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Preface

Students of music who choose to pursue the study of jazz improvisation and arranging frequently lack a thorough understanding of harmony, melody, rhythm, and form as it relates specifically to jazz and related, popular idioms. Many people have been exposed to traditional music theory courses where fundamental principles that govern Western classical music are taught. More often than not, these principles are not related directly to practical application and especially not to one's activities in American jazz and popular music styles. While a knowledge of traditional music theory principles and practices certainly is helpful to the understanding of jazz, such courses and books rarely address the specific characteristics unique and indigenous to the jazz language. As a result, students of music are frequently left with no understanding of relevant materials necessary for the study of jazz improvisation and composition or arranging. This book provides all the necessary tools to understand not only the theories associated with jazz styles but also the relationship of this material to traditional concepts while providing guidance in the practical application of information to arranging, composing, and improvising.

After a combined total of over 25 years of teaching, performing, and composing/arranging in jazz and related popular styles, the authors are well aware of the importance of taking nothing for granted in terms of the educational process. Very few assumptions have been made about the reader's prerequisite understanding of music theory as it relates to jazz. Several of the introductory chapters can be skipped unless a quick review is needed for the entire class or for a few individuals whose natural gift for jazz performance may exceed their knowledge of basic and important theoretical concepts essential to their comprehension of more advanced topics. A graduated approach is an essential component of any teaching/learning process in order to enhance comprehension and ensure that a logical learning curve is followed. Each chapter reinforces material presented in previous chapters while adding additional material and skills. Musical examples accompany each chapter and serve to clarify and to further define every principle

while carefully not confusing the reader by introducing concepts not yet discussed. Many of these examples have been extracted from the jazz repertoire, including excerpts from improvised solos by significant jazz artists and standard jazz tunes.

Because jazz has developed over the past nine decades as a result largely of oral and aural traditions, it seems that ear training must be a central component of any jazz theory text designed to provide not only theoretical comprehension but also an understanding of common practice application. No book of this kind would be complete if it did not address the specific ear-training needs of the jazz performer. Ear-training drills are an essential component of seven chapters and prepare the user to identify the harmonies, progressions, and scales unique to the jazz style. The authors have assembled a supplementary Macintosh computer disk called NOW HEAR THIS using Opcode's MIDIplay. This software is optional, and may be purchased separately as a supplement to the book. All that is necessary is a Macintosh computer, optional MIDI tone generator or QuickTime Movie Player v.2.0, and HyperCard Player version 2.2 or later. Since most jazz theory courses never provide enough time for in-class ear-training drill sessions, teachers must somehow find ways to provide self-paced ear-training activity outside of class time. The software provides the user with immediate feedback—right or wrong. Tests are also provided on disk for the teacher's convenience.

Nearly all chapters include suggested exercises and activities to further clarify and reinforce the material presented. When appropriate, discography information has also been provided along with suggested play-along rhythm section recordings available from Jamey Aebersold to help improvisers better understand and apply performance-related concepts to their instruments.

This book is intended for use in the college classroom by students who have completed one year or more of traditional theory or who demonstrate a prerequisite background. It can also be successfully used independently by individuals outside the classroom setting.

This book is not intended exclusively as an improvisation book nor is it an arranging/composition book. It is a comprehensive treatise on the theoretical concepts so essential for the practicing jazz performer or composer/arranger. A bibliography of recommended jazz improvisation and arranging reference sources for further study is provided.

Acknowledgments

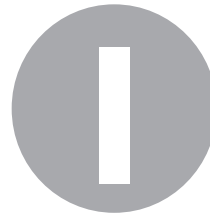
Approximately two years were spent compiling the information presented in the pages that follow, although this information is really the result of more than 25 years of teaching, performing, and composing. In many ways, numerous students from The University of Northern Iowa and The University of Texas at Austin were most influential and encouraging and deserve recognition for their input. Teaching and learning constitute an evolutionary process, and the authors hope that they have had a positive effect on these students and those of the future in much the same way that their primary teachers, including Rayburn Wright, Bill Dobbins, Chuck Mangione, and Bob Washut, have influenced their work.

Thanks are due to the manuscript reviewers: Charles Blancq, University of New Orleans; Patrick Harbison, University of Cincinnati; David S. Lalama, Hofstra University; Daniel Yoder, Pennsylvania State University; and Morgan Watkins, University of Texas at Austin.

Patience is certainly a virtue, and Susan Lawn and Pamela Hellmer deserve much credit for the production of this book; without their support and understanding it would not have been completed. Special thanks are extended to Susan whose careful editing and encouragement were indispensable.

This book would not have been possible without the commitment and support of its editor, Suzanna Brabant, whose guidance was instrumental during the

lengthy process. The authors are also indebted to Gary McDonald and Becky Magee, whose meticulous and precise work as production editor and copy editor did not go unnoticed or unappreciated. Lastly, thank you Greg Wilson, member of the Nova Saxophone Quartet, who transcribed the author's solo on "Donna Lee" at a point when there was no time to spare.



