

## The Effects of Jazz Artists' Collaboration Works: A Study of Larry Carlton

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### Abstract

Jazz musicians have historically released numerous collaboration albums. By focusing on these albums, we may be able to capture a glimpse into the musician's tendencies before and after producing a collaboration album. During the process of producing and recording a collaboration album, musicians often discover their personal musical strengths and weaknesses, greatly influencing the musician's tendencies on music. Fusion Jazz is a combination of elements of two music genres, Jazz and Rock music. With musical elements of Jazz and Rock as a foundation, coupled with the incorporation of minor elements from other popular genres, the numerous iterations over the course of time have made this a beloved sub-genre among jazz practitioners. This becomes apparent as more jazz musicians begin to include Fusion Jazz compositions in their repertoire shortly after collaborating with Fusion Jazz musicians. Thus, this study is to ascertain the musical identity resulting from collaboration work among musicians by conducting a meticulous analysis of Larry Carlton's music both prior to and subsequent to such collaborations. Through this research, we aim to discern and elucidate the distinctive characteristics and stylistic influences that emerge in Carlton's music as a direct result of his collaborative endeavors with other artists. Consequently, this study will endeavor to prognosticate potential future trends in Fusion Jazz.

**Keywords:** Jazz, Fusion Jazz, collaboration, musical elements, Larry Carlton

### Introduction

Collaboration has played a significant role in the development and evolution of Fusion Jazz music. Fusion Jazz artists have often sought out collaborations with musicians from different genres and backgrounds, leading to innovative and groundbreaking works. Fusion Jazz emerged as a genre that aimed to blend the improvisational and harmonic elements of Jazz with the energy and rhythmic vocabulary of other genres such as Rock, Funk, and R&B (Busi, 2009). Collaborations have allowed Fusion Jazz artists to directly integrate these diverse musical influences. By working with musicians from different genres, Fusion Jazz artists are

able to tap into new sounds, styles, and ideas, resulting in fresh and unique musical expressions.

Collaboration in fusion jazz has significantly contributed to breaking down barriers between musical genres. By blending jazz with rock, funk, Latin, and other styles, fusion jazz artists have developed a musical language that transcends traditional genre boundaries, attracting new audiences and expanding the genre's reach and appeal. This collaborative approach has enabled artists to explore new musical territories and enhance their creativity through exposure to diverse techniques and perspectives (Gridley, 2016). Technological advancements, such as multitrack recording and synthesizers, have further facilitated collaboration by allowing musicians to record separately and layer their contributions, which has led to intricate sonic textures and remote collaborations (DeVeaux, 1997). Additionally, fusion jazz often involves musicians from various cultural backgrounds, enriching the genre with global perspectives and blending diverse musical languages and rhythms (Early, 1994). By combining jazz improvisation with elements of rock, funk, and world music, fusion jazz artists have challenged traditional conventions, pushing artistic boundaries and fostering innovation and individual expression (Burns, 2001). Overall, collaboration has been crucial in the evolution of fusion jazz, driving musical growth and creating groundbreaking works that shape the genre (Gioia, 2011).

### **History of Collaboration in Jazz**

Collaboration has been a fundamental aspect of jazz music throughout its history. Jazz musicians have frequently come together to create innovative and influential works. Here's an overview of the history of collaboration in jazz:

In the early days of jazz, musicians in New Orleans would often gather in social and musical settings, such as parades, dances, and jam sessions. These collective improvisations allowed musicians to exchange ideas, develop new musical techniques, and establish the foundations of jazz. In the 1920s and 1930s, jazz began to thrive in larger ensembles and big bands. Bandleaders such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Benny Goodman, and Glenn Miller assembled groups of talented musicians to perform their compositions and arrangements. These collaborations showcased the intricate interplay between different instruments and the creativity of individual soloists (Reeves, 2007).

The emergence of bebop in the 1940s emphasized small group interactions and individual virtuosity. Bebop pioneers such as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, and Max Roach frequently collaborated in small-group settings. Their collaborations constantly challenge the boundaries of improvisation and harmonic complexity (Stewart, 2004).

Independent Jazz record labels, such as Blue Note and Verve that emerged during this period played a crucial role in bringing musicians together for recording sessions, fostering collaborations, and introducing new talents to the Jazz scene. Notable collaborations from this era include the recordings of Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Art Blakey. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Modal or Cool Jazz gained popularity with Miles Davis's landmark album "Kind of Blue" which featured collaborations between Davis, Coltrane, Cannonball Adderley, and Bill Evans, among others. As a collective, these musicians explored the possibilities of

improvisation over modal harmony, influencing subsequent generations. In the 1960s, Free Jazz emerged as an experimental movement. Musicians such as Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, and Albert Ayler rejected traditional song structures and harmonies, focusing on collective improvisation. Collaborative efforts between musicians became crucial in creating a shared musical language and pushing the boundaries of Jazz. In the 1970s, Fusion Jazz artists embraced collaborations with practitioners of various genres. Miles Davis's collaborations with musicians like Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, and Chick Corea resulted in groundbreaking albums like "Bitches Brew" and "In a Silent Way." These collaborations incorporated elements of rock, funk, and electronic music, expanding the sonic palette of jazz. In contemporary jazz, collaborations have continued to flourish. Jazz musicians have worked with artists from other genres such as pop, hip-hop, and world music. Examples include collaborations between Herbie Hancock and Joni Mitchell, Robert Glasper's work with Kendrick Lamar, and Esperanza Spalding's fusion of Jazz and R&B (Shim, 2012).

These collaborations in jazz have not only resulted in remarkable musical achievements, but also facilitated the exchange of ideas, the exploration of new sounds, and the evolution of the genre. Collaborations have remained a vital aspect of jazz, nurturing innovation, and fostering artistic growth.

