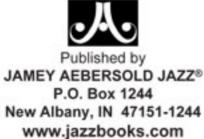
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## Acknowledgements

A word of thanks to Don Coffman and George Mazzeo for their excellent contributions with this project. Jamey Aebersold, for your patience, JB Dyas for your ideas, always insightful, and Alina, Mikey, and Luke for allowing me the time needed.

## Recording

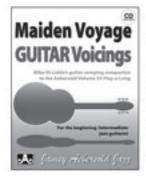
Mike Di Liddo, guitar; Don Coffman, bass; George Mazzeo, drums.

Recorded October 13 and 23, 2010 in Davie, Florida by George Mazzeo.

Mike Di Liddo performed on a 1971 Gibson ES-175 through a pair of Polytone *Mini-Brute* amplifiers, set up in stereo, through a TC Electronics ND-1 delay. Strings used are by Thomastik-Infeld, packaged as *Jazz-Bebop*, Electric Guitar Steel/Nickel Round Wound Medium, .014 - .055, BB114.

Michael Di Liddo, D.M.A. Professor, Jazz Studies Miami Dade College Miami, Florida 33132

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These voicings are "real world" authentic chord voicings, not simplified sterile examples. It's a great opportunity to not only learn great jazz voicings, but to see how these voicings can be used to navigate blues, rhythm, and great standards. Band directors will love this one because now ALL members of the rhythm section can practice their comping with this world famous play-a-long!

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#### Foreword

Welcome to the "prequel" to Michael Di Liddo's critically acclaimed first book Maiden Voyage Guitar Voicings. In this new volume, Jazz Guitar Voicings and Comping, Mike uses his vast
experience as a professional jazz guitarist and educator to present an even simpler yet still
thorough approach to understanding and executing the guitarist's vital accompaniment role in the
jazz combo setting. Perfectly suited as a stand-alone method or to be used in tandem with his
first book, Mike's latest effort has been designed with the guitarist who is new to jazz in mind,
although I suspect many a seasoned pro will find it useful as well. None of the voicings have
been "watered down" in any way but, rather, are the same ones you're likely to hear on any good
jazz recording in which the guitarist knows what he or she is doing.

As with Maiden Voyage - Guitar Voicings, this book also utilizes must-know standards and jazz classics as impetus for the voicings and comping patterns introduced throughout, and can be practiced with the recording from Volume 54 of the Aebersold play-along series. Each section begins with rooted voicings (i.e., roots on the low E or A string) for the tune at hand so you can hear the full quality of each chord as well as have viable voicings to play when no bassist is present (as in a guitar/horn duo situation for example). This is followed by a set of contemporary rootless voicings, along with suggested comping patterns, which are ideal for playing the tune in a jazz combo with standard instrumentation (in which there is a bassist). Most sections conclude with an example of a chorus of comping fully realized in both music notation and chord diagrams that indicate the correct fingerings. Other sections offer musical elements often unique to that tune or essentials for further growth.

I suggest that rather than going through the book in the order presented (although you certainly could), you proceed in the following order in which the "next" tune will utilize information from the "previous" tune, providing you with constant review as you continue to learn new voicings. My recommended tune order is: Bb Blues, Watermelon Man, Song for My Father, Impressions, Maiden Voyage, Cantaloupe Island, Satin Doll, Blue Bossa, Summertime, Footprints, Autumn Leaves, Doxy, and F Blues. Of course, feel free to skip ahead if need be. For example, if you have to find some hip II V I voicings in major and/or minor right away, go directly to Blue Bossa and Autumn Leaves. And don't forget that every chord is movable, meaning you can play each voicing in any key simply by moving it to the left or right.

Also, please remember that memorization is paramount! I suggest you don't start working on your "second" voicing until the "first" one is completely memorized. Likewise, don't start working on voicing 3 until the first two are solid, voicing 4 until the first three are solid, and so on. I also highly recommend you memorize each tune as you're learning it, not just the changes, but the head as well. Review them often in order to keep them in your long-term memory.

