

JAZZ AS A MODEL FOR  
TEACHING IMPROVISATION IN MUSIC EDUCATION

BY

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(I) INTRODUCTION

The concept of formal jazz education, although quite controversial, is a fairly recent development in South Africa. A jazz course has been introduced at the University of Natal, and it is hoped that in the future, jazz would become an integral part of degree programmes at other tertiary institutions in the country. However, if a study of jazz is going to be most effective, then jazz education will have to be given consideration at Secondary school level. Then only will formally trained jazz musicians and educators make a significant contribution to its development.

South African music educators, at secondary school level, have not fully recognized the value of jazz as part of the music education curriculum. This is partly due to the fact that teachers, generally, have a minimal or no knowledge of jazz. This has prompted the writing of this dissertation.

In my experience of music education, I have found that in South African schools, much emphasis is placed on music belonging to the European tradition, ie. classical music, to the exclusion of other musics. Consequently, students cannot relate to or identify with the music they are studying. The end result is that few students pursue music careers seriously. However, if the function of music education at secondary level is to provide a foundation on which students can build and develop their careers, then firstly, our music programme needs to be flexible to incorporate the teaching of other musics, for example jazz, and secondly, a different approach to music education is required.

My /.....

My main purpose here is to show how both these objectives can be realised through the advent of jazz education at secondary school level. On the one hand, I am attempting to show how a study of jazz is aesthetically valuable, and on the other, I am advocating an approach to teaching music through the use of jazz. I have therefore decided to base this text on the premise that a study of jazz would be to the advantage of musicians whose primary interests lie in the jazz arena, as well as those who are interested in general music education.

My dissertation is divided into four parts. Firstly, I present a general philosophy of music education. The second part deals with the characteristics of jazz, to give the reader an idea of the mechanics of this art form. The third part examines the place of jazz in music education, and more importantly, the value of teaching music through improvisation. Finally, I have devised an approach to teaching music education through jazz, with an introductory course which teachers can implement at secondary school level.

(A) PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC EDUCATION

The primary function of music education should be the creation of opportunities and the devising of learning situations where students can actively experience music. Here, the emphasis needs to be on the response of the individual involved. Qualities like originality, improvisation, creativity and spontaneity need to be stressed in the total music experience. However, the devising of this type of situation places certain demands on those involved in the experience. Regelski<sup>1</sup>, a music educator, highlights three factors which contribute towards making the experience effective.

The first factor is concerned with the readiness of the individuals to learn. This involves pre-conceived ideas and attitudes which affect the learners' ability to work at something. Therefore the responsibility of the teacher entails two choices; 1) the structuring of situations which can be easily handled by every member of the class, or 2) devising certain situations where each individual can respond at his or her level. This implies that it is imperative to bear in mind the age and stage of development of the learners involved. Different classes have varying levels of readiness and interest in certain areas. By allowing the learner to respond at his or her own level, everyone will invariably be left with a challenge and thus the interest is maintained.

The problem which arises out of this structure is that teachers sometimes demand a certain amount of uniform behaviour. This kind of attitude is to the detriment of the students, as it jeopardises personal expression.

The second factor deals with the activity itself. Activities should be geared in such a way that they demand active participation from all the learners/...

1) Thomas Regelski, Principles and Problems of Music Education (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975), p. 64.

learners. Teachers need to regard the activity as being a vehicle for establishing personal contact with the learners. The results of the learning derived from this personal contact are sometimes more important than those that are actually planned. Teachers also need to create situations where learning can occur and in so doing teachers are facilitators of learning. All the participants in the music experience constitute a community of learners. In addition teachers need to ensure that their material and method of presentation does not hinder a response from the learners. As is so often the case, technical jargon and explanations can stifle a reaction from the students. Teachers also need to create a relaxed atmosphere which is conducive to learning. There also needs to be a mutual understanding for and acceptance of each other, as human beings.

