

How to Incorporate Bebop into Your Improvisation

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Discussion Topics

- Bebop Characteristics & Style
- Scales & Arpeggios
- Exercises & Patterns
- Articulations & Accents
- Listening

Bebop Characteristics & Style

- Developed in the early to mid 1940's
- Medium to fast tempos
- Rapid chord progressions / changes
- Instrumental "virtuosity"
- Simple to complex harmony - altered chords / substitutions
- Dominant syncopation of rhythms
- New melodies over existing chord changes - Contrabfacts

Scales & Arpeggios

- Scales and arpeggios are the building blocks for harmony
- Use of the half-step interval and rapid arpeggiation are characteristic of bebop playing
- Because bebop is often played at a fast tempo with rapidly changing chords, it's crucial to practice your scales and arpeggios in ALL KEYS!

Scales & Arpeggios

- Scales you should be familiar with:
 - Major Scale - Pentatonic: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6
 - Minor Scales - Pentatonic: 1, b3, 4, 5, b7; Natural Minor, Dorian Minor, Harmonic Minor, Melodic Minor
 - Dominant Scales - Mixolydian Mode, Bebop Scales, 5th Mode of Harmonic Minor (V7b9), Altered Dominant / Diminished Whole Tone (V7alt, b9#9b13), Dominant Diminished / Diminished starting with a half step (V7b9#9 with #11, 13)
 - Half-diminished scale - min7b5 (7th mode of major scale)
 - Diminished Scale - Starting with a whole step (WHWHWHWH)

Scales & Arpeggios

- Chords and Arpeggios to work in all keys:
 - Major triad, Maj6/9, Maj7, Maj9, Maj9#11
 - Minor triad, m6/9, m7, m9, m11, minMaj7
 - Dominant 7ths
 - Natural extensions - 9th, 13th (#11 for Lydian sound)
 - Altered extension variations - b9, b9#9, b9#9#5/b13, b9#9#11 w/ 13
 - Half-Diminished - min7b5 (circle slash)
 - Diminished - dim triad, dim7 (° symbol)
 - *Augmented - aug triad, aug maj 7, dom7#5 - *These are more modern sounds but can also be used

How do these scales and arpeggios work in bebop?

- It's all about the chord tones!
- Playing chord tones on strong beats
- Half-step resolution of notes and lines
- Syncopation of chord tones and non-chord tones
- Using chord tones and arpeggios in a variety of ways: Passing tones, non-chord tones, chromaticism, enclosures, octave displacement

Exercises and Patterns

- There are COUNTLESS exercises and patterns to practice! Search them out or ask your private teacher!
- Having a good foundational knowledge of music theory will assist you in coming up with your own patterns and exercises.
- LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN!

ii-V-I Progression

- One of the most common progressions in the bebop style of music.
- In C: Dm7 - G7 - CMaj7
 - There are variations on this progression, but this is a good starting point

ii-V-I Progression

- Ways to practice the ii-V-I progression
 - Arpeggiate the chords in 8th notes for short ii-V's
 - | D F A C - G B D F | C E G B - % |
 - *Practice this basic arpeggiation in all keys

ii-V-I Progression

- Ways to practice the ii-V-I progression
 - The “ii” and the “V” chord have a special relationship. We can think of them as a unit.
 - **IMPORTANT!** - Practice always playing chord tones on down beats (number beats) to really solidify these sounds over these chords in your head

ii-V-I Progression

- Simple patterns over the ii-V7-I progression (8th notes)
- All examples will be in the key of C: Dm7 - G7 - C
 - #1 - Start from the root of the “ii” chord
 - | DFAC - BAGF | E..... |
 - #2 - Start from the 3rd of the “ii” chord
 - | FACE - DCBA | G..... |

ii-V-I Progression

- Simple patterns over the ii-V7-I progression (8th notes)
- All examples will be in the key of C: Dm7 - G7 - C
 - #3a - Start from the 5th of the “ii” chord (descending)
 - | AFDC - BAGF | E..... |
 - #3b - Change of direction on the V7
 - | AFDC - BDFA | G..... |

