Jazz Pedagogy for the Classical Piano Teacher: Introducing Jazz to Beginning- and Intermediate-Level Students

by

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ABSTRACT

The main goal of the traditional private piano lesson setting is to build skills that will lead to fluency in important classical repertoire. Jazz music is considered to be native to American culture, but music education today is largely Euro-centric. While the study of Western music is undeniably important for developing pianists, the exclusive focus on this area leaves little time for the exploration of skills that can be presented through jazz. Plenty of resources with jazz-inspired repertoire already exist for beginning and intermediate piano students, but the knowledge and skills students can obtain from learning jazz extend beyond the ability to read notation and interpret style through visual symbols. Furthermore, American piano students should have access to a diverse education in which jazz as a cultural art form is studied alongside music of the standard European tradition.

This project will attempt to fill the gap in beginning and intermediate pianists' curriculums by offering practical solutions for classical piano teachers who have had little to no exposure to jazz music. With a focus on aural training, creativity, harmonic understanding, and confidence in improvising through the jazz idiom, the curriculum presented in this project provides a foundation for beginning piano students to engage with jazz music aurally, using their minds and ears to adopt this important style of playing and develop new ideas within this style in a creative manner.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND

Introduction

A 10th-grade pianist sits at an electric keyboard in her high school jazz ensemble. She has taken lessons since she was seven years old, but this is her first year playing jazz, so she has listened intently to all of the instruction in the previous weeks on jazz modes, chord changes, style, and rhythm. In the middle of a tune, the band director starts pointing at her and yelling over the band that it is her turn to take a solo. She tries to play but nothing seems to sound right. She freezes until the solo is over, and the disappointed look on the director's face makes her start to cry.

This was one of the early negative experiences that caused me to doubt my abilities as a creative musician, improvisor, and artistic performer. Through conversations with many of my peers, students, and even professors, I know I am not the only musician who feels fear when called to improvise or perform in an unfamiliar style like jazz. While it used to feel as though jazz musicians were making music "out of thin air," I have since discovered the methodical process of jazz professionals and found the study of this music to be both approachable and fulfilling. Furthermore, playing jazz music has provided me an outlet to improve my rhythm, aural recognition, creativity, and many other skills needed for expert musicianship

Registering for applied lessons in jazz as a doctoral-level pianist revealed the weaknesses in my skills as a musician. My insecurity in aural skills in particular showed me what was lacking in the instruction I have had throughout my career. Professionals in jazz constantly pursue ear training in their study of the jazz language,

and there are many benefits to this style of learning that can be incorporated into the earliest lessons with children.

While aural skills are a more integrated portion of music methods today, the main goal of the traditional private lesson setting is to build skills that will lead to fluency in important classical repertoire. Jazz music is considered to be native to American culture, but music education today is largely Euro-centric.[1] Even at the earliest levels, teachers use graded literature meant to prepare students for the music of historically great composers such as Mozart, Beethoven, or Chopin. While the study of Western music is undeniably important for developing pianists, the exclusive focus on this area leaves little time for the exploration of skills that can be presented through jazz. Plenty of resources with jazz-inspired repertoire already exist for beginning and intermediate piano students, but the knowledge and skills students can obtain from learning jazz go beyond the ability to read notation and interpret style through visual symbols. Furthermore, American piano students should have access to a diverse education in which jazz as a cultural art form is studied alongside music of the standard European tradition. The divide between fluency in jazz and classical styles is often too wide in the career of a pianist, and beginning students are often only trained in one or the other.

There are now more than 250 universities offering degrees and certificates in jazz,[2] but there is relatively little research on jazz pedagogy compared to the large

[1] Lewis Porter, "Jazz in American Education Today," College Music Symposium 29 (1989): 134, www.jstor.org/stable/40373955.

[2] Bobby Reed, "Student Music Guide: Where to Study Jazz 2019," Downbeat Magazine, October 2018.

body of research that has been conducted within traditional music teaching methods. Many of the curriculums or studies on jazz pedagogy targeting classical teachers miss the mark by either over-generalizing the jazz style or trying to improve classical playing through elements of the jazz idiom. However, jazz is worth exploring for its own sake, so in this project, I will attempt to fill the gap in beginning and intermediate pianists' curriculums by offering practical solutions for classical piano teachers who have had little to no exposure to jazz music. I will also examine the processes adopted by professionals when practicing jazz in order to justify the activities in my curriculum. What I lacked in my lessons as a child, I now argue are crucial components of piano instruction: aural training, creativity, harmonic understanding, and confidence in improvising through the jazz style.

What is Jazz?

"Jazz" tends to be an umbrella term for many different styles of music. This includes New Orleans, Dixieland, Swing, Bebop, Hard Bop, and Modal Jazz, and often incorporates other styles like Latin, Funk, or Fusion. Jazz can be performed solo or in trios, quartets, and even larger ensembles that may include a variety of instruments or a singer. Jazz music began in New Orleans and "transformed marching band and dance music into an improvised, playfully voiced, cyclic, polyphonic music played over a steady dance beat using collective improvisation."[3] The first jazz

[3] Scott Deveaux and Gary Giddens, "New Orleans," in *Jazz: Essential Listening* (W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2010), https://wwnorton.com/college/music/jazz-essentials/ch/03/outline.aspx.

recording was released around 1917, "signaling a break from ragtime."[4] This recording was the first to use the word "jazz" in its label, but jazz has evolved to mean many different things since that time. Saxophonist and pedagogue Jerry Coker says, "'Jazz,' as a word, has been grossly maligned, misused, overused, and made too flexible in meaning."[5] Coker claims that classical musicians tend to group popular, rock, or commercial styles into the "jazz" category, and certain jazz artists even object to the label to describe their own music.[6] Jazz scholars Mark Tucker and Travis A. Jackson describe jazz in the following way:

> The term conveys different though related meanings: 1) a musical tradition rooted in performing conventions that were introduced and developed early in the 20th century by African Americans; 2) a set of attitudes and assumptions brought to music-making, chief among them the notion of performance as a fluid creative process involving improvisation; and 3) a style characterized by syncopation, melodic and harmonic elements derived from the blues, cyclical formal structures and a supple rhythmic approach to phrasing known as swing.[7]

Despite the confusion and debate over the meaning of jazz, Coker maintains that knowing "the names *and* recordings of the following people" will indicate a true familiarity with jazz: "Louis Armstrong, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Charles Parker, Duke Ellington, Michael Brecker, Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Rollins, Thelonious Monk,

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[4] John Edward Hasse, "The First Jazz Recording Was Made by a Group of White Guys?" *Smithsonian Magazine*, February 24, 2017, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/was-first-jazz-recording-made-group-white-guys-180962246/.

[5] Jerry Coker, *How to Practice Jazz* (New Albany, IN: Jamey Aebersold Jazz, Inc., 1990), 4.

[6] Coker, *How to Practice Jazz*, 4.

[7] Mark Tucker and Travis A. Jackson, "Jazz," *Grove Music Online* (2001), https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.libe2.lib.ttu.edu.

Charles Mingus, Horace Silver, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, Ella Fitzgerald, Tony Williams, Oscar Peterson, and Art Blakey."[8] For the purposes of this project, a thorough knowledge of the music of these artists is not required. However, I argue for the necessity of the study and appreciation of jazz by all musicians throughout this paper, as I believe that jazz should be as respected as the music of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven. Therefore, "jazz" in this paper will refer to any style of music that fits the definition by Tucker and Jackson, and the recordings of the aforementioned artists are an excellent way to begin if one has never heard or played jazz before.

Jazz as an American Art Form

I would be remiss in beginning this project without first acknowledging the profound impact that jazz music has had on American society. Jazz pianist and musicologist Lewis Porter surveyed jazz education in a 1989 article, claiming that "it is against our self-interest to keep our citizens ignorant of the major developments in our own culture, because such ignorance makes it difficult for our own culture to persist."[9] Porter further states that although "we cannot expect every student to like jazz, any more than we expect every student to love classical music," we should be more "concerned that our citizenry should have a basic knowledge and understanding of our native art forms."[10]

[8] Coker, *How to Practice Jazz*, 5; See listening list in Appendix C.

[9] Porter, "Jazz in American Education Today," 134.

[10] Porter, "Jazz in American Education Today," 139.

In a 2011 article, Jeff Farley, researcher and English faculty member at City Colleges of Chicago, discusses the impact of the Jazz Preservation Act (JPA) of 1987 on American culture and education.[11] Farley describes the JPA as a "government mandate to preserve a history and canon that it defined, primarily, through a wide variety of publicly supported jazz performances, historical studies, and educational initiatives."[12] The JPA declares that jazz is an "American National Treasure," which "[brings] to this country and the world a uniquely American musical synthesis and culture through the African-American experience. . ."[13] The language of this act further labels jazz as an important art which exemplifies American diversity and continues to influence "other genres of music both here and abroad."[14] Farley states that the JPA contributed to the "surge in popularity"[15] that jazz music experienced in the 1990s, despite continued debate over whether or not jazz can be described as a "fine or 'high' art."[16]

Jazz was historically considered to be primarily a popular style, since it was used for dancing before the 1940s. Classical music critics continued this view long

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[11] Jeff Farley, "Jazz as a Black American Art Form: Definitions of the Jazz Preservation Act," *Journal of American Studies* 45, no. 1 (2011): 113-29, www.jstor.org/stable/23016762.

[12] Farley, "Jazz as a Black American Art Form," 114.

[13] House Concurrent Resolution 57, 100th Congress, Dec. 4, 1987, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-101/pdf/STATUTE-101-Pg2013-2.pdf.

[14] House Concurrent Resolution 57, 100th Congress.

[15] Farley, "Jazz as a Black American Art Form," 113.

[16] Farley, "Jazz as a Black American Art Form," 119.

after "the development of concert forms such as bebop."[17] One of the first ways that jazz became more associated with classical music in the general public was through the music of bandleader Paul Whiteman, who became known for "blending the two styles."[18] However, early jazz artists were usually classically trained and eventually used their musical expertise to "[change] the standards, performance, craft, and musical ambition in jazz."[19] Deveaux and Giddins cite three different perspectives for jazz music today:

1. Art form: jazz viewed as heart of institutional America played by skillfully trained musicians.
2. Popular music: jazz viewed as a commodity partly dependent on taste.
3. Folk music: although urban, jazz stems from African American folk traditions.[20]

William "Billy" Taylor, who was a jazz pianist and professor of music at East Carolina University in Greenville, argues that jazz "is America's classical music."[21] With roots in the Black-American tradition, jazz has become "international in scope," being "studied and performed" all around the world.[22] Taylor summarizes the importance of studying this music:

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[17] Farley, "Jazz as a Black American Art Form," 120.

[18] Farley, "Jazz as a Black American Art Form," 119.

[19] Scott Deveaux and Gary Giddens, "The Roots of Jazz," in *Jazz: Essential Listening* (W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2010), https://wwnorton.com/college/music/jazz-essentials/ch/03/outline.aspx.

[20] Deveaux and Giddens, "The Roots of Jazz."

[21] William "Billy" Taylor, "Jazz: America's Classical Music," *The Black Perspective in Music* 14, no. 1 (1986): 21, doi:10.2307/1214726.

[22] Taylor, "Jazz: America's Classical Music," 21.

> Jazz is simple, complex, relaxed, and intense. It embodies a bold tradition of constantly emerging musical forms and directions. Jazz has developed its own standards of form, complexity, literacy, and excellence. It has also developed a repertoire, which codifies and defines its many varied styles . . . Americans of African descent, in producing music which expressed themselves, not only developed a new musical vocabulary, they created a *classical* music – an authentic *American* music which articulated uniquely American feelings and thoughts, which eventually came to transcend ethnic boundaries.[23]

While jazz has continued to gain respect after the JPA, with increased access through educational programs, degrees, and festivals, the style has been slow to make its way into traditional piano curriculums. While this project is focused on incorporating jazz piano at earlier instructional levels, this can only happen with a larger appreciation and support of jazz in the music community today. The following chapters will further discuss this through examples of the style and process of musicians who have mastered this craft, but I ultimately argue that a study of jazz process can and should happen at the beginning of music instruction, creating more well-rounded and skilled students who may later seek to specialize in this profound art or become patrons and listeners that propel the study of jazz into the future.

Organization of Document

As there are many resources for teaching jazz at the advanced level, this document will limit its scope to the teaching of jazz concepts to beginning- through intermediate-level students, either children or adults. Materials do exist in this area, but they are limited and usually focused on improvisation only or include a selection of "jazz-inspired" pieces. Although this document is primarily about introducing jazz

[23] Taylor, "Jazz: America's Classical Music," 21.

at an early level, I will use a considerable portion for a discussion about the professional jazz process. While I make no claims that teachers should be proficient jazz musicians in order to teach jazz, I believe that a basic understanding of how to gain skill in jazz performance is useful and necessary for effective instruction. I will use this discussion as a way to unveil some of the secrets behind jazz proficiency in the hopes that this will both encourage teachers to try to incorporate jazz into their own practice and also guide them more specifically toward goals for students. The upcoming chapters are organized as follows:

- Chapter Two: Review of Literature – This section will discuss current research in jazz pedagogy and synthesize available resources for classical pianists desiring to learn more about jazz in both their playing and teaching.
- Chapter Three: Jazz Process and Skill – Professional jazz musicians have specific methods targeted at improving their craft. There is much that Classical musicians can learn from these processes, and the skills that jazz musicians acquire often go beyond proficiency in reading notation and refining piano technique. This chapter will take a concise look at the steps pianists should take to acquire skill in the jazz style.
- Chapter Four: Beginning Jazz Pedagogy – This section will detail the first skills that beginning piano students should learn – those that will pave the way for proficiency in jazz as students mature and deepen their interests. Jazz concepts can be taught early, so children can begin this sequence in the very first piano lesson. This curriculum will use primarily a rote approach to teach aural pattern recognition, improvisation, basic blues harmony, and performing

in the blues style. This means that while teachers will have materials to look at for demonstration purposes, students will be learning concepts without notation.

Definitions of Key Terms

1. Voicing(s): This is a jazz term which refers to any combination of notes indicating a specific harmony. Jazz voicings differ from traditional chord-types, in that they may not always contain a root, third, and fifth. For example, a common voicing in jazz for a Dmin7 chord is F – A – C – E, instead of D – F – A – C.
2. Comping: This refers to the rhythmic playing of jazz voicings. Jazz musicians will "comp chords" during an improvised solo in a jazz ensemble setting to provide a lively accompaniment. Comping is an intricate topic to study, with many different rhythms, voicings, and styles possible.
3. Blues: Blues is a term used to describe both a musical form and a style of music. Typically, a particular scale and chord progression indicates a blues. A blues piece is often 12 measures (bars) long, but may be shorter or longer (e.g., 8 or 16 bars).
4. Bebop: This term was invented in the 1940s and is typically used to describe a style of jazz music with complex scale patterns containing 8 notes instead of 7 from the inclusion of a chromatic passing tone. It is commonly associated with jazz artists Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie and is studied in depth at many university programs today.

5. Standard tune(s)/Standard(s): These include any compositions which are well known and notable within the jazz community. Standard tunes are often recorded many times and in many styles by various jazz artists.
6. Chord changes: This is jazz terminology which typically refers to a chord progression. Jazz improvisors "learn the changes" to be able to solo effectively over the harmonies of standard tunes.
7. Guide tones: In jazz, this refers to the 3rd and 7th of each chord, often played in the left hand while the right hand improvises. The guide tones provide the quality of each chord as well as the essential chord sound.
8. Lead sheet: The lead sheet contains all of the information that jazz artists need to know to learn a tune. It usually includes the original melody, which jazz artists manipulate in unique ways when they perform, lyrics (if there are any), and chord symbols, which guide the improvised solo sections.
9. Jazz language: Jazz language refers to the set of rhythms, patterns, and motives which are common in jazz performance. A novice must learn elements of the jazz language in order to sound like a real jazz artist.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Classical piano teachers seeking to incorporate jazz pedagogy into beginning and intermediate lessons should consider three main areas of resources: 1) scholarly research in jazz pedagogy, 2) textbooks on jazz music and advanced methods, and 3) jazz methods or resources for beginning and intermediate piano students. The literature in this chapter is centered primarily on the resources that might be most interesting to the classical piano teacher, while also providing an overview on the various styles of research outside of piano study in this field. Additionally, certain resources have provided the rationale for the sequencing in Chapter Four.

Research in Jazz Pedagogy

The literature in this area overall suggests that while jazz pedagogy is still a relatively new area of research, several important trends have emerged to provide foundations for future study. The research in jazz pedagogy has historically taken several forms: surveys of literature, empirical research, and practical studies concerning jazz pedagogy.

