

President's Message

Music educators and students... Welcome back to school! I hope everyone has enjoyed the summer and is ready for the schedule changes the fall brings us. Congratulations to our member educators who have "made the changes" into retirement. Thank you for your years of service to the students and contributions to jazz education in Wisconsin. I am certain that we will see you in the clinician/adjudication circuit throughout the state, providing us the benefit of your knowledge, experience and expertise.

I am sure that many of you had the opportunity to take advantage of a workshop/class this summer. I had an excellent experience at the MENC/GAMA "Teaching Guitar Workshop" which was held at Conference Point in Williams Bay. Many of you are involved in teaching general music at your schools and/or deal with guitar in your jazz ensembles. Well, I was blessed with one excellent guitarist in my program a few years ago and it was a pleasure to have him in the jazz ensemble. Thank heavens he was studying privately! Where am I going with this? Not every guitar player is in a situation to study with a quality jazz guitarist. I have often dreaded the moment one of my band students tells me that he plays guitar in a band and wants to try jazz. You know the scene; he brings in his chartreuse, V-shaped electric guitar and plays a seven page solo from tablature with distortion! Aargh! What do you do now: Tell him no way and turn him off to jazz or do you try to take this curious "musician" and guide him into jazz. This workshop gave me enough

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Lots to Do at Fall Convention

by Marc Jimos
Jazz Education Chair
Wisconsin Music Educators Association Executive Board

This year's WMEA Fall Convention will feature exciting clinicians and performances.

Those of you who are interested in or have taken part in the "Essentially Ellington" competition will not want to miss the Wednesday afternoon kick-off. Jazz legend Clark Terry, saxophonist Dave Seiler from the University of New Hampshire and Ripon College's Kurt Dietrich will perform with the Sun Prairie Jazz Ensemble, directed by Steve Sveum, and the Eau Claire Memorial Jazz Ensemble, directed by Bruce Hering. The performance and clinic will center on the music of Duke Ellington.

Thursday will be a busy day for all jazz enthusiasts. Dr. Robert Kase, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, will cover "12 Easy Steps to Improving Your Trumpet Section." Later that morning, the Pius XI Jazz Ensemble will perform. At noon, Terry will do a question and answer session, "A Conversation with Clark Terry." At 1:30 p.m. Jerry Way, Chippewa Falls, will present "Jazz Guitar Techniques" that will undoubtedly be a big help to all of the non-guitar players out there. Finally that day, Dave Seiler, University of New Hampshire, will present, "Studying the Legacy of Duke Ellington."

One of jazz education's biggest contributors will be in residence Friday. Jamey Aebersold will direct two clinics on improvisation. The first clinic will focus on beginning improvisation while the second will discuss intermediate and advanced techniques.

Also on Friday morning will be clinic drummer/percussionist Steve Houghton. Steve is one of the co-authors of the Essential Styles book. He is also a former Wisconsin Honors Jazz Band conductor. Finally, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay's Jazz Ensemble I, under the direction of Dr. John Salerno, will present a concert at noon Friday.

Other events that you should check out: Karyn Quinn (University of WI-LaCrosse) - Bass Playing Techniques; the annual jazz ensemble reading band session; and "How To Incorporate a IAJE Student Chapter at Your School."

Please attend as many sessions as possible. We are fortunate to have an exciting ensemble of clinicians and performers this year. Please keep in mind anything that you would like to see at upcoming conferences. At last winter's convention planning session the number of jazz-related entries was surprisingly low! If you have a good idea **please** fill out the conference planning form that comes in your copy of Wisconsin Musician Magazine. Otherwise, contact me at mjimios@ashwaubenon.k12.wi.us and I will be glad to help any way that I can.

Clark Terry to Appear at State Music Convention

Legendary trumpet and flugelhorn jazz great Clark Terry will perform and present a clinic at this year's Wisconsin State Music Convention, Oct. 25. Terry will present a concert of Ellington music, backed by both the Eau Claire Memorial High School Jazz Ensemble, directed by Bruce Hering, and the Sun Prairie High School Jazz Ensemble, directed by Steve Sveum. Both bands have been finalists in the Jazz at Lincoln Center "Essentially Ellington" finals in New York City.

The concert will begin at 7 p.m. at the Monona Terrace Convention Center. The program will feature a wide range of Ellington compositions including some of the music which Terry performed while with the Ellington.