And finally, and perhaps most importantly, make sure you listen to the definitive recordings of these tunes numerous times before you work on them. This will help the style and feel become ingrained in you and, hence, will come out when you play. This goes for all the tunes you learn throughout the rest of your guitar playing career.

Enjoy!

JB Dyas, PhD Vice President Education and Curriculum Development Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz

#### Preface

The function of guitar in a jazz small group (combo) encompasses a variety of interesting roles. Guitarists are able to offer melodic statements, provide counterpoint and background figures, improvise solos, and outline harmonic structures for the ensemble in general. Additionally, the way the guitarist plays can add to the rhythmic vitality of the rhythm section and the band as a whole. For those guitarists new to jazz, all of these can present challenges.

Initially, guitarists are faced with knowing suitable chord voicings. Often, players come to jazz with chords that simply are not appropriate for the style. Chords used in Rock music, for example, are often too thick with doubled notes, do not contain enough notes to identify basic sounds (i.e., so-called *power chords*, that is, chords with the root and fifth, no third), or are void of important color tones (extensions) that are crucial to the jazz style.

Knowing suitable chord voicings becomes one of the essential goals of any guitarist involved in small group jazz performance. Additionally, if one is to study comping it seems a good idea to begin with strong voicings for the tune at hand (i.e., a tune you are studying). With the myriad of published items on the subject (i.e., Jazz Guitar Chords, Jazz Guitar Chord Encyclopedia, Jazz Guitar Chord Dictionary, etc.) the question seems more about suitable quality than arbitrary quantity. Not to say texts of this scope are not of value, rather it seems more important to know which voicings function best in a small group setting, as well as identifying chords that are most appropriate for traditional and modern jazz styles.

Once voicings needed to perform a tune are secure, basic jazz rhythms, that is, comping rhythms may be added. Although it may appear that the rhythms necessary to learn are vast, the truth is swung eighth-note comping is often based on a handful of rhythms that are varied greatly. The same is true for other styles of jazz that are not based on the swung eighth-note (i.e., bossa nova, jazz/rock, funky jazz, etc.).

#### A Way to Define Comping

Comping is the term jazz musicians use to describe the art of accompaniment provided by chordal instruments, traditionally piano, keyboard, vibraphone, or guitar during an ensemble performance. It essentially consists of chords performed with rhythms that complement the music at the moment. Good comping is rarely predictable and largely improvised. During the melody of a standard tune, comping may be lighter, less adventurous as compared to what may occur during solos. During solos, mature comping will follow the soloist and provide voicings that enhance what is being created. Rhythms will also change so as to, at times, seemingly comment on the soloist's improvisation. Smart rhythmic insertions can also help punctuate a player's solo. A rhythmically strong

Exceptions being "groove" tunes typical with shuffles, funky jazz, or soul influenced tunes where repetitive, pattern-infused accompaniment may be desired (see Bb Blues, Watermelon Man, and Cantaloupe Island).

"comp" can excite, stimulate, and motivate everyone in the ensemble and make for a more memorable jazz performance.

#### Scope of this Text

Materials presented here are directed at advancing the student by introducing contemporary jazz voicings and typical jazz rhythms appropriate for performance of standard tunes, jazz compositions and commonly recurring chord progressions (e.g., the blues) with great expediency. To that end, oftentimes only one voicing is given for each chord of the tune. However, with *Impressions* and *Maiden Voyage's* combo voicings, exceptions were given due to the extended harmony of those compositions. More chord choices were necessary after an initial presentation was made (see *Additional Combo Voicings* for each).