Literature reviews

The surveys of literature guide the structuring of jazz research and practice today and contain necessary information concerning what is important for educators to understand when teaching jazz. One common theme addressed in all of the surveys included in this section, from the 1980s to 2015, is the necessity of a better understanding of jazz improvisation practices and a more holistic approach to jazz

study. The 30-year span between the oldest and most recent survey suggests that this is an ongoing problem which may be difficult to solve, but many of the studies claim that a more comprehensive education for future music teachers is required for better teaching in secondary schools.

An early resource by Witmer and Robbins summarizes pedagogical methods and theory approaches to jazz learning that were published before 1985. This includes jazz improvisation methods, jazz exercise books, and theory textbooks.[24] Through their research, Witmer and Robbins call for a more thorough approach that focuses on "how" to apply elements of jazz style into performance instead of "what" to do when practicing.[25] Similarly, Bash and Kuzmich summarize resources before 1985 but expand the number of topics to texts concerning jazz pedagogy, history, journals, dissertations, curricular approaches, sociological studies, and performance analysis.[26] In particular, Bash and Kuzmich determine that a better jazz education curriculum for future music teachers is needed, as well as more in-depth studies on the "strategies or tendencies on the part of the jazz musician" in the study of performance.[27] There have been many updates to the types of resources that were available before the 1980s, but

[24] Robert Witmer and James Robbins, "A Historical and Critical Survey of Recent Pedagogical Materials for the Teaching and Learning of Jazz," *Bulletin for the Council for Research in Music Education* 1, no. 96 (1988): 7-29, www.jstor.org/stable/40318207.

[25] Witmer and Robbins, "A Survey of Recent Materials for Teaching Jazz," 26.

[26] Lee Bash and John Kuzmich, "A Survey of Jazz Education Research: Recommendations for Future Researchers," *Bulletin for the Council for Research in Music Education* 1, no. 82 (1985): 14-28, www.jstor.org/stable/4031808.

[27] Bash and Kuzmich, "A Survey of Jazz Education Research," 24.

the issues involved in the teaching of jazz remain the same in the present day, as seen in more recent surveys.

The following surveys more closely analyze the teaching of jazz in secondary schools. In 1989, Porter surveyed the prevalence of jazz education in American schools in the 1980s and argues the importance of jazz education in public curriculums, citing the Joint Resolution 57 which recognizes jazz as an important American art form.[28] Despite this article being released over 20 years ago, it is still as important in society today to encourage an inclusion of jazz education in standard curriculums and to keep jazz alive for future generations. West's 2015 survey of literature dealing with jazz education is one of the most recent to date. West considers the issues of teaching jazz ensemble in schools and teaching improvisation.[29] West's study again shows the importance of increasing the inclusion of jazz in today's curriculums. Teachers in school systems often do not feel qualified to teach skills like improvisation, so West suggests several methods for further study and implies that improvisation should be seen as a "basic component of musicianship" in a much broader sense.[30]

Empirical research

Empirical research conducted in the area of jazz education involves mostly studies on jazz improvisation, as this is one of the most integral and also least-

[28] Porter, "Jazz in American Education Today," 139.

[29] Chad West, "What Research Reveals About School Jazz Education," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 33, no. 2 (May 2015): 34-40, doi:10.1177/8755123314547825.

[30] West, "What Research Reveals About School Jazz Education," 38.

understood aspects of jazz performance. One survey by Watson, conducted in 2010, summarizes these studies and reveals five trends: "investigations of variables that predict achievement in jazz improvisation, content analyses of published instructional materials, investigations of the effectiveness of pedagogical methods, the construction and evaluation of jazz improvisation achievement measurement instruments, and investigations of a possible relationship between jazz improvisation achievement and the construct of creativity."[31] Watson encourages future directions including studies on gender and jazz participation, self-efficacy in improvisation, and processes in improvisation. The following are some of the specific studies from Watson's review.

In Watson's own empirical study, he analyzed the improvisations of 62 university undergraduate performers with little to no jazz experience and found that "aural instructional materials" are more important than notational methods for learning jazz improvisation.[32] Furthermore, the results from Watson's study indicate that jazz improvisation is likely not reinforced often enough in school jazz ensembles. This gap exists despite the general "consensus" that improvisation is an important area for study.[33] This could point to the need for instructional methodologies which attempt to teach jazz improvisation in a process-oriented fashion, allowing the growth of skills over longer periods of time.

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[31] Kevin E. Watson, "Charting Future Directions for Research in Jazz Pedagogy: Implications of the Literature," *Music Education Research* 12, no. 4 (Dec. 2010): 383, doi:10.1080/14613808.2010.519382.

[32] Kevin E. Watson, "The Effects of Aural Versus Notated Instructional Materials on Achievement and Self-Efficacy in Jazz Improvisation," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 58, no. 3 (2010): 250, www.jstor.org/stable/40961668.

[33] Watson, "Aural Versus Notated Instructional Materials in Jazz Improvisation," 250.

In a 2003 study, May evaluated 85 undergraduate wind players' achievement in jazz improvisation. May determined that the "high correlations among the subtests of each of the measures," along with the relationships between elements of jazz improvisation, "all support a single construct model of instrumental jazz improvisation."[34] The main findings suggest that while it is important to break down skills into manageable components, the skills involved in jazz improvisation should be taught simultaneously, rather than sequentially, for best results. May mentions aural skills, theoretical knowledge, aural imitative ability, memorization of tunes, melodic and rhythmic development, and expressive manipulation as areas to explore in improvisation instruction.[35] This study directly informs the layout of my curriculum, including the layering of jazz process components at every stage.

In another ground-breaking study, Wehr-Flowers specifically looks at the gender gap in jazz studies and finds that "females are significantly less confident, more anxious, and have less self-efficacy towards learning jazz improvisation."[36] This study shows the need for education in jazz improvisation to be provided for all students and for confidence-building to be at the forefront of teachers' priorities.

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[34] Lissa F. May, "Factors and Abilities Influencing Achievement in Instrumental Jazz Improvisation," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 51, no. 3 (2003): 255, www.jstor.org/stable/3345377.

[35] May, "Factors Influencing Achievement in Instrumental Jazz Improvisation," 256.

[36] Erin Wehr-Flowers, "Differences between Male and Female Students' Confidence, Anxiety, and Attitude toward Learning Jazz Improvisation," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 54, no. 4 (2006): 345, www.jstor.org/stable/4139755.

Wehr-Flowers mentions that specific instruction on *how* to practice jazz and materials for students to practice alone is one way to encourage those with lower confidence.[37]

Practical studies

Certain researchers seek to conduct practical studies on concepts of jazz teaching. These include two researchers who made applications from interviews with professional jazz artists. Herzig conducted an analysis of 12 jazz method books and compared the main topics in these books to the priorities drawn from interviews with 7 jazz pianists. While Herzig's study is mainly a survey of the current methods, the interviews provide information on the processes common to professional jazz pianists. A look at their learning process reveals the strong aural tradition involved in jazz, as well as the importance of playing with other musicians as often as possible.[38] The information from the interviews with the pianists does not coincide directly with the main topics found in the analyzed methods, so this provides a rationale for the development of methods that more closely align with jazz process. Like Herzig, Coss also interviewed seven "expert jazz educators" to determine how they teach improvisation, as a response to the lack of methods for teaching jazz improvisation effectively. Topics of discussion include the role of the teacher as a motivator, providing a safe space for students to explore improvisation, and combating doubts or

[37] Wehr-Flowers, "Differences between Male and Female Students' Confidence," 347.

[38] Monika Herzig, "Elements of Jazz Piano Pedagogy: A Content Analysis," Dissertation, Indiana University, 1997, 154, https://search-proquest-com.lib-e2.lib.ttu.edu/docview/304375026?accountid=7098.

fears students may have.[39] This study highlights the importance of the teacher giving reassurance that students can continue to improve despite encountering difficulties, which is especially essential for students who believe that improvisation is not a skill which can be learned.

Jazz Textbooks and Advanced Methods

Another area of scholarly work in jazz pedagogy includes advanced textbooks on how to practice jazz. Specific overviews of various areas in jazz, including comping, theory, and improvising, will provide the basis for the discussion on professional processes in Chapter Three and can serve as a resource for classical pianists seeking to improve their theoretical and practical knowledge of jazz. I have also included methods or curriculums which focus on older beginners or classically trained, adult musicians, since these resources deal with pianists who have had little experience with jazz music.

Jazz textbooks

One important resource for pianists is the pairing of Mark Levine's *The Jazz Theory Book* and *The Jazz Piano Book.* Levine, who is an author, educator, and jazz pianist, presents a thorough examination of how to practice jazz through real examples from renowned artists and albums. The theory book includes chord/scale theory, reading and interpreting chord symbols on lead sheets, elements of jazz improvisation, and how to reharmonize standard tunes for a more modern sound. The piano book

[39] Roger G. Coss, "Descriptions of Expert Jazz Educators' Experiences Teaching Improvisation," *International Journal of Music Education* 36, no. 4 (November 2018): 521–32, doi:10.1177/0255761418771093.

expands on the ideas of the theory book with piano-specific examples of left-hand voicings, rhythms and voicings for comping in an ensemble, and the use of scales and patterns in improvisation. Both books assume an advanced ability to read notation, but Levine presents concepts in a simple and clear format, with immediate applications for practice in every chapter.[40]

While Levine covers a wide range of topics, other useful texts focus on more specific aspects of jazz study. Bert Ligon, director of jazz studies at University of Southern California, discusses improvisation in *Connecting Chords with Linear Harmony.* Ligon's textbook is a study of three basic outlines that can be used for jazz improvisation and composition, which he derives from transcriptions of real tunes. [41] All of the examples contain the most standard chord progression in jazz (II-V-I) with real motives and melodic lines from experienced jazz musicians. The book contains an explanation of how the basic outlines are formed, examples of embellishments on these outlines, and exercises for further study.

Another specific study in jazz music includes Suzanne Davis' *Jazz Piano Comping: Harmonies, Voicings, and Grooves.* Davis' book is a more succinct sequence on comping than the material in Levine's *The Jazz Piano Book*, and it contains a CD for students to practice comping along with a rhythm section. Davis starts with simple instructions for basic voicings and how these can be used in both

[40] Mark Levine, *The Jazz Theory Book* (Petaluma, CA: Sher Music Co., 1995); Mark Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book* (Petaluma, CA: Sher Music Co., 1989).

[41] Bert Ligon, *Connecting Chords with Linear Harmony* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 1996).

ensemble and solo playing.[42] The explanations for advanced comping are less thorough than those in Levine's method, but Davis also provides instructions and musical examples on how to comp amidst other members of a rhythm section, such as the bassist or guitarist.

Finally, Jerry Coker's *How to Practice Jazz* is a compact handbook that provides a checklist for those wishing to gain skill in jazz.[43] This book does not contain many examples, but it can serve to narrow the focus for inexperienced jazz musicians. The highlights of the jazz process in this book will be discussed more in Chapter Three.

Jazz for adults or older beginners

In 1986, Larsen designed a course in three stages for classically trained adults in a group piano setting. Larsen provides full lesson plans and evaluation on course materials.[44] The course was one of the first of its kind providing beginning instruction in improvisation, designed due to the lack of improvisational skills taught in traditional piano lesson settings. The course shows the validity in successfully teaching classically trained pianists the basic skills of jazz in a short amount of time. Another resource by Larsen is designed for classical pianists who are high school age and older. Larsen includes basic overviews for various concepts, including

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[42] Suzanne Davis, *Jazz Piano Comping: Harmonies, Voicings, and Grooves* (Boston: Berklee Press, 2012).

[43] Coker, *How to Practice Jazz*.

[44] Janeen Jess Larsen, "Teaching Basic Jazz Piano Skills to Classically-trained Adult Pianists: A Mastery Learning Approach (Keyboard, Curriculum, Evaluation)," Dissertation, University of Florida, 1986, https://search-proquest-com.lib-e2.lib.ttu.edu/ docview/303458194?accountid=7098.

improvisation, reading lead sheets, 12-bar blues, and jazz theory. Larsen provides a sequence of steps to use for learning each concept.[45]

The 2019 study by Mishkit also focuses on adult learners, revealing a need for a revised jazz curriculum in undergraduate music programs. Like Larsen, Mishkit conducted an eight-week jazz workshop for adult music educators with little previous experience in the jazz style. The educators recollected little to no emphasis on improvisation or teaching jazz in their undergraduate education programs and expressed a desire to learn how to improvise more effectively. Mishkit provides the sequence and curriculum used throughout the study along with interviews with the students, evaluating the teaching and learning in the workshop.[46]

Resources for Teaching Beginning and Intermediate Students

There are many elements of teaching aural skills and improvisation in the curriculum in Chapter Four that were inspired by current piano methods. Since the curriculum is based on a rote approach, these methods are discussed as a point of comparison for this project, and not included to be used by the student. There are also many popular compilations from publishers such as FJH and Faber and Faber which provide sequenced repertoire in the jazz style. However, these books are outside the scope of this project, as I will instead focus on the *skills* that students can gain from a

[45] Janeen Jess Larsen, *Jazz Piano: A Primer for Classical Pianists* (Xlibris Corporation, 2007).

[46] Bruce D. Mishkit, "Investigating the Process of Learning Jazz Pedagogy and Improvisation through an Eight-Week Professional Development Workshop," Dissertation, Boston University, 2019, 219, https://search-proquest-com.lib-e2.lib.ttu.edu/ docview/2240049303?accountid=7098.

real study of the jazz process, versus an understanding of the jazz idiom through reading notation. These repertoire pieces could be supplemental to the curriculum, but integration of these works is not the main goal of the sequence.

Adaptations to other beginning curriculums

There are several resources available which discuss how to adapt parts of the jazz process to instruction for teachers with a lack of education in the jazz idiom. These include adaptations for instruments other than the piano. While some of the resources do not deal specifically with the jazz idiom, they are included due to their focus on aural approaches, which will be discussed more in the next chapters.

Azzara and Grunow's *Developing Musicianship Through Improvisation* argues the need for an aural approach in teaching improvisation and provides exercises for learning how to hear melody, rhythm, and harmony.[47] Azzara and Grunow's method of singing the music, improvising in the same harmonic framework, and then composing new music directly informs the curriculum of this project, except this method does not deal specifically with the jazz idiom. Furthermore, this may be a useful method for teachers who are struggling to conduct activities using a rote approach or who need more practice singing and hearing melodic ideas.

One resource which bases its curriculum on Azzara and Grunow's method is Choi's 2017 dissertation on improvisation. Choi taught improvisation using an aural-based approach to first-year undergraduate class piano students and found that this

[47] Christopher D. Azzara and Richard F. Grunow, *Developing Musicianship Through Improvisation – C Instruments* (Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 2006).

"may have led to improved music achievement."[48] Choi measured the participants' music aptitude before the class, and their improvisational skills were judged at the end of the class by "professional musicians with experience improvising."[49] Choi's document does not use the jazz idiom but shows an example of success using aural-based teaching for improvisation. Shih's 2012 dissertation also adapts Azzara and Grunow's method to teach jazz improvisation to middle school recorder learners. The techniques of listening, improvising, and composing are adopted in each unit.[50] However, the curriculum does not incorporate jazz elements throughout the sequence, or the connections to jazz process are not always explicitly stated. Similarly, Chyu's 2004 dissertation is not entirely focused on the jazz idiom but uses classical piano repertoire to teach improvisation to beginning and intermediate students, basing the approach on the Robert Pace Piano Method.[51] The author expands to include improvisation using scale systems, including a small unit on jazz, but the chapter on jazz improvisation is lacking in its use of proper jazz techniques. However, the document does explore research that emphasizes the importance of listening and developing the ear using a rote approach in order to become a better improvisor. This

[48] Jungeyun G. Choi, "Improvisation in Collegiate Class Piano," Dissertation, University of Rochester, 2017, viii, https://search-proquest-com.lib-e2.lib.ttu.edu/docview/2162655931?accountid=7098.

[49] Choi, "Improvisation in Collegiate Class Piano," viii.

[50] Yi-Ju Shih, "Teaching Jazz Improvisation to Middle School Recorder Learners: A Beginning Curriculum," Dissertation, California State University, Long Beach, 2012, https://search-proquest-com.lib-e2.lib.ttu.edu/docview/1321219471?accountid=7098.

