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Exploring the second chorus in vocal jazz: a study of Sarah Vaughan's melodic variation

In the vast landscape of jazz performance, melodic recapitulation remains an underexplored area, especially from the perspective of the jazz vocalist. While research has been conducted on similar topics in jazz from an instrumental improvisatory perspective,[1] examinations of how vocalists navigate and vary the melody has centred on scat improvisation.[2] My research focuses on the restating of the theme of a vocal jazz song for the second time, using the same set of lyrics – a performance practice I refer to as the *second chorus*. In this context, "second chorus" describes the tradition in vocal jazz where the singer performs the melody once, and then immediately restates it with melodic variation.

The decision to scrutinise the use of the second chorus comes from its important role in vocal jazz performance, which I will outline below based on my expertise as a jazz vocalist, vocal pedagogue, and composer. After having established the main theme in the first chorus, the second iteration of the theme during the second chorus allows vocalists to revisit the melody with new insights and creative variations. This part of the performance also showcases their depth of understanding the music and technical proficiency.

Another argument that I put forward in support of the importance of the role of the second chorus is the strong engagement it fosters with the public. Repeating the same set of lyrics and restating the theme in the second chorus serves an important function in enhancing audience engagement. This familiarity makes the public more receptive to the music, allowing listeners to appreciate the nuances and variations introduced by the performer and creating a sense of anticipation and connection, deepening the listener's experience.

The jazz standards[3] that are subjects of this research article are songs from the Great American Songbook,[4] adopted by jazz musicians for their harmonic complex-

1. See e.g. Titlebaum 2021; Liebman 2015; Bergonzi 2015.

2. See e.g. Binek 2017; Weir 2015; Cooper & Sickler 2004; Stoloff 1998.

3. The terms "jazz standard" or "standard" are frequently used to describe compositions in both popular music and jazz contexts, yet these definitions can exhibit considerable variance. In this article I will use a definition of a jazz standard as "a composition that is held in continuing esteem and is commonly used as the basis of jazz arrangements and improvisations". (Wilson n.d.)

4. According to the Great American Songbook Foundation, "the Great American Songbook" is the canon of

ity and lyrical depth, making them ideal for interpretation and improvisation, key components of the repertoire for jazz vocalists.

For my case study, I chose Sarah Vaughan's musical gestures and stylistic choices during the second chorus to highlight variations in melody, rhythm, phrasing, and expression.[5] By examining selected tracks from Vaughan's album *Live at Mister Kelly's*, I aim to uncover the intricacies of her interpretative mastery.[6] Through transcribing the selected audio recordings and comparing them with the original published lead sheets of the songs, this study embraces a comprehensive aesthetic analysis that allows an exploration of Vaughan's variation tools.[7] I have identified 50 recordings of jazz songs featuring a second chorus, 12 of which are by Sarah Vaughan, the highest number from any one singer found so far. This suggests her strong affinity for this practice and underscores its relevance to my research. The next closest examples are from Ella Fitzgerald, with seven recordings, and Carmen McRae with six. Sarah Vaughan's role in the history of vocal jazz and her interpretative approaches also render her a compelling subject for my analysis.[8]

The focus of my research is the variation that occurs during the second chorus; however, I also transcribed the first choruses of the analysed examples. I find it crucial to have a look and understand the "starting point" of the melody interpretation in each singer's case in order to observe the melodic variation events and tools used during the second chorus.

Defining the second chorus

By "second chorus" in vocal jazz, I refer to the second statement of the theme, with

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the most important and influential American popular songs and jazz standards from the early 20th century (Feinstein n.d.).

5. Sarah Vaughan, affectionately known as "Sassy" or "The Divine One", was born on 27 March 1924 in Newark, New Jersey, USA. In 2024, 100 years since Sarah Vaughan's birth are being celebrated.

6. Recorded live at Mister Kelly's, Chicago, IL, USA during August 6–8, 1957, the album was released on LP on EmArcy (Mercury Records) in 1958 (catalogue code 20326) containing 9 tracks and reissued on CD with bonus tracks in 1991 (catalogue code 832 791-2) including 20 tracks. Tracks 1–12 were recorded on August 6, track 13 on August 7, and tracks 14–20 on August 8, 1957. Sarah Vaughan's trio on Live at Mister Kelly's album: Jimmy Jones (piano), Richard Davis (bass), and Roy Haynes (drums).

7. I compiled all of the relevant audio examples I found until 11.11.2024 in Appendix 1 (List of musical examples with a second chorus): https://trio.journal.fi/article/view/147932/100492. All of the tracks that have a second chorus and are available on Spotify are part of Elena Mîndru's Spotify public playlist entitled "Second Chorus in Vocal Jazz": https://open.spotify.com/playlist/7vzFEBZpWHP15MKtQNpshu?si=384fa5b5d6264cac

8. This article is situated within the context of a practice-based doctoral project, underscoring its dual purpose of artistic exploration and scholarly inquiry. My research endeavours to establish a comprehensive knowledge base of the perceptual and aesthetic qualities associated with the second chorus, providing valuable insights for artistic exploration. By bridging the realms of academic research and creative practice, this study aims to contribute not only to the understanding of vocal jazz performance but also to artistry in jazz singing expression.

a repetition of the same set of lyrics, immediately after the first chorus. The second time the melody is sung, it often includes additional variations or embellishments to the original melody of the song. The performer is retelling the story using the same words. This creates a sense of continuity in the musical discourse and increases the impact of the theme, while providing structural cohesion to the music. Repetition reinforces the main theme in the listener's mind, making it more recognisable and memorable.

Jazz songs often follow a short thematic structure, such as the AABA or ABAC form. The inclusion of a second chorus provides an opportunity to extend the length of the performance. This expansion of the musical form adds depth and complexity to the performance, enriching the listening experience for both singers and audiences. Most of the time, the form of a song with a second chorus follows this scheme: INTRO (optional) – FIRST CHORUS – SECOND CHORUS – SOLOS (optional) – FINAL CHORUS[9] – ENDING (optional).

I have chosen "second chorus" as being a suitable concept for this research after conducting interviews with several internationally acclaimed contemporary jazz singers, such as Judy Niemack, Janis Siegel, and Benny Benack III. Besides second chorus, I also considered various terms such as embellished melody, melodic embellishment, referenced melody, manipulated melody, second melody, varied melody, improvised melody, second head, melodic paraphrase, melodic alteration, and ornamentation.[10]

In jazz music, the chorus is "each statement of the theme and each variation on it" (Owens 2003). The first chorus, sometimes also called "the head", is the "melody of a complete song form" (Weir 2005, 95). However, the first chorus is often the presentation of the original melody with some rhythmic and minimal melodic variation, and it is usually sung as written in the lead sheet. A lead sheet typically presents "the melody of a composition, written in the treble clef, with the lyrics if any, and the essential harmonic changes, shown by chord symbols placed above or below the staff" (Witmer & Finlay 2003), sometimes also including indications of style, tempo, dynamics, and the form of the song.

Jazz singers often use the second chorus to personalise songs from the Great American Songbook, while maintaining the essence of the original composition and the composer's point of view. The second chorus encompasses the core elements of the composition that reflect the composer's creative vision, musical ideas, and expressive intentions, as written in the lead sheet.

Melodic variations add interest and engage the listener while maintaining a con-

[9] When there are no solos in the form, the second chorus usually becomes the final chorus. After solos, the final chorus can also be only partial, for example BA (out of AABA).

[10] While I will not elaborate on these terms individually in this article, I plan to explain them comprehensively in the final thesis of my research.

nection to the original theme. The varied melody can include changes in pitches, rhythm, phrasing, dynamics, and ornamentation, performative gestures, and characteristics that define a vocalist's style. As jazz historian and author Will Friedwald states, "the secret at the heart of jazz is rhythm, and vocal jazz that depends so heavily on nonjazz [Broadway] source material makes a standard practice out of rhythmic superimposition. […] The way a singer or player hears the beat […] determines the way they interpret a piece of music." (Friedwald 1996, xiv.)

Interpretation and variation coexist within vocal jazz, contributing to its multifaceted expression. While interpretation conveys the essence and emotional depth of a melody, variation involves altering its elements to introduce new musical ideas while preserving its core identity. The recognisability of the melody can blur the line between interpretation and variation, depending on the extent of the alterations. Interpretation maintains the melody's fundamental characteristics, ensuring recognisability despite expressive nuances, while variation introduces more significant changes that may challenge immediate recognition. In my opinion, the distinction lies in how much the performer deviates from the original melody while retaining its essential essence.

A brief historical overview of the second chorus

Based on my observations and experience as both a performer and researcher, there appears to be an unwritten tradition in instrumental jazz regarding the use of the second chorus, dating back to early jazz times. While explicit written sources on this tradition are limited, it is a widely practised element within the jazz community.

African musical traditions, where music plays a central role in communal celebrations, contribute to the emphasis on repetition and variation heard in jazz. In his work *The Power of Black Music* (1995), Samuel Floyd explores the deep roots of African American music in practices like the *ring shout*, where communal gatherings feature repeated motifs and rhythmic cycles. Floyd's discussion of ring and ring-derived music highlights the importance of circular structures in African musical traditions, where the repetition of musical phrases is integral to creating both communal engagement and musical evolution. The riff or repeated motif in African American music, as discussed by Floyd, is not static – it undergoes constant "signifyin(g) revision", where slight modifications add depth and variety (Floyd 1995, 96–98). I find that Samuel Floyd's discussion of African influences on jazz, especially the concepts of repetition, call-and-response, and variation, directly tie into the concept of the second chorus in vocal jazz.[11] The repetition of the melody

[11] Samuel Floyd's (1995) book primarily focuses on the musical traditions of West and Central Africa when discussing African influences on jazz, particularly those that were sustained and transformed in the Americas by enslaved Africans.

with slight variations or nuances in a second chorus reflects this African-derived tradition of cyclical return and development. In large community gatherings, short themes or motifs are often repeated and elaborated upon, creating a sense of collective participation and rhythmic momentum. "Jazz is music of theme and variations" (Niemack 2012, 64).

Theme and variation is not a new concept introduced by jazz music. The classical form of theme and variation serves as a historical precedent for jazz performers, given that jazz is a unique hybrid of various art forms, including the Western European classical tradition.[12] The variational form can be traced back to the Baroque period, specifically the tradition of *aria da capo*, in which the singer – during the restatement or "da capo" of the main aria – is expected to ornament and alter the melody rather than repeating the initial performance of the theme. In this tradition, the singer's task is to add personal expression through ornamentation, improvisation, and variation, often reflecting a deeper engagement with the music.

