

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR.....	4
INTRODUCTION	5

CHAPTER 1—Music Review	6
The Grand Staff, Clefs and Ledger Lines	6
The Keyboard.....	7
Half Steps and Accidentals.....	7
Rhythmic Values of Notes, Rests and Measures	8
Time Signatures and Measures	8
Major Scales and Key Signatures	9
Fingerings for Major Scales	10
Intervals.....	11
Interval Inversion	11
Cycle of 5ths	12
Relative Minor	13
Fingerings for Natural Minor Scales	14
Triads.....	15
Diatonic Triads.....	16
Form and Lead Sheets	17

CHAPTER 2—The Twelve-Bar Blues	18
Transposing the Twelve Bar Blues.....	19
Making a Blues Melody with Arpeggios	20
<i>Mardi Gras</i>	20
Triplets	21
Inverting Triads	22
Inversion Exercises	23
The Left Hand—Swing or Shuffle Feel.....	24
<i>Working</i>	24
<i>Melancholy Blue</i>	26
Funky Thunky.....	27
<i>Funky Thunky</i>	27
Major Chords in the Minor Blues	28
<i>Worrying Blues</i>	28
Write Your Own Twelve-Bar Blues	29

CHAPTER 3—Blues Melodies	30
Transposing the Twelve-Bar Blues	31
<i>Drowning in My Blues</i>	31
The Major Pentatonic Scale.....	32
<i>The Major's Blues</i>	33
The Minor Pentatonic Scale.....	34
<i>The Miner's Blues</i>	35
Dominant 7th Chords	36
The Blues Scale.....	37
Dominant 7th Chords and The Blues Scale.....	38
<i>Get To It</i>	38
Combining Pentatonic Scales	39
<i>Everything Blues</i>	39
Tension and Resolution.....	40
<i>C Blues</i>	41

CHAPTER 4—Playing a Shuffle	42
<i>Chicago Time</i>	43
Fun with The $\flat 5$	44
Basslines	45
<i>Flat Five Shuffle</i>	46
Tremolos and Fills	45
<i>Trems and Fills</i>	47

CHAPTER 5—Piano Blues Sounds	48
<i>Otis's Blues</i>	49
Three-Note $\flat 5$ Lick.....	50
Four-Note $\flat 5$ Lick	51
Tension and Resolution.....	52
<i>Lafayette's Blues</i>	53
Chicago Piano Sounds on The Minor Blues.....	55
<i>Rush's Roads</i>	55
Playing off of Triads.....	56
Bending The 3rd.....	56
<i>Triad Blues</i>	57
Playing off the Dominant 7th Chord	58
<i>Dominant Blues</i>	59

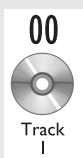
CHAPTER 6—A Look at Boogie-Woogie	60
<i>Boogie Blues</i>	61
Boogie-Woogie Bass Lines	62
Walking The Bass.....	63
<i>Walking Boogie Blues</i>	63
Minor Boogie and Minor 7th Chords.....	64
<i>So Long Boogie</i>	64
<i>Boogie Train</i>	65
Jimmy Yancey-Style Boogie-Woogie	66
<i>Jimmy's Boogie</i>	67

CHAPTER 7—Rhythm, Comping, Playing in a Band	68
Comping.....	69
<i>Blues in G</i>	69
Voice Leading.....	70
Comping in D.....	70
<i>Comping Shuffle in D</i>	71
The Beauty of Fills	72
<i>Guitar Player</i>	73
Comping With Octaves	74
<i>Octavia in F</i>	74
Dominant 7th Chord Inversions	75
Voice Leading With Dominant 7th Chords.....	76
Hideaway Comp.....	77
<i>You Can Run But You Can't Hide</i>	77
Scratch My Back Comp	78
<i>The Blues Itch</i>	78
Parallel 6ths	78
<i>Parallel Blues</i>	79
Minor 7th Chord Inversions.....	80
<i>Ten O'Clock Blues</i>	81

CHAPTER 8—Intros, Endings and Turnarounds	82
Turnarounds	82
Neighboring Chords.....	83
More Turnarounds	84
Turning Turnarounds into Endings.....	86
Following the Leader.....	87
Intros	88