[51] Yawen Eunice Chyu, "Teaching Improvisation to Piano Students of Elementary to Intermediate Levels," Dissertation, The Ohio State University, 2004, https://search-proquest-com.lib-e2.lib.ttu.edu/docview/305140145?accountid=7098.

includes advice from Azzara and Grunow to sing songs first before playing them on an instrument.[52]

Through observations of jazz lessons and interviews with jazz pedagogues, Haley adapts elements of the jazz process to classical playing. Haley highlights the importance of singing music in solfège before playing, rote approaches, understanding harmonic patterns and functions, and listening to create music in both the jazz and classical styles.[53] While my project focuses on teaching jazz for its own sake, Haley's work clarifies the artistic and holistic nature of jazz music for classical musicians.

Beginning and intermediate jazz methods

Portions of the curriculum in Chapter Four, while created for beginners, were inspired by the sequencing of intermediate-level jazz methods. This is partly due to the lack of materials for beginners but also because the intermediate methods present elements of the real jazz process more succinctly. The following methods are geared toward younger musicians and include a wide array of concepts and sequencing.

One notable method marketed for young students in jazz is Misha V. Stefanuk's *Jazz Piano for the Young Beginner*, but most of the pieces are similar to repertoire in other classical methods. The titles are "jazz-inspired" and some of the later pieces contain the flat 3rd or 7th interval common in blues styles, but there are no

[52] Chyu, "Teaching Improvisation to Piano Students," 171.

[53] Lilly D. Haley, "Using Jazz Pedagogy to Supplement the Undergraduate Classical Lesson Setting," Dissertation, The Florida State University, 2018, https://search-proquest-com.lib-e2.lib.ttu.edu/docview/2119990956?accountid=7098.

other components specific to jazz-style, except a brief discussion on "swinging eighth-notes."[54]

Another method dealing specifically with intermediate pianists is Jeremy Siskind's *First Lessons in Piano Improv.* Siskind, who is a proficient performer of the jazz style, provides basic lessons in call and response, creating accompaniment patterns, and improvising melodies and rhythmic motives.[55] This particular book is not based on the jazz idiom, but the call and response activities specifically can be easily adapted for lessons in jazz and the diatonic improvisation lessons parallel the sequencing of Chapter Four.

Intro to Jazz Piano by Mark Harrison is an intermediate-level instruction book for jazz concepts. Harrison presents the information on voicing types clearly with plenty of applications. However, all of the voicings are presented in every key, so this may slow down the progress of committing patterns and harmonies to memory. In one chapter, the author demonstrates how to layer basic voicings and rhythmic patterns in the left hand under the melody line of a standard tune, and the exercises are accompanied by a CD for practice. There is also a brief introduction to soloing through melodic embellishment of a tune and a discussion on blues scale improvisation, which will be examined further in Chapter Four.[56]

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[54] Misha V. Stefanuk, *Jazz Piano for the Young Beginner* (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay Publications, Inc., 2005).

[55] Jeremy Siskind, *First Lessons in Piano Improv: a basic guide for early intermediate pianists* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2017).

[56] Mark Harrison, *Intro to Jazz Piano* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2011).

A similar method called *Modern Jazz Piano* by Sarah Jane Cion also sequences basic jazz concepts like voicings, scales, bass lines, blues, and comping. Cion's book uses mostly examples with little text, creating an appealing layout.[57] However, Cion does not include many applications for the concepts, and certain voicings and scales patterns are not commonly used in the jazz style. One other method at the intermediate level, *The Jazz Piano Method* by Mark Davis, also details blues improvisation and progressions.[58] While teachers are encouraged to teach these concepts by rote in the curriculum of this project, this method provides helpful examples to study in order to do this effectively.

[57] Sarah Jane Cion, *Modern Jazz Piano: An Intermediate Guide to Jazz Concepts, Improvisation, Technique, and Theory* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2005).

[58] Mark Davis, *Jazz Piano Method: The Player's Guide to Authentic Stylings* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2015).

CHAPTER THREE

JAZZ PROCESS AND SKILL

Many of the jazz methods and textbooks discussed in Chapter Two tend to present jazz techniques in a way that requires a considerable amount of previous knowledge from the learner. Others attempt to present a sequence for jazz piano by starting from the beginning of music theory concepts, so the time needed for the basics leaves little room to progress to real jazz concepts. While these methods can be extremely helpful for reference, this chapter will simplify the material presented in these texts by analyzing some of the processes jazz professionals pursue to improve their craft. Mark Levine, Jerry Coker, and other jazz pedagogues explain how to practice jazz in their theoretical texts, so the highlights of these will be condensed along with additional information on how to grasp the intricacies of the jazz language. Young students may not fully engage with every aspect of this process at first, but the basic skills involved in these areas will be necessary for the activities in Chapter Four and developed upon as students mature.

General Considerations

Coker lists more than 18 activities necessary for practicing jazz in his handbook *How to Practice Jazz*, and the topics covered in Levine's *The Jazz Piano Book* and *The Jazz Theory Book* suggest a similar number of important considerations for mastering jazz. Though beginners will be focused on the basics, much of the time professional jazz musicians spend in the various areas of jazz performance depends on immediate goals. There are many styles or genres within the jazz idiom which may

determine how artists divide their practice. Coker describes these as "vehicle-types" and includes the following: "standard and bebop tunes . . . modal tunes, the blues, contemporary tunes, ballads, and free-form tunes."[59] However, a general consensus on how to practice, no matter the genre, seems to exist amongst most jazz pedagogues. Both Coker and Levine recommend practicing scales, jazz "licks" (or patterns), progressions, and chords, as well as learning standard tunes, transcribing solos, and practicing everything in all keys.[60] Furthermore, jazz musicians often employ a process called the "transcription process," which involves transcribing recordings, extracting motives, and targeting over tunes for any style, genre, pattern, or type of activity being pursued.

Transcription

David Liebman, jazz saxophonist and Artist-in-Residence at the Manhattan School of Music, writes about the transcription process, stating that it helps "one learn tone, nuance, and develop a true and believable jazz sense of rhythm."[61] Classically trained musicians cannot gain a real sense of how to play jazz until they immerse themselves in the sound of expert jazz musicians.

Transcription is the process of notating a recorded excerpt. This could include a melody, rhythm, comping pattern, or improvised solo in any worthwhile recording of

[59] Coker, *How to Practice Jazz*, 28.

[60] Coker, *How to Practice Jazz*; Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book*.

[61] David Liebman, "The Complete Transcription Process," David Liebman: Official Website, accessed April 7, 2020, http://davidliebman.com/home/ed_articles/the-complete-transcription-process/.

a jazz performance. In Herzig's study, which included interviews with jazz artists, "interviewees pointed out that they rarely teach from method books and believe strongly in learning through listening and transcribing."[62] After copying material onto manuscript paper or into a computer program for notation, musicians can then analyze and practice their chosen excerpt as if it was an etude. Liebman states that "transcribing is like learning how to speak a language," where the student "can hear the way the language is actually used and pronounced rather than written."[63] Instead of following along with a score while listening to a classical music recording for style, tempo, or articulation choices, jazz musicians have to rely on their ears alone to extract the language and musicianship of famous artists. Levine agrees with Liebman, stating that "your record collection contains everything you need to know."[64]

Today's musicians have the aid of technology to make this process much more efficient than it was in previous decades. Instead of dropping the needle repeatedly on a vinyl recording, online software allows musicians to extract particular phrases or even single measures for transcribing. For example, a difficult lick or pattern in a solo might require a trained musician several pass-throughs to fully hear and notate the correct pitches, rhythms, and articulations. Computer software for these purposes is updated continuously, and many include functions for slowing down recordings considerably without bending the pitch and the ability to loop particular sections, making it easier to listen intently to more difficult passages. However, transcribing can

[62] Herzig, "Elements of Jazz Piano Pedagogy," vi.

[63] Liebman, "The Complete Transcription Process," accessed April 7, 2020.

[64] Levine, *The Jazz Theory Book*, 251.

simply happen through any music software with a pause function and a pair of headphones.[65] Coker maintains that this process allows jazz musicians to play along with their favorite artists, with a goal of "absorbing the manner of phrasing, tone quality, articulation, time-feeling, etc."[66] While there are also published materials containing transcribed solos, working through the transcription process independently is "the best way to learn a tune," according to Levine, since this allows you to hear all aspects, including the roles of the other instruments, and understand more fully "how much you need to know about the tune."[67] For pianists, this may mean taking the time to transcribe an improvised solo from another instrument, the comping pattern used by the pianist, or the manipulation of a standard tune's melody. Pianists can gain many fresh musical ideas from the improvisations of other instruments in a typical jazz ensemble in addition to piano solos and voicings, so no aspect of a recording is off-limits.

Liebman recommends a three-step process when transcribing. First, singing the pitches (if it is a solo) and then notating the pitches, articulations, and rhythms.[68] Singing increases the skills of pitch and rhythm control "without the crutch of the instrument."[69] Second, the musician should play the transcription along with the recording, ensuring that it is "exactly imitated in every way, including dynamics,

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[65] Levine, *The Jazz Theory Book*, 251.

[66] Coker, *How to Practice Jazz*, 28.

[67] Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book*, 269.

[68] Liebman, "The Complete Transcription Process," accessed April 7, 2020.

[69] Liebman, "The Complete Transcription Process," accessed April 7, 2020.

articulation, nuance, time feel, tone coloring, and of course, the rhythms and pitches."[70] The third step involves analysis of the transcription, which is discussed in the next section.

Extracting Motives

Learning a transcribed solo or section of a tune at the tempo of the recording with all of the articulations and style copied as closely as possible is highly beneficial on its own. However, the next step is the extraction of motives or details from the transcription at an even smaller level. To incorporate new ideas into their own playing, jazz professionals will take patterns, licks, voicings, or rhythms that are interesting and treat them as exercises. This is the basis for Ligon's *Connecting Chords with Linear Harmony* and Jerry Coker's *Elements of Jazz Language for the Developing Improvisor*. Using renowned recordings, Ligon shows how certain "outlines" are the foundation of a jazz artist's language as an improvisor.[71] Similarly, Coker shows examples of jazz language devices through the use of notated examples from "outstanding recorded solos."[72] Both of these texts show extracted motives using common patterns or progressions, which is the process jazz musicians can engage in on their own through transcription. Coker explains that "*all* recorded improvisers make use of a relatively small number of common phrases, patterns, and melodic and

[70] Liebman, "The Complete Transcription Process," accessed April 7, 2020.

[71] Ligon, *Connecting Chords with Linear Harmony.*

[72] Jerry Coker, *Elements of Jazz Language for the Developing Improvisor* (Miami: Studio 224, Belwin, Inc., 1991), iv.

harmonic devices."[73] According to Coker, this does not mean that there are no other creative ideas possible, but it is this foundation of details that "help[s] to create the style by which the music is known and accepted by its listeners."[74] The careful analysis and then extraction of ideas from expert recordings is an efficient way to begin to sound like a real jazz artist. As Ligon states, "There is no way to know what these improvisers were thinking when they conceived their lines, but we can carefully examine and analyze the results. The jazz inventors and their music are the final authority."[75]

After extracting an interesting motive, which may be a short melodic idea, comping rhythm, voicing, or a longer phrase fitting over a II-V-I progression, the next step is to practice the same idea in all 12 keys. Levine argues that this practice allows musicians to become better at improvising in more difficult keys and transposing efficiently.[76] Learning the extracted motive on its own is not beneficial, unless the musician is able to apply it to new situations in their own improvisations, which leads to the last stage of the process.

[73] Coker, *How to Practice Jazz*, 27.

[74] Coker, *How to Practice Jazz*, 27.

[75] Ligon, *Connecting Chords with Linear Harmony*, 2.

[76] Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book*, 252.

Targeting Motives

Levine explains that practicing a motive is even more effective when "playing it in the context of a tune."[77] This process is called targeting, and it involves plugging an extracted motive into a different standard tune than the original. The main goal in this activity is to find several sections within the tune or multiple tunes which fit the parameters of the original motive. In order to target the motive in a selected area, the harmonic function and meter of the tune's progression would need to match that of the original. Targeting provides an opportunity to transpose the motive several times, while also inserting it into tunes of different styles or tempos.

In order to successfully target in a new tune, there are several rules to keep in mind: the main chord tones should usually align with beats one and three, and the motive should have a clear beginning and ending. Furthermore, an interesting motive almost never begins directly on the downbeat, but instead includes pick-up notes to transition into the new idea more seamlessly. These pick-up notes could be part of the original motive, or they may be invented by the performer to allow the motive to fit into a new harmonic context. Using a play-along recording, the musician can rest and follow along with the lead sheet until the targeted passage arrives, and then plug in the motive, attempting to play it with perfect timing and style. Next, the musician might freely improvise along with the recording and then plug in the motive at the moment of the passage. Throughout this process, musicians are practicing several skills: learning to listen for the effectiveness of different motives over certain tunes or

[77] Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book*, 251.

progressions, learning and memorizing the structure of new tunes, and also developing timing and rhythmic skills in different contexts.

Working through this entire process – transcribing, extracting, and targeting – is a painstaking and time-consuming endeavor. However, these activities are developing multiple skills at once: listening, interpreting, and adapting devices of jazz language. This integration of skills leads to fluency in the jazz language over many years of study. Through careful listening to stylistic elements and extracting ideas, musicians can adopt the common devices of jazz musicians while also adapting them to individual style or preference. Motives may be modified or combined with others, or new ones can be developed in a similar manner. The process then becomes an outlet for creativity in improvisation, providing important parameters through which musicians can explore their own ideas.

CHAPTER FOUR

BEGINNING JAZZ PEDAGOGY

Introduction

For a teacher who is inexperienced in jazz to try to teach it, there are several ideals that are necessary. First, it is assumed that the primary goal of the piano teacher is to facilitate learning to help create well-rounded musicians. Therefore, teachers do not need to abandon typical instruction in order to teach students how to play jazz. In fact, fluency in appropriate piano technique, basic music theory, and standard literature is necessary for any musician, whether they play jazz or classical repertoire, so the approach of this project is intended to be *integrated* into the teacher's typical lesson plan.

Second, Chapter Three highlighted the strong aural component inherent in the process of jazz pianists, so teachers should consider spending a considerable amount of time on ear training. This is an area that is not always reinforced in standard method books, so a teacher interested in exploring jazz should be aware of the importance of gaining skill in aurally recognizing and replicating melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic patterns. Some students will immediately grasp this, while others may need more time and repetition to develop the skills to copy simple patterns on the piano. Students who have already become accustomed to reading notation may feel apprehensive about using a rote approach at first, but with time, even students who struggle to recognize basic intervals will begin to develop the ability to respond more accurately to aural prompts. From my personal experience, I find this to be the most important skill for

students who want to continue studying jazz, but it is also an asset to musicians of any age or ability.

Third, teachers should accept that some students may be indifferent about the style of music they are playing. Young students in particular may have never heard a jazz tune in performance. Just as a teacher might introduce a student to the melody of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" or Mozart's "Twinkle Variations," teachers should be prepared to introduce students to the art of jazz. This means that a teacher with less experience in jazz should first seek out quality recordings of standard jazz tunes and be prepared to share these with students. A mastery of jazz is not necessary in order to do this, but an awareness and discussion of the processes involved in these recorded performances can inspire students to want to learn this style of music.

This chapter is not so much a jazz "method," as it is a collection of tools and activities in sequence for teachers to introduce the process of jazz learning to beginning- and intermediate-level students. These tools should be used in conjunction with any standard piano instruction and can be integrated as often as possible. This means that teachers are free to continue using any published methods or repertoire that they prefer concurrently with these added approaches.

Azzara and Grunow's *Developing Musicianship Through Improvisation* informs much of the sequencing in this chapter. Their approach takes students through "a repertoire of songs" while building "a vocabulary of solfège [and] rhythm syllables . . ."[78] Students are guided to sing and memorize the repertoire and then improvise and compose using the same harmonic parameters. While their repertoire is not

[78] Azzara and Grunow, *Developing Musicianship Through Improvisation*, 3.

specifically in the jazz idiom, this process is similar to the aural tradition of jazz. This project will follow the same model for many of the activities, with a stress on the importance of singing. Teachers can use whatever singing or counting syllables they prefer as they work through this curriculum, but I will demonstrate certain examples for teachers using "moveable Do" solfège, rather than "fixed Do," in both major and minor keys. Students who connect what they hear to solfège syllables will be able to ingrain the material into memory more quickly, and the use of "moveable Do" solfège will become necessary when students learn to play more difficult jazz standards, which usually modulate through many key areas.