The third factor which can have a great influence on the teacher in devising activities is the student attitude and interest. Students tend to develop their own goals and objectives which are usually not in accordance with those of the teacher. Consequently teachers sometimes try to impose their own goals onto the students in the hope that the students will be motivated; therefore it is the task of the teacher to devise the lesson in such a way that his or her goals can be co-ordinated with those of the students.

(B) DEFINITION/...

(B) DEFINITION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF JAZZ

From its inception, up until the present time, jazz has undergone an interesting metamorphosis. It has drawn elements from different music traditions and as such is considered to be both diverse and hybrid. Consequently it has become increasingly difficult to define the term jazz accurately, even though there are certain characteristics which have remained constant. Part of the problem that exists is that in its development, the term "jazz" has been loosely applied to forms of music which bear little resemblance to what is considered to be "pure jazz". Joachim Berendt<sup>1</sup> has attempted to define jazz in the following manner:

"Jazz is a form of art music which originated in the United States through the confrontation of blacks with European music. The instrumentation, melody and harmony of jazz are in the main derived from Western musical tradition. Rhythm, phrasing and production of sound, and the elements of blues harmony are derived from African music and from the musical conception of the Afro-Americans. Jazz differs from European music in three basic elements, which all serve to increase intensity:

1. A special relationship to time, defined as "swing".
2. A spontaneity and vitality of musical production in which improvisation plays a role.
3. A sonority and manner of phrasing which mirror the individuality of the performing jazz musician.

These three basic characteristics, whose essentials have been - and will continue to be - passed on orally from one generation to the next, create a novel climate of tension. In this climate, the emphasis is no longer on great arcs of tension, as in European music, but on a wealth of tension-creating elements, which continuously rise and fall. The various styles and stages of development through which jazz has passed since its origin around the turn of the century are largely characterized by the fact that the three basic elements of jazz temporarily achieve varying degrees of importance, and that the relationship between them is constantly changing".<sup>1</sup>

(1) MELODY

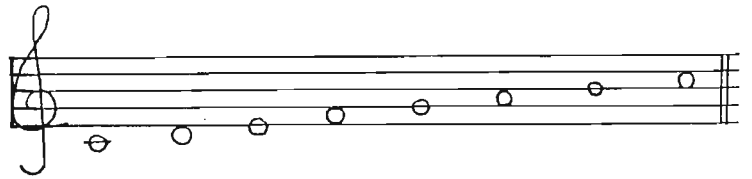
1) Joachim E. Berendt, The Jazz Book. (London: Granada Publishing Company, 1983), p.449.



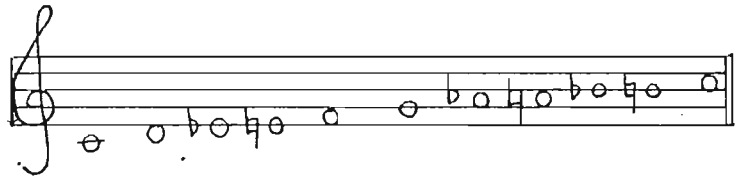
(1) MELODY

Jazz melodies are derived from a wide range of scales and modes. These melodies may be further subdivided into smaller fragments commonly referred to as phrases or motifs. The most prominent of all scales is the blues scale. The blues scale uses the notes of the diatonic scale, with the addition of the flattened third, flattened sixth and the flattened seventh. Here is the diatonic scale of C major, with the blues scale in C:

C major scale :



Blues scale in C :



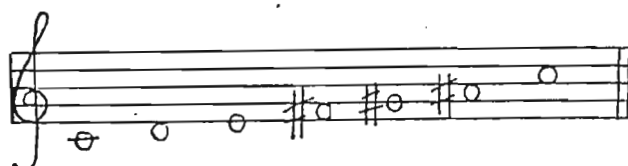
Here is an example of a tune based on the blues scale:



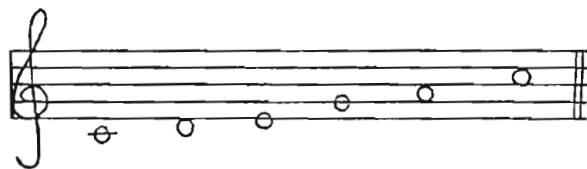
The tune "Straight No Chaser" is a good example of one based on a particular melodic motif:



Improvisational melodies may be derived from other scales, for example the whole tone scale and the pentatonic scale. Here is an example of the whole tone scale:



Here is an example of a pentatonic scale, which uses the first, second, third, fifth, and sixth degrees of the scale.