As Samuel Floyd (1995, 85) states, "emerging African-American genres were moulded in a process that superimposed European forms on the rich and simmering foundation of African religious beliefs and practices." In this context, both classical forms – the theme and variation and the *aria da capo* – could serve as historical precedents for the practice of the second chorus in vocal jazz. Just as Baroque singers varied the melody during the *da capo* restatement, jazz singers often alter the melody in the second chorus, introducing improvisation, ornamentation, and rhythmic variation. The second chorus in jazz thus mirrors these earlier practices of musical alteration and personalisation.

During the New Orleans period (1910s and 1920s), one could encounter "performances on the move, in parades and marches and from strolling vendors" (Gioia 2011, 30). Musicians often repeated the theme of a song multiple times to sustain energy and entertainment throughout the procession. This repetition not only engaged the audience but also facilitated improvisation and variation, which are hallmarks of jazz music.

The earliest example of the second chorus practice is Marion Harris's 1918 rendition of "After You've Gone" with Rosario Bourdon's Orchestra. Harris, whose recording career began in 1916 (Crowther & Pinfold 1997, 37), is often considered "the first singer to record jazz" (Yanow 2008, x). While some debate her classification as a jazz singer,[13] arguing that her performances lack the characteristic swinging feel, I contend that her relaxed phrasing lays the groundwork for future developments in vocal jazz.

[12] This idea is an ongoing debate over the influence of African culture on ancient Western civilisation, over the blending of African performance practices with European musical forms. See also Hendler 2023 and Gioia 2011.

[13] The first jazz recording is often credited to the Original Dixieland Jazz Band (ODJB), on the song "Livery Stable Blues", recorded in 1917 (Gioia 2011, 36).

During the Swing Era (1930s to early 1940s), when "jazz was synonymous with America's popular music, its social dances and its musical entertainment" (Schuller 1989, 4), dance bands in ballrooms thrived, focusing on audience engagement. Musicians often extended performances by repeating choruses, allowing dancers to enjoy the music longer. This practice of repeating choruses with variations became central to jazz performance, offering musicians opportunities to showcase their improvisational skills and creativity.

Louis Armstrong explained: "On the first chorus I plays the melody, on the second chorus I plays the melody around the melody, and on the third chorus I [play] routines" (Collier 1978, 150–151). This could indicate that, after restating the song's melody, Armstrong would play a variation of it and conclude with a climax using simple, repeated figures. He presented the melody several times using both his trumpet and his voice, often making it challenging to state whether he was "singing like a horn or playing like a singer" (Potter 2000, 54).

As Scott Yanow states, "most singers up until the late 1920s were treated by musicians as necessary evils, tools of the record companies who were used to help sell songs" (Yanow 2008, x). During the big band era of the 1930s, vocalists were often engaged by big bands as featured performers.[14] However, singers typically did not occupy the central spotlight as the star of the evening. Instead, vocalists contributed to the ensemble's collective sound by stating the theme at some point during the performance. "Singers had customarily sung a chorus within a band arrangement, having to make what impact they could within a framework not necessarily designed to showcase them" (Crowther & Pinfold 1997, 103). Typically, this occurred after an elaborate introduction and often following an instrumental rendition of the theme. Consequently, the vocalist's chorus would be the second or even third iteration of the melody heard by the audience.

The 1940s marked a pivotal time for jazz singers, as they took centre stage, with shorter big band introductions before singers began. "The bands declined, but the status of the singers blossomed" (Crowther & Pinfold 1997, 121). Bands would typically play during the second chorus or solo, with vocalists returning for the final chorus (Shapiro 2015, 13). Shortly after this, they transitioned from big band to solo careers and often performed with smaller groups or combos rather than large orchestras. These smaller ensembles provided a musical environment that was more flexible and conducive to improvisation, also enabling closer interaction between the singer and the instrumentalists. Their interplay could lead to spontaneous musical dialogues, further enriching the performance.

As jazz evolved and smaller ensembles became more prevalent during the 1950s,

[14] For example: Earl Hines and His Orchestra featuring Billy Eckstine, Count Basie Orchestra featuring Billie Holiday, Benny Goodman Orchestra featuring Peggy Lee, Chick Webb and His Orchestra featuring Ella Fitzgerald, Earl Hines and His Orchestra featuring Sarah Vaughan, Harry James Orchestra featuring Frank Sinatra, or the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra featuring Frank Sinatra.

the practice of the second chorus persisted, though in a different context. As singer and voice teacher Jan Shapiro notes, "a typical song structure comprised one or two verses, a bridge, and a final verse,[15] which served as a foundation for solo improvisation with room for additional choruses" (Shapiro 2015, 15). In this context, I argue that vocalists found the extended format of the second chorus conducive to exploring the material in greater depth, allowing them to delve into the lyrics, melody, and emotional nuances of the song.

An analysis of Sarah Vaughan's second choruses in medium-tempo jazz songs

A live performance recording at Mister Kelly's jazz club in Chicago, Illinois, for three evening shows on August 6–8, 1957, Sarah Vaughan's album *Live at Mister Kelly's* features notable musicians such as pianist Jimmy Jones, bassist Richard Davis, and drummer Roy Haynes. "Vaughan, backed by a swinging trio, gives us a typically masterful and playful performance, taken at a relaxed pace" (Baerman n.d.). By August 1957, the 33-year-old had already recorded several albums for Columbia and Mercury, collaborating with her trio, big bands, and various string orchestras.

Live at Mister Kelly's is the singer's first live album (out of ten), being preceded by seven studio albums (out of 48) in her discography. This album is an early example of Sarah Vaughan's technical skill, enriched by her exposure to the jazz tradition. The relaxed pace of the performances and her ability to infuse each song with emotional depth reveal her musical expression, mastery of jazz rhythms and phrasing, and the synergy between her vocals and the trio's instrumental accompaniment, creating a cohesive and engaging performance.

The jazz journalist Peter Quinn has quoted Vaughan as commenting on her own singing: "I don't think I ever modelled myself after a singer, I've more or less copied the styles of horn-tooters right from the start." Quinn sees her ability to navigate complex melodic lines and intricate rhythms as mirroring "the innovative approaches of Gillespie and Parker, pushing the boundaries of expression in jazz". (Quinn 2024.)

In his discourse on Sarah Vaughan, trumpeter and producer Quincy Jones observes: "She uses her voice like the way a great jazz musician plays his instrument" (Hayes 2017). He characterises Vaughan as sophisticated and adept in navigating harmonic complexities, illustrating her propensity for conceptualising her vocal performance as akin to instrumental proficiency.

[15] In this section, Shapiro uses the term verse to refer to the A section of a song in an AABA structure, and the term bridge to refer to the B section. This should not be confused with another meaning of verse, which can imply an introductory passage that is not repeated once the main form of the song begins.

Out of the nine tracks included on the 1958 issue on LP of Sarah Vaughan's album *Live at Mister Kelly's*, six include a second chorus. For this article, I have transcribed and analysed two medium tempo songs from this LP: "Just One of Those Things"[16] and "Honeysuckle Rose",[17] both recorded on the same evening during a show on August 6, 1957.

I chose these two songs due to their differing overall forms. Both follow an AABA structure, but with varying bar lengths. "Honeysuckle Rose" has a 32-bar chorus (8 bars for each A1, A2, B, and A3), while "Just One of Those Things" doubles this to 64 bars (16 bars per section). Additionally, the overall performance structure differs, likely influenced by the chorus length. In "Honeysuckle Rose", a full chorus piano solo follows the second vocal chorus, with the final vocal chorus returning at the B section and ending with a turn-around of A3's last four bars. In contrast, "Just One of Those Things" features only the first and second vocal choruses throughout, without an instrumental solo.

My research approach for analysing the chosen material in this article involved explicitly transcribing the way that Sarah Vaughan sang the melody. Typically, transcriptions in jazz are used for solos (instrumental or scat) rather than the theme of a song. For instance, Justin Binek (2007) mentions and briefly analyses the theme, but the transcriptions included are only for the scat parts of the recordings. In my transcriptions, I documented the theme during both the first and second choruses, although my research primarily focuses on the second chorus.

I have categorised the observed aspects into four parts: rhythmic variation elements, melodic variation elements, interplay elements, and expressive elements. For visualising the musical analysis of my transcriptions of the audio recordings of the two songs mentioned above, I chose colour-coded textual annotations to complement the formalised music notation. I marked rhythmic variation elements in red above the staff, melodic variation elements in green below the staff, and elements related to the interplay between the band and the singer in blue above the staff. For lyric addition segments, I used rectangular boxes and marked the text in bold and italic.

My transcription charts include systems with three staves: the upper stave no-

16. Track 3 on side 1 on LP (EmArcy, 1958) and track 3 on CD (EmArcy, 1991), duration 3:10 minutes; available for listening here: https://trio.journal.fi/article/view/147932/100493. "Just One of Those Things" is a popular song penned by Cole Porter for the 1935 musical Jubilee. The musical itself serves as a political satire, portraying a deposed king and queen who must assume incognito identities within their own country. Remarkably, less than two months after Jubilee's opening, the recording of "Just One of Those Things" by Richard Himber and His Orchestra (featuring Stuart Allen as the vocalist) climbed the record charts, reaching the impressive position of number ten. Over time, this song has solidified its place as a standard in the Great American Songbook.

17. Track 3 on side 2 on LP (EmArcy, 1958) and track 7 on CD (EmArcy, 1991), duration 3:30 minutes; available for listening here: https://trio.journal.fi/article/view/147932/100494. "Honeysuckle Rose" was introduced as a dance number in the 1929 revue Load of Coal, at Connie's Inn in Harlem by its composer, Thomas "Fats" Waller. Also included in the musical revue Hot Chocolates, Honeysuckle Rose would become one of the most enduring compositions born of the longtime collaboration of Waller and lyricist Andy Razaf.

tates the melody according to the officially published versions of the songs (the lead sheet), the middle stave notates the first chorus as sung by Vaughan, and the third stave notates the second chorus from the transcribed audio material, as sung by Sarah Vaughan.[18] The analysis also includes an autobiographical aspect, incorporating reflective practices of these specific recordings. This artistic research method allowed for self-reflection and critical analysis through my own experiences as a singer.