Improvisation will be one of the main skills discussed, as this is at the heart of jazz, but pianists also need to learn how to "comp" through chord changes. This accomplishes two main goals: 1) students will come away with a better understanding of the harmonic structure in jazz tunes, and 2) students will be more prepared for ensemble playing in the future. The main vehicle for teaching both improvisation and comping will be the blues style, since this is one of the most basic jazz styles to grasp before students encounter more complicated chord changes in standard tunes. This chapter will not exhaust all of the options for presenting jazz to beginners but will explore some of the easiest versions of what a musician might encounter in jazz study. Certainly, highly motivated and skilled students may move on quickly from the tasks in this chapter, so the jazz methods discussed in Chapter Two can provide further information on next steps. Suggestions for further study will also be provided in Appendix A.

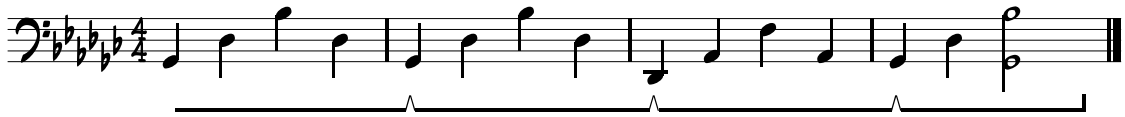
First Steps: Major and Minor Tonalities

Overview

There are several resources for developing diatonic improvisation already available, including Siskind's *First Lessons in Piano Improv*, discussed in Chapter Two. These resources usually include call and response, question and answer, or composition activities. This document will later employ these activities specifically for the jazz idiom, but before diving into jazz style, there are several activities in major and minor keys that teachers can try with students to provide the foundation for the strong aural skills necessary for jazz study.

Free improvisation using black keys

One of the first activities a beginning student can engage in is improvising using solely the black keys of the piano. Even in the first lesson, if students possess the necessary motor control to place individual fingers on the black keys, they can create music along with a simple accompaniment from the teacher. This is an activity that is often included in early method books, but any duet on the black keys can be used for this purpose. After achieving success in black key-only repertoire, teachers can use the same duet part and encourage students to create their own music using the same hand position. Since a black-key improvisation contains no half steps, teachers can take advantage of the consonant sound to allow students full control in selecting patterns and rhythms using these pitches. Example 1 shows a teacher accompaniment written for a black-key repertoire piece from Helen Marlais' *Succeeding at the Piano: Preparatory Book A*, which would provide a simple, yet effective background to a student's black-key improvisation.



Example 1: Possible Teacher Accompaniment for Black-Key Improvisation[79]

Free improvisation in C Major

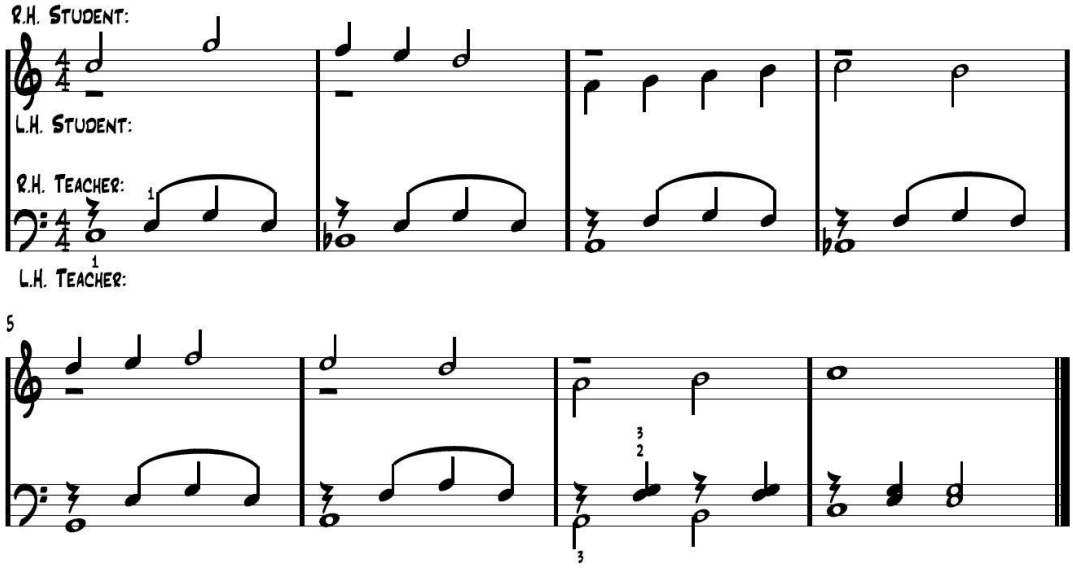
The black-key improvisation activity can be completed in white-key hand positions as well. The first pieces on the white keys in method books typically begin in C Major. The teacher accompaniments for these pieces tend to work well with any pitches played in C position, in which the left-hand pinky and right-hand thumb are both on C, and Middle C Position, in which both thumbs are on Middle C. If students play in a hand position in which certain notes clash over harmonies of the duet, teachers can use this as a discussion point, directing students to listen carefully and use mostly "Do – Mi – Sol" for a better effect. However, many young students will not notice or become bothered by dissonances, like an F held over a C Major chord, so this discussion can also happen later on when students are more mature.

For example, in Marlais' *Succeeding at the Piano: Preparatory Book A*, the first piece that requires the student to use all five fingers on both hands is called "Yellow Spaceship."[80] The piece uses Middle C position, so the range extends from F in the left-hand pinky to G in the right-hand pinky. If the teacher uses this position for improvisation, the student has a large pool of notes to choose from as they play. The teacher accompaniment of "Yellow Spaceship" is one of my favorites to use as a first

[79] Helen Marlais, *The All-in-One Approach to Succeeding at the Piano: Preparatory Book A* (Fort Lauderdale: The FJH Music Company, Inc., 2014), 17.

[80] Marlais, *Succeeding at the Piano: Preparatory Book A*, 31.

white-key improvisation activity because of the ambiguity of the harmony. Students can explore the whole range of the position and still make pleasing sounds. However, even if students play an F or a B over the C Major harmonies of this accompaniment, resulting in a dissonance, it is important for the teacher to allow the student to explore these sounds and decide what they prefer. Example 2 demonstrates how a young student's free improvisation in Middle C position might look over the accompaniment for "Yellow Spaceship." The student's part has been written up one octave from Middle C position to simulate how it might actually look if the teacher and student are playing the duet side by side on a single piano.



Example 2: Improvisation over Accompaniment for "Yellow Spaceship"

Pattern recognition

Another important activity that can happen in the first lessons is pattern recognition. Introducing this activity as "The Copy Game," teachers can ask students to listen to short motives on the black keys and try to repeat them. For example, play a D-flat followed by an E-flat in any rhythm. Ask your student to sing the two notes

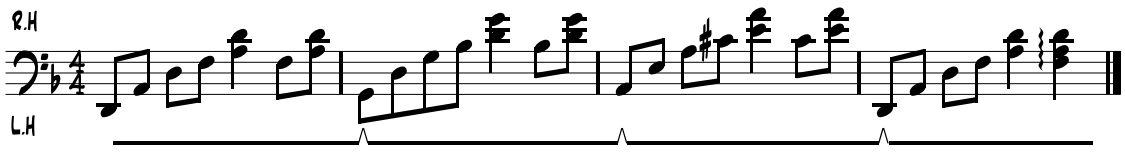
with you, first, and guide them to find the correct pitch in their voice. Students who are not used to singing may struggle with this, but it is important to develop an ability to hear and then replicate pitch with the voice. After students can sing the motive back to you, ask them to copy the pattern exactly on the piano. Students will most likely begin by doing this purely visually, but over time their recognition of keyboard layout will most likely improve alongside their aural ability. As students become quicker at identifying simple two- or three-note patterns, teachers can direct them to close their eyes and try to recognize and replicate the motives without any visual cues. Again, have them sing the motive with you, first, and then on their own. Students will typically feel excited when they are able to finally hear, sing, and replicate the pattern on the piano successfully. This simple activity can happen at varying degrees of difficulty and at any point in the lesson, depending on the age or maturity of the student. Teachers can increase the difficulty as students improve by changing the rhythm, increasing the number of notes used, and encouraging students to try the game with their eyes closed.

Free improvisation in other tonalities

When students expand to playing in other major or minor five-finger positions or full scales, free improvisation using these scales or hand positions can increase confidence and fluency. This can and should happen within the context of the typical lesson – I often use the teacher accompaniment of the method book piece my students are currently playing. I ask my students to discuss the characteristics of a piece they have already learned and then ask them to improvise using these characteristics over the same accompaniment.

Students who are not currently in a method book can still do this activity if teachers can create their own accompaniment in a particular style. A simple, alternating pattern using tonic and dominant chords can be created by the teacher as an accompaniment at any point. Keeping the teacher accompaniment simple allows the student to focus on the sounds they are creating and begin to notice how certain notes work over the changes in the harmony of the accompaniment. The style of the accompaniment also provides another opportunity for creativity: A boom-chuck pattern (left-hand bass notes alternated with right-hand chords played with a staccato articulation) might result in a more upbeat feeling, while a lyrical, arpeggiated pattern might suggest a calmer mood. Teachers can ask their students to improvise in the style of the accompaniment and discuss how various pitches, rhythms, or articulations can change the feeling of music.

For example, the teacher might direct the student to place their right hand on a D minor pentascale. The student can play any of the notes in this hand position while the teacher plays a simple accompaniment, and the easy hand position allows beginners to focus on their sounds as they play. The student should be directed to notice the style of the chosen accompaniment, trying to make the improvisation match while also listening carefully to how each pitch sounds over the various chords. A possible accompaniment that could be used under a D Minor pentascale improvisation is shown in Example 3.



Example 3: D Minor Accompaniment for Improvisation

Call and response

Another activity that can increase fluency in improvisation is "call and response." Siskind refers to this as "a musical conversation" where one person asks a question and expects the answer of another.[81] After students are allowed to experiment with improvising in various five-finger patterns, teachers can return to "The Copy Game." This time, however, teachers can be more specific about the aspects that students should copy. For example, the teacher might ask the student to copy only the rhythm, while using any pitches the student chooses within the scale, or the student can try to copy the melody while using a different rhythm. Next, teachers can ask a "question" and ask students to come up with an "answer." One way to do this is to discuss how the question and answer should be related in some way: if the teacher plays a staccato, upbeat melody, the student should probably not reply with a legato, melancholy response. However, students and teachers can be creative with how they structure their melodies, and students should also be given a turn to ask the question and wait for the teacher's response.

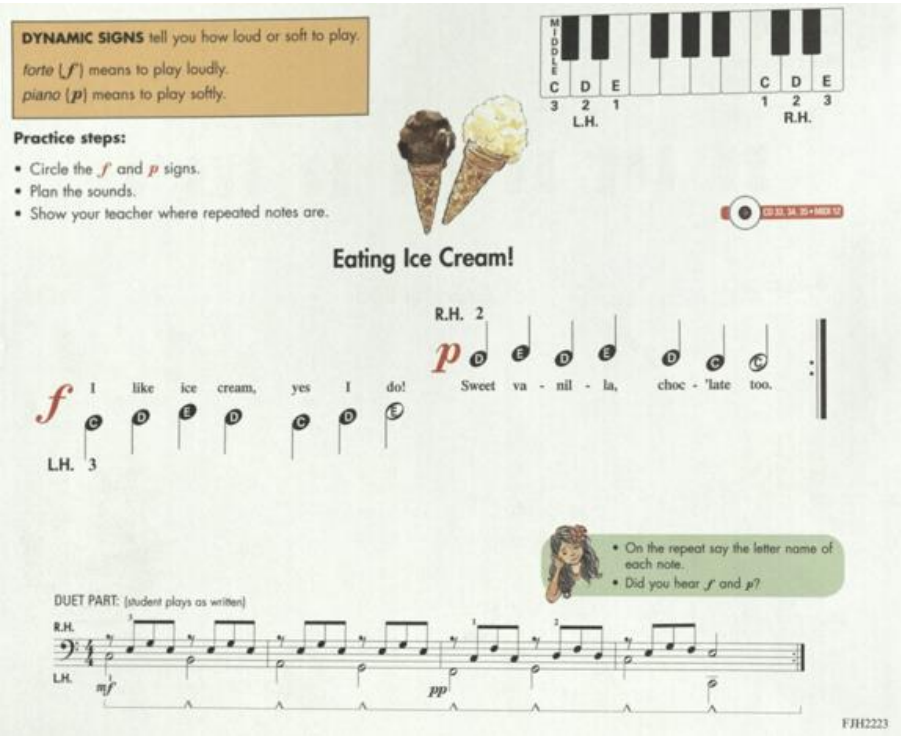
Composition

Azzara and Grunow recommend reading repertoire first before improvising and then composing using the same "tonal and rhythmic vocabulary."[82] Their sequence not only provides a chance for creativity and facilitates improvement in reading notation, but also develops the ear by allowing students to relate the physical approach of playing the piano to what they hear. The following example shows how

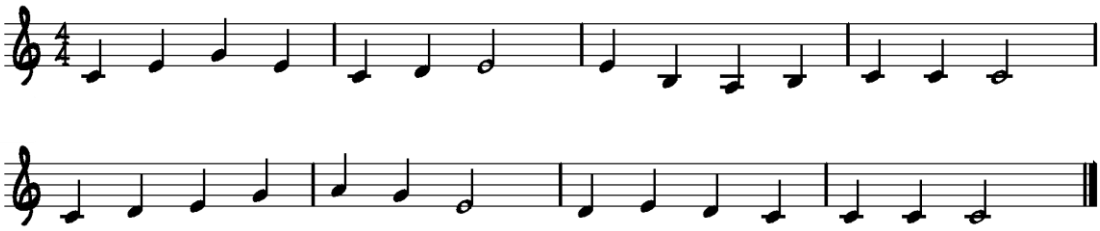
[81] Siskind, *First Lessons in Piano Improv*, 10.

[82] Azzara and Grunow, *Developing Musicianship through Improvisation*, 15.

this activity can be completed by young students who have not yet moved to sophisticated repertoire or piano technique. My 7-year-old student Colin was working on a piece called "Eating Ice Cream" from Helen Marlais' *All-in-One Approach to Succeeding at the Piano* (Example 4). After we discussed the mood of the piece, Colin improvised using notes in the same tonality while I played the teacher accompaniment from "Eating Ice Cream." Colin was ready to expand to a Middle C position for his improvisation, but this activity could easily be completed using the exact hand position from "Eating Ice Cream." Next, I pointed out a particularly pleasing motive Colin had played and asked him if he would like to write it down. He agreed, and after spending a few more minutes coming up with new patterns, he had a short composition matching the length, meter, and style of the same accompaniment from "Eating Ice Cream" (Example 5).



Example 4: Helen Marlais' "Eating Ice Cream" [83]



Example 5: Colin's Composition Based on "Eating Ice Cream"

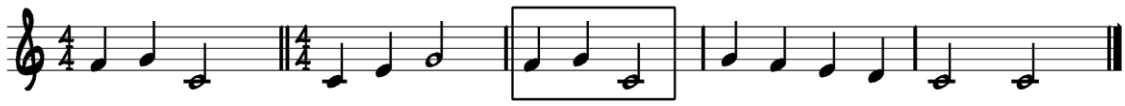
This activity can also happen informally, without the parameters of certain repertoire. If students are already improvising in a particular hand position, and you hear them gravitating towards a particular motive or pattern, encourage them to write it down and then find similar patterns to expand their ideas. The composition can be short; an 8-bar piece is plenty for young students. A fun way to finish the activity is to create an interesting accompaniment to play with students or use a teacher accompaniment from a method book using the same tonality.

Targeting in major or minor keys

Finally, before moving to jazz-specific sounds, students can employ a part of the jazz process in their major key improvisations. As discussed in Chapter Three, targeting a particular motive is an effective way to increase aural skill and integrate solid ideas into performance. Students can create a rhythm or melody (or both) that they like and write it down. Then, instead of expanding this into a composition, they can try to "target" this pattern somewhere in a free improvisation. Selecting the proper hand position, direct students to play freely and then try to "surprise" the teacher with the pattern they have written down. This allows students to practice integrating their

[83] Marlais, *Succeeding at the Piano: Preparatory Book A*, 22.

own ideas and provides structure in an otherwise free improvisation. Example 6 shows how an extracted motive can be targeted in a free improvisation. If a student was improvising in a C major five-finger hand position, they might play "Fa – Sol – Do" and decide that they find this to be particularly pleasing. Next, the student should write down the pitches of the motive, either on staff paper, or by copying the letter names if they are not reading notation yet. After copying down the motive and practicing it, they can improvise again, and this time, try to incorporate the motive somewhere in the improvisation. Example 6 shows the extracted motive in the first measure and then how this motive might look within a four-bar phrase of free improvisation.



