

# **A Method for Teaching Improvisation at the High School Level**

**by**

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Department of Education**

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## Acknowledgements

In the teaching of Jazz improvisation, there is no one way that will work for every student and it becomes clear over time that as you, the teacher, continues to grow and explore options that bring new ideas into play in your classroom instruction you come to the realization that over the years you have taken material from multiple sources. At various points you are a teacher, a facilitator, a private teacher, a mentor to your students and this method presented draws on the teachers and mentors who worked with me as a young and not so young player. It is constantly evolving as I seek out ways of connecting with my students and starting the process of ignition toward a love of Jazz, of music, of life. The following people have been influential to my own growth as a player and more specifically as a teacher and to who I am eternally grateful.

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## About Bill Stevens

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He has studied with Elliot Topalian, Herbert Winters Harp, Gilbert Johnson, Randy Brecker, Jack Walrath, bassist Joe Solomon and Laurie Frink. Bill has studied composition and arranging with Ron Miller and Gary Lindsey at the University of Miami and has been the recipient of composition grants from the Seattle Arts Commission, Earshot Jazz, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Music Center. He is currently performing with the New York Jazz Workshop Big Band, the New York Symphonic Arts Ensemble Orchestra and with his own ensembles, the Bill Stevens Quintet and Bill Stevens, Rich Russo, Gary Fogel Trio. Bill lives in New York City with his wife Laura and their son Miles who is a student-athlete playing Division II college baseball and majoring in Exercise Science at Ashland University in Ohio.

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## Introduction

Over the past ten years I have been the Director of Jazz Studies at the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts. From the first day I took over the ensemble I have tried to instill in the students the belief of building and maintaining a legacy, to honor and respect the masters of this music both past and present and to respect those student-musicians who have sat in these same seats as the current students are sitting in now. Our motto has been, "You Play the Way You Practice!" Every player has an obligation to learn the music (and solo changes) and to perform it at the highest levels possible. We discuss professionalism and how that is demonstrated on and off the bandstand. Additionally, I never conduct the ensemble or direct the small groups. As we get closer to performances, I make myself obsolete. The students are given complete ownership of the band through sectional work and in their performances by counting the tunes in and cutting them off, making announcements, as well as thinking on their feet if something gets off, as we all know, there are certainly moments in this music and they have to think on the bandstand and be supportive of one another. I have enjoyed many performances from the balcony of the Tony Bennett Concert Hall or from the back of a club.

From that first day I have also expressed my belief that what makes this music magical and great is the ability to spontaneously compose, to improvise. It is the basis of what Jazz is. The ability to both give yourself up to the group when performing in an ensemble and to speak with your individualistic voice when stepping up front to solo. We never discuss the masters or each other when improvising in terms of "good or bad"; but in terms of developing your individual voice and each of our voices is something to celebrate. We also take the words of Miles Davis to heart, "There are no mistakes!"

If you were to ask 100 educators what is the best system for teaching improvisation to high school students within an approximately 45 minute period of time where you also have to prepare for concerts and other performances, there is no doubt in my mind that you would get 100 varied answers. I also believe that of those 100 answers, most would be a method that works and gets the job done. So, what is different about the method I have come up with as presented in this book?

Although the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts auditions students for acceptance, the majority of students do not enter with a Jazz background from elementary or middle school. The Jazz Studies program is an elective course and students audition for the ensemble once in the school. I audition students each May for the following school year and the ensemble is open to students from all six studios. During the freshman orientation I will audition any students interested or recommended to me to either fill in seats or to add students as I look ahead on the status of how many seniors may be graduating and leaving the ensemble at the end of the year. The class meets everyday during the last period of the day and there is an agreement within the ensemble that even when the bell rings, we do not leave if we are in the middle of something. We leave once we have it accomplished, no matter how long that might take allowing us to always move forward the next day.

The method presented in this book for teaching improvisation to high school students has been developed over a ten year period and is based on what I have come to refer to as developing the Qualities of a Jazz Musician which include:

1. Mastery of the Instrument – the ability to execute the ideas that you hear quickly and easily
2. Style – your voice, your statement of who you are (sound)
3. Taste – is a process of elimination, choosing what to play, when to play and the use of incorporating space
4. Communication – the direct link between you and the band and between you and the audience
5. Chord /Scale Theory & the Study of Chord Progressions – to learn and become familiar with nomenclature, chord progressions and scale choices through Jazz theory.
6. Rhythm – is what will combine all of the prior elements into a cohesive statement (including the importance of maintaining time)

Each of these qualities is examined through a course of study that begins with breaking down the barriers and fears that students have toward releasing themselves to become improvisers. I will discuss some opening lessons that work with the rhythm section to swing and to accept their roles as accompanists, as well as to learn some basic language on conception, feel and nomenclature for the entire ensemble. As we move into the bread and butter of improvisation study I begin with the Blues and move into the incorporation of ii - V's into the Blues form, rhythm changes, major & minor modal playing, ii - V compositions, the minor ii - V progression and concluding with a study on tunes from the Great American Songbook, Jazz compositions from the likes of Benny Golson and Horace Silver concluding with material utilizing non-traditional chord progressions coming from an open form - ECM style.

As I have stated earlier, this is but one method on teaching improvisation to high school students. I hope that after you have reviewed it and even tried some of the examples you will see how it can be quite successful for your students, as it has been for mine, as they work toward developing the qualities of a Jazz musician.

Bill Stevens, NYC 2015

## Chapter 1

### The Beginning

Whenever I have spoken to students who have a desire to play in the Jazz Ensemble, it is inevitable that they will say how much they want to be a part of the Jazz Studies program; however their next sentence will be, "I'm not sure about the improvising. I've never done it and I'm a little nervous about doing it." It has become clear to me that this is the first hurdle that has been placed in our marathon or journey toward a study of Jazz.

When I hold auditions for the ensemble, I only ask for them to prepare a piece of music that they have worked on and feel comfortable playing. It does not have to be a Jazz piece of any kind. I actually prefer that it is not a Jazz piece. Their prior background in Jazz is not important to me at the audition. What I am looking for is; Is the piece prepared? Did they work on it enough to show what their work ethic is if and when they make it into the class? Can they play their instrument? The rest I will take care of once an ensemble of students has been selected. As for vocalists, many students come into the audition with strong show voices or what I refer to as the "American Idol" sound. What I look for are those students who can tell a story. Did they not only learn the song, but do they understand the words and are they trying to communicate the story to me?

Once they are in class, it is my first task to take out the mystic of improvisation, to take out the fear factor. At the beginning we look at a quote by Miles Davis, "There are no mistakes." We discuss the meaning of what Miles is saying. That it is the mistakes that have made Jazz so exciting throughout its history, that ability to make it happen by living in the moment. To understand the idea of living in the moment we first discuss the idea of listening. We do a couple of activities to see how much we are truly listening. The first one occurs in the classroom:

1. Have the students take out a piece of paper and something to write with.
2. Explain to them that we are about to do a listening exercise. After you clap, for one minute you will write down every sound that you hear. Prepare them to start.
3. Allow for a moment of wait time and then create a loud clap. The students will begin writing what they are hearing.
4. At the end of one minute, go around the class and call on each student to tell you what they heard. It is important that you hear from all of them. It's OK if they repeat something that someone else said as long as you know that it is something they wrote down and heard for themselves.

The second activity is given as a homework assignment:

1. At some point in the evening, each student is to sit quietly and for ten minutes write down every sound that they hear in those ten minutes. The length of time is important, right from the start, to build stamina in their ability to stay in the moment and be able to listen at a deep level. It is also a drill of sorts to learn how to put all other activities aside for a while like social media, TV, food, homework, whatever.
2. The next day in class, have each student go through their list and have them be able to tell you how they felt during those ten minutes. How hard was it to focus your listening for that length of time? Where you able to start your listening with those sounds closest to you and

then were you able to start hearing at a deeper level both externally further away and even internally?

Let me state at this point the importance of hearing from each student. Without them even knowing it, you already have the class in the act of improvisation through their own use of communication. Additionally, right from the start, everyone speaks, everyone is involved, everyone is listening to one another. The third activity involves the craft of communication:

1. Again as a homework assignment, they are to write out their observations of a communication with friends they are involved in. State clearly that it is not the topic, but how do each of the participants listen to one another? How do they know when to interject their own thoughts into the conversation? What happens when everyone is speaking at the same time? Or what happens at those moments when complete silence takes over?
2. In class, have each student describe their observations of the communication. Once again, every student must contribute to the whole.

It is at this point that the discussion can now be brought back to music. First, we discuss the process of being in the moment and knowing how your part fits into the whole. We think about our participation in the other ensembles they play in and I ask them to see if they can identify those moments when they are not part of the whole because they are not listening or distracted. We know these moments as being on "automatic pilot". We brainstorm ways to identify that moment, to be aware of it when it is happening and techniques to bring themselves back to the present. We, for the first time, introduce one of the component's of being a professional musician in that you must be listening and aware of the music as a whole and your part in it whether playing or in counting bars of rest. You are always in the music.

To tie these lessons together we look at music as communication and in Jazz in particular, it is the communication you create through improvisation that is the foundation and basis of this art form. There are no mistakes in the communication you made when carrying on a conversation with your friends, just as there are no mistakes in communicating through the language of music. We will be learning a new language and in the process they will learn that it is more about listening and developing your own individual voice through your instruments and that each person's voice is valid and wonderful.

### Starting with the Avant-Garde

Start with the Avant-Garde? Wouldn't you want to start with scales and chord progressions, theory? Why Free Jazz? Once again I reiterate the first step has to be breaking free of the mystique and fear of improvising. You want to give your students a feeling of success, a feeling of achievement and a belief that they can do this and have fun improvising. By stressing that these first activities are all about listening and communicating with the other members of the ensemble you are scaffolding what was initially learned and now building on that previous learning. Before I explain the activities, I believe it is important right from the start that you involve yourself in these group improvisations. Play with them and put yourself out there just as you are asking them to do.

Additionally, all of the studies and activities in this book can and should be done by the vocalists and the drummers as well. It is important for vocalists to understand improvisational concepts the same way an instrumentalist does and to go further, your drummers need to have an understanding of harmony and melodic line as well. Now keep in mind that this may

be the first time that your students are going to be asked to play something where they have no music in front of them. Have fun with your students when doing these activities to help them to relax and to attempt what you are about to do.

In the first activity, ask the students to take out their instruments and sit in a circle. Sit in a way that the rhythm section players are a part of the circle. You should also have a place in the circle with your instrument. Begin as follows:

1. Instruct the students that we are going to do a group improvisation all at the same time. They will feel more relaxed being a part of the group as opposed to doing something on their own. That will come soon enough.
2. Inform them that we will be improvising on our instruments, except that we have to play them any way but how they were intended to be played. They can only produce sounds, no "musical notes". For example, you can play your mouthpiece or just the slide, you can slap the keys on your sax, you can pull the slides out of your instrument so you only get a buzz, you can play the inside of the piano, hit the upright bass or guitar, vocalize with sounds - just no notes of any kind.
3. With no more than that to start with tell them that when you say "go" everyone has to start at the same time (make sure you are sitting where you can see a clock and its second hand). They are to make the sounds on their instruments for 10 seconds and then we all stop together, so watch for the cut-off. They really won't know what to make of it, but the truth of the matter is that they just performed a group improvisation!
4. There is no doubt that in that first attempt they probably weren't listening very much and that it was funny and just noise, so now try to get them to do the same thing, but to listen to each other and to listen to themselves and how their sound is fitting into the whole. Let's talk about the two attempts, 1. What if anything was different between the two performances? 2. Have all of them identify someone in the room and tell us what sound they were using? 3. Did you change your sound from the first to the second time? Why or why not?
5. Next, move to a series of additional group improvisations that bring in some elements of music, i.e.: use only long sounds, short sounds, play loud, play soft, half the circle play loud, the other soft and then switch. make a game of it and do it in as many ways as you can think of always discussing what the outcomes were based on their listening right afterwards. Listening is the essential lesson in these studies.
6. Throughout the above you can have them experiment with different sounds on their instruments. They do not have to keep the same one, although have them remember all of the sounds they used to create a sound "bag of tricks".
7. At this point, they will begin to feel a little more comfortable. They improvised and they are still alive and having fun in the process. So now lets move to solos and duets, again only using the sounds they have found on their instruments.
8. It goes like this: player one starts (which should be you to get it going) by themselves for 5 seconds, then player 2 enters and the duet continues for 10 seconds, player one stops and player 2 solos for 5 seconds, player 3 joins for a 10 second duet, player 2 stops and player 3 takes a 5 second solo, etc... all the way around the circle. The use of the clock is important to push them to start playing and to play for a set period of time. This way they have to jump in and play for a total of 25 seconds in duet and then as a soloist.



To get your students to develop a routine of daily practice, ask them to go home and just find as many sounds on your instrument that you can and simply play the sound.

The second circle activity follows in a similar fashion, but now using a single note on their instruments (again vocalists and drummers will sing their parts).

1. Instruct the students that we are going to do another group improvisation all at the same time again sitting in a circle.
2. Inform them that we will be improvising on our instruments, but they can only play a concert Bb. They can play the concert Bb in any range they choose. They can play the note long, short or a combination. You are now giving them the opportunity to make their own choices; however the choices are based on listening and responding to what they are hearing in the moment.
3. With no more than that to start with tell them that when you say "go" everyone has to start at the same time (again make sure you are sitting where you can see a clock and its second hand). They are to play the concert Bb on their instruments for 10 seconds and then we all stop together, so watch for the cut-off. At first it will sound as though they are just tuning up and that's OK.
4. Remind them again the importance of always listening to the group and to themselves as to how they are fitting into the whole, so now try to get them to do the same thing, but to listen to each other and to listen to themselves and how their sound is fitting into the whole. Let's talk about the two attempts, 1. What if anything was different between the two performances? 2. Have all of them identify someone in the room and tell us how they were playing the concert Bb? 3. Did you change the way you played it from the first to the second time? Why or why not?
5. Next, as before move to a series of additional group improvisations that bring in some elements of music, i.e.: use only long notes, short notes, play loud, play soft, half the circle play loud, the other soft and then switch. Continue to make a game of it and do it in as many ways as you can think of always discussing what the outcomes were based on their listening right afterwards.
6. Throughout the above you can have them experiment with different ranges on the concert Bb on their instruments. Try to help them to become aware that the register they are using is dictated by what they are hearing at the time and those concepts of register placement can also be added to their "bag of tricks".
7. They are continuing to improvise, they are still alive and still having fun in the process. So now lets move to solos and duets, again only using the concert Bb.
8. It will follow the same format as before: player one starts (which should be you again to get it going) by themselves for 5 seconds, then player 2 enters and the duet continues for 10 seconds, player one stops and player 2 solos for 5 seconds, player 3 joins for a 10 second duet, player 2 stops and player 3 takes a 5 second solo, etc... all the way around the circle. Continue to use the clock to get them to start. Once they start they are usually fine from there.

