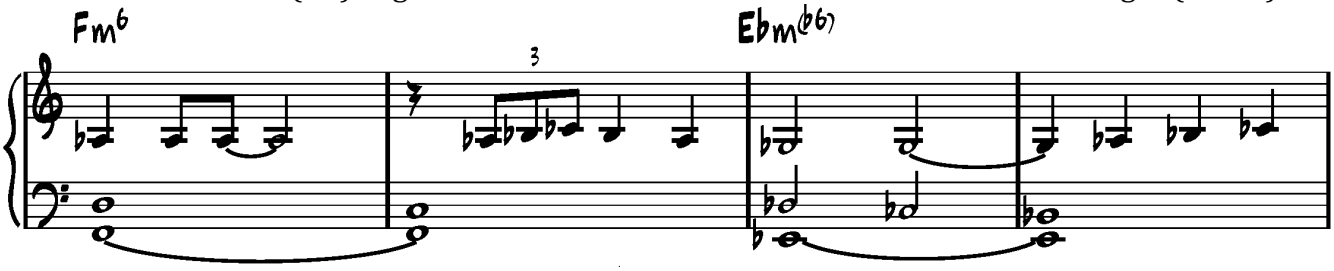
For Bernie is a 38 bar 'A A B A' slow – medium tempo swing tune. It is loosely in the key of F# minor, and was written in 2008 by Andrea Keller as a dedication to Bernie McGann. Bernie performed the tune on a number of occasions with the Andrea Keller Quartet in Sydney at the Opera House Studio, the Seymour Centre, in Melbourne at Uptown Jazz Café and at the Wangaratta Jazz Festival. McGann recorded 'For Bernie' with the AKQ on their collaborations project album 'Galumphing Round the Nation' in 2009.

'For Bernie' should be played with a loose swing 2 feel. The melody can afford to be phrased in a relaxed way. There is a counter melody notated in the upper voice of the bass clef stave.

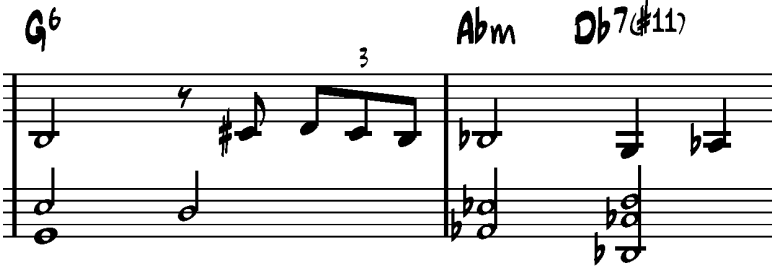
The first A section (A1) begins in F# minor and is 16 bars in length (1-16).



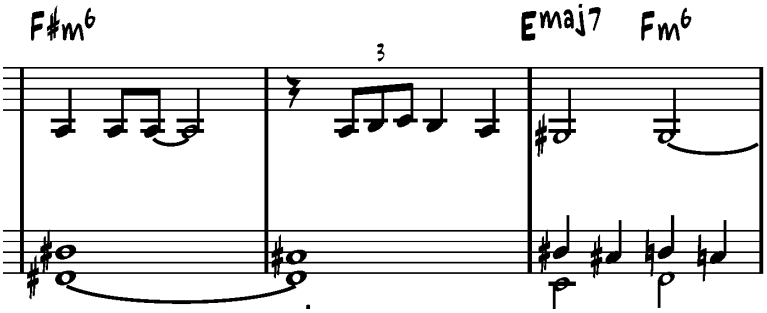
The second A section (A2) begins a semitone lower in F minor and is 10 bars in length (17-26).



The B section begins in G Major and is only 4 bars in length (27-30).



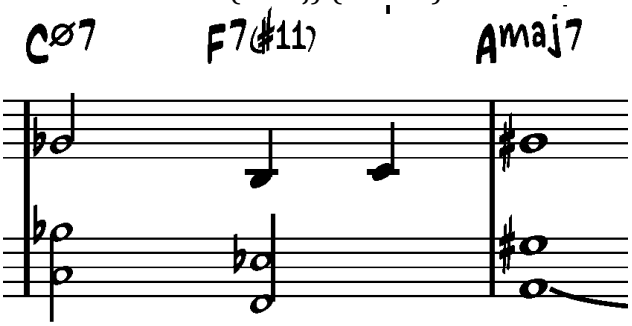
The final A section (A3) returns to F# minor and is 8 bars in length (31-38).