#### Voicings and Fingerings

This text includes thirteen tunes (i.e., standard tunes, jazz compositions or chord progressions) extensively played in jazz. Presented with each are Root/Bass Voicings, Combo Voicings, Initial Comping Rhythms, and other items sometimes unique to the particular piece or chord progression. Some clarification of the first two items may be helpful:

Root/Bass Voicings are chords that include the root of the chord as the lowest sounding note, always occurring here on either the fifth or sixth string of the guitar. These voicings are useful when in a playing situation that does not have bass notes being supplied (i.e., no bass player, no left-hand bass on keyboard). Examples of these kinds of playing situations include guitar and voice, guitar and saxophone, guitar and trumpet, etc. Root/Bass Voicings are recommended when first learning a tune as they help the ear to hear the harmony. Additionally, they are essential voicings in solo guitar arrangements. However, I recommend NOT using them when playing in an ensemble as they may enter the register of the bass.<sup>2</sup>

Combo Voicings are primarily used when guitarists are playing with other instrumentalists, one of which is providing a bass line. The typical example would be a four – seven member small group with the rhythm section consisting of guitar, piano, bass and drums. As a harmonic device, they are intended to be more modern sounding. Whenever possible I avoided a basic voicing. C7, for example, was rarely used in favor of the richer sounding C9 or C13. Am9, Am11, and Am13 were selected over Am7, and so on.

Careful consideration was also given to presenting strong voicings that are relatively easy to play. Difficult fingerings and stretches were avoided as they might inhibit ease of execution, especially at faster tempi. Furthermore, the context of a particular chord within

.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In actual practice, experienced jazz guitarists are able to use all sorts of voicings in any position of the instrument, including rooted voicings on lower strings.

its progression helped determined its fingering. Fingerings used in chord "A," for example, affected fingerings for chord "B," which in turn affected fingering for chord "C." I recommend that indicated fingerings be at least considered if you intend to later discard.

#### How to Use this Book

This book was written to help guitarists with a collection of "entry level" jazz tunes, specifically, those found in Jamey Aebersold's *Maiden Voyage*, *Vol 54* play-along. As alluded to in his introduction to that text, they are not juvenile tunes. They are simply tunes that allow for the greater success for someone new to the style.

If you are unfamiliar with the tune, begin by playing the Root/Bass Voicings.<sup>3</sup> Use these voicings completely through the tune's chord progression. Repeat until comfortable. At Miami Dade College I have my students sing, in time, the roots of the chords throughout the tune until they can hear the root movement. That little exercise can greatly help you start to hear the harmony but will also help you sectionalize the tune and get a feel for its form.

For the Combo Voicings I recommend taking one tune at a time and try following the format below:

- Listen to one of the recommended recordings under Listening to Historically Significant Jazz Recordings below (a more extensive discography is provided in Aebersold's Maiden Voyage, Vol. 54).
- Without the guitar in hand, follow along with a printed lead sheet (also available in Aebersold's Maiden Voyage, Vol. 54) making certain you can keep your place within the tune, not only during the head but during solos as well.
- Without the recording playing, work up one of the versions of the combo voicings. Get comfortable enough that you can change from chord to chord without hesitation.
  - Put on the recording and perform with the voicings you have learned.
  - · Repeat with other versions of combo voicings.

## Listening to Historically Significant Jazz Recordings

The importance of listening to proper recordings cannot be overstated. They not only give us an example of how to play the tune, but they can also provide us with a common reference. Definitive recordings, that is, recordings that can define a way of performing a particular tune, have been a significant part of jazz performance practice for years. I believe it is safe to say that most, if not virtually all, professional jazz musicians are

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> If completely unfamiliar with the tune, listening to appropriate recordings before any work with voicings or comping is crucial (see Listening to Historically Significant Jazz Recordings).

familiar with, for example, Miles Davis' 1961 recording of Someday My Prince Will Come (Columbia, CS-8456), Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers' 1958 recording of Moanin'(Blue Note 4003), or John Coltrane's seminal 1960 recording of Giant Steps (Atlantic LP 1311). Those recordings are what needs to be "in your ears" when you learn those particular tunes. You can see these things come to life when you attend a jam session of experienced musicians. Many mature players can, without rehearsal, call the Thelonious Monk classic 'Round About Midnight and perform it with the introduction, interlude, and ending like they have rehearsed it. The reason they can do that? They have listened and learned the famous Miles Davis recording of it (Columbia CL-949; 1957). If you are going to learn a tune that you don't know, it seems logical to associate yourself with the one that has defined the performance of that composition.

