

WE'RE OFF TO SEE THE WIZARD

Playing order: ● × □ △

★ =

◆ =

○ = optional

Intro:

C GΔ⁹no3 C F#D7

Em Em C#D7 G C/D

Bm Am-D G GΔ7 C/9-Cm6

G/9sus CΔ7 D Em A9 D7

should be ◆'s

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C#9b5 no3
B+/C#

optional sustains

A9b5 no3
B+/A

optional

9

B

EΔ7

F#

B

BΔ7

D

F#9 no3

11

The song begins here:

B

BΔ7

D/E

F#

B

BΔ7

B6

B

13

We're off to see the Wiz - ard, _____ the

E

F#6

B

B7

E

EΔ7

D#m7

D#m7/11

15

won - der - ful Wiz - ard of Oz. _____ We hear he is a Wiz of a Wiz if

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17

G#m7/11 C#7 C#m7/11 F#7 E F#7 B G#m7
 or twice

ev - er a Wiz there was. If ev - er, oh ev - er a Wiz there was, the

19

C#m7 F#7 B B7 E E#7 D#m7 G#m7
 or E, E, D# melody

Wiz - ard of Oz is one be - cause, be -

21

C#7 F#7 C#7 F#7 F#m#7 F#9 F#7
 moving lines.....
 opt: try a D# grace note
 or ♯s

cause, be - cause of the won - der - ful things he does.

23

A E D F#7 B B#7 B6 B
 optional sustains

We're off to see the Wiz - ard, the

25

F#7 Em6 B/D# F#7 F#7 Em6 B
 or

1. won - der - ful Wiz - ard of Oz! We're won - der - ful Wiz - ard of Oz!

2.

WE'RE OFF TO SEE THE WIZARD

Red Greene
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* = [] [] [] 1 f (This piece is in 12/8 time) ♦ = [] [] []

INTRO

Other counting for the 100 above notes or symbols

OPT. SUSTAINS

OPT.

the song begins here

or twice

or E E D F# MELODY

OPT. SUST. 5

We're Off to See the Wizard

Ted Greene Arrangement — 1991, January 12

Compilation pages by Paul Vachon with assistance from
James Hober, Mike de Luca, David Bishop, and Barbara Franklin.

Ted loved film scores, especially musicals, and he seems to have had a great love for sweet, simple songs such as those often found in Walt Disney and other “children” type movies. Perhaps it was his love for the purity and innocence that these films often express in their soundtracks that attracted him. The classic *The Wizard of Oz* falls into this category, with Ted’s arrangement of *We’re Off to See the Wizard*, written by Harold Arlen (lyrics by E.Y. Harberg) in 1939.

Barbara Franklin wrote:

Ted’s love for the earlier Walt Disney or similar film musicals was generated by the tender, charming, and optimistic nature that the music and stories engendered. He also loved that many of these films included a subtle yet wise underlying life-lesson message. The entire experience brought him tremendous joy. But the songs in particular would stimulate all these joyful, light-hearted sensations, and he was inspired to learn them so he could recreate and express the joy and cheerfulness he felt inside and share that with others. This music emphasizes Ted’s quote about playing music that touches others’ hearts the way it had touched his.

James Hober wrote:

I’ve been playing “We’re Off to See the Wizard” lately. This is in what I would call Ted’s “kid style.” That is to say, although it is a sophisticated arrangement with wonderful inner voice movement, there is a kind of beautiful innocence to it, a child-like quality that can renew the child in you.

Special thanks to James Hober, Mike de Luca, and David Bishop for proofreading the notation, checking chord names, and providing some musical insights. We’ve incorporated their thoughts into the comments below.

On his original page Ted indicated at the top two symbols (a star and a diamond) with specific rhythmic figures to be played for each one. These instructions apply *only for this arrangement*. (In his other arrangements, the star and diamond are sometimes used as part of his “playing order” of moving lines on a chord diagram.)

He also wrote, “This piece is in 12/8 time.” However, the original music score has it in 6/8. The only reason I bring this up is because the final chord of the “song” portion really should fall at the beginning of the measure, as it appears in the original score. In Ted’s version this chord falls on beat 7 of the 12/8 bar. This occurs in measure 25 of the compilation score. In addition, the original piece doesn’t end right on the I chord but instead continues for a few measures with a short Tag (in 6/8). Nonetheless, Ted’s arrangement works great as it is.

We added a 1st and 2nd ending so you can repeat the song, even though Ted’s arrangement doesn’t include this, and we added an F#7 chord in the 1st ending to bring you back to measure 14.

As usual Ted did not provide chord names, as this was for the student to add. We’ve taken the liberty of adding them, although some chords could be analyzed differently.

There’s a 13-bar introduction to this piece before the song begins. At first we thought that this was taken directly from the movie soundtrack, but after watching the film with an ear open for this passage, we concluded that Ted must have written this introduction himself. It’s a wonderful intro to the main theme.

