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The following piece revolves around the slip-note technique. Use swing eighth notes to give it the nice, relaxed feeling you hear on many of Floyd Cramer's songs. You can begin by playing roots in half notes in the left hand until you are ready for the full bass line.



Slippin' with Floyd

Track 17

Swing 8ths

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of five systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The piece features a prominent slip-note technique in the right hand, characterized by slurred eighth notes that 'slip' into the next note. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment, starting with half-note roots and later moving to a full bass line. Chord symbols are placed above the staff to indicate harmonic changes. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and fingering numbers (1-5). The piece concludes with a 'D.C. al Fine' instruction.

Chord symbols: G, C, G, C, G, D, G, C, G, Emin, Amin, Emin, Bmin, Amin, C, D, G, C, G, D.

Measure numbers: 1, 4, 7, 10, 13.

Endings: Fine, D.C. al Fine.

Imitating Guitar Rhythms

Funk guitar is distinguished by its *syncopation*, or accenting of notes that do not fall on traditionally strong parts of the beat. The crunchy guitar parts that had for years been a major part of James Brown's music formed much of the rhythmic basis for funk guitar.

The ability to emulate syncopated guitar rhythms is another important part of the R&B keyboardist's tool kit. This example uses a stock R&B chord progression that can be found on such songs as Bobby Hebb's "Sunny" and Sly and the Family Stone's "If You Want Me to Stay." The left hand plays very straight, while the right hand syncopates.

25
Track 25.1

Musical score for Track 25.1, showing a piano accompaniment in 4/4 time. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note bass line. The right hand plays chords with syncopated rhythms. Chords are labeled: Amin, Gmin, C, F, and E.

On a keyboard, we don't have the benefit of being able to strum in both directions, so playing a fast, repetitive rhythm on a single chord can be challenging. The following example is in the style of James Brown's "Make It Funky." Play the sixteenth notes with a swing feel, as though they were swing eighth notes.

26
Track 25.2

Musical score for Track 25.2, showing a piano accompaniment in 4/4 time. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note bass line. The right hand plays chords with a fast, repetitive sixteenth-note rhythm. Chords are labeled: Dmin and G.

A more keyboard-friendly way to achieve this kind of active syncopation is to use chromatic neighbor and/or passing chords. On page 30, we discussed the use of neighboring chords for ornamentation. To do so chromatically entails decorating the main chord with a chord of the same type a half step away.


27
Track 25.3

Musical score for Track 25.3, showing a piano accompaniment in 4/4 time. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note bass line. The right hand plays chords with a fast, repetitive sixteenth-note rhythm. Chords are labeled: G7, 4/2 (F#7), 5/3 1 (F#7), 4/1 (F#7), 5/3 1 F7, 4/2 1 (E7), (E7), and 4/2 1 (F#7).

Montunos


A *montuno* is a type of piano figure found in numerous Afro-Cuban styles. Montunos are syncopated in a manner designed to be compatible with the clave, existing in part to outline the sound of the chords and in part to create melodic and rhythmic excitement.

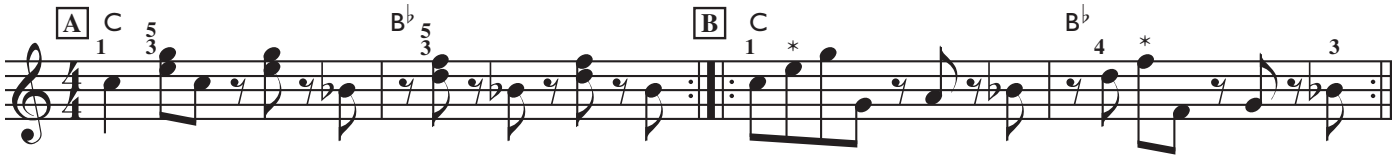
Montunos are generally very repetitive—once you pick a montuno, you tend to repeat its rhythm and contour throughout that section of the tune. Example 45A below shows a standard montuno in 2-3 clave. Example 45B takes the same montuno and shows how the contours and rhythms can be made to fit over more than one chord.