Rhythmic variation elements

Anticipations and delays

I identified syncopation (off-beat) through anticipation (ahead) or delay (behind) as a technique frequently employed by Vaughan in her transcribed performances, present in both the first and second choruses. Syncopation, a core element of jazz rhythm, enriches the rhythmic flow, adding complexity and the sense of swing. Anticipating or delaying a note shifts the emphasis from strong beats to weaker ones, keeping the listener engaged and adding excitement to the music. This practice, especially in Vaughan's performances, relies heavily on her expressive phrasing, which continually builds and releases tension against the rhythm of the band.

Sarah Vaughan often anticipates a note by singing it slightly ahead of its expected position, typically by an eighth note, thereby creating rhythmic syncopation through anticipation. In "Just One of Those Things", she applies anticipations nine times during the first chorus and five times during the second chorus. In "Honeysuckle Rose", she uses anticipation ten times during the first chorus and nine times in the second chorus.

However, delays seem to be Vaughan's preferred choice when it comes to syncopation. She uses delays to introduce unexpected twists that enhance the overall dynamism of the performance, creating syncopation by singing the pitches behind their expected position according to the lead sheet. In "Just One of Those Things" the use of such delays reaches its peak, as she employs them 45 times in the first chorus and 53 times in the second chorus. In "Honeysuckle Rose" this technique is used more moderately, appearing 7 times in the first chorus and 16 times in the second chorus. Vaughan's preference for delays likely stems from the fact that they allow her to interpret lyrics more expressively, introducing subtle nuances that enhance the storytelling aspect of her performance.

[18] In my transcriptions I used jazz notation, which marks straight eighth notes but interprets them with a swing feel – unequal, triplet-based subdivisions where the first eighth note is longer than the second. This contrasts with classical notation, where rhythms are precisely written with detailed articulation and dynamics. Transcription charts can be found here: https://trio.journal.fi/article/view/147932/100758 and https://trio.journal.fi/article/view/147932/100759

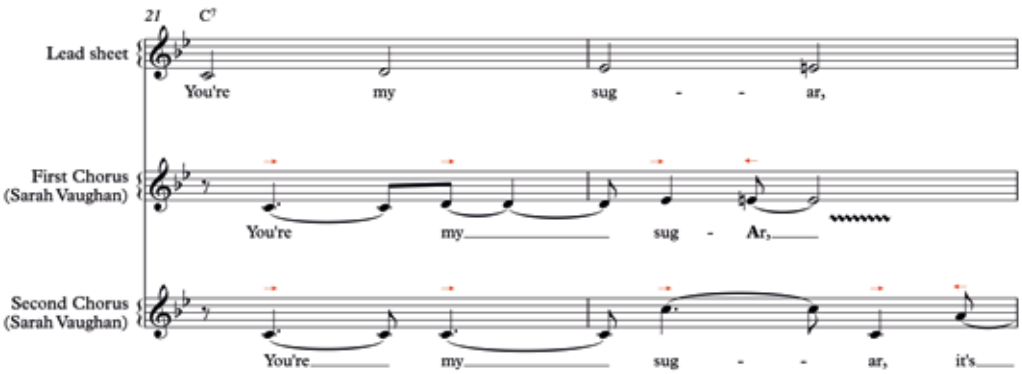

Figure 1. Sarah Vaughan's delays (red arrow to the right) and anticipations (red arrow to the left) in the first (0:50–0:54) and second chorus (1:45–1:49) of "Honeysuckle Rose", B part, bars 21–22.

Augmentations and diminutions

I have observed that Sarah Vaughan uses augmentation to expand and elaborate on musical ideas by lengthening rhythmic values, allowing the singer to explore the material more deeply. She deliberately stretches the duration of specific notes or motifs, which in turn slows down the tempo of the phrase or musical line. By extending the rhythmic values of certain syllables or words, Vaughan introduces a sense of rhythmic tension – the listener must wait longer for the resolution of a phrase, which heightens the emotional impact of the performance.

In "Just One of Those Things", Vaughan artfully utilises the pickup from the original song by extending it, beginning the melody already on the first beat of the anacrusis bar, which allows her more space to augment the word "just" at the start of the first A section in the second chorus. She employs the same augmentation technique on "just" again in the second A section. This approach is repeated in the third A, where she also applies augmentation to the word "fun". I interpret the elongation of these words as Vaughan's way of adding emphasis and enhancing the lyrical and emotional expression of the performance. The word "just" in this context carries a sense of inevitability or dismissal ("just one of those things"), and by augmenting it she may be amplifying the irony or weight of the sentiment.

In the first A section of the second chorus of "Honeysuckle Rose", Vaughan engages in continuous augmentation of the lyrics, filling pauses and half-note spaces with elongated pitches on key words. This begins with inserting a pickup (anacrusis) already in the final bar of the first chorus, allowing her to create more space for the augmentation. The phrase "Honeysuckle Rose" at the end of this section returns to the original rhythm, providing a sense of rhythmic conclusion after the adventurous paths she took. I have observed that she employs the same pattern of augmentation in the second A section, following the same structural approach as in the first A:

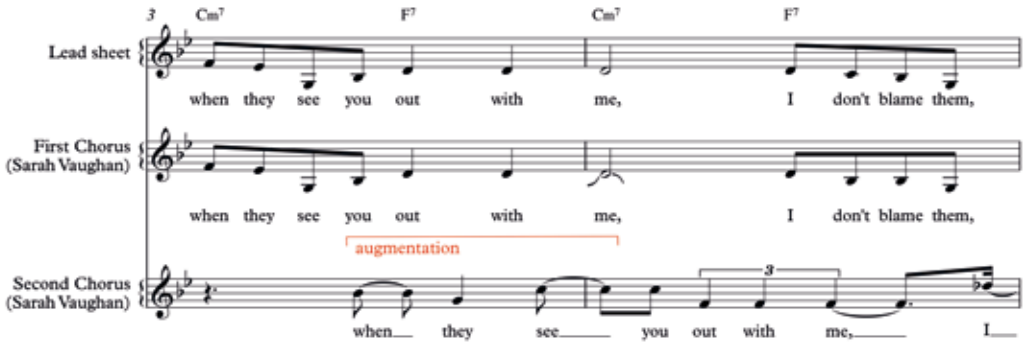

Figure 2. Sarah Vaughan's augmentation in the second chorus of "Honeysuckle Rose", A1 part, bars 3–4 (1:15–1:18).

On the opposite side of augmentation lies diminution, which, for Vaughan, becomes another tool of virtuosity and rhythmic variation. This technique allows her to condense musical material by increasing the pace or subdividing the rhythms of a given line. Diminution involves the shortening of rhythmic values within a phrase or motif, adding excitement and energy to her performance, and demonstrating her technical mastery and rhythmic agility. Diminution often acts as a counterbalance to a previous augmentation, or at other times it may be incorporated into a displacement, as Vaughan demonstrates multiple times in her rendition of "Just One of Those Things" during both the first and second choruses, as seen in my transcriptions:

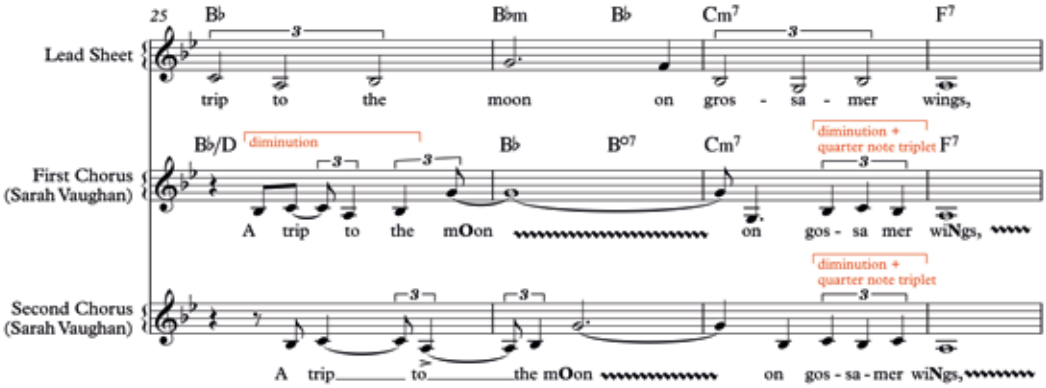

Figure 3. Sarah Vaughan's diminution in the first (0:51–0:56) and second chorus (2:15–2:20) of "Just One of Those Things", A2 part, bars 25–28.

Displacements, triplet feel and quarter-note triplets

In both analysed songs, Vaughan demonstrates a distinct preference for rhythmic displacement, a technique frequently employed by the singer, as a hallmark of her interpretative style. She skilfully manipulates the timing, sometimes dramatically, by

shifting entire phrases either forward or backward from their original position. This results in starting phrases on a different beat or subdivision than where they would traditionally occur according to the lead sheet, creating a dynamic and unpredictable rhythmic structure.

After a rhythmically augmented pick-up opening in "Just One of Those Things", Vaughan immediately begins displacing the upcoming four-bar phrases throughout the first two A sections, both in the first and second choruses, more pronounced in the later one. The B section offers a brief respite from extensive displacement, yet Vaughan subtly incorporates short displaced motifs, gradually intensifying these shifts toward the end of the section, leading back to the final A. She concludes the second chorus with a striking displacement of two full bars, making great use of the rhythmic space:

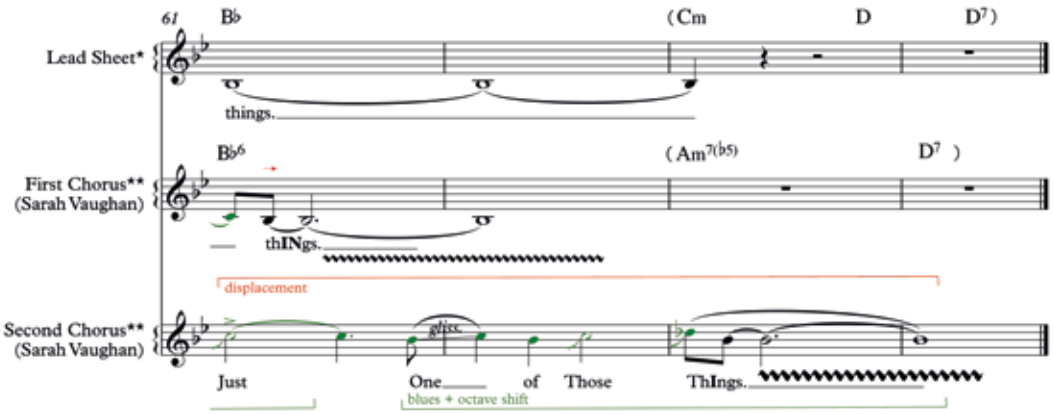

Figure 4. Sarah Vaughan's displacement and octave shift in the second chorus of "Just One of Those Things", A3 part, bars 61–64 (2:59–3:06).