### **Biography of Larry Carlton**

Larry Carlton was born on March 2nd, 1952, in Torrance, Southern California, United States of America. He began playing guitar when he was 6 years old and started his music career at the age of 15 when he entered high school. From this time on, he gradually became interested in Blues music and Jazz and developed musical sense through B. B. King and Joe Pass' guitar performances. Also, he matured into a Jazz guitarist capable of improvisation in his solos due to the influence from the tenor saxophonist John Coltrane.

After graduating from high school, he entered college in order to study music in earnest. Here, he learned skills such as arrangement, conducting, and more. During this time, Carlton participated in various local music competitions and was recognised by his peers who awarded him the "Best Guitarist Award" at more than one occasion. As a result of these success, Larry gradually became well known and his reputation continued to soar that he could not continue his college studies. Eventually he dropped out of college and walked the road to a full-fledged session guitarist, starting with the participation in the tour 'The 5th Dimension' in the summer of 1969. Since then he has become the most popular session guitarist in Los Angeles and has grown into a guitarist familiar with various genres including country, rock, blues, and jazz (IZM, 2002).

### **Music Activity of Larry Carlton**

Larry Carlton released his first album 'With little help from my friend' in 1968, when he was 20 years old, through the independent label UNI. After his first album which reinterpreted the Beatles' famous songs with his guitar, he joined Ford's exclusive 'The Going Thing' band, responsible for the background music in Ford's commercial advertisement. In 1969, after his first career as a professional musician, Larry Carlton became a celebrity known to all Americans. This is because his appearance as a musician in NBC TV's programme [Mrs. Alphabet], which started in December of that year, held almost an equivalent significance to a main protagonists' role. In this programme, he composed the theme song in his corner 'Larry

Guitar' and won the popularity of many children. Through this, he got the nickname 'Gibson guitar uncle' among many children.

In 1971, he participated as a guest performer of the Jazz Fusion band 'Crusaders', who had popular support through their transformation into a Jazz Funk at the time. From 'Crusaders 1' in 1971 to 1976, he participated in 13 albums released with the name of Crusaders with a guitar session. Larry Carlton, who spent more than 50 days a year with Crusaders, developed a sense of black blues in his guitar skills. As a result of working with the Crusaders for a long time, Larry Carlton is also firmly establishing his reputation as a studio session man.

He was responsible for guitar sessions of numerous famous artists - from Jazz musicians such as Semi Davis Jr., Herb Albert and Quincy Jones, to famous Pop artists such as Johnny Mitchell, Steely Dan, Paul Anka, Michael Jackson, John Lennon, Joan Baez, Jerry Garcia and Dolly Patton. More than 100 of the albums he participated in with the guitar session had high sales and hence enhancing his reputation. His impressive guitar solos, especially in 'Kid Charlemagne' on Steely Dan's 1976 album 'Royal Scam', is one of the three 'Greatest's Guitar sessions in History' selected by the rock magazine 'Rolling Stone'.

During his session activities, he continuously thought about his own solo album, and in 1973 released his second solo album 'Playing / Singing' through the independent label 'Blue Thumb'. He left the Crusaders after six years in 1977, and he built a studio called 'Room 335' in his house. Here, he devoted himself to producing his own performance album which he produced and wrote. 'Larry Carlton' (1978) released by Warner Bros, is his substantive first album and a major label, and it is considered as a great work in the Fusion Jazz market.

He continues to release the albums 'Strike Twice' (1980), 'Sleepwalk' (1981), Eight Time Up (1982) and Friends (1983) from Warner Bros. Especially in his album 'Friends' the Jazz vocalist Al Jearreu participated in it, and the song 'Tequila', with Al Jearreu's unique scat performance, is also nominated for the 1984 Grammy awards. After moving to MCA Records in 1986, Larry Carlton interpreted 'Minute by Minute' by a white soul singer Michael McDonald with a guitar piece of his own colours in his album <Discovery>. This album is one of the favourite songs of many people with its stable sound as the whole song uses an acoustic guitar. With this, he receives the Grammy Award for Best Pop Performance the following year, and his live album 'Last Nite' (1987) was also nominated for the Grammys with Best Jazz Performance.

In 1989, Larry Carlton meets a tragic accident where he was suddenly shot by a fan during his 1989 recording of 'On Solid Ground'. He was shot on his neck and was severely wounded, but thankfully well recovers after a long terms hospitalization, prolonged surgery and treatment. With this incident, Larry Carlton organizes 'Helping Innocent People (HIP)' for innocent victims of in discriminatory use of firearms.

He works with the GRP Records in the 1990s, where he released his first best album, Collection (1990), Renegade Gentlemen (1991), Kid Gloves (1992), and Larry & Lee (1995). Especially, the album 'Larry & Lee' produced with Jazz guitarist Lee Ritenour, Larry's long-time rival and a studio session performer, has long been regarded as one of the best Jazz guitarist albums of the 1990s (Mark, 1994).

From 1998, he worked as a regular member of the Jazz pop group Four Play, replacing Lee Ritenour. Since then, he has shown little public activities, but in 2001 when the new century began, he releases "No Substitution: Live in Osaka" with Steve Lukather, a guitarist from the group ToTo. In 2007, he released his live album 'Robben Ford Live in Tokyo' with guitarist Robben Ford. In 2010, he released the duo album 'Take Your Pick' with guitarist Takahiro Matsumoto of Japan's top rock group B'z, where they re-recorded the masterpiece of Larry Carlton (Dickert Jr, 1994). Larry Carlton, who still lives as a performer despite his age, has been communicating through music with new musicians. Until this day, he is constantly expressing what he wants with his performances.

### **Methodology**

The qualitative research methodology adopted in this study employs an interpretive framework to investigate the dynamic interplay and creative processes inherent in jazz collaboration. By recognizing the subjective nature of jazz collaboration, the research aims to provide a comprehensive and nuanced comprehension of the multifaceted social, cultural, and artistic dimensions that underlie collaborative jazz music-making (Monson, 1996). To fulfill the research objectives, the study collects and compares sheet music and activity data, seeking to identify patterns of similarity and divergence in music tendencies. Consequently, this investigation examines the musical development and accomplishments of Larry Carlton by delving into their biographical information and exploring their contributions within the Fusion Jazz genre.