A more recent development in jazz is the utilization of modes. These modes, corresponding to the original ecclesiastic modes, provide musical "colour" to melodies. The modes are derived by shifting the tonic to the various pitch levels of the scale. Here are the modes in the key of C major:

(a) Ionian Mode

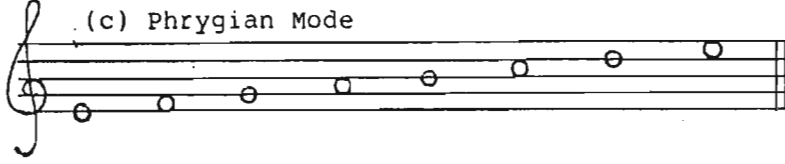


(b) Dorian/...

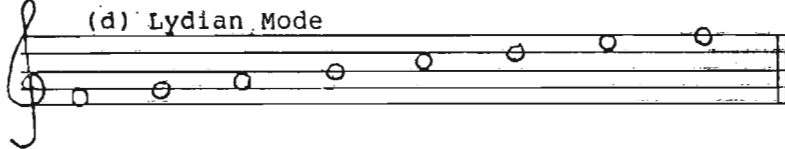
## (b) Dorian Mode



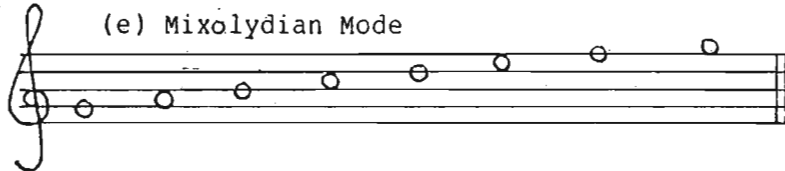
## (c) Phrygian Mode



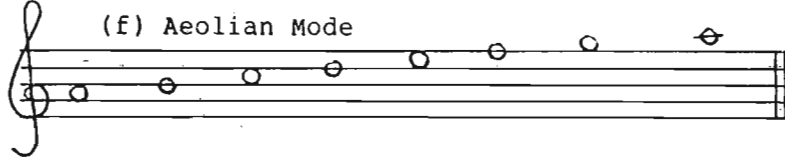
## (d) Lydian Mode



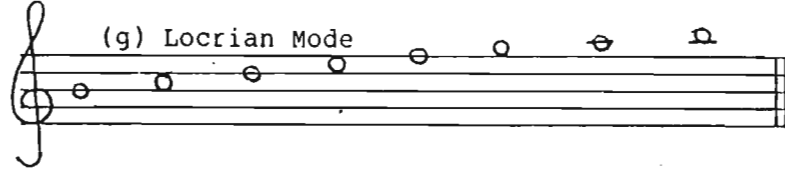
## (e) Mixolydian Mode



## (f) Aeolian Mode



## (g) Locrian Mode

(2) RHYTHM

Rhythm is another key element of jazz and one that gives jazz a very distinct "time-feel!" The element of rhythm and the notation thereof has been criticized by so called classical musicians for certain inaccuracies. Because of its derivation from different sources, jazz rhythms are usually more complex. Moreover, the "time-feel" which jazz employs is intricate. The rhythmic feel and pulse structure in any jazz group is usually maintained by the rhythm section, which traditionally consists of piano, bass and drums.