Vaughan employs triplet feel and quarter-note triplets in her renditions, both of which are commonly used rhythmic elements in jazz. She makes rich use of triplet feel in "Honeysuckle Rose", a song where the original lead sheet employs eighth notes, which in my opinion may have influenced her rhythmic approach. By subdividing the groove into triplets, she imparts a distinctive "swing" feel to the melody, emphasising the underlying beat (see Figure 5).

In Sarah Vaughan's rendition of "Just One of Those Things", she demonstrates a marked preference for quarter-note triplets, likely influenced by the song's original rhythmic structure, which does not utilise eighth notes, relying instead on quarter notes, half notes, dotted half notes, and whole notes. The faster tempo of the piece, in comparison with that of "Honeysuckle Rose", may also contribute to Vaughan's inclination towards quarter notes. By employing quarter-note triplets, Vaughan in-

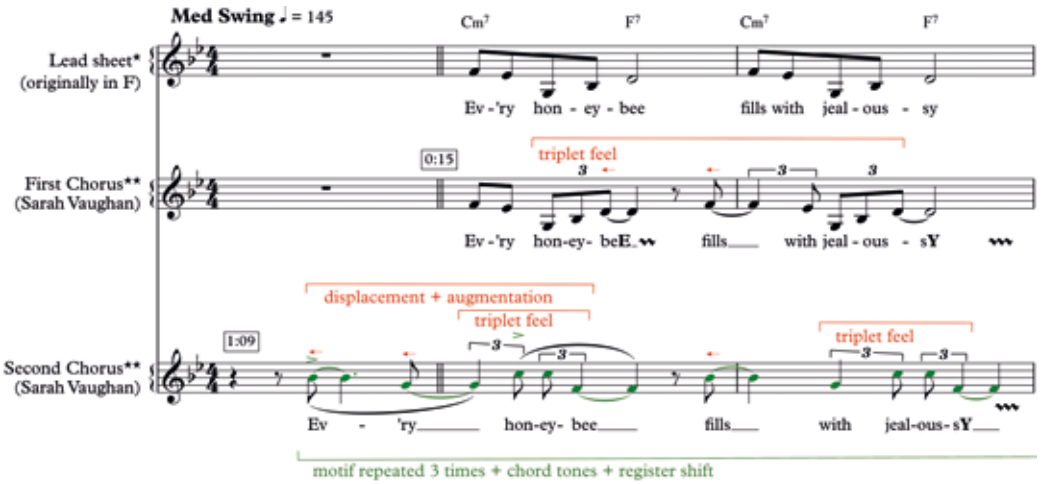

Figure 5. Sarah Vaughan's triplet feel and register shift in the first (0:13–0:18) and second chorus (1:09–1:14) of "Honeysuckle Rose", A1 part, bars 1–2 with pick-up (anacrusis).

troduces rhythmic tension, dividing two beats into three equal parts against the 4/4 metre. This creates a syncopated, off-balance effect that contrasts with the original rhythm from the lead sheet:

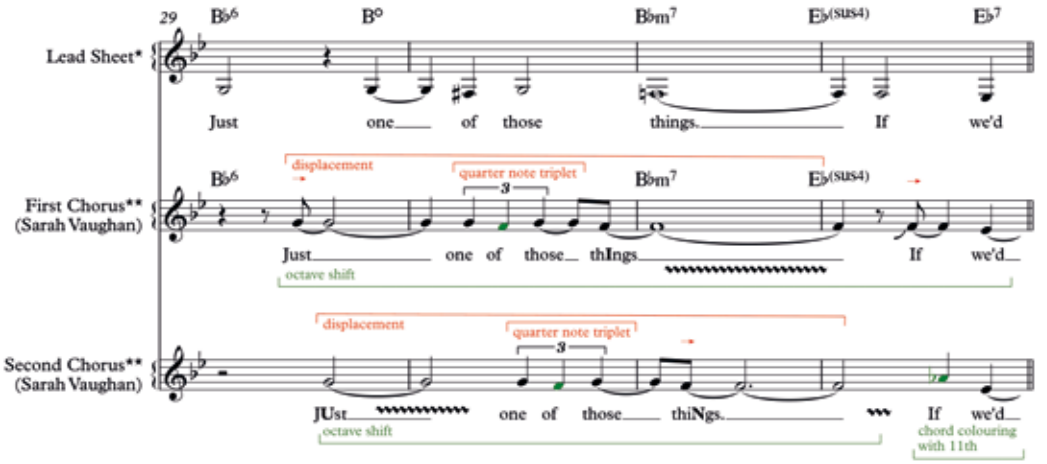

Figure 6. Sarah Vaughan's quarter-note triplets in the first (0:56–1:01) and second chorus (2:20–2:25) of "Just One of Those Things", A2 part, bars 29–32.

Melodic variation elements

Register and octave shifts

Sarah Vaughan exhibits her vocal technical mastery and her extended vocal range, tone, and depth through melodic variation. Her signature melodic gesture, the athletic register shift, adds flair and complexity to her performances. She transitions smoothly between the head and mixed registers, often with large intervals of a fifth or more. Vaughan's register shifts frequently become octave shifts, emphasising phrases and creating dynamic contrast, especially in the second choruses. I have noticed that this technique rarely appears in her first chorus renditions.

In "Honeysuckle Rose", Vaughan starts her second chorus in full strength by shifting the melody higher to her mixed register during both the A1 and A2 parts, maintaining this elevation even in the first two bars of the B part. She changes the original pitches to ones that are a fourth or even an eleventh higher. After returning to the chest register during the B part of the second chorus, she shifts once more to the mixed register in the final A3 section, concluding with a clear and powerful octave shift of the melody in the last bars (see Figure 4 above).

In the A1 part of the second chorus in "Just One of Those Things", Vaughan varies the melody by taking it higher step-by-step with a clear register shift in bar 10, leading to a decisive shift of the melody by one octave higher at the beginning of the A2 part, arriving in her head register. This shifting wave calms down for a few bars, then rises up again towards the end of A2, with another clear octave shift higher, this time within the chest and mixed registers. She continues varying the melody within the mixed register at the beginning of the B part, preparing for the final A3 part characterised by alternating register shifts, culminating in an octave shift at the end, that she also employed in "Honeysuckle Rose" (see Figure 5 above).

The register and octave shifts are not merely technical features, but are creative tools that Sarah Vaughan uses to enhance the expressive quality of her singing and musicianship. This technique allows her to play with musical expectations, often starting with a melody in one register and then unexpectedly shifting it an octave higher or lower, either for a longer duration or just for a brief fragment. This sudden change of register, up to an octave or even higher, can evoke various emotional responses from the listener, ranging from excitement to a profound sense of awe. When she shifts to a higher register, her voice takes on a lighter, more ethereal quality, while a shift to a lower register introduces a darker, more resonant tone. Vaughan's incorporation of register and octave shifts into her performances, mostly in second choruses, contributes significantly to the dramaturgy of her singing.

Blues, pentatonic, major, or minor scales

As composer and researcher Toby Wren points out, "generally speaking, early era

jazz improvisers perform variations on the melody in their solos, employing pentatonic or blues scales or arpeggios to fill in the gaps" (Wren 2022, 7). These tools allowed musicians to maintain a balance between variation and adherence to the original musical structure, being used also during the second chorus, among other tools.

In addition to her signature register and octave shifts, I have also observed in my analysis that Sarah Vaughan employs a variety of pitch modifications by substituting the original pitches of a melody with tones from blues, pentatonic, major, or minor scales, most probably inspired by the tools used by instrumentalists. In this way, she introduces new melodic and emotional dimensions to the music, adding new colours and textures to the melody. Vaughan uses these variation elements already in the exposition of the first chorus, intensifying them during the second chorus.

The last bars of the A1 part of the second chorus in "Honeysuckle Rose" showcase the smooth use of blues scale tones for a two-bar descending phrase starting in the head register from the minor third D♭5 down to D♭4, underlying the lyrics "I don't blame them, goodness knows":

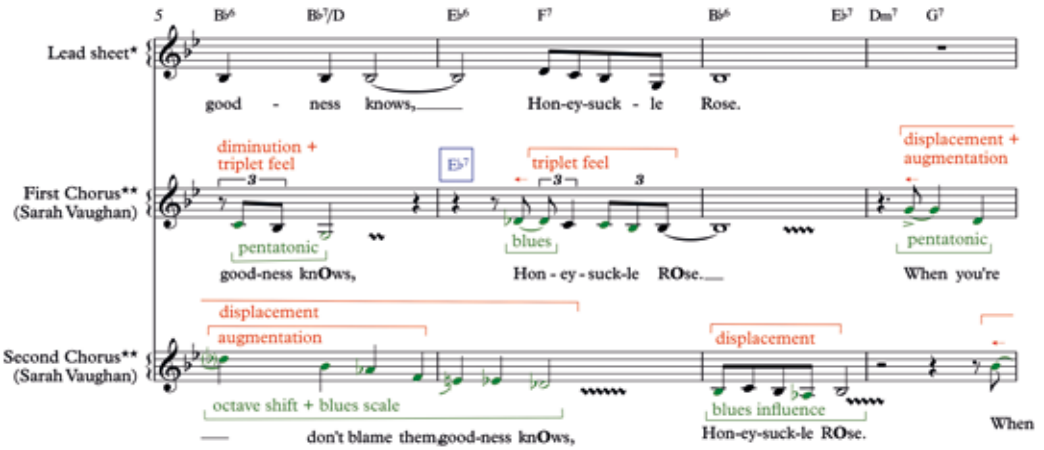

Figure 7. Sarah Vaughan's pitch modification with blues scale tones in the second chorus of "Honeysuckle Rose", A1 part, bars 5–8 (1:18–1:24). Modified pitches are marked in green.