Again for home practice, just take any note of your choice and play around with it. How many ways can you play it?

The final activity once again follows the same format; however now the improvisation is on a concert Bb major scale. This is the one scale you have to believe that they all know, but if not you can take the time to review with them by playing together ascending and descending in whole notes, half notes, quarter and eighth notes. It, in my opinion, works best when they are all in their easiest one octave register when playing this improvisation study.

1. Instruct the students that we are going to do another group improvisation all at the same time again sitting in a circle.
2. Inform them that we will be improvising on our instruments, but they can only play a concert Bb major scale. Start by playing each note sustained, but the length is their choice. You are once again giving them the opportunity to make their own choices in the moment.
3. With no more than that to start with tell them that when you say "go" everyone has to start at the same time and play the scale ascending one octave. They can hold the note as long or as short as they choose to and can be repetitive on the note they are playing as well, but they all must play one full octave. No clock will be used. The length of the improvisation is now in their hands. Since they will be changing the notes of the scale at different times some amazing sound textures will be created. Once these sound textures begin they will be excited and their listening will be heightened automatically. Additionally, even though the entire group is starting at the same time depending how fast or slow they move up the scale will result in a thinning of the ensemble to something like a quintet, a quartet to a trio, duet and ending with a student finishing the scale as a soloist. Time is no longer a factor.
4. Always take the time to discuss the ways they were listening (or not listening) to the group and to themselves as to how they are fitting into the whole. Some questions to ask, 1. What was created as we started to move up the scale? 2. Identify how others were playing the scale? 3. Were you listening to anyone in particular that made you move up the scale faster or slower?
5. Next, as before move to a series of additional group improvisations that bring in some other elements of music, i.e.: use combinations of long notes, short notes, play loud, play soft, add silence. Continue to make a game of it and do it in as many ways as you can think of always discussing what the outcomes were based on their listening right afterwards.
6. You can now have them experiment with different ranges on the concert Bb major scale or octave displacement on different notes or parts of the scale, but they must continue to play each scale tone ascending numerically. Try to help them to become aware that the register they are using is dictated by what they are hearing at the time and those additional concepts of register placement can also be added to their "bag of tricks". You want to stress that the "bag of tricks" is constantly added to and used. You do not have to make up something totally new each time you play. Build on what you just did. Keep what you like and toss out what you do not.
7. From the use of just sound, now they have progressed to their instruments and utilizing the elements of music (duration, articulation, dynamics, silence etc...) while improvising on an ascending major scale. So now lets move to solos and duets, again only using the concert Bb major scale.
8. It will follow the same format as before with a few variations (no clock and each player plays one octave ascending on the concert Bb major scale): player one starts (which should be you again to get it going) by themselves on the ascending scale, when player 1 hits the 4th scale degree then player 2 enters from tonic. When player 2 hits their 4th scale

degree player 3 enters from tonic and so on all the way around the circle. You continue to play until you complete the entire octave. Each succeeding player must listen for when the player in front of them moves to the 4th scale degree to know when to enter. Without a clock and depending how fast or slow they play the ascending scale the result should be random solos, duets, trios, quartets, etc... creating some cool sound textures.

For practice, play the ascending scale in as many ways as you can. Do the entire scale one way, then cut the scale in half and do it two ways, then alternate every two notes or alternate every note to something new. Can you string the whole scale together working in those elements of music as discussed in class?

### Key Points

In conclusion, by utilizing these activities as a prelude to Jazz improvisation you have first and foremost started the process of breaking down the mystic and fear of improvising hopefully in a way that was fun to do.

More than anything, you have ignited a fire under your students to want to move forward, participate more and through your instruction they are prepared to engage in deep practice that will allow them to bring out their abilities and talents. To help and encourage them to engage in deep practice, praise effort over talent. Hard work does pay off and the time you spend in deep practice only serves to engrain the skill on your brain and in your ears. Remember the basic concepts of this chapter - there are no mistakes and the development of each students individual voice where each voice is valued.

As we move forward, it is essential that your students are listening to Jazz. Help them to get the sound in their heads and ears. Listen to who you want to become!

## Chapter 2

### The Rhythm Section

To move our study of improvisation to a Jazz context, there are elements that we must begin to hone. The first of these starts with the rhythm section and their ability to swing and to learn their role as accompanists. As part of this understanding, I stress the importance of the quarter note. Once the quarter note is established, everything works from the quarter note. We look to find the pocket of each quarter note that comes from a strong walking bass line and the center of the hi-hat engaging 2 & 4. We work on the following drill to make a series of successive quarter notes swing like there's no tomorrow.

1. In a medium tempo, we start with a walking bass line on a Blues progression. (since we will be moving into Blues improvisation first, this allows the students to hear and internalize the Blues progression). I put the bass player "in a box" where he can only play quarter notes through the progression and at times I may ask the player to only play root notes depending on their ability.
2. Next, I will ask the drummer to play the hi-hat on 2 & 4. When it begins to lock in, just a walking quarter note bass line and the hi-hat on 2 & 4, it will begin to get a lift or bounce to the line and it starts to settle into a groove. Once this takes place, it really begins to get a comfortable feel to it and it swings. It is essential that they are in eye contact with one another and that they are listening, breathing and feeling each others presence.
3. Now it's the guitar's turn. Playing quarter notes through the Blues progression, the guitar joins the walking bass and hi-hat on 2 & 4 in what is best described as Freddie Green style (as in Freddie Green from the Count Basie Orchestra). Once again you are looking for all three players to find the center or pocket of the beat in those quarter notes and what's referred to as "locking in". When it finally does lock in, there is such a feeling of forward motion that at that moment, when I look at my students, you can begin to see them smile because they start to feel something, the essence of swing feel. Remember to set up the rhythm section so that they can have eye contact and stress the idea of listening, deep listening.
4. Moving back to the drums we look to add two additional elements all the while staying with the quarter note. First, we begin to "feather" the bass drum. This means that, very lightly, the drummer begins to play quarter notes on the bass drum to lock in with the walking bass line and the guitar playing in "Freddie Green" style. The second addition is to now have the drummer ride on the cymbal, but only allowing the stick to bounce on quarter notes. You may need to balance the rhythm section so that there is a blend to their sound and most importantly emphasize holding the time, to not rush or drag, again it's about finding the pocket of each quarter note. This is also a good point to bring in the importance of using a metronome in practice. Start with the metronome playing on all four beats, maybe even have a different click sound for beat one to reinforce always moving to the one of each measure. When it starts to lock in, move the metronome so that it plays on beats 2 & 4 (and down the road, you can put the metronome on so that it only clicks on beat 4 ala Philly Joe Jones).
5. Finally, we bring in the piano to play what is referred to as a "Charleston Rhythm". In each measure, play a quarter note on 1 and an eighth note on the + of 2. When this locks in to the quarter note, listening for the center or the pocket, the piano gives the progression

momentum, a feeling of the music moving forward. Once again, set the piano player in a way that all four have eye contact and observe that they are listening and making eye contact with one another.

6. In order to understand all of this in a practical sense, we will listen to early Ellington and Basie and we make note that the drummers rarely fill. They actually, like the rest of the rhythm section players, are simply playing quarter notes and does it ever swing. These early drummers not only did not fill, but they did not accent the figures with the band. They only played quarter notes in this style and when really listening there is no way it doesn't swing.
7. Every time I pass out a new big band or small group chart throughout the year, I have the rhythm section play in this fashion. After all, if it can't swing from the quarter note, how will it ever swing when the drummer is attempting every set up and hit. We are always making a point on focusing on the time feel. It is vital that all members of the ensemble understand that maintaining good time is essential by every member of the ensemble, "remember the adage, we are all drummers".

In looking at the early Ellington and Basie bands and most Jazz groups large and small, you begin to see a common theme. This theme is that the first rule for any rhythm section (and they do not like hearing this at first) is that they accompany. That is a rhythm sections main role before they can do anything else, they must serve an accompanists to the ensemble, soloists and vocalists. When the kids get over the initial shock of this and they begin to take ownership of that responsibility their playing really starts to gel and you can see and feel the excitement in the room as the notes come off the page and the music comes alive.

### Key Points

1. The quarter note is the essential grounding pulse of Jazz. Everything comes off the quarter note - your eighth note line, your triplet feel, everything.
2. The walking bass line must lock in with the drummers hi-hat. The music will not swing until they are able to accomplish this feat and nothing can be added on top until they settle into the pocket.
3. As instruments are added in the rhythm section, they must now listen at a deeper level and collectively make the quarter note swing. When the piano finally enters on the "Charleston Rhythm" you get a feeling of the music having forward motion as it starts to swing. Remember to balance their overall sound as well.
4. The metronome has to be an essential practice tool for everyone. First placing it on all four beats (finding a different click on the first beat will reinforce the concept of every measure moving to the one), place the metronome on 2 & 4 or just on beat four to feel the Jazz pulse as well as each quarter note even though it's not being played by the metronome. Remember, we are all drummers. We are all responsible for the time.
5. Listening to the masters and listening to one another are two traits that must continually be talked about and made into a number one priority.
6. The rhythm section must first accompany before it can stretch.

## Chapter 3

### Understanding Basic Jazz Language

Once the rhythm section has a basic concept of swing feel we have to move back to the horns so that when they play on with the rhythm section they are doing so in a Jazz style. As with everything that I have done with my ensembles, it all starts with the quarter note. I'll play some examples from Louis Armstrong, Bix Beiderbecke, Roy Eldridge and the big bands of Duke Ellington and Count Basie to demonstrate how the quarter note has a bounce to it. In the hands of a master, like Roy Eldridge for example, the quarter note played by a master can dictate the time. I have even brought recordings of Baroque music, which they actually may be more familiar with, to demonstrate the lightness and bounce of the quarter note and how everything comes off the quarter note. This bounce is what makes it dance music and it is important that from the beginning they think about Jazz as dance music.

I have included a series of band rhythm studies that start with the ensemble playing scales on and off the quarter note (Addendum #3.1). We'll start as before with the rhythm section playing in the same fashion, to accompany the band in playing the rhythmic scale studies. As they settle in we bring in the horns and have them line up their rhythmic pattern with the bass and drums, so now the horn players have to find that quarter note pocket as well. Finally we'll add the rest of the rhythm section and as it settles it will start to swing and when it does we then move to thinking about a little push on the quarter notes on 2 & 4.

The first of these three studies (Group A) are rhythmic patterns that begin on a downbeat. Each measure continues the same pattern while the scale of whatever key you are calling rises to the ninth degree and then descends back to the tonic. The second rhythmic study (Group B) are patterns that begin on an upbeat following the same ascending and descending scale format. Finally, the third pattern (Group C) are those that anticipate the next measure. By working on these with the entire ensemble you are covering many aspects of the music at one time: scale study, phrasing, articulation, time, listening.

In the beginning, young players will have a tendency to play in a short, clipped almost staccato style. So now we talk about giving weight (a fullness) to each quarter note and begin the technique of playing in a legato style. We look to smooth everything out. I present to the students a series of warm-ups titled Phase 1 and Phase 2 (Addendum #3.2). These are studies that are based on half notes that help the players produce a smooth, legato line while feeling half time, the playing on one and three while feeling the hi-hat on 2 & 4.

Of course each new note combination introduced means a reteaching of the previous. It is a constant process of scaffolding. So when we bring eighth notes in it will once again become somewhat choppy and very straight sounding. The first step I have taken to smooth out the line and lock the eighth notes off of the quarter notes with the rhythm section is to take the same warm up studies and play them as though they were quarter notes and feel the line moving as though it were a walking bass line. Now as you move to eighth notes, you want everything to come off the quarter note. You want them to feel the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th notes of the scale in the pocket as the quarter note hits (like a Bill Evans style of eighth note playing, more downbeat oriented) and then you want all of the notes on the upbeats to be legato and drop to the downbeat (as in a player like Lester Young, inflecting the eighth notes). We do this slurring first and inflecting with the air and eventually moving to a legato tongue. We think a triplet feel, but I try not to write it as such instead trying to focus on the idea of subdividing the quarter note as triplets. As I try to start with some familiarity and then add a

new concept I bring in a study in eighth notes on Major and minor thirds in fourths (Addendum #3.3). We are focusing on playing quiet and light, feeling the quarter note as we inflect an eighth note line. The line will naturally alternate between emphasizing the downbeat and inflecting the upbeat into the downbeat first with the breath, then with a legato tongue so that we can continue to also work on articulation and phrasing. Remember that playing in the pocket is the goal. Every player is a drummer and collectively we are listening to maintain good time feel and articulation within that time feel.

Once this begins to fall into place, and you will know when it starts to develop a feeling, an "attitude". So let's talk a little more on the concept of swing eighth notes. I do explain it as a triplet feel, but I never write it on the board as often seen as the first two triplets tied and then the third. It has to be about a feeling, not a technical way of explaining it. I try to get them to think long - short, long - short, long - short, etc... or a doodle sound. It will start out by sounding like a dotted eighth and sixteenth note, so I will talk about that rhythm as being "boxy" with sharp edges. You want it to feel "rounded" and smooth (that feeling of a legato line). I have found that describing the aspects of the music as an image is understandable to them and desirable so that it remains a feeling and not something technical. You are looking for a loose interpretation, not a stuffy choppy sound.

Finally, to make an eighth note line swing we work toward inflecting the line from the upbeats to the downbeats (although as stated previously, there are times where the line can become more downbeat oriented). We start by slurring and inflecting the upbeat to the downbeat with the breath. After a period of time this will smooth itself out and then we will do the same inflection using a legato tongue.

As a means to incorporate this into individual practice and to create a practice system that allows students to fully learn their Major scales we will look to work towards a mastery of the instrument. We introduce a study I call, "Key a Week" (Addendum #3.4). For twelve weeks we will do a series of studies, one key a week. Aside from becoming familiar with the 12 major keys, students are working to develop a technical sense of playing their instrument from the bottom to the top of their playing abilities. Students are also expected to practice these studies in a Jazz style - bounce the quarter note, inflect the eighth notes in a triplet feel, maintaining length of notes (a "fat" sound) in a smooth, legato style using a metronome to work on time feel.

