

New Orleans Grooves

Part 1

Masterclass CD By Jason Mingledorff

The music of New Orleans has shaped American music in ways that are beyond comparison. Widely accepted as the birthplace of jazz, New Orleans is also home to a musical tradition that has had a formative influence on other important American musical genres, including rock-and-roll, funk and hip hop. As I travel around the country and internationally, I continually meet people fascinated with and deeply affected by the music they hear from my hometown, the Crescent City. I've heard New Orleans-style bands in great musical cities like New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles as well as in surprising places such as Osaka, Japan and Madison, Wisconsin.

Unfortunately, I've also found that New Orleans' music is sadly underrepresented in the curricula of college jazz programs throughout the country. I've met many graduates from respected jazz programs who have never transcribed a Louis Armstrong solo, don't know the chord progression to *When the Saints Go Marching In*, and have never heard of innovators such as Professor Longhair, Lee Allen, or the Meters.

This *Saxophone Journal* Masterclass with accompanying CD is an introduction to some of the prevalent grooves that continue to be popular in New Orleans today. For this first of two parts, I've written four songs that showcase variations of the rhythm that we in New Orleans call the "second line." A future article will discuss other important Crescent City styles, including New Orleans mambo, rock-and-roll, and funk.

I should point out that the Dixieland music that most people associate with New Orleans is actually closer to a Chicago swing style that was popularized by many native New Orleanians who settled there in the 1910s and 1920s, when Chicago became the epicenter of the new jazz age. While this "hot swing" style shows an influence of the traditional second line and is certainly still popular in New Orleans, I've chosen to focus this article on styles that were primarily developed and popularized in New Orleans.



NEW ORLEANS GROOVES: Part I Saxophone Journal Masterclass CD By Jason Mingledorff

Track	Title
1.....	Introduction (spoken)
2.....	<i>The Ursulines Second Line</i> (spoken explanation)
3.....	<i>The Ursulines Second Line</i> (full performance)
4.....	<i>The Ursulines Second Line</i> (play-along with horns)
5.....	<i>The Ursulines Second Line</i> (play-along with piano)
6.....	<i>Fiasco On Frenchman</i> intro (spoken explanation)
7.....	<i>Fiasco On Frenchman</i> (full performance)
8.....	<i>Fiasco On Frenchman</i> (play-along)
9.....	<i>Neutral Ground</i> (spoken explanation)
10.....	<i>Neutral Ground</i> (full performance)
11.....	<i>Neutral Ground</i> (play-along)
12.....	<i>Half Dozen</i> (spoken explanation)
13.....	<i>Half Dozen</i> (full performance)
14.....	<i>Half Dozen</i> (play-along)

THE SECOND LINE

The Tradition Of The New Orleans Jazz Funeral

The key to learning how to interpret New Orleans' music is an understanding of what may be considered its essence – the "second line." Like the term "jazz," "second line" is not easily defined. To get a full understanding of the second line and all that it can mean, we must take a look back to the history of New Orleans.

The name "second line" comes directly from the tradition of the jazz funeral, which came to prominence in the late nineteenth century. As a funeral procession would leave a church, it would slowly proceed to the cemetery while a brass band played a slow and solemn dirge. The deceased's family, following the horse-drawn hearse, made up what is called the "main" or "first" line. Behind them marched a large group of friends and curious onlookers. This is referred to as the "second line."

After the burial (or "release"), the band would strike up a high-spirited and joyous tune, and everyone in the second line would break into a frenzied dance as they marched away from the cemetery. This tradition carried on the African practice of celebrating, in addition to mourning, a deceased person's life. These funerals were usually sponsored and planned by Social Aid (and Pleasure) Clubs, which also preserved the African concept of tribal society by turning the funerals from private services into community events.

