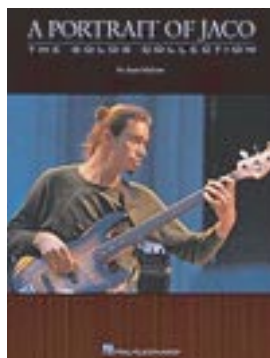


# FENDER PLAYERS CLUB JACO PASTORIUS

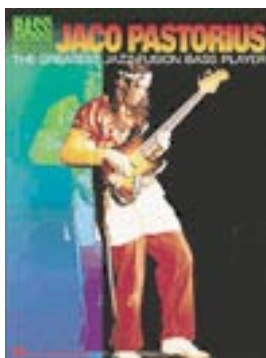


From the book:  
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#HL 660114. Book \$14.95 (US).

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Tab for "Slang" also available in:

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## SLANG by Jaco Pastorius

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A feature of every Weather Report concert was a solo performance by each of the musicians. "Slang" is a live recording of what many thousands of fans heard Jaco play during his years of touring. Most, if not all of you are familiar with the classic joke: "Beware when the drums stop – bass solo!" And that joke isn't unfounded, so the idea of a solo electric bass performance was less than appealing to most. What could possibly be played on solo electric bass that could be considered actual music and keep the audience's attention for more than five minutes? It turns out that there is plenty to say and quite a show to see. Enter Jaco Pastorius – part Sid Vicious, part Jimi Hendrix, part Charlie Parker, and part Wilson Pickett.

The order of events became standardized in a Pastorius bass solo: some high-register melodic work, often including a variety of musical quotes, followed by a repeating bass loop over which Jaco often quoted Jim Hendrix, then a feedback-driven explosion of distorted harmonics, capped off with some more melodic work, and for good measure, a hearty back-flip off of his amplifier onto his bass. "Slang" would silence all doubters and add another chapter to the Pastorius revolution.

Jaco begins "Slang" with a melody starting on low F and intersperses harmonics, which sound out some favorite Pastorius chords: E7#9, Bm7, and Bb13. He then takes off with some blazing, albeit rough, chromatic lines that are part blues and part bebop. This section ends with a diminished seventh arpeggio and some phrasing that is reminiscent of his work on "Donna Lee."

The next section of the solo is considered to be an innovation on Jaco's part, though anecdotal evidence supports that Jaco got the idea from Alphonso Johnson. Jaco slaps his bass strings with an open palm over the pickup while engaging a delay pedal that has the ability to repeat infinitely. This provides the tempo for Jaco's layered, three-part motif that creates the harmonic and rhythmic foundation over which he'll solo. The motif consists essentially of the extensions of an E9 chord (B-D-F#) and includes their upper neighbors (C#-E-G#) as well. Once he establishes all of the layering, he hits the "repeat" function and becomes a one-man-band. He equalizes the tone of the loop, preparing the next section of his solo.

Jaco plays a handful of licks in the upper register, mixing legato and staccato statements with the low E string. Most of the lines are mainly pentatonic and/or bluesy in a funk setting. At this point, he engages the distortion pedal and flies into a rendition of the Jimi Hendrix classic "Third Stone from the Sun." The audience usually responds with shock and amazement, which ushers them into a new level of engagement with the solo. The Hendrix section of the solo winds down with a large, deliberate slide down the bass neck, and Jaco returns to a clean tone, referring back to the melodic material he presented earlier.

The final section is announced by disengaging the bass loop and by playing a Cmaj9 chord with harmonics and a low C. Jaco then quotes the first phrase from his composition "Portrait of Tracy" and slides deftly into a quote from "The Sound of Music." After his trademark Eb7#9 chord, a distorted low A sounds for a few seconds, followed by a crash on a distorted low E. This is the point where Jaco has undoubtedly jumped off the amplifier, generating a roar of applause.

If we stand back and inventory the contents of "Slang," we get funk, bebop, Jimi Hendrix, and a dash of Julie Andrews, all combined with the showmanship that's part James Brown and part Barnum's Circus. The playing itself is enough to convince any listener of Jaco's enormous skill and talent, but combine that with the stage presence and the aura that surrounded him, and it's easy to understand why Jaco became larger than life. A point that is often overlooked with Jaco is that it wasn't only his playing ability that made him a virtuoso; it was also the virtuosity of his creativity and an innate ability and desire to entertain. In other words, "Slang" worked because Jaco made it work.

from Weather Report—8:30

# Slang

By Jaco Pastorius

**A**

Free time

N.C.(F)

(C/E)

(F)

(D5)

E7#9

8va  
Harm.

C

Bm7

Bb13

**B**

\*\* Fast swing ♩ = 180 (♩ = ♩<sup>3</sup>)

N.C.  
loco

(B)

\*\* As this is a live solo bass piece without any rhythm accompaniment, tempo markings throughout this section are approximate.

\*\*\* Deaden strings with plucking hand.

(Bb)

(A)

(Ab)

(G)

(F#)

Slower ♩ = 144 (♩ = ♩)

N.C.