Example 6: Motive Targeted in a C Major Free Improvisation

First Steps in Jazz Improvisation: Blues

Overview

After students have some familiarity with keyboard layout, they are ready to improvise in the blues style. The remainder of the curriculum centers around blues style, as this is one of the easiest ways to participate in the jazz idiom without advanced harmonic knowledge. Levine states that the blues "has its own traditions, but is also the single biggest part of the jazz tradition."[84] Throughout this section, students will become familiar with blues improvisation, voicings, and comping. The sequence

[84] Levine, *The Jazz Theory Book*, 219.

begins with only three pitches, so beginners of any age, even young children, can succeed in this activity. The first step is to introduce students to the sound of the blues. The following recordings of tunes using a blues progression and style provide a good starting place:

- Duke Ellington – "C Jam Blues"
- Sonny Rollins – "Blue 7"
- Horace Silver – "Doodlin'"
- Clifford Brown – "Sandu"

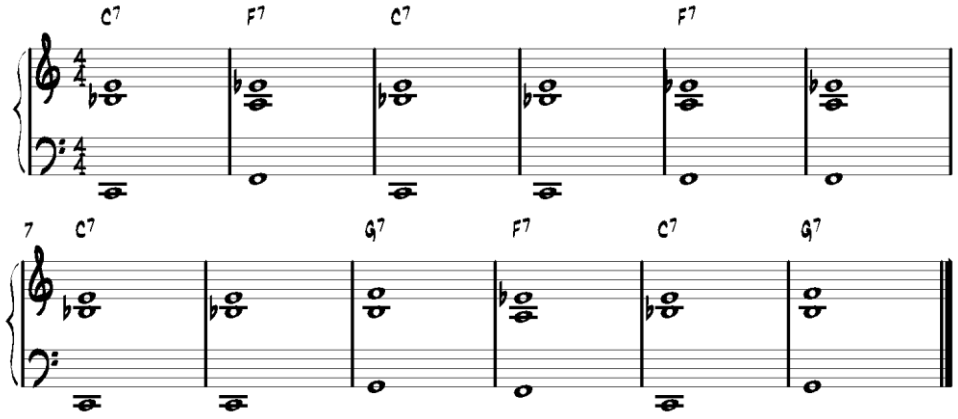
After students have listened to the recordings, the teacher can ask questions about the style. Suggestions for topics of discussion include the treatment of the melody (repetition and character), the mood, the parts of the ensemble, and the form. In particular, the melodic lines of "C Jam Blues" are highly repetitive. Teachers can sing the melodies back to students, so they can begin to hear the repetitions. In "Blue 7," the bass line figures prominently in the whole track, which will parallel the activities later in the sequence. Furthermore, the chord changes under the simple melody of "C Jam Blues" show a clear structure. These tunes will be featured again later in this sequence,[85] and the following section will discuss the chord progression typically used for a standard blues.

Beginning blues progression

There are several chord progressions that can be called a "blues progression," but this sequence will begin with the simplest version. Appendix A includes a

[85] Other tunes for listening activities are provided in Appendix C.

common example of a more advanced blues progression, which students may encounter later in an ensemble setting, but Levine provides an example of the basic Blues in C chord progression in *The Jazz Theory Book*:



Example 7: Basic Blues in C Progression[86]

The basic blues progression includes three chords: I, IV, and V. However, each of these chords is a dominant 7th chord, meaning they all include a major triad plus a minor 7th.[87] For example, in a C Blues, the progression would include C7, F7, and G7. This progression allows the C Blues scale to work over each measure in the chord progression in a blues improvisation; the full blues scale will be introduced later in this chapter.

For each of the following activities, teachers can supply a walking bass line that will work under the improvisations of students in this style. In a standard blues performance within a jazz rhythm section, the bass line would typically be performed by the bassist while the pianist comps chords. However, a pianist can also play both parts, with the bass line in the left hand and the 3rd and 7th of each chord, or the guide

[86] Levine, *The Jazz Theory Book*, 221.

[87] Levine, *The Jazz Theory Book*, 220.

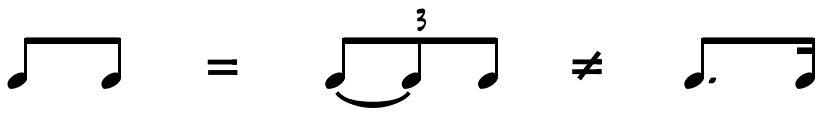
tones, comped in the right hand. A standard blues usually includes 12 measures and is a cyclical form, meaning it can be repeated several times. Each time the form repeats, the 12th measure will use V7 instead of I7 and then will land on I7 when the piece ends. Appendix B includes several versions of a blues bass line, along with the pitches to be played in the right hand and endings featuring the motions to both V7 and I7. Teachers can simply hold the right-hand pitches in whole notes in each measure, or they can try comping over the bass line in various rhythms while students improvise. Again, teachers do not need to be proficient in jazz performance to play the bass line or guide students through the next activities.

Swing style

As students begin this unit, their improvisations should be conducted in a swing style. This is the standard for most jazz performances and also happens to be one of the most difficult aspects to perform correctly. Students should not be expected to perform swinging eighths perfectly from the first try – this is a skill that requires maturity after many years of practicing and listening to the style in important recordings. Will Campbell, director of jazz studies and professor of saxophone at University of North Carolina-Charlotte, discusses swing style and jazz conception in "The Jazz Style: Learning to Speak with the Correct Musical Accent." For inexperienced students, "it is the lack of the correct 'accent' that inhibits their success" in sounding like mature jazz musicians.[88] Campbell states that "the simplest way to notate swing eighths is by thinking in terms of an eighth note triplet with the first two

[88] Will Campbell, "The Jazz Style: Learning to Speak with the Correct Musical Accent" (presentation, North Carolina Music Educators Conference, Winston-Salem, NC, November 10, 2008).

notes tied together."[89] Swing feel is "often incorrectly notated as a dotted eighth and a sixteenth," which sounds more snapped than swung.[90] Example 8 shows the comparison between two eighth notes, a triplet with the first two notes tied together, and the dotted eighth and sixteenth note rhythm. Saying "TRIP-A-LET" out loud while clapping on only the first and last syllable results in swinging eighth notes. Teachers can practice chanting and clapping the syllables with their students and then try some repeated note swung eighths on the piano for practice.



Example 8: Swing Rhythm Comparison[91]

Jazz articulation

Campbell also provides information about articulations in jazz style. However, many advanced jazz methods do not provide any instructions for articulations, due to the aural nature of jazz study. It is more likely that jazz musicians would learn articulations through listening to recordings. If they are marked, the articulations do not necessarily have different definitions than what one would expect in classical notation, but jazz musicians exaggerate articulations more than classical musicians do. For example, Liebman defines notation symbols for transcription purposes and describes a note with an accent as a "heavy accent" which should be held for full

[89] Campbell, "The Jazz Style: Learning to Speak with Correct Musical Accent."

[90] Campbell, "The Jazz Style: Learning to Speak with Correct Musical Accent."

[91] Campbell, "The Jazz Style: Learning to Speak with Correct Musical Accent."

value. In contrast, a note with a marcato is still described as a "heavy accent," but it should be held for less than full value.[92] Campbell uses the syllable "daht" to describe the sound of a marcato over a quarter note.[93] Meanwhile, staccatos would be described as a "dit" sound, which "is rarely used in jazz conception articulation"[94] in the way that classical players might play them. Staccatos in jazz, when they are used, would be shorter and less pronounced then what is usually played in classical music. In general, according to Campbell, "a syncopated entrance should almost always receive a clear accent," and "when a musical line changes direction or shape, it is best to accent the high points of the line."[95] Examples 9 and 10 show a realization of common jazz articulations in blues motives as an example.

Blues improvisation using three pitches

Before learning the entire blues scale, beginning students can successfully improvise in a blues style using three pitches in any key. A prominent feature of the blues scale is a minor 3rd interval, so using "Do-based minor" solfège, students can begin to improvise with "Do – Me – Sol." These three syllables can be combined in creative ways to improvise over a blues bassline. Students should find the pitches in the voice first, singing solfège or a "la" syllable to memorize them quickly. The easiest way to begin this activity is to find these pitches in an A or D Blues, since all

[92] Liebman, "The Complete Transcription Process," accessed April 7, 2020.

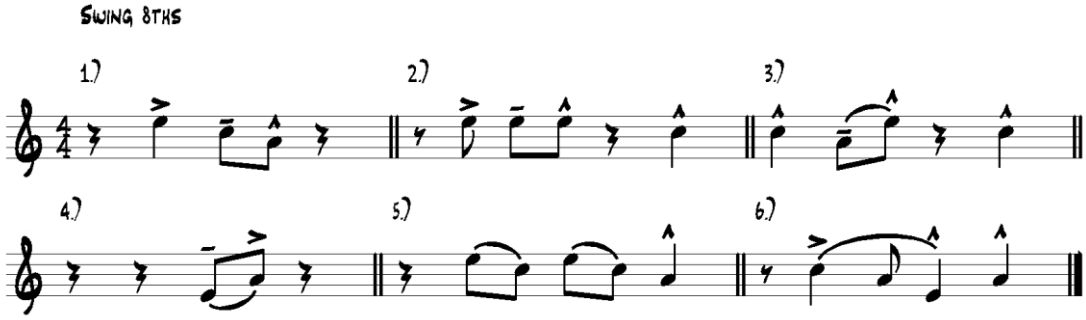
[93] Will Campbell, "Jazz Articulation Techniques for the Maturing Saxophonist," *Saxophone Journal* 33, no. 4 (March/April 2009): 54.

[94] Campbell, "Jazz Articulation Techniques," 54.

[95] Campbell, "The Jazz Style: Learning to Speak with Correct Musical Accent."

three pitches will be on the white keys. For example, in an A Blues, "Do – Me – Sol" would be the notes A, C, and E. Students with small fingers can split this between the hands, or they can play all three pitches with one hand.

This activity can begin with "The Copy Game." Using swing rhythm and strong accents, teachers should first have students echo short motives using these pitches, as shown below in Example 9. These six short and simple motives are provided for the teacher's use, but the student should learn these patterns purely from a rote approach. Again, teachers should guide the students to sing the motives first, in order to commit them to memory and strengthen the aural recognition. Students can also be encouraged to come up with their own motives, and those with a stronger sense of the rhythmic pulse can choose motives with more syncopation, like number 6 of Example 9. The articulation markings in these examples are adapted from Campbell's "The Jazz Style: Learning to Speak with the Correct Musical Accent."



Example 9: Blues Motives Using "Do – Me – Sol" [96]

After students can sing and play short blues motives, they can begin to form their own in a call and response activity; teachers should encourage students to

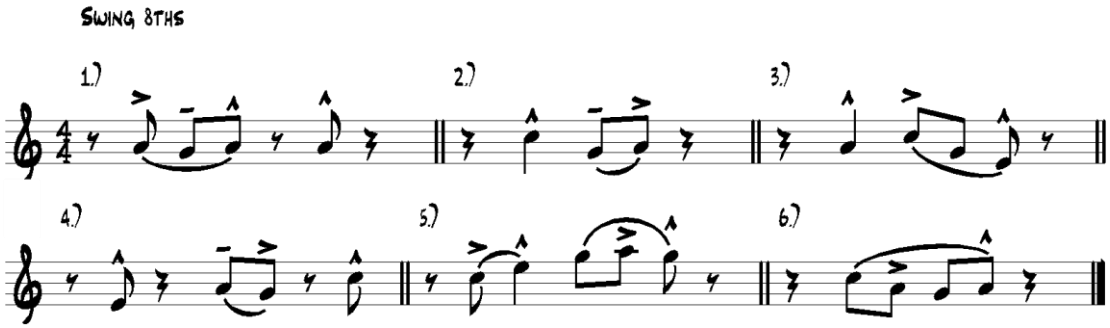
[96] Articulation markings adapted from Campbell, "The Jazz Style: Learning to Speak with the Correct Musical Accent."

respond to the motives they play either by copying only the rhythm or melody, first. Next, students should form their own answer, making sure to keep the stylistic elements of the blues in place. Afterwards, students are ready to freely improvise over an A Blues bass line.[97] Students may resort to random groupings of A, C, and E at first, but teachers should encourage them to try to replicate some of the motives they sang and played, use strong rhythmic accents, and think about their ideas before they play them. This entire activity can happen in a matter of minutes and should be repeated several times before moving on to the next part of the sequence.

Blues improvisation using four pitches

Beginning with "Do – Me – Sol" in an easy key allows students to focus on rhythm and articulation, but adding one more melodic pitch will quickly give more interest to a student's improvisation. The next part of the sequence adds "Te" to the scale, which comes directly from the I7 chord of the blues progression. Students do not need to understand dominant 7th chords to participate in this activity and can be taught the solfège without the theoretical knowledge. Teachers can begin by reviewing the motivic patterns using A – C – E from an A Blues and then direct students to add one more note – G. This may require a redistribution of the hands. For example, students can play G and A in the left hand, while the right hand plays C and E. Students should use strong fingers like 1 and 3 in order to get the best rhythmic sound. After learning the new note, teachers can repeat "The Copy Game" using this pattern. The example below shows some motivic patterns that students can practice singing and copying on the piano.

[97] An example of an A Blues bass line is included in Appendix B.



Example 10: Blues Motives Using "Te – Do – Me – Sol"

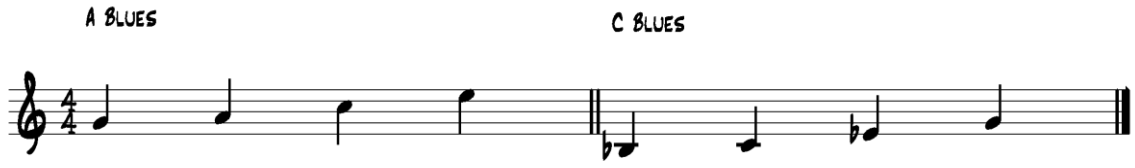
After singing and replicating patterns using "Te – Do – Me – Sol," students can once again participate in call and response and then freely improvise with these pitches over an A Blues bass line. At this point, students should be encouraged to try many different rhythms and unique combinations of the four syllables. Students who are ready to change fingers can explore other orderings of the notes; moving around the keyboard to play the G and A above C and E instead of below is one way to do this. After a few weeks, students should work to feel more comfortable moving and changing fingers to find these pitches in different octaves.

Transposition

Students who have played using the four pitches from the A Blues scale for several weeks should be ready to transpose to a new key. One easy key area to transpose to would be the D Blues, as this also uses all white keys for "Te – Do – Me – Sol," but students who are used to playing in C Major might also find it interesting to find pitches for a C Blues. Blues in C is a common way to introduce the blues in

jazz textbooks, so the remainder of the sequence will include examples in this key area.[98]

One way to introduce transposition to a C Blues to young children is to use whole steps and half steps. For example, teachers can begin by demonstrating the relationship between G and A from the A Blues as a whole step. Next, students should find the new "Do" for the C Blues, and then go a whole step down, which will lead them to B-flat, or "Te." The next two pitches in a C Blues can be found by moving from C up a whole step plus a half step, landing on E-Flat or "Me," and then two more whole steps, landing on G or "Sol." Example 11 illustrates the layout of the four syllables in an A Blues compared to a C Blues.



Example 11: Comparison of A Blues and C Blues in Four Pitches

After transposing to a new key, teachers should guide students through the same activities: "The Copy Game," call and response, and free improvisation over a blues bass line, and using the new key area until students are comfortable moving around the keyboard and shifting fingers to other octaves.

[98] An example of a C Blues bass line is provided in Appendix B.

First Steps in Comping: Blues Progression

Overview

As students are continuing to practice improvisation using four pitches, they can begin to learn the basics in jazz comping. After some time spent on blues improvisation using four syllables, students will become used to hearing the blues bass line that the teacher plays as an accompaniment. With the student, try listening to Clifford Brown and Max Roach's "Sandu" again, and this time listen to the treatment of the bass line and piano coming.[99] As the wind players perform the melody, the bassist produces a steady bass line while the pianist interjects chords as an accompaniment. Similarly, Sonny Rollin's "Blue 7" begins with a long introduction featuring only the bassist, and after Sonny plays the melody on tenor saxophone for a few measures, the pianist begins to comp.[100] Students should be able to notice the rhythmic complexity of the comping and how the pianist seems to try to fit his playing to Sonny's improvisations. These recordings both demonstrate the important role of the pianist in a jazz ensemble setting and can also inspire young students to wish to learn how to comp chords rhythmically and musically.

