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## THE ELEMENTS INFLUENCING THE MUSICAL DIRECTION OF FUSION JAZZ ARTISTS: A STUDY OF LEE RITENOUR

Jin Jae Young<sup>1</sup>, Marzelan Salleh<sup>2\*</sup>, Camellia Siti Maya Mohamed Razali<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Music, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
Email: yannjin101@siswa.um.edu.my

<sup>2</sup> Department of Music, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
Email: marzelan@um.edu.my

<sup>3</sup> Department of Music, Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 Serdang, Malaysia  
Email: camellia@upm.edu.my

\* Corresponding Author

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### Abstract:

Traditional Jazz is characterized by swing rhythm, the use of blues notes, syncopation, and improvisation. Jazz music has gone through evolution, birthing multiple iterations of a genre. One such iteration is Fusion Jazz as a combination of Jazz and Rock music. This music has undergone changes, adopting musical elements from various genres such as Funk, R&B, Blues, and other popular music, including the occasional use of computer programming. This study analyzes and studies the elements that have influenced fusion jazz artists. During the process of producing, recording, and performing, musicians often discover their personal musical strengths and weaknesses. This greatly improves or changes the musician's tendencies on music. This research is to explore the life, career, and musical contributions of guitarist Lee Ritenour, with a specific focus on his impact on the jazz and contemporary music scenes. This study aims to examine the influence he exerted on the fusion jazz world by analyzing the various musical elements present in his compositions. Thus, this study will also predict possible future trends of Fusion Jazz.

### Keywords:

Jazz, Fusion Jazz, Musical Elements, Musician, Lee Ritenour

## Introduction

### *Background*

Jazz is music genre that originated in United States by the African American communities in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Gushee, 2002). Jazz music incorporated a lot of musical elements from Africa, and it is not an exaggeration to say that the feelings and values flowing in Jazz are the uniqueness to Black culture and musical expressions (ServiceNational, 1993). However, a lot of Western musical expressions were also influenced in Jazz as the African American lived in a White society (Roach, 1972). Thus, the music genre Jazz can be seen as a new music born from the combination of Black and White elements.

Throughout many years, Jazz has experienced numerous developments. Jazz was first performed by musicians in New Orleans, United States as early as late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Before that the musical form was usually a simple singing that was spread among the African American. There were Negro Spiritual, Gospel Song, Blues, and Work Songs all containing unique musical forms and expressions of their culture, which were later remade by the early Jazz musicians into Jazz songs (ServiceNational, 1993). In the early history of Jazz, Rag Time where piano solo held the main role emerged in the 1900s. Swing Jazz reminiscences a big band style during the 1930s. Then in the early 1940s, Bebop, which later evolved into Modern Jazz in the mid 1940s. In the late 1940s, the music further evolved into a soft style Cool Jazz, Hard-bop and Cool Jazz. In the 1950s, Brazilian-influenced jazz such as bossa nova and samba-style jazz emerged. Then came Fusion Jazz which appeared in the 1960s as Rock music boomed with the widespread use of the electric guitar and synthesizer in popular compositions.

In this sense, Jazz has been undergone multiple stages of evolution, introducing the challenge to clearly distinguish the genre. The musicians' creative attempts and their social influences, each age gave birth to a new Jazz sub-genre. New Jazz genre was also created through various combinations and technological advances within the huge framework of music. Throughout the development of the Jazz genre, a myriad of musicians have continuously experimented with their craft. Their musical skills and creative endeavours are not only achieved by their own abilities because Jazz is a music that requires two-way communication with other musicians while playing their songs. In addition, with the advancements of science and technology, electronic musical instruments have introduced new sonic possibilities, diversifying the ways of expression. In this way, Jazz has developed harmonically, through the fusion of social differences, the fusion of technology and music making, and the fusion of works through collaboration between musicians. Therefore, this study hopes to serve as a guideline for future Fusion Jazz music studies.

