

# About the Author

Eric J. Morones hails from Racine, Wisconsin. He attended the University of North Texas for jazz studies, later attending the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, where he earned a degree in Communications.

Now living in Los Angeles, Eric has played/recorded/toured with Kelly Clarkson, The Brian Setzer Orchestra, The Lucky Band, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, Drake Bell, Bobby Caldwell, Steve Tyrell, Maureen McGovern, Jack Sheldon, Bill Holman, Will Kennedy, Chad Wackerman, and many Los Angeles bands. Television appearances include *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, *Dancing with the Stars*, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, *The American Music Awards*, *The Today Show*, *Live with Regis and Kelly*, and *Woodstock '99*. His sax playing is featured on *Big Fish Audio Sample DVD Suite Grooves 1 and 2*.

A busy writer, he is the author of *101 Saxophone Tips*, *Paul Desmond Saxophone Signature Licks*, *25 Great Saxophone Solos*, *25 Great Flute Solos*, *25 Great Trumpet Solos*, *25 Great Clarinet Solos*, and *Saxophone Workout*. He also penned a bi-monthly column for the *Saxophone Journal* and produced two Masterclass CDs: "How to Play Pop, R&B or Smooth Jazz" and "How to Play the Blues."

Eric's first solo jazz album—*About Time!*—was released by Arabesque Records. As the artist SHY, he has released two vocal albums, *Throwback* and *Shy*.

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# Preface

*25 Great Clarinet Solos* is a collection of some of the most renowned and significant clarinet solos and melodies ever recorded. The songs themselves are classics: famous, recognizable, and heard almost everywhere in the world. For the person who has always wanted to learn those famous clarinet melodies (“licks”), it’s all here!

Solos/songs were chosen using various criteria: popularity, acquirable publishing rights, musical content, familiarity, and inherent musicality. Some are harder than others, and some are short and simple. Extensive research was done to provide accurate information about the solos, songs, equipment used, recording, musicians, and players. (In some instances, that info was simply unavailable.)

A few solos are performed on bass clarinet. Since bass clarinet sounds an octave lower, playing the parts an octave lower on the B<sup>b</sup> clarinet will match the correct pitch. Certain solos contain some precarious high notes, so study proper high-note fingerings (included at the end of the book) and practice appropriate high-note exercises.

## About the Audio

The accompanying audio tracks attempt to sound like the original recordings. The time code shown at the start of each solo transcription indicates the point where the solo begins on the original recording. There are two versions of each solo: 1) clarinet solo with accompaniment; 2) accompaniment only. This allows you to hear how the solo sounds, then to play it yourself with the accompaniment track. Though our goal was to replicate all solos and performances, there’s nothing like the real thing, so we encourage you to listen to the original recordings.

All music on the recordings is performed by:

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Eric J. Morones | clarinet, bass clarinet, saxophones, keyboards |
| Austin Byrd     | piano  |
| Lucky Diaz      | guitar   |
| Anders Swanson  | bass   |
| Brennan Murray  | drums  |
| Nathan Morones  | trumpet  |

Orchestral arrangement of *Rhapsody in Blue* by Kyle Newmaster

Produced by Eric J. Morones

Recorded and Mixed by Nic Chaffee at Woodshed Studios, Long Beach, California

Thank you to Jeff Schroedl and Hal Leonard LLC, to the wonderful musicians on this project, and to all the amazing clarinetists who played these great solos that will last a lifetime!

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# Canal Street Blues 1923



Johnny Dodds

*“It was my ambition to play as he did. I still think that if it had not been for Joe ‘King’ Oliver, jazz would not be what it is today.”*

—Louis Armstrong

## Johnny Dodds

The first solo of the bunch is proof that great performances will last a century!

Johnny Dodds was born on April 12, 1892 in Waveland, Mississippi. He received his first clarinet around age 16, with early jazz pioneer Sidney Bechet as his first influence. Dodds eventually moved to New Orleans where he practiced during his job lunch breaks.

Like many New

Orleans musicians at the time, he sharpened his music reading and playing skills working in dance bands aboard Mississippi riverboats. In 1920, he relocated to Chicago, where he replaced Jimmie Noone in the powerful and popular King Oliver’s Creole Jazz Band. A young Louis Armstrong, who was also in Oliver’s band, later invited Dodds to play an important role in his first recordings—as a leader with legendary Hot Seven. “Canal Street Blues” and “Potato Head Blues” are just a few examples of famous performances from the band.

In total, Dodds eventually played on nearly 220 recordings with various bands and orchestras, including Kid Ory’s Creole Orchestra, Papa Celestin’s Original Tuxedo Band, Jelly Roll

Morton’s Red Hot Peppers, and his own Johnny Dodds and his Chicago Boys’ Orchestra. His unique clarinet tone was known for its wide vibrato, strong attacks, deep blues inflections and roots, and flowing diatonic melodies.

Dodds died of a heart attack on August 8, 1940 in Chicago.

## King Oliver



King Oliver

Joseph Nathan “King” Oliver was born on December 19, 1881 in Aben, Louisiana. As a trumpet player and bandleader, he was one of the most important early figures in jazz. Oliver began playing cornet as a child in a neighborhood brass band. He would later become the teacher of the young Louis Armstrong. As a bandleader and composer, he wrote many classic popular jazz hits,



# Canal Street Blues

including “Dippermouth Blues,” “Sweet Like This,” “Doctor Jazz,” and “Canal Street Blues.” Oliver became famous for using mutes, derbies, bottles, and cups to alter the sound of his cornet. By 1922, he was considered the “King of Jazz,” leading the legendary King Oliver and His Creole Jazz Band.

Oliver died in Savannah, Georgia on April 10, 1938.

