



JAZZ PIANO SCHOOL

Learning Freedom

STAGE 05 Lesson Text

Lessons 41-48

By: Brenden Lowe

Table of Contents

Lesson 41	3
Lesson 42	17
Lesson 43	28
Lesson 44	39
Lesson 45	48
Lesson 46	56
Lesson 47	64
Lesson 48	72



JAZZ PIANO SCHOOL

Learning Freedom

Lesson 41

JPS Lesson 41

Technique

1. *Dominant Montuno* – This dominant montuno switches between the sus of the chord and resolves down to the third in your RH using octaves. Your LH plays a simple 1, 5, 1 in the bass.



2. *Minor Montuno* – In this minor piano montuno our RH is switching between a D-minor chord and a D-6 chord. The way we switch between the two is with the octave that starts on the fifth and then moves to the 6th while keeping the root and third in the middle of the chord. The LH bass just plays a rhythmic 1 to 5 pattern. (see below)



3. *2-5-1 Montuno* – This 2-5-1 montuno is just a matter of voice leading your octaves. Your RH starts on the 7th of the -7th chord then moves to the 3rd of the V7 chord. From there you move to the major 6th of the Imaj chord. Then move to the 5th of the Imaj chord. (see below)



4. *Hexatonics Series Part 5 – C+7 (bVII+, I+)* – This is a very common sound you’ve probably heard before a lot but didn’t know where it was coming from. With this hexatonic combination, we get the #11 and b13 added in a triadic fashion. It gives a whole tone scale sound but in a hexatonic fashion. (see below)



5. *Jazz Exercise in 3/4*



Harmony & Theory

1. Styles Series Part 1/8 – Latin Jazz

- a. Latin music is a great style to be able to play and it can help us get different kinds of gigs! In this section, I'll go over the more important concepts for you to understand in Latin music so that, if called upon to play, you can be confident. There are many different forms of Latin jazz that have various influences. Some of these influences include Afro-Cuban and Afro-Brazilian. The Afro-Brazilian music will be bossa nova and samba styles which has a slightly different foundational pattern then the Cuban clave.
- i. Clave - The clave in Latin music is a strong rhythmic pulse that emphasizes certain beats and holds the music together. In Latin bands you will hear this figure played distinctly by one person alone to hold everything together. There are different types of rhythmic claves depending upon the song. I will explain two of the more important ones to you.
- ii. 3/2 Clave – The 3/2 clave is a two measure rhythmic phrase that emphasizes three particular beats in the first measure and two in the second. Below you can see this rhythm written out. (see below)



When you are you comping or soloing you do not have to always emphasize these beats but rather try and feel this pulse inside of you or listen to the band member playing the clave. Think of it as the rhythmic engine that is running the train.

- iii. 2/3 Clave – The 2/3 clave is similar to the 3/2 clave but flipped. We have two beats emphasized in the first measure and three beats in the second measure. (see below)



- b. Bossa Nova - The bossa nova originated from Brazil and took on a more harmonic based "cool" style as to the more percussive based samba that was happening. Such influences as Antonio Carlos Jobim, Johnny Alf and Joao Gilberto helped to progress this style forward. Probably the most popular bossa ever played to this day is *The Girl from Ipanema*.

The bossa clave, played by the drummer's snare, is very similar to that of the son clave, the more Cuban based clave. The only difference is the last beat in the pattern is delayed. (See the figure below).



- c. Playing the music – Knowing these foundation rhythmic patterns when playing Latin music is always helpful when contributing your part. There will not be any harmonic difference in your style. The only difference will be the

rhythms. Your comping and solo lines will all be straight eights. You will not be swinging your lines anymore. As I mentioned previously, you should listen to the clave and try and feel it as you are playing. The drummer will be playing some sort of variation of this so it will help to listen as you play. A lot of people over think the playing of Latin pieces. It's actually very easy and doesn't require much effort as long as you know the Latin feel. You can still use all of your swing licks and chops over Latin pieces in the same manner but without the swing feel. Don't feel like you need comp the claves either. You can comp any kind of rhythmic patterns you like as long as they are straight eighth comps. Basing your comping around the rhythms of the clave will definitely help strengthen the rhythmic feel of the tune as well.

2. Advanced Left Hand Voicing Series Part 1

- a. *Intro* – As your playing progresses, you'll find that you can be more and more creative. Everything that I've taught you will serve as a foundation for your creativity from which you can expand and go wherever you wish. This will hold true for every concept we work on. In this upcoming section, we are going to be exploring as many possible LH voicing combinations as the 5 fingers on your hand permit, mixed with our traditional extensions available. Again, the traditional extensions are a foundation to build from, this doesn't mean you can't add any note to a chord if you enjoy this sound. Go for it! I will simply be showing you all the possibilities that are available with the extensions and chord tones that are within the common jazz language. The way we will approach this is by starting on every possible note available to the chord in our LH. These sections won't consist of too much explanation

but rather lists of the voicing possibilities you have available to you and practices for your LH for each chord quality.

b. *LH Minor 7th – Voicings*

- i. (See last page for numbers. See practice exercises for notation.)

3. *Popular Two Handed Voicing Series - Minor Part 1*

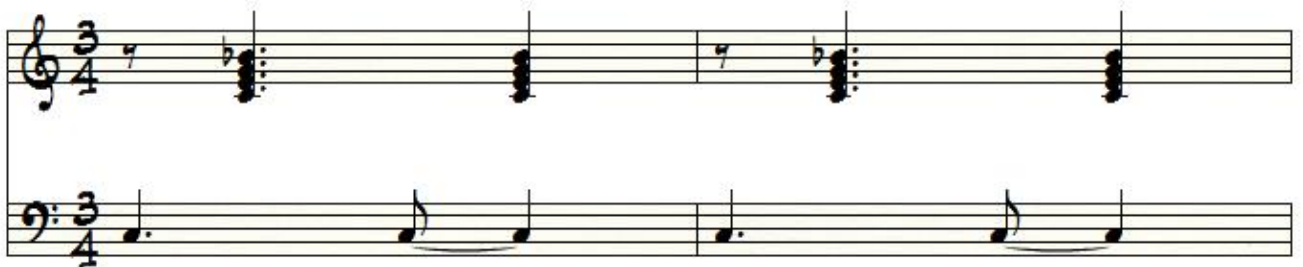
- a. There are a lot of popular two handed voicings for many chords. Here is a great minor voicing that will help spread your hands out and create rich harmonies at the same time. In this voicing, our 3 and 7th are in our RH which is perfectly acceptable. We just need them to be in the chord somewhere. Our LH has 1, 5 and 9, while our RH has 3, 11, 7 and 9. (See below).



4. *Time Signature Series – 3/4* – Playing in 3/4 can be very fun and very tricky at the same time. In this section I'm mainly going to talk about the type of rhythms you can play off of to spice up your playing. The notes and approach to soloing will stay the same. When you can add some rhythmic motifs it'll really spice up your playing.

You can feel the time signature as three quarter notes or you can feel the measure as two dotted quarter notes. I talk about this as a rhythm to play off of in this section.

- a. *Waltz Feel* – This rhythm gives your solo a waltz feeling. It's nice to use this specific rhythmic phrase occasionally throughout your solo because it strongly represents the 3/4 time. See below.



- b. *Triplets* – Triplets are a simple yet effective way to start soloing. When playing triplets in a 3/4 time signature you will derive a very elegant ornament. Experiment with small triplet figures, long phrased triplet figures and medium to reach the full potential of this concept. See below.



- c. *Dotted Quarter Note* – Playing off the dotted quarter note is a great way to start when playing in a 3/4 time signature. The dotted quarter note divides the measure up into two beats. You can emphasize these two beats through your lines and create motifs around them.



d. *Quarter Note Triplets* – Playing with a quarter note triplet feel will give you a nice poly rhythm that can be great for texture and building tension. The hard part with this rhythm is that unlike some other poly rhythms which restart back on one quickly, this one takes quite a while before your quarter note triplet syncs back up with beat 1 again. You will really need to be able to feel where you are in the time if you are going to divert back into an eighth note line. I'll provide different options in the example. See below.



Vocab & Repertoire

1. *Latin & Bossa Tunes* - There are a lot of Latin jazz tunes out there. The more you play the better you will get at this style. Don't psych yourself out either! You're really not changing what you play, just the style and groove you play it in. You can keep all your voicings, lines and textures the same. You will just need to change your rhythms to a straight feel.

Manteca is a classic Latin jazz tune to learn. It is a very easy melody with some easy progression as well.

The most infamous bossa tune ever written could very well be *The Girl from Ipanema*. This bossa is most popular for being played in those awkward movie scenes where two people are standing in an elevator without speaking and the elevator music is playing *The Girl from Ipanema*. Even with that being said, this is an amazing song and a definite need to know as an advanced player.

As I described above, the Bossa takes on more of an airy and lighter approach. This is definitely how you should approach this tune.

2. *Montunos* - When playing Latin jazz in a small group, you won't normally hear montunos used often but it doesn't mean you can't use them wherever you would like. The montuno is mainly heard in larger groups with orchestrated parts for a big band or small big band. All the montunos you have learned are tools that you can use wherever and whenever you would like. I like to even throw them in to swing tunes and if the drummer is paying attention he'll play a Latin groove for a couple of bars or so. Get creative with them and mix them in to Latin and jazz tunes. Have fun!

3. *Improvisation*

- a. *Hexatonics Series Part 5 – C+7 (bVII+, I+) -* Improv with this hexatonic is going to sound very Monkish. The use of two augmented (#5) triads is going to give you a very distinct and "out" sound. This is great when you wanted to throw a texture in to completely change things up. You could also focus on this texture throughout your solo then slide into more of a standard bebop sound which would also be a nice contrast.



- b. *Latin* - Again, soloing in different rhythmic styles doesn't necessarily mean we are going to play in different types of lines. The main thing that will be changing

is our feel in our lines. Meaning we will be playing straight 8th lines in a Latin tune.

One thing to watch out for though is if the bebop language was meant and created for bebop tunes in that area. I don't want to say you can't make use of all



the approaches we've learned in the intermediate course over a Latin tune, but the majority of Latin music is based off of rhythms. I wouldn't focus on intricate approaches to chord tones. Instead try and develop your solos based off the rhythmic motifs we've learned previously.

- c. 3/4 - The 3/4 is a very classy time signature. Meaning it comes from a waltz and feels more elegant then some of the other time signatures. With this being said, you can approach a 3/4 time signature with a beautiful melodic focus. You really don't need much in order to create beautiful melodies. There are certain 3/4 tunes and styles that will be the contrary to this. For example, a Elvin Jones type of 3/4 over *My Favorite Things*, but will get to this later. With our tune *Someday Our Prince Will Come* focus on creating beautiful and singing melodies during your improv.



4. Application

a. *LH Voicings with in a minor piece* - Now I'm sure you're thinking, "How in the world do I use all these voicings?" Well, we pick and choose what will work best depending upon a couple of different things such as the register your right hand is soloing in or the texture and mood of the song. You want to view these voicings and colors and textures. After you've developed a relationship with them through practice there will be certain ones that stand out to you that you enjoy! These will become your go-to voicings and you can start to use them just as you would an improvise line you learned for your RH.

