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AEBERSOLD PLAY-A-LONGS by ANDY LAVERNE

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## Introduction \& Usage Suggestions

The seeds for Chords in Motion were planted back in the late 1960's. That's when I first heard McCoy Tyner comping behind John Coltrane on A Love Supreme. I was fascinated by the way McCoy was moving chordal structures while Coltrane was soloing. I knew they were playing on one chord for a long time, but didn't quite understand how McCoy kept those chords in motion. I came to discover that he was using voicings built in fourths, also known as quartal voicings. Quartal chords contained the keys that unlocked the concept for Chords in Motion. Fourth voicings built on a prevailing mode, moving diatonically, defining a harmony, sounded open and mysterious. The foundation for McCoy's innovations came from the famous Bill Evans "So What" chords on the classic Miles Davis recording Kind of Blue.


An interesting historical footnote is that as a youth, McCoy lived next door to Bud and Richie Powell in Philadelphia, and spent a lot of time at the Powell house. Richie Powell was already exploring chords built in fourths as demonstrated by some of his comping behind Clifford Brown. This undoubtedly resonated with McCoy and later blossomed in his playing with John Coltrane. Quartal chords proved to be a perfect fit for Coltrane's pentatonic scale derived lines. The two share intervallic characteristics of fourths, fifths and seconds. Stretched out, a major pentatonic scale is a series of fourths or fifths.

My study of McCoy's quartal chords led me to explore other types of moving chords, such as quintal, drop two, dominant7b9 and diminished, major and minor triads, and structures moving in varying intervals. Those along with quartal chords are contained in Chords in Motion. Pianists are required to play in any key; therefore, each category is presented in all 12 keys. At the conclusion of Chords in Motion are sample tunes illustrating some of the devices as they might be used in actual playing situations.

As I mentioned in my previous Aebersold Jazz publication, QuickChords, pianists spend about $80 \%$ of their time comping in an ensemble. Given that amount of time comping, an equal portion of practice time should be devoted to the study of comping devices. Chords in Motion can assist jazz pianists (as well as other instrumentalists) in expanding their comping vocabulary, skills, techniques, abilities, confidence, and chops!

If you're just starting out, focus on one area at a time, for instance, one of the D minor $7^{\text {th }}$ quartal patterns. Get it under your fingers then apply it to a tune like "So What" or some other tune you like to play. More experienced players can cherrypick through Chords in Motion. When you find a sound you like, move it through several keys. Take entire examples or fragments and insert them into tunes. The Comping Choruses in Part Six at the end of the book can give you some ideas about how to adapt these examples to various harmonic rhythms. You can also use Chords in Motion as a reference by looking up a particular chord in motion, and plugging it into a tune you're playing. Combining the various types of moving chords can provide variety and interest, in both your comping and soloing. Most of the materials are first presented in C, or an equally easy tonality. You can start there, and then move into some other familiar and comfortable keys with few accidentals ( $\mathrm{F}, \mathrm{G}, \mathrm{Bb}$ ), then gradually work in more challenging keys. It's all here at your disposal. Before long, your armamentarium of moving chords will increase substantially, and you'll be putting your Chords in Motion! Make sure to consult the Applications Appendix at the end of the book to unleash the full potential of many of the structures presented in Chords in Motion. During this process, tap into your imagination and creativity by incorporating variations and pursuing tangential ideas sparked by Chords in Motion.

The various Chords in Motion configurations found in this book are an amalgamation of my years of studying and playing in a wide variety of settings from the big bands of Woody Herman, Mel Lewis, Bill Watrous, and others, to more intimate groupslead by Stan Getz, Miroslav Vitous, Gerry Mulligan, Lee Konitz, Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Stitt, Chet Baker, Dave Liebman, John Abercrombie, Benny Golson, Elvin Jones, as well as my own groups with wonderfully creative, inspiring, and inventive musicians, including Jerry Bergonzi, Frank Tiberi, Joe Lovano, Jimmy Greene, Tim Hagans, Rick Margitza, Mike Brecker, Randy Brecker, Dave Samuels, Eddie Gomez, Billy Drewes, George Mraz, Al Foster, Billy Hart, Mike Richmond, Steve LaSpina, Gary Versace, John Patitucci, Harvie S, Bob Sheppard, Shelly Manne, Gary Campbell, Conrad Herwig, Greg Herbert, Roy Hargrove, Claudio Roditi, Jeff Brillinger, Anthony Pinciotti, Larry Schneider, Dave Weckl, Adam Nussbaum, Jay Anderson, Billy Drummond, to name just a few! All these opportunities helped shape my comping concepts. Many of the patterns presented herein are things that I actually play when the time is right. The theory and historical background behind the concepts will be briefly addressed at the start of each part. As my musical mentor and teacher Bill Evans did with me when I was lucky enough to study with him, I'm leaving some things unsaid, so that you may have the joy of discovery by connecting the dots on your own.

Andy LaVerne

February, 2013

## 2. Minor 7: Five-Note, Quartal-Based


C. 7


Eb-7


F-7


Part One

## 11. Minor 11: Six-Note, Quartal-Based

(1) Left-Hand Quartals \& Right-Hand Root Position Major Triads, Whole Steps, Parallel Motion
C.-

C $\ddagger=1$
D.1

$f \$-11$

$f-11$


G-11


Ab-11


A_11


Bb-11

23. Dominant 7b9 \& Diminished 7:

Left-Hand Structures

Three-Note Structures
C769 Eb769 Gb769 A769 C\#0 EO GO BbO

$D 6769 \quad E 769 \quad G 769 \quad B 6769 \quad D O$ Fo AbO Bo


## 45. Chromatic Motion

Right-Hand Root Position Major Triads, Left-Hand Single Notes, Contrary Motion


Right-Hand 2nd Inversion Major Triads, Left-Hand Single Notes, Parallel Motion


Five-Note Diminished Structure With Right-Hand 2nd Inversion Minor Triads (1)


Part Five

