

Bach Fan Writes Pop Songs

Module 4 of *Music: Under the Hood*

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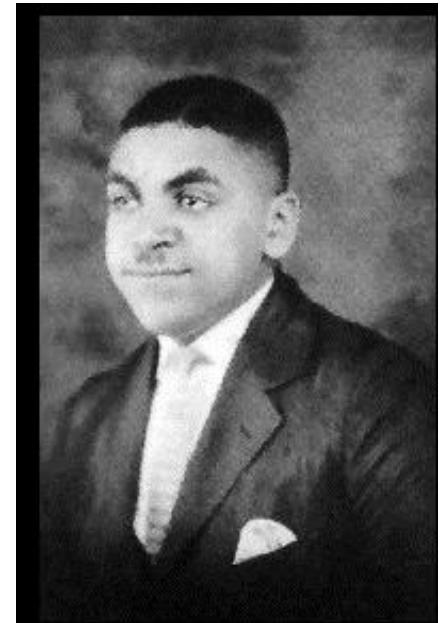
Osher Course
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Outline

- Biography of Thomas Wright “Fats” Waller
- Analysis of *Honeysuckle Rose*

Biography

- Thomas Wright “Fats” Waller, 1904-1943
 - Born in NYC, youngest of 11 children.
 - Studied piano at age 6.
 - Organist at Lincoln Theater, Harlem, at age 14.
 - Studied with James P. Johnson, inventor of stride piano.
 - Published first compositions at age 18.
 - Early death due to pneumonia resulting from overwork.



Biography

- Most famous songs
 - *Ain't Misbehavin'* (1929)
 - *Honeysuckle Rose* (1929)



Biography

- Other...
 - Copyrights on over 400 songs.
 - Kidnapped to play at Al Capone's birthday party (1926).
 - Performed *Ain't Misbehavin'* in film *Stormy Weather* (1943)
 - Son Maurice wrote a [biography](#) (1977).



Biography

- Musical interests

- Known primarily as a formidable piano player

- Especially stride style

- Favorite composer was J. S. Bach

- Played Bach fugues on church organ for his friends.

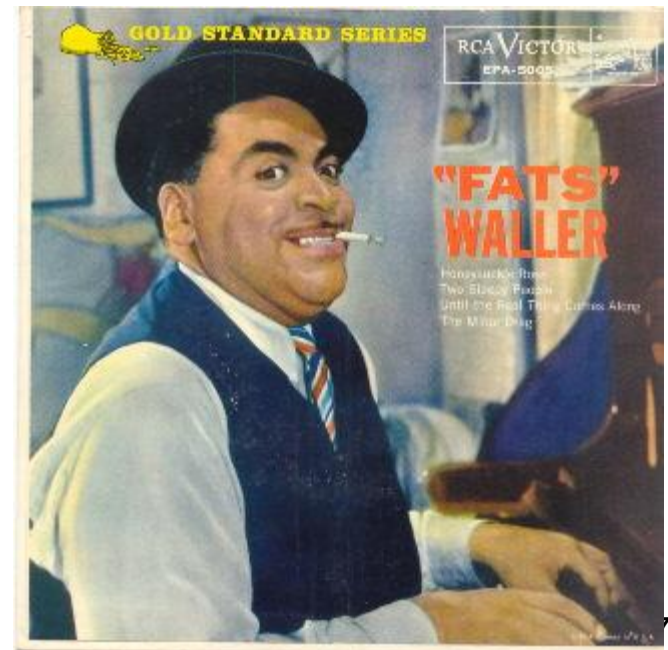
- Wanted to write more “serious” music.

- [London Suite](#), performed in London 1938-39



Honeysuckle Rose

- Illustrates Waller's compositional sophistication.
 - Begins with extended appoggiatura.
 - Same idea later used by George Gershwin.
 - Heavy use of chromaticism
 - Also favored by Bach, as in [Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue](#).
 - A standard feature of Wagner's music.



[Audio file – original recording \(1934\)](#)
[Audio file – original sheet music \(below\)](#)

Honeysuckle Rose (1929)

Thomas "Fats" Waller
Lyrics by Andy Razaf

$\text{♩} = 60$

Piano

The image shows the piano accompaniment for the song 'Honeysuckle Rose'. It consists of three systems of music. The first system is an instrumental introduction. The second system starts at measure 5 and includes the lyrics: 'Ev' - ry hon - ey bee fills with jeal - ous - y when they see you out with'. The third system starts at measure 8 and includes the lyrics: 'me I don't blame them, good - ness knows Hon - ey suck - le Rose.' The music is written in a grand staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 60.