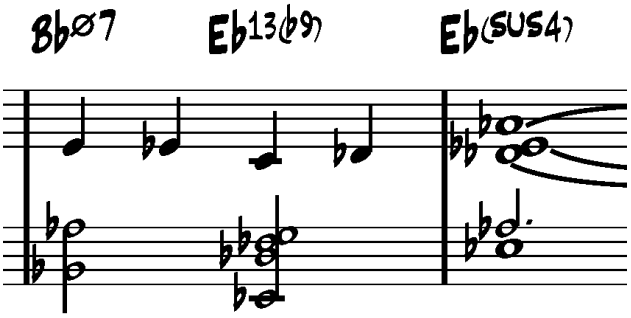
The harmony used in 'For Bernie' is not entirely functional. Only a handful of II-V progressions can be found, some resolving and others unresolved.

Two such progressions occur in A1, the first unresolved and the second serves as a back-door II-V into A2:

Cmi7b5 F7#11 (AMaj) (bar 10)

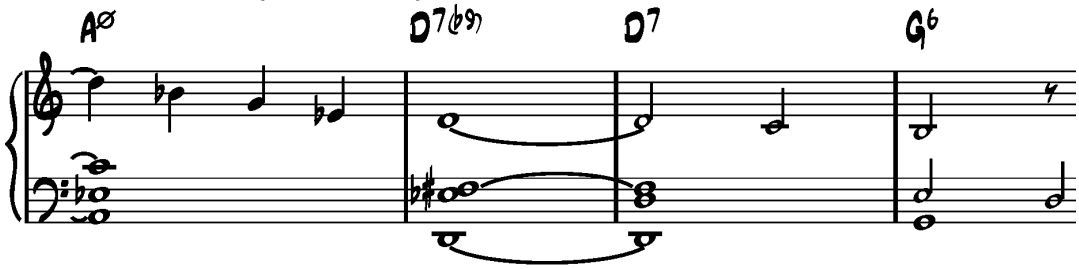


Bbmi7b5 Eb13b9 (Ebsus) (Fmin) (Bar 14)



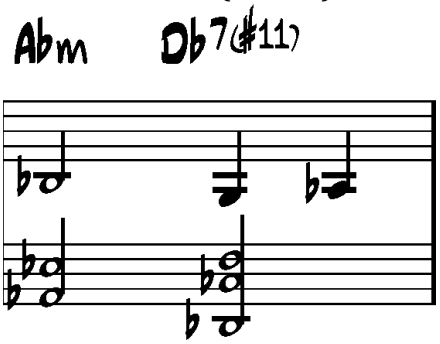
The end of A2 utilises a II-V progression, which resolves into the B section

Ami7b5 D7b9 G6 (Bars 24-27)

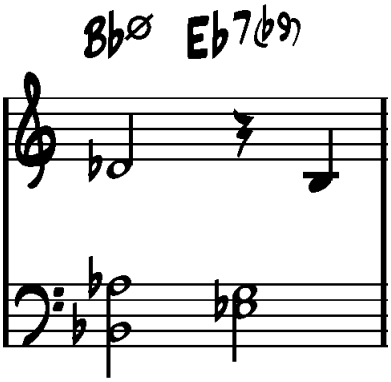


The brief B section consists of three II-V progressions, which ascend by a series of steps, concluding with a back door II-V resolving into F# minor for the final A section.

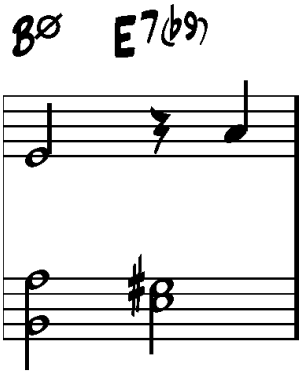
Abm7 Db7#11 (Bar 28)



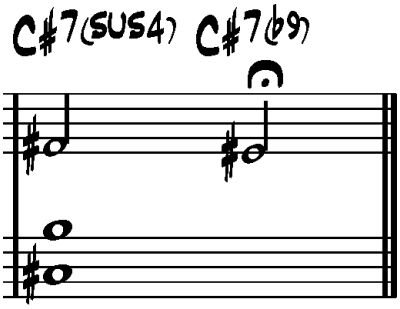
Bbmi7b5 Eb7 (Bar 29)



Bmin7b5 E7 (F#min) (Bar 30)



There is an absence of II-V progressions in A3. The section concludes with a C#7 (Bar 38) acting as a V to lead into the solo section.