LH Minor 7th Voicing Numbers

3 Note Voicings

3,4,7 - 4,7,3 - 7,3, 4

3,5,7 - 5,7,3 - 3,7,5

3,6,7 - 6,7,3 - 7,3,6

3,7,1 - 7,1,3, - 1,3,7

3,7,9 - 7,9,3 - 9,3,7

3,7,3

3,7, 11

4 Note Voicings (11 in front)

3,4,5,7 - 4,5,7,3 - 5,7,3,4 - 7,3,4,5

3,4,6,7 - 4,6,7,3 - 6,7,3,4 - ,7,3,4,6

3,4,6,7 - 4,6,7,3 - 6,7,3,4- ,7,3,4,6

3,4,7,1 - 4,7,1,3 - 7,1,3,4 - 1,3,4,7

3,4,7,9 - 4,7,9,3 - 7,9,3,4 - 9,3,4,7

3,4,7,3,

(13 In front)

3,6,7,1, - 6,7,1,3 - 7,1,3,6 - 1,3,6,7

3,6,7,9 - 6,7,9,3 - 7,9,3,6 - 9,3,6,7

3,6,7,3

3,6,7,11

5 Note Voicings (4 in front)

3,4,5,6,7 - 4,5,6,7,3 - 5,6,7,3,4 - 6,7,3,4,5 - 7,3,4,5,6

3,4,5,7,1 - 4,5,7,1,3 - 5,7,1,3,4 - 7,1,3,4,5 - 1,3,4,5,7

3,4,5,7,9 - 4,5,7,9,3 - 5,7,9,3,4 - 7,9,3,4,5 - 9,3,4,5,7

3,4,6,7,1 - 4,6,7,1,3 - 6,7,1,3,4 - 7,1,3,4,6 - 1,3,4,6,7

3,4,5,7,3

(5 in front)

3,5,6,7,1 - 5,6,7,1,3 - 6,7,1,3,5 - 7,1,3,5,6 - 1,3,5,6,7

3,5,6,7,9 - 5,6,7,9,3 - 6,7,9,3,5 - 7,9,3,5,6 - 9,3,5,6,7

3,5,7,1,9 - 5,7,1,9,3 - 7,1,9,3,5 - 1,9,3,5,7 - 9,3,5,7,1

3,5,7,1,3

3,5,7,9,3



JAZZ PIANO SCHOOL

Learning Freedom

Lesson 42

JPS Lesson 42

Technique

1. Jazz Exercise – Funk Line#1



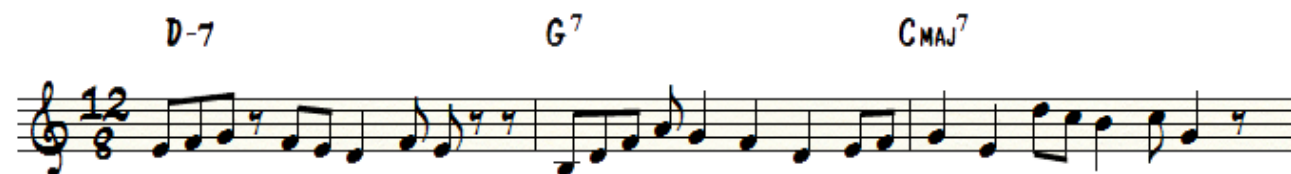
2. Jazz Exercise – Funk Line #2



3. Hexatonics Series Part 6 – C+maj7 (III, #IVo)



4. Jazz Exercise in 12/8



Harmony & Theory

1. Styles Series Part 2/8 – Funk

- a. The funk genre is less about what you play and definitely more about how you play it. Funk music strongly emphasizes the bass, drums and groove that is created by both in combination. The melody and harmonies in funk music take a lesser role than jazz and other genres while rhythmic hits of the band take a strong role. For a pianist, funk music is actually pretty easy. For most tunes, you're only vamping on one to four chord changes, that repeat for the entire song. The main focus of the pianist, keyboardist, in a funk groove is simply lay down the harmonies as a nice palette for the drums and bass to create rhythmic grooves over. If the comping of the pianist starts to get too rhythmic, it can begin to destroy the whole groove of the band. All the chord changes in a funk piece can be played like jazz harmonies, but predominantly you will see more triads in most tunes.

- i. You'll want to think about different textures you can create with the piano while laying down harmonies in a funk tune. Here are a few to play around with.

1. Low End – While your RH plays voicings around the middle register of the piano, your LH simply plays and holds bass notes. Don't worry this won't interfere with what the bass is doing as long as you hold the note down. This will give a real nice thick voicing texture for the rest of the band to play over. If you want

to add a rhythmic component to your RH that is okay. Definitely don't do much with your LH though!

2. Middle – In the middle of the piano, similar to jazz, your LH should play something thin such as the shells of the chord, (3 & 7 , or 7 & 3) while your right hand plays rootless voicings. You'll want to use this middle register with a variation of short rhythms and holds since you have more harmonies that will cut through the sound of the band.
3. High end – This is a great register to use in funk. The high end should usually only be used with short rhythmic comps. The notes are too high to be held and used has harmonic support. Your comps are going to be used more for a quick texture to make a statement. After, you should jump back down to play some supportive harmonies in the middle to low end of the piano.

2. Advanced Left Hand Voicing Series Part 2 - Dominant

- a. *Dominant Voicings (See last page for numbers. See Practice Exercises for notation.*

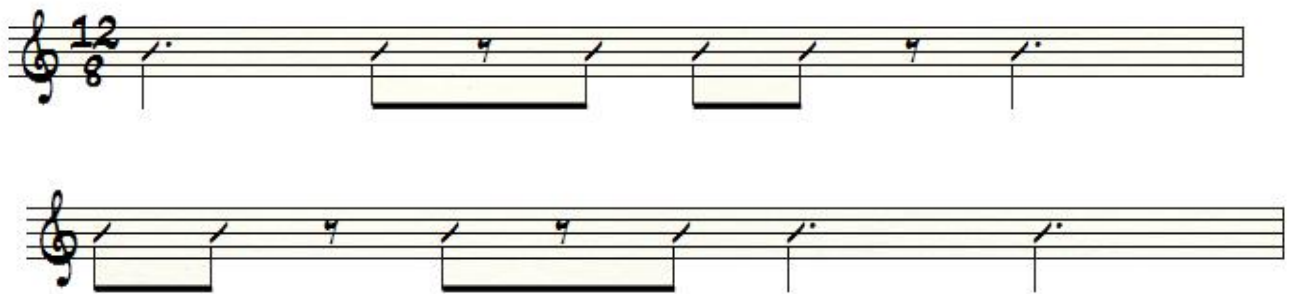
3. Popular Two Handed Voicing Series – Minor Part 2

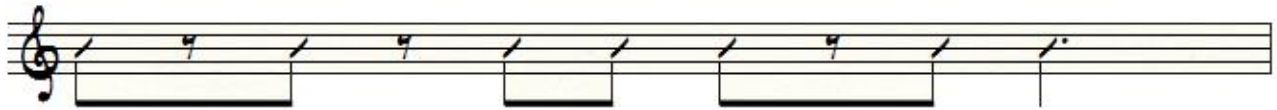
- a. This voicing is more compact than the last one. In your LH you have 1, 5, 7. Your RH is adding all the colors with the degrees 9, 3, 11, 13. This is a great voicing I use a lot because it has all the available extensions for a minor chord in my right hand. (See below).



4. Time Signature Series – 12/8

- a. The 12/8 signature is a great African rhythm that is usually felt in 4 beats every three eighth notes. So we are tapping our foot on the down beat of groupings of three eighth notes. So you can also feel this time signature like it is in four but you are subdividing each beat into triplets, which gives us 12 beats. This is a great groove that a lot of jazz tunes have adopted at times. 12/8 usually lends itself to more of a modern style of playing. Mostly fourth voicings and pentatonic type of soloing on top. Here are some playing examples of a 12/8 groove. (See below)





Vocab & Repertoire

1. *Funk Tune* - Funk is all about the groove and feeling. The sooner you can really believe in that, the better you will become at funk music. The role of the keyboard player in funk music is mainly about contributing harmonies and some rhythmic components. The bass and drums are the drivers of the groove so keyboard players don't really have to do much except play the changes.
The tune *Red Clay* by Freddie Hubbard is a great jazz funk tune to get started on. Check out the lead sheet below.
2. *12/8 Blues* - In your music journey you will come across many tunes with a 12/8 time signature. The most prominent example that comes to my mind when thinking about a 12/8 feel is going to be a very, slow blues. When playing slow tunes, it helps to subdivide into a slightly faster division in order to feel the beat better. A slow blues that intends to sound fast yet is at a quarter note tempo of 50 or so will often have a 12/8 time signature. This allows us to subdivide the quarter note into 4 groupings of triplets and allow us to swing and get real bluesy with it.
3. *Improvisation*
 - a. *12/8* - When improvising over a 12/8 feel, I normally just feel the time as you would a 3/4 tune but in groupings of 4. Meaning I would be feeling "1,2,3 1,2,3 1,2,3 1,2,3". This will help you feel the groupings while keeping the 12/8 feel. There is no reason to try and count in your head to 12 but you do have to pay attention to the

main grouping pulse of 4 throughout each measure otherwise you will lose track of the bars. They can go by very, very slow.



b. Hexatonics Series Part 6 – C+maj7 (III, #IVo) - This hexatonic sound will be very haunting and mysterious. It is a very beautiful sound when utilized in the



proper context. Meaning, I wouldn't simply just add this into a bebop tune unless you are with other advanced players who are able to follow you. The combination of the b13 and #11 extension in both the triads comes out as a sound that is spacey and questioning. Make sure you spend some time with this and really internalize what this sound means to you before you start randomly integrating it into tunes.

c. Funk - Just like the Latin feel, the funk is based primarily off the groove so we want our improv to reflect that. Our main focus when taking a funk solo should be about rhythmic development. This is not to say you should abandon your melodies but I would take the mindset of rhythms in a way. Keep your melodies simple while you work on establishing a nice rhythmic motif and building it.