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background that I feel I can teach a beginning guitar class, develop a curriculum for it and was given direction/ammunition to work with guitarists on jazz voicings and comping techniques. We also played electric bass. How many times have you said; "I should take the time to learn to play the bass"? Me too. Of course, I am not claiming a level of expertise concerning guitar or a great playing ability, but I am no longer AFRAID! To top it all off, the workshop offered scholarships toward 3 graduate credits, approximately \$200 worth of method books (free) and a steel-stringed acoustic guitar – FREE!! (guitar value is approximately \$500) I must not forget to mention that the case, tuner, picks, and strap were part of the package. Sounds too good to be true. You must be a member of MENC to take advantage of this opportunity – keep it in mind when you are looking for a workshop next summer, I highly recommend it. The teaching staff was excellent and the location on Lake Geneva.....what can I say!

October will bring us some great opportunities with two fall jazz clinics set for Saturday, October 7 at Sun Prairie HS and New London MS. The directors to contact for the clinics are: Steve Sveum at Sun Prairie HS and Roberta Porfilio-Sawall at New London MS. A third fall clinic will be held at Eleva-Strum HS on Saturday, October 21st. Contact Dave Mueller if you are interested in participating. The WMEA Convention is scheduled for October 25 – 28 in Madison. We will have an IAJE booth at the convention and have joined WMEA in a partnership situation for additional jazz clinics extending into Saturday morning.

The WSMA Honors Jazz Ensemble and Vocal Jazz Ensemble will perform on Friday, October 27 at the First United Methodist Church, beginning at 4:00. Dominic Spera is the Honors Jazz conductor and Jennifer Shelton conducts the Vocal Jazz Ensemble. I have had the wonderful opportunity of being a part

of the Honors staff and would recommend the experience to you. Applications are available from WSMA, contact Linda Petersen for more information. Speaking of the honors jazz groups, we need to encourage more students to audition. As we review the numbers of applicants/auditions it is obvious that many students are not auditioning. There were only 2 bass trombonists applying one year and no auxiliary percussion/vibes applicants at another time. I know I have heard many fine jazz ensembles at jazz festivals and state music festivals with honors level performers on every instrument. Encourage your students to audition. The experience of preparing for the audition and the actual audition performance is of great value to each student and your program. This past year was very exciting for vocal jazz auditions: enough students auditioned and were "recommended" to complete the ensemble. That is great, no students (guys in particular) were called and asked/encouraged/begged to be in the vocal jazz ensemble. Encourage your vocal jazz colleagues and students to consider the vocal jazz auditions. The student-conductor ratio is wonderful; 16 vocalists, piano, drums, bass to one conductor. What a wonderful experience!

A request has been made to re-activate the "Charts That Work" column for the newsletter. This issue has a listing of blues charts recommended by a variety of jazz educators in the state. If you have titles of good charts that you feel should be added to the listing, please send the information to me.

I hope this newsletter finds you starting the new school year on the "right foot" (sorry, many of us also do marching band) and that you have many wonderful musical moments this fall.

Karen M. Johnson

Three Clinics Planned for October

Three IAJE sponsored clinics are planned for October. At Eleva-Strum High School Oct. 21, Dave Mueller will be running a clinic that teaches jazz articulations and jazz syntax. Dave reports that "a combo from UW-Eau Claire will serve as clinicians and a model group. The clinic will begin at 9 a.m. and run until about 12:30 p.m. We will start with a short combo performance then go into master classes. The clinic will conclude with an onstage performance of the world's biggest head chart performed by all students and clinicians."

Information on the Oct. 7 clinic at Sun Prairie High School is as follows:

Site: Sun Prairie High School, room 308 (band room) (220 Kroncke Drive, Sun Prairie, WI)

Telephone/contact: Steve Sveum; 608-834-6809; sveumj@hotmail.com

Clinic topic: Transcription: listening, transcribing, assimilating

Clinician: Steve Wiest

Time: 9 a.m.-Noon; follow-up for directors with luncheon meeting at Champs, 12:15-1:30 p.m., cost of lunch to be paid by attendees.

Roberta Porfilio-Sawall is in charge of the Oct. 14 clinic in New London. Contact Roberta at 920-982-8532 or rporfili@newlondon.k.12.wi.us

A Big-Picture Look At Jazz Improvisation

by Glenn Kostur

The subject of jazz improvisation is so broad and has so many facets, that keeping a perspective on what and how to practice can be difficult at times. It helps to occasionally take a step back; to stop wandering among the trees and reassess the forest. That's what this article is about.

I won't be divulging the secret II-V-I lick that you've all been searching for, but I hope the ideas here can give you some breathing room as you approach jazz improvisation for yourself or with your students.