The following recordings can be a starting place for many of the tunes in this collection. As stated earlier, a more extensive listing can be found in Aebersold's Maiden Voyage, Vol. 54 play-along.

#### Impressions

\*John Coltrane, Impressions - Impulse! MCAD 5887 CD; 1963

#### Bb Blues

Note: Since the chord progression for Bb Blues (and F Blues) is more the focus than the tune presented in the Aebersold text, the following recordings are recommended:

Blue Monk

Thelonious Monk, Thelonious Monk Quartet with John Coltrane at Carnegie

Hall, Blue Note; 2005

Sonnymoon for Two

Sonny Rollins, A Night at the Village Vanguard, Blue Note/EMI; 1957

Solar Flair (same chord progressions as Kenny Dorham's Blue Bossa) \*Joe Henderson, Page One, 4140 CD; 1963

#### Summertime

John Coltrane, My Favorite Things, Atlantic Records SD-1361; 1961

Note: Coltrane's version has six extra measures at the end of the tune and is part of the form for the solos.

Watermelon Man

\*Herbie Hancock, Takin' Off, Blue Note BST 8410; 1962

Song for My Father

\*The Horace Silver Quintet, Song for My Father, Blue Note 4185; 1965

Satin Doll

Wes Montgomery, The Wes Montgomery Trio, Riverside 1156; 1959

Maiden Voyage

\*Herbie Hancock, Maiden Voyage, Blue Note 4195; 1965

#### F Blues

As in the case with *Bb Blues* above, and since the *F Blues* chord progression is more the focus than the Aebersold melody, the following tunes/recordings are recommended:

Billies Bounce

Charlie Parker, Charlie Parker and His Re-Boppers, Savoy; 1945

Bag's Groove

Miles Davis, Bag's Groove, Prestige 7109; 1957

#### Cantaloupe Island

\*Herbie Hancock, Empyrean Isles, Blue Note 4175; 1964

#### Footprints

\*Wayne Shorter, Adam's Apple, Blue Note 4232; 1966

\*Miles Davis, Miles Smiles, Columbia CS-9401; 1967

#### Doxy

\*Miles Davis, Bag's Groove, Prestige 7109; 1957

#### Autumn Leaves

Cannonball Adderley, Somethin' Else, Blue Note 1595; 1958



<sup>\*</sup>indicates author's opinion as a definitive performance(s)/recordings(s)

#### Performance Notes

#### Right Hand Options

The chords presented are largely four-note voicings and can be performed with the traditional "pick and fingers" used by many players. With this method, the pick (plectrum) is placed between the thumb and index finger and plays the lowest note of the chord. The remaining fingers, that is, the middle, ring and little finger are used to play the remaining notes of the voicing.

This is not the only way to play the chords, however, as using the pick for all the notes of the chord is also effective and at times preferred. If you are comfortable with the pick alone, I recommend on swing based tunes to utilize down stroke strums only. The tendency for many players new to the jazz style is to strum up and down which is usually not proper for this style (although there are some notable exceptions). Some players play without the pick and use the fingers alone. This has several advantages including the simultaneous attack of five-note chords (although no five-note chords are presented in this text). The disadvantage I have found with not including the pick is that you may lose the ability to execute some of the funk, soul, and rock based tunes (but again, there are exceptions to this). For me, the pick on these type of tunes has been an added texture and simply a lot of fun.

#### Impressions

This John Coltrane classic will necessitate more voicings than initially presented. I've included a fair amount of additional voicings that you can use along with the combo voicings. The quartal voicings will give you a more modern sound and can offer a different approach to the harmony. Quartal harmony was common for many players from the 1960s and is still an important part of jazz harmony today. Even without incorporating quartal voicings you will gain much from the minor seventh voicings that take you up and down the fingerboard. The six voicings help provide for the construction of harmonized background lines to form as you comp.