The primary aim of this study is to conduct an in-depth investigation into the life, career, and noteworthy musical endeavors of acclaimed guitarist Lee Ritenour, with a particular emphasis on his profound influence within the realms of jazz and contemporary music. The research will encompass a meticulous examination of Ritenour's formative influences, the evolution and distinctiveness of his musical style, his extensive collaborations with esteemed musicians, his comprehensive discography, and his significant contributions to the progression of jazz fusion and contemporary guitar performance. Furthermore, this research endeavor will scrutinize the profound impact Ritenour has had on the fusion jazz genre by thoroughly analyzing the various musical elements employed in his compositions. Ultimately, the objective of this study is to present a comprehensive and erudite overview of Lee Ritenour's artistic journey, thereby

illuminating his indelible contributions to the domains of guitar musicianship and fusion jazz music.

## Literature Review

### *Fusion Jazz*

Over the evolution of Jazz music, Jazz musicians have consistently adopted and integrated elements from other then-popular genres. By drawing from other styles such as the blues, ragtime, dance songs, marching bands and classical music, certain vocabularies from these styles, whether melodic, rhythmic or structural, were eventually fused with Jazz musicians' proclivity for improvisation (BowdenMarshall, 2019). This constant synthesis and evolution are what kept Jazz active and loved by the audience. Jazz had the ability to absorb changes that was occurring and following the trend of music.

With the emergence of RnB in the 1950's also came to the creation of Hard-bop Jazz, a combination of RnB and Jazz. During this same era, similar attempt to meld genres were happening with Afro-Cuban music and Jazz, eventually birthing the foundational language for the Latin Jazz genre. Thus, it may be concluded that Jazz has always found itself merging with other genres into various audience pleasing genres.

When the Rock genre emerged in the 1960's, Jazz musicians responded to what was popular then. The response and the merging with elements of Rock music with Jazz has led to what is now known as Fusion Jazz. More precisely, it was a combination of Jazz, Rock, Funk and Technology, thus the word Fusion came along (Nasaw, 2000).

As Rock increased in popularity among the masses, traditional Jazz music became less prevalent as a mainstream music. Rock was a new genre that heavily relied on new technology like the electrical instruments, from the electric guitar which was only invented in 1931 to the electric keyboard and bass. With these new instruments, and post-production style music recording technology, the audiences were attracted by the new sounds and receded from the traditional acoustic sounding Jazz sonic palette.

Miles Davis had a huge influence in the creation of Fusion Jazz (BowdenMarshall, 2019). In the late 1960's, Miles began adopting new technology by bringing in electrical instruments like electric keyboards, guitars and basses to incorporate the sonic elements of Rock. He also added more instruments to create rhythms to carry out more funk into his Jazz.

Rhythm was as important as the improvised solos. Miles played his trumpet like an electric guitar by including electronic pedals and effects into his signal chain. Using these new ideas and techniques, Miles created his two classic Fusion Jazz albums, 'In a Silent Way' and 'Bitches Brew'. However, upon its releases, many critics accused these two albums of not being Jazz as it was too radical.

Musicians like Herbie Hancock and Tony Williams were members of Miles Davis's band. When Miles Davis dropped out of Music in 1975 due to drug and alcohol problems, Herbie Hancock as well as Tony Williams both left to lead their own bands.

Hancock went on to release multiple Fusion Jazz albums until 1979. Conversely, Tony Williams formed an ensemble that included English guitarist, John McLaughlin who was also influenced both by Davis as well as Williams. Eventually, McLaughlin left the band to form another group.

The constant formation and dissolution of bands led to musicians influencing other musicians and Fusion Jazz was finding its ground in the music industry (TedGioia, 2011).

There were other musicians who were in Miles Davis's band who later came out to form their own bands. Joe Zawinul, Wayne Shorter and Chick Corea who had previously worked with Miles Davis, created their bands and made several albums featuring Fusion Jazz.

Certainly, Miles Davis work on Fusion Jazz in the late 1960's has not only influenced many of his contemporaries in the style of Fusion Jazz, but it also led them to branch out into more their own bands which further influenced more musicians with Miles Davis idea.

### ***Fusion Language***

The musical language found in fusion music is not so different than the language(s) used in Malaysia. The multicultural country that has its majority population made up by Malays, Chinese and Indians has its own "fusion" of language. This is explored by Clark Terry's method of learning through imitation, assimilation and innovation (Goldsby, 2002). Certain words used in everyday Malaysian language are imitated from another language to be used within the same context, e.g. *shiok*, *cincai*, etc. Some words are assimilated into their own language (with or without the appropriate context for use), e.g. "pokai" is not to fall on the ground as the language of origin, the Chinese dialect, Cantonese intended it to be, but to be bankrupt or broke. "Action" is not used as the English language would the word, but used as "to be a show off". Innovation is evident with words such as "gostan" from the English word "go astern", "abuden" as an amalgamation from the Chinese dialect, Hokkien "if not" and the English word "then" in replace of the phrase, "If it is not this, what could it then be?".