## How to Play It

“Canal Street Blues” is credited to both Oliver and Lil Hardin Armstrong, Louis

Armstrong’s second wife. It was the second title from King Oliver’s Creole Jazz Band’s first recording session, held on April 5, 1923 in Richmond, Indiana.

To play it, you will have to use note bends or scoops, performed by dropping your jaw to lower the pitch, and then back up while still maintaining the note. A wide and shaky vibrato (a style of the 1920s) is played on all long, sustained notes. Play with an open “oh” embouchure to give you a wider, open-sounding Dodds tone! Dodds used a Selmer Albert-System clarinet, which allowed greater flexibility in his sound and made it easier to bend notes and create smears. Some higher notes, including the high-range G, are

required in measures 13-14. Use straight-eighth notes rather than the usual swing-eighth notes.

### Vital Stats

**Clarinet player:** Johnny Dodds

**Song:** “Canal Street Blues”

**Album:** *King Oliver’s Creole Jazz Band*

**Age at time of recording:** 41

**Clarinet used:** Selmer Albert-System

**Mouthpiece:** unknown



1:21  
Fast (♩ = 180) (♩ = ♪♩)

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# Rhapsody in Blue 1924

## Ross Gorman



Photo courtesy Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division

Ross Gorman

This composition puts the “classic” in classical! One of 20th-century music’s most famous pieces just happens to feature a famous clarinet intro—that was made purely by accident!

Ross Gorman was born on November 18, 1890 in Patterson, New Jersey. He studied music with his musician father, John R. Gorman, appearing with him as part of the vaudeville act The Kiltie Trio. In 1919, Gorman joined Harry Yerkes’ Band, recording several albums with Columbia Records. Forming his own band, Novelty Syncopators, they recorded many novelty songs, the

most famous of which was “Barkin’ Dog Blues;” it featured the clarinet imitating a barking dog.

The well-known band leader Paul Whiteman hired Gorman for his orchestra in late October 1920, where he replaced Gus Mueller; he stayed with the band for five years. It was during this period that he was featured in the premiere performance of George Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* (February 12, 1924). He eventually formed his own orchestra, appearing in *The Earl Carroll’s Vanities 1925 Revue*. Throughout the 1930s, he performed a lot of radio and studio work and was a staff musician for NBC, recording with many bands, including the boy-wonder trumpet player B. A. Rolfe.

Ross Gorman died on February 27, 1953.



## George Gershwin

Jacob Bruskin Gershowitz (George Gershwin) was born on September 26, 1898 in Brooklyn, New York. When the family bought an upright piano in 1910, he quickly learned to play it; by age 15, he was writing his own songs. His first published song came out at age 17. He and his wordsmith brother Ira wrote several successful musicals, including the hits *Oh, Lady Be Good*, *Funny Face*, and *Strike Up the Band*. Gershwin’s many contributions to the Great American Songbook include “Fascinating Rhythm,” “I Got Rhythm,” “Summertime,” and “A Foggy Day” (see page 27). Among his other compositions are the opera *Porgy and Bess*, the orchestral tone poem *An American in Paris*, and, of course, *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Gershwin died of a brain tumor on July 11, 1937 in Hollywood, California.

## How to Play It

In 1924, Paul Whiteman (1890-1967), the country’s best-known band leader from the 1920s to the 1940s, tapped Gershwin to write a “jazz concerto” for a concert he planned to present at New York’s Aeolian Hall. (Whiteman had been impressed by his earlier collaboration with Gershwin on *George White’s Scandals of 1922*.) Entitled “An Experiment in Modern Music,” it promised to broaden concertgoers’ perceptions of what serious American music could sound like.



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*“There was something different about him. Everybody in the band knew they were working with a genius.”*

–Barney Bigard on Duke Ellington

## How to Play It

Written by Ellington and Irving Mills in 1928, “The Mooche” comes from Ellington’s “jungle style,” African-themed music period, echoing other songs like “East St. Louis Toodle-oo” and “Black and Tan Fantasy.” The name, as Ellington explained, referred to “a certain lazy gait peculiar to some of the folk of Harlem.”

There are two solos here:

Solo 1 is the famous clarinet melody of the song, played in harmony with other clarinets. (The lead part is omitted for the backing track). Use a very wide vibrato and employ an open “oh” embouchure position, with an open throat.

Solo 2 is Bigard’s low-register “woody” solo. Try to overblow the clarinet, but avoid squawking or cracking any notes. Again, use lots of wide vibrato. Most of the lines are slurred, which should be helpful in playing.

## Vital Stats

**Clarinet player:** Barney Bigard

**Song:** “The Mooche”

**Album:** unknown

**Age at time of recording:** 22

**Clarinet used:** Albert system

**Mouthpiece:** unknown



0:09

Slow drag (♩ = 124) (♩♩ =  $\overset{\frown}{\text{3}}$ )

Dm Db

5 Ebdim Dm

9 Bb Dm

13 Bb Db C+

By Duke Ellington and Irving Mills

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# 25 GREAT CLARINET SOLOS

Transcriptions • Lessons • Bios • Photos

From Benny Goodman and Jan Van Halen to Kathy Jensen and Buddy DeFranco, take a look at the genesis of pop clarinet. Includes solo transcriptions in standard notation, lessons on how to play them, professionally recorded audio performances, play-along backing tracks, biographies, instrument information, photos, history, and more.

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The price of this book includes access to audio tracks online, for download or streaming, using the unique code on page 1.

Canal Street Blues  
**Johnny Dodds**

Rhapsody in Blue  
**Ross Gorman**

The Mooch  
**Barney Bigard**

Sugar Foot Stomp  
**Russell Procope**

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