Dominant 7th LH Voicing Numbers

2 Note Voicing

37-73

3 Note Voicings

3,#4,7 - #4,7,3 - 7,3, #4

3,5,7 - 5,7,3 - 3,7,5

3,b6,7 - b6,7,3 - 7,3,b6

3,6,7 - 6,7,3 - 7,3,6

3,7,1 - 7,1,3, - 1,3,7

3,7,9 - 7,9,3 - 9,3,7

3,7,b9 - 7,b9,3 - b9,3,7

3,7 #9 - 7,#9,3 - #9,3,7

3,7,3 -

3,7, #11

3,7,12

4 Note Voicings

(#11 in front)

3,#4,5,7 - #4,5,7,3 - 5,7,3,#4 - 7,3,#4,5

3,#4,b6,7 - #4,b6,7,3 - b6,7,3,#4 - ,7,3,#4,b6

3,#4,6,7 - #4,6,7,3 - 6,7,3,#4 - ,7,3,#4,6

3,#4,7,1 - #4,7,1,3 - 7,1,3,#4 - 1,3,#4,7

3,#4,7,9 - #4,7,9,3 - 7,9,3,#4 - 9,3,#4,7

3,#4,b7,b9 - #4,b7,b9,3- b7,b9,3,#4 - b9,3,#4,b7

3,#4,b7,#9 - #4,b7,#9,3 - b7,#9,3,#4 - #9,3,#4,b7

3,#4,7,3

5 in front

3,5,b6,7 - 5,b6,7,3 - b6,7,3,5 - 7,3,5,b6

3,5,6,7 - 5,6,7,3 - 6,7,3,5 - 7,3,5,6

3,5,7,1 - 5,7,1,3 - 7,1,3,5 - 1,3,5,7

3,5,7,b9 - 5,7,b9,3 - 7,b9,3,5 - b9,3,5,7

3,5,7,9 - 5,7,9,3 - 7,9,3,5 - 9,3,5,7

3,5,7,#9 - 5,7,#9,3 - 7,#9,3,5 - #9,3,5,7

3,5,7,3

b13 in front

3,b6,7,1 - b6,7,1,3 - 7,1,3,b6 - 1,3,b6,7

3,b6,7,b9 - b6,7,b9,3 - b7,b9,3,b6 - b9,3,b6,b7

3,b6,7,9 - b6,7,9,3 - 7,9,3,b6 - 9,3,b6,7

3,b6,7,#9 - b6,b7,#9,3 - b7,#9,3,b6 - #9,3,b6,b7

3,b6,7,3

13 in front

3,6,7,1 - 6,7,1,3 - 7,1,3,6 - 1,3,6,7

3,6,b7,b9 - 6,b7,b9,3 - b7,b9,3,6 - b9,3,6,b7

3,6,7,9 - 6,7,9,3 - 7,9,3,6 - 9,3,6,7

3,6,b7,#9 , 6,b7,#9,3 - b7,#9,3,6 - #9,3,6,b7

3,6,7,3

3 + 7 in front

3,7,1,b9

3,7,1,9 -3,7,1,#9 - 3,7,1,3 - 3,7,1,#11

3,7,b9,3 - 3,7,9,3 - 3,7,#9,3

5 Note Voicings

3,#4,5,6,7 - #4,5,6,7,3 - 5,6,7,3,#4 - 6,7,3,#4,5 - 7,3,#4,5,6

3,#4,5,7,1 - #4,5,7,1,3 - 5,7,1,3,#4 - 7,1,3,#4,5 - 1,3,#4,5,7

3,#4,5,7,b9 - #4,5,b7,b9,3 - 5,b7,b9,3,#4 - b7,b9,3,#4,5 - b9,3,#4,5,b7

3,#4,5,7,9 - #4,5,7,9,3 - 5,7,9,3,#4 - 7,9,3,#4,5 - 9,3,#4,5,7

3,#4,5,b7,#9 - #4,5,b7,#9,3 - 5,b7,#9,3,#4 - b7,#9,3,#4,5

3,#4,5,7,3

3,#4,b6,7,1 - #4,b6,7,1,3 - b6,7,1,3,#4 - 7,1,3,#4,b6 - 1,3,#4,b6,7

3,#4,6,7,1 - #4,6,7,1,3 - 6,7,1,3,#4 - 7,1,3,#4,6 - 1,3,#4,6,7

3,#4,6,b7,b9 - #4,6,b7,b9,3 - 6,b7,b9,3,#4 - b7,b9,3,#4,6

3,#4,6,b7,9 - #4,6,b7,9,3 - 6,b7,9,3,#4 - b7,9,3,#4,6 - 9,3,#4,6,b7

3,#4,6,b7,#9 - #4,6,b7,#9,3 - 6,b7,#9,3,#4 - b7,#9,3,#4,6 - #9,3,#4,6,b7

3,#4,7,1,b9 - #4,b7,1,b9,3 - b7,1,b9,3,#4 - 1,b9,3,#4,b7 - b9,3,#4,b7,1

3,#4,7,1,9 - #4,7,1,9,3 - 7,1,9,3,#4 - 1,9,3,#4,7 - 9,3,#4,7,1

3,#4, b7,1,#9 - #4,b7,1,#9,3 - b7,1,#9,3,#4 - 1,#9,3,#4,b7

#9,3, #4,b7,1

(3,5, in front)

3,5,b6,7,1 - 5,b6,7,1,3 - b6,7,1,3,5 - 7,1,3,5,b6 - 1,3,5,b6,7

3,5,b6,b7,b9

3,5,b6,7,9 - 5,b6,7,9,3 - b6,7,9,3,5 - 7,9,3,5,b6 - 9,3,5,b6,7

3 b13 in front

3,b6,7,1,9 - b6,7,1,9,3 - 7,1,9,3,b6 - 1,9,3,b6,7 - 9,3,b6,7,1

3,b6,7,1,3

3,b6,7,9,3

(3,13 In front)

3,6,7,1,9 - 6,7,1,9,3 - 7,1,9,3,6 - 1,9,3,6,7 - 9,3,6,7,1

3,7,1,9,3



JAZZ PIANO SCHOOL

Learning Freedom

Lesson 43

JPS Lesson 43

Technique

1. Jazz Exercise – Blues (Swing)



2. Jazz Exercise – Blues (Traditional)



3. Hexatonics Series Part 7 – C-maj7 (Vlo, VIIo) – This hexatonic combination is another favorite of mine that is used over –maj7th chords. We combine two diminish triads to get a min6th sound with the maj7 as well. It is a great color to use over minor maj7th chords. (see below)



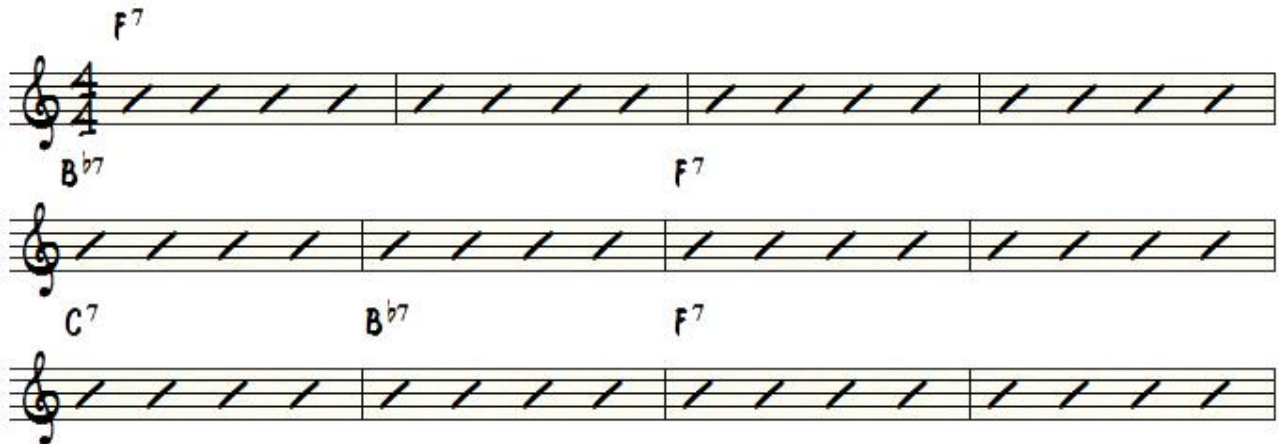
4. Jazz Exercise in 7/4



Harmony & Theory

1. Styles Series Part 3/8 – Blues (Swing and Traditional)

- a. The blues can take on many variations but they're all great! In this section I'll explain all the different types of blues and how they fit with improvisation.
 - i. Traditional – An old style blues that you might play is going to be the most simple. With this style of the blues you'll have three chord changes. The I7, the IV7 and the V7 chord. These are laid out in the structure below. (see below)



Soloing over this type of blues will take a more traditional approach with just the use of the minor blues scale. You want to be as gritty and dirty as possible during this style.

- ii. Swing – The more jazz type of blues is going to add a couple more chords but still follows the same form as before. We add a couple of II – V progressions into the blues now to give it more of a jazzy feel rather than just a standard blues feel. Check out the progression below.
(see below)

The image shows a 12-measure blues progression in F major, organized into three systems of four measures each. The chords are written above the staves:

- System 1: F7, B \flat 7, F7, C-7, F7
- System 2: B \flat 7, B \flat 7, F7, A-7, D7
- System 3: G-7, C7, F7, D7, G-7, C7

The main difference here is on the 9th measure, you go to the ii-7 chord of the key you are in, then you go to the V7 on the next measure. Adding these II-V's in definitely gives the blues more of a jazz type of feel. When improvising you can solo over this style pretty much however you would like. All jazz language is available!

- iii. Bird Blues- The term “Bird Blues” was coined from the blues heads that Charlie Parker composed with a certain set of changes. These changes involve even more II-V’s than the swing blues. By adding more II-V’s into the blues it gives the blues more of a bebop feel. Look at how we move from the I7 chord to the IV7 chord in the 5 measures in the Bird Blues. (See below)

The musical score for Bird Blues consists of three staves, each with four measures. The chords for each measure are as follows:

Staff	Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4
1	F ^b	E ^b -7 ^b 5	A ⁷	D-7
2	B ^b 7	B ^b -6	A-7	D ⁷
3	G ⁷	G-7	C ⁷	F ^b
4	D ⁷	G-7	C ⁷	

Now that we have more II-V’s, our improvisation style will take on more of a bebop mentality. We will use more approach notes to segue way into each II-V that we are playing over.

- iv. Minor Blues – A minor blues is exactly what the title says. We are taking our blues changes and making them minor. A few of the turn arounds and inner 2-5-1’s are also of minor. The structure stays the same so all you need to practice is how to shift your minor voicings between one another. (see below)

Three staves of musical notation showing various jazz chords. The first staff has chords: F-6, B^b-7, F-6, C-7, F⁷. The second staff has chords: B^b-7, F-6, A-7^b5, D⁷. The third staff has chords: G⁷(^b9), C7ALT, F-6, D⁷, G-7^b5, C⁷. Each staff has four measures with slanted lines representing the chords.

2. Advanced Left Hand Voicing Series Part 3 – Major 7th

- See last page for numbers. See practice exercises for notation

3. Popular Two Handed Voicing Series – Dominant Part 1

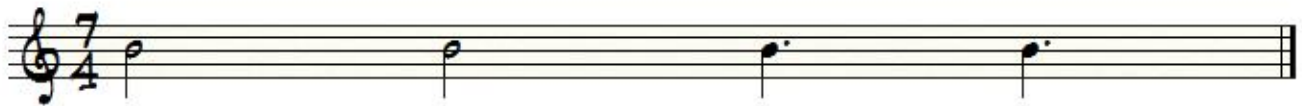
- This is a great dominant voicing that I adapted from Oscar Peterson. The LH simply has the shells starting on 7+3 then adds the b13. So for a C7 dominant chord we would have B^b, E then A^b for the b13. Our RH starts on the root above the b13 in our LH and goes up to the #9, b13 again then 1 again. The doubling of the b13 and root really adds to the voicing. For a C7 your RH notes would be C, D[#], A^b and C on top. (see below)

C⁷ #9, ^b13

Musical notation for a C⁷ #9, ^b13 voicing. The right hand (RH) has notes C₄, D[#]₄, A[#]₄, C₅. The left hand (LH) has notes B^b₃, E₄, A^b₄. The RH notes are C, D[#], A[#] and C. The LH notes are B^b, E and A^b.