Another influence from Africa on the second line is found in its rhythm. From the early days

of slavery, New Orleans was unique in that it provided a place, named Congo Square, where slaves and freed men and women of color could practice the music and dance of their native homes. This platform allowed for the preservation of these rhythms, ensuring that they would have a strong influence on New Orleans' music.

When you listen to the second line beat you may notice similarities to other rhythms influenced by African music – especially the Caribbean grooves of Haiti and Cuba. Locals may roll their eyes at

Hollywood's fascination with New Orleans' Haitian voodoo practices, but they proudly acknowledge that Haitian Creoles played an important role in the development of the Faubourg Tremé (pronounced "Truh-MAY"), the neighborhood that is home to Congo Square and the city's thriving brass band scene.

The cultures of Cuba and New Orleans certainly intermingled at the turn of the 20th century when twice-daily ferries took travelers to and from Havana. The prevalence of Latin rhythms like the *tresillo* (also known as the three side of the son clave), (Example 1A), the *habanera* (Example 1B), and the *cinquillo* (Example 1C) in New Orleans music further confirms the evidence of these Caribbean influences. Jelly Roll Morton called this influence the "Spanish tinge" and considered it an essential element in jazz music.

Although some versions of the second line look very similar to the "son clave," the use of the clave in second line music differs from its use in Cuban music in two important ways. Unlike in Cuban music, the eighth notes in a second line have a slight swing, or bounce, to them.

In addition, the clave pattern is not strictly adhered to in New Orleans as it is in Cuba. You will often find versions of a 2-3 clave superimposed over a 3-2 clave, or a 3-2 clave over a repeated 3 clave. Imagine a parade with marchers all along the street banging on cowbells and beer bottles, unaware of what rhythms others down the block are playing, creating a rich texture of overlapping syncopations as they dance down the street. These complex, swinging rhythms, seasoned with the sounds of a marching brass band (especially its precise snare drum rolls and booming bass drum hits) come together to create what has become the backbone of New Orleans' music – the second line.

THE SECOND LINE

More Than Simply A Type Of Beat

To some people the second line is simply a type of beat. To others it is a lively dance full of humorous shakes of the hip, flamboyant spins, and rhythmic stomps of the feet. To most of the people of New Orleans it is the embodiment of the city's joie de vivre. As I think about what the second line means to my fellow citizens, I can't help but think of one of my fondest second line memories, which is from a benefit concert in the New Orleans Arena after

Hurricane Katrina. The entire venue broke into a spirited second line dance as Wynton Marsalis' band began their rendition of the brass band standard *Joe Avery's Second Line*. That evening I proudly wondered where else in the world one would find 10,000 people dancing so joyously together to the sounds of a traditional jazz band. Since this Masterclass is designed for saxophonists, my goal here is not to teach you how to play the second line's various beats. You will find, however, that learning to recognize it and knowing how it relates to New Orleans is essential to learning about our music.

ROLE OF THE SAXOPHONE IN NEW ORLEANS' MUSIC

Before I talk about the music on the accompanying CD, I should discuss for a moment the saxophone's place in New Orleans' musical history. Although the use of the saxophone was not popularized in New Orleans' music until the rhythm-and-blues recordings of the 1950s, many New Orleans dance bands began to make use of it in the 1920s. Most people would agree that early jazz bands in New Orleans did not favor the saxophone, perhaps because it was often associated with vaudeville and society music. However, the bands of Sam Morgan, A.J. Piron, and Joseph Robichaux all made good use of the saxophone and recorded with it in New Orleans during those early days of swing.

Lovers of early jazz will often refer to the prominence of the bass saxophone and the soprano saxophone. New Orleans, however, didn't really play a role in their popularity. The great bass saxophonist Adrian Rollini called New York home and Sidney Bechet only began to play the soprano after leaving New Orleans.