Vaughan chooses to incorporate tones from the blues scale in her melodic variation at the ending of the A2 part, starting from the tonic B♭ and landing on the minor third D♭ for the phrase "You're much sweeter goodness knows". The singer continues to explore the blues scale in the B part of her second chorus, particularly in bars 17–20, and again at the end of the song by using the minor seventh in bar 30.

In the song "Just One of Those Things", Vaughan employs the blues scale at the end of her second chorus by using the minor third in bar 63. Additionally, this song is notable for its use of tones from the pentatonic scale, particularly at the ending of

A1 in bars 13–16 and the ending of A3 in bar 60.

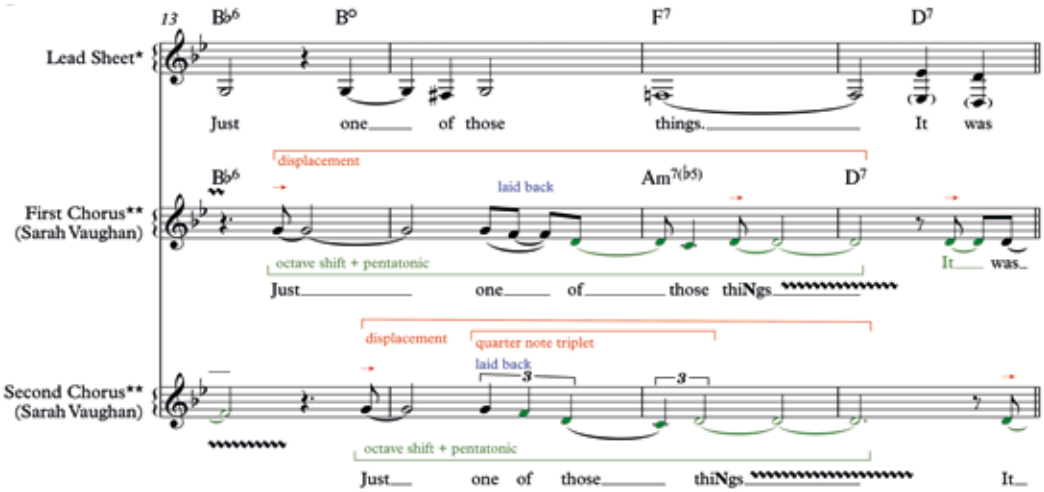

Figure 8. Sarah Vaughan's pitch modification with pentatonic scale tones in the second chorus of "Just One of Those Things", A1 part, bars 13–16 (1:59–2:04).

Chord tones and chord colouring

The analysed songs show that Sarah Vaughan also utilises chord tones or even triad arpeggios to outline the harmony of a chord progression played by the accompanying band, or infuses certain chord tones to further explore and to enhance the varied melody (see Figure 9).

Additionally, she incorporates chord-colouring pitches into the melody, adding or altering notes within chords to create richer, more complex harmonies. Vaughan uses the ninth (e.g. bars 1–2 or bar 43 in the second chorus of "Just One of Those Things") or the eleventh of the chord (bar 32 in the second chorus) to variate the melody over the harmony played by the rhythm section (see Figure 10).

Melodic pedal points, sequences, motifs, and inversions

Another technique that Sarah Vaughan introduces in the second chorus is the melodic pedal point, where she transforms the original pitches into recurring ones that remain constant for one or several bars. This approach creates a distinctive floating effect, contrasting with the comping of the rhythm section. Occasionally, this technique is combined with a register shift by an octave within the melodic pedal point, leading toward a climax in the melody, which is often resolved by returning to the chord tones. In both examples, Vaughan uses the melodic pedal point only once, exclusively in the second choruses.

In "Honeysuckle Rose", Vaughan employs this technique near the end of the B

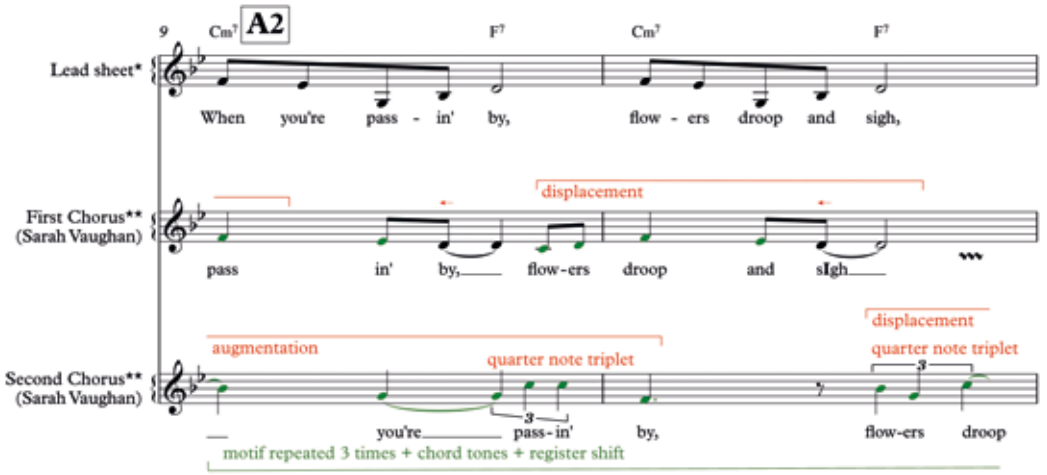

Figure 9. Sarah Vaughan's use of chord tones in the second chorus of "Honeysuckle Rose", A2 part, bars 9–10 (1:24–1:28). There is a certain delay in the vertical alignment of the chords and the varied melody due to the rhythmic variation that happens at the same time.

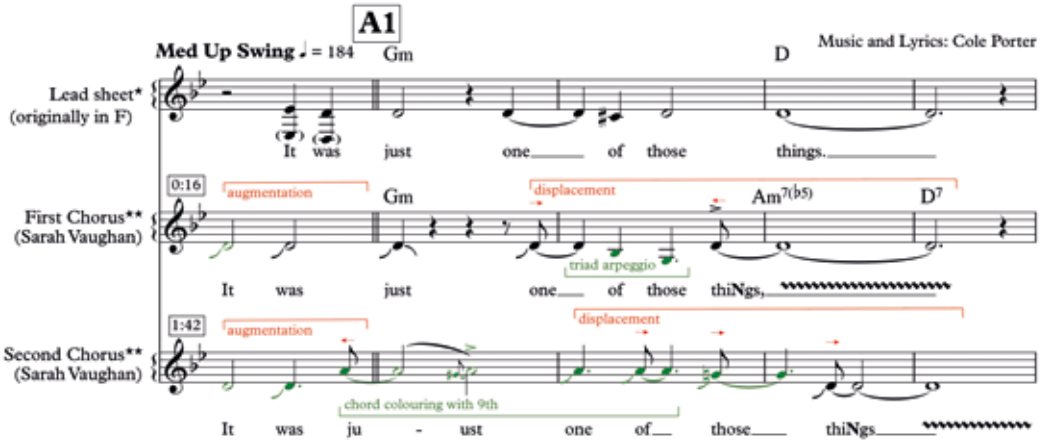

Figure 10. Sarah Vaughan's chord colouring in the second chorus of "Just One of Those Things", A1 part, bars 1–4 with pick-up (anacrusis) (1:42–1:48).

section in the second chorus, using the lyrics "You're my sugar" to emphasise the meaning of the text. She selects the first pitch of the phrase, which is also the root of the chord (C), and sustains this pitch for the following two bars.

In the song "Just One of Those Things", Vaughan applies the melodic pedal point at the beginning of the A section in the second chorus. This time, however, the pitch chosen for the melodic pedal point differs completely from the original melody. For the phrase "One of those bells that", she alters all the pitches for two and a half bars to G, the sixth of the accompanying chord in bar 9, marking the beginning of the

melodic pedal point. This anticipates the root of the chord played by the rhythm section in bar 10 and extends into the first half of bar 11.

The occasional insertion of melodic sequences is another variation device used by Vaughan during the second chorus. These sequences consist of short melodic figures, primarily intervallic in nature, repeated at a new pitch level (i.e. transposed), serving to unify and develop the musical material. In bars 11–13 of the second chorus of "Just One of Those Things", Sarah Vaughan employs sequences on the phrase "now and then rings", accentuating the idiomatic expression and emphasising the sporadic nature of the bells ringing:

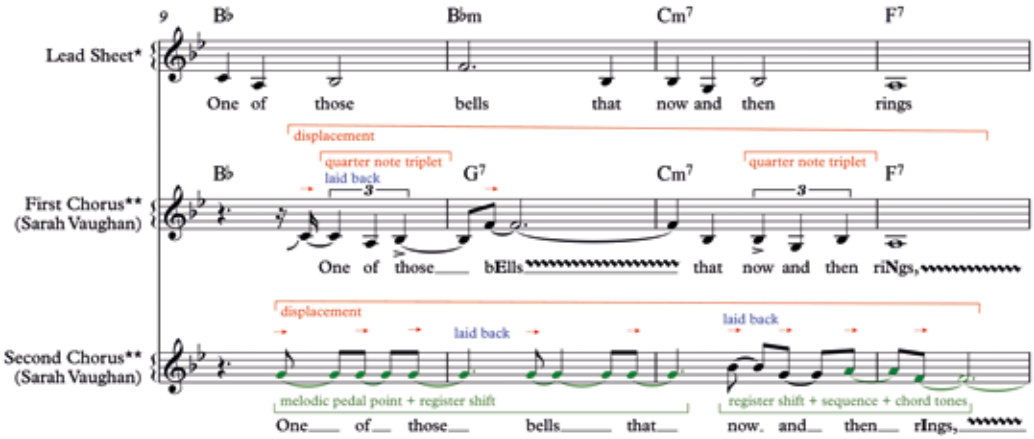

Figure 11. Sarah Vaughan's melodic pedal point and sequence in the second chorus of "Just One of Those Things", A1 part, bars 9–12 (1:54–1:59).

Motifs are another essential component in Vaughan's melodic variation arsenal during the second chorus. In "Honeysuckle Rose", she demonstrates this technique from the outset of the second chorus, where she transforms the melody into a motif, which she repeats consistently throughout the first halves of both A1 and A2 sections. This is resolved in both instances with a descending blues scale melody. In the A3 section of the second chorus she introduces a new motif rhythmically inspired by the original melody's eighth notes, but inverts it with an upward melodic movement, contrasting with the original downward motion (see Figure 12).