Similar instances could be found in fusion music where the artist has gone through or is going through the process as described by Clark Terry. Keeping to song forms and genre specific rhythms while adopting improvisational elements and vocabulary from the jazz genre. This section will explore some of the language used in fusion music as well as genre specific rhythms that we may better understand the following chapter of the analysis. Firstly, by describing the melodic foundations laid by the scales used to develop the fusion harmony, followed by some concepts of fusion in terms of rhythms.

While Gill and Purves have attempted to study society's bias towards certain musical scales over other by way of analysing individual scales' tones to the harmonic series (2009), Schönberg has described it with the following statement:

*The material of music is the tone; what it affects first, the ear. The sensory perception releases associations and connects tone, ear and the world of feeling. On the cooperation of these three factors depends everything in music that is felt to be art. (Schönberg, 1983, p. 19).*

While the study of the quality of tone may be out of the scope of this chapter, we shall make attempts to describe some of the tones or notes of the scales used by fusion musicians to colour their improvisations and compositions.

### ***Biography of Lee Ritenour***

Lee Ritenour was born on January 11th 1952 in Palos Verdes, California, United States of America. He entered music with a guitar he had received from his father when he was 6 years old, and he studied music theory and guitar technique since he was 13 years old. He received a lot of inspiration when he was 16 from his visits to famous LA clubs such as 'Donte's' and 'The Baked Potato'. Then he moved onto the University of Southern California (USC) where he learned a number of musical part from Jack Marshall, Joe pass and Christopher Parkening.

In 1974, when he was 21 years old, he went on concert tours around Brazil with a Brazilian musician Sergio Mendes. This tour had left a lot of impact on Lee Ritenour's music. It was especially influenced by music that originated from the north of Brazil (IZM, Lee Ritenour, 2002).

After that, Lee Ritenour worked as a studio session man in LA until 1976. During this period, he had a chance to interact with a wide range of musicians. At the height of his studio music session, he held more than 20 concerts a week and in just a few years held a total of nearly 2,000 concerts, and participated in over 3500 recordings. With such vigorous activities, he earns himself the nickname 'Captain Finger.' He had participated in the albums of many infamous artists such as George Harrison, Whitney Houston, BB King, Johnny Matisse, Ringo Starr, Johnny Mitchell, James Taylor, Grover Washington Jr, Stevie Wonder, Paul Anka, George Benson, Natalie Cole, Art Garfunkel, Ray Charles, Frank Sinatra, Carly Simon, Steely Dan, Barbra Streisand and Pink Floyd and many more. He has also participated in film music such as Champ, Roots, Saturday Night Fever, An Officer and a Gentleman, American Gigolo, Taxi Driver, A Star Is Born and Havana.

### ***Music Activity of Lee Ritenour***

Lee Ritenour is a prolific guitarist, as a sideman and a bandleader. His first band career began with the band 'Friend Ship' which he formed with Ernie Watts on saxophone, Don Grusin on keyboard, Abraham Laboriel on bass, Alex Acuna on drums, and Steve Forman on percussion. This band was mainly active in the United States and Japan, in particular they received much attention in Japan.

Since his first solo album <First Course> in 1976, Lee Ritenour continued producing works as a solo guitarist. Especially <Rit>, which was released in 1981, received a popular response even from the pop market for being an exceptional Jazz record. 'IS IT YOU' featuring vocalist Eric Tagg in this album was released as a single and reached the top 15 on the Billboard pop single. After this, he continued to target the pop music market with Rit2, On The Line and Banded Together, all of which included a few songs with notable vocals along with his guitar music.