ii-V-I Progression

- *We can alter chord tones to account for any changes in harmony: min7b5, altered dominant chords, minor “i” chords.
- Minor “ii/V” progression: Dm7b5 - G7b9 - Cm7
 - #1 - | DFAbC - BAbGF | Eb..... |
 - #2 - | FAbCEb - DCBAb | G..... |
 - #3a - | AbFDC - BAbGF | Eb..... |
 - #3b - | AbFDC - BDFAb | G..... |

ii-V-I Progression

- These are just starter patterns that will instantly help your improvisations sound more like bebop
- Here are a few scalar patterns:
 - 1, 2, 3, 5 - 1, 2, 3, 5 - 1, 2, 3, 5 on each chord
 - DEFA - GABD - CDEG
 - Descending scale in the key from the root, 3rd, 5th, or 7th of the “ii” chord
 - DCBA - GFED - C
 - FEDC - BAGF - E
 - AGFE - DCBA - G
 - CBAG - FEDC - B

Bebop Scale (Dom7)

- The “Bebop” Scale is a descending scale built from the Dominant 7th Scale (Mixolydian)
- Adds a half-step between the root and the 7th of the dominant scale
 - G7 Bebop Scale - G, Gb, F, E, D, C, B, A, G
- We can play this entire scale over the “ii-V” unit in the progression or over a full measure of the “V7” chord.

Bebop Scale (Dom7)

- This scale can be played in its entirety starting from the root, 3rd, 5th, and 7th of the V7 chord.
- Using the G7 scale
 - From the root - G, Gb, F, E, D, C, B, A, G
 - From the 3rd - B, A, G, Gb, F, E, D, C, B
 - From the 5th - D, C, B, A, G, Gb, F, E, D
 - From the 7th - F, E, D, C, B, A, G, Gb, F

Bebop Scale (Dom7)

- Variation #1 - No Half-Steps if you start from the 2nd, 4th, or 6th of the V7 chord
 - From the 2nd - A, G, F, E, D, C, B, A, G
 - From the 4th - C, B, A, G, F, E, D, C, B
 - From the 6th - E, D, C, B, A, G, F, E, D

Bebop Scale (Dom7)

- Variation #1a - Add 2 half-steps between the 2nd and the root, and the root and the 7th
 - From the 2nd - A, Ab, G, Gb, F, E, D, C, B
 - From the 4th - C, B, A, Ab, G, Gb, F, E, D
 - From the 6th - E, D, C, B, A, Ab, G, Gb, F*
 - *This does not end on a chord tone for the major scale. (Appoggiatura)

Bebop Scale (Dom7)

- Variation #2 - Add 3 half-steps: between the 3rd and the 2nd, 2nd and root, and root and 7th when starting on the 3rd, 5th, or 7th of the V7 chord
 - From the 3rd - B, Bb, A, Ab, G, Gb, F, E, D
 - From the 5th - D, C, B, Bb, A, Ab, G, Gb, F*
 - From the 7th - F, E, D, C, B, Bb, A, Ab, G
- *This does not end on a chord tone for the major scale. (Appoggiatura)

Bebop Scale (Major)

- The Bebop scale can be applied to the major 7, major 6, or major 9 chords.
- C major bebop descending - add a half-step between the 6th and the 5th of the scale.
 - C, B, A, Ab, G, F, E, D, C
- We can do this starting from the 3rd and the 5th of the scales as well.
 - From the 3rd - E, D, C, B, A, Ab, G, F, E
 - From the 5th - G, F, E, D, C, B, A, Ab, G

Bebop Scale (Major)

- For the major scale, we can add half-steps in between tones as long as we continue to keep chord tones on strong beats.
 - Var. #1 - From the root
 - C, B, A, Ab, G, F, E, Eb, D
 - Var. #2 - From the 3rd
 - E, Eb, D, Db, C, B, A, Ab, G
 - Var. #3 - From the 5th
 - G, F, E, Eb, D, Db, C, B, A

Enclosures

- Enclosures are very common in bebop
 - Playing notes above and below the “goal” note to delay the resolution
 - Example: C major
 - Simple: D, B, C* (used leading to a Cmaj7)
 - Var: Db, B, C*
 - Adding on: E, D, Db, B, C*; or Eb, D, Db, B, C
 - You can work these out on your own, or you can find these by transcribing bebop players.