#### **Bb Blues**

This is a basic, three-chord blues, a progression that is possibly blues in its purist harmonic form. Other blues such as Charlie Parker's *Blues For Alice*, and Sonny Rollins' *Tenor Madness*, as well as T-Bone Walker's classic *Call it Stormy Monday (But Tuesday Is Just As Bad)* all stem from this basic three-chord form. Several versions of combo voicings will allow for greater variety. Learn them separately but mix them up as desired. I have included a version of thirds and sevenths, thereby reducing the chords to their most basic sound. If you use these it's probably best, at least initially, that you continue with them for a chorus or two rather than mixing them with four-note voicings. When performing with another choral instrument, they may appreciate you using these as it allows them to harmonize the changes more freely.

A comparison of Bb Blues with F Blues will reveal more harmonic movement with the latter blues' chord progression. Sometimes referred to as "jazz blues" or "blues with jazz changes," the added chords are often favored by jazz musicians. It is not uncommon, for example, for a performance of a three-chord blues to develop into a jazz blues during the solos.

#### Solar Flair

The chord progression is taken from the 1963 Kenny Dorham classic Blue Bossa (see Listening to Historically Significant Jazz Recordings). The tune is played with an even eighth-note feel so many of the comping rhythms will be different from swing rhythms. Once comfortable with a particular presentation of voicings, practice the chords with the indicated comping rhythms (i.e., Initial Comping Rhythms).

There are some useful II-V-Is presented under Combo Voicings. Measures 5 - 7 offer a minor II-V-I (i.e., Dm7b5 - G7b9#5 - Cm9) that is easy to play and provides smooth voice leading. Measures 9 - 11 offer a major II-V-I (i.e., Ebm9 - Ab13 - Dbmaj7) that you may also find useful. Both of these cadences should be transposed for use in all keys.

The Bass/Chord Accompaniment I've included can be useful when playing without a bass player, and can be managed with an ensemble as well. It is NOT meant to be performed with only a pick, rather, the use of a traditional, classical right hand would be ideal (i.e., thumb, index, middle, and ring fingers). If you don't like to put your pick down, I would recommend using "pick and fingers" as mentioned earlier. You may, however, need to grow a small amount of nail in the right hand to get a desirable tone.

#### Summertime

This classic song by George Gershwin (lyric by DeBose Heyward) has been extensively recorded by a wide variety of jazz musicians from Louis Armstrong to John Coltrane, not to mention a multitude of pop and operatic singers.2 The John Coltrane recording (see Listening to Historically Significant Jazz Recordings) is superb and you may want to try the voicings learned along with the Coltrane recording (please reference the note that accompanies the Coltrane recording entry).

Both versions of Combo Voicings contain some practical II-V-I voicings. Minor II-V-Is are found at measures 7 - 9 and 14 - 15 (i.e., Em7b5 - A7b9#5 - Dm9, both versions). Major II-V-Is are at measures 12 - 13 (i.e., Gm9 - C9 - Fmaj7 for Version 1; Gm9 - C13 -Fmaj7 for Version 2).

#### Watermelon Man

Eighth-notes are generally treated straight, that is, with even eighths. The underlying rhythm is sixteenth-notes and should be referenced throughout. Comping can be performed with either "pick and fingers" or with the pick alone. I tend to alternate between the two. If the band starts to play more aggressively, I focus on the pick alone.