Here’s what Barbara Franklin wrote about Ted’s intros and the “Wizard” intro:

Ted told me that he worked hardest and put his greatest effort into writing and arranging the intros for the songs on his Solo Guitar album. Not only was Ted very fond of these intros, but he was also very proud (yes, he did say that!) of his efforts and how well the intros complemented the songs.

Considering what Ted told me about composing intros, and from what I know about him, it is more than likely that Ted composed the intro for “We’re Off to See the Wizard.” When Ted wrote an arrangement it was all-inclusive.

James Hober wrote about this:

Amazing how long this beautiful intro is before the song actually starts. But that’s the way I heard Ted play things at Spazio’s on Sunday mornings: interesting intros, then the tune in two or three keys and feels. Incredible!

Some comments and fingering suggestions: (referring to the compilation pages)

Measures 4 and 5: Notice that measures 4 and 5 have a D bass pedal with the progression G – C – Bm – Am – D, then moving to G in measure 6. This is just a simple variation on diatonic step-wise triads. Nice.

Try this fingering for the G to C/D to Bm to Am → D: 1,2,2,2 (keep 1st finger planted in full barre) to 1,4,2,3 (lift 4th finger for X note on string 4, then use the 2nd finger to play the A note [square] on string 5, then play the D again on string 6).

Now, keep the 1st finger barred and play the Bm as: 1,3,2,4 then slide down a step on strings 4, 3, and 2 to the Am → D as: 3,2,4. Then lift your 3rd finger and get the X note [A] with the first finger. Barre if you wish. Get the square [F#] with the 2nd finger and the triangle [D] with the 3rd finger. A bit awkward to coordinate this smoothly, but it works well once your fingers know what to do.

From David Bishop:

I hear mm. 4 and 5 all with a pedal D, even the Am, even though the D doesn’t arrive until the last eighth note of m. 5. This would make the last half of m. 5 a D9 chord.

Measure 6: James observed:

Ted was an outstanding proofreader of his own material. It’s rare to find errors in any of his stuff. Nevertheless, I’m pretty sure that the third chord grid of the second line, the G major chord, should have diamonds instead of stars.

Yes, that’s correct—they should be diamonds, and we’ve indicated that in the notation page.

Finger the C/9 to Cm6 in measure 6 and the G/9sus in measure 7 as follows:

3,2,1,4 to 3,1,4 (you might find it convenient to barre the 8th fret with finger 1 here). Then, going on to the G/9sus: 3,1,4,2 (with full barre at the 7th fret). Lift finger 2 off for the B note on the top string, then add it back on string 2 for the G note. Stretch your 4th finger over to get the Db note on string 4. Try to keep that B note on the top string sustained throughout this move.

For the smoothest transition between these two moves, just slide your full barred first finger down from the 8th fret to the 7th fret while keeping your third finger planted on the G note on string 5. In fact, you may wish to do a full barre on the G and Gmaj7 chords that occur prior to the C/9 and use the same technique of keeping the 3rd finger planted and sliding the barre up one fret. This will make all of these chord ring longer and sound better.

Measures 8–10: For a smooth transition from the D7 in measure 8 to the C#9(b5) in measure 9, finger it this way: 3,4,1,1 to 3,4,2,2. Just slide down a half-step on strings 6 and 4. Use your first finger to play the bass notes on the 6th string. Repeat this same fingering for the A9(b5) in measure 10.

From David Bishop:

Measure 8 to 9: Resolution of the leading tone (F#) at the end of m. 8 to G (our perceived tonic) on the downbeat of m. 9, with the basic harmony moving down by half step. Beautiful deceptive resolution of the V of G major to launch us into the transition!

Measures 9 and 10: Comments from David Bishop about these two measures:

Wow, two wonderful measures. I think I would go with the C#9(b5) and A9(b5) labels. (On beat 4 of m. 9 you could very well put B+ and on beat 4 of m. 10, G+. Or just consider those two bass notes (B and G) as passing sevenths.)

It's almost a complete whole-tone collection on C#, with one missing note, E# (F). As you know, this is very slippery material (just like a series of diminished chords), and I'm not surprised Ted used it at this point as the transition to the new key. One really loses a sense of being in a key in these measures, making it easy to slip smoothly into, in this case, the new key of B. (It's all very swirly, isn't it?...just like the twister in the Wizard of Oz!)

For some insight into these chords, I would direct the interested reader to Chord Chemistry, end of Section 8, discussions of Dominant 9th b5th Chords and Dominant 9th #5b5 Chords (pages 51 and 52 in my edition); also Section 11, Part XIX, discussion of Dominant chords with b5ths and / or #5ths (page 64 in my edition). Note where Ted writes "...the last chord in a case like this [i.e., moving parallel dominant-type chords 2, 3, or 4 frets] will most often be the V7...of the [key] you are leading to...." On the downbeat of m. 11, the B/F# stands in for the F#7 (V7 of B). And, as always, he stresses to "be careful to resolve nicely," which, of course, he does in this section.