4. Time Signature Series – 7/4

- a. This can be a very tricky time signature to play in because we simply are not use to feeling rhythms like this. Its an odd metered rhythm so the beat comes around to 1 again in a place our body doesn't feel it. The best way to break down the 7/4 rhythm is to feel the first 4 beats as a grouping, then the last 3 beats as a grouping. The standard rhythm that is usually played is two half notes for the first 4 beats, then two dotted quarters to cover the last 3 beats. (see below)



A lot of tunes these days are being played more and more in odd meter tempos. If you are really looking to increase your skills then make sure you are working hard at your odd meter tempos such as 7/4 and 5/4.

Vocab & Repertoire

1. *7/4 Tunes* - There are not many jazz standards actually written in this time signature. It has more recently become a popular time signature within the last ten years or so. Almost all tunes can be converted into 7/4 which can be extremely difficult if you're not comfortable with the feeling of 7. Brad Meldau popularized *Might as Well be Spring* in 7/4. This is a good tune to learn in general as well as in 7/4. We initially want

to start by feeling the pulse as two half notes connected to two dotted quarters but we eventually want to feel all 7 beats individually so we are not caged by that rhythm.

2. Improvisation

- a. *Hexatonics Series Part 7 – C-maj7 (Vlo, VIIo)* - This is a nice hexatonic scale for minor major chords. It will definitely give you a more modal sound that will still contain the haunting quality of a minor major chord.



- b. *7/4 Improv* - In the beginning, as people start to learn how to improv in 7/4 it's best to feel the initial pulse of the two half notes for 4 beats and the two dotted quarter notes to equal 3. You can mimic you're improv around this beat to help you stay focused within the meter.

After you feel comfortable with this we will want to feel all four beats up front instead of two half notes. So we will think, "1,2,3,4" then keep the two dotted quarter notes. Our goal is to be able to internalize all 7 beats individually.

Finally, we will feel all 3 beats at the end on top of the 4 so that we are just feeling all 7 beats as we solo. This final step will lead to true freedom over the 7/4 time signature.



LH Major 7th Voicings

3 Note Voicings

3,#4,7 - #4,7,3 - 7,3, #4

3,5,7 - 5,7,3 - 3,7,5

3,b6,7 - b6,7,3 - 7,3,b6

3,6,7 - 6,7,3 - 7,3,6

3,7,1 - 7,1,3, - 1,3,7

3,7,9 - 7,9,3 - 9,3,7

3,7,3 -

3,7, #11

3,7,12

4 Note Voicings

(#11 in front)

3,#4,5,7 - #4,5,7,3 - 5,7,3,#4 - 7,3,#4,5

3,#4,b6,7 - #4,b6,7,3 - b6,7,3,#4 - ,7,3,#4,b6

3,#4,6,7 - #4,6,7,3 - 6,7,3,#4 - ,7,3,#4,6

3,#4,7,1 - #4,7,1,3 - 7,1,3,#4 - 1,3,#4,7

3,#4,7,9 - #4,7,9,3 - 7,9,3,#4 - 9,3,#4,7

3,#4,7,3

5 in front

3,5,b6,7 - 5,b6,7,3 - b6,7,3,5 - 7,3,5,b6

3,5,6,7 - 5,6,7,3 - 6,7,3,5 - 7,3,5,6

3,5,7,1 - 5,7,1,3 - 7,1,3,5 - 1,3,5,7

3,5,7,9 - 5,7,9,3 - 7,9,3,5 - 9,3,5,7

3,5,7,3 –

b13 in front

3,b6,7,1 - b6,7,1,3 - 7,1,3,b6 - 1,3,b6,7

3,b6,7,9 - b6,7,9,3 - 7,9,3,b6 - 9,3,b6,7

3,b6,7,3

13 in front

3,6,7,1 - 6,7,1,3 - 7,1,3,6 - 1,3,6,7

3,6,7,9 - 6,7,9,3 - 7,9,3,6 - 9,3,6,7

3,6,7,3

3 + 7 in front

3,7,1,9 - 3,7,1,3 - 3,7,1,#11

3,7,9,3

5 Note Voicings (3, #4 In front)

3,#4,5,6,7 - #4,5,6,7,3 - 5,6,7,3,#4 - 6,7,3,#4,5 - 7,3,#4,5,6

3,#4,5,7,1 - #4,5,7,1,3 - 5,7,1,3,#4 - 7,1,3,#4,5 - 1,3,#4,5,7

3,#4,5,7,9 - #4,5,7,9,3 - 5,7,9,3,#4 - 7,9,3,#4,5 - 9,3,#4,5,7

3,#4,5,7,3

3,#4,b6,7,1 - #4,b6,7,1,3 - b6,7,1,3,#4 - 7,1,3,#4,b6 - 1,3,#4,b6,7

3,#4,6,7,1 - #4,6,7,1,3 - 6,7,1,3,#4 - 7,1,3,#4,6 - 1,3,#4,6,7

3,#4,7,1,9 - #4,7,1,9,3 - 7,1,9,3,#4 - 1,9,3,#4,7 - 9,3,#4,7,1

(3,5, in front)

3,5,b6,7,1 - 5,b6,7,1,3 - b6,7,1,3,5 - 7,1,3,5,b6 - 1,3,5,b6,7

3,5,b6,7,9 - 5,b6,7,9,3 - b6,7,9,3,5 - 7,9,3,5,b6 - 9,3,5,b6,7

3b6 in front

3,b6,7,1,9 - b6,7,1,9,3 - 7,1,9,3,b6 - 1,9,3,b6,7 - 9,3,b6,7,1

3,b6,7,1,3

3,b6,7,9,3

3,6,7,1,9 - 6,7,1,9,3 - 7,1,9,3,6 - 1,9,3,6,7 - 9,3,6,7,1

3,7,1,9,3



JAZZ PIANO SCHOOL

Learning Freedom

Lesson 44

JPS Lesson 44

Technique

1. Jazz Exercise – Gospel #1



2. Jazz Exercise – Gospel #1



3. *Hexatonics Series Part 8 – C-7b5 (bVII, Io)* – Our bVII major triad and 1 diminished triad will gives a sus sound with a half diminished sound. This is a great change in color from regular locrian scale you may use with any half diminished scale. (see below.)



4. Jazz Exercise in 6/8



Harmony & Theory

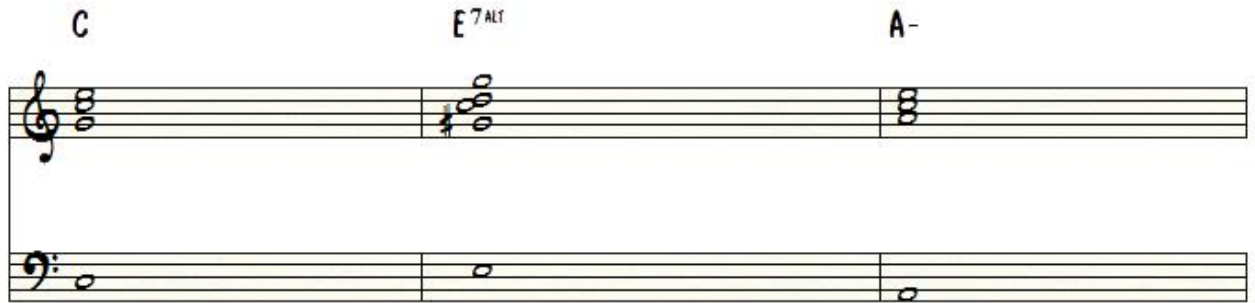
1. Styles Series Part 4/8 – Gospel/Church

- a. The gospel sound or piano comes mostly from the removal of 7th chords. To create a church gospel type of sound we are going to only use triads and move the triads over different bass notes to create progressions. These movements are what give us that gospel feel, since all the hymns were written back in the day and weren't using 7th chords. Look at this popular gospel progression starting on the ii chord moving up to the V. Notice how we are using all triads and one diminished chord to create this progression. (see below)



One tip to learning this style in and out is becoming very familiar with your voice leading of triads. All your RH will be doing is voice leading triads all over the place. Your LH can jump around as much as you want but if you're RH is just playing root position chords, it's not going to sound great.

Using alt chords is also very popular in the Gospel harmonies. These alt chords are mainly used when leading to a minor chord. For example, on the vi minor chord when moving to the ii minor. In a minor 2-5-1 going to the relative minor of the key you would use it on the V chord. So in the key of C if you had a minor 2-5-1 going to an A-, you would use your altered chord over the E7 in the progression.

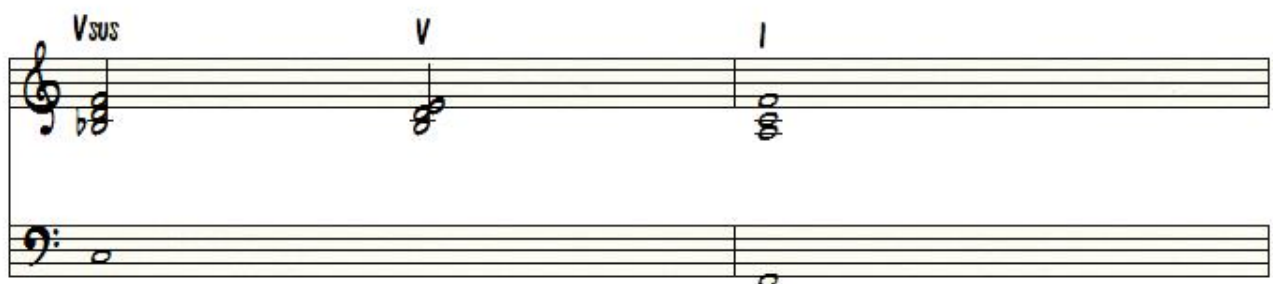


As a side note, if you're looking for more of a gospel sound the use of a sus chord on the V7 is usually the way to go. If you are trying to get more of a traditional church sound you can simply play the V chord as a triad. (see below)

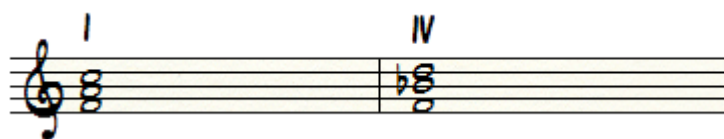


Progressions - The common gospel progressions will deal with triads and slash chords a lot, as well as some 7th chords and alt chords. Here are a lot of the common progressions you will see in gospel. (See Below)

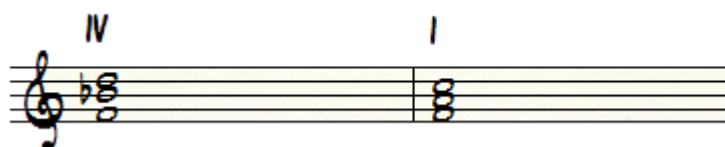
1. Sus 4 to resolution.