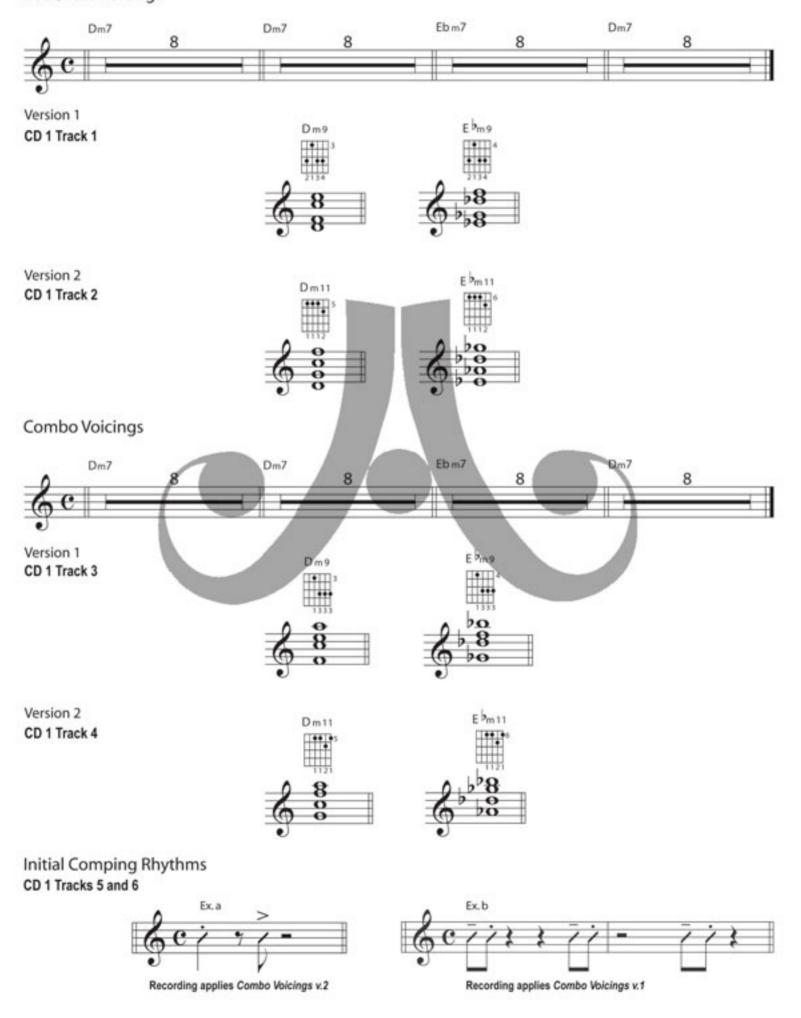
The tune consists exclusively of dominant seventh chords. Most of the chords found in Bb Blues and Doxy are also dominant seventh chords. All three tunes, therefore, will provide a decent collection of dominant seventh voicings.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Summertime is from the 1935 opera Porgy and Bess by George Gershwin (music) and DeBose Heyward (lyrics).

## Impressions

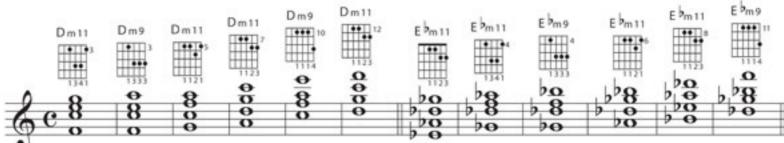
Apply presented voicings to the harmonic (chord) progression of Impressions. Some suggested comping rhythms are included below.