James Hober observed:

There's no question that measures 9-10 are tricky to analyze. I agree with David Bishop that one of the two whole tone scales is the source material for this passage. And I like his descriptions that the passage is slippery and swirly like a twister. However, I am not hearing clear dominant chord function here.

True, Ted would have instantly known the homonyms of the first chord of measure 9:

C#9b5 no 3rd = G(7)#5b5 = Eb7+ = A9b5 no root

and similarly the measure 10 chord:

A9b5 no 3rd = Eb(7)#5b5 = B7+ = F9b5 no root.

And I definitely hear dominant function INTO measure 9 from the D7 chord to the chord that can be understood as G(7)#5b5.

But then we are in augmented/whole tone mystery land, which old cartoons used for things like hypnotism, and Dukas used to magical effect in "The Sorcerer's Apprentice." Ted likely felt such references. Measure 10 is simply measure 9 transposed down a major 3rd = two whole tones, the same way you would move from one augmented voicing to another.

From measure 10 to measure 11, there is one tendency tone motion: the pitch G down to F#. The rest of the voice leading is common tone connection. So to claim dominant function, you have to be hearing the G as the b7 of the A9b5 chord resolving downward with no other voice leading motion happening.

One also could hear scale degree b6 to scale degree 5 in the key of B as what's called an augmented sixth chord in classical theory or as what Ted called an approach chord. But there's no augmented sixth (E#) above the G. So that kind of understanding only reflects the pull of the G pitch down to F# and isn't an explanation for the other common tone connections.

So while I can see/hear some support for the dominant chord names, I'm not fully convinced.

To me, the simplest analysis is two measures of suspenseful B augmented chord that resolves to a B major chord and key. Under this is whole tone bass motion, with strong rhythmic emphasis given to accented passing tones, to increase the misterioso effect.

In chord symbols: B+/C#/B/C#/B and then B+/A/G/A/G.

Measures 11, 12 and 13: James Hober wrote:

In bars 11, 12 and 13 Ted's intro features several false starts, that is, little hints of the melody to come. It's as if he's cueing the singer, i.e. the higher octave melody when the tune begins in earnest.

Measure 12: Finger the D to F#9 as 3,4,2,1 to 2,4,2,1. For the transition, simply slide fingers 4 and 1 down one fret...don't lift them off the fretboard.

Measures 15 and 16: On the repeat, if you want a variation, try this: B then B/A (A, F#, B – strings 6, 4, 3) then E/G# (G#, E, B – strings 6, 4, 3), then continue with the Emaj7 as Ted wrote but add an open E bass note on string 6.

Measure 16: James Hober wrote regarding the last chord in measure 16:

Is it D#m7? The chord in question sounds like it's changing from the previous chord. [David Bishop agrees.]

F#/9? How does that move to G#m11?

Call me crazy but I hear G#9sus with 9 in the bass. Hmmm.

Call this chord what you may, but when transitioning to this chord from the previous D#m7, keep your 4th finger planted on string 2.

Measure 18: Use the George Van Eps 5th finger technique (side of your first finger, or “slant barre”) to catch the A# note on the top string.

Measure 19: David Bishop wrote about the final chord in measure 19:

I realize that the C# occurs on the beat, but the D# is the chord tone here, with C# functioning as an accented passing tone between B and D#. To label it as a B/C# might be misleading, since it indicates that the C# is part of the chord (at least to me), and this is not the case.

Measure 21: This whole measure is essentially just C#7 with some chromatically ascending lines. Yes, chords are created if you analyze them vertically, but it's easier to see it all as a dominant chord move. Nice, Ted!

Measure 22: David Bishop wrote about this measure:

On beat two, I wonder if C#+/F# would make more sense here. I'm essentially hearing an entire measure of F#7 with moving inner voices, and labeling that chord a min/maj7 bothers my theorist brain. But that's what it looks like, so I can accept your analysis.

Measure 23: If you find it slow and a bit awkward to play the scale with chords for the first half of this measure, you might try playing just the notes alone (and throw in an open E bass note on string 6). Finger the E as 2,2,2,1 and then use finger 4 for the A# note.

Measure 26: I really want to hear a B in the bass for the final chord. [David agrees!]

James adds:

To get the B in the bass that your ear craves for the final chord, just remove your finger from the D# and tap on the 7th fret B bass note with the right hand thumb. Ted commonly did that kind of thing.

I hope you find the notated compilation pages and these comments helpful. So kick back, roll up your sleeves and dig in, letting the ‘kid’ inside you enjoy learning and playing this fine guitar arrangement by Mr. Ted Greene!

~ Paul