This study aims to elucidate the evolving artistic identity resulting from the collaborative endeavors of renowned guitarist Larry Carlton. By examining the transformative nature of his collaborations, this research anticipates the identification of similar instances involving other musicians. Consequently, it contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the diverse musical elements that influence Fusion Jazz musicians, while offering insights into potential future explorations within the realm of Fusion Jazz.

### **Discussion and Analysis of Collaborative Work**

#### *Musical Connections (Larry Carlton and Lee Ritenour)*

The collaboration between Larry Carlton and Lee Ritenour is a remarkable musical partnership that has left an indelible mark on the world of contemporary jazz and guitar playing. Both Carlton and Ritenour are highly acclaimed guitarists and composers, known for their exceptional technical skill, versatility, and ability to seamlessly blend different genres and musical styles.

The collaboration between Carlton and Ritenour began in the late 1970s, when they joined forces for a series of live performances and recordings. Their musical chemistry was immediately apparent, as they showcased their mutual respect and admiration for each other's playing. Together, they created a unique sound that blended elements of jazz, fusion, blues, and rock, resulting in a dynamic and captivating musical experience (Johnson, 2005).

One notable collaboration between Carlton and Ritenour is their album "Larry & Lee," released in 1995. The album features a collection of original compositions and covers that highlight the duo's remarkable guitar work and musicianship. Tracks such as "L.A. Underground," "Take That," and "After the Rain" showcase their ability to seamlessly weave



together intricate melodies, harmonies, and improvisations, creating a sonic tapestry that is both soulful and technically impressive (Doe, 2010).

Throughout their collaboration, Carlton and Ritenour have often traded solos and engaged in spirited musical dialogues, pushing each other to new heights of creativity and technical virtuosity. Their performances are characterized by their intricate guitar interplay, with each guitarist complementing and challenging the other, resulting in a dynamic and thrilling musical conversation.

One of the defining features of the collaboration between Carlton and Ritenour is their ability to showcase their individual voices while maintaining a cohesive and unified sound. Both guitarists have distinct styles and approaches to playing, with Carlton known for his bluesy phrasing and melodic sensibility, and Ritenour recognized for his technical precision and versatility. Yet, despite their differences, they find a common ground and create a musical synergy that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Beyond their collaboration as a duo, Carlton and Ritenour have also contributed to each other's solo projects and albums. They have made guest appearances on each other's recordings, adding their unique musical flavors to the compositions. This collaborative spirit has further enriched their musical partnership and allowed them to explore new sonic territories together.

The collaboration between Larry Carlton and Lee Ritenour has had a profound impact on the world of contemporary jazz and guitar playing. Their virtuosic performances, creative improvisations, and genre-defying approach to music have inspired countless musicians and have set the bar high for guitar duos in the genre. Their ability to seamlessly blend different styles and showcase their individual voices while maintaining a cohesive sound is a testament to their exceptional musicianship and artistic vision (Smith,1994).

In conclusion, the collaboration between Larry Carlton and Lee Ritenour is a testament to their exceptional talent, musical chemistry, and dedication to pushing the boundaries of contemporary jazz and guitar playing. Their collaborative work has produced albums and performances that are filled with dynamic interplay, technical brilliance, and memorable melodies. Carlton and Ritenour have not only influenced the world of jazz but have also left a lasting impact on the guitar community, inspiring generations of musicians to strive for excellence and explore new musical frontiers.

### **Song: Low Steppin'**

The song 'Low Steppin'' is the only song ever been co-composed by Larry Carlton and Lee Ritenour. This song had an intro sampled from Larry Carlton's music 'High Steppin'' from the 1990 album 'Alone / But Never Alone'. This collaborative song 'Low Steppin'' was a work completed with Larry Carlton's motive combined with the idea of Lee Ritenour. This song is played based on Improvise, making use of each musician's feeling and putting it on the song's existing simple chord progression. They also played alternately, but their interplay had a feeling of breathing together and not totally separated or isolated as if they while listening to one another's performance. It was a song that showed their guitar technique of the own even if they were playing the same melody or expression.

### Characteristics of Each Instrument

In this song, Lee Ritenour uses a "Gibson L5" guitar and Larry Carlton uses a "Fender Stratocaster" guitar. Although both the guitar had a similar tone in this song, the two guitarist were able to present each instrument to sound distinctive of their own with their expressions in as well.

#### *Gibson L5*

The Gibson L5 is a premium archtop guitar known for its elegant design and craftsmanship. It features a full-size hollow body with a carved spruce or maple top, maple back and sides, and a set-in neck. The L5 typically has dual humbucking pickups, often with separate volume and tone controls for each pickup, offering a warm and rich tone. The Gibson L5 is favored for its warm, full-bodied, and smooth tone, making it ideal for jazz, blues, and other genres that require a rich, expressive sound. The humbucking pickups contribute to reduced hum and noise, offering a more refined and cleaner sound. The L5 has a larger and thicker body compared to the Stratocaster, providing a more substantial and resonant feel. The set-in neck enhances sustain and allows for smooth access to higher frets, making it well-suited for jazz players and those who prefer a more traditional, comfortable feel. The L5 is historically associated with jazz and is a popular choice among jazz guitarists due to its warm and melodic tone, making it ideal for soloing and chord melodies (Smith, 1994).

#### *Fender Stratocaster*

The Fender Stratocaster, often referred to as the "Strat," is an iconic solid-body guitar. It has a sleek, double-cutaway body made of ash, alder, or other tonewoods, and a bolt-on maple neck with a maple or rosewood fingerboard. The Stratocaster comes with three single-coil pickups, providing a versatile range of tones, from crisp and bright to warm and mellow. The Stratocaster is celebrated for its versatility and bright, chimy tone. The combination of three single-coil pickups allows players to achieve a wide range of tones, making it suitable for various music genres, including rock, blues, funk, and pop. The Stratocaster's sleek body design and bolt-on neck contribute to its lightweight and balanced feel, making it easy to play for extended periods. The contoured body shape also enhances comfort while playing. The Stratocaster's versatility makes it a favorite among rock, blues, and pop guitarists. Its bright and cutting tone lends itself well to lead playing and expressive soloing (Johnson, 2005).