Intervals as a Building Block: A Review

Because intervals that result from the combination of two pitches serve as the foundation, or building blocks, for scale, chord, and melody construction, a review of the construction and naming of these basic units is essential. Most traditional theory courses cover in detail not only the construction and naming of intervals but also their aural identification. The assumption has been made that users of this text have encountered intervals as well as major scale construction theory and practice in traditional theory courses and during performance, which serve as prerequisites to a course of study in jazz theory. The material presented in this chapter is therefore intended as a refresher rather than as a detailed discussion and explanation.

SIMPLE AND COMPOUND

There are two basic types of intervals, *simple* and *compound*. A simple interval is one constructed by combining two pitches that occur within an octave of one another. Example 1.1 shows an octave followed by several intervals that would all be termed *simple*.



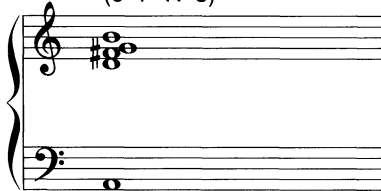
Example 1.1

Compound intervals occur when two pitches more than an octave apart are combined, as in Example 1.2. In this example, each interval is defined by a key signature. The whole notes represent a perfect octave and are followed by quarter notes representing a compound interval. Compound intervals will be discussed in more detail later.

When chord symbols call for a foreign bass note, such as $G\text{Ma}7/A$, many pianists tend to voice the 7th chord in close position and include fewer extension tones in order to preserve the polytonality (the sense of one tonality in the right hand versus another tonality in the left hand) dictated by the composer. A typical voicing for this kind of chord is shown in Example 9.23.

Example 9.23

$G\text{Ma}/A$
(5–7–R–3)



The musical notation for Example 9.23 consists of a grand staff with two staves. The right-hand staff (treble clef) contains a G major triad (G4, B4, D5) in close position. The left-hand staff (bass clef) contains a single bass note, A2, which is the foreign bass note for the $G\text{Ma}/A$ chord.

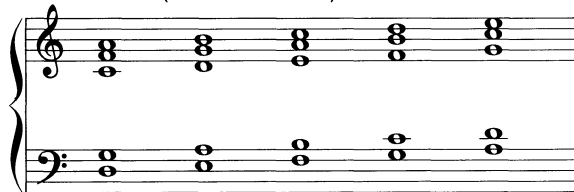
Once again, only the basic chord tones of $G\text{Ma}7$ are used in this voicing. Adding more extensions to the $G\text{Ma}7$ would detract from the foreign bass note below the chord voicing. In these situations it is also more acceptable to include the root of the upper structure chord in the voicing.

Modal Voicings and Planing

Modal jazz in the 1960s was spearheaded by jazz greats Miles Davis and John Coltrane (see Chapter 12). The jazz pianist is faced with a different challenge in modal playing because voice-leading is no longer as important a consideration. Instead, voicing structures often incorporate *planing*, or parallel movement of a chord structure, along the mode that the composer stipulates. The following voicing, called the “So What” voicing because of its extensive use by Bill Evans on the Miles Davis recording, uses a series of 4ths with a 3rd on top. This voicing is then planed along the Dorian mode. This technique is known as *diatonic planing*. See Example 9.24.

Example 9.24

$D\text{mi}7$ (D Dorian mode)




The musical notation for Example 9.24 shows a grand staff with two staves. The right-hand staff (treble clef) contains five chords, each a D minor triad with a 7th (D-F-A-C), moving chromatically up: D-F-A-C, E-G-B-D, F-A-C-E, G-B-D-F, and A-C-E-G. The left-hand staff (bass clef) contains five chords, each a D minor triad with a 7th, moving chromatically down: D-F-A-C, C-B-A-G, B-A-G-F, A-G-F-E, and G-F-E-D.

Note that the intervals of the voicing change somewhat from voicing to voicing because of the changing half- and whole-step pattern of the Dorian mode.

This voicing may also be moved up and down chromatically—a concept known as *chromatic planing*. This method introduces even more tension and dissonance. The dissonance increases with the number of consecutive chromatic voicings used. A sample of chromatic planing using the “So What” voicing is shown in Example 9.25.

Example 9.25

$D\text{mi}11$



The musical notation for Example 9.25 shows a grand staff with two staves. The right-hand staff (treble clef) contains five chords, each a D minor triad with a 7th and 11th (D-F-A-C-E), moving chromatically up: D-F-A-C-E, E-G-B-D-F, F-A-C-E-G, G-B-D-F-A, and A-C-E-G-B. The left-hand staff (bass clef) contains five chords, each a D minor triad with a 7th and 11th, moving chromatically down: D-F-A-C-E, C-B-A-G-F, B-A-G-F-E, A-G-F-E-D, and G-F-E-D-C.