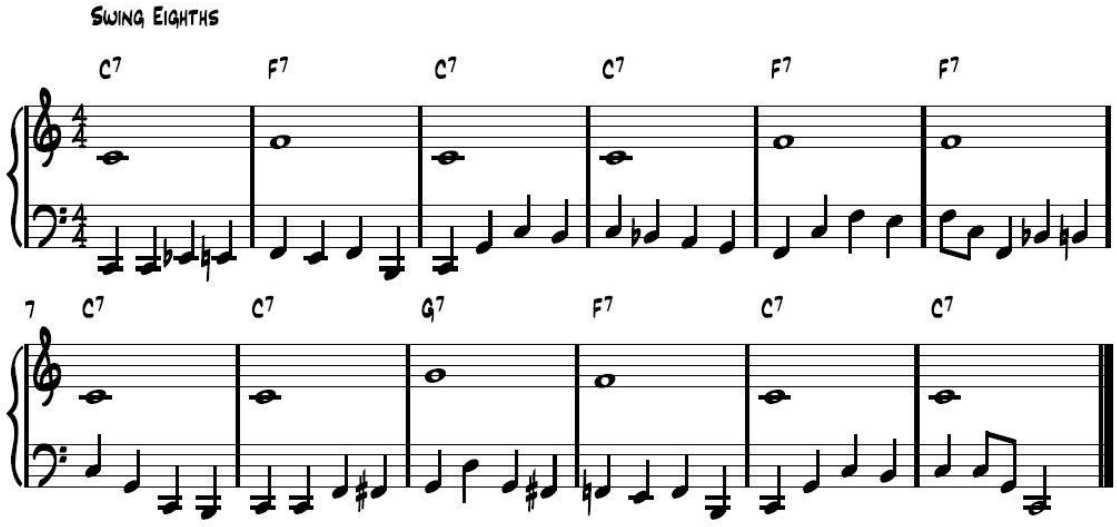
Memorizing the roots

After listening to "Sandu" and "Blue 7," teachers can introduce the simple blues progression by playing a C Blues bass line alone while students observe. Next, teachers can demonstrate the root note of each chord by holding the roots in the right

[99] Clifford Brown and Max Roach, "Sandu," recorded February 23-25, 1955, track 6 on *Study in Brown,* EmArcy Records, vinyl.

[100] Sonny Rollins, "Blue 7," recorded June 22, 1956, side 2, track 2 on *Saxophone Colossus,* Prestige Records, vinyl.

hand while singing the note names of the roots and playing the bass line in the left hand. The example below shows this activity for a C Blues.



Example 12: Roots in the Right Hand Held over the Bass Line

Next, students can participate by holding the root notes in the *left hand,* while the teacher plays the bass line. It is important for students to use their left hand for the roots, since the right hand will be used for other notes of the chords later. As students hold the root notes, they should say or sing the note names out loud on each downbeat with the teacher's help. This allows students to learn the root motion and commit the blues progression to memory.

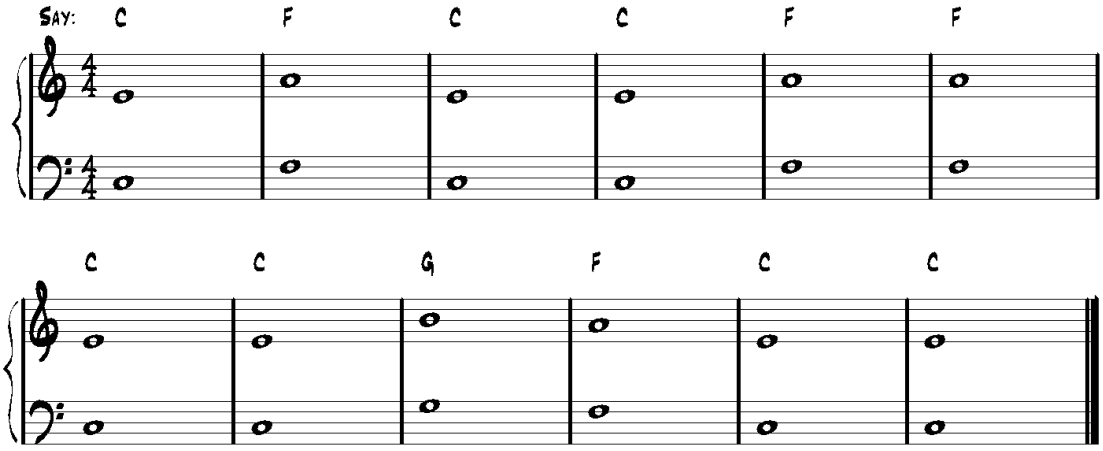
The memorization of the blues progression may take several weeks. At this point, it may be helpful to write the root motion using letter names, but students should be encouraged to reproduce it from memory. Students do not need to understand the chord theory until later in the sequence. Before moving on to the next activity, I recommend that students have a basic understanding of major triads. Students who know how to play major triads in basic keys will have an easier time learning how to play the voicings for a blues progression. This activity can still be

completed without previous knowledge in this area, but it may take longer to commit to memory. For students who are familiar with their triads, a quick reinforcement on the labels of "root, third, and fifth" may be necessary. The next activity will be shown using a C Blues progression, but other keys are possible as well.

Adding the major 3rd

After students practice playing the roots of a basic blues progression, the next step is to add the major 3rd for each chord in the right hand. It should be noted that a blues scale improvisation uses the minor third – "Do" to "Me." However, the chord progression in a basic blues uses *major* thirds. For a C Blues, teachers can guide students to find the triads of C Major, F Major, and G Major. This activity should still be completed by rote and without the labels of I, IV, and V, yet. After finding the three triads, have students find and say the name of the root for each chord, which they will already be familiar with from playing these notes over the bass line. For example, they should say and play C, F, and G in the left hand. Next, students should find and say the 3rd of each of these major triads; they should play and say E, A, and B in the right hand. This activity may require the teacher to hold the complete triad as students search for the third. After some repetition of finding and playing the roots in the left hand and the 3rds in the right hand, they should try to play both of these pitches together for each chord. For this activity, students should play the right hand one octave and a major 3rd up from the roots, since this will more closely parallel the spacing for a typical jazz voicing. Beginning students may need some time to coordinate the two hands together. After committing the voicings for the three chords to memory, students can play these voicings in time while the teacher plays the bass

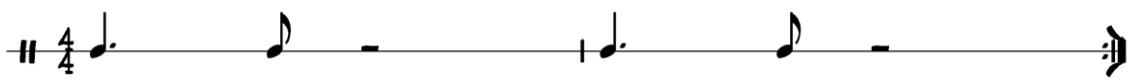
line again. Example 13 shows what students will need to play for each chord change, with the appropriate spacing, while the teacher supplies the bass line. Again, have students say or sing the root on each downbeat to remember the form of the progression.



Example 13: Roots in the Left Hand and 3rds in the Right Hand

Applying a rhythm

Applying a basic rhythm to the voicing makes this activity more interesting. Listening to more jazz recordings with students and directing them to notice how the pianist "comps" or plays chords while other instruments are improvising can show students the role of the pianist in jazz performance. Young students may have trouble with the syncopated nature of common jazz comping rhythms, so a basic, repetitive rhythm is a natural first step. Teachers can again supply the bass line while students try the rhythm in Example 14, or this may be a good opportunity for teachers to try a simple blues improvisation while students play the voicings in rhythm, giving the students a chance to accompany a soloist.

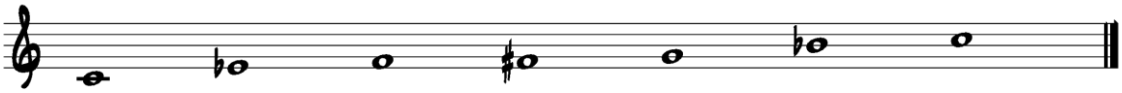


Example 14: Basic Comping Rhythm [101]

Expansions to Blues Improvisation: The Full Blues Scale

Since this curriculum is meant to be integrated into a traditional private lesson setting, it is assumed that teachers have spent many weeks or months on the previous concepts. Even students who grasp the concepts quickly will need time to develop a rhythmic vocabulary in their improvisations or comping. At this point in the sequence, students could reasonably be in early intermediate repertoire or can do the following: read and play eighth notes, use full five-finger hand positions, and play in both detached and legato styles. The next activity requires solid motor control and use of all the fingers. After students have spent time playing the four pitches of "Te – Do – Me – Sol" in several keys while improvising, the next step is to learn the full blues scale. The full blues scale contains the following syllables: "Do – Me – Fa – Fi – Sol – Te." For young students who have not learned how to pass the thumb underneath the other fingers, the scale can be divided between the hands. In this case, the left hand can play C, E-flat, and F with fingers 4, 2, 1, and the right hand can play F-sharp, G, B-flat, and C with fingers 1, 2, 4, 5. Otherwise, the full scale can be played in the right hand with fingers 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, in the order of the pitches shown in Example 15.

[101] Davis, *Jazz Piano Comping*, 61.



Example 15: Full C Blues Scale[102]

After spending some time learning the scale, Duke Ellington's "C Jam Blues" and Horace Silver's "Doodlin'" are two possible recordings to re-visit for blues scale improvisation.[103] In both of these recordings, students should notice the repetitive nature of blues style melodies and the underlying chord progression. Students should also listen for the interchange between soloists, as this is an opportunity to point out the return to the beginning of the form. After listening, it is time to return to "The Copy Game" once again. The expansion to all notes of the blues scale will make this activity much more enjoyable and also more time-consuming. It is expected that students may need several repetitions to grasp both the new notes of the scale and the complexities of moving around the keyboard in rhythm. Once again, knowing the proper solfège syllables for singing can allow students to commit blues motives to memory more quickly. During "The Copy Game," teachers can sing difficult motives using the "Do-based minor" solfège and direct the students to repeat them through singing and then playing. Further activities of call and response or allowing the students to create their own motives and write them down will also aid in the fluency of using the full blues scale in performance.

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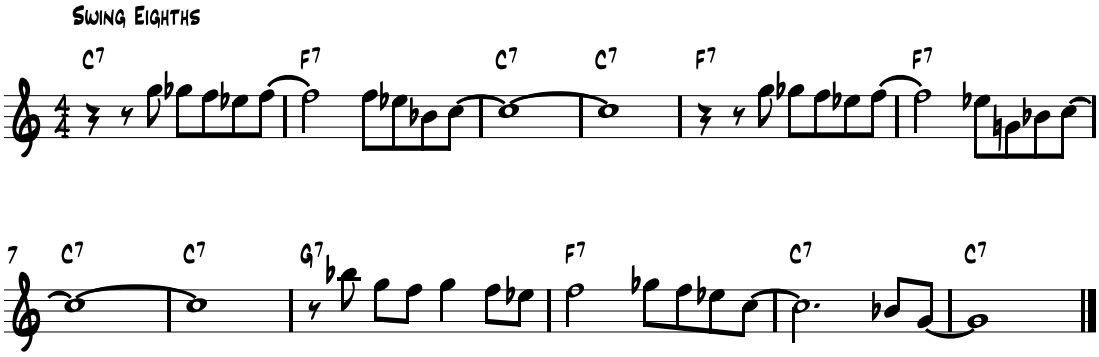
[102] Levine, *The Jazz Theory Book*, 231.

[103] Duke Ellington, "C Jam Blues," recorded 1958-1959, track 5 on *Blues in Orbit*, released 1960, Columbia Records, vinyl; Horace Silver, "Doodlin'," recorded November 13, 1954, track 8 on *Horace Silver Quintet*, released 1956, Blue Note Records, vinyl.

Finally, students can improvise again using the blues scale while teachers play the bass line. Teachers should encourage students to hear ideas before they play, use accents and strong rhythmic patterns, and create space between melodic ideas, which can be heard in the improvisations in "C Jam Blues" and "Blue 7." The following example from Mark Harrison's *Intro to Jazz Piano* shows a simple blues improvisation using space between the entrances of three separate phrases. Students can be taught the melody of this example by rote for more reinforcement of this idea, or the teacher can play this excerpt and then ask students to create something similar.



Example 16: C Blues Improvisation[104]

Targeting and composition

Students who are used to improvising using the full blues scale can return to the targeting and composition activities from earlier in the chapter. Students should be allowed some time to come up with motives they enjoy playing and then insert these ideas somewhere in a blues improvisation. More advanced students may try to listen to "C Jam Blues" or "Doodlin'" to extract interesting motives for this activity. Since students are only using the blues scale to improvise, they do not need to worry yet

[104] Harrison, *Intro to Jazz Piano*, 79.

about exact placement of their motives; the student can "surprise" the teacher with where they decide to play the extracted motive. This activity strengthens aural ability while also making an improvisation sound more structured. Students can further increase their aptitude in blues improvisation by creating a blues-style composition. Taking extracted motives, either created by the student or heard in recordings, students can combine them into a pleasing composition and attempt to fill all 12 bars of the blues progression with planned ideas.

Expansions to Blues Comping: Adding the Minor 7th

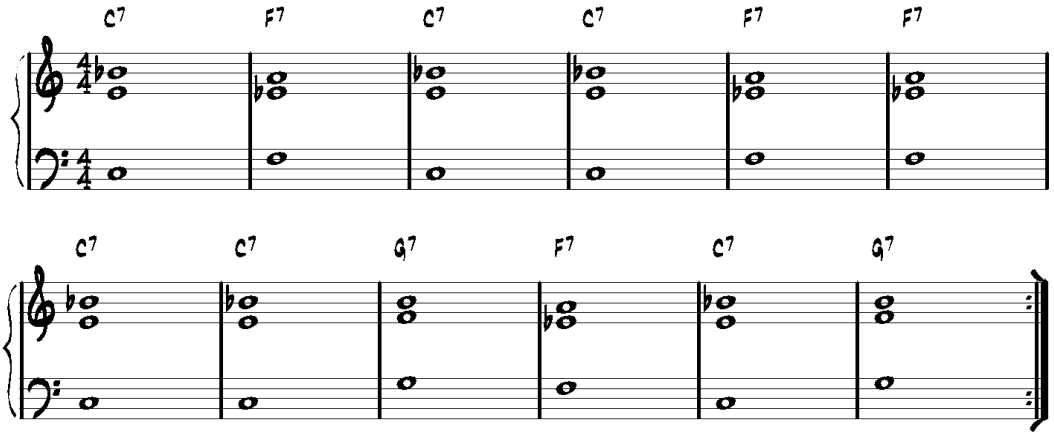
As students continue to practice improvising using the full blues scale, they can also begin to study the harmonic theory concerning the blues progression. Jazz provides the perfect opportunity to teach beginning or intermediate students about 7th chords. Students who can play both major and natural minor scales and sing solfège for both will have an easier time learning this new concept, but it is still possible through a rote approach for students who have no experience in this. As stated previously, each chord in the basic blues progression is a dominant 7th chord, meaning it contains a major triad plus a minor 7th. For a C Blues, the three chords are C7, F7, and G7. Students can learn this concept as an extension to the comping activity presented previously. After playing the roots of the blues progression in the left hand and the major 3rds in the right hand, the next step is to add the minor 7th for each chord in the right hand as well. The 3rd and the 7th are commonly referred to as the guide tones, as these provide the quality of the chord in addition to the essential chord sound.

One way to introduce the minor 7th is as a whole step down from the root of the chord. Therefore, the 7th for C7, F7, and G7 would be the notes B-flat, E-flat, and F, respectively. Another way to show students the added 7th is to build the complete triads again for C, F, and G, and then add the minor 7th to each, as a minor 3rd above the 5th. For example, teachers can guide students to find the C-E-G triad, name G as the fifth, and then go up a whole step plus a half step, or minor 3rd, landing on B-flat. Students may have trouble playing all four notes in a dominant 7th chord together, so teachers may need to assist students by playing the triad while students play the minor 7th by itself.

On the other hand, students who are already familiar with the full C major scale can use their knowledge of the scale to learn about minor 7ths. Teachers can direct students to play the C Major scale, then find the 7th note of the scale – B. Next, teachers can describe this B as a major 7th because it is part of the major scale. Afterwards, students can be shown how lowering the major 7th down a half step makes it a minor 7th. Students do not need to be aware of natural minor scales to complete this activity, but this is yet another way to explain why it is called a minor 7th. Comparing the C Major scale to the C natural minor scale can further solidify the components of the chord as a major triad paired with the minor 7th, especially if the student prefers complete explanations behind theoretical aspects.

After learning and memorizing the minor 7th for each chord in the blues progression, it is time to integrate this into the previously learned voicing. Students should review the root in the left hand and the third in the right hand, first, and then add the 7th of each chord in the right hand. This results in a three-note voicing, which

is a common basic voicing to begin with when learning jazz tunes in various styles, as well as the blues.[105] The final voicing for each chord is shown in Example 17 within the context of the full blues progression.