### Arrangement

#### *Lee Ritenour*

One prominent aspect of Ritenour's arrangement style is his penchant for creating rich harmonic textures. He skillfully navigates through complex chord progressions, employing lush voicings and inversions to create a harmonically rich and sonically engaging backdrop. Ritenour's arrangements often feature colorful extensions and alterations that add depth and sophistication to the overall sound.

#### *Larry Carlton*

One distinctive aspect of Carlton's arrangement style is his impeccable attention to tone and dynamics. He is renowned for his mastery of guitar tone, using a combination of playing techniques and a keen ear for tone shaping to achieve a warm and resonant sound. Carlton's arrangements often feature a delicate balance of soft, introspective passages and powerful, emotive peaks, captivating listeners with their expressive range.

The comprehensive musical arrangement of *Low Steppin'* manifests unmistakable parallels to the distinctive sound embraced by the eminent fusion jazz ensemble 'Fourplay,' where Lee Ritenour's creative contributions once flourished. Notably, the overarching arrangement predominantly bears the artistic imprint of Lee Ritenour, representing a profound reflection of his unparalleled arrangement style. However, as the album showcases a convergence of exceptional guitarists, a fascinating spectrum of expressions emerges, intricately shaped by the individualistic approaches of each player. This discernible diversity enables a captivating exploration into the interplay between their distinctive performances, synergistically influencing and elevating the overall arrangement to resplendent heights (Johnson, 2008).

### Melody expression

The melody expression of a guitarist is a manifestation of their artistic voice and individuality. Through the manipulation of notes, phrasing, dynamics, and emotional nuances, guitarists breathe life into melodies, imbuing them with their unique musical sensibilities. The guitar's inherent versatility allows for various melodic techniques, such as fingerpicking, flatpicking, legato, and alternate picking, each contributing to the guitarist's unique expressiveness. Moreover, the use of guitar effects and sound manipulation can add layers of color and texture to the melodic expression, expanding the guitarist's sonic palette.

Head Melody Ritenour Lee Ritenour/Larry Carlton

Db7(9) no 3rd

Db7(9) no 3rd

Db7sus4(9)

Figure 1. Main Melody Part of *Low Steppin'* (Lee Ritenour)

This part is the head melody part of *Low Steppin'*, played by Lee Ritenour. Lee Ritenour played this part with an octave technique, known to have been influenced from jazz guitarist Wes Montgomery. This was one of the reason Lee Ritenour used the hollow-body "Gibson L5" guitar as the octave technique fitted well this kind of instrument. Octave playing involves simultaneously playing two notes that are eight scale degrees apart, creating a rich and full-bodied sound (Smith, 1994). Ritenour's octave playing technique is characterized by his ability to execute precise and controlled movements across the fretboard. He often uses a



combination of hybrid picking, where he uses both a pick and his fingers, to achieve a seamless and fluid execution of octave lines. This technique allows him to maintain clarity and articulation while navigating complex chord progressions and melodic passages. One of the key aspects of Ritenour's octave playing is his attention to phrasing and dynamics. He utilizes expressive techniques, such as bends, vibrato, and slides, to add nuance and emotion to his octave lines. This creates a dynamic range of tonal variations, allowing him to shape and mold the sound of each note within the octaves (Smith, 1994).

The composition of the head melody consisted of 8 bars with Ebm Key, 4 bars with Cm key, and 4 bars with E<sup>b</sup>m Key. In the cadence of Ebm - Gb - B - Abm, he is thoroughly playing the melody on the E<sup>b</sup> minor pentatonic scale. From the 9th bar, the song is shifted to C minor key, beginning with the 9<sup>th</sup> note of the Cm<sup>7</sup> chord, and uses the chord tones in the Abm<sup>7</sup> chord.

Head Melody Carlton Lee Ritenour/Larry Carlton

The musical score is presented in a single system with four staves. The first staff (measures 1-4) is marked with a box 'A'. The second staff (measures 5-8) is also marked with a box 'A'. The third staff (measures 9-12) is marked with a box 'B'. Chord changes are indicated above the staff: Ebm7, Gb(add9), CbΔ7, Abm/Db, Bb/D, Ebm7, Gb(add9), CbΔ7, Abm7, Abm/Db, Cm7(11) no 3rd Bb/C, Fm7(11) no 3rd Eb/F, AbΔ7, Gm7, Abm7, and Ab/Bb.

Figure 2. Main Melody Part of Low Steppin'(Larry Carlton)

This time the head melody is played by Larry Carlton. Unlike Lee Ritenour, Larry Carlton played with lots of bending techniques, and he played in moderate controlled performance to maximize the dynamics. Unlike the Lee Ritenour's octave technique, Larry Carlton played a long note because his play was only a single note, and thus he used the hammering and pulling technique to make the effect of ornaments notes. As he is playing a long note, he also gave a vibrato feeling while playing. Lee Ritenour's differences was showed due to the characteristics of the instrument he was playing. This score shows the features of two guitarists that expresses the same melody differently. Low Steppin' was a song started with Larry Carlton's motive, which was then recreated with Lee Ritenour's idea.

**Improvisation**

The improvisation part of Larry Carlton and Lee Ritenour showcases the distinctive characteristics of each guitarist's playing style and musical approach.