New Orleans will probably always be known as a city of great trumpeters and drummers. Pianists, clarinetists, and trombonists also lay claim to an important part in the history of New Orleans' music. Fans of this music, however, recognize that the saxophone has become a major voice in New Orleans today. Saxophones are a fixture in all of the brass bands marching today and are featured prominently in touring brass bands like the Dirty Dozen and the Rebirth. Other popular bands (like The Iguanas, Astral Project and Galactic), and world-renowned saxophonists such as Branford Marsalis and Donald Harrison ensure that the saxophone's current role in New Orleans' music is strong and undeniable.

EX. 1A - THE TRESILLO



EX. 1B - THE HABANERA



EX. 1C - THE CINQUILLO



EX. 2

CLOSED H.H.



EX. 3

SNARE DRUM



EX. 4

SNARE DRUM



EX. 5

SNARE DRUM



THIS MASTERCLASS PLAY-ALONG CD

The four tunes that I've written for this Masterclass CD are all versions of the second line groove that one might find in New Orleans today. In the following notes, I will share a little about the history of these grooves, what makes them distinct, and my personal observations on the songs' inspirations. I give even more background information on the songs during the introductions on the CD, so be sure to listen to those as well.

The Ursulines Second Line

The Ursulines Second Line is an example of a traditional two-beat second line, complete with a traditional brass band roll off as an introduction. It's based on the chord progression of *Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home*, which is one of the most common progressions found in traditional jazz (perhaps more common in some circles than even the 12-bar blues). Some of the more popular New Orleans standards that use this progression, also known as "waltz changes," are *Bourbon Street Parade*, *Tiger Rag*, and *Paul Barbarin's Second Line*. I would recommend that any serious improviser become familiar with this progression in all twelve keys. It offers the player long expanses of time to play over the tonic (I) and the dominant (V7), works its way to the subdominant (IV), and utilizes one of the most common turnarounds in jazz (1/VI7/ii7/V7/I).

The rhythm section plays in a basic two-feel, but changes it in an important way. The bass drum adds an accent on beat four at the end of each two-bar phrase (Example #2). This "big four" was a significant development in a couple of ways: (1) it provided a background of set phrases that the soloist could play off of, and (2) it hinted at a swinging four-feel, leading the way to the driving style that is commonly known as swing. This "big four," along with a rollicking snare pulse of eighth notes and buzzes, creates the classic street beat sound. Also make note of the four bar drum tag (which prominently uses the *tresillo* rhythm) followed by the horns soloing over a repeat of the last eight bars. This is the standard ending brass bands use for songs with this progression.

You may notice that the trumpet is playing the melody and the saxophone is playing a harmony that is intermingled with an obbligato-like countermelody. This is a common way to perform traditional numbers like this. I've also included a version that has a chorus of the trumpet and saxophone soloing at the same time. Soloing with another person is a treasured art form in New Orleans. It requires listening to the other soloist, leaving space for them to play, playing in a complimentary range, and responding to their lines without merely copying them. Try playing along with either the trumpet (right channel) or saxophone (left channel). It's no substitute for playing with a person who can interact with you, but it is a good way to practice listening to another soloist while you solo.

Fiasco On Frenchman

This tune takes the traditional street beat and puts it in a more modern setting. You'll notice that the "big four" is so pronounced that it is easy to confuse it with beat one. Also notice that the snare hints at a modified 2-3 clave, particularly at the beginning of the melody (Example #3). Inspired by the Smokey Johnson classic *It Ain't My Fault*, this tune is based on the chord progression of *When the Saint's Go Marching In*. Like *Bill Bailey*, this progression is found in many other songs and should be memorized by anyone interested in improvising. The melody, however, uses more modern harmonies like those found in Eddie Harris' *Freedom Jazz Dance*. As you solo over this song, you'll notice that many chords will also change on beat four. This may force you to create lines that resolve in places they might not normally resolve in a swing-four style.