I also ask the students to not write out each new key, but to learn the key and play the pattern in that key. When we talk about the patterns we use the scales tones to describe where we are starting or what type of pattern it is (i.e.: in thirds starting on the tonic and ascending 1 - 3, 2- 4, 3 - 5, etc... in eighth notes). This serves two purposes, the first is that it reduces confusion between all of the different transpositions in the room, but more importantly it gets them thinking about and understanding the scale tones so that when we get into chords, arpeggiation and upper extensions, they already have a sense of how things work. Additionally, when transcribing and analyzing, they can identify the tones played by a performer to the chord. We are beginning the concept of chord/scale study.

After the first twelve weeks, we will spend the next twelve weeks on minor scales with the same patterns. We begin to speak about the dorian mode and how the ii chord functions. And next we move to dominant scales for the final twelve weeks with a study of the V chord and mixolydian mode. By this point we will also introduce passing tones on the major scale (adding the b6) and on the dominant scale (adding the major 7th). These scale studies can be used on any scale by making the necessary adjustments.

It is also at this time that we introduce basic Jazz nomenclature, the various ways you will see how a major chord is written and the same with dorian and mixolydian. We have been looking

at their scales and we will emphasize arpeggiation and the upper extensions, as well as avoid tones on the major. This brings in the incorporation of Lydian on the major chord.

Finally, by this point we are establishing routines and expectations for how we rehearse as an ensemble and what is required by each player in their own practice. We will add our second motto that we live by in the ensemble, "You Play the Way You Practice!". We take the Miles Davis quote to another level here, "There are no mistakes". I never get upset over mistakes they make; however my expectation is clear, if you are having difficulty with a part, you must practice it on your own. Have difficulty today, but not tomorrow. We are not here to rehearse for you to learn your part. We are here to refine, rehearse for nuance, to bring in the advanced elements of dynamics and more than anything, to make the music swing and come alive. When it is your turn to solo, you have an obligation to the ensemble to know your chord changes and scale choices and to work on developing a musical statement that maintains the music at a high level. Additionally, we support each other in this process and it is the process that is the most important. We all have an obligation to one another to do the job and to do it to the best of our abilities.

When students buy into these concepts, the ensemble becomes theirs and that is ultimately the goal. Through these studies the band now has a concept of swing feel that they can practice and strengthen. They are feeling more confident and supported by one another. They are learning that it is ok to make a mistake and that we all make mistakes. It's what do you do after a mistake occurs and how do you keep our composure. We learn from our mistakes and the mistakes that others make as well. That is how we grow as musicians and as a band. Now we are ready to bring all of the pieces together through improvising in a more Jazz based context and that means in this approach, starting with the Blues.

### Key Points

1. Listen to the masters. How does Louis Armstrong or Bix Beiderbecke or Roy Eldridge play quarter notes and how do their eighth notes come off the quarter note?
2. Jazz as a dance music.
3. In refining articulation, we are striving for a legato style triplet feel.
4. Key a Week studies are a means for students to learn how to master their instrument from the top to the bottom while working on scale theory, modes, articulation and time feel.
5. Rehearsal expectations are established. The importance of teamwork, of having each others backs is stressed. Take ownership of the ensemble and work to master your own part and your own solos. Contribute to the whole.



## Chapter 4

### The Sound of the Blues

Why start with the Blues? Many will say that the Blues is a complicated form filled with emotion and complexity beyond a student's understanding. Yes, that is true, there is an expectation that one's life experience is what permeates the Blues and a player's ability to communicate that experience. But it is also true that the basic I - IV - V Blues progression is easy to hear and allows a student to grasp a basic knowledge of Jazz theory as a starting off point. The other aspect of the Blues is in learning and playing the minor Blues pentatonic scale. The simplicity of these five notes is easily learned by the students and as performers we all know that a utilization of this scale is in essence a universal language that the average listener feels and can process that feeling into an emotional context.

I'll never forget the words of Whit Sidener, head of the Jazz Studies Department at the University of Miami, in our first day of our Jazz Improvisation class when he said and I paraphrase, "We all know how to pull an audience in at any point on almost any tune. Simply play the minor 3rd on the highest partial you can play it and just hold it out. You'll have an audience hooked from that point on." Once again, we all know that he's right and who among us hasn't pulled that out of our bag of tricks at one point or another?

I start by simply teaching the concert Bb minor Blues pentatonic (1, b3, 4, 5, b7 - Bb, Db, Eb, F, Ab) - Addendum 4.1. Once the class has the notes for their instrument we play the scale together starting on tonic and go up one octave and back down, then two octaves ascending and back down.

Once they are able to identify the notes, I talk about playing the sound of the scale. When I say the sound of the scale, I mean it's pure sound, just those five notes, no rhythm section, no time. I preface the playing to come by adding that silence in between the phrases that you play will create a feeling of telling a story. The concept of statement, breath, continuation, breath and the same...

At this point I will demonstrate by playing a series of Blues statements, again only plying the five notes of the minor Blues pentatonic. Was I able to communicate my story? We discuss this and reiterate the importance of Jazz improvisation being about communication. Communication between you and the other musicians on the bandstand and between you and the audience. It is at this point that we introduce "call and response". The discussion is a quick one introducing the basic concept as a communication between two people through their music, not their words. As in speaking with someone, it requires listening, processing what was said and responding. The dialogue can go back and forth and others may also enter and eventually exit the conversation. It is at this point that we do our next full class activity as follows:

1. Once again the class is set up in a circle (remember to make sure that the rhythm section is part of the circle also). As a rule, the vocalists will be expected to do all of the same activities as the instrumental players. What should the drummers do? As we are early in our learning the language of Jazz, I do ask them to make the attempt to vocalize the Blues pentatonic. They have been singing the ascending and descending scales with the rest of the horn players, so they are in a position to sing and as I stress with all of them, play simply. Note choice and use of rhythm and silence are more important than playing a lot of notes fast. Play the sound of the Blues through the minor Blues pentatonic. One last thing,

I do not ask the ensemble to sing, but to play on their instruments. I am still doing all that I can to break down any fears that are still lingering. Confidence building is more important to me at this stage of the game than anything else.

2. We will now do a call and response activity. I will play the roll of the call throughout the entire class. As I play a statement, the first student will answer me. I will play again and they will answer one more time before following the same pattern with the next student all the way around the class. It is a lot of playing on the teachers part; however you do not have to come up with a new call for every student. It actually is more effective if your calls are more similar than varied. The more they hear your ideas, the more they will begin to take a chance and imitate you. Now, as students start to imitate your calls, this is the point as you go around the room where you start to vary your playing. Stay in that general area for a while and once they start to imitate, then vary your calls again.
3. It is important that every student participates and after the first time around, initiate a discussion on some of the things they heard or felt from each others playing. How intently were they listening and not just to their turn with the teacher, but how intently were they listening throughout the whole exercise? How did each persons playing communicate with you? Did you "hear" dialogues occurring? And what made you aware of these dialogues?
4. Now they are ready to do the second part of this activity and that is developing a communication through call and response with each other. You can start by playing a call to which the first student answers, do it one more time, then make the first students second response become a call to the students sitting next to them. The conversation would follow as teacher (call), student #1 (response), teacher (call), student #1 (response & call), student #2 (response), student #1 (call), student #2 (response & call), student #3 (response), etc... This now creates a three way communication which makes it very important that the students are truly listening and processing the playing that is happening to be prepared to join the conversation.
5. As with all activities, there must be a discussion afterwards to have the students assess their understanding and the understanding of their peers. Additionally, either through these question and answer assessments or throughout the period at some point, you must hear from every student. Every students voice must be heard in the playing and in the discussions. Continually stress the important concepts of listening, processing, joining the conversation (call and response), staying in the moment even when you are not playing.

In conclusion, for homework, I ask them to practice on these five notes of the minor Blues pentatonic in concert Bb by playing the essence and sound of the scale and each notes relationship to the previous one just played. This is a "stream of consciousness" type of assignment. Do not worry about time, simply play the sound of the Blues. The only criteria is that you can only play those five notes and you must incorporate silence between statements (phrases). I often tell my students to do this exercise every night in your room, with the lights out so that you are not distracted. Listen to what you are playing and respond to it. When you play something that sounds "cool" to you, work with that for a while (development of ideas).

Now we are ready to learn the Blues progression and to learn our first Blues tunes.

## Key Points

1. Strive to learn first the sound of the Blues. The importance of the sound and feeling of the minor third.
2. Learn the minor Blues pentatonic. Listen to the relationship of one tone to the next.
3. Practice freely listening to the sound of the minor Blues pentatonic. Develop a line.
4. Work on call and response exercises to learn the craft of communication between you and your peers, but also between you and the audience.

## Chapter 5

### The I - IV - V Blues Progression, Blues Scale and Riff Blues Compositions

After much of this preliminary work, the students are now in a position to start working with a rhythm section and improvise in a Jazz style using a common progression with chord/scale theory. I now introduce the 12 bar Blues progression using a standard I - IV - V Blues form. By this point the students should be aware of the minor Blues pentatonic and how a 12 bar Blues progression functions. The idea at first is to keep them "in a box". By this I mean, limit what they are allowed to play, in this case the box is the five notes of the minor Blues scale to be played throughout the 12 bar Blues progression. Throughout the course of study in this book, the students will continually be placed in these boxes with which to practice before being "let out of the box" as performance opportunities come about. The side benefit of keeping them in a box is that unknown to me at the time, but has become quite evident in listening to my students improvise throughout the years is that they truly think about what they are going to play. They limit their playing by using space. They simply do not overplay which from the beginning is such an advanced concept that I am always amazed at how it happened organically without having to bring it to their attention.

In order to emphasize that a minor Blues pentatonic can be used throughout the 12 bar Blues progression we start by learning a Riff Blues head. Since we have been working primarily in Bb, the first head we learn by ear is the Sonny Rollins tune, Sonnymoon for Two ([Addendum 5.1](#)). At this point I also introduce the minor Blues pentatonic in F and the F Blues progression to Milt Hinton's Bag's Groove ([Addendum 5.2](#)), also by ear. Once the students hear these heads travel through a Blues progression, they understand that those five simple notes can be used throughout. The additional benefit of starting here is that if the students hold to those five notes, they cannot play a "wrong note", so once again you are creating a comfort zone that gives them confidence to play in a manner that gives them a feeling of success. Before I go into some detail on how I proceed, I have created a list of some 25 Riff Blues heads ([Addendum 5.3](#)) in various keys for them to practice. I suggest that they play these riffs and Blues scales in all 12 keys and those riffs that they really like, to use and to place them in their "bag of tricks" to draw upon while playing on the Blues progression.

It is at this point in our improvisation studies that I quote Clark Terry and his three steps to being an improviser. The first being Imitation, which is where all of them are at right now. Most students do not use what they learn thinking that they have to create something new on the spot every time they play. I will play some out-takes of Charlie Parker recordings and show them how each solo has similar elements. That is Bird's bag of tricks. He had thousands of them, they have a few, but it is OK to use what they have at various points in their solos. I go on to explain that the next step is Assimilation. The more they practice and process the information they are learning and using this information as a means to build new material from, over a period of time they begin to get out what they have been learning. And finally, Innovation. What the masters are able to do. They imitated their idols, processed their lessons over time and now they are creating and speaking from their own voice.

To begin, I will play some Blues progressions maybe from an Abersold cd and have the students raise their hands or gesture as each of the chord changes occurs. I will also test them to see if they can hear the top of the progression, or the V - IV turnaround. Can they locate the 5th bar, 9th bar so that they are understanding the progression based on four bar phrases? Once this feels comfortable and that they have had time to practice on the five notes of the pentatonic, and after a review of Jazz articulation we now start to play over the

progression. This exercise also helps them to continually listen to the rhythm section as they play to maintain their place in the Blues progression.

Now the rhythm section will be asked to accompany each player in the ensemble. To get everyone playing means that the rhythm section has to play for a long period of time. At first that is very difficult for them especially in regards to stamina. They simply get tired physically and mentally. As they get used to the length of time they become stronger and are able to play physically for longer periods of time, but even more importantly they learn to stay in the moment mentally. The other benefit of this is that after a period of time, they learn to accompany each player based on their abilities. They know when to play more simply for a younger player who are not feeling comfortable as of yet and they learn how to either communicate more and listen at a deeper level for those more advanced players.

At the beginning the criteria is for all of the students to play a two chorus solo (later on we will add a third chorus or even a fourth to get them to think more about development). Prior to this we might listen to some Lester Young and show how with the limits on recording time, he was able to create a statement of sheer beauty in eight or sixteen measures. I will then set the parameters as they can only use the five notes of the minor Blues scale, they must make an effort to find those notes in that scale that identifies the IV chord and the V - IV turnaround back to the I chord. At the beginning I will state that I want to hear rhythmic movement by half notes or quarter notes before moving into eighth notes. They must establish the time feel themselves, not relying on the rhythm section. They can also think of the use of sustained notes and silence to prep the next entrance. It's a lot to think about, but nothing new from where we started in previous lessons. It's important to emphasize this. they are not starting from scratch every time a new concept is added.

At this point I have them sit in the big band set up so they can get used to hearing the rhythm section from their band positions (it also is beneficial for me to remember who has played and how I am mixing the order of one horn after another). I will have the entire ensemble play the head, let's say in this case, Sonnymoon for Two twice, just like they would do it if they were in a small group. For the first soloist, I select a student before the start so that once the head is concluded, the first player will start to improvise. From there I randomly point to students to play the next solo. Typically I let the first chorus go by and at the start of the second I let the next player know that they are next and so on.

Occasionally, I will select a predetermined order for solos, mostly if we are trading four's it makes it easier without having to make decisions so quickly. And, yes, for the drummers they will either play two full choruses as a solo and bring the band in to play the head out, or we will trade four's with the entire ensemble back to the head once the four's are completed.

Whenever we do this exercise, I will solicit feedback from members of the ensemble. I will direct a peer critique of each persons playing. Because all of the students are pretty much in the same place and feeling much of the same nerves and excitement they usually speak in very supportive terms to one another. We spend time in finding the right way to say something so that we learn from one another and that it is not an attack. I will often point out someone's playing that they identified while we were going around the class. You might hear a player really put it all together and you see the other students smiling, or saying something by acknowledging that they heard something in their playing, they may applaud after a solo to show support of one another. This is a great opportunity to have them point out for themselves what they heard in another students playing so that they can pick up on it and incorporate it into their own practice. It also builds the confidence of players when they are identified as playing something cool.

This is an exercise that we do quite often, typically at the beginning and end of a school week so that students know what they need to practice during the week and on weekends. Once

established, the students actually really look forward to doing it, especially as has been our custom to hold a "jam session" prior to any holidays or weeks off from school. It's an old Jazz tradition to play with friends and to jam together and we hold this tradition with honor among my students.