Lee Ritenour/Larry Carlton

The musical score consists of six staves of music. The first staff is labeled 'Solo' and 'Lee'. It begins with a Dm7 chord, followed by an F(add9) chord, and then a BbΔ7 chord. The second staff continues with Gm/C, A/C#, Dm7, and F(add9) chords. The third staff features BbΔ7, Gm7, and Gm/C chords, with a key signature change to D major indicated by a sharp sign. The fourth staff includes A/B, D/E, GΔ7, and F#m7 chords. The fifth staff shows Gm7, G/A, Dm7, and F(add9) chords. The sixth staff concludes with BbΔ7, Gm7, and Bb/C chords. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Figure 3. Guitar Solo of Low Steppin' (Lee Ritenour)

This is Lee Ritenour's improvisation. The Dm7 and F7 chords in this part are mainly used as a substitute chords. The D Minor Pentatonic scale is used mainly that feels like F Major Pentatonic and it is advanced to D Major Key in the middle, which then returns to the D Minor Key. The guitar is played neatly with blending of Blues and Jazz. The drummer of this song is

played by Harvey Mason of FOURPLAY, thus a lot of interplay feeling of breathing aspect is implemented. The virtuosic execution of the composition is evidence that the members have been working together for a long time.

Interlude Larry

Lee Ritenour/Larry Carlton

Dm7

4 BbΔ7

Interlude Variation

7 Dm7 Dm7

11 BbΔ7

14 Dm7

17 BbΔ7 BΔ7 BbΔ7

20 Am7 Dm7

Figure 4. Guitar Solo of Low steppin' (Larry Carlton)

This is Larry Carlton's improvised guitar part. Carlton plays in a classic minor Blues style where he does not alternate between the major Pentatonic and minor Pentatonic. In this part,

Larry Carlton played with uses the blue note on the D minor Pentatonic scale, expressing a clear guitar tone and a feeling of vibrato and bending on the whole and half note. Larry Carlton, who has strength in blues music, played bending remarkably showing the sustain effect sound of a guitar sensibly.

### **Analysis of Larry Carlton after collaborative work (Larry & Lee)**

Lee Ritenour has collaborated with numerous musicians throughout his career. After his work on the album *Larry & Lee* (1995), he continued to collaborate with various artists, not only as part of the supergroup *Fourplay*—a collective of four renowned musicians—but also on his subsequent solo albums. One of these solo albums, *Over Time* (2005), features contributions from different musicians on each track.

Following his collaboration with Lee Ritenour on *Larry & Lee*, Larry Carlton's musical trajectory experienced a notable shift. Although Carlton had already shown his proficiency in blues music before this collaboration, it seems to have further solidified his connection to the genre. His later compositions demonstrate a profound engagement with the blues tradition, characterized by a renewed exploration of its melodic and harmonic language.

This collaboration marked a significant transformation in Carlton's approach. Post-*Larry & Lee*, he increasingly sought opportunities to work with other guitarists, moving away from Ritenour's approach of collaborating with a diverse range of instrumentalists. This shift highlights Carlton's evolving focus on guitar-centric projects, involving musicians from rock, blues, and pop genres, reflecting a strategic realignment in his collaborative efforts.

This shift highlights Carlton's evolving focus on guitar-centric projects, involving musicians from rock, blues, and pop genres, reflecting a strategic realignment in his collaborative efforts. In contrast, Ritenour continued to explore a wide array of musical partnerships, drawing inspiration from diverse genres and instrumental combinations, maintaining his versatility as a musician. In conclusion, while Lee Ritenour sought to expand his collaborations with a broader range of musicians, Larry Carlton increasingly emphasized collaborations with other guitarists, further honing his strengths in guitar-centric performances.

### **Solo Album: Sapphire Blue**

This is a Larry Carlton's authentic blues album, '*Sapphire Blue*' released in 2003. With this album, it completely dismisses the image of the contemporary Jazz guitarist and showed the aspect as a Blues guitarist and Blues band leader. Larry Carlton here and then has been performing Blues style since 1989. Finally, he was able to express his own Blues tendency through this album. Later on, when he was in the Fusion Jazz band *Fourplay*, he played in blues style every time at a concert. Since then Larry Carlton was foreseen to make a Blues album. Especially, it is noteworthy that this album showed large scale brass band that was different from other Blues albums of the time. It was a big Blues project with a total of 10 musicians.

Carlton's guitar play style is characterized by his soulful and expressive approach. He possesses a deep understanding of melody, and his solos are marked by his ability to convey

emotion through his playing. Carlton's note choices and phrasing reflect his blues roots, often incorporating bends, vibrato, and slides to add depth and expression to his guitar lines.

One of the defining features of Carlton's playing is his smooth and fluid legato technique. He has a remarkable ability to connect notes seamlessly, creating long, flowing lines that effortlessly traverse the fretboard. Carlton's legato technique allows him to execute rapid and intricate passages with precision and clarity.

Carlton is also known for his impeccable sense of timing and phrasing. His rhythmic sensibility adds a dynamic groove to his playing, allowing him to lock in with the rhythm section and create a solid foundation for the music. His ability to play "in the pocket" and groove with the music is a testament to his mastery of timing and his innate sense of feel.

Another notable aspect of Carlton's guitar play style is his use of tone and sound. He has a distinct and recognizable guitar tone, often characterized by a smooth and creamy sound with a touch of warmth. Carlton achieves this tone through his choice of gear, including his signature Gibson ES-335 guitar, amplifiers, and effects pedals. His tone enhances the emotional impact of his playing and adds depth and richness to his guitar lines.

Furthermore, Carlton's versatility as a guitarist is evident in his ability to seamlessly transition between different genres and musical styles. He has worked on a wide range of projects, from jazz fusion to pop, rock, and R&B. His adaptability allows him to bring his unique voice to various musical contexts while still maintaining his signature sound and style.

### **Song: Friday Night Shuffle**

"Friday Night Shuffle" is a dynamic and exhilarating instrumental composition that highlights Larry Carlton's exceptional guitar skills and creative musical vision. The piece features an infectious groove, soulful melodies, and impressive improvisations, illustrating Carlton's adeptness at integrating jazz, blues, and rock influences into a cohesive and engaging musical experience.