Neutral Ground

Another popular version of the second line beat is used in *Neutral Ground*. A strong influence on this beat is the music of the Mardi Gras Indians. These "tribes" of African Americans still march the streets of New Orleans, showing off elaborate hand-sewn costumes and singing chants that have been passed down for generations. This "funky second line" (of course, you could argue that all versions of the second line are quite funky) uses a variation of the 3-2 clave as the basis of its beat (Example #4). Notice that 8th notes have now become 16th notes. There is still a swing feel, but it is now more subtle. A classic version of this modern second line beat, which uses just the 3 side of the clave as its basis, can be found on the Meters' *Hey Pocky Way*. This song can be found on their classic album *Rejuvenation*, a must-have for anyone who loves New Orleans music and funk.

Half Dozen

This up-tempo street beat can be heard by many of the modern brass bands playing today. Bands such as the Rebirth and the Nightcrawlers take the traditions of parade music and fuse them with more modern styles, such as bebop, modal jazz, and hip hop. The Dirty Dozen Brass Band is credited for pioneering this modern brass band movement and bringing the music of the street onto the concert stage. I've chosen to play this piece on the baritone saxophone in tribute to one of the greatest musicians active in the modern brass band scene, Roger Lewis of the Dirty Dozen. Notice that the bass drum uses the *tresillo* as it's main pattern while the snare drum plays many of the rhythms it used in *Fiasco On Frenchmen* (Example 5). The drums also use the faster tempo to create a driving intensity that wasn't heard on that earlier tune.

CONCLUSION

I hope you've found this discussion of second line grooves to be interesting and are inspired to learn more about the music of New Orleans. Perhaps you might even try using these rhythms in your own music. As you become more familiar with these second line grooves, it will hopefully feel more natural for you to solo over these grooves in a proper style. The traditional and funky second line do not lend themselves to a string of bebop eighth notes. The use of space, quarter notes, and accents in choice places like the "big four" will help an improviser feel at home and interpret this music in a way that would be right at home on the streets of New Orleans.

My next masterclass will focus on some other New Orleans styles that also use elements of the second line but in different ways. I will also discuss the style and approach of some of New Orleans' greatest saxophone players, including Lee Allen.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

The following is a short list of recordings that provide great examples of the second line grooves discussed in this article. You might be surprised to find that there is no good example of the second line beat in early jazz recordings. There are a couple of significant reasons for this. In the early days of recording, the drums were too loud to record. Therefore, many of the early records used only a wood block or a washboard, if any percussion at all. Another reason for the scarcity of early examples of the second line is that those recordings (most of which were not done in New Orleans) were made for dancers and the second line was considered a marching beat danced by individuals, not couples.

I've selected individual recordings that you can download from iTunes. Many of these songs are standards that every musician in New Orleans is expected to know. Hopefully these tunes will inspire you to find more music from these wonderful artists. My next article will list many more "standards" of New Orleans music.