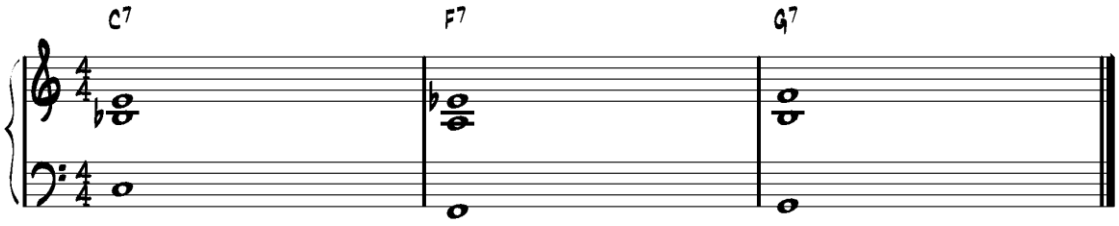
Example 17: Three-Note Voicings for C Blues

With the full voicing, the connections between the chords in the progression become clearer when the guide tones in the right hand are played in closest position to one another. As the C7 moves to F7, the 3rd in the first chord goes down a half step to the 7th of the second chord. Similarly, the 7th in the first chord goes down a half step to the 3rd of the second chord. This particular voicing allows for a "maximum of smoothness, or good *voice leading*."[106] The guide tones in the right hand can also be reversed. Example 18 shows another inversion of the 3rd and 7th in the right hand, which also allows for smooth voicing leading between the chords in the progression.[107]

[105] Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book*, 17.

[106] Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book*, 17.

[107] Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book*, 18.

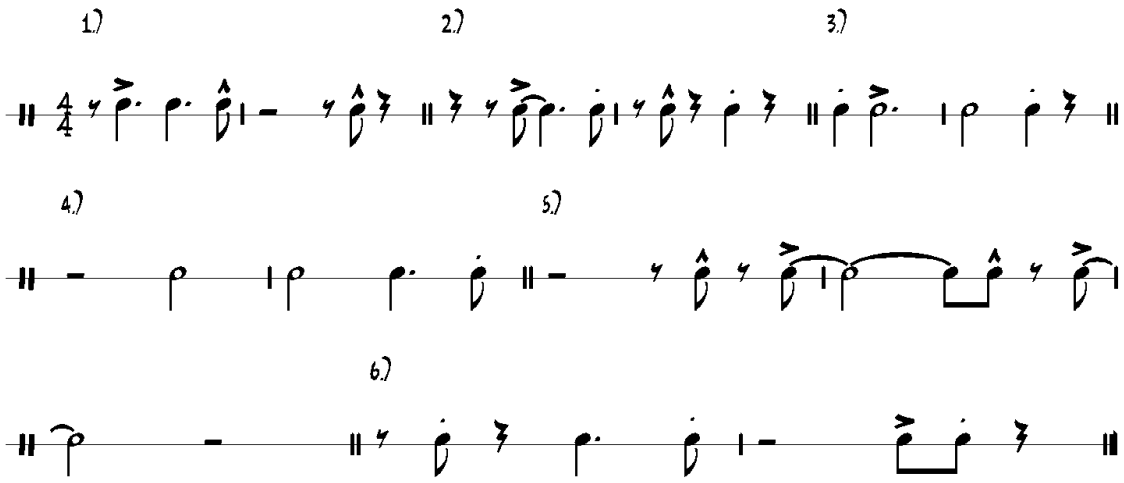


Example 18: 3rd and 7th in the Right Hand in Another Inversion

Applying a rhythm

After playing the new voicing in whole notes while the teacher plays the bass line, the student can apply a rhythm. The basic rhythm learned previously can be used again for students struggling to play these voicings, but more advanced students may be interested in creating their own. Comping in jazz tends to have a balance of elements. Expert jazz pianists will often use a combination of long and short notes along with notes that are both on and off the beat. The following rhythmic figures in Example 19 come from a transcription of comping by jazz pianist Kenny Barron. Teachers can take this opportunity to play Nick Brignola's "All The Things You Are," featuring Barron as the pianist.[108] It is clear that Barron varies his comping by using a variety of articulations, including marcatos, staccatos, and accents along with longer tied notes. Baron also combines off-beat chords with on-beat chords and avoids repeating rhythms too often. One common feature of the rhythms Barron and other jazz pianists use is the anticipation of the downbeat, with an eighth note in the previous measure tied to the downbeat of the next.

[108] Nick Brignola, saxophonist, "All the Things You Are," by Jerome Kern, recorded September 25, 1989, track 4 of *On a Different Level*, Van Gelder Recording Studio, compact disc.



Example 19: Transcription of Comping Rhythms by Kenny Barron[109]

Beginning students may not be ready to attempt these complicated rhythms, but teachers and students can come up with their own using similar ideas. Clapping the rhythms together with a metronome before trying to play them will help students internalize the rhythm. Students who understand basic counting systems can also plan rhythms that happen on and off the main beats and notate some of the rhythms to help commit them to memory. Again, teachers should allow students to experiment with different rhythms over the bass line and remind students about the role of the pianist in various jazz ensembles. Listening to recordings again can give students a better idea of how this activity can potentially be applied, but students with no intentions of playing in a jazz ensemble can still enjoy learning about comping. Teachers can improvise using a blues scale while students play their comping rhythms to allow them the chance to act as the accompanist. A list of 100 popular jazz tunes is provided in

[109] Rhythms adapted from a transcription of Kenny Barron, pianist, comping on Nick Brignola's "All the Things You Are," track 4 of *On a Different Level*.

Appendix C so that teachers and students alike can listen to many different styles of comping and improvisation.

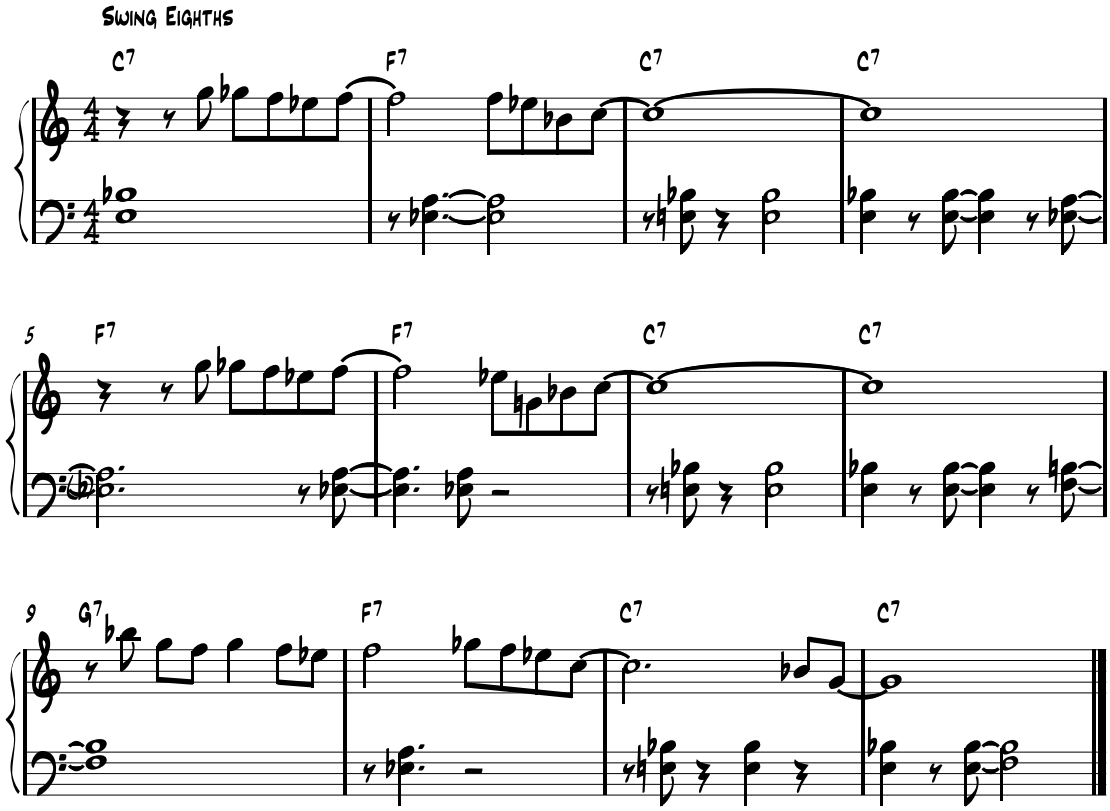
Combining Comping and Improvisation

Voicings can later be combined into the left hand alone while the right hand improvises; this is an important skill that can prepare students to play jazz in performance as a soloist. It is also the easiest way to enjoy playing jazz if one never has the opportunity to join a jazz ensemble in the future. There is a rich library of recordings featuring renditions of standard tunes performed by solo pianists, including the artists Bill Evans, McCoy Tyner, Art Tatum, and many others. In McCoy Tyner's live version of "In a Mellow Tone," students can hear how Tyner plays the melody in the right hand while providing a chordal accompaniment in the left hand. Tyner also embellishes the moments between melodic content with virtuosic flourishes in both hands.[110] This recording can demonstrate to young students the vast capabilities of jazz pianists as well as the possibilities for performing jazz as a solo artist.

However, the skill of combining the right and left hand together in jazz can be more difficult for children with smaller hands. Instead of playing the entire voicing from Example 17 in the left hand alone, or learning a more difficult voicing, younger students can begin by playing the right-hand pitches from Example 17 in the left hand. The resulting voicing is a tritone interval without the root, but it contains the guide tones of each chord. The following example takes the melody from Mark Harrison's

[110] McCoy Tyner, "In a Mellow Tone," by Duke Ellington, recorded 1988, track 3 on *Revelations: Live at Merkin Hall, NYC*, Blue Note Records.

blues improvisation from Example 16 and adds the 3rd and 7th of each chord in the progression to the left hand. The voicings are comped rhythmically, but this exercise can begin with the left hand holding the pitches in whole notes until students become familiar with playing hands together.



Example 20: Left and Right Hand Together in a C Blues[111]

Conclusions

By the end of this sequence, students have learned how to improvise using the blues scale with strong accents and swing rhythm. Furthermore, they have learned a three-note voicing that can be applied to the basic blues progression and comped in a

[111] Rhythm and voicing in the left hand adapted from Mark Harrison, *Intro to Jazz Piano*, 79.

rhythmic fashion. While these skills seem to be elementary versions of what jazz musicians are able to do, I argue that it is the early musical training of these skills that is so important for advancement in the jazz style. The early exposure to this aural approach and the experience with improvising can pave the way for future study in a more confident manner.

While I have always enjoyed listening to jazz music, my enjoyment of it as a pianist only developed when I was able to understand the complexities of the processes involved in learning the jazz style. This curriculum takes a step beyond the traditional piano methods, which may include a piece or two in the jazz idiom, and the curriculums which introduce jazz for the purposes of becoming a better classical musician; the activities in this document instead allow young students the experience of engaging with music aurally, using their minds and ears to adopt an important style of playing and develop new ideas within this style in a creative manner. In the future, I hope to see more engagement with jazz across all curriculums and a deeper appreciation of this art form within the classical piano community. Moreover, I believe that the incorporation of jazz study into beginning curriculums is a way to ensure that this happens.

Appendix A contains a brief summary of the concepts that students may encounter if they seek to continue with more advanced activities or join a middle or high school jazz ensemble. The next step for improvisation in the blues style involves many new theoretical concepts, including chord-scale theory, and more advanced blues progressions with an increase in the number of voicings necessary. However, the processes needed to learn more advanced jazz music remain the same. In whatever

endeavors students commit themselves to, they should listen to recordings, sing all new ideas first, extract important details, target motives, compose, and improvise freely as often as possible. Skill in jazz requires time, repetition, and dedication, and the rewards of committing to the process are many: advanced aural ability, harmonic awareness, creativity, and above all, an engagement with the unique American art form known as jazz.

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APPENDIX A

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Applications: Jazz Ensemble

As students continue to learn about jazz, they may be inspired to join a jazz ensemble when they reach middle or high school. In a school setting, the band director would be responsible for teaching jazz concepts, but the classical piano teacher can still develop confidence to provide help for their student in this situation through the resources provided in Chapter Two and the following information. Moreover, the lessons in improvisation and comping from this sequence will increase the aural ability and confidence necessary of the student for performance in a jazz ensemble. Jazz pianist Rhonda Ringering echoes the necessity of an introduction to jazz skill before students attempt to sit in an ensemble for the first time:

> In reality, most pre-college jazz band pianists are intermediate to advanced classical students who have had little or no introduction to jazz or improvisation. They join the band with technique "to burn" but with no understanding of basic jazz structures or chords, chart reading, comping, swinging or improvisation. And while seeing a prize pupil enter the studio with a stack of jazz band charts in hand may strike fear in many classical instructors, jazz band playing should be encouraged, as it will only improve the student's theory, ear training, rhythmic, ensemble, and improvising skills.[112]

While the sequence of this project is intended for beginners and may not extend as far as some of the skills that Ringering mentions, it does introduce students to jazz style and articulation, swing rhythm, blues improvisation, and basic comping.

[112] Rhonda Ringering, "Keeping the Beat: How to Teach Classical Piano Students to Play with a Jazz Band," *American Music Teacher* 58, no. 5 (April/May 2009): 22.

The following section will briefly summarize what teachers might expect if students continue jazz study in a school setting and provide suggestions for how to prepare.

Reading Lead Sheets

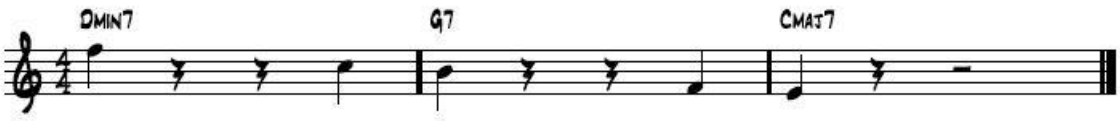
Directors of a middle or high school jazz ensemble may pass out jazz charts, or scores, to the pianist with sections designed for chord comping that contain only the chord symbols. This can be daunting to read at first, but students need only remember the voicing they learned through basic blues comping. In the three-note voicing for a blues, the pianist plays the root in the left hand and the 3rd and 7th, or the guide tones, in the right hand. There are many other more advanced voicing types, but this basic voicing provides an optimal place to start when first reading a lead sheet. For each chord symbol, the student needs to decide the quality of the chord to find the 3rd and 7th. In the basic blues, the 3rd of the chord was always major, and the 7th was always minor, since the progression contains only dominant chords. However, students will need to learn how to play other types of chords, such as minor, half diminished, sus, and many more. For example, if a student encounters a Cmin7 chord in a lead sheet, they can play a C in the left hand and an E-flat and B-flat in the right hand. In this case, the 3rd is minor, and the 7th is also minor. More information about chord symbols and types can be found in the jazz methods for intermediate players, discussed in Chapter Two.

Voice Leading in Improvisation

As students advance, they will need to become aware of how to improvise using patterns aside from the blues scale. Again, this is a vast topic that cannot be fully covered in this document, but the following information summarizes some of the basic principles.

In some of the blues recordings mentioned in Chapter Four, the improvisors are not only using the blues scale to improvise over a blues progression. The next step is to learn more about the intricate harmonic knowledge that jazz improvisors use. Through the transcription process, it becomes clear that almost all jazz improvisors make constant use of either the 3rd or the 7th on the downbeats of each new measure or chord change. Furthermore, the 7th almost always resolves down by half-step to the 3rd of the next chord, just as the right hand moves down by half-step when playing the 3rd and 7th in basic blues comping. Coker calls this the "7-3 resolution" and clarifies that "the setting for the 7-3 resolution is most often a harmonic progression of II7 to V7, though the setting is sometimes V7 to I."[113] This happens to be the most common progression found in jazz standards, so I suggest that students learn and memorize their II7-V7-I7 progressions in all keys. While jazz textbooks often present the progression in capital letters as Coker did, the progression is usually ii7, V7, and Imaj7, as in this C Major progression: Dmin7, G7, Cmaj7. Ligon provides an example showing the 7-3 resolution in this key. This graphic represents how the 3rd of the chord might be highlighted by improvisors on the downbeat and how the 7th might be on the last beat before the chord change.

[113] Coker, *Elements of Jazz Language for the Developing Improvisor*, 19.



