

Careless Love

Kenny Baker w/ Bill Monroe

Transcribed by Annie Staninec

This is Kenny Baker's kick-off solo to Careless Love, recorded in 1962. The origin of this song is somewhat obscure, and it has been recorded numerous times by blues, jazz, folk, and bluegrass artists. On this particular recording, found on the Bill Monroe Bluegrass 1959-1969 4 CD box set, the credited authors are W.C. Handy, Martha E. Koenig, and Spencer Williams.

The solo begins with a classic triplet kickoff with triple stops, for which you need a really flat bridge to play! Since my bridge isn't flat enough, I go with the G and C notes (played on the D and A string, respectively). There is a little vibrato played on the longer notes, which can be heard clearly on the double stops in bars 3, 5, and 7. Bar 5 brings us to a G chord, which is the five chord in the key of C. The double stop here is a pattern with the flat 7th on the bottom (F natural) and the fifth on top (D), which makes a G7 chord.

The first half of the solo is in first position. In bar 6, we shift into second position, sliding into the first E note on the A string with our third finger. The last three notes in bar 6 are played by sliding the second finger down to the G# and back up to the A. Now that we're in second position, we're prepared for the cool double stops in bar 7! We're now on a four chord, which is F in the key of C. The first double stop is an F double stop with the root on the bottom (F) and the third on top (A). We then replace the root with a flat 7th (Eb), which then slides up to an E natural. We resolve to another F double stop, this time with the fifth tone on the bottom (C) and the third on top (A). Throughout bar 7, our second finger will stay on the A note on the E string. In bar 8, there's a slow slide into the E note, and we'll use the downward slide to shift back into first position and land on the C with the second finger. The lick in bar 9 is a nice way to end a solo to a mid to up-tempo song in C- try it out in different songs!