2. 1 to 4



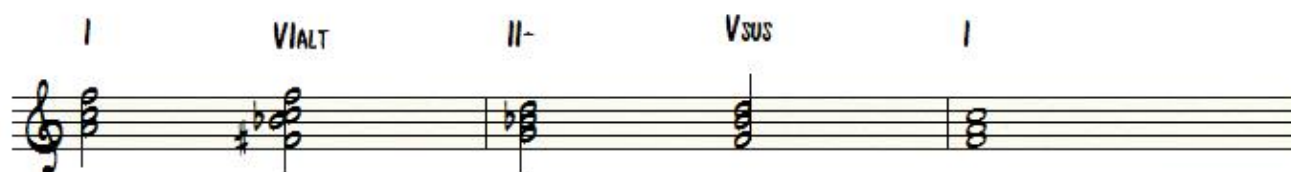
3. 4 to 1



4. 5 #5dim 6-



5. ii iii iv ivdim 5

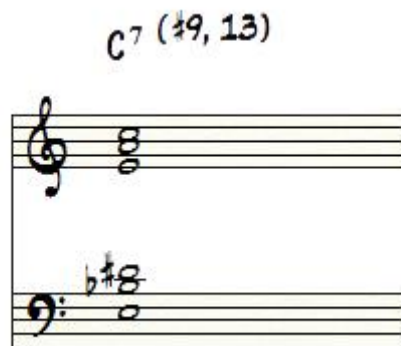


7. vi to vii to I



2. *Popular Two Handed Voicing Series – Dominant Part 2*

- a. This is a more modern type of sound but can be very nice in ballads or over high intensity tunes. Your LH starts with the 3 and 7th and adds the #9 this time on top. Your RH starts a half step above the #9 on the 3 with your thumb, then adds the natural 13th, (I love this sound), then the root on top.
- (see below)

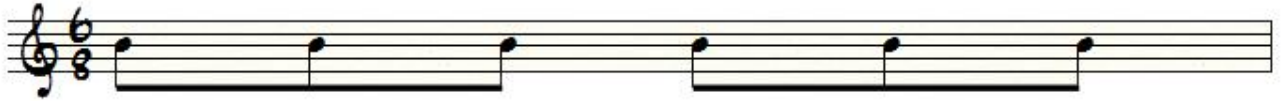


This is a great sound. I love using the natural 13 in the middle instead of the b13. It gives such a distinct color that cuts through.

3. *Time Signature Series – 6/8*

- a. This time signature is a little bit easier to grasp than 7/4, that's for sure! The 6/8 time signature can be felt a couple of different ways. We can simply split

the 6 beats into two groupings of three so we are feeling two pulses for one bar. We would tap our foot on beat 1 and beat 4 of the six beats. (see below)



We can also feel 4 dotted eighth notes over the 6 beats, which would give us more of 4/4 time feeling. (see below)



Or it's also pretty easy to feel each bar as 6 beats if you are used to the 3/4 time signature. You just elongate your 3/4 feeling into 6 beats. This is a very common time signature and you should be able to adapt to it pretty fast if you spend some time working on your 3/4 time signature first.

Vocab & Repertoire

1. Styles and Grooves Gospel/Church

a. Gospel - The gospel sound is very particular for many reasons. The type of harmonies used as well as the joyful emphasis on beats 2 & 4. Like I stated earlier, most church and gospel music is played with triads or slash chords. There aren't too many extensions used except in particular places that have become the gospel sound such as the altered 6th chord or a sus chord with a b13 for the V7 chord. You'll really want to practice your triad movement with inversions to be able to play this style well. Check out this classic gospel tune *Over My Head* to get you started.

2. *6/8 All Blues* - This is a great 6/8 tune to learn. It has become widely popular and is often called at jam sessions. When playing in 6/8 tunes, I tend to encourage students to feel the entire 6 beats just as if we were feeling a 7/4 measure. A lot of students learning to play in 6/8 who have played in 3/4 before will divide the measure into two groupings of 3. I don't recommend this as it can lead to getting lost in the form while feeling the measures go by.

When you first start you can definitely feel two measure of 3/4 if this helps initially. Eventually you will want to simply feel all six beats.

3. Improvisation

- a. *Hexatonics Series Part 8 – C-7b5 (bVII, Io)* - This is a fantastic hexatonic scale because everyone always seems to have trouble improvising over -7b5 chords. This hexatonic scale uses a natural 9, which is a great color to be used with this harmony. After a little practice with this, I know you'll love it just as I do!



- b. *6/8 Improv* - When playing in 6/8 it's very important to feel the phrasing as 6 beats instead of two groupings of 3. This is an okay way to start off your improv in the beginning but down the road this will lead to strange improv lines that may throw you off in the tune. If you are feeling one measure as two groups of 3



try to break out of this habit by playing with a metronome that makes a high pitch click on beat 1 of every measure. This will help you adjust to the feeling of the 6 beats individually.



JAZZ PIANO SCHOOL

Learning Freedom

Lesson 45

JPS Lesson 45

Technique

1. Jazz Exercise – New Orleans #1



2. Jazz Exercise – New Orleans #2



3. Hexatonics Series Part 9 – C Alt (bV,bVI) – This hexatonic gives us an altered sound incorporating the #9 and b13 into the sound.



4. Coltrane Changes Lick #1



Harmony & Theory

1. *Styles Series Part 5/8 – New Orleans Beat* – The New Orleans beat is always fun to play to. This style emerged from the streets of New Orleans in the late 1800's as the civil war came to a close. Brass bands had been playing and competing during the war for quite some time. After the war was over, the military bands had no use for their instruments anymore so they gave them to the pawn shops, which left New Orleans filled with second hand brass instruments from the brass groups that were playing. These brass groups would play through the streets and develop a second line of people that would dance, sing and clap along with the band as they played. The brass bands were playing with a standard march beat until a great trumpeter appeared by the name of Buddy Bolden. It was said that Bolden was the first to pull the march beat away and add some syncopation to it, which transformed into the syncopated New Orleans Street beat we know today, aka "the big four".
2. Playing along with the New Orleans street beat doesn't take much besides listening to the other members to the group. The specific rhythms of the groove are going to be syncopations with beat four heavily emphasized. You can comp and groove however you want rhythmically as long as it's in the pocket with the beat the drummer is playing. Remember, with this groove it's about creating fun dance music with syncopated rhythms. The rhythms you play are going to be much more important than your voicings.

3. Popular Two Handed Voicing Series – Major Part 1

- a. Two handed major voicings are always fun because you can derive beautiful, thick colors to resolve to when coming out of a 2-5. This is a nice spread voicing with a cluster in the middle which creates two different sounds in one. With the spread you are getting more openness to the sound, and with the cluster you get a little bit of rub in the middle. Your LH has 1, 5 and 9 on the top. Your RH has 3, #11 and 7. I absolutely love this sound!



4. Coltrane Changes – Part 1 – Intro

- a. *What are Trane changes*
- i. Coltrane changes have become a progression that you're expected to know when playing different tunes. You might hear the bass player begin to reharmonize a 2-5-1 with Coltrane changes. You also might hear a soloist begin to play some lines over Trane change and want to follow him while you're comping. No matter what situation, you should definitely spend some time with this progression because it is tricky and will come up often.

- ii. The progression is originally seen in his phrasing from *Giant Steps*.
The progression in *Giant Steps* seen below. (see below)



As you can see from the pattern, we go major, dominant, major, dominant, and continue to switch off to the final resolution. The intervals of the changes are important as well. From the major we always go up a minor third to the dominant chord and then that dominant resolves naturally down a fifth to its own I maj7 chord. The progression continues in the same pattern from here.

b. *How to begin playing over them*

- i. Playing over Coltrane changes can be very tricky. You have to think on your toes. You are changing keys every bar practically. The easiest way to start practicing this is to group into the 5-1 relationships you see in the changes. The first chord is not connected to anything except its own major so you should group that with the first 5-1 relationship. For example, in the *Giant Steps* changes I would practice, Bmaj7 to D7, to Gmaj7. That's it! Just practice moving your lines throughout those three harmonies. When you have gotten used to that then you move on to the next chunk, which would be connecting Gmaj7 to the Bb7 chord. Even though this isn't a 5-1 relationship we still need to work on this connection because it is going to be the least familiar. After this we move on to the next chunk which is the Bb7 to the Ebmaj7. Sounds simple enough so far, right? Now we connect all the chunks together

and put together a phrase to play over the entire thing. This is why it is so important to truly be comfortable with each chunk. If one part of the puzzle is missing, it's not going to come together. So we have finished the first phrase of *Giant Steps*. We have a couple more to go so you would continue to practice the same way over the other phrases in this tune. In the next section we will look at how the Coltrane changes fit over a 2-5-1 progression.

Vocab & Repertoire

1. Styles and Grooves New Orleans Street Beat

- i. Style* - The street beat is an old New Orleans style of music.
- ii. Progressions* - When playing a street beat, you're going to want to resort to slightly less "jazzy voicings". What mean by this is less extensions and thinner voicings. You want to focus on the rhythmic placement of your comps rather than the voicings. The street beat is a very soulful groove so you want to embrace some of the soulful gospel voicings and movements we talked about earlier. The register one octave below middle C is going to be perfect for some of these rhythmic soulful comps. You're really going to be able to feel the support and groove from your voicings when they are played in this lower end. It's going to help fill up the sound. You obviously can still play voicings in a higher register but this will cut through a little more and will actually loose some of those low soulful harmonies. For some reason the low end really resonates the body and music. Just as if Barry White were to sing something with his low soulful voice. This is going to sound completely different than a higher girls voice

such as Mariah Carey. (I know a funny example for a girl but she's the first person to come to mind and it worked.)

iii. *Harmonies within hands* - Harmonized lines will sound very good combined with some of the gospel voicings we went over previously. Remember though, you want to focus these voicings more with creative rhythms. The way you comp with the drummer's beat is going to be the most important.

2. *Improvisation*

a. *Hexatonics Series Part 9 – C alt (bV,bVI)* - This is going to be exactly like soloing with the two upper structures you learned previously. We've turned it into a scale now so you can run up and down instead of just thinking in terms of two triads.



b. *New Orleans* - Much like funk and Latin, the New Orleans street beat is all about the groove and feeling. You don't want to get too fancy with your playing. Focus on creating rhythmic motifs that build through the use of the blues scale

or major 6th blues scale. Let the drums and bass drive the groove while you build your solo.

3. *Advanced Playing Concepts Series Part 1*

a. *Working on your sound* - In order to continuously improve you must be constantly working on the sound you wish to achieve. When I was younger, I was in love with Oscar Peterson. I loved his touch, his articulation of his lines, the feeling it gave me and much more. I wanted to sound just like him! I'm sure you have players you love and want to sound like as well, and there is nothing wrong with that. When you study certain players you adapt their textures and it becomes a part of yourself and your playing. But you need to set out with a focus. If you like the way Art Tatum sounds for example you have to study his playing and ask yourself, "Why does Art Tatum sound like Art Tatum?" This will help you achieve the sound you are looking for as you play.

Everyone has their own sound when they play. The more confident you are about what type of sound you want to achieve while playing, the better you'll be at picking players to study and help you reach your goal.