As for practice, since we are now playing a progression, we begin the conversation on the importance of using a metronome in practice. I suggest that students get a metronome where you can change the sound of the click on different beats. I will have them start with a click identifying the one of each measure with a click on the other three quarter notes. Now they can play a Blues progression that labels the one of each measure so that they learn to keep their place and to play figures and lines in time.

The next step I will have them take with the metronome is to once again place it on all four quarter notes to the bar; however put a different sounding click on 2 & 4. This allows them to hear and feel all four quarter notes, but to also identify the hi-hat feel on beats 2 & 4. Finally, once they are comfortable with that, then the next step is to have the clicks on beats 2 & 4 only. They are now feeling the one of each bar and they are playing with the swing of the hi-hat, which I refer to as Philly Joe Hi-Hat. Now for your most advanced players, those who have been doing the 2 & 4 hi-hat for a long time and feel comfortable doing it, I will have them move to a click only on beat four. They are now feeling the one, as well as the other quarter notes on the bar without hearing them. This is truly a Philly Joe Jones feel that they become aware of through listening.

As students get beyond the reluctance of using a metronome, because it simply is never wrong and really identifies where we need to devote our practice time, you and they begin to see that their time feel is improving and once they get with an organic, breathing rhythm section, they feel much more free and are able to stretch out in their improvisations.

## Key Points

1. Learn the I - IV - V Blues progression. Identify the change of each chord over the 12 bars, as well as breaking the tune up into three four bar phrases.
2. Review the minor Blues pentatonic and explain that those are the only notes they can play as we begin to improvise. This is what I refer to as keeping them "in a box".
3. Learn the riff Blues tunes Sonny Moon for Two and Bag's Groove by ear. Through analysis you can show them how the minor Blues scale can be played over the full 12 bars of the Blues progression. Additionally, we are focusing attention on playing a Blues in Bb and F.
4. Examine and analyze a sheet of Riff Blues tunes to see various formulas for playing the Blues scale.
5. Discuss Clark Terry's three stages of an improviser: Imitation, Assimilation and Innovation.
6. To start, play the Blues progression to hear it and get it internalized. Next, with the rhythm section accompanying the soloists, call on each student to play a two chorus solo on the Blues progression. Focus on the rhythm section in their building of stamina and the ability to stay in the moment over longer periods of time.
7. Introduce various forms of practicing with the metronome (and that it is essential that every student spends practice time with a metronome). Some forms of practice are: click

on all four quarter notes with a different sounding click on 1 to follow the progression and to find the one of each measure; Click on all four beats with a different sound on beats 2 & 4 to feel the hi-hat; metronome on 2 & 4; metronome on beat 4 only.

## Chapter 6

### The Major Blues Pentatonic

As the students become more proficient in navigating the playing of the Blues scale over the standard Blues progression the next step in their improvisation study is the idea of shifting scales to the appropriate chords. I begin this process in a somewhat simple fashion by introducing the major Blues pentatonic scale (1, 2, 3, 5, 6) - [Addendum 6.1](#). We introduce the new pentatonic in a similar fashion as we introduced the minor Blues pentatonic. Once they get the feel for the scale by playing some call and response playing and for homework, playing the essence of the scale, its sound. We will also practice going back and forth between the two pentatonic scales so that they can feel and hear the movement of one scale back and forth to the next, especially the difference in sound going from the major 3rd to the minor 3rd and from the 6th to the b7th. Without saying anything we are beginning to introduce the concept of a guide tone line.

Looking at the I - IV - V Blues progression we identify the use of the major Blues scale over the I chords and the minor Blues scale over the IV chord in the fifth and sixth measures and over the V - IV turnaround in the 9th and 10th bars. It is at this time that we bring out our work tune to get a feel for utilizing the two Blues scales. I use the Clifford Brown composition Sandu; however I start by playing it in concert Bb ([Addendum 6.2](#)). Up to this point they have primarily only improvised in the keys of Bb and F, so this grounds it for them so that do not have to learn everything new at the same time. First we analyze the head so that they can see how he proceeds the I chords with the use of the sixth scale degree and how he proceeds the IV and V - IV turnaround by using the minor Blues scale emphasizing the b3 and b7. We play the head and then listen to me perform the head very slowing with the rhythm section so that when we move to listen to the recording, which is much faster, they will have an idea of what to focus their hearing on.

Prior to listening to the Clifford recording, I will now introduce the major and minor Blues scales in concert Eb ( the original key), they will practice in the new key following the same format. As they listen to the recording by Clifford Brown, since they are now used to the new key, they are hearing it as they will perform it. We will also spend some listening time to players like Hank Mobley who utilized this concept in many of his Blues solos. My goal is to get them to hear the sound of the two scales first and then play for themselves trying to match what they have already heard.

As they start to play Sandu in concert Eb ([Addendum 6.3](#)), they have to re-think their note choice so that they do not fall into playing in either Bb or F. This level of concentration is a really powerful moment for them. They really concentrate on note choice and additionally, it re-emphasizes the idea of leaving space, especially when you are not sure what you want to play.

We will stay on this idea of shifting between two scales over a Blues chord progression until they begin to feel a comfort level and are actually able to improvise within this box, remember the idea is that when playing either scale, they must show the appropriate places to play them, but they also are only allowed to use those five tones of either scale. They will, of course, add additional tones, but try to catch them and help them to really focus on only the tones of the two pentatonic scales. Continue to review the original riff Blues heads, but now have them play full choruses on the minor Blues scale and then additional choruses using the shift between the major and minor pentatonic in Bb and F. These three keys are a good



start for them without overwhelming them with too much. Keep in mind that through all of this they have been doing the key a week exercises on major scales which are reviewed each day at the beginning of the period as a warm up or Do Now exercise.

At this point in the school year I will often add Duke Ellington's C Jam Blues as an additional tune in the book. Maybe (and usually) not to perform in concert, but to increase the size of the book for out of school performances. In their improvisation study, often without them realizing, we have added another key to their Blues repertoire. When we do perform the Ellington arrangement of C Jam Blues, I never assign solos. I choose students to play as the head is performed by the sax section in the arrangement similar to how we practice in class, but now in a live performance setting. Because of this, they all practice the major and minor Blues scales in Concert C to be prepared to play if and when called upon to do so. Throughout this entire process we are also building a book of small group combo tunes they can play when needed. Our first four tunes are Blues compositions, three riff Blues and one through composed Blues head in the keys of Bb, F, Eb and C.

In the next chapter, we will introduce one more Blues head and begin the study of playing over a ii - V or iii - VI - ii - V progression on the Blues.

#### Key Points

1. Adding the major Blues pentatonic. Begin the concept of chord/scale theory by shifting from the major pentatonic to the minor on the I - IV - V Blues progression.
2. New tune: Sandu, first analyzed and played in Bb and then to its original key of a Blues in Eb. Analyze the Clifford Brown head for the use of both pentatonics, but also the initiation of a guide tone line utilizing the movement from the major 3rd to the dominant 7th (minor third of the new scale) and the 6th to the b7th.
3. Adding repertoire, C Jam Blues and a new Blues progression key to learn, C Blues.

## Chapter 7

### The ii - V progression and iii - VI - ii - V turnaround in the Blues

Once the students reach a comfort level of alternating between the major and minor Blues pentatonic, it admittedly gets more serious and a lot more difficult. We now add the following chords to the Blues progression: IV chord on the second bar, VI chord on the eighth bar leading to a ii - V on bars nine and ten and in the eleventh and twelfth bars a iii - VI - ii - V turnaround. This is probably the most common Blues progression played today in sessions and at least to start when someone calls a Blues to perform. For our work tune, we use Tenor Madness ([Addendum 7.1](#)).

We start with a two part analysis. First we look at the chord progression and review the theory behind a ii - V progression. We will then analyze the Tenor Madness head as we begin the process of looking for Guide Tone lines in the Sonny Rollins melody. Sonny Rollins use of the major 3rd moving to the b7 and back again as well as the final lines of the tune focusing on the guide tones and his use of chromatic passing tones. There is an examination of scale to chord theory by emphasizing the modes of dorian, mixolydian and ionian.

Now that the students are able to use more note choices, they usually feel a little nervous about this, but I always start very simple and always discuss the idea of leaving space when not sure what to play. We start by first demonstrating that even with the additional chord changes, you can continue to play the Blues scales throughout (which most of them will continue to do for some time). Next we work on playing the root movement of the chords by playing whole notes (half notes on the turnaround) and then following the same format by moving move 3rd's to 7th's and 7th's to 3rd's. We will discuss approach tones to get to the target tones whether 3rd's or 7th's and move to the 7th's or 3rd's and escape tones so that the students learn how to produce a continuous melodic line. We practice this by playing quarter notes approaching target tones and releasing. Then we take the same quarter note approach and release and play it in eighth notes. We work on approaching the target tones from above and from below with a single chromatic approach. Later on we will approach by two chromatic tones, then three and so forth.

Once they have the idea of a linear concept, we look at arpeggiation (again first focusing from the roots, then in establishing a guide tone line through the use of inversions). We will then focus on arpeggiation by starting each chord on the third, then the fifth and finally the seventh. All of this preliminary work gets them hearing the progression and helps to further develop a linear concept of playing.

Finally, I will share with them some examples of ii - V patterns that work over two bar and four bar ii - V's or iii - VI - ii - V's ([Addendum 7.2](#) and [7.3](#)). These are patterns that start from the root of each chord, the addition of arpeggiation from the root to the exploration of melodic movement starting on other than the root and using a guide tone line of approach, target and release tones. From here I emphasize once again the importance of extracting what they hear and incorporating it into their solos and to create their own ii - V patterns as well. So now I put them back in a box. There are three aspects I initially want them to be able to demonstrate:

1. The ability to play the major and minor Blues pentatonic in the first six bars as previously worked on

2. I want them to be able to identify the VI chord each time it comes around by targeting its major 3rd
3. And finally, to demonstrate the ability to play a linear guide tone line through the ii - V progressions from the ninth to the twelfth bars back to the top of the progression

At this stage of our improvisation study, I will also suggest that students begin to transcribe what they are listening to. I suggest they find a Blues of a player they like (I try to push them to the wonderful melodic players such as, for trumpet examples, Blue Mitchell or Art Farmer). I suggest that they do not transcribe the entire solo, but first start with listening to what they are playing on the turnarounds and extract those two or four measure phrases. Once they take them down, play them and try to incorporate into your solo so that you get used to hearing the sound of a truly linear ii - V pattern. The hope is that they will continue to keep adding to their "bag of tricks" and continue to draw on ideas they are working on. What I have found is twofold:

1. They are fearful of playing something either learned in class or that they picked up from an album because they think by copying it is not improvising. It's important to break this misconception. I will play recordings by Charlie Parker where there are many alternate takes to show them that even Bird played many of the same lines from solo to solo on the same song. I try to explain to them that the only difference between them and Charlie Parker right now is that his bag of tricks is huge.
2. Secondly, when I find students who actually attempt to incorporate these ideas into their solos something truly amazing tends to happen. Inevitably, no matter how much they practice a ii - V pattern for example, they usually mess it up somehow when trying to incorporate it, but because they have the sound in their heads now, they can actually improvise their way out of the "mistake". They often surprise themselves, but little by little they begin to play a melodic line through a ii - V progression.

### Key Points

1. Start adding the VI chord on the 8th bar followed by a ii - V and in the 9th and 10th bars, show the iii - VI - ii - V turnaround back to the top of the tune in the 11th and 12th bars.
2. Our work tune will be Tenor Madness by Sonny Rollins
3. Work on dorian, mixolydian and ionian scales
4. Start showing how to set up a guide tone line (3rd's to 7th's and 7th's to 3rd's) and how to practice using target notes and approaches to the target and releases from the target
5. Have the students begin to transcribe a Blues by a player they admire, especially picking up on how they navigate through the last four bars of the progression through the turnaround back to the top of the Blues form. You may need to select a player for them, as well as a Blues tune to work from
6. Maintain the idea of playing the major and minor Blues pentatonics over the first 6 measures, identify the VI chord by emphasizing its major 3rd and how to develop a guide tone line over the ii - V and turnaround in the progression

7. Add some ii - V patterns to their repertoire and get them to incorporate these into their solos to get the sound in their ears

## Chapter 8

### Rhythm Changes

As the students begin to demonstrate an ability to play through the ii - V's on the Blues, our next move is to expand on this knowledge as we move to rhythm changes. We start with a brief overview of the Great American Songbook, specifically George Gershwin's classic, I Got Rhythm and how this progression was appropriated by Jazz musicians as a vehicle for improvisation.

We first examine the last six measures of Tenor Madness and show the relationship to rhythm changes in concert Bb once again reminding the students to make connections with prior learning. When students first see a rhythm change chord progression, they often do not see the similarities to what they have already been studying. When that connection is made, you can see them relax and it simply is not as daunting. This is a good point to establish the idea of looking for commonalities in the music, both in written parts and in chord progressions. You do not need to start from scratch on every new tune you look at. Next we will examine the bridge to rhythm changes. Right away they usually see that it is an extension of the first two bars. However, it acts differently in this context. For example, to continue the process of looking back to move forward, we will work on utilizing the Blues scale over the A sections and how it works throughout, but it simply does not work on the bridge. Additionally, as we listen to a series of performers playing on rhythm changes, it becomes clear that it is on the bridge that the players really take off by creating a propelling sense of forward motion as they move into the quicker moving chord changes in the last A section and in moving back to the top of the tune.

Before we even add a practice tune, the first step that we take is to introduce a series of patterns that move through the ii - V progressions starting from the root of each chord. This serves two purposes, the first is that they begin to hear the strength of the ii - V root movement and secondly it begins the process of moving in a linear fashion from one chord to the next through ascending and descending scales. We will then do an exercise where we play a continuous line and change to the next chord scale as we rise on the line. This is valuable in assisting students in the process of reading chord changes, but also thinking quickly from one chord to the next. This also serves to now pull them away from always starting on the root note of each new chord. Since they are able to hear the bass movement they can now dig deeper in the development of guide tone lines while maintaining their place in the progression.

Once they have a stronger aural understanding of the rhythm changes chord progression, now we can add practice heads. I pass out Sonny Rollin's Oleo and The Flintstones Theme ([Addendum 8.1](#)). On Oleo they can see how the head was created with guide tones and on the Flintstones they see right away how simple you can play even with all of those chord changes moving fairly swiftly underneath.

