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IVC PLAYING MELODIES

Although a line as described in the preceding chapter may be considered a melody, for the most part a short motive that has expressive quality could be considered more accurately as a true melody. This abbreviated line is usually framed by space on either side of it, possibly achieved by a sustained note in some cases. Basic to playing melodies is the use of expressive nuances such as bending the pitch, grace notes and other ornaments, as well as dramatic use of vibrato along with other devices. In essence, melodic variation is the ability to take a simple motive and vary it in ways which still retain the original flavor. Study of the great ballad players in jazz (Ben Webster, Miles Davis, Bill Evans, Chet Baker) provide a good source of knowledge and inspiration in this area. Below are a few examples of common devices used on motives taken from well known standards.

Example 1 *Lover Man* (Martinez)

Original

D-7 G7 D-7 G7

Example 1a

Rhythmic variation (ballad style)

D-7 G7 D-7 G7

Example 1b

Use of elongation and diminution

D-7 G7 D-7 G7

Example 1c

Use of space; changing the sequence of pitches; rhythmical variation

D-7 G7 D-7 G7

Example 1d

Use of fills and other chord tones

D-7 G7 D-7 G7

Example 1e

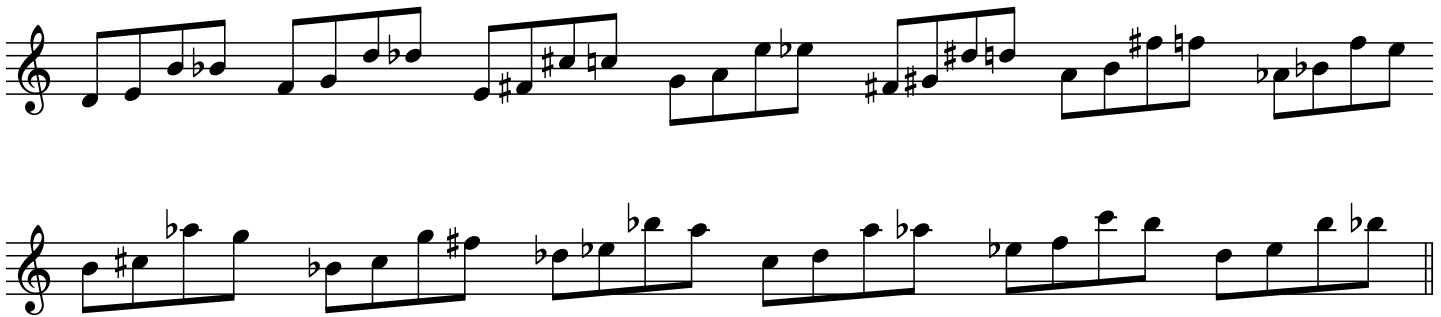
Example of totally improvised melody

D-7 G7 D-7 G7

2. PATTERN AND VARIATIONAL TECHNIQUES

A pattern is a line with a symmetrical sequence of intervals. The result is a very specific melodic contour. These shapes can act as a kind of *filler* material to be used as a connecting phrase between main musical ideas. Creatively, they should not serve as a substitute for melodic and harmonic invention. There is always the danger of overuse leading to a mechanized and predictable musical statement. But they can be quite handy as a practice tool in helping the mind be intervallically agile and for improvement of finger dexterity on all instruments. By clever use of variational techniques, a pattern can easily be continuously shifted and provide more melodic interest. The following are examples of patterns both with and without variation.

Example 1 Patterns of whole step up; perfect fifth up, half step down; the roots are separated by a minor third up, then followed by a half step down.



Example 2 Diminished pattern using accents and rhythmic displacement.



CLASSICAL EXCERPTS

I have decided to include some piano reductions and short pieces from the classical repertoire. They clearly demonstrate the early use of chromaticism from Bach and Chopin in which notes are quickly resolved, through the modern composers and their complex voicings and colors. These pieces are thoroughly analyzed in many books by competent musicologists in this field. These are rather simple examples which can be slowly played on the piano. One quickly realizes that there is nothing new about chromaticism.

Example 13

J.S. Bach: *The Goldberg Variations* #25 (1742)

Adagio

The musical score for Example 13, J.S. Bach's Goldberg Variations #25, is presented in four systems. The first system is marked *Adagio*. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The right hand features a complex melodic line with frequent chromaticism, including sixteenth-note runs and grace notes. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment with some chromatic movement. The piece concludes with a final cadence in the right hand.