By 1985, Lee Ritenour had signed an exclusive record label deal with GRP record company, a Fusion Jazz label. Lee Ritenour released his first album from this record company, 'Harlequin', in association with Dave Grusin. This album first introduced the Brazilian Jazz vocalist Ivan Lins to the American audiences. 'Harlequin' was nominated for four Grammy nominations and



this album's song 'Early A.M. Attitude' was awarded the Grammy Music Award. Since then, he released the albums 'Two Word' in 2000, and 'Amparo' in 2008 with Dave Grusin.

In 'Earth Run' released in 1986, he used SynthAxe, a guitar synthesizer, which allowed him to try new sounds constantly. After experiencing an experimental sound with high tech like this, he was mesmerized into Brazilian music again.

The album <Festival> was released in 1988 and was a great success. This album highlighted the Brazilian music features and gave an opportunity create a connection between Brazilian musicians such as Joao Bosco and Caetano Veloso, and New York's studio musicians such as Marcus Miller, Omar Hakim, Anthony Jackson. The album was ranked first on seven different Jazz charts, and Lee Ritenour was honoured to be nominated as the best guitarist in the readers' vote for 'Jazziz' magazine and Japan's 'Ad Lib' magazine.

Lee Ritenour's musical direction for Brazilian music continues to Costa Rita in 1989. He continued his creative work in this album while playing soft and sensual guitar in the style of Samba Music. His old friends Carlos Vega, Jimmy Johnson, Eenie Watts, Russel Ferrante, Phil Perry and more joined the production of this album. Some of the works also show the influence of the guitarist Wes Montgomery. Lee Ritenour has stated that Wes Montgomery is one of the artists who influenced his early music styles.

Like this, Lee Ritenour has the ability to sublimate and express the merits of great musicians. Lee Ritenour has an important band which largely influenced his musical activities. It is the 'Fourplay'. It is a Fusion Jazz band equipped with the best performers, formed by Bob James in 1991 with Harvey Mason and Nathan East. The band's first album, 'Fourplay', set an unprecedented record of being top of the Billboard Contemporary Jazz charts for 33 weeks. Their second album, 'Between The Sheets,' was also awarded a Golden Album and was nominated for a Grammy, topping the Billboard and other charts. However, Lee Ritenour leaves this band after the third album 'Elixir'. The next guitarist to join the band is none other than Larry Carlton.

Lee Ritenour is also a guitarist who used various advanced equipment. He was one of the first to use guitar synths. He used Bob Easton's 360 System in his 1977 album 'Captain Finger'. Since then, he continued to perform with Yamaha G-10, SynthAxe, Roland GM70 and Takamine classical guitar synths. (JIN JAE YOUNG, 2014).

Lee Ritenour and other great musicians of his time continued to interact and influence each other during his music activities. This has always been a driving force for Lee Ritenour to try new challenges. Thus, he continued to develop using various equipment and new plans. Due to this various abilities, Lee Ritenour has established himself as one of the most notable and unique guitarists in the Fusion Jazz market.

### Methodology

This study is based on qualitative research framework. Sheet music and activity data are collected and compared. This data is employed through comparative analysis to identify musical tendencies to justify the research objectives. Therefore, this study examines Lee Ritenour's musical growth and activities through his biography and explores the achievements made in the fusion jazz industry.

This study will present an evolved perception of identity through the various musical elements of guitarist, Lee Ritenour. Therefore, many other musicians of similar cases will also be found in the future. Thus teaching to a conclusion that, various musical elements presents the influence of the Fusion Jazz musician, and predicts a new attempt of the future Fusion Jazz musician.

## **Research and Music Analysis - Representative Songs of Lee Ritenour**

### ***Captain Fingers***

The album 'Captain Fingers' was released in 1977 by Epic Label, an early label of Lee Ritenour. The title of the song is Lee Ritenour's nickname during his active music career. While Ritenour employed the same personnel for this album as his previous albums, he experimented with different sounds by bringing Don Murray onboard as the album's engineer. Lee Ritenour tried to create a new sound by using a guitar synthesizer. He showed that he was a leader in fusion jazz at the time, using some of the advanced equipment in music field. This album has been made over six months and showed more splendid technique than the previous album. This album featured drummer Harvey Mason's technical drums technique, and bassist Alphonso Johnson playing a powerful bass guitar. As shown in the album's credit, Lee Ritenour as well as many other guitarists participated in the work of this album. This situation resembles the past of Lee Ritenour who participated in the album of group 'Steely Dan'. At that time, Steely Dan's guitarist Walter Becker had several guitarists joined in his album. Lee Ritenour was one of them. Thus it was easy for Lee Ritenour to call upon Steely Dan's music work into his album as well. A notable feature of this album 'Captain Fingers' is the rhythmic virtuosity displayed by the musicians who played sections precisely while maintaining amazing time feel.