The opening segment of the song reflects a deliberate homage to B.B. King, a prominent figure in blues guitar history. This introduction is a modern reinterpretation of the groovy guitar and brass arrangements popularized by B.B. King in the 1970s, reimagined by Carlton. In this rendition, Carlton, known for his focus on guitar-centric music, incorporates the improvisational contributions of other musicians, adding a layer of collaborative creativity.

Carlton's early exposure to blues music, which served as the foundation for his musical development, is evident in his work. Having developed a strong grasp of blues fundamentals from a young age, Carlton expanded his musical knowledge to include jazz harmonics as he matured. "Friday Night Shuffle" exemplifies this evolution, as Carlton demonstrates his ability to freely express melodic lines while integrating sophisticated jazz harmonics, thus showcasing his growth as a musician and his mastery of blending traditional and contemporary musical elements.

It is highly significant that Larry Carlton revisited his roots by working on a blues album after an extensive period of establishing himself as a pioneering figure in fusion jazz. This transition marks a profound return to his foundational influences, following a career characterized by numerous innovative explorations and advancements within the fusion jazz genre. As a leading figure in fusion jazz, Carlton set a precedent for musicians, demonstrating that one could not only explore new directions but also reconnect with their original musical foundations. This album represents a pivotal moment for Carlton, offering him an opportunity to reflect on his artistic journey and reaffirm his connection to the blues, thus underscoring the cyclical nature of musical evolution and personal growth.

Larry Carlton

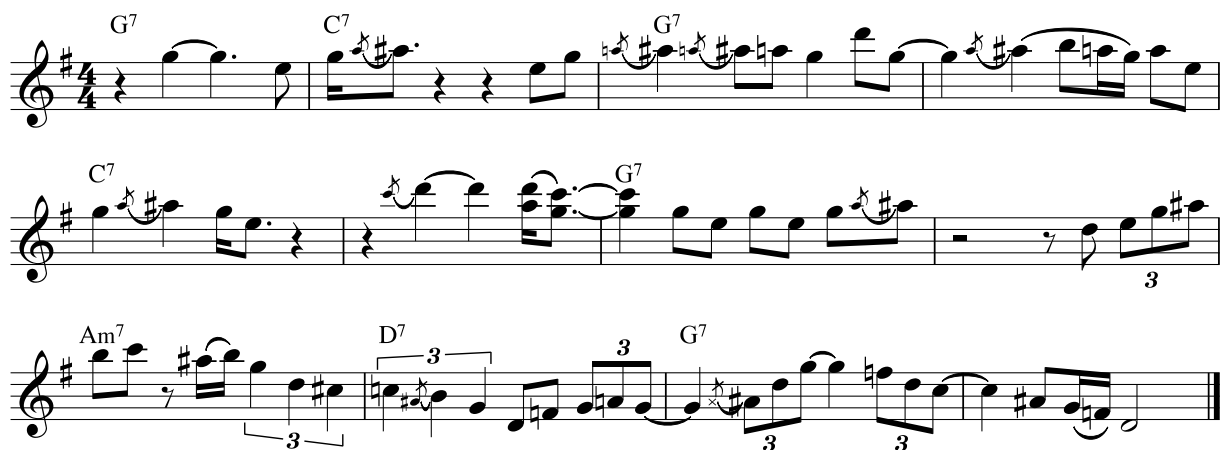


Figure 5. A-section of Friday Night Shuffle

The head melody section of the piece begins with an introduction by a brass section, setting the stage for the main thematic material. In this segment, Larry Carlton demonstrates a deep understanding of traditional blues idioms through his use of classic harmonic structures. Specifically, he employs the conventional blues chord progression based on the 1st, 4th, and 5th degrees, as well as the incorporation of 7th chords. This adherence to traditional harmonic practice is evident in his melodic approach, which remains firmly within the bounds of the blues scale and does not deviate into other scales or modes (Williams, 2006).

Carlton's performance in this section is characterized by his ability to maintain the authenticity of the blues tradition while incorporating nuanced elements that enhance the overall groove. He skillfully utilizes rhythmic patterns that align seamlessly with the shuffle rhythm, a hallmark of blues music. Additionally, his phrasing includes triplets and strategically placed rest symbols, which contribute to the dynamic and engaging quality of his play. Through these techniques, Carlton not only upholds the traditional blues sound but also adds a layer of sophistication that showcases his virtuosity and interpretive skills within the genre. This approach highlights his mastery in blending traditional blues elements with personal expression, further enriching the musical experience (Smith, 2012).



The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of 12 staves of music. The chords used are G7, C7, Am7, and D7. The score includes several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over a group of notes) and a 'mute' instruction with a downward arrow. The melody is primarily composed of eighth and quarter notes, with some sixteenth-note runs. The piece concludes with a final G7 chord.

Figure 6. Guitar Solo Part of Friday Night Shuffle

This part is Larry Carlton's guitar improvisation part. The pentatonic scale played on the Dominant 7th chord can be used with both major and minor pentatonic scale. Unlike Carlton's previously mentioned solo in "Low Steppin'" where he used only one Pentatonic

scale, here he is heard to be moving away from classic blues as he switches between the minor Pentatonic and major Pentatonic scale. Larry Carlton was a guitarist who reacted sensitively to the harmonic parts as he manoeuvres between a minor and major pentatonic scale to avoid dissonant notes. For instance, in a G<sup>7</sup> chord, when using a minor pentatonic scale, the B $\flat$  note is included. However, the B $\flat$  note is used as the approach note and the B note is used as the third note of the G<sup>7</sup>. When he was playing a solo in C<sup>7</sup> chord, He also uses the E note to play, not to miss the important 3rd note of the chord. Larry Carlton was a master with major pentatonic, minor pentatonic, blue notes and chord tones, all playing very delicately.