There are many ways to break the subject of jazz improvisation into chunks for discussion or practice. The separation that I will use here goes like this: Jazz improvisation occurs in two modes of operation- formulaic and motivic. Almost every jazz solo contains both of these approaches at some point in the solo.

Formulaic improvisation is commonly referred to as playing licks or patterns, and much of the published material available for jazz improvisation focuses on the building of a repertoire of such licks and patterns. Motic improvisation refers to taking a short, simple melodic motive and developing that idea in a compositional way.

Most jazz players use some kind of balance of these two approaches in each of their solos. And several factors can influence which type of improvisation will be more prevalent in any given solo. Up-tempo tunes, fast-moving or difficult chord changes, or the desire to achieve a flurry of fast notes (even in a ballad) almost necessitate the use of patterns or licks. Our brains and bodies can't work fast enough to generate ideas and then execute them without the use of patterns.

Here's a good experiment for you to do by yourself or with your students: Get out a metronome and set it at 200bpm. (this would be a fairly moderate tempo for a jazz tune) Now, for each beat, count out loud from 1-10, and from 10 back down to 1. (stick with me!). Now, for each beat, say the digits in your telephone number, your best friend's telephone number, your social security number or some other pattern

of numbers that you can think of. Here's the fun part: For each beat of the metronome, say out loud a random series of numbers between 1 and 10 (no patterns). It's next to impossible to come up with a random series of numbers that quickly, and remember, we're talking about quarter-notes! In the many times I have done this demonstration with students, I see two responses to the challenge of the random numbers. Either the person tries so hard to keep the numbers random that they slow down and lose the quarter-note pulse; or in their effort to maintain the time, they unknowingly resort to number patterns (2-4-6-8, 9-8-7-6 etc.).

The purpose of the experiment is to show that, even if we wanted to play a random series of notes, by the time we get up to a certain tempo our brains will

resort to patterns that we have practiced. When playing fast or even moderately fast, we all play patterns. We can't escape that fact. The problem is that if the only thing we practice fast is the Bb blues scale or the Bb major scale, then that's what will come out when we're trying to improvise on a fast tune. That's not so good if the tune is in the key of G or B or A. Also, if we want those licks to sound like jazz, they have to be patterns or musical phrases drawn from a jazz vocabulary. You can get the licks from books or lift them from records or collect them and trade them with your friends. But no matter how you try to swing it, playing scales and arpeggios up and down will always sound like scales and arpeggios. The moral: If you want to

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Another Look at Vocal Jazz

by Dick Johnson
Stevens Point Area Senior High School
Email: rjohnson@wisp.k12.wi.us

I feel like a fish out of water - a choir director writing for an instrumentalists' newsletter, and I must clarify the route that was followed to get into this position.

My undergraduate degree in choral music didn't prepare me for the jazz world. Nor did teaching in small towns in Minnesota and Wisconsin. And my Masters of Music Education Degree from Mankato State University was of no help either. My learning experiences were centered on the "serious" European and American music traditions. However, I did have a series of lucky circumstances in jazz, beginning with my college roommate, who was truly hip with the music of Stan Kenton, Miles Davis, Oscar Peterson, Luis Bonfa, Herbie Mann, and the Modern Jazz Quartet. I became an aficionado by listening to the best jazz of the '60s on the best stereo on campus.

After several years of teaching concert choirs and swing choirs, I was fortunate to enroll (through conve-

nience - not by wisdom) in jazz workshops by Steve Zegree and Phil Mattson. These sessions unveiled the language of jazz and gave me a vehicle for passing on my love of jazz through the vocal jazz ensemble. Lambert, Hendricks and Ross (with their vocal transcriptions of Count Basie) were an early influence. Manhattan Transfer, with their great arrangements of '40s tunes brought back great swing melodies. The Singers Unlimited and Gene Puerling brought a harmonic approach that challenged the most sophisticated musicians. Take 6, The Real Group and The New York Voices added new dimensions to the world of vocal music. And finally, teaching in the same school with Dave Kiepert - a great inspiration for what can be accomplished with teenagers.

These were exciting experiences, since they bridged the gap between my appreciation of jazz and my opportunities as a choir teacher to bring these experiences to my stu-

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play fast stuff that sounds good and makes musical sense, you have to practice patterns and licks from the jazz tradition.