The composition's structure includes dynamic shifts in tempo and intensity, allowing for moments of both frenetic energy and delicate melodic passages. Ritenour's ability to seamlessly transition between these different moods and styles demonstrates his versatility as a composer and performer. The song's intricate arrangements and tight musicianship reveal Ritenour's meticulous attention to detail and his commitment to delivering a rich and engaging musical experience.

"Captain Fingers" has become a staple in Ritenour's live performances, often serving as a showcase for his technical prowess and improvisational skills. The song's infectious energy and memorable melodies have made it a fan favourite, earning it a well-deserved place in the jazz fusion canon. It continues to captivate audiences with its thrilling guitar work, powerful rhythm section, and the undeniable chemistry between the musicians. With its fusion of jazz, funk, and rock elements, the song exemplifies Ritenour's ability to create electrifying and dynamic music. The exceptional performances by the ensemble and the song's intricate arrangements make it a standout piece in Ritenour's repertoire. "Captain Fingers" is a testament to Ritenour's enduring legacy as a virtuoso guitarist and a visionary in the world of jazz fusion.

The figure displays eight staves of musical notation for the 'A-section' of 'Captain Fingers'. The notation is in 4/4 time. The first six staves feature a Gm7/C chord as a riff, with Dm7/G and Em7/A chords used as a section. The seventh staff introduces Fm7/Bb, and the eighth staff continues with Fm7/Bb. The melody is in G minor, with C notes in the bass indicating a C Dorian scale interpretation.

**Figure 1. A-section of Captain Fingers**

This is part A of Captain Fingers. Gm<sup>7</sup>/C chord is used as a riff and, Dm<sup>7</sup>/G and Em<sup>7</sup>/A chords are used as a section. The melody uses G minor scale. However, based on the use of the C notes in the bass notes, this melody can also be viewed as the C Dorian scale.



The Dorian scale, or a mode, is the second of the seven musical modes. It is similar to the natural minor except for the raised sixth. The Dorian scale is the minor scale that appears when a major scale is started from the second note. In the Gm<sup>7</sup>/C chord, note A is 9th degree, but when based on C, note A is 6th degree. Therefore, the 6th degree note is a typical note that represents the sound of the Dorian scale. This gives the song a Dorian feeling when playing the melody.

### ***Rio Funk***

The album *Rio* released in 1979 was released through JVC Records in Japan and it is a solo album played only with an acoustic guitar. 'Rio Funk' is the representative Fusion Jazz song of the album that was influenced by Brazilian Samba and Bossa Nova. This song is famous for its' funky bass playing at the time, which after the album was release, this song was frequently shown in brazil as their country's main theme music. Considering that Ritenour had previously declared his affinity to Brazilian music during his tour with Sergio Mendes in 1974, there was a sense of ridiculousness that Larry Carlton would release his album "Rio Samba" before Ritenour's "Rio". Larry Carlton have combined Brazilian style with funky rhythms to create a new fusion style. In the end, both *Rio Samba* and *Rio Funk* have played an important learning track as the country's representative piece.

The performers of the song were, the pianist Dave Grusin and the bassist Marcus Miller, who played slap as his main technique. This song has since become a fusion jazz standard. This was because the song had a composition of Jam type in a simple chord progression and the song had a neat sound due to a tight arrangement with lots of grooves, a characteristic of the Funk music. It was a great piece to learn not only for the guitarists but also for all the performers. This album also featured numerous bass solo part which was uncommon in the Fusion Jazz album. *Rio Funk* is included in this album as well as the live album and the best album, and it serves as the representative song of Lee Ritenour. Ritenour's guitar work throughout the track is nothing short of brilliant, effortlessly combining intricate jazz licks with funky rhythms. His melodic lines are filled with technical prowess and creative improvisation, highlighting his virtuosity as a guitarist.