Pno.

5

Ev' - ry hon - ey bee fills with jeal - ous - y when they see you out with

8

me I don't blame them, good - ness knows Hon - ey suck - le Rose.

12

Pno.

When you're pass - in' by flow - ers droop and sigh,

15

Pno.

and I know the rea - son why, You're much sweet - er, good - ness knows,

18

Pno.

Hon - ey suck - le Rose. Don't buy

22

Pno.

sug - ar, You just - have to touch my cup You're my

26

Pno.

sug - ar, it's sweet when you stir it up. When I'm tak-in' sips

30

Pno.

from your tas - ty lips seems the hon - ey fair - ly dips, You're con - fec - tion

33

Pno.

good - ness knows Hon - ey suck - le Rose.

Audio file – original sheet music (below)

Honeysuckle Rose

(1929)

Thomas "Fats" Waller

Lyrics by Andy Razaf

$\text{♩} = 60$

Piano



The piano introduction consists of four measures. The first measure has a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The melody starts on G4, moving to A4, Bb4, and C5. The bass line starts on G2, moving to A2, Bb2, and C3. The second measure continues the melody with a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, Bb4) and a quarter note (C5). The bass line has a triplet of eighth notes (G2, A2, Bb2) and a quarter note (C3). The third measure features a block chord in the treble (Bb4, C5, D5) and a block chord in the bass (G2, A2, Bb2). The fourth measure features a block chord in the treble (Bb4, C5, D5) and a block chord in the bass (G2, A2, Bb2).

Series of dominant 7ths with suspended 3rds

Pno.

5

Ev' - ry hon - ey bee fills with jeal - ous - y when they see you out with

8

me I don't blame them, good - ness knows Hon - ey suck - le Rose.



The piano accompaniment for the vocal lines is shown in two systems. The first system (measures 5-7) is enclosed in a red box. The second system (measures 8-10) is also enclosed in a red box. Within the second system, three specific measures are highlighted with colored boxes: measure 9 is highlighted in blue, measure 10 is highlighted in green, and measure 11 is highlighted in green. The piano part consists of a treble and bass clef. The treble clef contains the melody and chords, while the bass clef contains the bass line. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are written below the treble clef.

Finally resolves to tonic Chromatic progression

Repeat

12

Pno.

When you're pass - in' by flow - ers droop and sigh,

15

Pno.

and I know the rea - son why, You're much sweet - er, good - ness knows,

18

Pno.

Hon - ey suck - le Rose. Don't buy

Chromatic progressions

22

Pno.

sug - ar, You just - have to touch my cup You're my

Chromatic progression

Pno.

26

sug - ar, it's sweet when you stir it up. When I'm tak-in' sips

The image shows a piano accompaniment score for measures 26-29. The right hand features a chromatic progression highlighted in a green box, starting with a D major triad in measure 27 and moving chromatically through E major, F major, and G major in measures 28 and 29. The lyrics are 'sug - ar, it's sweet when you stir it up. When I'm tak-in' sips'.

Pno.

30

from your tas - ty lips seems the hon - ey fair - ly dips, You're con - fec - tion

The image shows a piano accompaniment score for measures 30-32. The right hand features a melodic line with a chromatic progression highlighted in a green box, starting with a D major triad in measure 30 and moving chromatically through E major, F major, and G major in measures 31 and 32. The lyrics are 'from your tas - ty lips seems the hon - ey fair - ly dips, You're con - fec - tion'.

Signature chromatic progression

Pno.

33

good - ness knows Hon - ey suck - le Rose.

The image shows a piano accompaniment score for measures 33-35. The right hand features a signature chromatic progression highlighted in a green box, starting with a D major triad in measure 34 and moving chromatically through E major, F major, and G major in measure 35. The lyrics are 'good - ness knows Hon - ey suck - le Rose.'.

Dominant 7th with suspended 3rd Where it comes from

[Audio file](#)

The image shows a musical score for Piano in common time (C) with a tempo marking of ♩ = 60. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first measure shows a cadence with a dominant 7th chord, highlighted by a red box. The second measure shows a suspended 3rd chord, with the suspended 3rd note circled in red. The third measure shows the resulting chord, also highlighted by a red box. The score is divided into three measures by vertical bar lines.

Cadence
with
dominant 7th

Suspended
3rd

Resulting
chord