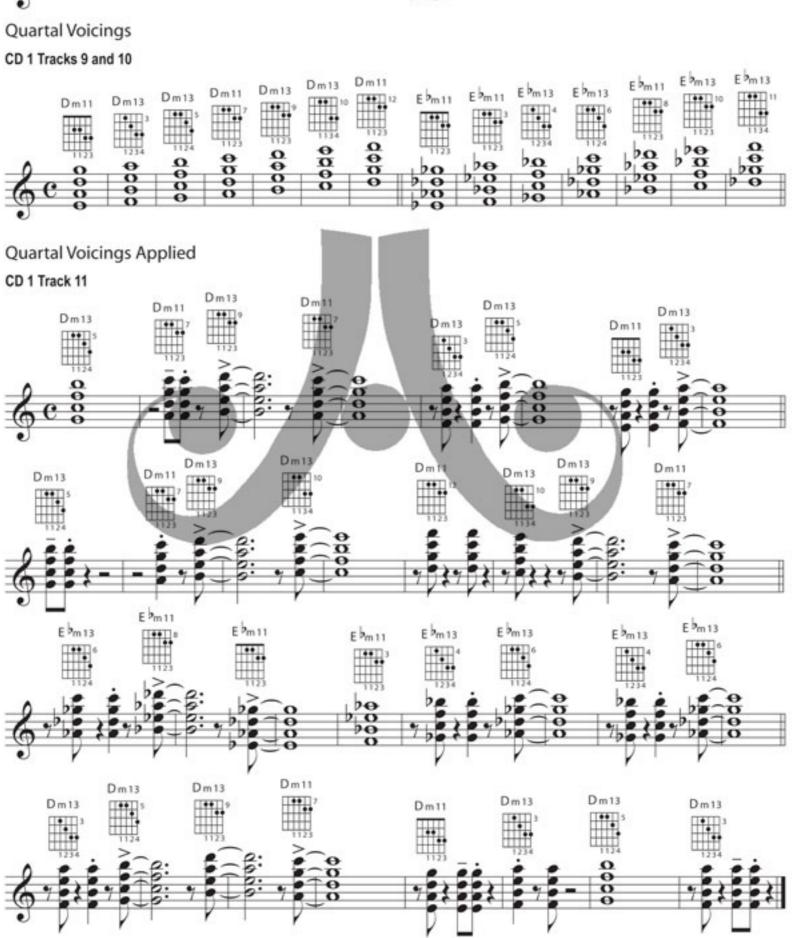
### Root/Bass Voicings



### Additional Combo Voicings

## CD 1 Tracks 7 and 8

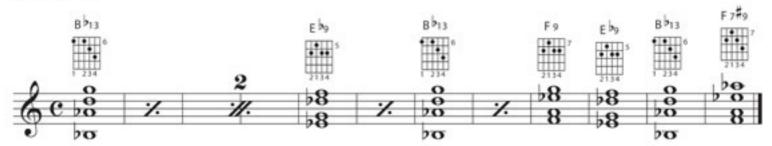




## **Bb Blues**

## Root/Bass Voicings

#### CD 1 Track 12

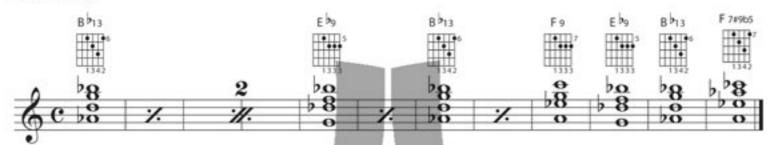


#### Combo Voicings

Play through each of the versions below. When comfortable, mix and match voicings to form original versions of the progression.

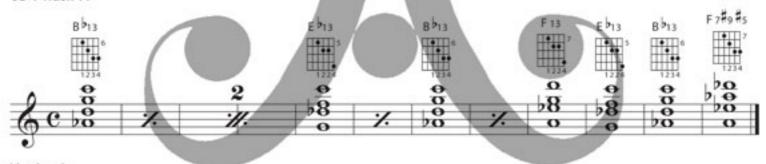
#### Version 1

#### CD 1 Track 13



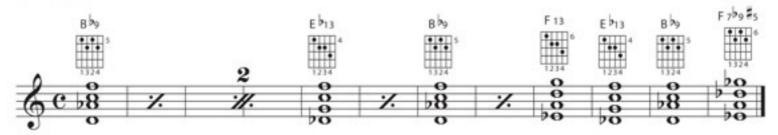
Version 2

#### CD 1 Track 14



Version 3

#### CD 1 Track 15



Version 4

#### CD 1 Track 16