JAZZ PIANO SCHOOL

Learning Freedom

Lesson 46

JPS Lesson 46

Technique

1. *Jazz Exercise – R + B #1*



2. *Hexatonics Series Part 10 – C7 b9#11, (I,#IV)* – This is a great hexatonic sound to use as well. The combination of a simple I major triad with a #IV triad creates a fantastic outer space like sound that is very intriguing to the ears. (see below)



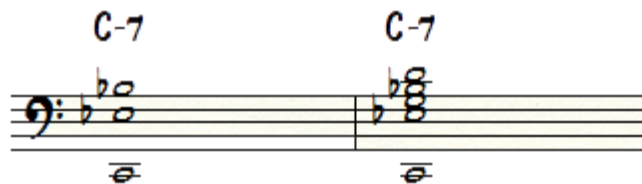
3. *Coltrane Changes Lick #2(2-5-1)*



Harmony & Theory

1. Styles Series Part 6/8 – R & B

- a. Playing R&B is once again, more about the groove than anything. Playing simply is better in this style. The pianist's role is to lay down the harmonies while the bass and drums come to the foreground. There are a couple of nice textures that you can use to do this. You can generally think about comping in this type of a setting as playing whole note chords that sustain, while maybe adding one or two rhythmic comps to add variety. Practically all of the rhythmic groove will come from the bass and drums. Let's talk about some of the texture you can use for coming in this style.
 - i. Low End Texture – This low end texture is great for simply providing support and allowing everyone else to do their thing. When you're using this texture they enjoy the space, freedom and support you're giving them to do their thing. Your LH is simply going to play bass notes, any sort of roots or fifths. While your right hand plays either rootless voicings or even as simple as the 3+7. Look at the following example (see below)



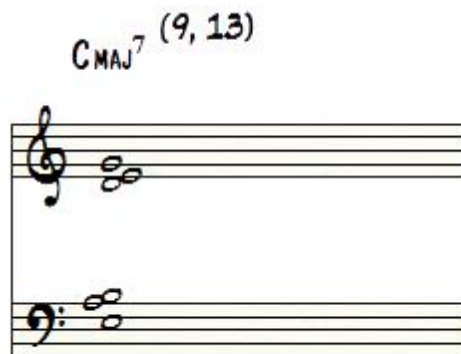
- ii. The middle register texture can be very nice as well. This will allow your comping to stick out a little more than the low end texture. Be careful in this register though because you will have more of an impact

on the feel of the piece due to the harmonies cutting through more. In this register, you'll use your normal coming patterns with either 3+7 in your left and any variations in your RH, such as upper structure triads, rootless, or coming extensions however you please. Your rhythmic patterns should still be subtle in this register. Mostly whole and half notes.

- iii. Your upper register is going to be for more interactive and rhythmic comping. You're not necessarily using chords up in this register, but mainly two handed solo lines to compliment the singer, or soloist, and light rhythmic figures. You're going for more ornamental type of stylings when you want to play up in this register. Anything else besides simple lines will be way too much due to the high register.

2. *Popular Two Handed Voicing Series – Major Part 2*

- a. I really enjoy playing this rootless texture because it creates two whole step rubs in the chord. These rubs create a really distinct sound that is unique to the listener and can really spice up the flavor of a tune. This is also a closed type of voicing, in which we add an extension in between the 3+7 in our LH which is different as well, but still creates a great sound. In your LH you will have 3, 13, 7 while your RH has 9, 3, 5. (see below)



3. Coltrane Changes – Part 2 – Trane Changes Over 2-5-1

- a. *Applying Trane Changes over 2-5-1* - Applying Coltrane changes over a 2-5-1 is systematically simple, but doing it on the spot while improvising takes a little bit of work. *Countdown* is another famous tune written by Coltrane in which he uses his chord pattern I spoke about in the last chapter and applies it over a 2-5-1. The first 2-5-1 in the tune *Countdown* is in the key of D and is four bars long because the major7 chord is two bars at the end. The changes that Coltrane uses over this 2-5-1 are as follows. (see below)



We start on the ii-7 and move up to get to the first V7 that will start the sequence we previously learned. The V7 then resolves down to its major7 which proceeds to go up a minor 3rd to the next V7 chord and so the pattern continues until we resolve to the Dmaj7 in the 4th measure. This pattern can be used to reharmonize 2-5-1's you may see in tunes that have 4 bars. You can also use different chunks of these changes to play over a 2-5-1 if it is less than two bars as well. Listen closely to soloists as they may reharmonize 2-5-1's with these changes and now you'll be able to follow them!

Vocab & Repertoire

1. *Styles and Grooves— R & B*

R & B, similar to bossa and funk, is mainly about the atmosphere and groove. The bass and drums play the main drivers to create the groove. The keyboard player has a nice easy job of providing a harmonic palate for everything else. Unless playing a specific rhythm that is notated we want to try our best not to interfere with the groove of the drums and bass. To do this whole note and half note comping is best with the occasional up beat thrown in.

2. *Improvisation*

- a. *Hexatonics Series Part 10 – C7 b9#11, (I,#IV)* - The #11, b9 combination in this hexatonic scale is very distinct. The more you use it the more you will grow to recognize and love these tensions together. Another tool in the box for dominant chords.



- b. *R & B* - Improvising over R & B should always focus on the pocket. If you start getting fancy you will destroy the groove. Now, I'm not saying you can't play some killin' stuff but always keep in the mind the group sound. That will be

most important. If your stuff doesn't sound like it fits then it probably doesn't.
Keep it simple.

3. *Coltrane Changes Part 2 – Tune Up*

Tune up is a very simple tune that can very easily be reharmed with Trane changes due to the 2-5-1's.

E-7 F7 B^bMAJ⁷ D^b7 G^bMAJ⁷ A⁷ D^bMAJ⁷

D-7 E^b7 A^bMAJ⁷ B⁷ E^bMAJ⁷ G⁷ C^bMAJ⁷

4. *Advanced Playing Concepts Series Part 2*

- a. *Always be creative and let yourself go-* This may sound like a given but you have to always be creative in order to progress your playing. You have to always be pushing the boundaries. By doing this you will force yourself to open up and truly find what you want to express. If you settle with what you know you can play you will always stay at the same level. Always strive to be creative no matter what you are playing.
- b. *Never play the same thing twice if you can help it -* This is a great way to stay creative. It is very difficult to achieve but if you can adopt this thought process

you will constantly get better. You will obviously play things twice, but you want to always strive to express yourself naturally. That's the point of this exercise. You want to have complete freedom over the piano. Try not to simply insert licks or lines you've learned for the heck of it. You want to always play what's inside of you.

- c. *Have intention for every note you play* - The more intention you can bring to your playing the better it will sound without changing any notes. Intention and confidence can make a single note sound like the greatest thing anyone's heard. This is one of the big reasons people ask me, "Brenden, I'm playing the same thing but it doesn't sound as good." Well that's because you don't have a relationship with the music you are playing. You need to have your own connection with certain notes, harmonies and lines. When you start to develop that relationship the intention behind notes and movements will and come and your playing will have a greater depth to it.
- d. *Always make music* - Never, ever sacrifice the music. You always want to ensure the creation and beauty of the music comes first. Meaning just because something is difficult and sounds cool doesn't mean it will be the best music. You need to play within your means and always strive to create the most beautiful music you can at whatever level you are at. This is how music touches ourselves and others.



JAZZ PIANO SCHOOL

Learning Freedom

Lesson 47

JPS Lesson 47

Technique

1. Jazz Exercise – Straight Feel



2. Jazz Exercise – Straight Feel



3. Hexatonics Series Part 11 – C7 b9, #9, #11, nat13 (I-, #IV-) - This is similar to the last concept but the added #9 when we use a C- triad instead of the major definitely changes the texture and color of the sound. (see below)



4. Coltrane Changes Lick #3 Reharm



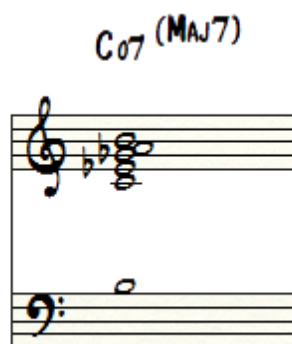
Harmony & Theory

1. Styles Series Part 7/8 – Straight Feel

- a. A straight eight note is becoming extremely popular these days. It seems that all the most popular jazz artists these days, besides the older artists, are playing mostly with a straight feel in all of their tunes. Popular artists such as Gerald Clayton, Robert Glasper, and Taylor Eigsti are all using this feel on the majority of tracks on all of their albums. You would think a straight feel would be easier than swingin', but that's not always the case. When playing in this style, you must be more aware of all of the 16th notes in each beat. It is common for the 16th notes to be more emphasized than the eighth notes are. When comping you are using all of the same approaches and textures we have talked about, but again you need to be very conscious of where you are placing each comp within the beat. It shouldn't take long to get a hold of this style but again it can be tough when you've been working on swing for so long then switching to a straight feel.

2. Popular Two Handed Voicing Series – Diminished Part 1

- a. Diminished chords are one of those changes that you hear patterns over all the time. The whole half scale which commonly is played over the diminished chord lends itself to many possibilities. This voicing simply takes a note from the whole half scale and adds it into a diminished chord. The voicing is a very closed voicing as a block chord. I'm going to start with our RH for building sake. Our RH starts with a regular diminished chord, 1, b3, b5, 6 but on top we are going to add a major 7. So we have 1, b3, b5, 6, maj7. We then simply double the major 7 and octave down with our LH. (See below)



Vocab & Repertoire

1. *Styles and Grooves– Straight Feel*

- a. *Straight Feel* - The straight eighth feel has become very popular from the growth of such artists as Robert Glasper, Gerald Clayton and the integration of R&B, gospel, and hip hop into jazz. All tunes can be transformed into this type of style. One of your main focus points when playing in the straight feel should be on the subdivision of quarter notes into sixteenth notes. This is a common rhythmic subdivision that is usually occurring with the straight feel. Drummers love to play around with different parts of the 4 sixteenth note beats. You'll want to match this feeling with your comping and improvisation.

2. *Improvisation*

- a. *Hexatonics Series Part 11 – C7 b9, #9, #11, nat13 (I-, #IV-)* - This hexatonic scale is very similar to the last one but pay attention to the added #9 in the first

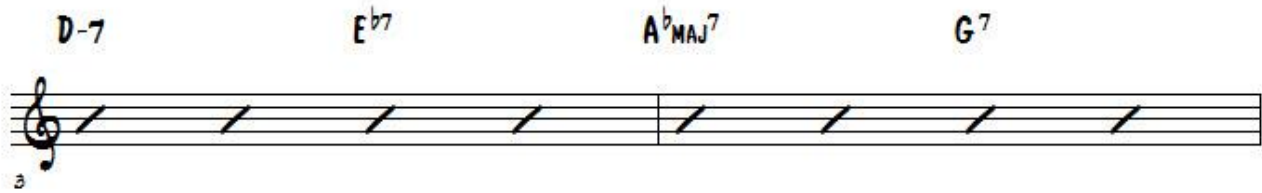
minor triad. This note is going to drastically change the texture and feeling of the scale.