First system of a piano score. The right hand features a melodic line with chromaticism, including a triplet of eighth notes. The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving bass lines. The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 3/4.

Second system of the piano score. The right hand continues with a melodic line, showing a chromatic descent. The left hand accompaniment includes chords and moving bass lines. The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 3/4.

Third system of the piano score. The right hand continues with a melodic line, showing a chromatic descent. The left hand accompaniment includes chords and moving bass lines. The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 3/4.

Fourth system of the piano score, featuring a first and second ending. The right hand continues with a melodic line. The left hand accompaniment includes chords and moving bass lines. The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 3/4.

Analysis: Close intervals; momentary dissonance quickly resolved.

GARGOYLES

Richie Beirach

Rubato Ballad

bass arco, drums float

$\frac{G-7}{B-}$ $\frac{Bb7}{B+}$ $\frac{C-7}{B6}$ or $\frac{Eb}{B6}$ 1. $\frac{Eb}{Btr.}$ $\frac{G-7}{Btr.}$ 2. $\frac{Eb}{Etr.add9}$

freely

C pedal

♩ = 60 (in strict tempo)

in B \flat

75

80

-2 highest climax

space

space

Anacrusis

(no vib.) < sfz

85

Melody in wave contour

mf *f*

$Bb\text{add } b2$ B $Bb7$ B $Eb\Delta^7$ B

103

E minor tonality

F# pentatonic

mf *f* *mf*

$A-\Delta^7\#5$ B B^4 C^4 B

106

oblique motion by 2nds
w/ G as upper stationary tone

space

mp *mp*

$B\Delta^7\text{add } b7$ $\text{no } 5$ $Eb\Delta^7\text{no } 5$ B $B\Delta^7\text{no } 5$ $B\text{add } b3$ $Gb\Delta^7\text{no } 5$ B Bb B

108

112

$\text{Db}\Delta^7\text{no}3$
B

Eb
B

Db
B

B tr.

$\text{D}\flat$
B

$\text{B}\flat$
B

$\text{B}\flat$
B

p *pp* *mp* *f*

116

vib. *2nds* *Extension* *lowest climax* *vib.* *altered repetition* *Anacrusis*

mf *mp* *mf*

B
B \flat

D $^\circ$

Eb
B

$\text{Ebadd}2$
B

B-67

119

f *mf* *mp*

predetermined

B \flat
B

$\text{B}\flat$
B-tr.

$\text{B}\Delta^7\#5\text{add}13$

$\text{B}\Delta^7\#11$

$\text{D}\flat$
G

B

G \flat

E

$\text{E}\flat$
Etr.

$\text{B}\flat\text{no}3$
Etr.

$\text{G}7\text{no}3$
Etr.

EXAMPLES OF CHROMATIC LINE ANALYSIS

1. TONAL ANCHORS

Example 2a

Chord labels: $E_b-1, \flat 3, 4, \flat 5$, $F\Delta 7\#5$, E_b-9 , $Ctr.add\flat 6$

Pattern:

- a) Minor motive using 1, $\flat 3$, 4, $\flat 5$ followed by:
- b) Whole step ascending; $\Delta 7\#5$ chord followed by:
- c) Back to key of a); -9 chord followed by:
- d) Minor third descending; triad $\flat 6$

Exercise

Use a) through d) for transposed progression; construct melodies using designated notes in other sequences.

Examples

- a) $D\flat-$ $E_b\Delta 7\#5$ $D\flat-9$ $B\flat \flat 6$
- b) $G-$ $A\Delta 7\#5$ $G-9$ $E \flat 6$
- c) $B-$ $C\#\Delta 7\#5$ $B-9$ $A\flat \flat 6$ etc.

Example 2b

Chord labels: B, $C\#$, B, $A\flat$

2. INTERVALLIC

Example 2c

(First phrase)

Intervallic analysis: $1/2 \downarrow$; $P4 \downarrow$; $m3 \uparrow$

Example 2d Transposition:

Example 2e Reverse direction:

Intervallic analysis: $1/2 \uparrow$; $P4 \uparrow$; $m3 \downarrow$