On the other side of the equation, motivic playing involves a strong connection between the player's ears and their instrument. In order to create a musical motive, you have to have the sound of the harmony in your head and be able to sing the idea to yourself, figure out what those notes are, and find them on your instrument. All this in the time it takes to take a breath as you are about to play. Then, once you have laid the motive out there, the real challenges begin. Again following your ear, you decide how you are going to develop the motive: add notes, subtract notes, move it up or down, turn it upside down, play it slower, play it faster, play it again exactly the same, or with altered notes to reflect a new chord under your line.

There are lots of ways to practice that will help your motivic playing. Sing a lot. Sing an idea out loud and then try to play it on your instrument. Think of a simple tune, (Happy Birthday or a Christmas carol) pick a key and try to play it on your instrument (no sheet music allowed!)

The balance between motivic playing a formulaic playing changes from player to player and from tune to tune. In a ballad or a modal tune where the chords move slowly, we have time to develop lots of motivic ideas. But even in these situations, with motivic improvisation there is a build-up of musical tension which we often want to hear released in a flurry of notes or licks (often at the ends of phrases or in a cadenza.) Faster tunes, like "I Got Rhythm" tunes or bebop tunes, or harmonically challenging tunes push us to play mainly patterned ideas. But, after churning out licks and patterns that have been artfully connected together, the player and listener want to break up that activity with a motivic idea and some development.

As stated before, every great jazz soloist has skills in both of the modes of

improvisation. However, many artists' personal choices lead them to favor one type or the other. Improvisers who favor motivic improvisation are often referred to as "melodic", "thoughtful", "spontaneous" or "creative" (I believe that playing licks and patterns can have those qualities as well!). Players famous for their motivic improvisations include: Miles Davis, Freddie Hubbard, Chet Baker trumpet; Paul Desmond, John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, saxophone; Keith Jarrett, piano and many others.

Players who emphasize their leaning toward licks and patterns are often described as "having chops", "burning", "blazing", or "tearing it up". Masters of formulaic improvisation include trumpeter Clifford Brown; saxophonists Charlie Parker, Sonny Stitt, John Coltrane, and Dexter Gordon; trombonists Frank Rosolino and Carl Fontana; pianists Oscar Peterson and Bud Powell. Keep in mind that all of these great players use both ways of improvising within any given solo!

So as you sit down to practice improvisation, be aware of whether you are going to work on building your repertoire of licks and patterns and your ability to connect them in a beautiful and graceful way; or work on your skills at creating musical motives and developing those ideas through the harmonic structure of a tune. And be sure to spend some time trying to integrate both ways of improvising into your solos.

About the author: *Glenn Kostur is the director of jazz studies at the University of New Mexico, in Albuquerque, NM. Prior to his appointment at UNM, Glen toured and recorded for three years as saxophonist and musical director for Maynard Ferguson. Glenn's jazz band charts are published by Doug Beach, Warner Brothers and UNC Jazz Press. Glenn is also busy as a member of the exciting saxophone quartet, Thrasher, which has recently released a CD on mp3.com. Glenn is an artist/clinician for Boosey&Hawkes and plays Keilwerth saxophones.*

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dents. And, as a middle-aged instructor, I was learning this new language barely one step ahead of the students.

I might add that I have not had any performance experiences in jazz (other than those offered me in workshops). But, I have been an avid student of the art form - learning the chord structure, the scales (finally, I found a use for those modes I learned in college) and song forms. All of which I needed to enlighten and bring new challenges to our most advanced choir students.

Currently, I direct two vocal jazz ensembles at Stevens Point Area Senior High School, one of which (Counterpointers) has earned awards in Downbeat Magazine. It has been a thrill to see students, who at one time were busy learning fancy choreography, getting turned on to jazz and embracing the music of Ellington, Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald and Mel Torme. These are the same results that instrument jazz instructors have worked on for years. It is especially thrilling for me to see an idiom develop that can expose our choral students to the same creative experiences as their instrumental counterparts. Where else in our schools can our students experience the "creative" process as opposed to the "re-creative" process? Improvisation is at the heart of jazz, and now both instrumentalists and vocalists can discover their own musical "voices."

Yes, I have indeed been blessed in a sequence of events which have allowed me to share the world of jazz with our youth. As the new WIAJE Vocal Jazz Chair, I hope to be able to expand the vocal jazz ensemble into more schools. If you have a prospective choir director in your school, let me know. Tell them to bring some kids to the Lawrence University Jazz Festival - it's low key and educational. Or, if you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, please contact me. IAJE at the annual conventions has made great progress in vocal jazz. Hopefully, with your help, the trend will continue in our state.