As we looked at patterns from the root, now we look at a series of two and four bar ii - V patterns. These will incorporate guide tone movement of 3rd's to 7th's and 7th's to 3rd's, arpeggiation and for the first time the upper unaltered and altered extensions. The suggestion is to play through all of them and identify the ones that stick out to you and learn those by first incorporating them into your practice and to use the ii - V's as part of your improvisation, this idea of imitation leading to assimilation again. Secondly, practice those that you really

like by moving them to every key. This really gets the sound in your head and on your fingers.

Other ways of practicing through rhythm changes is to think about playing in two, four and eight bar phrases and by trying to incorporate the minor Blues scale on the fifth and sixth bars of the A sections (another practice box to put them in). It is also suggested that as students listen to examples of master players performing on rhythm changes that once they hear a line or pattern that they identify with, that they transcribe it, take it down by ear. Once again incorporate these line transcriptions into your own solos. Once they have a fragment that they want to incorporate into their solo, we look at ways to approach the fragment and / or how to release away from it to continue the line. My suggestion to those who really take me up on doing this is to focus on the bridge, to create a notebook of bridge transcriptions from a variety of artists. Another step I will often suggest to students is to write out your own solo line and it's ok to incorporate some of the material you are drawing from others. This translates into a visual image of what their line looks like and when they play it back it becomes clear where they are understanding the concepts of the Jazz language and where they may need to focus more attention.

Since few students will truly begin the process of transcription, I pass out a number of transcribed solos for the students to use. They can use them simply as an etude and play it from beginning to end. At the least, they are hearing and feeling what a Jazz line is. I will start in class and have them continue the process of analyzing the solo for note and scale choice over each chord. We will look for commonalities and melodic development throughout the solo. We look for the use of pattern and as always, how did the player use space. I then make the same suggestions as before, find elements of the solo that you can identify with and extract those bits and pieces and incorporate them into your own practice and improvisations. Nobody will say you are "cheating" to quote from a transcribed solo, on the contrary, they will hear it as part of your practice.

The transcriptions I use first are the Miles Davis and John Coltrane solos from the Prestige sessions of Oleo ([Addendum 8.2](#)). I like to show the contrast between Davis and Coltrane. Miles uses rhythm and pattern, space and exquisite note choice, simplicity - the foil to Coltrane. Coltrane uses long lines through the chord changes, arpeggiation and 1235 patterns. Both are amazing solos, both work to perfection, now it is up to the student to incorporate through imitation. By doing that, they will begin the process of assimilation.

I actually use one more solo to review with them, a Clark Terry solo from a recording of The Flintstones ([Addendum 8.3](#)). The lines are beautifully constructed and easy to analyze. But I like to use all three of these solos to discuss the objective of developing one's own voice. Clark Terry's personality flies out of his instrument. You can feel his warmth and humor. Miles Davis is much more introspective and Coltrane is definitely expressing the power of his inner being. The idea for the students to understand that what and how they play is a reflection of who they are, their inner voice projected through their instrument.

## Key Points

1. Expansion of the ii - V progressions from the end of Tenor Madness to Rhythm Changes.
2. Examine commonalities from one tune to the next. Help them to make connections to prior learning.

3. Work with the ii - V patterns sheet and/or create your own ii - V patterns to extract and import into your solos. Start with patterns off the root to assist in hearing the root movement of the chord changes.
4. Expand the ii - V patterns to include a guide tone line, arpeggiation, unaltered and altered upper extensions.
5. Use transcription to extract lines that you identify with. Learn in all 12 keys and incorporate as part of your solos.
6. Analyze selected transcribed solos by Miles Davis, John Coltrane and Clark Terry.
7. Include the rhythm change work tunes: I Got Rhythm, Oleo and Flintstones.

## Chapter 9

### Modal Progressions - Playing over Major and Minor Chords

By this point in the school year the students have been continuing their key of week study first on major scales and then on minor scales. They will continue this same practice on dominant scales, but it is also time to take a break from playing on ii - V progressions and move to working with those major and minor scales.

I pull a Jamey Abersold tune out called *Beatitude* ([Addendum 9.1](#)) which is a simple 8 bar tune all on major chords with the final chord incorporating a #4 (lydian) scale. I feel that this is a good point in the year to review and discuss nomenclature - chord symbols and chord construction ([Addendum 9.2](#)). This discussion then moves to an examination of the major diatonic system, modes and characteristic tones that identify the chord ([Addendum 9.3](#)). Again, because they have been playing the key a week studies, they are better prepared now to understand the major scale and its accompanying modes, so now we start to introduce chromatic passing tones such as the b6 on the descending major scale to create a moment of tension and release in the line of the scale, as well as looking at the use of the lydian scale in place of the major to add the color tone +4 ([Addendum 9.4](#)). Off of the key a week studies we look at major scale patterns that are usable over any major chord (these can also be altered into lydian scale patterns ([Addendum 9.5](#))). Once the students are able to incorporate the major scale patterns we further our study by looking at chromatic additions on the descending major scale ([Addendum 9.6](#)). This trains their ear to listen for tension and release within their line and to listen for similar sounds from the players they are listening to. Finally, we add one more element, that of the use of the major pentatonic ([Addendum 9.7](#)). This gives them the ability to use scales that can act as substitutions, for example we discuss and play the major pentatonic over a major chord starting in its root, fifth and ninth (which will give you lydian). As with any scale study, we look at some common pentatonic patterns that can be used to help them get the sound of the five note scale in their head and of their fingers ([Addendum 9.8](#)). Now we are able look at how the guide tone would work still emphasizing the movement to the major 3rd or 7th and how these tones are identifying tones to indicate chord quality, but now we bring in something new, the idea of color tones and common tones ([Addendum 9.9](#)). We introduce the 9th as a substitute for the tonic, the +4 and the 13th.

No discussion on major chords can occur without looking at the fourth scale degree. Probably the only true avoid tone, so we emphasize that if you play the fourth scale degree on a major chord you are only a half step away to drop down to the third scale degree or a whole step away from moving up to the fifth. But now we introduce another color tone, that of the #4 creating the lydian mode. From the fourth scale degree you are now only a half step away from moving that fourth scale tone up a half step to the +4 color tone. It is at this time that we reinforce the use of chromaticism into the line to create interest through tension and release.

From here we look at soloing on minor chords and the practice tune we use is Herbie Hancock's *Maiden Voyage* ([Addendum 9.10](#)). We approach the suspended chords as minor chords on the fifth of the root and the first thing we study is the minor seventh chords and diatonic system ([Addendum 9.11](#)). As part of the key a week studies we have been playing dorian scales in all keys, so now they are better prepared to look at how minor chords and scales work. We look at guide tones leading to the the b3 or b7 of the new chord and how these pitches are the identifying tones of the chord as being minor. As with major chords, we



look at the concept of color tones and common tones in the chord progression. Again we identify the ninth as a substitute for the root. We also introduce the 6th scale degree and the fourth as color tones of the minor scale.

The larger concept to learn on minor chords is how one can substitute the dominant over the minor chord (i.e.: playing G7 over Dm7). We do diverge some to discuss the dominant scale and the use of the M7 passing tone when using the scale in a descending fashion (Addendum 9.12).

Once we examine these concepts I then pose the question, can we use the Blues scales over Beatitude and Maiden Voyage. We find that we can use the major Blues pentatonic and even the minor Blues scale on Beatitude, but not so much on Maiden Voyage. So after all the study we have done using the Blues scales this will be the first time that I restrict its use so that they can be placed in a different box and develop a somewhat completely new vocabulary of ideas in their melodic line. However, we do demonstrate how to use the major pentatonic over minor chords by playing it from the seventh, fourth and third of the minor chord (Addendum 9.13).

Additionally, these tunes are not based on swing feel, instead both tunes use a straight 8th feel (Beatitude uses a Latin feel). So literally everything becomes new in their improvisation study between how the rhythm section must accompany to the type of line and articulation that is used, not to mention preparing to improvise on static chord movement. As we know, it is not that way at all. It's getting them to adjust the material in their bag of tricks to now have it work in these settings as they did on the Blues and rhythm changes.

So how does one practice improvising on these modal tunes? The difficulty in most modal playing is that you must improvise on one chord for an extended period of time (you will see that they actually miss the use of chord changes at first rather than filling in so much space within the static chord movement). My first homework is that, as they originally did in their Blues practice, take the first chord of either tune and just hang their for a while and develop some ideas on a singular chord. Then move to the next chord and do the same. The next step is to bridge one chord to the next. Play out of time and hear one chord and then move and make the adjustment to play on the next chord. Once you begin to feel comfortable doing this, then with the use of a metronome, start playing over the tune in time focusing on two, four and eight bar phrases.

This is also a good opportunity to bring in the concept of playing over the bar lines (i.e.: playing the end of the tune and through to the top; or the end of one eight bar phrase through to the next or from an A section into the bridge; or out of the bridge to the last A section). Like weening them from starting their solos always on the roots of each chord, you want to get them to move their lines longer and in new directions. All the while you have to keep the mantra up that they must only play what they are hearing and that it's ok to leave space, to let the music breathe. To work in the idea of incorporating space and playing over the bar lines we will use some Lennie Tristano practice ideas. One such idea is the the player must improvise for two to three measures, but then rest for two bars and then play four measures, rest one more bar and follow the same pattern again. It automatically pushes you over the bar lines while forcing you to start lines in places that they had not thought about before all the while they are allowing space to become a part of their improvisational tools.

## Key Points

1. From the Key a Week studies begin to incorporate the b6 passing tone and chromatic additions on the major scale and the major 7 passing tone on the dominant scale.
2. Discuss and listen for the identifying tones of the minor chord (b3 and b7) and the major chord (major 3 and major 7). Bring in the concept of color tones, on minor - the 9th, 6th and 13th scale degrees and for major - the 9th, #4 adding the Lydian mode and 13th. Also introduce the concept of playing the dominant scale over the minor chord, as well as the various combinations of the major pentatonic over both minor and major chords.
3. The work tunes for this section are Beatitude by Jamey Abersold for playing on major chords and Herbie Hancock's Maiden Voyage for playing on minor chords (this also introduces suspended chords to the students). Examine the melodic characteristics of the guide tone line and the use of common tones.
4. Introduce the concepts of straight 8th and/or Latin feel and the incorporation of straight 8th notes and its corresponding articulations.
5. Practice procedures starting from free playing to develop lines on both major and minor chords, bridging the two chords through a guide tone line and bringing in the use of the metronome to practice in time over the full progression.
6. Further develop the practice of playing in two, four and eight bar phrases eventually moving into some "Lennie Tristano" type practice procedures that teach playing over the bar line while maintaining the idea of using space as part of their improvisation.

## Chapter 10

### ii - V Compositions

Now that we have looked at minor and major chords in more depth and also started the process of how to play the dominant over the minor chord we can now look to further our study on the ii - V progression. We start this unit by reviewing and confirming the voice leading principles used to set up a guide tone line and introducing the concept of target tones, approach tones and release from the target tones ([Addendum 10.1](#)) After a playing of Tenor Madness and rhythm changes we move directly into our new practice tunes based on the ii - V progression, Tune Up by Miles Davis and Pent Up House by Sonny Rollins ([Addendum 10.2](#)).

We will look at our ii - V patterns first and reaffirm the use of a guide tone line. From here we will start to examine the ii - V in all it's possibilities, such as ([Addendum 10.3](#)):

1. The major scale can be used throughout the entire ii - V progression, as well as incorporating the use of the lydian mode. The students will practice playing on one of the practice tunes by playing only the major scales of each ii - V. Staying on this concept we will additionally use the lydian mode in place of the major scale and experiment with the use of the #4 through the progression. Finally, we will also work in the passing tone b6 and other chromatic additions on descending major scale lines. These last two ideas examines the use of chromaticism creating tension and release in their melodic line.
2. Next we will look to use the V chord and it's source scale over the ii chord and the V chord resolving to the ionian or lydian scales as it hits the major chord. On the dominant, we will reintroduce the passing tone major 7 on the descending line.
3. To break it down even further, we will then look at each chord independently and their corresponding modal source scales as follows: the ii chord will utilize the dorian mode to the V chord and mixolydian moving to the I chord in ionian or lydian. All previous material will be added as well building on past learning. It is here when we analyze the ii - V patterns and their use of the altered upper extension we look at the use of b9 and #9 on the dominant ([Addendum 10.4](#)).
4. In order to add further to the study of altered extensions we will introduce another new scale choice on the dominant chord, that of what Miles Davis referred to as double diminished (1, b9, #9, 3, b5(#11), 5, 13, b7) - it can also be explained as a diminished scale starting with a half step. Which uses the altered upper extensions - b9, #9, b5(#11). The 13th is natural in this form of diminished, but we will include the b13 as an altered upper extension in this study.
5. Finally, in our study of ii - V progressions we will also look at tri-tone substitution. We will identify the 3rd and 7th of the dominant chord and show how its tritone has the same 3rd and 7th resulting in a similar guide tone movement. This example will be demonstrated on the bridge to rhythm changes and then on both Tune Up and Pent Up House.
6. As these more advanced concepts are processed, now we turn our attention to transcribed solos in much of the same format as previously. On Tune Up, we will study the Miles Davis solo from the Prestige recording and on Pent Up House, we will analyze the solo as played by Clifford Brown on the Sonny Rollins Plus 4 album ([Addendum 10.5](#)).

There is so much to process with these two pieces in understanding how to navigate the ii - V progression that we will spend additional time through practice of imitation and extracting ideas from the patterns and solos to allow the language to get deep inside and assimilate the material in order to bring it out of their instrument.

### Key Points

1. Discuss, demonstrate and teach how to practice setting up a guide tone line by establishing target tones. Work on ways of approaching the target tones. As this becomes more comfortable, examine how to extend the line by using approach tones to a target and then incorporating release tones away from the target.
2. Over ii - V progressions, start by playing the major scale over the entire ii - V moving to the I chord. Do the same using the lydian scale.
3. Next, use the dominant over the ii chord and through the V chord resolving on ionian or lydian for the major chord.
4. Now, play dorian to mixolydian and resolving on ionian or lydian incorporating concepts of the guide tone line (approach, target, release).
5. Introduce the altered dominant chord and the altered upper extensions (b9, #9, b5(#4), b13) and their corresponding scales including double diminished.
6. Finally, introduce tri-tone substitution showing how the third and seventh scale degrees of a dominant chord are identical allowing for similar guide tone line movement.
7. Our work tunes for this unit are Miles Davis' Tune Up and Sonny Rollins' Pent Up House. As part of this unit of study we will return to the ii - V patterns that were introduced when we looked at rhythm changes and we will analyze two transcribed solos, Miles Davis' solo on Tune Up and Clifford Brown's solo on Pent Up House.