Vaughan elevates the use of motifs to a new level, adding layers of sophistication in "Just One of Those Things". While she similarly introduces a descending intervallic motif in the first chorus, she amplifies its complexity and nuance in the second chorus by inverting the motif and incorporating an ascending intervallic pattern. This occurs at the beginning of the third A section, on the phrase "goodbye, dear, and Amen", where she simultaneously extends the phrase by lyric addition. Here the motif not only serves as a variation but also has the effect of propelling the melody

Figure 12. Sarah Vaughan's motifs in the second chorus of "Honeysuckle Rose", A3 part, bars 25–28 (1:51–1:58).

forward, building tension and anticipation. I interpret Vaughan's use of rhythmic displacement, combined with quarter-note triplets and unexpected intervallic leaps, as a development in melodic variation compared to what I have observed in "Honeysuckle Rose". Through this approach, she transforms a simple motif into a "dynamic" and compelling musical statement, bridging the first and second choruses (see Figure 13).

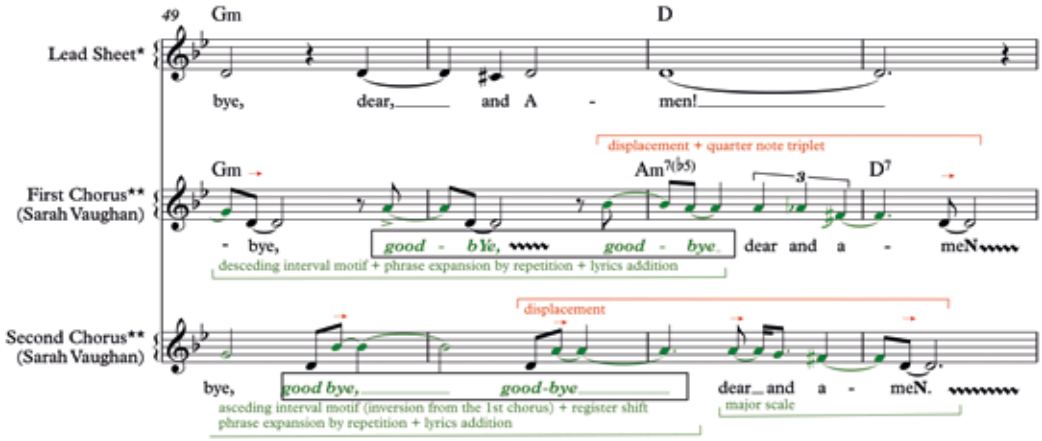

Figure 13. Sarah Vaughan's motifs and inversions in the first (1:23–1:28) and second chorus (2:45–2:50) of "Just One of Those Things", A3 part, bars 49–52.

Pitch count and vocal range

I conducted a detailed analysis of the pitch modifications during the melodic variation process. The figure below presents an analytical breakdown of Sarah Vaughan's performance in the song "Just One of Those Things", comparing the first and second choruses with the lead sheet (see Figure 14). In the first chorus, 40 pitches are modified, which constitutes approximately one third (33%) of all the pitches. The second chorus exhibits even more variation, with higher percentages of modifications: section A1 shows an increase to 18 modified pitches, accounting for 64%, while sections A2 and B have fewer changes, with 10 modified pitches each, representing 33% and 63%, respectively. Section A3 is notable for having nearly all its pitches altered – 26 out of 27 – resulting in a 96% modification rate. Overall, in the second chorus, Sarah Vaughan modifies 63% of her pitches, demonstrating her dynamic vocal variation.

Just One of Those Things	**A1**	**A2**	**B**	**A3**	**Total**
Pitch Count in Lead Sheet	28 (100%)	30 (100%)	35 (100%)	27 (100%)	**120 (100%)**
Modified Pitches in First Chorus	6 (21%)	7 (23%)	9 (26%)	18 (67%)	**40 (33%)**
Modified Pitches in Second Chorus	18 (64%)	10 (33%)	22 (63%)	26 (96%)	**76 (63%)**

Figure 14. Pitch count and variation percentage comparison for the first and second choruses in "Just One of Those Things", as sung by Sarah Vaughan.

Similarly, in "Honeysuckle Rose", the second chorus sees a dramatic increase in pitch modifications, with sections A1, A2, and A3 each showing a 90% alteration rate, and section B at 77%, totalling 87% overall (see Figure 15). This high level of variation in both songs highlights Vaughan's ability to transform melodies with creative expression and complexity, enhancing the emotional depth and engagement of her performances.

Honeysuckle Rose	**A1**	**A2**	**B**	**A3**	**Total**
Pitch Count in Lead Sheet	29 (100%)	29 (100%)	22 (100%)	29 (100%)	**109 (100%)**
Modified Pitches in First Chorus	6 (21%)	10 (34%)	0	10 (34%)	**26 (24%)**
Modified Pitches in Second Chorus	26 (90%)	26 (90%)	17 (77%)	26 (90%)	**95 (87%)**

Figure 15. Pitch count and variation percentage comparison for the first and second choruses in "Honeysuckle Rose", as sung by Sarah Vaughan.

The high rate of pitch modification in the second choruses of both songs may raise questions about the theme's recognisability. However, the lyrics remain a critical identifier in these cases. If replaced with scat syllables, I think recognition would then rely on rhythmic structure, harmony, and possible melodic anchors. Additionally, since the original melody is presented in the first chorus with much less pitch alterations, this reinforces the musical memory of the listener. Research indicates that listeners can identify songs based on chord progressions alone, even when melodic, rhythmic, timbral, and textural cues are absent, as demonstrated in studies on veridical memory for harmony (Jimenez, Kuusi & Ojala 2022).

Sarah Vaughan was recognised for her rich, operatic voice and its three-octave, instrument-like range. By using the above-mentioned melodic variation tools, she easily expanded the range of a tune and shifted it, sometimes even enlarging it to upper registers. This shift happens especially during the second chorus. In the case of the song "Just One of Those Things" the range shifts up by a major third during the second chorus, and in the case of "Honeysuckle Rose" she enlarges the range upwards by a fourth, also during the second rendition of the theme. In both cases, the range of the first chorus is maintained as in the lead sheet.

	Just One of Those Things (in the key of B♭)	***Honeysuckle Rose*** (in the key of B♭)
Lead Sheet Vocal Range (general)	E3-B♭4	G3-A♭4
First Chorus Vocal Range (S.V.)	F3-B♭4	G3-A♭4
Second Chorus Vocal Range (S.V.)	A3-D5	A♭3-D♭5

Figure 16. Sarah Vaughan's vocal range as used in "Just One of Those Things" and "Honeysuckle Rose".

From early in her career, Vaughan embellished melodies with a coloratura quality, likely due to her classical training background. In the analysed material, I observed that melodic anticipations occur either on the same pitch or involve a chromatic shift, typically approaching from below as a scoop. This pattern is the most common in the two examples analysed, occurring during both the first and second choruses. Occasionally, Vaughan approaches the desired pitch from above, sliding down to it through a fall:

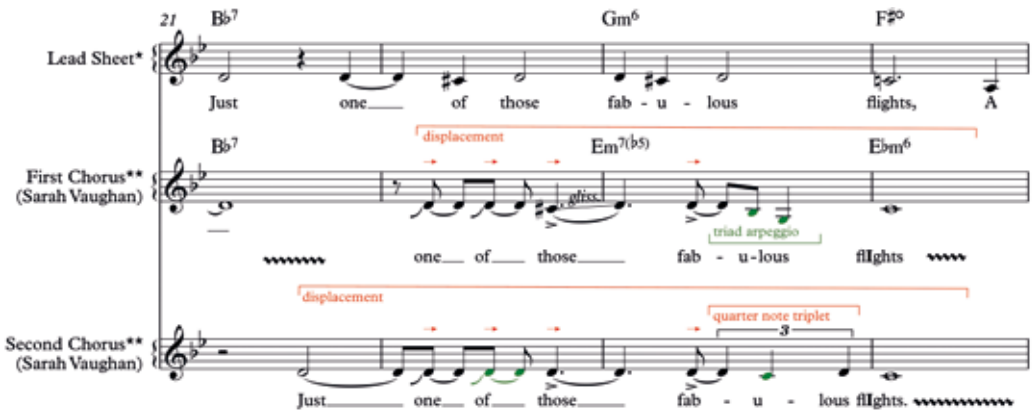

Figure 17. Sarah Vaughan's use of scoops in the first (0:45–0:50) and second chorus (2:09–2:14) of "Just One of Those Things", A2 part, bars 21–24.

All of the melodic variation techniques presented above that Sarah Vaughan makes use of, as I have observed from my transcriptions and analysis, show her ability to take simple musical elements and weave them into elaborate performances.

Interplay elements

As expressed in the liner notes of the CD reissue of the album, Sarah Vaughan "always kept a strong trio together, that's the way she most liked to work, and that's the context in which she consistently did her finest singing" (Jeske 1991). When analysing the transcriptions of the songs "Just One of Those Things" and "Honeysuckle Rose", I have identified and marked in blue, above the staff, three types of interplay elements:[19] laid-back phrasing, even phrasing, and specific chords played

[19] Interplay in jazz involves adaptive variation, where musicians listen and respond to each other's contributions, adjusting their own playing in real-time to complement, contrast, or enhance the collective sound. This adaptive variation is characterised by a fluid exchange of musical motifs, rhythms, harmonies, and improvisational ideas, allowing the music to evolve organically. Through such interplay musicians engage in a form of musical conversation, where the direction of the performance can change and develop based on the inputs and reactions

by the band that influenced the melodic component of the variation chosen by Vaughan. Interplay elements relate directly to the band's timing and playing, while rhythmic variation elements correspond to the lead sheet markings. This distinction highlights the dynamic interaction between Vaughan and her trio, where the band's harmonic and rhythmic choices subtly influence her vocal variations, creating a rich and textured interplay.