Articulations & Accents

- Bebop articulations are characterized by the syncopation of accents
- At fast tempos and for fast lines, 8th notes are typically slurred, or lightly articulated
- The “jazz articulation” may also be used: Tongue/slur - tongue/accent upbeats and slur to the downbeats
- Saxophonists - The “muffle” tongue is also a jazz technique used to “muffle” one note or a group of notes to give emphasis to the notes that occur after it/them.
(Charlie Parker, Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane)

Articulations & Accents

- Syncopation in horn improvisations also come from listening to how the drummer is accenting and playing “hits”
- Listen to the rhythm section in bebop groups and how they accent to see/hear how those accents are picked up by the horn players and vice versa.
- IMPORTANT!!!! Transcribe not only lines and melodies, but articulations, inflections, accents, and sound quality. **This is the ONLY WAY that you can authentically learn and play the bebop style!!!**

Bebop Musicians

- Alto Saxophone - Charlie Parker, Cannonball Adderley, Sonny Stitt, Lee Konitz, Paul Desmond (cool jazz), Phill Woods, Sonny Criss, Charles McPherson, Lou Donaldson, Frank Morgan
- Tenor Saxophone - Dexter Gordon, Don Byas, John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Lester Young/Coleman Hawkins (early), Sonny Stitt, Lucky Thompson, Stan Getz, Hank Mobley, Charlie Rouse, Benny Golson, Johnny Griffin, Frank Foster, Gene Ammons
- Baritone Saxophone - Gerry Mulligan, Pepper Adams, Leo Parker, Serge Chaloff, Cecil Payne, Jerome Richardson, Bill Perkins, Sahib Shihab

Bebop Musicians

- Trumpet - Clifford Brown, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, Lee Morgan, Kenny Dorham, Harry "Sweets" Eddison, Howard McGhee, Fats Navarro, Clark Terry, Freddie Hubbard, Nat Adderley, Jon Faddis, Art Farmer, Ira Sullivan
- Trombone - J.J. Johnson, Bill Watrous, Kai Winding, Frank Rosolino, Curtis Fuller, Slide Hampton, Conrad Herwig, Bob Brookmeyer, Bob Curnow, Delfeayo Marsalis

Bebop Musicians

- Piano - Bud Powell, Barry Harris, Thelonius Monk, Oscar Peterson, George Shearing, Lennie Tristano, Tommy Flanagan, Marian McPartland, Al Haig, Horace Silver, Hank Jones, Duke Jordan, Wynton Kelly
- Guitar - Charlie Christian, Herb Ellis, Kenny Burrell, Barney Kessel, Joe Pass, Jimmy Raney

Bebop Musicians

- Bass - Ray Brown, Charles Mingus, Oscar Pettiford, Percy Heath, Scott LaFaro, Paul Chambers, Tommy Potter, Niels-Hennig Ørsted Pederson
- Drums - Kenny Clarke, Max Roach, Art Blakey, Roy Haynes, Philly Joe Jones, Buddy Rich, Jo Jones, Ed Thigpen, Sid Catlett, Shelly Manne

Summary

- Know the bebop style and characteristics
- Understanding of basic to intermediate harmony
 - Scales, Chords, Arpeggios, Functional Harmony (ii-V7-I)
- Learn some digital patterns and exercises that “fit” the chords; i.e. playing chord tones on downbeats
- Learn jazz articulations through listening
 - Syncopation of accents, listen to rhythm section
 - Transcribe not just the notes! Articulations, inflections, accents, sound.
- LISTEN!!! LISTEN!!! LISTEN!!!