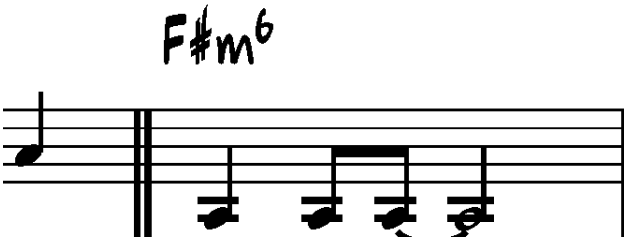


The remainder of the harmonic material used in 'For Bernie' is non-cyclic and predominantly moves by the smaller intervals of semitones, tones and thirds.

The chord symbols detail melodic tones of note and those of the counter melody (notated as the middle voice of the three parts).

The melody of 'For Bernie' is written in 4 bar phrases, with the exception of a 6 bar phrase at the conclusion of A2.
A1
Phrase 1 (bars 1-4)
Phrase 2 (bars 5-8)
Phrase 3 (bars 9-12)
Phrase 4 (bars 13-16)
A2
Phrase 5 (bars 17-20)
Phrase 6 (bars 21-26)* 6 bars in length
B
Phrase 7 (bars 27-30)
A3
Phrase 8 (bars 31-34)
Phrase 9 (bars 35-38)

A particular melodic feature is the use of the descending octave leap, which characterises the A sections.



Another feature of the A sections is the alternating resolution of melodic phrases into minor and Major chords.
The first melodic phrase resolves onto the minor 3rd of the E minor chord (bar 3).
The second melodic phrase resolves onto the Major 3rd of the E Major chord (bar 7).
The fifth melodic phrase resolves onto the minor 3rd of the Eb minor chord (bar 19).
The eighth melodic phrase resolves onto the Major 3rd of the E Major chord (bar 33).

The solo form, notated in bars 39-66, is a reduction/simplification of the harmonic material of the head.
It is 28 bars in length, divided into seven lots of 4 bar phrases.
Of the II-V-I progressions used in the head, five are included in the solo form.
The back door II-V of A1: Bbmi7b5 Eb13b9 (Fmin) (53-54).
The resolving II-V of A2: Ami7b5 D7b9 G6 (61-62).
The successive unresolved II-V's ascending by steps of the B section, concluding in a back door II-V: Abm7 Db7#11 - Bbmi7b5 Eb7 - Bmin7b5 E7 (F#min) (64-66).

Tonic minor chords, as differentiated from Dorian and Aeolian minor chords occur in bars 39-40, 43-44, 55-56 & 59-60.

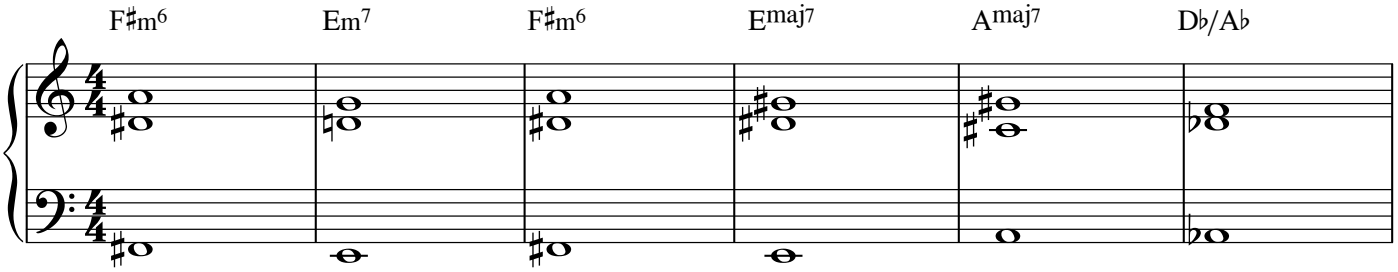
The coda occurs on the head out and is an opportunity for the melody player to play three mini cadenzas, one on each chord, effectively putting a pause/fermata above each chord, with the changes occuring on cue from the soloist.
The coda implies a bVI7 – V7 – imin cadence, but instead of resolving to the expected minor tonic of F#, the piece resolves onto a tonic minor chord a semitone below (reflecting the tonal shift of A2).