CHAPTER 9—Walking Bass and an Introduction to the Slow Blues	90
<i>Walking the Blues</i>	90
Building a Walking Bass Line	91
Getting From One Measure to the Next.....	92
Practice Making Bass Lines	93
ii-V-I	94
<i>Sad and Lonely Blues</i>	94

DISCOGRAPHY	95
--------------------	-----------



A compact disc is available for this book. This disc can make learning with this book easier and more enjoyable. This symbol will appear next to every example that is on the CD. Use the CD to help insure that you are capturing the feel of the examples, interpreting the rhythms correctly, and so on. The track numbers below the symbols correspond directly to the example you want to hear. Track 1 will help you tune an electronic keyboard to this CD. Have fun!

CHAPTER 2

The Twelve-Bar Blues

If you ask someone who loves the blues what the blues means to them, they are unlikely to start talking about chords. But if you're on the bandstand and the leader calls a "blues in G," then he is talking about chords and a specific form. It's the twelve-bar blues. There are a number of different blues forms, but twelve bars is by far the most common. Typically, the twelve bars are divided into three four-bar phrases. The second phrase generally repeats the first, and the third is a response to the first two. This pattern echoes the "call and response" tradition of African music which is at the root of all blues music. In a call and response situation, a leader will "call"

a phrase and the crowd will repeat it. This became standard practice in African American churches. The three-phrase form was adopted by early blues singers who were often improvising lyrics as they sang. The harmonic structure varied somewhat, but over the years a specific chord progression emerged: four bars of I, two bars of IV, two bars of I, one bar of V, one bar of IV and two bars of I. This chord progression has been in use for nearly a century and is so pervasive in both blues and rock music that it is certain not to disappear anytime soon.

The example below outlines the form of a basic twelve-bar blues. The form is twelve bars long. In other words, the harmonic pattern, or chord progression, repeats itself every twelve bars. Each time through the progression is referred to as a chorus. When you begin to improvise on blues "changes," this is the chord progression you will be playing over. In this example, you'll be playing the root of the chord in your left hand, and the major triad in your right hand.

♩ = 90

7
Track 2

C(I)

F(IV) C(I)

G(V) F(IV) C(I)

There are only three chords in the twelve-bar blues progression, and they are all diatonic to the key of the blues. They are the I, the IV and the V chords.

CHAPTER 4

Playing a Shuffle

We already know from learning a shuffle-style bass line (page 24) that a shuffle is played with a triplet, or $\frac{12}{8}$ feeling, also called swing eighths. But there's a whole lot more to learn about the art of playing a shuffle. The shuffle has been developing for nearly a century now, with each great blues player along the way adding their signature to its evolution. In addition to the characteristic feel and bass patterns of shuffles, there are stylistic elements like *breaks*, *fills* and particular sounds that make a tune sound like a shuffle. You might hear a classic shuffle referred to also as a Chicago-style blues, because Chicago was the city where the great players played when the style was developing.

As a blues pianist, you get to play lots of different roles. You can be melodic, harmonic or rhythmic—or some combination of all three. When you play a solo shuffle on the piano, you actually fill many roles at once: you tell the story, you propel it forward with rhythm and you punctuate it. When you play with a singer or a band, you'll be trading roles with the other musicians, and will need to always find a niche to play in that will enhance the music. As you learn to play the blues, listen to both solo piano players and pianists with bands. Listen to how the piano player's role changes from situation to situation, and from moment to moment, within one song. That way, as you acquire more skills on the keyboard, you will be ready to use them musically.

In this chapter, we'll learn about the feeling of a shuffle, about when and how to fill up the spaces in a melody and about putting the icing on top of whatever else might be going on without getting in its way.



PHOTO • BILL GREENSMITH

Eddie Boyd, was very active in the Chicago scene during the 1940s and '50s. Known for the sophistication of his playing, Eddie Boyd played briefly with Muddy Waters. He then went on to play with Sonny Boy Williamson's band. Boyd provided excellent accompaniment to Johnny Shines and Jimmy Rogers as well as recording his own tunes. His biggest hit was Five Long Years (J.O.B. Records) which topped the R&B charts in 1952.