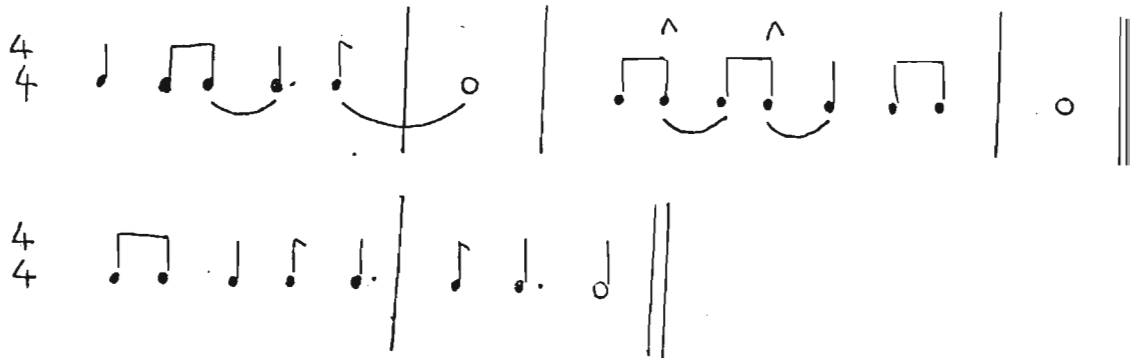
The function /...

The function of the rhythm section, is not merely to provide a solid foundation upon which soloists can build their improvisations.

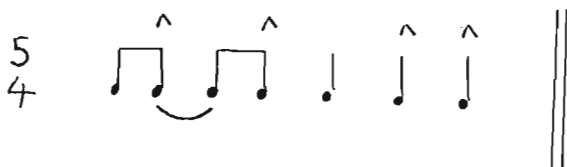
Of all the rhythms in the history of jazz, the "swing" rhythm is the most popular:



Another feature which gives jazz that very effervescent quality is the device known as syncopation. Syncopation occurs when there is the shift from the accented beat to the unaccented beat. This is also achieved when certain beats are anticipated for eg:



Here are a few more complex time signatures:



KEY TO THE JAZZ CHORDS USED IN THE TEXT

Jazz harmony is generally indicated by chord symbols, for example,  $C_6$ .

This means that the chord is built on the note 'C', as well as, that the note on the sixth degree is contained in the chord.

Roman numerals are also used here. In this case, the chord is built on the degree of the scale indicated by the Roman numeral, for example, I, vi, ii, V, I. The "capital" Roman numerals are used for major chords, while those in "small letters" indicate minor chords. A  $V_7$  chord therefore refers to the seventh chord built on the fifth degree of the scale, otherwise known as a dominant seventh chord.

Here is a summary of the chords used in the text.

$C_{\Delta 7}$	=	C major seventh
$C^{-7}$ or $C_{m7}$	=	C minor seventh
$C_7$	=	C dominant seventh
$C^9$	=	C ninth
$C^\sharp$	=	C sharpened ninth
$C^{b9}$	=	C flattened ninth
$C^{11}$	=	C eleventh
$C^{13}$	=	C thirteenth
$C^{\circ 7}$	=	C diminished seventh
$C^\emptyset$	=	C half diminished
$C^+$	=	C augmented

(3) HARMONY

Harmony in jazz is an additive process. Chords are usually embellished by the addition of notes over the basic triad. More complex harmonies occur when chords are superimposed on one another. The following examples show how the addition of notes over the triad gives rise to new chords. The contemporary trend with regard to jazz harmonies is that they are formed from different progressions, for example, the cycle of fifths progression. The intricate nature of modern day harmonies, is achieved by sounding the chords with different note distributions. This concept is referred to as chord voicings. Here is how a chord is embellished:

Major

Minor

C C<sup>b</sup> C<sup>Δ7</sup> C<sup>-</sup> C<sup>-b</sup> C<sup>-7</sup> C<sup>-maj</sup>

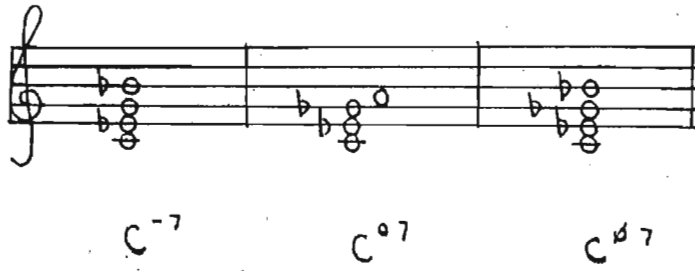
( - = minor )  
( Δ = major )

Chords also have a dominant function.