45  Track 39.1




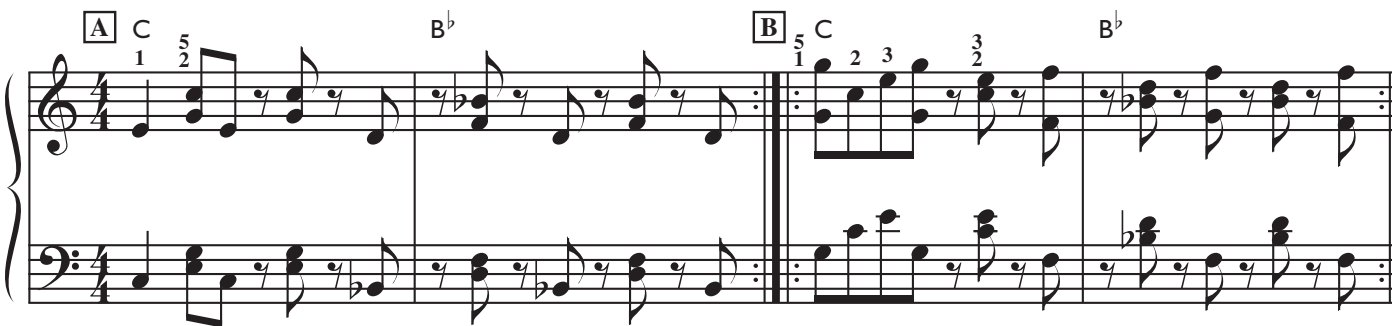
This basic pattern leaves room for numerous subtle but fun variations. Example 46A below uses more than one note at a time in places to create a denser sound. In Example 46B, the rhythm is essentially the same, but with a couple additional notes (marked with asterisks) to make the rhythm fuller.

46  Track 39.2



If you use two hands for a montuno, there are even more textural possibilities. Example 47A creates harmony between the two hands. In Example 47B, notes are doubled (in some cases tripled) through the use of both hands.

47  Track 39.3



The following example shows how to adapt this pattern to 3-2 clave. The main challenge is that the “3” measure does not begin on the beat. However, you can begin on the beat to get yourself going, then shift to the usual pattern in reverse once there is some momentum.

48  Track 39.4



Using Modes in Improvisation

Modes were around before any of the music studied in this book, but they were seldom used in modern music until the 1950s with the advent of *modal jazz*, a movement led by George Russell and popularized by Miles Davis. In modal jazz, the soloist and rhythm section play freely within a given mode, rather than feeling the need to emphasize specific notes in the corresponding chord. This technique lends itself to other styles as well, from vamp sections in Latin music to one-chord “jam band” tunes. The example below uses D Dorian, the same mode that serves as the basis for Miles Davis’s “So What.”

83
Track 83

Dmin7

1 1 5 2 2 4 1 2 4 3

1 2 5

5 1 2

1 2 5

Notice the left hand playing freely within Dorian rather than outlining a Dmin7. The 4th-based voicings, including the two-handed voicings at the end, are typical of modal music.

Modes can also work well on tunes that are not inherently modal. You can use a mode anywhere you encounter a compatible chord, a general technique that will serve you well as you increase your vocabulary of scales. If you stay on a chord for long enough, you can even play within the mode in the open-ended manner demonstrated above. The following example applies modes to a more standard chord progression in the style of “All of Me” by Marks and Simons.

84
Track 84

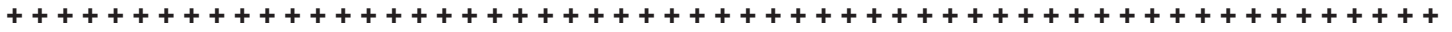
CMaj7 (C Lydian) E7 (E Mixolydian)

5 3

A7 (A Mixolydian) Dmin7 (D Dorian)

CHAPTER NINE

HYBRID STYLES



The pieces in this chapter demonstrate what can happen when two or more styles are fused. There are vast possibilities for combining elements from different styles.

Jazz-Rock

The following piece is an example of *jazz-rock*. Music placed in this category is sometimes jazz played with rock rhythms and/or instrumentation, and sometimes it is rock music that incorporates jazz harmony or improvisation. This tune combines a rock groove with impressionistic modern jazz voicings and progressions. The vibe is reminiscent of the band Steely Dan, led by Walter Becker and keyboardist Donald Fagen.



Don 'N' Walt

Track 94

Musical score for "Don 'N' Walt" in 4/4 time. The score is written for piano and includes the following elements:

- Measures 1-4:** Chord voicings: Bmin9, CMaj9. Fingerings: 1 2 1, 3 1.
- Measures 5-8:** Chord voicings: D/E, E/F#, A/G, G/A. Fingerings: 5, 5 4. Ends with "Fine".