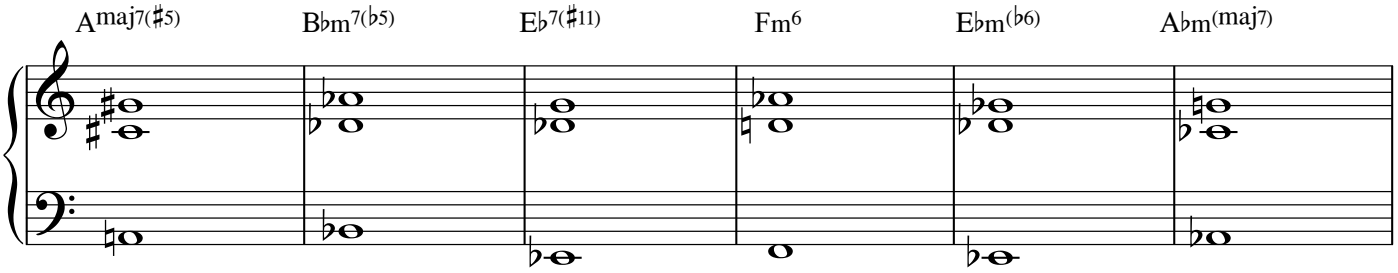
Supplementary material refers to the solo section (sib file)
And includes:
Basic 3 note voicings
Rootless voicings
Sample scales

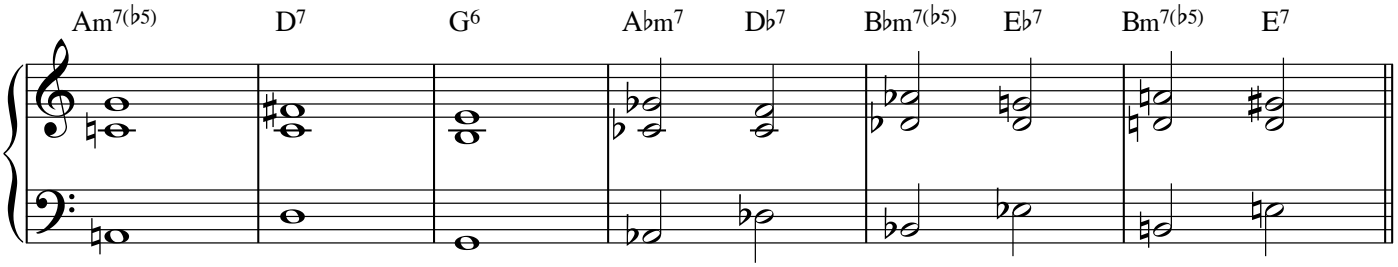
For Bernie - Supplementary Material (Solo form)