- Paul Barbarin

“The Second Line”
Paul Barbarin and his New Orleans Jazz Band

- The Eureka Brass Band

“Joe Avery’s Blues”
Atlantic Jazz: New Orleans

- The Dirty Dozen Brass Band

“Blackbird Special”
My Feet Can’t Fail Me Now

- The Rebirth Brass Band

“Do Whatcha Wanna”
Feel Like Funkin’ It Up

- The Tremé Brass Band

“Gimme My Money Back”
Gimme My Money Back

- Wynton Marsalis

“Bourbon Street Parade”
Standard Time Vol. 2 – Intimacy Calling

- The New Orleans Nightcrawlers

“Royal Flush”
Funknicity

- Smokey Johnson

“It Ain’t My Fault, Pts 1 & 2”
It Ain’t My Fault

- Earl King

“Street Parade”
New Orleans Blues

- The Wild Magnolias

“Injuns, Here We Come”
They Call Us Wild

- Dr. John

“Iko Iko”
Gumbo

- Astral Project

“Crescent City Strut”
Big Shot

- Kermit Ruffins

“I Got Mine”
Livin’ A Tremé Life

- The Meters

“Hey Pocky Way”
Rejuvenation

- Ahmad Jamal

“Poinciana”
Live at the Pershing

THE MUSICIANS

Jason Mingledorff is one of the most versatile and in-demand saxophonists working in New Orleans. After studying classical saxophone with Jonathan Noffsinger at the University of Alabama, Jason moved to New Orleans in 1995 to study with Ed Petersen at the University of New Orleans, where he received a Master of Music in Jazz Performance. He quickly began playing with a diverse collection of award-winning local bands, including funksters Galactic (*Crazyhorse Mongoose*), bluesman Mem Shannon, and the critically praised Nightcrawlers Brass Band (*Slither Slice*). He has also toured extensively with country star Clint Black and performed and recorded with two of the city’s biggest exports – Dr. John (the Grammy Award-winning album *The City That Care Forgot* and the Academy Award-nominated *Down in New Orleans*) and Harry Connick, Jr (the 2008 NBA All-Star Game halftime show).

For the last ten years Jason has had the pleasure of being a member of the all-star funk band Papa Grows Funk. The great variety of groups that Jason regularly works with, which also includes the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, The John Mahoney

Big Band, the O’Jays, and the New Orleans Saxophone Quartet, has helped Jason feel at home in almost any musical setting.

In 2006, Jason began teaching saxophone and jazz ensembles at Loyola University of New Orleans, currently home of the prestigious Thelonious Monk Institute. Whether it’s through teaching, composing, arranging, or performing, Jason loves sharing with others this great passion of his – the music of New Orleans.

For this recording, Jason is playing a Conn 10M tenor with a Peter Ponzol M1 110 mouthpiece and a Yamaha baritone with a Vandoren B95 mouthpiece. Jason can be found on facebook and emailed at – Jasonm71@aol.com.

Gerald P. French (drums) started playing drums at the age of 5 and has traveled and performed with hundreds of musicians, including Harry Connick Jr., Leroy Jones, Donald Harrison, Dr. John, Dr. Michael White, Charmaine Neville, and the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. He has been featured in *Modern Drummer Magazine* (October 1996) and appeared on numerous recordings, movie soundtracks and television scores. He is a fourth generation New Orleans musician (his father is bassist and singer George French) and a Mardi Gras Indian with the Wild Magnolias.

Jesse Boyd (bass) is a professor of jazz and music industry at Loyola University of New Orleans and is one of the busiest musicians working in New Orleans today. He performs regularly with Charmaine Neville, Ingrid Lucia, Jeremy Davenport, Leah Chase, Bob French, Michael Peller, Al Belletto, Ellis Marsalis, Topsy Chapman, and Larry Sieberth.

Joshua Paxton (piano) has become a fixture in the New Orleans music scene since moving there to study with Ellis Marsalis in the 1990s. Joshua has written a number of transcription books for Hal Leonard Publishing (including *The James Booker Collection*, *The Professor Longhair Collection*, and *New Orleans Piano Legends*) and has worked with Bruce Hornsby, The Wild Magnolias, Marva Wright, Leigh “Little Queenie” Harris, Maria Muldaur, and Michael Ray and the Cosmic Krewe.

Kevin Clark (trumpet on “The Ursulines Second Line”): Known as the trumpet player and musical director of Dukes of Dixieland, Kevin is a Grammy nominated artist whose numerous solo albums range in style from New Orleans jazz to big band swing to gospel. He has toured the world with Clarence “Gatemouth” Brown, Pete Fountain, and the New Orleans Nightcrawlers. You can catch Kevin performing nightly with the Dukes of Dixieland on the famed Steamboat Natchez.

