

# Crescent City Voodoo

SONG TITLE: CRESCENT CITY VOODOO

GENRE: R'n'B

TEMPO: 110 BPM

KEY: G BLUES

PATCHES: PIANO

FEATURES: TWELVE BAR BLUES PATTERN

COMPOSER: ADRIAN YORK

ARRANGER: JEREMY WARD

PERSONNEL: DEIRDRE CARTWRIGHT (GTR)

HENRY THOMAS (BASS)

GEORGE GAVIN (DRUMS)

ALASTAIR GAVIN (KEYS)

♩=110 R'n'B  
Patch: Piano

G<sup>7</sup>

C<sup>7</sup>

D<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup>

## BACKGROUND INFO

There are several Crescent Cities in America but it is also the nick-name of New Orleans. This is a laid-back boogie-woogie twelve bar blues that evokes the style and the era.

## THE BIGGER PICTURE

Boogie-woogie was a very popular piano style in the 1930s and 40s, and it combined elements of several other styles. It is instantly recognisable for its ostinato left hand figures that play around with the notes of a chord ascending and descending within one shape. The style has numerous origins and the word 'boogie' was common currency at the time that Wilbur Sweetman's 'Boogie Rag' was recorded in 1917.

## NOTES

One key pianist who did much to popularise the style in the late 1920s was 'Pine Top' Smith whose 1929 hit 'Pine Top's Boogie-Woogie' was the first certified hit celebrating the style and from then on its name was coined. Albert Ammons' recording of 'Boogie Woogie Stomp' was a huge hit in 1936. His

appearance at Carnegie Hall two years later with fellow boogie enthusiasts Meade 'Lux' Lewis and Pete Johnson did much to promote the boogie-woogie craze in America which was to last until the end of the Second World War. More modern exponents of the style include formed Squeeze keyboard player Jools Holland.

## RECOMMENDED LISTENING

Albert Ammons' seminal recordings can be found on *The History of Blue Note: 70 Anniversary* (2009). The Tommy Dorsey band recorded several boogie-woogie inspired songs as did the Andrews Sisters ('Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy') and Jools Holland ('Boogie Woogie Country Girl').

# Crescent City Voodoo

Adrian York

♩=110 R'n'B  
Patch: Piano

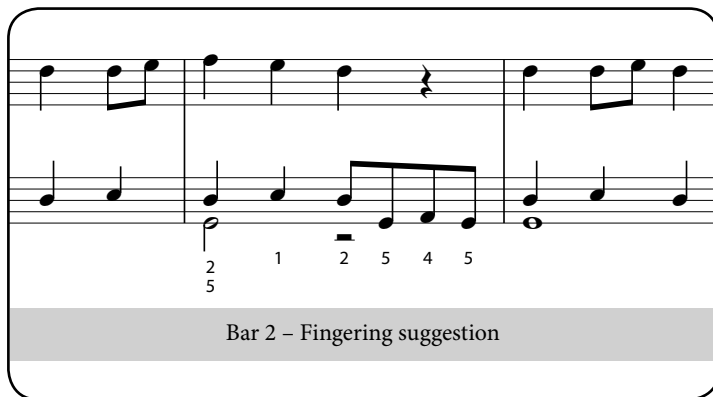
The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time, with a tempo of 110 beats per minute and an R'n'B style. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major). The score consists of seven systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The first system starts at measure 1 and ends at measure 4, with a G7 chord above the first measure. The second system starts at measure 5 and ends at measure 8, with C7, Bb, and G7 chords above the first three measures. The third system starts at measure 9 and ends at measure 12, with D7, C7, G7, and D7 chords above the first four measures. The fourth system starts at measure 13 and ends at measure 16, with a G7 chord above the first measure. The fifth system starts at measure 17 and ends at measure 20, with C7, Bb, and G7 chords above the first three measures. The sixth system starts at measure 21 and ends at measure 24, with D7, C7, and G7 chords above the first three measures. The seventh system starts at measure 25 and ends at measure 28, with D7, C7, and G7 chords above the first three measures. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of the seventh system.

# Walkthrough

You should choose a piano patch for this tune. This piece is based around the 12 bar blues chord structure. This means that the main chords used will be I, IV and V in the key of the piece. This piece has G as the home (root) note and so the main chords will be G, C and D. Take a few moments to familiarise yourself with these chords so you are used to their sounds.

