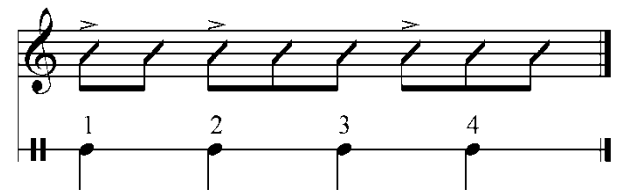


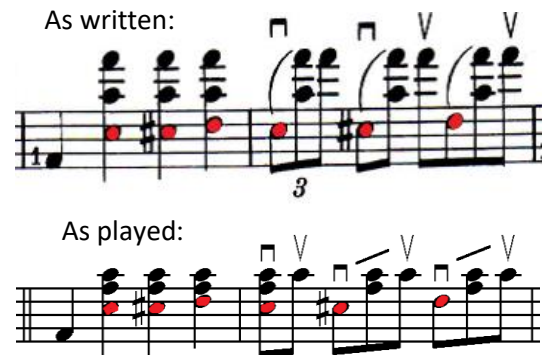
Frosted Chocolate by Harry Reser as transcribed by Ron Hinkle

Frosted Chocolate's main theme is built on two basic ideas; the 2-3-3 (=8) syncopation, and the simple, repetitious melody that outlines that syncopation. Here is the *rhythmic* motif in “slash” notation; Reser used this particular rhythm in 13 separate measures of the first stanza alone!



#1: Note that they are all eighth notes. **#2:** Notice how the notes line up with the steady metronome beat (bottom line). **#3:** Notice how I have re-grouped the notes (2-3-3); they are still straight eighth notes (not triplets). This notation technique gives a clearer visual signal that syncopation is present, once you understand it as such. **#4:** Notice the accent above the first note of each group; this is what defines and outlines the syncopation *and* the melody.

Next, here is the *melodic* motif (the bottom note of the chord); notice how the melody note coincides with the syncopated rhythm. The first example is taken directly from the published sheet music. If you compare this with the second example, you will see a couple of major differences: The first one is voiced for tenor banjo (F on top of the chord), and the second is voiced for plectrum banjo (F in the middle of the chord). Listen closely to the recording, and you will *not* hear that high F; it is clearly the plectrum voicing! Also notice that I have used the new note grouping as outlined above.



Compare also the rhythm of the first beat of the second measure; Reser *wrote* the triplet figure in the first example, but he *played* the second example (again, listen closely)! “Transcription” is the art of writing it down *exactly as played*, with no regard for sheet music variations; I use the sheet music for reference only. Anyway, the syncopation is cleaner and easier and the melody more pronounced without the overly-busy distraction of the triplet split stroke—especially at the lively tempo Harry recorded it. He did use that exact stroke to great effect in another piece that I’ll get to at a later date. At any rate, if you want to be true to the published sheet music, *play the triplet stroke*; nobody will object!

Frosted Chocolate has a bit of a *harmonic* motif as well: In the fifth and sixth measures (4th beat) of the first stanza, the step-wise melody results in a C⁷ “add-2” chord (D, E, Bb). Reser used add-2 chords every chance he got throughout this piece for harmonic “color” (or maybe it’s the “frosting?”). It is simply a C⁷ chord with an “added” 2 (the D; if the note was placed *above* the 7, it would be a C⁹). I don’t use chord symbols *or diagrams* in my transcriptions; neither of those “shortcuts” will do you any good on a complex piece like this. *In my opinion*, a reliance on those things (as opposed to simply *reading the music*) will keep you from learning to play this music! TAB is “cheating enough,” but it is legitimate notation, and shows you where to put your fingers.

The Trio is played three times on the recording (and on the piano accompaniment, which I have sequenced and would be happy to share with you); the first time “straight,” the second time in muted background chords so his accompanist could take a solo, and the third time “hot.” I included all three; just leave out the muted section for a stand-alone banjo solo. If you don’t have the recording, it can be found on YouTube.

I sincerely hope that you are enjoying and learning from this series of transcriptions! As I’ve said before, I encourage skepticism and questioning; I certainly don’t know (or hear) everything! Please, “correct me if I’m wrong.” I’m doing this to *learn!* Next in the barrel: *Crazy ‘Jo*.