Example 21: 7-3 Resolutions in a II-V-I Progression[114]

When learning how to improvise over a new tune, students can find the 3rd and 7th of each chord first, and then discover how the relationship between each of the chords allows for smooth voice leading on the chord change. An example of this is shown in the next section, within the context of a blues progression. After students find the 7-3 resolution, they can fill in the gaps with embellishments, sequences, or scalar patterns. As referenced in Chapter Two, Ligon provides many examples of some common improvisational outlines showing how to do this in *Connecting Chords with Linear Harmony*.[115]

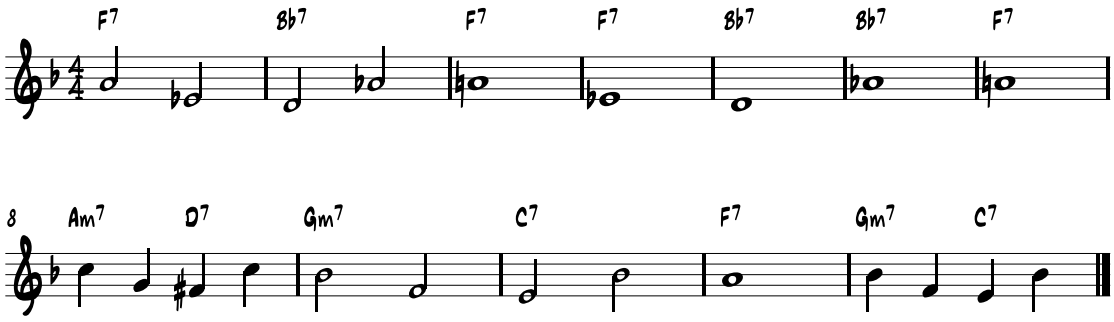
Advanced Blues Progressions

The basic blues progression presented in the sequence of this project is a commonly accepted form of the blues, but several other more advanced chord progressions exist in standard jazz performance. These more advanced progressions require considerably more jazz theoretical knowledge but can still segue students into improvisation and comping within more difficult standard tunes. As seen in Example 22, the basic chord structure remains the same, but there are additional ii7-V7 progressions that offer more opportunities for variety in harmonic relationship. For example, instead of moving to V7 in the ninth measure, this progression moves to the

[114] Ligon, *Connecting Chords with Linear Harmony*, 6.

[115] Ligon, *Connecting Chords with Linear Harmony*.

ii7 chord belonging to the V7, first. Furthermore, there is a ii7-V7 moving to that chord first in measure 8. In addition to the chord progression, Example 22 shows how to find the 7-3 resolutions for improvisation within this progression. This exercise can later be embellished when learning to improvise.



Example 22: 7-3 Resolutions in an Advanced Blues Progression[116]

To close this section, I want to reiterate that jazz requires many other skills that surpass what is included in this document. It is important for future jazz students to seek out as many ways as possible to improve their aural ability through listening to recordings, singing, and practicing methodically. Jazz learning is a process that requires the careful layering of ideas before knowledge and skill can be combined to create a natural approach to jazz performance. Teachers with little to no experience in jazz can guide their students to useful resources and help them discover effective ways to improve their skills.

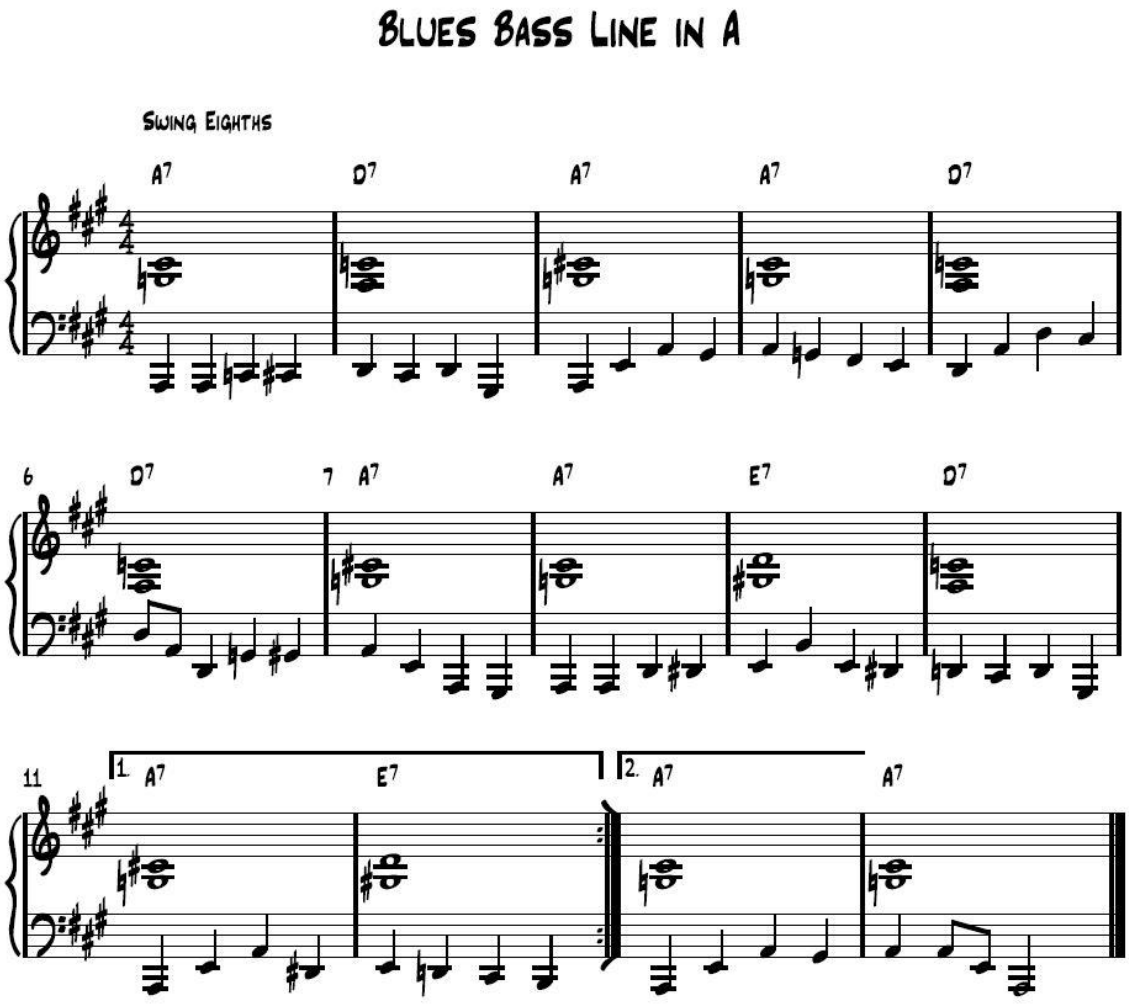
[116] See examples for embellishing the 7-3 Resolutions in Ligon, *Connecting Chords with Linear Harmony*, 102.

APPENDIX B

BLUES BASS LINE EXAMPLES

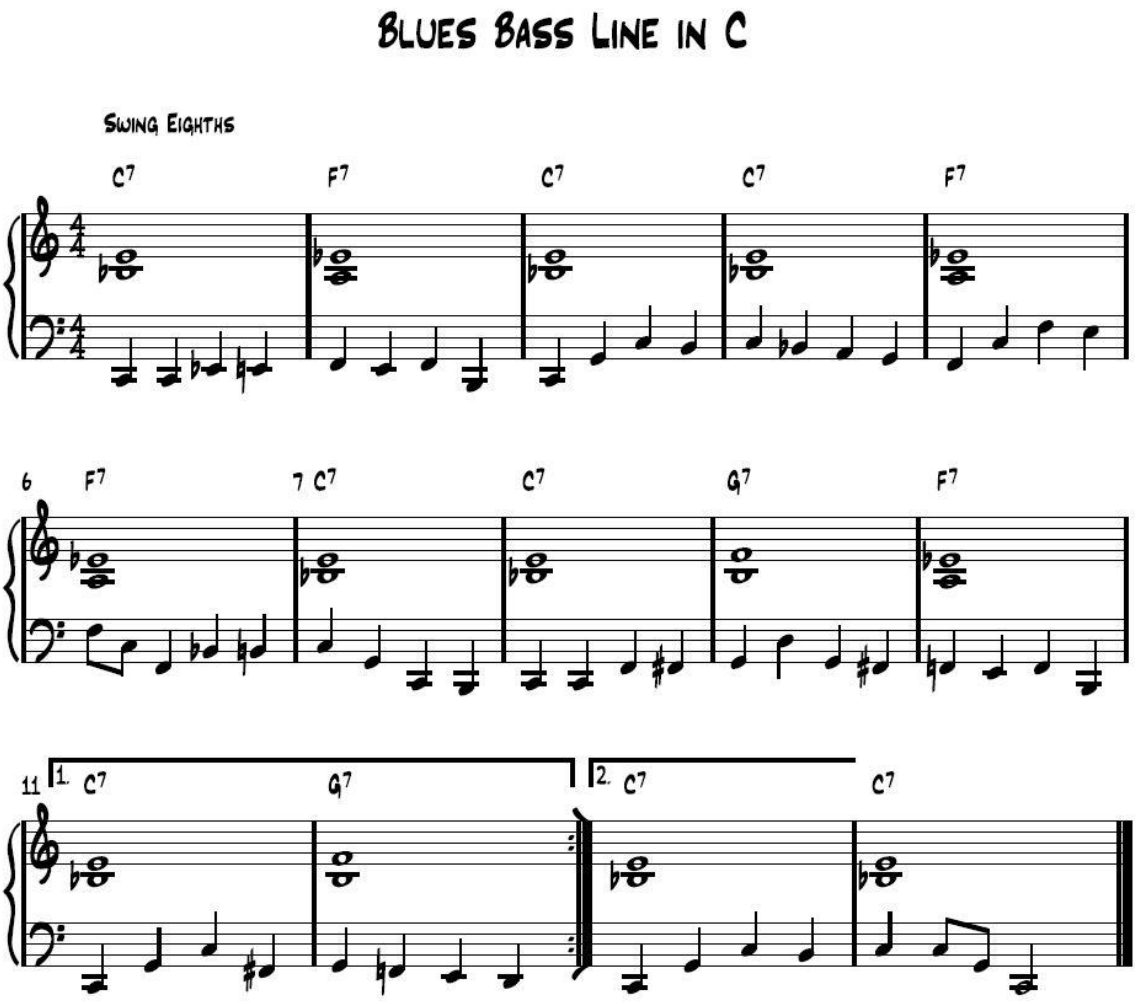
The following blues bass lines are provided for the teacher's convenience. The structure of these bass lines was adapted from Tom Warrington's *Jazz Bass: Crawl Before You Walk.* I encourage teachers to use this resource in order to create their own bass lines. There are two keys provided for the main activities of this document, but as students become more advanced, they will need to transpose their improvisations to new keys.

The right-hand notes are written in whole note rhythms, but teachers should practice comping the right hand over the left-hand bass line. This can be surprisingly complicated to do since the bass line is rather intricate, so beginning with a simple, repeated rhythm in the right hand can be helpful, just as students do in Chapter Four.



Example 23: Blues Bass Line in A[117]

[117] Adapted from Tom Warrington, "Jazz Bass: Crawl Before You Walk," *Jazz Educators Journal* 31, no. 2 (September 1998): 42-45, https://search-proquest-com.lib-e2.lib.ttu.edu/docview/1369670?accountid=7098.



Example 24: Blues Bass Line in C[118]

[118] Adapted from Tom Warrington, "Jazz Bass: Crawl Before You Walk," *Jazz Educators Journal* 31, no. 2 (September 1998): 42-45, https://search-proquest-com.lib-e2.lib.ttu.edu/docview/1369670?accountid=7098.

APPENDIX C

LISTENING LIST

The following list of tunes gives students and teachers a starting to place to expand their knowledge and enjoyment of the jazz style. “The Jazz 100” list was voted for by listeners of the Jazz24 streaming service. This list has also been compiled in the free streaming service called Spotify as a playlist titled “The Jazz 100.”

	Song	Artist
1.	Take Five	Dave Brubeck
2.	So What	Miles Davis
3.	Take The A Train	Duke Ellington
4.	Round Midnight	Thelonious Monk
5.	My Favorite Things	John Coltrane
6.	A Love Supreme (Acknowledgment)	John Coltrane
7.	All Blues	Miles Davis
8.	Birdland	Weather Report
9.	The Girl From Ipanema	Stan Getz & Astrud Gilberto
10.	Sing, Sing, Sing	Benny Goodman
11.	Strange Fruit	Billie Holiday
12.	A Night in Tunisia	Dizzy Gillespie
13.	Giant Steps	John Coltrane
14.	Blue Rondo a la Turk	Dave Brubeck
15.	Goodbye Pork Pie Hat	Charles Mingus
16.	Stolen Moments	Oliver Nelson
17.	West End Blues	Louis Armstrong
18.	God Bless The Child	Billie Holiday
19.	Cantaloupe Island	Herbie Hancock
20.	My Funny Valentine	Chet Baker
21.	Body And Soul	Coleman Hawkins
22.	Song For My Father	Horace Silver
23.	Spain	Chick Corea
24.	Blue In Green	Miles Davis
25.	Naima	John Coltrane
26.	Flamenco Sketches	Miles Davis
27.	Waltz For Debby	Bill Evans
28.	Autumn Leaves	Cannonball Adderley
29.	St. Thomas	Sonny Rollins
30.	Mercy, Mercy, Mercy	Cannonball Adderley
31.	What A Wonderful World	Louis Armstrong
32.	Lush Life	John Coltrane/Johnny Hartman
33.	Blue Train	John Coltrane

34.	Poinciana	Ahmad Jamal
35.	In a Sentimental Mood	Duke Ellington & John Coltrane
36.	Freddie Freeloader	Miles Davis
37.	Summertime	Ella Fitzgerald
38.	Watermelon Man	Herbie Hancock
39.	Salt Peanuts	Dizzy Gillespie
40.	Moanin'	Art Blakey
41.	Straight, No Chaser	Thelonious Monk
42.	Good Morning Heartache	Billie Holiday
43.	Mack the Knife	Ella Fitzgerald
44.	In the Mood	Glenn Miller
45.	Desafinado	Stan Getz
46.	Cast Your Fate To The Wind	Vince Guaraldi
47.	Rhapsody in Blue	George Gershwin
48.	Blue Monk	Thelonious Monk
49.	Caravan	Duke Ellington
50.	Sidewinder	Lee Morgan
51.	Django	Modern Jazz Quartet
52.	Compared To What	Les McCann
53.	Red Clay	Freddie Hubbard
54.	Ruby, My Dear	Thelonious Monk
55.	April in Paris	Count Basie
56.	Bitches Brew	Miles Davis
57.	Twisted	Lambert, Hendricks & Ross
58.	Maiden Voyage	Herbie Hancock
59.	Mood Indigo	Duke Ellington
60.	St. Louis Blues	Louis Armstrong
61.	Manteca	Dizzy Gillespie
62.	How High The Moon	Ella Fitzgerald
63.	At Last	Etta James
64.	Fever	Peggy Lee
65.	Satin Doll	Duke Ellington
66.	Someday My Prince Will Come	Miles Davis
67.	Autumn in New York	Billie Holiday
68.	Epistrophy	Thelonious Monk
69.	I Loves You Porgy	Nina Simone
70.	It Don't Mean A Thing	Duke Ellington
71.	Koko	Charlie Parker
72.	Milestones	Miles Davis
73.	Misterioso	Thelonious Monk
74.	Nuages	Django Reinhardt
75.	Struttin' with Some BBQ	Louis Armstrong
76.	The In Crowd	Ramsey Lewis
77.	Ain't Misbehavin	Fats Waller
78.	Bye Bye Blackbird	John Coltrane
79.	On Green Dolphin Street	Miles Davis

80.	Linus and Lucy	Vince Guaraldi
81.	Georgia on My Mind	Ray Charles
82.	Joy Spring	Clifford Brown & Max Roach
83.	One O'Clock Jump	Count Basie
84.	Potato Head Blues	Louis Armstrong
85.	Bumpin' (On Sunset)	Wes Montgomery
86.	Feeling Good	Nina Simone
87.	Misty	Errol Garner
88.	Moody's Mood For Love	James Moody
89.	Stardust	Louis Armstrong
90.	Yardbird Suite	Charlie Parker
91.	Diminuendo & Crescendo in Blue	Duke Ellington
92.	Donna Lee	Charlie Parker
93.	Water Boy	Don Shirley
94.	Ornithology	Charlie Parker
95.	Begin the Beguine	Artie Shaw
96.	Ceora	Lee Morgan
97.	Sophisticated Lady	Duke Ellington
98.	Sugar	Stanley Turrentine
99.	Footprints	Wayne Shorter
100.	Four on Six	Wes Montgomery[119]

[119] "The Jazz 100," Jazz24, accessed April 10, 2020, https://www.jazz24.org/the-jazz-100/.