Charts That Work - BLUES

This column was developed several years ago with the intention of providing an additional resource for good jazz ensemble literature. It is my hope that the list would continue to grow with your help. We all have those times when we need one more chart for a concert or festival program. Sometimes reviewing old programs and/or listings of literature reminds us of a chart we had forgotten about or introduces us to some other options. I want to make it clear that I do not claim to have the “edge” on anyone for good literature. This listing has been developed with the help of Dave Kiepert, Harvey Halpaus, Steve Sveum, Bruce Hering, Kurt Dietrich, to name a few of the contributors. If you have a great blues chart that you use and rely on for teaching material and/or concert programming, please send the information to me and I will add it to the list.

VERY EASY

Blues Bulletin

John Edmondson
Hal Leonard
Trpt: Eb5
Bone: C4

Blues For Mr. B

John Edmondson
Hal Leonard
Trpt: Eb5
Bone: C4

Blues Machine

Michael Sweeney
Hal Leonard
Trpt: D5
Bone: D4

A Blues To Blow On

Clark
Barnhouse
Trpt: D5
Bone: B3

Blue Tuesday Blues

John Edmondson
Hal Leonard
Trpt: Eb5
Bone: Bb3

Good News Blues

Hager
Kjos
Trpt: E5
Bone: Eb4

Sue's Blues

Sebesky
Elem. Stage Band Book
Studio PR
Trpt: D5
Bone: Eb4

Valentine Blue (ballad)

Hager
Kjos
Easy ranges - brass

EASY

Freddie the Freeloader

Davis/Sweeney
Hal Leonard
Trpt: G5
Bone: Eb4

Blues Is My Favorite

Color
Paul Clark
Barnhouse
Trpt: E5
Bone: Eb4

Back On Track (shuffle)

Yasinitsky
Kendor
Trpt: G5
Bone: Eb4

Straight Time (rock)

Yasinitsky
Kendor
Trpt: G5
Bone: Eb4

Woodchoppers Ball

Sweeney
Hal Leonard
Trpt: E5
Bone: B3

Inside Out (rock)

Sweeney
Hal Leonard
Trpt: G5
Bone: Eb5

Jumpin At The

Woodside
Taylor
Warner Bros.
Trpt: E5
Bone: Eb4

Ultra Blues

Higgins
Jenson
Trpt: E5
Bone: Eb4

Watermelon Man (rock)

Edmondson
Hal Leonard
Trpt: E5
Bone: Eb4

MEDIUM EASY

Back Street Blues

Nestico
Kendor
Trpt: F5
Bone: F4

Blues for Clyde

Nestico
Jenson
Trpt: F5
Bone: F4

A Little Blues, Please

Nestico
Jenson
Trpt: F5
Bone: Eb4

Easy Does It

Niehaus
Hal Leonard
Trpt: F5
Bone: Eb4

Ivory Blues (piano feature)

Barduhn (12/8 blues)
Jenson
Trpt: G5
Bone: Eb4

MEDIUM

All Blues

Davis/Barduhn
Jenson
Trpt: C6
Bone: F#4

The Blues Doctor

Nestico
Jenson
Trpt: G5
Bone: F4

Blues In Hoss Flat

Foster, Basie/arr. Taylor
Warner Bros.
Trpt: C6
Bone: G4

C Jam Blues

Ellington/arr. Pugh
Warner Bros.
Trpt: A5
Bone: Gb4

Every Day (I Have The

Blues) - vocal
Arr. Roger Holmes
Hal Leonard
Trpt: Db6
Bone: F4

K. C. Blues

Strommen
Alfred
Trpt: G5 (Bb5 opt.)
Bone: G4

Nice-n-Easy Blues

Mintzer
Kendor
Trpt: Bb5
Bone: Ab4

Take What You Need

Doug Beach
Doug Beach Pub.
Trpt: G5
Bone: G4

MEDIUM ADVANCED

Basically Blues

Wilson
Kendor
Trpt: E6
Bone: Bb5

Better Git It In Your Soul

Mingus/Johnson
Kendor
Trpt: A5
Bone: Ab4

Black and Tan Fantasy

Ellington/David Berger
Warner Bros.
Trpt: C6
Bone: Gb4

Blue Landscape

Geoff Keezer
Sierra
Trpt: C#6
Bone: G4

Dark Side Of The Blues

Andy Claussen
Barnhouse
Trpt: C#6
Bone: A4

Potato Blues

Harris
Kendor
Trpt: D6
Bone: Ab4

Things Ain't What They

Used To Be
Arr. Lalama
Hal Leonard
Trpt: C6
Bone: A4

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