## Chapter 11

### The minor ii - V Progression

Once the students have a basis for navigating through ii - V progressions, our next step is to learn how to play over the minor ii - V. In order to do this we have to introduce two new scales, the melodic minor and harmonic minor scales. In teaching melodic minor, the first part is to separate from the classical music theory they may be studying. In Jazz, we only use the ascending part of the melodic minor scale. We often move at a quicker pace in practicing these scales in all twelve keys. First we will do both at the same time through the key a week studies as practiced previously on major, minor and dominant scales. second, we will focus on the keys and minor ii - V's as found in our practice tune which is Autumn Leaves ([Addendum 11.1](#)). It's a perfect tune for this introduction as it focuses on one minor ii - V which is the relative minor to the one major ii - V and even has a chord substitution iii - VI - ii - V to bVI +11 of G minor to V altered to i minor.

Our process to working on the minor ii - V will be very similar as what we did for the major ii - V as follows ([Addendum 11.2](#)):

1. The harmonic minor scale can be used throughout the entire minor ii - V progression. The students will practice playing the practice tune by playing only the harmonic minor scale of each minor ii - V while playing the major scale on the major ii - V. This is a very tight box to play in, but it assists the students in playing the key centers of the tune both minor (Gm) and major (BbMaj).
2. We will then look at each chord independently and their corresponding use of the melodic minor scale as follows: the ii chord will utilize the melodic minor scale from the b3 and the V chord will use the melodic minor scale from the b2 moving to the i chord in dorian or harmonic minor. Additionally on the ii chord, students will learn to additionally use the locrian mode as a source scale, but the real emphasis instructionally is in examining the fully altered dominant chord incorporating b9, #9, +11, b13 using the prescribed melodic minor scale (the use of double diminished is also brought into focus again here as well). Once the scale choices come into view and the student feels more comfort in applying them, then we begin to look at how the guide tone in minor is established to create clear, identifiable chord qualities within their melodic ideas.
3. As these more advanced concepts get processed, now we turn our attention to transcribed solos in much of the same format as previously. We will examine the Miles Davis solo from the Cannonball Adderley album of Autumn Leaves and the Chet Baker Autumn Leaves solo from the album "She Was Too Good to Me" ([Addendum 11.3](#)). The expectations remain the same, to extract material that can be imitated and assimilated in their practice and playing of tunes with minor ii - V progressions while continuing to process a strong linear concept through the major ii - V.
4. One additional component that I like to move into is to have the students create their own minor ii - V patterns by first altering the major ii - V patterns that they previously have practiced and seeing where adjustments need to be made for it to work on the minor. By seeing it, hearing it (both aurally and internally) and by playing it, students begin to see how the process works and our able to develop some of their own ideas which pushes them now to the third component of learning, innovation.

As the students begin to work on this material, we can move to the next chapter in this study guide where students will begin to examine music from the Great American Songbook for common chord progressions. We will now learn tunes much faster, actually building a book as they begin to see that there is no reason to start from scratch every time a new tune is called or placed in front of them. For many of them, they will see themselves more in control of the music for the first time.

### Key Points

1. Begin to introduce the harmonic and melodic minor scales. Explain the use of harmonic minor over the entire minor ii - V progression and then how to incorporate the melodic minor scale off the b3 of the ii half diminished and off the b2 over the altered V chord.
2. Our work tune for this unit will be Autumn Leaves. Analyze the composition and connect scales to the appropriate chords.
3. Use the Miles Davis and Chet Baker solo transcriptions to Autumn Leaves as a guide to study and extract material to use and move to all 12 keys.
4. Work off the ii - V patterns and alter to fit over the minor ii - V progression. Have students create their own minor ii - V lines.
5. Work toward proficiency in navigating both the major ii - V and minor ii - V of Autumn Leaves incorporating all previously learned material.

## Chapter 12

### Common Chord Progressions

The transition that students need assistance in understanding at this point is that they should not need to start from scratch each time they move to a new tune. They have studied and begun the assimilation of the following:

1. I - IV - V Blues (Sonnymoon for Two & Bags Groove)
2. Incorporating both the major and minor Blues scales (Sandu)
3. Adding ii - V's and a iii - VI - ii - V turnaround to the Blues (Tenor Madness)
4. Rhythm Changes (Oleo & The Flintstones)
5. Major (Beatitude) and minor (Maiden Voyage) modal tunes
6. ii - V tunes (Tune Up & Pent Up House)
7. Minor ii - V's (Autumn Leaves)

These eleven practice tunes have been the basis of our study. They, in sense, have all of the elements found in most Great American Songbook standards and Jazz standards. The students must make the connections, and to internalize the connections, they must do it on their own. I will start by facilitating the process that they will take on their own.

In using the Real Book, I will select a standard, let's say for example, All the Things You Are. We will identify each of the ii - V or iii - VI - ii - V progressions (both major and minor) by bracketing them, we will then identify key centers so that they can draw on their key a week studies to be able to work through the chord changes and to simplify the chord changes in any of the 12 major keys and their modes. You see, we are now making connections with all facets of our study to this point.

Next we will identify the scale choices that can be used for each chord. We can look at practice techniques such as root movement, arpeggiation, patterns and scales. Once the students see how to quickly analyze the progression, I will ask them to select from a group of tunes and they will do the same on their own and then present to the class. As each student does their preparation, they begin to see the commonalities from one tune to the next. Remember, the commonalities we are looking for are their ability to identify the progression, not yet the commonalities from let's say the last eight bars of Stella by Starlight to the A sections of Hot House. I purposely hold off on this as I am always curious if they are able to make those connections on their own and the selection of tunes that they will work on are connected to one another in just that manner. If they are alert to these characteristics, then I can feel comfortable that they are beginning to become proficient at moving from one tune to another with the ability to read a new set of changes, knowing that its all been seen before in some capacity.

Additionally, at this point in their study, they have or will soon complete their key a week work. We now will move our weekly assignments to learn to play in all keys to working on patterns to learn to follow a set of chord changes. I will pass out examples each week from Jerry Coker's Patterns for Jazz book. Not only do students learn a new set of available

patterns, but the way the book is set up is a perfect vehicle for learning to read chord changes. As you may know from this book, a progression is written out and in each example, you are given the pattern to play, but only over the first two or three measures which means that now the student has to continue the pattern over the remaining bars of the progression. It is a great system to get students to learn to read a chord progression and respond by playing the appropriate stated pattern. Each week I will assign studies to review covering major, minor, dominant, ii - V's (both major and minor), Blues and so on. By giving so many studies, they are being forced to read and not memorize the pattern to the progression.

As these patterns also incorporate altered dominants, diminished, double diminished, augmented, melodic and harmonic minor patterns the students are learning a new vocabulary that they can bring into their improvisations. To further this study, I also will assign for reading purposes material from Oliver Nelson's Patterns for Jazz book. These are excellent as etudes for working on phrasing and articulation so that their soloing expresses a strong Jazz vocabulary.

Finally, at this point in the curriculum, I begin to introduce ear training. I wait to this point as now they have a sense of the theory and sound associated with the melodic and harmonic language of Jazz theory and my hope is that they will be able to transfer that sound from the horn to their voice by hearing what is deep inside of them already. We just want to move it more to the front of their playing. We will sing the words to the Jazz standards we are playing and focus on the scales and intervals of the major and minor scales. We will arpeggiate chords from root position to their inversions. I will also play this material on the piano for them to identify.

As we will see in the next chapter, it is now time to add tunes and to learn how to function in a small combo setting.

### Key Points

1. At this point there should be a complete review of all learned material to firm up their understanding and to clarify any misconceptions.
2. Introduce exercises that help students to understand the process of reading chord changes while working on patterns from Jerry Coker's Patterns for Jazz. Also introduce additional patterns for study through Oliver Nelson's Patterns for Jazz.
3. Have students continue to practice ear training from the assigned classwork such as: singing the words to standard compositions, arpeggiating the chord progression and singing the scales that correspond to each chord.



## Chapter 13

### The Great American Songbook Standards & Small Group Playing

Our study moves into performance practice for small group Jazz combo playing. Students are assigned to small groups and given a few tunes that they will work on independently. They are expected to learn the heads and since they are in groups of three or more horns, they have to develop an arrangement that they can teach to the rhythm section when it is their time to perform with them. I additionally teach them how to use a rhythmic or sustained guide tone line to accompany each other prior to meeting up with the rhythm section.

Groups are rotated so that everyone has an opportunity to put their pieces with the rhythm section, play their arrangements and get the chance to solo over the chord progression. We discuss ways of communicating with one another so that the arrangements are clear and if something doesn't work as expected, they have ways of pulling it back together.

In the beginning, the first time around, I will select the tunes for them, for example:

Stella by Starlight, All the Things You Are, There Will Never Be Another You, Body and Soul, Embraceable You, How High the Moon, You Go to My Head, Out of Nowhere, I'll Remember April, and so on.

Each of these sessions will culminate in a performance in a club setting or in class in which case each performance will be recorded. When a second round occurs, I will mix and match the groups again; however this time they will get to choose their own two tunes to work on from a prepared list of tunes. The material will continue to come from the Great American Songbook list of standards that they receive indicating 100 standards that they should consider learning (Addendum 13.1). Additionally, we will look at a list of contrafacts (Addendum 13.2), tunes that have an original melody over an established set of changes. This is the continuation of the process to build a book of tunes that they can use to attend sessions with or to have a repertoire to choose from whenever they are in a small group playing situation.

At the beginning of this project, I work with each small group to look at analyzing the chord progression looking for commonalities between these changes and what we have already studied. The idea that not much new really occurs in the material from the Great American Songbook. I look for the students to identify such things as ii - V's and iii -VI - ii - V progressions, key centers, movement of major to minor, 3rds and 7ths in creating a guide tone line, finding the common tones, bVII - I as a substitute for V - I, tritone substitution and finally an introduction of the minor ii - V progression,

Another aspect that we work on at this time is that the students are expected to find and learn the words to the standards they are performing. They will sing the head with each other and with the rhythm section. They sing fairly straight, with little or no inflection. We then move this singing of the head to their instruments and look to vocalize through their instrument so that we feel the story that the lyrics are portraying.

Usually with the most advanced players I have had, we try to do the following: I emphasize that no matter what they do during their improvisations, they have to have the head in mind all of the time. We usually start improvising simply by inflecting the melody, to moving to play lines in and around the melody, to full improvisatory discretion; however we will play a game

where in the middle of their solos, I will say "head" and they in turn must move to the head wherever they are in the melody at that time. It is my belief that if they have the melody and the words in mind throughout their solos, then they are hearing the changes and reacting to the progression while, like a vocalist, they are telling a story through their melodic line, no matter how far out they may take it.

As they become more comfortable and become more willing to take chances in their playing, now we can move to some of the great Jazz composers where the chord changes do not always move where it might be expected and the ensemble playing can take on the characteristics of a little big band. We will also look to now put players on their own with a rhythm section. Now they have no one to lean on, they must do it themselves.

### Key Points

1. Place students in small groups where they will work independently and rotate the groups throughout the week to work with the rhythm section.
2. Material will first be chosen for them. The second round they will be able to choose from a list of 100 common tunes or contrafacts to learn where they will eventually choose their own tunes to play.
3. Horn players will be expected to use a guide tone line to accompany each other to practice learning the chord changes and improvising.
4. Groups will perform each week whether when possible in a club setting or in the classroom where the session will be recorded to critique at a latter date.
5. Students will be expected to learn the words and to sing the heads to standard tunes. They will be expected to improvise off the melody and progress from there.
6. They should begin to see commonalities between tunes with common progressions and devices (i.e.: bVII - I and tritone substitution)

## Chapter 14

### The Great Jazz Composers

We move to focus our attention on three of the greatest early Jazz composers and one seminal band leader - Benny Golson, Horace Silver, Wayne Shorter and the music of Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. The music of these composers uses all of the material previously studied - major and minor ii - V progressions (although now often times moving where you least expect), varied forms of the dominant chord (mixolydian, altered dominant, dominant #4 resulting in the use of the BeBop scale, melodic and harmonic minor, double diminished and whole tone scales and also bVII as a substitute for V moving to I), modal structures using dorian, half diminished, locrian and aeolian scales and major tonic chords using ionian, lydian and lydian augmented scales, as well as minor - major 7th chords and aeolian.

These composers also looked at a small group of two or three horns and the rhythm section as a little big band where the rhythm section has hits, accents and movement occurring while the horns are less in unison and more so playing harmonized or independent lines.

We will also look at various forms of altered Blues structures including Bird Blues and rhythm changes with altered bridges and substitutions (i.e.: tritone substitution on dominant chords) to draw from.

The students are literally full time on their own now. I act as a facilitator, not so much as a teacher. Students are assigned material or they select material that must be approved by me. A note on this, at times I will allow them to work on a tune that is somewhat inappropriate for them (by that I mean, a tune that is beyond their understanding and control) in order to make a point on how to choose appropriate material to play. To help them understand that a tune may be great, but not necessarily a tune that they may be ready for. It's OK to stretch, but when the reach is simply too far they must make decisions on what they are willing to work on and what they are looking to perform. Performance practice becomes paramount at this point in the instruction.

Some aspects of performance practice include arriving on time to setting up to not warming up on the band stand to having sets ready to go to knowing how to introduce the pieces and the band members. We will look at the business aspects of music - speaking to club owners and managers, advertising and the use of social media, how to negotiate pay for the ensemble, drinks and/or food, what to wear based on the venue you are playing.

When I have had students who are adept at these matters, I will look to book the small groups into a club, preferably a club setting that may be monthly so that students can take what they are learning into a real world, yet safe environment. The more they are on the bandstand, the more confident they become and at the same time they are building a book of tunes that they can use for the rest of their performing lives.

## Key Points

1. We begin to study the music of Golson, Silver and Shorter, as well as the music from the book of Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers.
2. We review all forms of chord/scale theory and analysis and then allow them to operate as independently as possible including seeking performance opportunities.
3. There is discussion on the business aspects of music to have an understanding on how to book a gig, negotiate price with a club owner, choosing material and rehearsing for the job, show up early to set up, do not warm up on the bandstand before your hit, paying the musicians and much more.

## Chapter 15

### Continuing Instruction for the Most Advanced Students

If and when students begin to advance and are able to cover the primary literature in the Jazz idiom up to let's say the early 1960's, then it becomes time to move to what I have considered to be the most advanced concepts and associated materials.

Before moving on, I hand out a packet that covers the following material (Addendum 15.1):

- \* Conventional Tetrachords
- \* Major Scales and Symbols
- \* Minor Scales and Symbols
- \* Dominant Scales and Symbols
- \* Common Slash Chords
- \* Pentatonics
- \* Altered Pentatonics
- \* Triad pairs
- \* Schoenberg Tone Rows
- \* Typical Intervallic Lines
- \* Articulation Studies
- \* Cycle Practice

Some of this material is review, some is new material that we will start to study. It's important to me to truly and clearly assess where they are and how much they have internalized so that now through assimilation they are starting to enter the final phase, that of innovation.