Andrea Keller

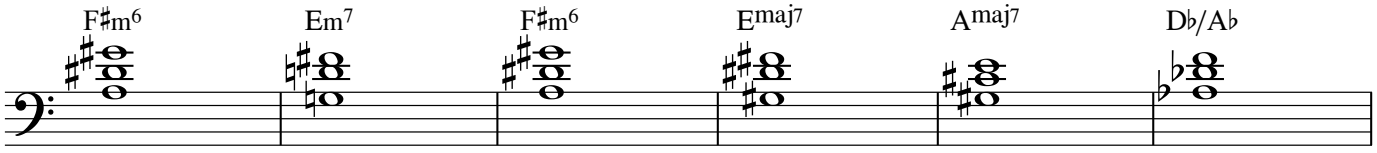
Basic 3 note voicings

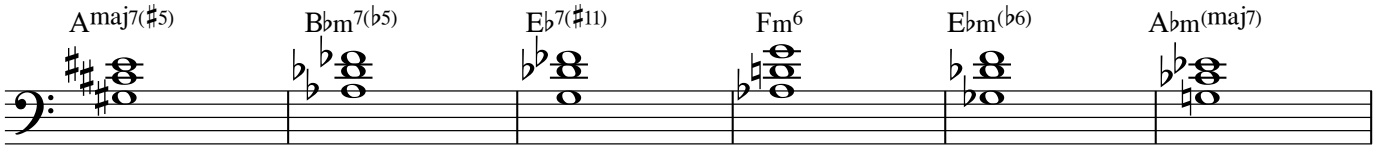


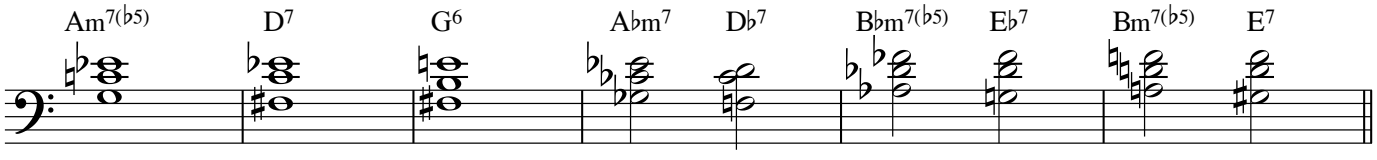




Rootless Voicings







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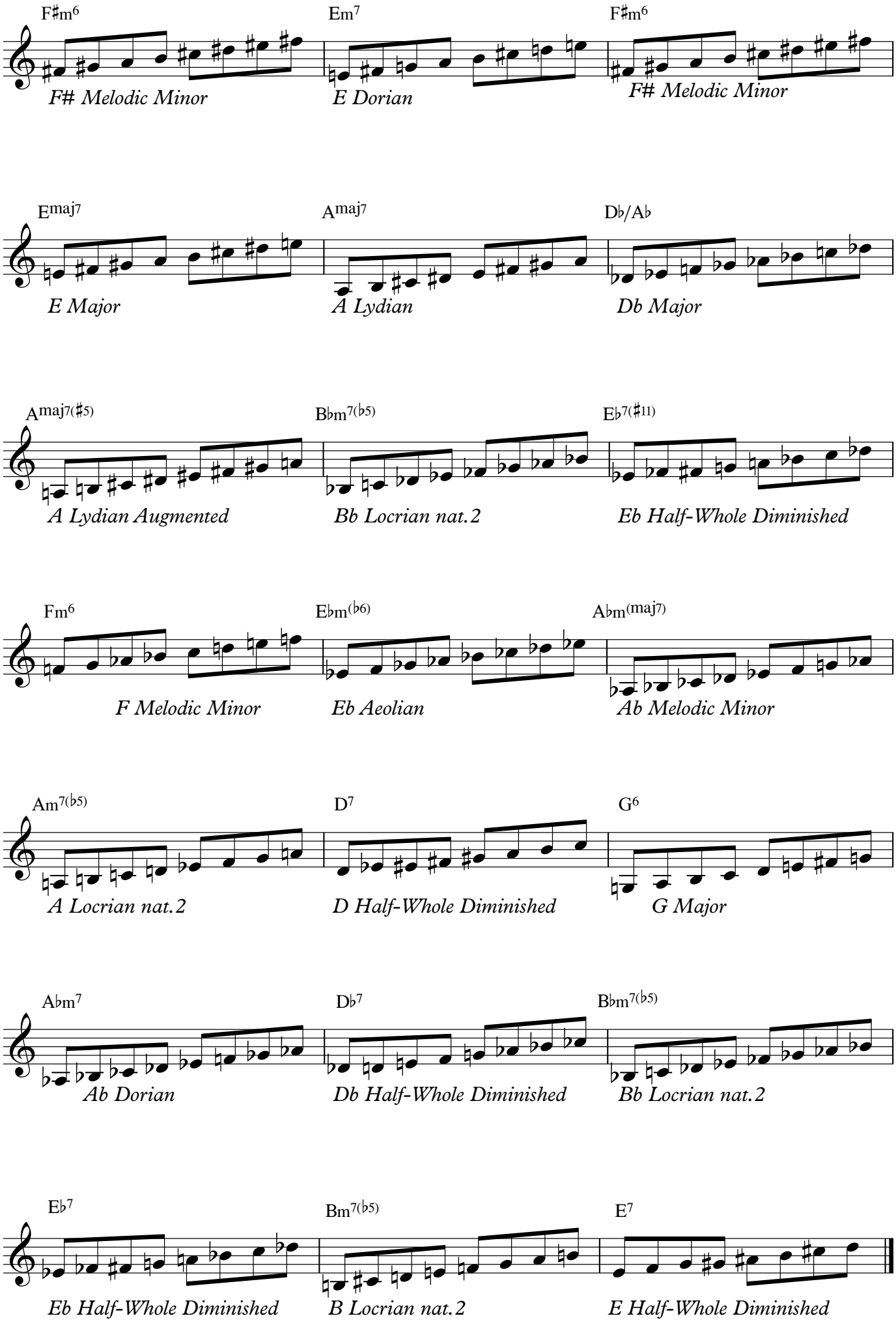
Sample Scales