"Rio Funk" exemplifies Ritenour's ability to push the boundaries of genre and create a distinct musical fusion. It seamlessly combines jazz, funk, and Brazilian elements, resulting in a vibrant and dynamic composition. The song's infectious groove and memorable melodies have made it a favourite among fans of instrumental music and have contributed to its enduring popularity. Over the years, "Rio Funk" has become a beloved staple in Lee Ritenour's live performances, often serving as a showcase for his improvisational skills and collaborative spirit. The song's timeless appeal continues to resonate with audiences, bridging the gap between jazz, funk, and Brazilian music, and showcasing Ritenour's ability to push the boundaries of genre.

In conclusion, Lee Ritenour's "Rio Funk" is a captivating musical journey that seamlessly blends jazz, funk, and Brazilian rhythms. With its infectious groove, impressive guitar work, and vibrant ensemble performance, the song embodies the spirit of celebration and musical fusion. It remains a testament to Ritenour's musical prowess and his ability to create a timeless and exhilarating musical experience.



**Figure 2. Intro of Rio Funk**

The intro starts simply with a Cowbell and a Slap Technique from the electric bass guitar. The bass line leads without any special chord progression, and the 4 note pattern repeats three times in total, so that it plays tightly with an offbeat section of the sixteenth note. From the second repetition, the same line is played with the guitar in unison, and while the pattern is repeated, each instrument comes in one by one to make the playing sound of the whole part. The drum kit plays a simple 4/4 groove with hits over time with the rest of the band and leads into a *tutti* section for the main melody part. (*Tutti*: an Italian term meaning ‘all’ and indicates to all the performers or singers to play together.)

### ***Magic Carpet Ride***

‘Magic Carpet Ride’ is a song that was included in the album ‘Elixir’ which was released in 1995 by the Fusion Jazz group ‘Fourplay’. There were two important bands when referring to Lee Ritenour and Larry Carlton. One was ‘Steely Dan’ and another was ‘Fourplay’.

Steely Dan was a band that participated with many outstanding musicians since the 1970s. Larry Carlton and Lee Ritenour also participated in this band in 1977 album "Aja". In particular, Larry Carlton joined the 1975 album "Katy Lied" and the 1976 "Royal Scam". Steely Dan's album included many talented musicians at the time, and listing Larry Carlton and Lee Ritenour in Steely Dan's album showed how talented the two guitarist were at that time.

Fourplay was a band that were on issue since the day it was formed. Fourplay was a super band with four well known musicians: Bob James (Piano), Harvey Mason (Drum), Nathan East (Bass) and Lee Ritenour (Guitar).

Fourplay's music is characterized by their smooth and melodic sound, showcasing the virtuosity of each individual musician and their exceptional chemistry as a collective. With their unique blend of jazz improvisation, soulful grooves, and memorable melodies, Fourplay has become one of the most successful and influential contemporary jazz groups of their time.

The group's self-titled debut album, released in 1991, immediately garnered critical acclaim and commercial success. It introduced audiences to their signature sound and laid the foundation for their future collaborations. The album featured a combination of original compositions and notable covers, displaying the members' versatility as both performers and composers.

Throughout their career, Fourplay has consistently delivered albums that showcase their musical craftsmanship and collective synergy. They have released over 15 studio albums, including notable titles such as "Between the Sheets," "Elixir," and "Let's Touch the Sky." Each album explores a variety of musical styles while maintaining the group's distinct fusion jazz aesthetic.

Looking past at Lee Ritenour's previous music activity, who only had some collaborative works, we can see that he was eager to extend and broaden his collaborative musical activities by joining the band. Lee Ritenour remained in Fourplay until the regular third album 'Elixir'. After the third album, Lee Ritenour left the band and Larry Carlton joined. This is why it is worth studying the Fusion Jazz band Fourplay as the band had two top guitarist. The song 'Magic Carpet Ride' was a song written by Lee Ritenour that matches Bob James's keyboard very well.

In addition to their studio albums, Fourplay has gained a reputation for their dynamic live performances. They have toured extensively around the world, captivating audiences with their impeccable musicianship and engaging stage presence. Their concerts often feature extended improvisations and energetic interplay between the band members, showcasing their prowess as live performers.