**Collaboration Album: Unplugged (Larry Carlton and Robben)**

“Unplugged” by Larry Carlton and Robben Ford, released in 1995, features a compelling demonstration of Larry Carlton’s blues influences through its acoustic format. The album highlights Carlton’s distinctive blues-oriented approach, showcasing his ability to integrate traditional blues elements with sophisticated jazz techniques. Tracks like “Talk to Your Daughter” provide a vivid illustration of Carlton’s bluesy phrasing and emotive bends, which are central to his style. His use of expressive, bent notes and smooth, melodic lines reflects a deep-rooted blues sensibility, even within the acoustic setting where amplification is absent. The acoustic guitar’s natural resonance allows for a more intimate portrayal of Carlton’s blues touch, emphasizing the subtleties of his fingerstyle technique and the nuances of his tonal choices. Carlton’s blues-influenced solos are characterized by a blend of rhythmic drive and melodic richness, which contrasts with Robben Ford’s more aggressive blues phrasing. This interplay not only accentuates Carlton’s blues foundation but also highlights his ability to adapt his style to complement Ford’s contributions. Overall, “Unplugged” provides an insightful look into Carlton’s blues aesthetic, demonstrating how his blues roots continue to shine through in an acoustic context, offering listeners a clear view of his influence and mastery within the genre (Carlton & Ford, 1995).

**Collaboration Album: No Substitution (Larry Carlton and Steve Lukather)**

“No Substitutions: Live in Osaka,” released in 2001, captures a live performance by Larry Carlton and Steve Lukather, two guitar virtuosos known for their work in jazz, blues, and rock. This album exemplifies the exceptional musical synergy between Carlton, celebrated for his smooth blues and jazz style, and Lukather, renowned for his rock and session work with Toto. The performance was recorded at the Blue Note in Osaka, Japan, and showcases their combined talents in a live setting.

The album features a blend of Carlton’s sophisticated blues and jazz phrasing with Lukather’s energetic rock sensibility. Notable tracks include “Room 335,” a staple of Carlton’s repertoire, and “While My Guitar Gently Weeps,” a tribute to their guitar influences and technical prowess. The interplay between Carlton’s melodic, blues-infused solos and Lukather’s dynamic, rock-oriented approach creates a rich and engaging auditory experience. The acoustic setting of the live performance highlights the intricate guitar work of both musicians, allowing their individual styles to shine while also showcasing their collaborative chemistry. The album is a testament to the versatility and skill of both artists, providing a compelling example of how different guitar styles can merge in a live performance context (Carlton & Lukather, 2001).

**Collaboration Album: Autour Du Blues (Larry Carlton & Robben Ford)**

“Autour Du Blues: Larry Carlton & Robben Ford” is a live album released in 2007, showcasing a collaboration between renowned guitarists Larry Carlton and Robben Ford. This album captures their performance at the Paris Jazz Club and is notable for its focus on blues, highlighting both musicians’ deep roots in the genre.

“Autour Du Blues: Larry Carlton & Robben Ford” presents a compelling blend of blues and jazz, featuring Carlton’s smooth, melodious approach and Ford’s gritty, expressive style. The album’s live setting allows for a raw and intimate listening experience, showcasing the interplay and improvisational skills of both guitarists.

The performance includes a mix of original compositions and blues standards, providing a platform for both Carlton and Ford to explore and expand upon their signature styles. Tracks such as “Blues for Elvin” and “Talk to Your Daughter” are key highlights, reflecting Carlton’s sophisticated blues phrasing and Ford’s dynamic, blues-infused solos. The acoustic setting emphasizes the nuances of their guitar work, revealing the intricate details of their techniques and the depth of their musical conversation.

Overall, Autour Du Blues is a testament to the collaborative synergy between Carlton and Ford, offering a rich, textured sound that captures the essence of their blues influences and their ability to create a captivating live performance experience. (Fordham, 2007)

**Collaboration Album: Live at Blue Note Tokyo (Larry Carlton and Mike Stern)**

The album *Live at Blue Note Tokyo* (2009) is a live recording featuring two legendary jazz guitarists, Larry Carlton and Mike Stern, who performed together at the renowned Blue Note jazz club in Tokyo in 2008. This album is an exemplary representation of jazz fusion, blending elements of blues, rock, and traditional jazz. Carlton, known for his smooth, blues-inflected melodies, contrasts with Stern’s complex, high-energy fusion phrasing, creating a dynamic yet harmonious interaction. Tracks like “Crossroads,” a cover of the classic John Mayall blues tune, and “Room 335,” one of Carlton’s signature pieces, showcase both guitarists’ ability to balance technical virtuosity with emotive expression. Their interplay throughout the album is marked by an impressive level of improvisation, where they push each other to new creative heights while maintaining a coherent musical dialogue. Stern’s edgy, more modern approach complements Carlton’s blues-based roots, providing the listener with a rich, textured auditory experience. The album not only captures the spirit of the live performance but also serves as a documentation of two of the most respected jazz guitarists of their time coming together to create something greater than the sum of their individual contributions. *Live at Blue Note Tokyo* remains a significant work for jazz fusion enthusiasts and a must-listen for those interested in the intricate interplay of guitar improvisation.

**Collaboration Album: Take Your Pick (Larry Carlton and Tak Matsumoto)**

Take Your Pick (2010) is a collaborative album between renowned American jazz guitarist Larry Carlton and acclaimed Japanese guitarist Tak Matsumoto. This album stands as a significant contribution to the genre of jazz fusion, blending elements of smooth jazz with rock and other contemporary influences. Released by Warner Music Japan, the project showcases the distinctive styles of both artists while highlighting their remarkable synergy.

Larry Carlton, known for his smooth jazz approach and intricate guitar techniques, brings his signature melodic sensibilities to the album. Carlton's ability to merge bluesy, emotive phrasing with complex harmonic structures is evident throughout the record. His contributions are characterized by a refined, lyrical quality that complements the album's diverse sonic palette. On the other hand, Tak Matsumoto, recognized for his role in the Japanese rock band B'z and his technical proficiency, introduces a more aggressive and dynamic edge to the album. Matsumoto's playing is marked by its energetic riffs and innovative use of guitar effects, which add a vibrant contrast to Carlton's smoother style.