## Bars 1–4:

A suggestion is to spend time practising the hands separately so that each hand is as secure and fluent. The right hand figure is relatively straightforward but make sure the 8th notes are evenly spaced and that the quarter note rest in bar 2 is observed. The left hand has quite a lot of work to do and it is important that you keep it relaxed. In bar 1 the 5th finger has to hold down the note G for the complete bar and this will take some practise as it is one of the weakest fingers. In bar 2 there is an 8th note figure using the 4th and 5th fingers. This is a technical workout so spend time getting them even.



Bar 2 – Fingering suggestion

The image shows a musical staff for Bar 2. The right hand (treble clef) plays a descending eighth-note pattern: G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The left hand (bass clef) plays a steady eighth-note pattern: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3. Fingering numbers are written below the notes: 2 and 5 for the first two notes, 1 for the third, 2 for the fourth, 5 for the fifth, 4 for the sixth, and 5 for the seventh. A quarter rest is shown in the right hand for the eighth beat.

## Bars 5–8:

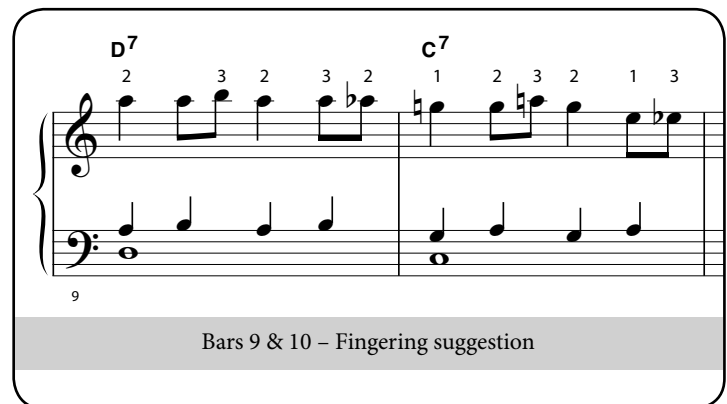
Bars 5 & 6 follow the same pattern as the previous four bars but because they are centred around C as the root note, the right hand has to play B flat in bar 6. Bars 7 & 8 return to root G. Spend a few moments ensuring the left hand 5th finger can move between the root notes, G, C and D with security.

## Bars 9–12:

In these bars you cover all of the chords mentioned above. The left hand pattern is the same, but make sure you notice that the right hand last beat is a descending chromatic 8th note group in bars 9 & 10. You will need to change fingers here and slow practise will be required. Also make sure that in bar 12 you are aware of the 8th note rest in the left hand on beat 3. This is the end of the first cycle of the twelve bar blues pattern.

## Bars 13–16:

In these bars the main right hand shape is the same as before, but this time it plays the 8th note pattern in bar 14.



Bars 9 & 10 – Fingering suggestion

The image shows musical notation for Bars 9 and 10. Bar 9 is marked with a D7 chord and has a right-hand melody: G4 (finger 2), A4 (finger 3), G4 (finger 2), F4 (finger 3), E4 (finger 2). Bar 10 is marked with a C7 chord and has a right-hand melody: G4 (finger 1), A4 (finger 2), Bb4 (finger 3), A4 (finger 2), G4 (finger 1), F4 (finger 3). The left hand in both bars plays a steady eighth-note pattern: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3.

As these are played with the thumb and second finger (the strongest fingers), make sure the sound is not too heavy and matches the preceding phrase. The left hand now plays two notes every beat. It is important that you try to bring out the upper note that moves.

## Bars 17–28:

These bars follow the information given above. You will need to be careful that the left hand does not become too insistent and begin to quicken the pace. It is important that you are able to hear the backing track at all times.

Also watch that the left hand does not dominate the melody and that the melody can be heard throughout. The only bar that changes is the final one, bar 28. Here there is a descending chromatic right hand and the left hand joins in on beats 1 & 2. Just be careful you co-ordinate the tied note ending chord.

# General Musicianship Questions

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You will be asked five General Musicianship Questions at the end of the exam. The examiner will ask questions based on pieces you have played in the exam. Some of the theoretical topics can be found in the Technical Exercises.

## Topics:

- i) Music theory
- ii) Knowledge of your instrument

The music theory questions will cover the recognition of the following at this grade:

- Note pitches
- Note values
- Rests
- Time Signatures

Knowledge of the construction of the following chord types:

- Major
- Minor

The instrument knowledge questions will cover the following topics at this grade:

- Show an octave from any white or black note
- Where the patches are located and how they are set

Knowledge of parts of the keyboard:

- Keys, on/off switch, volume control, patches.

Questions on all these topics will be based on pieces played by you in the exam. Tips on how to approach this part of the exam can be found in the RockschooL Companion Guide and on the RockschooL website: [www.rockschool.co.uk](http://www.rockschool.co.uk).