We have already looked at the concepts involved in chord substitution, but now we begin the process of superimposition. This is the re-chording of existing progressions and the imposition of chords on top of chords primarily in modal based compositions. This is the beginning of playing "outside" of the harmony. We study side-stepping concepts which is the movement up or down from a static chord to create tension and release. You can hear these ideas being developed by John Coltrane through his Atlantic recordings. They begin with his chord substitution of his "Giant Steps" changes over tunes like But Not for Me and his use of superimposition on tunes like Summertime. As he moves from My Favorite Things to A Love Supreme and the albums of that period you begin to hear his use of side-stepping.

Some of the musicians to follow Coltrane from this period are players like Woody Shaw, Joe Henderson, Eric Dolphy, Booker Little to name a few. As students are now much more involved in small group playing, we find selections from these artists to study and we choose from a selection of tunes like, The Moontrane, Inner Urge and Fire Waltz for example.

At the same time we are examining and listening to the music of the Free and New Thing players that played from 1959 through the 1960's following Coltrane's lead. Players like Ornette Coleman, Albert Ayler and The Art Ensemble of Chicago. Miles Davis Second Great Quintet is of specific interest from both their studio and live recordings. What's interesting in the scope and sequence of this method is that we have in a sense travelled full circle from where we began as improvisers. However now, we will look at the various forms of Free playing, such as:

1. Linear Improvisation as exemplified by Ornette Coleman and Don Cherry. Playing off the melodic content of the head with no chord changes and no real structure or form. We will examine the concept of harmelodics as I tend to understand it as the ability to take any note and have it become an intregal component of any chord as described below:

The note C can, depending on the chord, act as the root, b9 in B7, 9th in Bb, #9 or minor 3 in A dom or A minor, major 3 in Ab, sus4 in G, #11 or b5 in F#, P5 in F, aug 5 or b13 in E, 13th in Eb, minor or dom7 in D, major 7 in Db major

2. Freely interpreting the chord changes and maintaining the form of the composition. There is an established harmonic progression that can or does not have to be adhered to. An example of this style would be Eric Dolphy and Booker Little.
3. A third style of free playing was demonstrated by the middle sixties quintet of Miles Davis often cited as time, no changes. As amazingly demonstrated on the series of recordings from the Plugged Nickel which I believe is the epitome of this style each soloist improvises on the form of the tune, time remains, but with the absence of chord changes.
4. We will also spend time studying the late Coltrane style of "Pure Sound" improvisation. How can one use sound in a purely emotional context forgoing the use of melody, rhythm and harmony?

One of the last formal styles we will examine is what I will refer to as Free Form - ECM style which incorporates non-traditional chords and progressions. Much of this harmonic language comes from the modes of harmonic minor, melodic minor, melodic minor #5 and harmonic major ([Addendum 15.2](#)). There is a connection to the Impressionistic period when using these harmonic structures and in examining melody we begin to see the use of both wider intervals and repetitive notes, sustained lines that are based on the color tones of each chord. The musician is acting as a painter, creating a sonic sound palette. The ECM style comes from a European sensibility based on the study of American Jazz and the orchestral and operatic history of Western music.

One of the composers I use to get a handle on this style is a former composition teacher of mine from the University of Miami, Ron Miller. His compositions utilize all of these concepts and yet are accessible for the students to work through to grasp the intricate concepts presented.

## Key Points

1. A review is conducted including a study of chord substitution into the introduction of superimposition
2. An examination of the Free and New Thing players with an emphasis on John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, Eric Dolphy and Booker Little and Miles Davis Second Great Quintet.

3. Examining and listening to the various forms of free Jazz - linear improvisation, chord substitution and superimposition, time - no changes, pure sound
4. From the freedom in the opening lessons, a movement to ECM - open form styles and European Jazz incorporating the modes of Harmonic Minor, Harmonic Major, Melodic Minor and Melodic Minor #5
5. Introducing the music of Ron Miller

## Chapter 16

### The Big Picture and the Reality of Covering the Entire Scope and Sequence

Now, the truth be told, I have only made it once over a ten year period through the entire course of study. I had selected a large freshman class to be in the ensemble and over a four to five year period I was able to cover the entire scope and sequence of this entire system of Jazz Improvisation. Of the 21 students in the ensemble over those years, 19 of them went on to study music at some of the finest Jazz conservatories in the country including Juilliard, Hartt College, The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music, Berklee and Purchase.

In a typical year we usually cover the opening sequence of Blues improvisation, rhythm changes, major and minor modal playing and ii - V tunes and of course depending on the number of students returning, that will dictate where we start in the year and how far I can expect to progress through the course of study.

For the majority of the school year I break the week up as follows:

Monday - Improvisation, Theory, Listening and History Lessons

Tuesday - Big Band or Small Group Rehearsals

Wednesday - Big Band or Small Group Rehearsals

Thursday - Big Band or Small Group Rehearsals

Friday - Run down over the weeks assignments including improvisation, theory, listening review, big band and/or small group performance. Additionally I often record the Friday rehearsals to listen more closely to each students solos and to listen to the small group and/or big band performance. I will use this to prepare my lessons for the following week.

As you can see, because the ensemble is a production class we are always in the process of adding repertoire. By doing improvisation lessons on Monday, it gives them the week to practice the material we are introducing and by Friday they must demonstrate at least the start of some form of proficiency and then they have the weekend to continue their explorations. As we prepare for performances throughout the year, we will let these lessons go for a brief period of time to focus on big band or small group material. I usually devote April, May and June to small group playing and material is selected to further their study to the point where the improvisation lessons and small group performance are now the focal point as the big band takes a break. What big band playing we do at this time of the year is to focus on ensemble sight reading.

Additionally at this point in the school year we will focus some of our attention on small group composition. What I have learned from this for the students is that as they write a melodic line, it is written in the manner in which they play and invariably, they do not like it; however what they can now see for the first time is what their melodic line looks like and they can analyze it for note choice, rhythm, phrasing, articulation, etc... In other words, they see how they have been playing and when they go back to revise their line, their adjustments are usually more in line to what we have been studying and this often begins to translate into their own playing.



Along with composition, I will assign solo transcriptions for them to work on and learn. They are instructed to find a recording of the solo and if possible to download some sort of slow-downer device. They must first sing the solo with the recording. Eventually singing the solo with the metronome clicking on 2 & 4. Since we will not have the ample time needed to do this exercise correctly in order to assimilate the solo, once they can sing it, then they are to play the solo on their instruments by first playing with the recording, then playing it with a metronome on 2 & 4. Again, they will not have the time needed as I am basically trying to get the concepts through to them so that they can proceed on their own. Finally, once they can play it with the metronome clicking on two and four, then and only then will I ask for them to write it out. I save the writing for last so that they learn to pick up the solo by ear not yet worrying about the rhythms, so by the time they sit down to write it (away from the horn) they often have a better grasp of the rhythmic content used in the solo.

I should explain further how the transcribing should be done to get full advantage of the transcription. As a student is singing the solo with the recording, invariably they are listening to the soloist which is good because they are picking up conception, sound, inflection, the language of the player they are studying. After a period of months doing this, the student begins to stop listening to the soloist and begins to hear the rhythm section. Now they are hearing what the soloist heard when they played the solo. At this time, have the student sing the solo with the metronome only. Now they can move the solo to the horn and proceed in the same manner. Play with the recording listening to the soloist to become that player, then eventually they will begin to listen more to the rhythm section than the soloist, now it is time to move it to the metronome away from the recording. Then and only then should the student start to write the solo out with pencil and paper, away from the horn and the recording. This is the real test to see if they have internalized the solo and if they can place the right rhythms on the paper. This whole process can take months to accomplish, but it is really worth it as the transcription now becomes imbedded very deeply inside the student and as it gets assimilated in their playing, they begin a process of innovation in their own playing as they progress on their journey.

One area that I feel is often neglected in music education programs is the idea of what do you do when your student(s) may be better players than you are? I can say that I have been fortunate to have many students come through my program who were quite advanced players at such young ages. As you listen deeply to these there are certain areas that are common to all beginning players regardless of their abilities. Many times I have heard these students play very well over the Blues or rhythm changes, even major ii - V standards; however when tunes are placed in front of them using minor ii - V's or tunes that disguise their resolutions as for example Wayne Shorter's compositions do, they will need your assistance in how to navigate these challenges. It is also imperative to increase their repertoire with standards so that they are able to sit in almost anywhere and have a large collection of tunes they can draw from.

Other areas that I feel the more advanced students need your assistance and challenge in is in phrasing, getting them to think more over the bar line. How to end a line and allow for a clean resolution. The incorporation of space. The building of melodic and rhythmic ideas, sequencing your playing in the moment from what you have already played or what other players have already played and where you want the solo to build to.

I believe that one of the most exciting aspects of this work is listening to how the students advance if and when they put the hard work in. The moment the light bulb actually goes off and they begin to see and hear progress it has been my experience that now you have them, complete ignition. They will want to learn more and find the means to keep improving. If they haven't already, this is the time to push them to a high quality teacher.

Once ignition takes over, now they want to play as much as possible. Most schools will have an in-house concert schedule to prepare for each year. At Sinatra each year in November we would present what we referred to as a "Pops" Concert where the Symphonic Orchestra and Wind Ensemble would prepare lighter pieces similar to what the Boston Pops might present. As for the Jazz Ensemble we would perform one set usually with repertoire from the swing era. For our annual Winter Concert I would have the band prepare some jazzed up version of a holiday classic. I've performed works for this concert by Glen Miller, Stan Kenton, Rob McConnell among others. Then each April we would have our own Jazz Appreciation Month Concert. This is what we work for every year, to play two sets of classic literature which has included Ellington, Basie, Thad, Buddy Rich, Maria Schneider, Gil Evans, Mingus, Pat Metheny, Jaco Pastorius and so many more. With all of the work we have put in to work on improvisation it sort of all seems to come together at this point so that when we perform it's the solos that take the music to another level within a very tight ensemble that swings.

Once our concerts are over we have devoted April through June on small group playing to continue our study of improvisation, but also theory, history and listening as well. We have often been asked to attend festivals throughout the school year. I like to have us represent as much as possible in small groups as well as with the big band. However, I should note here that I do not take my students to festivals that end by awarding prizes to the best bands and individuals. Music is competitive enough and I try to stress to my students that each player and each ensemble has its own voice and that each voice is to be respected. Instead of looking to be better than someone else or better than another band, I get them understanding that first and foremost you have to take care of your own business and when you do that you will be great. In my time at Sinatra, I have expressed this belief to two area festivals that were originally designed as competitions and I stated that I would not be attending unless the focus changed to the idea of musicians celebrating the history of the music and celebrating our contributions within the community. It has always been important for me to have the kids come together through the music.

Finally, each year I have tried to find club settings where we can perform whether as a big band or more preferably in small groups. The clubs are the incubators for development and creativity and they need to experience this setting. We have had a monthly small group performance space once and we have performed at such New York City clubs such as the Jazz Standard, Cachasa, The Astor Room and The Tea Lounge to name a few. It's also important to build a book each year so that your ensembles are ready to perform upon special request. We have been asked on short notice to play at Gracie Mansion for the Mayor, the NYC Department of Education for the Schools Chancellor, The National Arts Club including large functions at hotel convention rooms for the School Construction Authority, the United Federation of Teachers and the Council of Supervisors and Administrators. You never know and you always have to be ready for the phone to ring.

Of course, there is no way this work can be done alone or in a vacuum. I believe in using the entire community to inspire and ignite the students. I have assembled a list of teachers that I highly suggest that they work with. The list I have is of some very fine musicians, but more importantly, they are great teachers. They have the ability to listen and watch each player and ask questions and only then prescribe practice material that challenges them and that they need in order to advance. Additionally, the best way to advance as a player is to get yourself on that bandstand as much as possible and to work with as many different band leaders as possible. As I have said many times, mine is not the only way. Listen and learn from everyone you come in contact with. So I make a strong push to put their names forward for outside playing opportunities including All-City Jazz, York College Blue Notes, Jazz Band Classic, Arturo Sandoval's Latin Jazz Ensemble, the Jazz Standard - Jazz for Kids Program (which is the best small group playing situation in NYC), prep programs at the Manhattan School of Music, Juilliard, Jazz and Jazz at Lincoln Center among others. As a matter of fact,

most of my recruiting is with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Middle School Jazz Academy and the Jazz Standard - Jazz for Kids Program where I have the opportunity to hear middle school students perform. I also make the attempt to get my students to attend summer Jazz camps so that for a week or two they are truly immersed in the art form. Students who have attended these camps come back stronger and are energized to do more. Some of the camps my students have participated in include Lichtfield, Skidmore, Eastman College, Berklee College of Music and I have even had students go overseas to Spain.

In using the entire City as a community I have worked to bring in many masters to do clinics with the students. Some of these artists have included Joe Lovano, Marvin Stamm, Lew Soloff, Harold Jones, Clayton Cameron, Todd Coolman, Oliver lake, Sam Newsome, David Liebman, Onaje Allan Gumbs, Mike Kaupa, Cecil Bridgewater, and this really is a short list.

As well as assisting students to get ready for college auditions, I also recommend that they try out for the Grammy Band, Young Arts, the Downbeat Student Music awards and around this time I will also speak to their parents to see how they feel about recommending their children for professional playing opportunities. I feel that if they are playing at an advanced level, the more opportunities they have the more they will grow and that includes understanding the business of music as well, but that's a topic for another time.

Thank you for reading through this method and if you were able to get one idea from this book that you feel will benefit your students, then this has been a successful endeavor. My last bit of advice is simply to say, enjoy every minute with your students. There is nothing quite as satisfying as watching students grow and what better profession is there that you can hear a group of young people everyday play inspiring music. I am not shy about saying that I have truly loved every kid who came through my program and I am confident that the legacy they, not me, has established will mean that the level of the band at Frank Sinatra will live on. In the words of Clark Terry, "Straight Ahead!".

## Addendum's

All addendum's have been identified in each chapter and can be found in the pages listed below.

