

JPS Lesson 47

Technique

1. Jazz Exercise – Straight Feel



2. Jazz Exercise – Straight Feel



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



4. Coltrane Changes Lick #3 Reharm



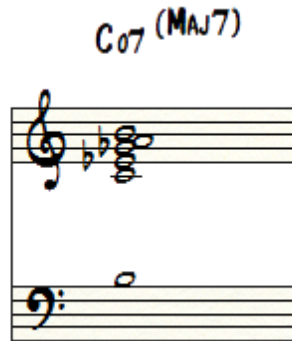
Harmony & Theory

1. Styles Series Part 7/8 – Straight Feel

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

2. Popular Two Handed Voicing Series – Diminished Part 1

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



Vocab & Repertoire

1. *Styles and Grooves– Straight Feel*

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

2. *Improvisation*

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

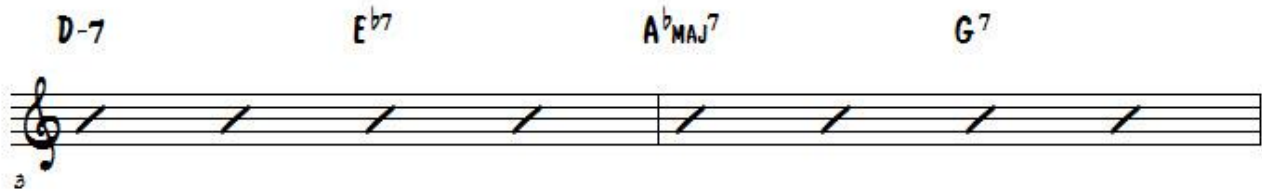
minor triad. This note is going to drastically change the texture and feeling of the scale.



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

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

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



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



4. Advanced Playing Concepts Series Part 3

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

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

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

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