From the transcriptions of Sarah Vaughan's rendition of the above-mentioned tunes, I have observed that her overall rhythmic approach is characterised by her distinctive laid-back phrasing, which imparts a relaxed quality to her performances. There are a few passages that I wanted to mark down especially for the laid-back character, where she strongly and intentionally sung slightly behind the beat, in comparison to the beat of the rhythm section:

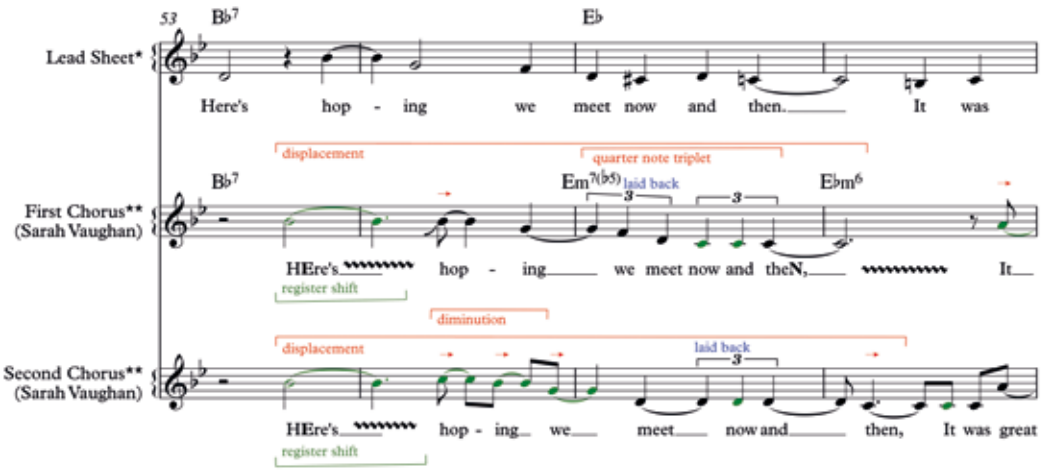

Figure 18. Sarah Vaughan's laid-back phrasing in the first (1:28–13:33) and second chorus (2:49–2:54) of "Just One of Those Things", A3 part, bars 53–56. For another example, see Figure 11 above.

Vaughan periodically enhances her interaction with the band by briefly shifting away from the prevailing swing, a triple subdivision of the beat. She does this by adopting a duple metre, where she sings straight eighth notes, dividing each beat evenly in half. This stark contrast to the usual swung rhythm serves to create tension and emphasise rhythmic variety. This rhythmic choice adds a dynamic layer to the performance, showcasing Vaughan's rhythmic flexibility and her ability to "play against" the groove while still maintaining cohesion with the ensemble. This adds an element of surprise and variation, enhancing the dynamic interplay between her voice and the instrumental accompaniment:

of each participant, creating a unique and cohesive musical experience.

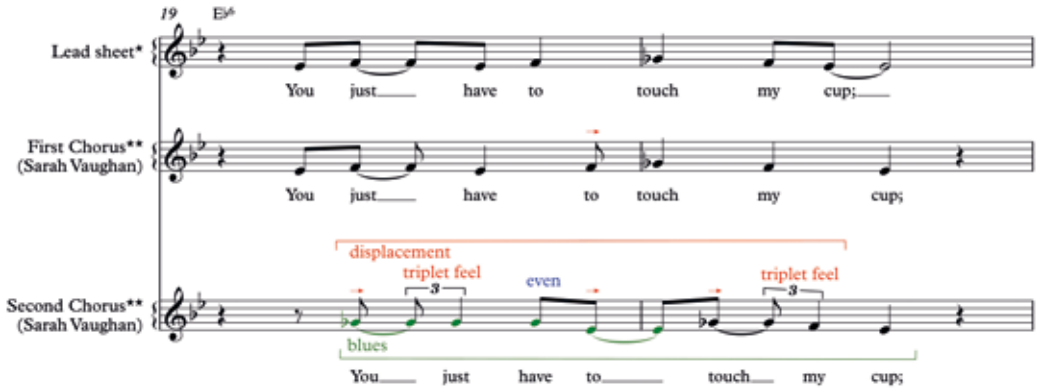

Figure 19. Sarah Vaughan's even phrasing in the second chorus of "Honeysuckle Rose", part B, bars 19–20 (1:41–1:44).

Dizzy Gillespie acknowledged Vaughan's piano playing skill, noting in his autobiography: "[Sarah] was as good a musician as anybody in the band. She could play the piano, knew all of the chords, and played terrific chords behind us" (Quinn 2024). This fluency might explain Vaughan's quick reactions to the band's chord changes. In the first A section of both the first and second choruses of "Honeysuckle Rose", the rhythm section plays a dominant chord (E♭7) instead of the major sixth chord (E♭6) indicated in the lead sheet. Vaughan seizes this opportunity in both choruses to use the seventh (D♭) of the chord to create melodic variations, implying the blues scale:

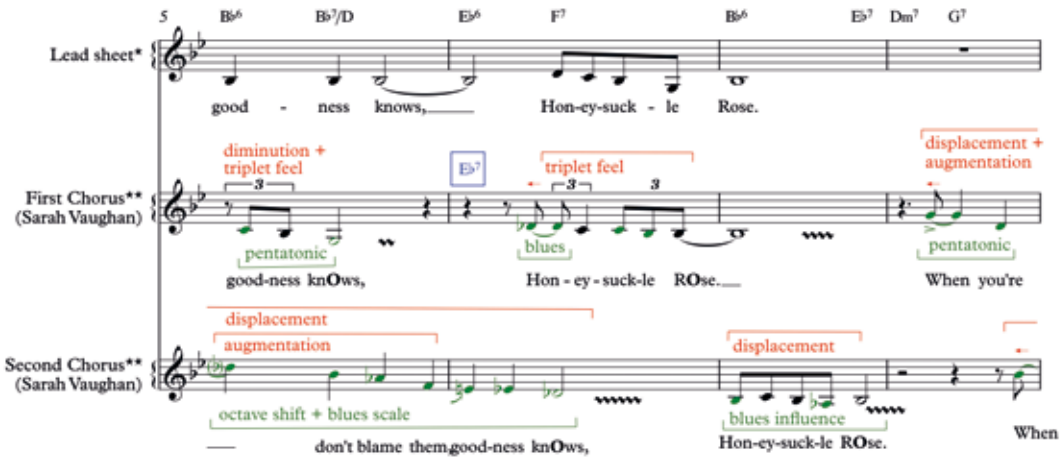

Figure 20. The chord played by the band in bar 6, which I interpret to have influenced the melodic component of the variation chosen by Sarah Vaughan in the first (0:23–0:29) and second chorus (1:18–1:24) of "Honeysuckle Rose", A1 part, bars 5–8.

The question arises as to whether this chord is part of an arrangement or was played *ex tempore* by Jimmy Jones. While the chord functions as a dominant throughout the first and second choruses, determining which version applies remains elusive. Nonetheless, I consider the dominant chord to have influenced Sarah Vaughan's choice to imply the blues scale in her variation, highlighting its role as an element of interplay.

Expressive elements

Lyric addition

In an interview, the singer confesses: "When I sing a tune, the lyrics are important to me. […] I guess I never sing a tune the same way twice" (Alkyer 2009, 60). As noted by vocalist and multi-instrumentalist Jan Shapiro (2015, 15), Sarah Vaughan was not only an adept scat singer but also improvised extensively with lyrics, treating them as musical elements, much like an instrumentalist might manipulate notes or rhythms. My analysis of Vaughan's performances confirms that she often incorporated lyrical additions during the second choruses of songs. These additions, used to extend or expand lyric lines, appear to be a deliberate tool she reserved for the recapitulation of the melody in the second chorus, a technique not employed in the first chorus.

During the second chorus of "Honeysuckle Rose", Sarah opts for a more reserved lyric addition by inserting two words and only during the second chorus. In bar 16 she adds the first-person pronoun "I" at the beginning of the line "Don't buy sugar", personalising the directive and strengthens the connection between the singer and the lyrics. The addition of "I" emphasises that the advice or sentiment is coming directly from her perspective. Then, in bar 23 she inserts the adverb of degree "so" into the phrase "it's SO sweet when you stir it up". This added emphasis can convey a heightened sense of affection or delight, making the sentiment more vivid and engaging for the listener. It also adds a touch of personal flair and character to the performance, showcasing Vaughan's ability to bring additional nuance and feeling to the lyrics (see Figure 21).

In the song "Just One of Those Things", Vaughan chooses to expand the lyrics with larger phrases more prominently during the second chorus on two occasions. In the first one, in bars 49–51, she adds two repetitions of the word "goodbye", enhancing the sense of farewell, making the parting feel more poignant and heartfelt. At the same time, I find that she adds an extra layer of emotional emphasis and finality to the conclusion of the song. This repetition can underscore the theme of the song – a sense of finality and reflection on a fleeting romance.

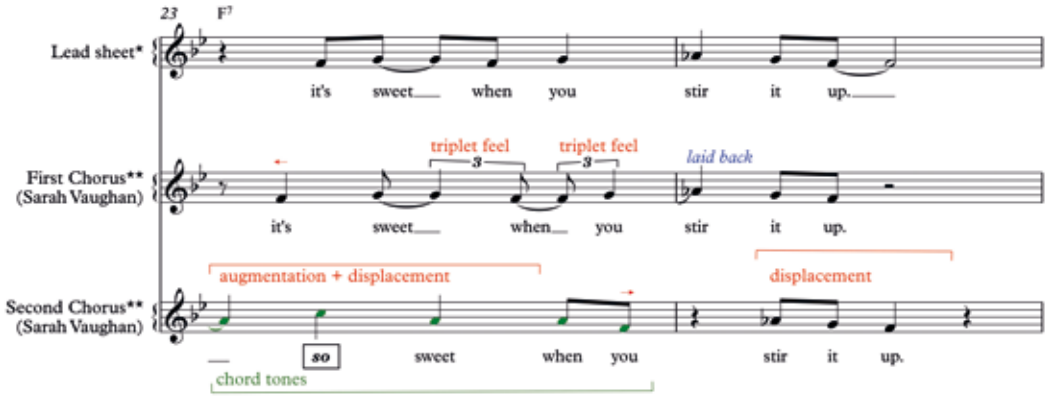

Figure 21. Sarah Vaughan's lyric addition in the second chorus of "Honeysuckle Rose", B part, bars 23–24 (1:48–1:51).