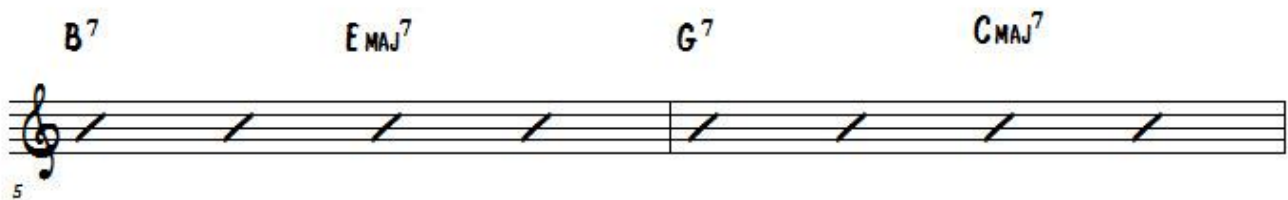
- b. *Straight Feel* - The straight feel can sometimes take a while to get used to because of the 16th note subdivision feel. There are a lot more beats to feel and based off the skill of your drummer you can easily lose beat one if you're not careful. When improvising with a straight feel it's perfectly fine to improvise with larger subdivisions such as eighth notes and quarter notes but because there is no swing feel for some reason these rhythms can sound slightly boring. There is a method that I call "staggering" in which you either speed up or slow down your eighth notes so that it gives the line a little texture. At the end of the line you simply fall back into the beat. Don't get me wrong regular and eighth notes can sound great as a simple texture but giving contrast to this is also good.

3. *Coltrane Changes Part 3 – Reharm in all pieces*

- a. When applying the Trane reharm to any tune we want to look for 2-5's we can use. Not all tunes will have a full 2-5-1 for us to reharm but we can use the beginning or the end of the Trane reharm. Here's an example of using the beginning part of the Trane reharm to start the 2-5-1 off.



Here's an example of using the end of the Trane reharmon to resolve the 2-5-1.



4. *Advanced Playing Concepts Series Part 3*

- a. *Maintaining Focus* - Focus in our way of talking is counterintuitive. We actually do not want to focus on anything. We don't even want to try to focus on anything. This comes from a very zen like mentality about simply being. If we try to focus on doing nothing, we are still trying, and in essence using our minds to force the music. We simply want to watch what we are doing as an observer. We want to stay in the moment. Ultimately that's all we have, is one moment in time that is forever changing. The future does not exist. It is a false reality that people live in. The past has already gone by so it no longer exists. The only truth we have is our presence in the current moment. This is the only state that exists. So when I say focus, I simply mean letting yourself go and just be with whatever

it is you are playing at the moment. Do not let your mind interfere. Just accept everything you are releasing through the music as your own personal truth. When this happens you will see that your playing will be on a completely different level.

- b. *Patience* - This is a big one. Even though you may have gone through and read everything I've taught it doesn't mean you will be able to apply every thing to your playing immediately. Jazz is a life long journey. You must learn to accept this fact. If you are able to do this, then everything that comes with that journey are simply steps a long the way. Nothing will seem like a chore anymore and you will be able to obtain an unlimited amount of patience. Be patient with your progress and learning. Be patient with your playing and your experiences. Patience will ultimately solve all of your feelings of disappointment and frustration. If you are patient, your playing and everything else will improve at an exponential rate. Without patience, your journey will resemble an immortal life locked in a cell, never to be set free.
- c. *Discipline* - Even though I have taught about freeing our mind, this doesn't necessarily mean we do not have to be discipline and practice. We still must work hard in our practice of the jazz language. Our goal is to reach a point of internalization with everything we are working on to a point where we do not have to conceptualize it. We can simply allow our body to express it however we want. If you do not possess the discipline and work ethic to continuously practice your weak areas or subjects I have discussed but you have found difficult, you will always hit a ceiling of growth. Some of the greatest musicians are working harder than they ever had at the age of 70 or above. This shows their dedication to the process and the discipline it takes to excel.

- d. *Growth* - Growth will always come with work. As long as you are taking steps, growth will and progress will come naturally. This might be the easiest concept to comprehend. If you are not taking action or making steps in any sort of direction you will not grow. Your playing will stay stagnant. It is also very easy to get caught up in a place where we believe we are growing but we are actually just playing what we know. In order to make growth we must take all the previous components and combine them. We must focus, maintain patience and discipline and in turn this will produce growth and success. If you are following the previous steps, then growth will naturally be the outcome.



JAZZ PIANO SCHOOL

Learning Freedom

Lesson 48

JPS Lesson 48

Technique

1. Jazz Exercise – Pop/Rock #1



2. Jazz Exercise – Pop/Rock #2



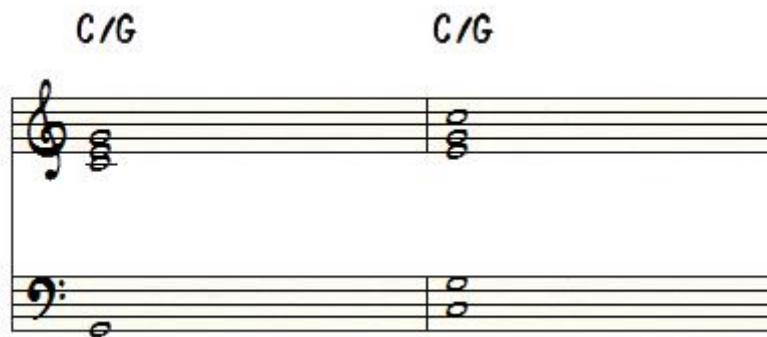
3. Hexatonics Series Part 12 – C7 nat9, #11 (bVII+, I)



Harmony & Theory

1. Styles Series Part 8/8 – Pop/Rock

- a. I saved the easiest style for last. The pop/rock style predominantly only involves triads when being played. There is nothing complicated about this style and you should already be pretty familiar with it by this point. A couple things to pay attention to are the use of slash chords. When you see slash chords you have the option to double the note the bass player has in your LH or you can simply play the full chord in both hands that you have above the slash chord. (see below)



Besides adding small simply rhythmic figures in with your triads, there isn't much more too it!

2. *Popular Two Handed Voicing Series – Diminished Part 2*

- a. This diminished chord is very easy to build and very popular. For this one, we take our regular diminished chord and play it in our LH. For example a Co7 chord. With our RH we simply play another diminished chord a whole step above the 7th of our diminished chord is playing in our LH. This creates a very thick and dissonant sound that can really be effective in certain situations. (see below)



Vocab & Repertoire

1. Styles and Grooves— Pop/Rock

The Pop/Rock groove will be the easiest for the keyboard players. In this style, we really only have to worry about doing some voice leading for the triads will be using. The rest of the band and guitar have more of the main parts. Depending upon the tune we want to lay down a harmonic pad for the band to play over top of. Now obviously if you are playing a Billy Joel or Elton John tune you are going to have the majority of the tune.

When playing rock tunes solo it becomes a little more difficult because you don't have drums to give you that rock groove. Even though it technically can be done I do not recommend it. You'll see this come up a lot during weddings when you get requests for certain songs. Personally, I try to stay away from playing certain rock or pop songs cause most of the time they need a singer. Just playing the melody on the piano doesn't sound all that great. If you are with a band just lay down the chords with some rhythms and you'll be solid.

2. Improvisation

- a. C7 nat9, #11 (bVII+, I) -* This hexatonic scale is slightly rounder on the edges compared to the last two. We have a natural 9 being emphasized as well as the #11. This is a nice one for a little bit of tension that doesn't make people turn their heads.



b. *Pop Rock* - When improvising over this style I'm mainly sticking to pentatonics and blues scale. No bebop approaches here. You can't go wrong with the pentatonic and blues scale combination. You're going for simplicity with energy involved. Don't forget its Rock, not jazz! Keep it simple here and you can't go wrong.

3. *Coltrane Changes – Part 4 – Soloing approaches*

a. Someone could write a 500 page book just talking about improvisation approaches to *Giant Steps* or Coltrane changes. I'm going to give you two methods to start out with.

Here's the first one - Pentatonics - This is definitely the traditional approach to soloing over Trane changes. With this approach we are connecting our pentatonic patterns over each 2-5 in the pattern. Look at the example below.



The second approach is more of the bebop approach where we are playing quick bebop approaches around all the 2-5's. Look at the example below.



As you dig into Trane and his harmonic concepts you will discover a whole world of improvisation techniques. The rabbit hole is deep my friend.

4. *Advanced Playing Concepts Series Part 4*

- a. *Listening While Playing* - I want to leave you with a couple of theoretic principles you can start to improve on. I'm sure you've read enough about outer body experiences at this point. The number one thing I find blocking highly skilled players from reaching a new level is always listening. They are only hearing a certain amount of sound from the group. This may be from the drummer or bass player, or bass and drums, or just the sax, or the just the drummer's ride cymbal, or just the bass players walking lines or worse, just themselves. People get so caught up with how good they are trying to sound that they forget there are other people in the band to listen to! The sooner you can realize that you're playing will increase by listening more to others, the better off you will be. I'm going to list out all of the components I see people fail to listen to or are lacking in their listening. A lot of musicians may be listening very hard to 90% but are not hearing one little detail that may be holding their playing back drastically.

i. Listening to the Bass

1. *Walking Lines* - Just listening to the time and feel of the bass player is a topic I had to state up top because even a lot of pianist are not doing this easy task. You must keep your ears open to the general time feel and lines the bass player is creating. If you can't sing back the line the bass player just played then you are not listening hard enough. Or someone is playing too loud. Ha! Will assume however there is perfect balance.
2. *Harmonies he's playing* - While listening to the general sound of the bass player, you must be open to the harmonies he is using. If he chooses to use a tritone substitution or pedal in one area of a tune, then you must be ready to adapt to this and go with him. There should be a push and pull relationship in which both of you can suggest different harmonic movements. If you are not listening to the specific notes they are choosing then you have a big problem.
3. *Playing Roots and fifths* - Listen to whether they are playing lots of roots and fifths or moving outside the key a lot. If they are sticking to the standard roots and fifths with a couple of diatonic filler notes then you will be able to take more liberties with your harmonizations. If they tend to stray from the traditional roots and fifths then you will be required to be more attentive to the lines they are walking so you two are not clashing.

4. *Walking strange lines* - If you are playing with a bass player that is not walking correct harmonies, generally, the best course of action is to simplify your playing. Give them room to express what they want. At the same time, see if you can latch on to the lines they are playing. Do they always play specific out of key notes or is it random? Listen to patterns that may emerge so you can gain some insight into their approach.
5. *Solid or moving* - Like any musicians, bass players will have been influenced by previous bass players. These bass players might have come from an era where they simply laid the time down or they might have come from an era where they were moving around and creating alternate melodies. The better you can distinguish what the style is of the bass player is the better you will be able to fit your style with them. Remember jazz is about adaption and unity. When you find any musician you are playing with that has a different style than you are used to, always try and meet at a middle ground. Getting frustrated because they are not playing a certain way isn't going to solve anything. Try the other way and create beautiful music with them, no matter what they are playing or what their skill level may be.
6. *Following you or not listening* - If you are lucky enough you will be playing with a bass player that will always follow your lead, granted you are the leader. If this is the case then you can take full rein and drive the band however you'd like. If you have suggested a couple of harmonic movements and the bass player has seemed completely oblivious to what you are doing, then it's best to try and follow him

through certain progressions. Try to suggest and state simple ideas so they might have a chance of actually catching on to what you are playing.