A SPECIAL THANK-YOU

I would like to thank all of the wonderful musicians who contributed their talent and knowledge to this project. I would also like to thank the following for their contributions: my wife Nikki, for her constant inspiration and support; Misha Kachkashvili, who recorded, mixed, and mastered this CD at his excellent recording facility Axistudio; Tom Saunders, who knows more about early jazz than anyone I can think of; and a number of great musicians that I continually learn from and enjoy making music with - including Eric Traub, Tony Dagradi, Brian Kane, Cale Pellick, Wayne Maureau, The Nightcrawlers and Papa Grows Funk. I’d also like to acknowledge two informative books that were very helpful in preparing for this article – *New Orleans Jazz and Second Line Drumming* by Herlin Riley and Johnny Vidacovich and *Second Line: 100 Years of New Orleans Drumming* by Antoon Aukes.

NOTE: *Neutral Ground* is performed by an excellent group of musicians that includes **Allyn Robinson** (drums), **René Coman** (bass), **John Fohl** (guitar) and **John Gros** (organ and piano). This band recorded all the selections that will be included in part two of this masterclass. You can find out more about these wonderful musicians in that article. §

The Ursulines Second Line

(alto/baritone saxophone part)



- CD track 2 (spoken explanation)
- CD track 3 (full performance)
- CD track 4 (play-along with horns)
- CD track 5 (play-along with piano)

TRADITIONAL 2-BEAT
SECOND LINE

Jason Mingledorff

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a circled 'A' and an 'F' chord. The second staff starts at measure 5 with a 'C7' chord. The third staff starts at measure 10 with an 'F' chord. The fourth staff starts at measure 14 with a circled 'B' and an 'F' chord. The fifth staff starts at measure 22 with 'Bb7' and 'Bb' chords. The sixth staff starts at measure 26 with 'G7', 'Bb7', 'Bb7', 'F7', and 'D7' chords. The seventh staff starts at measure 30 with 'G7', 'C7', and 'F' chords. The piece concludes with a 4-bar drum tag and a repeat sign over the final 8 bars.

TO END: 4 BAR DRUM TAG, REPEAT LAST 8

Fiasco On Frenchman

(alto/baritone saxophone part)



CD track 6 (spoken explanation)

CD track 7 (full performance)

CD track 8 (play-along)

Jason Mingledorff

4 X's 4

(INTRO)

(A) G⁷

G⁷ D⁷

9 G⁷ C⁷ C^{#o7}

13 G⁷ D⁷ G⁷

17

(LAST X) G⁷ D⁷ G⁷

21 G⁷ D⁷ B^{b7}

25

All parts in this New Orleans Grooves masterclass are available in the key of Bb (tenor saxophone) as a PDF file at: www.dornpub.com/download.html.

Scroll down to July/Aug 2011 *Saxophone Journal* issue and click on link.

Neutral Ground

(alto/baritone saxophone part)



CD track 9 (spoken explanation)
CD track 10 (full performance)
CD track 11 (play-along)

FUNKY SECOND LINE

Jason Mingledorff

(INTRO) 16

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of four staves. The first staff is an empty staff with a measure containing a bar line and the number '16'. The second staff, labeled 'A', contains a melodic line starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth and quarter notes, and is accompanied by chords A7 and G7. The third staff, labeled '21', continues the melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, accompanied by chords F7 and A7. The fourth staff, labeled 'B', contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, followed by a section of slanted lines indicating a vamp, and is accompanied by a B7 chord.

SOLOS: ABB

ENDING: VAMP ON B SECTION

Half Dozen

(alto/baritone saxophone part)



CD track 12 (spoken explanation)
 CD track 13 (full performance)
 CD track 14 (play-along)

UP-TEMPO STREET BEAT

Jason Mingledorff

(INTRO) 4 X'S 4

(HEAD) F#7 3

5

F#7 3

13

F#7 2

21

D7 C7 C#7 C7 F#7 3 To CODA

29

(SOLOS) F#7 F#7 E7

37

F#7 D7 C#7 F#7 D.S. AL CODA

53

D7 C7 C#7 C7 F#7 3

69

D7 C7 C#7 C7 F#7

77