Fourplay's impact on contemporary jazz cannot be overstated. They have garnered numerous accolades over the years, including Grammy nominations and chart-topping albums. Their music has influenced and inspired countless musicians in the genre, and their longevity as a group is a testament to their enduring appeal.

Fourplay is a fusion jazz group that has left an indelible mark on the contemporary jazz landscape. With their smooth and melodic sound, the group has crafted a unique musical identity that seamlessly blends jazz, R&B, and pop influences. Their albums and live performances showcase their exceptional musicianship, collective synergy, and ability to connect with audiences worldwide. Fourplay continues to be celebrated as one of the most influential and successful contemporary jazz groups, and their music stands as a testament to their enduring legacy in the genre.

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). It consists of four staves. The first staff contains measures 1-4 with chords Cm, Gm7, Fm7, Gm7, Fm7, Gm7, and Cm7. The second staff contains measures 5-8 with chords Cm, Gm7, Fm7, EbΔ7, Dm/G, G7, and C7. The third staff contains measures 9-12 with chords FΔ7, Em7, Dm7, CΔ7, B7(Δ9), C/G, and G7. The fourth staff contains measures 13-16 with chords Cm, Gm7, AbΔ7, Gm7, Fm7, Gm7, and Cm7. The melody is primarily played by guitar in the first two staves and keyboard in the last two staves, with staccato articulation in the guitar parts.

**Figure 3. A-section of Magic Carpet Ride**

This A-section starts with a fill in of drum to mark the beginning of the music. A rhythmic guitar melody with the use of staccato is played. Although the 1-2 and 5-6 bars play the same melody, the 6 bar uses the  $E^bM^7$  chord instead of the  $Gm^7$  chord. This chord was played in order for the song to go for a smooth transition to 7-8 bar. This is performed passing a modulation to F key after using the  $C^7$  dominant chord. From the 9th bar, the keyboard plays the melody, and the guitar plays the chords in unison. Cm key is played again after 13 bars.

**Figure 4. B-section of Magic Capet Ride**

This is a B-section showing the head melody using Lee Ritenour's signature octave technique style. The octave technique's feeling of swing is better expressed using the right hand rather than a play of picking, which also makes the rhythm expressed better on a same melody line. A feeling of staccato is more present as the song is played in a rhythmical way.

### Conclusion

The experimental nature is commonly found among Jazz musicians. In particular, the exploration of rhythm was introduced like the many rhythms of Africa, Cuba and Brazil folk music. This remains consistent in the genre of Fusion Jazz. Lee Ritenour, a renowned guitarist, has explored various elements of fusion jazz throughout his career. Fusion jazz itself is a genre that blends elements of jazz with other musical styles such as rock, funk, and Latin music. Ritenour's contributions to fusion jazz include:

**Electric Guitar and Guitar Synthesizer:** Ritenour used electric guitars extensively, which are a staple in fusion jazz. He often incorporated other musical technology such as distortion, wah-wah, and various effects to achieve a more edgy and contemporary sound.

**Funk and R&B Grooves:** Ritenour integrated elements of funk and R&B into his fusion jazz compositions. He incorporated funky rhythms, syncopated grooves, and soulful melodies, giving his music a vibrant and danceable quality.

**Latin and Brazilian Influences:** Ritenour also incorporated Latin and Brazilian rhythms and melodies into his fusion jazz compositions. He explored genres like bossa nova and samba, incorporating percussive elements and creating a rhythmic foundation that adds a vibrant and exotic flavour to his music.



Jazz Harmony and Improvisation: While incorporating various other elements, Ritenour maintained a strong foundation in jazz harmony and improvisation. He showcased his technical prowess and improvisational skills through intricate chord progressions, melodic lines, and expressive solos, staying true to the essence of jazz.

Collaborations: Ritenour frequently collaborated with other talented musicians from the fusion jazz and jazz-fusion scene. His collaborations allowed him to experiment with different musical ideas and styles, further expanding the fusion jazz elements in his repertoire.

It's important to note that Lee Ritenour's musical style has evolved over time, and he explored various genres and styles beyond fusion jazz. As a versatile guitarist, he has embraced elements of contemporary jazz, smooth jazz, and even explored popular and world music. These elements, among others, contribute to the diverse and ever-evolving musical direction of fusion jazz artists, making it a dynamic and exciting genre.

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