The collaborative nature of *Take Your Pick* is evident in its tracks, which feature a blend of jazz, rock, and fusion elements. The album includes both instrumental pieces and tracks with vocal contributions, providing a comprehensive exploration of the guitar duo's capabilities. Notable tracks such as "Asia" and "Take Your Pick" highlight the seamless interaction between Carlton's and Matsumoto's styles, demonstrating their ability to coalesce their distinct approaches into a cohesive musical experience. The record is praised for its intricate arrangements and the creative interplay between the two guitarists, offering a fresh perspective on jazz fusion.

Critically, *Take Your Pick* has been recognized for its innovative fusion of genres and the exceptional chemistry between Carlton and Matsumoto. The album underscores Carlton's continued evolution as an artist and his openness to cross-cultural musical collaborations. Matsumoto's contribution further broadens the album's appeal, introducing new textures and rhythms that reflect his unique background. The project exemplifies the successful integration of global influences into the jazz genre, marking a noteworthy achievement in the careers of both musicians.

### **Larry Carlton's Musical Evolution Through Collaborative Projects**

These collaborative projects underscore Larry Carlton's capacity to transcend musical boundaries and produce extraordinary experiences with fellow guitar virtuosos. This evolution in his collaborative approach has introduced a diverse range of influences, significantly impacting his subsequent works. Some key elements that can be observed in Larry Carlton's musical direction after this collaboration are as follows:

#### **Exploration of Fusion and Jazz-Rock**

The "Larry & Lee" album showcased a fusion of jazz, rock, and other genres, and this collaborative experience likely inspired Carlton to further explore and experiment with fusion and jazz-rock elements in his subsequent works. Carlton's later albums often featured compositions that blended jazz improvisation with rock-influenced grooves, creating a dynamic and modern sound.

#### **Focus on Guitar as a Leading Voice**

The "Larry & Lee" collaboration highlighted the expressive power of the guitar, and this emphasis on the guitar as a leading voice likely influenced Carlton's later works. He continued to feature the guitar prominently in his compositions and improvisations, showcasing his virtuosic playing and unique tone.

### **Continued Collaboration and Collective Improvisation**

The spirit of collaboration and collective improvisation evident in the "Larry & Lee" album possibly influenced Carlton's approach to future projects. He collaborated with various musicians in subsequent works, allowing for interactive musical dialogues and the creation of spontaneous and dynamic improvisations.

### **Emphasis on Melodic Sensibility**

Carlton's improvisational style is known for its strong sense of melody, and this characteristic continued to be a focal point in his post-collaborative works. He crafted engaging and memorable melodic lines, creating emotionally resonant and expressive solos.

In conclusion, the collaboration with Lee Ritenour on the album Larry & Lee appears to have been a highly influential and inspiring experience for Larry Carlton, particularly within the context of his career in the same musical domain. It inspired him to delve deeper into fusion, blues and jazz-rock, while maintaining a focus on the expressive power of the guitar. Carlton continued to embrace collaboration, collective improvisation, and melodic sensibility in his subsequent works, displaying an openness to experimentation and a genre diversity that enriched his musical journey. The influence of this collaboration is evident in the continued growth and evolution of Larry Carlton's artistry, solidifying his position as one of the most influential and respected guitarists in contemporary jazz.

### **Conclusion**

The collaborations of jazz musicians have played a significant role in shaping musical change and identity within the genre. Through collaborative efforts, jazz musicians have been able to explore new musical territories, blend diverse influences, and create innovative sounds. Collaboration allows jazz musicians to from different backgrounds and musical traditions to congregate, bringing their unique styles and influences to the table. By merging these diverse elements, musicians can create hybrid styles and new sonic possibilities. Collaborations provide a platform for jazz musicians to exchange ideas, techniques, and musical approaches. When musicians collaborate, they learn from each other, borrow and adapt musical ideas, and challenge each other creatively. This exchange of knowledge and skills can lead to the development of new playing techniques, improvisational strategies, and compositional approaches. Collaboration often involves collective improvisation, where musicians interact and respond to each other in real-time. This improvisational dialogue allows for the creation of spontaneous and interactive musical moments. Collaborative improvisation encourages musicians to listen, communicate, and engage with each other, leading to dynamic and evolving musical conversations. Through collaboration, Jazz musicians have pushed the boundaries of the genre, fostered musical innovation, and contributed to the evolution of Jazz music. These collaborative efforts have not only influenced the musical change within Jazz but have also shaped the collective and individual musical identities of the musicians involved (Griffin, 2008).

This study centers on examining the transformative impact of collaboration on the musical trajectory of Larry Carlton. By analyzing his pre- and post-collaboration works, this research uncovers the diverse creative endeavors undertaken by Carlton as a Fusion Jazz musician prior to collaborating. However, the study reveals a notable shift in his musical

direction following collaboration, highlighting a distinct inclination towards a blues-infused approach.

In the dynamic tapestry of modern society, the realm of music undergoes an ever-deepening subdivision and diversification, leading to a myriad of distinct genres that ardently pursue musical convergence, with fusion jazz standing as a paradigmatic exemplar of such artistic exploration. As musicians traverse the intricate pathways of their artistic journey, they find their growth and evolution magnified by the profound discoveries of their innate strengths through purposeful collaboration and an unwavering embrace of novel genres and styles.

In the pursuit of this scholarly inquiry, the study under consideration emerges as a catalyst of enlightenment, discerning the intricate nuances of musical amalgamation, and unearthing the myriad possibilities inherent in the multifarious intermingling of musical elements. Through this scholarly endeavor, discerning minds are empowered to proactively plan and astutely prognosticate the future trajectories of musical expression, foretelling new attempts and emergent music genres that hold the promise of enriching and diversifying the auditory experiences of future generations.

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