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Addendum's for Chapter 16 begin on page 63 and include the following:

1. Things That Create Interest When Soloing
2. Suggested Listening - Jazz Artists
3. Interval Chart
4. Advice form Thelonious Monk

# Addendum's

## Chapter 3

# Addendum's

## Chapter 5

# Addendum's

## Chapter 6

# Addendum's

## Chapter 7



# Addendum's

## Chapter 8

# Addendum's

## Chapter 9

# Addendum's

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# Addendum's

## Chapter 16

## Supplemental Materials

Though grants I was able to receive during my tenure as the Director of Jazz Studies at the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, I was able to put a library of method books and a cd listening library together. This proved to be a valuable resource in the differentiation of instruction that was needed for a class that had such a wide range of student. The listening library allowed students to take home cd's, listen to them and then research more of an artists recordings to build their own library and to continually fold in Jazz to their listening habits.

Below I have reprinted the method books and cd's that were available to see a list and make a determination on what you may want to consider for use within your classroom. These lists are not exhaustive, they are simply what became available to me at the time that I received the grants.

## Teaching Materials

### Texts:

How to Listen to Jazz – Jerry Coker

How to Practice – Jerry Coker

Free Play

Teaching Music Through Performance in Jazz – Richard Miles & Ronald Carter

Jazz at Lincoln Center – Jazz and Democracy & Jazz for Young People

National Endowment for the Humanities – Jazz History

Smithsonian – History of Classic Jazz

### Methods:

Jazz Handbook – Jamey Abersold (free upon request)

Clear Solutions – Jerry Coker

Forward Motion – Hal Galper

Hearin' the Changes – Jerry Coker

How to Improvise – Hal Crook

Jazz Theory Workbook – Jerry Coker

### Scale Studies:

Jazz Chord Scale Handbook – Gary Keller

Thesaurus of Scales - Slonimsky

Pentatonic Scales – Ramon Ricker

The Blues Scales – Dan Greenblatt

Minor is Major – Dan Greenblatt



Advanced Diminished Scale Study – Mickey Bass  
Chromatic / Non Diatonic Scales – David Liebman  
Beyond Time and Changes – Hal Crook

Patterns:

Patterns for Jazz – Jerry Coker  
Patterns for Jazz – Oliver Nelson

Intervallic and Chromatic Studies:

Giant Steps – Walt Weiskopf  
Intervallic Improvisation – Walt Weiskopf  
Triad Pairs – Gary Campbell  
How to Approach Standards Chromatically – David Liebman

Guide Tone Methods:

Target and Approach Tones – Joe Riposo  
Goal Note Method – Shelly Berg

Ear Training:

Ear Training – Jamey Abersold

Vocal Methods:

Guide for Jazz and Scat Vocalists – Dennis DiBlasio  
Jazz Singers Guidebook – David Berkman  
Singers Book of Standards

Trumpet Methods:

Trumpetology – Pat Harbison  
Flexus – Laurie Frink & John McNeil

Trombone Methods:

Doodles – Dale Cheal  
Contemporary Technique for Trombone – David Baker

### Saxophone Methods:

Developing Jazz Concepts – Lennie Niehaus  
Charlie Parker Omnibook

### Piano and Guitar Methods:

Jazz Piano Voicings - Mike Tracy  
Chordal Bebop Lines for Guitar  
How to Comp – Hal Crook

### Bass Methods:

Walking Basics – Ed Fuqua  
The Bottom Line – Todd Coolman  
The Bass Tradition – Todd Coolman  
Jazz Bowing Technique – John Goldberg

### Drum Methods:

Time Awareness – Peter Erskine  
Masters of Time – Steve Davis

### Arranging Methods:

Nelson Riddle Arranging Method  
Gil Evans Miles Davis Historic Collaborations

### Beginning Big Band Methods:

Know Before You Blow – Chris Tedesco  
Chop Monster, vol. 1 & 2 – Shelly Berg

Real Books – C, Bb, Eb, bass clef and singers edition

### Videos:

Artist House Series  
CHOPS  
Understanding Jazz Rhythm – David Liebman  
How to Use Brushes  
JALC – Jazz & Democracy, Jazz for Young People

Jamey Abersold Play-a-Long cd's:

Instructional:

How to Improvise  
Nothin' But Blues  
ii – V Progressions  
Turnarounds, Cycles and ii – V's  
Scale Syllabus  
Rhythm Section Workout  
Minor Blues  
Countdown  
Free Play  
Miles of Modes

Tune Methods:

Jazz Standards – 3 volumes  
Bossa Nova  
Ballads  
Night and Day  
Up Tempo  
Latin Jazz Improv New York Jazz Holiday Classics  
Contemporary Standards  
Tunes You Thought You Knew

Jazz Performers:

Charlie Parker  
Miles Davis – 2 volumes  
Woody Shaw  
Herbie Hancock  
Cannonball Adderley  
Benny Golson  
Horace Silver – 2 volumes  
David Liebman  
John Coltrane  
Wayne Shorter  
Cedar Walton  
Bill Evans  
Thelonious Monk  
Freddie Hubbard  
Billy Strayhorn

Dexter Gordon  
Tadd Dameron  
Lee Morgan  
Joe Henderson

## Jazz CD Library

Cannonball Adderley – Radio Nights  
Ralph Alessi – Snow Umbrellas  
Clifton Anderson – And So We Carry On  
The Best of Louis Armstrong - Hot 5's and 7's  
Louis Armstrong – Mack the Knife  
Louis Armstrong – Ken Burns Jazz  
Jay Ashby & Steve Davis – Mistaken Identity  
Albert Ayler – New Grass  
Chet Baker – Embraceable You  
Some Other Time – Tribute to Chet Baker  
Count Basie – Complete Atomic Basie  
Count Basie Swings/Tony Bennett Sings  
Count Basie – Straight Ahead  
Mickey Bass – The Reunion Legacy Band  
David Becker – Batavia  
George Benson - Witchcraft  
George Benson – Breezing'  
Jerry Bergonzi – Shifting Gears  
Art Blakey – Moanin'  
Art Blakey – A Night in Tunisia  
Art Blakey – Feelin' Good  
Paul Bley - Memoirs  
Michael Brecker – Wide Angles  
Michael Brecker – Pilgrimage  
Randy Brecker – Toe to Toe  
Brooklyn Jazz Underground – A Portrait of Brooklyn  
Clifford Brown – Brownie Speaks  
Ray Brown – Don't Get Sassy  
Dave Brubeck – Time Out  
Kenny Burrell – Guiding Spirit  
Chris Byers – Music Forever  
Charlie Christian – Celestial Express  
Billy Cobham – Spectrum  
Al Cohn – and his “Charlie's Tavern” Ensemble  
Ornate Coleman – The Shape of Jazz to Come  
John Coltrane – Lush Life  
John Coltrane – Blue Train  
John Coltrane – The Heavyweight Champion, Complete Atlantic Recordings  
John Coltrane – Giant Steps  
John Coltrane – My Favorite Things

John Coltrane – Ballads  
John Coltrane – A Love Supreme  
John Coltrane – Ken Burns Jazz  
Chick Corea – Return to the 7<sup>th</sup> Galaxy  
Chick Corea – Electric Band  
Connie Crothers – Spontaneous Suites  
Miles Davis – Birth of the Cool  
Miles Davis – Capitol/Blue Note Years  
Miles Davis – Miles & Coltrane  
Miles Davis – Ballads  
Miles Davis – '58 Sessions  
Miles Davis – Kind of Blue  
Miles Davis – Miles Ahead with Gil Evans  
Miles Davis – the Best of Miles Davis & Gil Evans  
Miles Davis – Jazz at the Plaza  
Miles Davis – Seven Steps to Heaven  
Miles Davis – Greatest Hits  
Miles Davis – Miles Smiles  
Miles Davis – Nefertiti  
Miles Davis – Miles in the Sky  
Miles Davis – Panthalassa  
Miles Davis – Bitches Brew  
Miles Davis – At Montreux  
Miles Davis – Tutu  
Miles Davis – Le meilleur de Miles Davis  
Miles Davis – Ken Burns Jazz  
Eric Dolphy – Out to Lunch  
Dave Douglas – Freak In  
Dave Douglas – Strange Liberation  
Roy Eldridge with Gene Krupa  
Elements – Liberal Arts  
Duke Ellington - Centennial  
Duke Ellington – The Great London Concerts  
Duke Ellington – Such Sweet Thunder  
Don Ellis – Shock Treatment  
Bill Evans – New Jazz Conceptions  
Tal Farlow – Finest Hour  
John Fedchock – Up & Running  
Maynard Ferguson - Chameleon  
Ella Fitzgerald – The Best of  
Tommy Flanagan – Moodsville  
Bela Fleck and the Flecktones – Greatest Hits of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century  
Carl Fontana – Live at the Royal Palms

Vincent Gardener – The Book of BeBop  
Red Garland – Red in Bluesville  
Stan Getz  
Dizzy Gillespie & Charlie Parker – Town Hall 1945  
Dizzy Gillespie – Absolutely the Best  
Dexter Gordon – Sophisticated Giant  
Grant Green – Green Street  
Charlie Haden – Quartet West  
Jim Hall – Concord Jazz Heritage Series  
Slide Hampton – Jazz Classics  
Herbie Hancock – Maiden Voyage  
Coleman Hawkins – Body and Soul  
Eddie Henderson – Reemergence  
Eddie Henderson – Time & Spaces  
Eddie Henderson – So What  
Joe Henderson – Inner Urge  
Woody Herman - Thundering Herds 1945 – 1947  
Woody Herman – East and West  
Andrew Hill – Timelines  
Billie Holiday – Love Songs  
Freddie Hubbard – Open Sesame  
Freddie Hubbard – Ready for Freddie  
Freddie Hubbard – Red Clay  
Freddie Hubbard – Sky Dive  
Robert Hurst – BOB a palindrome  
Tommy Igoe Birdland Big Band - Eleven  
Jay Jay Johnson – The Eminent  
Kai & J.J. – “Nuf Said”  
Thad Jones – Detroit – New York Junction  
Thad Jones – Central Park North  
Thad Jones - Consummation  
Thad Jones – Live on Tour Switzerland  
Stan Kenton – Stompin’ at Newport  
Stan Kenton – All Time Greatest Hits  
Lee Konitz – Subconscious Lee  
Steve Lacy – Hot House  
Michel Legrand – I Love Paris  
David Liebman – Negative Space  
Joe Lovano – On This Day  
Joe Lovano – Ballads Songbook  
Joe Lovano – Us Five, Bird Songs  
Joe Lovano – Us Five, Cross Culture  
Joe Lovano, Bill Frizzle, Paul Motion

Wynton Marsalis – Uptown Ruler  
Pat Martino – Timeless  
Christian McBride – Mack Avenue Advance  
Jackie McLean – Destination Out  
John McNeil & Bill McHenry – Rediscovery  
Mike Metheny – Day In – Night Out  
Pat Metheny – Jaco  
Pat Metheny – Imaginary Day  
Pat Metheny – Metheny/Mehldau  
Glenn Miller – Greatest Hits  
Marcus Miller – Panther/Live  
Charles Mingus – Mingus Ah Um  
Charles Mingus – Best of  
Charles Mingus – Tijuana Moods  
Hank Mobley – Best of  
Hank Mobley – Reach Out  
Thelonious Monk – Live at the Five Spot (w/Trane)  
Thelonious Monk – With Coltrane at Carnegie Hall  
Thelonious Monk – Live at Monterey  
Wes Montgomery – Goin’ Out of My Head  
Lee Morgan - Candy  
Lee Morgon – The Sidewinder  
David Murray – 4tet & Strings  
Oliver Nelson – Blues and the Abstract Truth  
Arturo O’Farrill – Jim Seeley/Arturo O’Farrill Quintet  
Charlie Parker – Very Best of  
Charlie Parker – Rockland Palace Concert  
Joe Pass – One For My Baby  
Art Pepper – Meets the Rhythm Section  
Oscar Peterson – West Side Story  
Bud Powell – The Amazing  
Joshua Redman – SF Jazz Collective 2  
Buddy Rich – Mercy, Mercy  
Buddy Rich – Big Swing Face  
Buddy Rich – The New One  
Nelson Riddle – Cross Country Suite  
Saxophone Summit – Seraphic Light  
Sonny Rollins – Plus 4  
Sonny Rollins – Tenor Madness  
Sonny Rollins – The Sound of Sonny  
Sonny Rollins – Ken Burns Jazz  
Wallace Roney – Jazz  
Woody Shaw – Live at the Village Vanguard



Woody Shaw – Dark Journey  
Paul Simon - Graceland  
Wayne Shorter – The Soothsayer  
Wayne Shorter – Night Dreamer  
Wayne Shorter – Speak No Evil  
Frank Sinatra – Sinatra Sessions  
Frank Sinatra – My Way  
Horace Silver – Serenade to a Soul Sister  
Jimmy Smith – The Sermon  
Wadada Leo Smith – Condor, Autumn Wind  
Wadada Leo Smith – Compassion  
Dayna Stephens – That Nepenthetic Place  
Mike Stern – All Over the Place  
Sonny Stitt – In a Mellow Tone  
Art Tatum – Finest Hour  
Cecil Taylor – Port of Call  
Lennie Tristano – New Tristano  
Trombone Shorty – For True  
Steve Turre – Rainbow People  
McCoy Tyner – Tender Moments  
McCoy Tyner – Bon Voyage  
Vanguard Jazz Orchestra – Can I Persuade You?  
Vanguard Jazz Orchestra – The Way – Slide Hampton  
Vanguard Jazz Orchestra – Up From the Skies – Jim McNeely  
Sarah Vaughn – in Hi-Fi  
Jack Walrath – Neohippus  
Jack Walrath – Gut Feelings  
Jack Walrath – Serious Hang  
Weather Report – Mysterious Traveler  
Weather Report – the Jaco Years  
Ben Webster – with the Mike Renzi Trio  
Larry Willis – This Time the Drum’s on Me  
Phil Woods – Round Trip  
Lester Young – Complete 1936 – 1951 Sessions  
Lester Young – Best of  
Kings of Swing  
Red Hot on Impulse

Essentially Ellington Recordings

Vocalists:

The Essential American Songbook

Ethel Waters

Billy Eckstein  
Frank Sinatra  
Ultimate Tony Bennett  
Tony Bennett – Duets II  
Diana Krall – Live in Paris  
Alexa Fila

In conclusion, as much as I enjoy performance, composing and arranging for small groups and big bands, teaching has been my career. A career that has been incredibly fulfilling. You can go to this website: <http://billstevensmusic.com/pedagogy/> and see my philosophy of teaching, my mission statement and a link to my Jazz Pedagogy Curriculum that I use to teach college level Jazz performance majors the craft of teaching. The website also has my contact information should you have any comments or questions on any of my teaching methods. I am also available for clinics and master classes on the craft of teaching, analysis of current programs and just general conversation on the music, performance and/or pedagogy.

Thank you for reading this book and I look forward to hearing from you in the future.