7. *The strength of their pull* - Some bass players will dig in a pull like they mean it. Some will stand relaxed and pull effortlessly. Each style is going to invoke a certain atmosphere you need to be aware of. Neither is bad or good but mostly depends on your preference for the sound you like the most. If you are not on the look out for how the bassist pulls, you will be left wandering without direction.
8. *Their Listening skills* - Finally you need to be aware of how much they are listening too. If the bass player is catching rhythmic phrases with the drummer and yourself, while being aware of dynamical movements you are suggesting then they are obviously listening very hard. Unfortunately, it's rare to find musicians who are that sensitive to other people's playing. This is what you must strive to be. The better you can determine how much they are listening, the better you will be adapt yourself to make up for the lack of listening you might be experiencing.

ii. *Listening to the drums* - Certain factors will arise more depending upon the instrument. There will be a couple of similarities from the bass section but there will be also some factors that have more weight due to sound the particular instrument can create and its purpose within jazz.

1. *Swing Feel, of ride Cymbal* - Listening to the pattern that the drummer is playing on their ride cymbal is a must. You can gain a lot of insight into the feeling, style, amount of energy and groove

the drummer is providing, all by listening to their ride pattern.

Listen to whether it is loud or soft, is it driving or laid back, is it thin and dry, or full and wide. Once you have an idea of the way the drummer prefers to play their swing pattern you can again adjust and come together with them.

2. *How he feels eighth notes and quarter notes* - Time is a funny thing because everyone can feel the eighth note swing differently. Some one might feel it pushing more, other might feel it pulling. You want to determine how the drummer is feeling the swing of the eighth note. It could be right in the middle of the pocket. Once you have determined where it is in comparison to the beat you can know how you will need to phrase your lines. If both of you are playing on the top of the beat then you will know the pocket will have little room for error. There will not be a wide margin. On the other hand, if you are playing more behind the beat while the drummer is pushing, you will be creating a bigger pocket. If the bass player is listening he would do well to sit his lines directly in the middle of both of you. And yes this is actually how much everyone in the group must be listening and aware of each other.
3. *Volume* - Because the drums have the power to take over a band you need to be aware of the drummers volume at all times. If you are the one leading the band and the drummer is being too loud you can play quieter to suggest you want a different volume level. The quickest way to gauge a drummers listening awareness is by playing quieter than they are. The time it takes for them to follow you is directly proportionate to how well they are listening. I love using

this trick. I'll say one thing, I've never had a problem with a drummer playing too quietly. That being said most of the time I would want to try and direct the drummer to starting out quietly then growing as we build the tune.

4. *Busy or relaxed* - Similar to the bass player, we want to see if the drummer is staying with a traditional pattern and snare or if they are adding movements, fills and phrases to the tune. The busier the drummer the less room you will have to talk on your instrument. With busy drummers I will always wait until they leave space and then say something. Almost always they start to play less or we begin to have nice conversations back and forth. Any drummer who continues to speak over me I usually verbally talk with after the rehearsal gig or performance, unless they are the leader of course. If you are the leader, you can't be afraid to tell people how you would like the band to sound.
5. *The snare* - A lot of the times drummers will try and match up their snare to your comping patterns. This is very common practice between pianists and drummers. Listen to whether the drummer is attempting to match their snare hits to your comping patterns. If they are, then you know you have a drummer who is listening hard. If not, then you can strongly suggest some comping patterns that they may catch on to. Once they realize you are suggesting rhythmic phrases you can pull back on how obvious you are being about the patterns. The snare and comps work best when they are light and rhythmic behind soloists or the melody you may be playing.

6. *Style and Groove* - This applies in different ways to the drummer and bass player, but the drummers should also be aware of any groove suggestions you make while playing. If you begin to suggest a 12/8 feeling the drummer should be following you. This also works the other way around. If the drummer is suggesting a backbeat or some different groove besides swing, within a moment's notice you should be able to follow them and suggest the groove in your playing.

iii. *Listening to yourself* - This shouldn't be your main focus but you must be conscious of a couple of things in order to ensure you are blending with the band properly.

1. *Volume* - Always, always be aware of how loud you are playing. You should match the level of the other members of the group in order to create balance. If the group is playing much louder than you, don't add fuel to the fire. Playing as loud as you can will only make the band sound worse. See if you can spread out your playing a little and set your level at medium. Hopefully the band will settle back down at a decent dynamic level for you all to play at.
2. *The register you are playing in* - The register you are playing in will have a large effect on the sound of the band. The lower register will create a totally different atmosphere than the high register. So which one do you choose? Usually you want to contrast the other components of the band for balance. If the bass player and soloist are playing up high then you should add some low end for support

and vice versa. Always aim for balance when thinking about the register you are playing in.

3. *Long vs Short* - Be aware of the duration of your playing. Are you primarily holding your chords or notes down and playing them a little long? Are you playing everything short and rhythmic? Both are good and should be used. Again your goal is to create a good balance amongst the group. Support what other members of the band are doing by giving contrast.
4. *Thick vs Thin* - This is similar to the long vs short concept. Be aware of the density of sound the group is creating. If things are feeling sparse then go ahead and add a little thickness into the mix to help balance it out. This can be done with fuller voicings or playing more notes. On the other hand, if everyone is playing a lot, then back off a little and add some thinner 2 or 3 note voicings and play a little less.
5. *Your engagement with other group members* - I'll hear a lot of pianist only interact with the drummer or maybe the bass player. Be aware of who you are playing off of. If you have only interacted with the drummer, try suggesting some ideas to the bass player, or the soloist. Make sure you are mixing it up and including everyone in the band.
6. *Groove and style* - Hopefully you have heard a number of different piano styles. They range from Art Tatum to Erroll Garner, to Red Garland, to Herbie Hancock. Be aware of your style and how it is effecting the other members of the group. If you are playing with a

trumpet player who sounds like Clifford Brown, you may want to pull back on your McCoy a little and suggest more of an older bebop style to support him. This can get a little tricky because you want to be able to comp and play how you want to, but at the same time, jazz is about playing with other people and supporting each other. This means adapting to others and being flexible.

iv. *Listening to horns* - Listening to horns is probably the easiest task you will have because their sound normally stands out front. It doesn't take much active listening to hear what they are going for or doing. Still, here is a list of points you should keep your ears open for.

1. *Tone* - You should try and match the tone the sax or trumpet player is going for. Some sax players might prefer a smooth, silky and fluid tone. In this case, you should try and comp a little more elegantly to match the sound they are creating. Others might go for a more gritty and dirty sound in which case, you can do the same with your comping and support. Maybe add some more clusters, and less drop 2's.
2. *Rhythmic Phrasing to their lines* - Since the sax and horn will only be able to play one note at a time, all of their emphasis is going to be on their individual note lines. Pay close attention to how they are phrasing their lines. Are they leaving a lot of space for you to speak like Miles would do? Or are they constantly blowing bebop lines like Sonny Stitt or Parker? Depending upon whether they are creating longer or shorter phrases should effect your comping and support behind them. The longer they are talking, the less you should be and vice versa. If they are phrasing more rhythmically it

would be wise to lay down longer comps for harmonic support. If their phrases are running a little longer then can you opt for more short rhythmic comps behind them.

3. *Interaction with the band* - Some horn players love hearing just straight ahead time behind them with no interaction. Others will want you to suggest ideas for them to play off of. You have to determine whether the horn player is attempting to engage in conversation with the rhythm section. You can usually tell if he starts to feed off some of the rhythmic patterns or grooves the rhythm section is creating. If you suggest some sus chords and hear the soloist start to play off of the sus then you can tell he is open for engagement. Most of the time a better player will want to have this type of engagement. It is still good for you to know you will come across the player who will just want solid support behind them with out any interference.

v. *Listening to the band in groups* – Finally, we come to groupings in the band and listening to the entire band as a whole. This is the fun part!

1. *Bass and drums* - Besides all the previous individual things you should be listening for it is good to also group instruments together for a combined listening experience. The bass and drums will truly be the engine that drives the group forward. Their synchronization will be heavily dependent upon their skill levels and styles but you still want to be able to pick out certain problems with your ears to adapt to different situations.

- a. *Time* - The most important sound you want to be aware of is the time that the bass player's lines and the drummer's ride cymbal are creating. Are they locking up together or not? Is one person pushing the beat while the other is pulling? Depending upon how they are forming the pocket you will want to help balance on the other side just like a teeter-totter. If they are going too far in one direction try and help to pull it back to the other side with your comping or soloing.
 - b. *Interaction* - Bass players and drummers love feeding off each other rhythmically and stylistically. One may suggest something and before you know it you have a completely different feel being played behind you. It's important to keep your ears out for how much they are interacting together if at all. Some bass drum duos will stay very still, others will be feeding off each other like siblings expressing playful banter. Once you determine the level of interaction you have a much easier time knowing your place for comping and soloing. Again, balance is the key.
 - c. *Volume and interaction with you* - The last component is whether they are both reacting to you spontaneously. Hopefully they are! It is at these moments that true music is created while everyone is listening very attentively.
2. *Bass and Horns*- When listening to the bass and sax combo we are looking for harmonic feedback. If the bassist and sax player are feeding off each other harmonically, magical things can happen when you step in with some chords. Let's say in a blues, the sax

player chooses to make the iv chord minor with a lick, then play the lick up a minor third. If the bass player is good he will mimic is walking pattern to reflect the upward movement of the minor third. At this point, you can reinforce everything by laying down your harmonies up a minor third as well which will be a concrete foundation. The tune can begin to morph harmonically wherever the sax may want to go because everyone is listening. Should the sax and bass player not be listening to one another, this harmonic modulation could never occur.

vi. *Full band* - When listening to the band as a whole, you are trying to distinguish more general facts that will help you guide your playing.

1. *Energy* - What is the energy like of the entire band? Does it sound dead? Alive? Together? You are listening for an over barometer of the togetherness of the band. Once you have determined this, look to either add or take away depending upon where the energy is at.
2. *Ebb and flow* - What is the general pattern of the group? Are the bass player and drummer generally interacting? Are the sax and bass the ones listening to each other? Whatever it may be see if you can conclude the ebb and flow of the band. Is the group repeating a certain section the same way or is everyone more focused on dynamics? Again, whatever the case may be, see if you can introduce something new or add to whatever is going on.
3. *The groove* - I probably should have listed this one first. Above all else, is the group swinging or grooving? If you feel at ease and are having fun then most likely everyone is playing in harmony

together. Most of the time, when you feel the need to force your playing to swing a certain way then someone may not be upholding their end. Hopefully its not you though. You may need to adapt your eighth note feel if it is continuously not matching up with the group.

4. *The atmosphere* - What sound is the group creating together? Soft and contemplative? Hard, dirty and grooving? Or laid back and soulful? You have to look for the characteristics that are sounding best in the group you are playing in. Some groups will tend do better creating certain atmospheres over others. If the group is doing specifically well with one type of feeling or emotion, then add to that and go with it. In this situation, you don't want to contrast, you want to emphasize as much as possible.

5. *How in the world to listen to all of this?*

1. So now that I've listed all these things to listen to, how in the world do you go about listening to all of it. Easy. Just take it in steps. Write down which component you are going to focus on one night. Maybe it's just the drummer, or just the bass player and focus on their components. Then, the next night, pick another category. In time, all of these categories will register like reading a book. You do have to take it slowly. Once you begin to recognize the certain elements they will come much faster as you begin to combine listening components. Do not start with combinations! There is simply too much going on unless you are used to picking out the individuals first.