The second occasion when she appeals to lyric addition is in bars 58–59 of the second chorus, when she inserts one extra repetition of the phrase "it was great fun", reinforcing the sentiment of the song's message at the end of the tune (Figure 22). By repeating the phrase she emphasises the enjoyment and significance of the experience, while the final line "but it was just one of those things" brings it all back to the central theme of the fleeting nature of the romance. It highlights the bittersweet acknowledgment that while the experience was memorable and enjoyable it was ultimately transient, capturing a sense of nostalgia and acceptance. I find that Vaughan's interpretive choice here enriches the lyrical narrative, giving listeners a more profound and resonant conclusion:

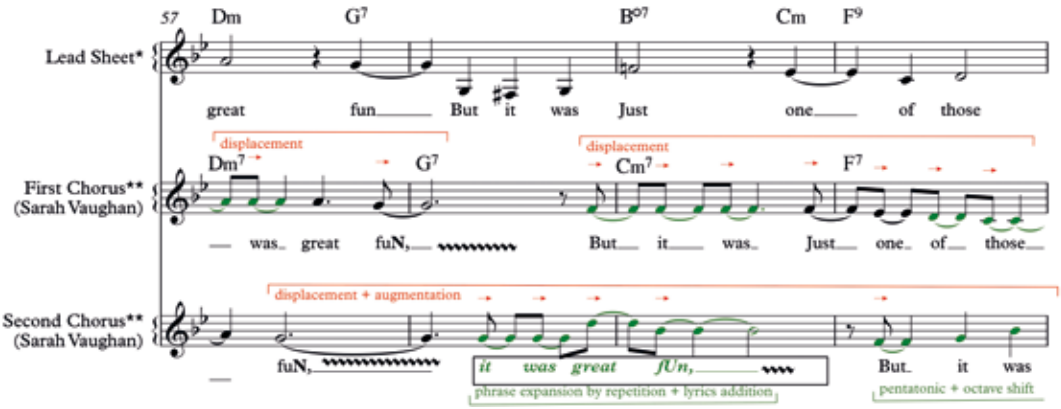

Figure 22. Sarah Vaughan's lyric addition in the second chorus of "Just One of Those Things", A3 part, bars 57–60 (2:54–2:59). For another example, see Figure 13 above.

Vibrato and tonal colour

Vaughan's vocal technique was defined by her impeccable breath control, dynamic range, and precision. Her mastery of both pitch and rhythmic flexibility allowed her to shape each phrase with accuracy, producing a vibrant, agile sound. Furthermore, she often employed glissandi, smoothly transitioning between pitches, adding emotional depth and a sense of fluidity to her interpretations. These embellishments, infused with a coloratura quality, highlighted her technical prowess and artistic expressiveness, and contributed to the overall variation of the melody.[20]

Vaughan's resonant vibrato and nuanced use of tonal colour added distinctive richness to her performances. In my transcriptions, I have indicated the sounds she vibrates on using capital letters in bold and provided an approximate visual length of the vibrato. The vibrato element is not marked in the lead sheets and varies between singers, so it can only be analysed and compared within the same artist's first and second choruses. Vaughan vibrates on vowel sounds in different words, such as E (e.g. "bElls," "thE," "wE"), I (e.g. "rIngs", "flIghts", "It"), U (e.g. "jUst"), A (e.g. "awAre"), and O (e.g. "hOt," "dOwn"), as well as the resonant consonant N (e.g. "thiNgs," "wiNgs," "towN," "ameN"). She alternates between straight sounds and vibrated phonemes within the same syllable across different choruses, creating specific variations within the words:

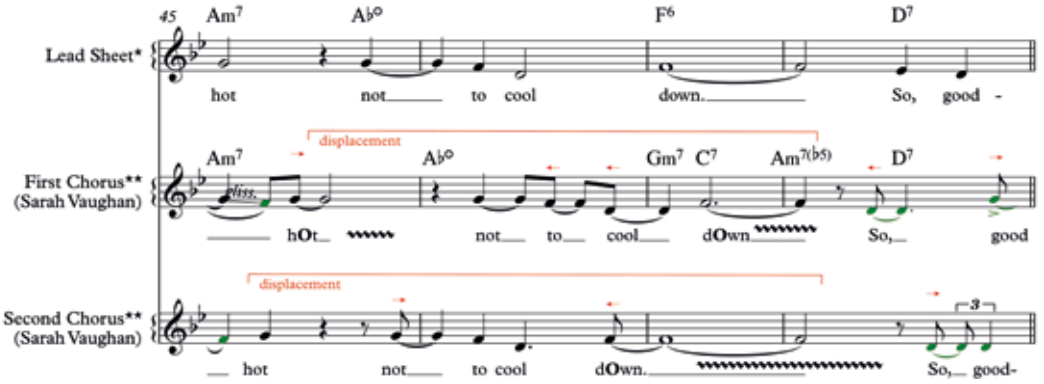

Figure 23. Sarah Vaughan's vibrato on phonemes in the first and second choruses of "Just One of Those Things", B part, bars 45–48. Vaughan uses vibrato on "hOt" and "dOwn" in the first chorus (1:17–1:22), but she opts for a straight tone on "hOt" and a longer vibrato on "dOwn" in the second chorus (2:40–2:45).

The exploration of lyrical variation in the second chorus is a broad topic that I plan to address in future research. For the purposes of this article, I have confined my observations to a brief examination of lyrical additions and vibrato.

[20] On the technical prowess and artistic expressiveness of Vaughan's performances, see e.g. Queen 2004; Reeves 2018; Hayes 2017; Shapiro 2015, 15; Niemack 2004, 36; West 1980; Gardner 1961.

Conclusion

The second chorus in vocal jazz represents a pivotal moment for artistic expression and creativity. This practice, involving the repetition of the melody with the same lyrics but with varied interpretations, allows vocalists to showcase their technical prowess and emotional depth. The second chorus serves as a canvas for singers to infuse their personal style into the piece, employing techniques such as rhythmic and melodic variations, interplay shifts, and lyrical expressions. This not only enhances the structural cohesion of the performance but also deepens the listener's engagement by making the melody more recognisable and memorable.

The second chorus is integral to the jazz tradition, rooted in the genre's strong employment of improvisation and variation, reflecting a sophisticated re-engagement with the theme, both honouring its African American musical roots and allowing for individual artistic expression. It provides a unique opportunity for vocalists to reinterpret the original material, adding layers of complexity and nuance. This practice is essential to maintaining the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of jazz, allowing each performance to be a distinct and memorable experience.

I have so far identified 50 examples of recorded songs that include a second chorus, performed by 19 different singers,[21] with examples from nearly every decade from 1918 to 2022. In terms of form, I observed that out of the 50 tracks, only five (10%) contained a vocal scat solo, and only 12 (24%) included instrumental solos. Around 76% of the example tracks on my list include neither an instrumental nor a vocal scat solo, aside from the second chorus, which presents the theme with the same lyrics once more. Hence, another important function of the second chorus is to serve as a variational tool in the form of jazz performances. I interpret this to mean that the second chorus often acts as a substitute for the vocal solo, functioning as an improvisation with words, as in Sarah Vaughan's "Honeysuckle Rose". It can also replace other solos, both instrumental and vocal, serving as the final chorus, as seen in "Just One of Those Things".

From an artistic research perspective, my analysis, as a jazz singer, of Sarah Vaughan's second chorus in jazz songs reveals significant insights into her interpretative techniques and their impact on vocal jazz performance. Vaughan's approach to the second chorus is distinguished by her refined use of rhythmic and melodic variations, which serve not only to embellish the melody but also to create a deeper emotional connection with the audience. Her frequent use of anticipations, delays, augmentations, diminutions, displacements, and triplet rhythms introduces a level

[21] Cyrille Aimée (1 example), Ernestine Anderson (2 ex.), Betty Carter (2 ex.), Jay Clayton (3 ex.), Doris Day (1 ex.), Ella Fitzgerald (7 ex.), Marion Harris (1 ex.), Bill Henderson (1 ex.), Billie Holiday (2 ex.), Shirley Horn (3 ex.), Peggy Lee (1 ex.), Carmen McRae (6 ex.), Mark Murphy (2 ex.), Anita O'Day (2 ex.), Frank Sinatra (1 ex.), Mel Tormé (1 ex.), Sarah Vaughan (12 ex.), Dinah Washington (1 ex.), Nancy Wilson (1 ex.). Please see Appendix 1 for more details.

of rhythmic complexity that is engaging.

Melodically, I reached the conclusion that Vaughan's incorporation of register and octave shifts, along with her use of blues and pentatonic scales, chord tones, and devices such as pedal points, sequences, motifs, and inversions, demonstrates her ability to transform and personalise the melody in a way that is both artistically expressive and technically proficient. These variation gestures allow her to maintain the recognisability of the original theme while infusing it with her own creative flair.

Expressively, Vaughan's use of lyric additions and nuanced vibrato and tonal colour further enhances the emotional depth of her performances. According to my listening experience, her dynamic interplay with the band, characterised by laid-back and even eighth-note phrasing and responsive chordal influences, creates a rich musical conversation that is integral to the overall performance.

In examining recorded performances rooted in improvisation that vary from one rendition to another, I find it very important to complement transcriptions with contextual analysis and listener interpretations in order to grasp the full scope of their impact. Through my transcriptions and analysis of Sarah Vaughan's approach to the second chorus I have gained a deeper understanding of her artistry and character as a jazz singer. Vaughan likely did not consciously think about the tools she employed during her second choruses; instead, she instinctively allowed herself to emerge with the music, "singing with soul", as she explained in her 1957 interview with Don Gold for *DownBeat* magazine (Alkyer 2009, 60). While transcriptions illustrate what singers perform, they do not convey the emotional intent behind their choices; we can only make assumptions about that.

Through this study I aim to contribute to a broader understanding of the significance of the second chorus and to establishing its terminology in the field of jazz. It underscores the importance of this practice in enhancing audience engagement and providing a platform for vocalists to demonstrate their artistic mastery. Vaughan's techniques can very well serve as a model for vocalists, illustrating how the second chorus can be used to elevate a performance through creative interpretation, variation, and technical skill.

This exploration of the second chorus offers valuable insights for both scholars and practitioners of vocal jazz, highlighting its enduring legacy and significance in the broader context of jazz performance. As a jazz vocalist, vocal pedagogue, and composer, this study has enriched my artistic practice and aims to inspire others to explore the creative possibilities of the second chorus.

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