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Introduction

Is the joy of creating music necessarily aligned with public performance?

We are led to believe, in our traditional study of music, that performance, in the form of concert settings and/or recordings should be our goal. After all, unperformed music is akin to the tree that falls, unwitnessed, in the forest, hence the sound it makes is questioned because no one was there to hear it. But God heard it, animals heard it, and nearby trees were aware of it. Nevertheless, we are taught that creation without an eventual audience is pointless, unproductive, without merit, even selfish. But is that really true?

The creation of music, or any art form for that matter, exists for the creator, even if there are no witnesses present to enjoy and/or pass judgment on the quality of that creation. Motivations for creating, when allied with public performance, are also called into question. Is it to inflate the ego? Is it to establish an occupation that leads to monetary support? Or, on a more positive note, is it the desire to share worthwhile creations with an audience and to establish the practice of co-creating music with other musicians in a performing group? Without question, a part of our musical development is achieved by interacting with other musicians, even in a private rehearsal or jam session.

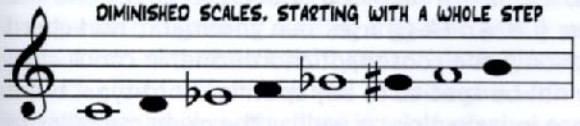
In spite of all that, it is possible to enjoy the practice of creating music all alone, without an audience! That enjoyment can also be shared by very small numbers of people who happen to be within earshot, such as a close family member, a friend, a private student, or when demonstrating for a small ensemble. In those cases, the hearers are relatively attuned, knowledgeable, receptive, and probably respectful toward what is provided.

When the same creation is presented to a larger audience, however, as in a night club, festival, or a formal concert, the enjoyment of one's creation is likely to be hampered by a whole host of problems, to include poor acoustics, crowd noise, a poorly-operated sound system, and audience that may or may not be attuned and receptive, perhaps hoping for a very different offering, owing to diverse backgrounds and cultivated (?) musical taste. In any case, the result for the performer(s) is likely to pale considerably when compared to performing alone or for an audience of 1-8 persons who are attuned to a higher level of music.

Every one of us is creative innately, this energy always seeking expression.

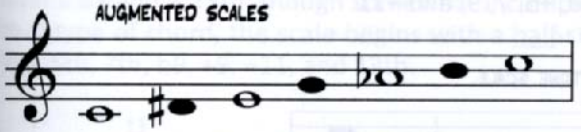
The diminished and augmented scales are both what could be referred to as scales having a two-part symmetry, in which two different intervals alternate evenly. The diminished scale alternates between whole-steps and half-steps and the augmented scale alternates between minor third intervals and half-steps. Because of the increased number of half-steps in the diminished scale, when compared to only two half-step intervals in major and minor scales, there are eight notes in the diminished scale, compared to seven in major and minor scales. You will find, when learning the diminished scale, that there are only three different 'keys' of the scale. For example, when you learn the **C** diminished scale, you have simultaneously learned the **Eb**, **Gb**, and **A** diminished scales as well.

NOTES OF THE C, Eb, Gb, AND A DIMINISHED SCALES, STARTING WITH A WHOLE STEP



The augmented scale, because it contains three minor third intervals, has only six notes, and there are only four 'keys' of the scale. When you learn a **C** augmented scale, for example, you have also learned augmented scales on **E** and **Ab**.

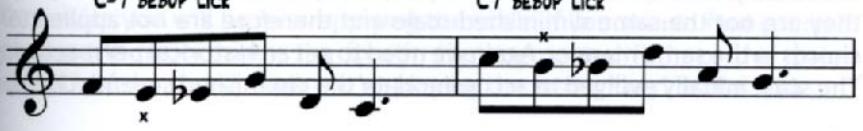
NOTES OF THE C, E, AND Ab AUGMENTED SCALES



Turning now to the application of those scales to chord-types, it might seem that because the twelve-note chromatic scale is not intrinsically attached to any specific chord-type, that it would offer few or no uses to the improviser. It seems to declare nothing, since it uses every possible pitch. Be that as it may, it is nonetheless used by all improvisers in a wide variety of ways. The bebop scale and the bebop lick both use a chromatic note, dissonant if you will, in getting from one consonant note to another. Ironically, the added chromatic note is a seeming anachronism to the chord-type, especially when applied to a minor seventh chord where the chromatic note is a major third, and when applied to the dominant seventh chord, the 'extra' note is the major seventh! But they work and are in common use.

C-7 BEBOP LICK

C7 BEBOP LICK



the last track played in the practice session happened to be "Stella By Starlight," and then I put down my instrument and engage in some other, non-musical activity, such as cooking or gardening, my aural memory will continue playing that last selection. At first, perhaps because the practice session has ended, I'm not consciously aware of hearing anything. But when I do become conscious of what I'm hearing, I will of course identify the tune. On the Play-A-Long, the tune modulates up one-half step at the end of each chorus, so when I first check into what I'm hearing internally, it might be in **Bb** (the starting key). Then I again become unconscious of the fact that the internal memory is playing, but when I return to listening to it, several minutes later, the tune might be in, say, **Db** instead of **Bb**. In other words, the aural memory never stopped playing the track, continuing to modulate up a semi-tone after each chorus, whether I was paying attention to it or not.

Another aspect to that phenomenon is that I also continue to hear my own imagined improvisation on the tune, sometimes even catching myself moving my fingers as though I still had the horn in my hands, hearing each pitch as it was being 'fingered.' This is referred to in several of my books as *Quality-Pitch Association*. I first became aware of that aspect of hearing when I was eleven years old, while still playing clarinet, shortly before switching to saxophone. I was listening to a recording of Benny Goodman's "Wang Wang Blues," trying to transcribe portions of it, when I noticed that I could locate many of the pitches by noticing the dramatic difference in tone quality on certain pitches that was caused primarily by the number of tone holes that were open or closed. For example, when playing in the 'throat tones' (**G-Bb** above middle **C**), virtually all holes are open, causing a weak, soft, nasal quality. But one half-step higher than the **Bb**, when **B**-natural is played, in which all holes are again covered, the quality abruptly becomes strong and loud. Hence it was easy to distinguish between **Bb** and **B**-natural. I learned over the ensuing years that every note on the clarinet has a different tone quality, however slight. Finally, I later discovered that all instruments (saxophone, trumpet, trombone, etc., even piano and guitar) share that association between tone quality and pitch! When, in a private conversation with trumpeter Chet Baker, I mentioned that even when driving my car, my fingers are moving as though improvising on my horn and hearing each corresponding pitch, Chet leaned forward excitedly and said, "You do that, too?" He then told me that he might, for example, be watching a movie in a theater, and catch himself fingering his trumpet unconsciously, hearing the corresponding pitches as he did so. Though we were both surprised to learn that we shared this activity, I strongly suspect that most, if not all, jazz improvisers do this, consciously or not. No wonder they can "play what they hear!" I