C<sub>7</sub> C<sub>9</sub> C<sup>(b9)</sup> C<sup>(#9)</sup>

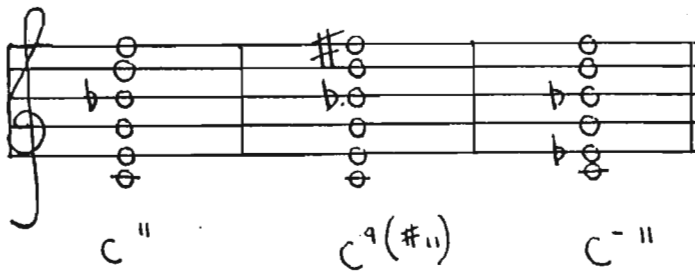
Minor/...

Minor Seventh/ diminished seventh chords.

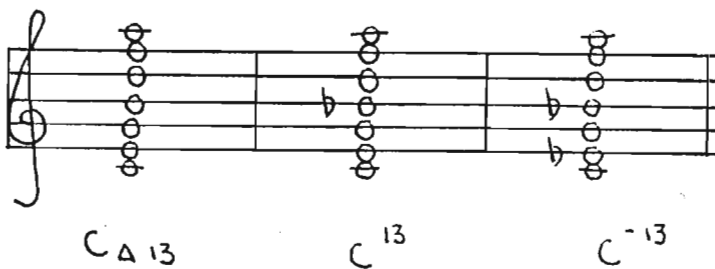


During the development of jazz, the harmonies have also become more intricate. Here are a few more complex chords:

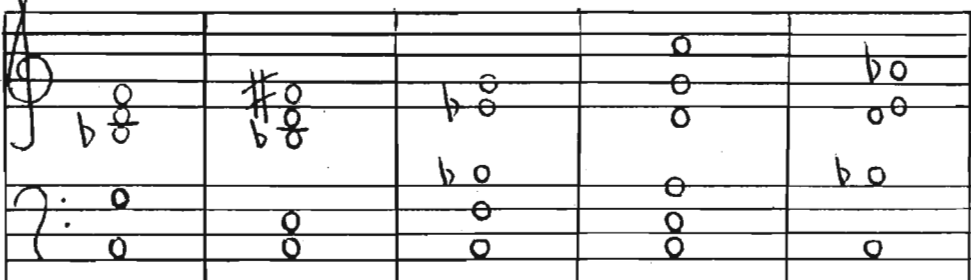
### Elevenths



### Thirteenths



Here are a few voicings of the eleventh and thirteenth chords respectively:



(4) **FORM**

According to Collier,<sup>1</sup> the blues evolved from the work song, the prison song, the street cry and the spiritual. The Blues was essentially a means of self-expression for the blacks, and it was a reflection of their sad, pitiful way of life. Music was also used as a means of education, as the older folk used the blues to pass on wisdom to the young folk. This is similar to the African tradition where children are educated through oral means.

After World War I, blacks began to migrate from areas in the south to big cities like Chicago and Detroit in the north. This mass exodus from the south to the north was effected as a result of poor living conditions and the lack of decent job opportunities. However, prior to this movement to the north, there were itinerant musicians who moved around quite freely in the south, playing their music. This concept of communication through music was important to the blacks as it served as a means of sharing each others burdens.

From 1925, according to Collier, record companies started to make recordings of blues artists. This led to fame, though not fortune, for some, and accelerated the dissemination of the blues through black communities nation-wide. Blacks were now producers and consumers of a cultural commodity that carried the prestige of commercial value and was unmistakably their own.

By the/...

1) James Lincoln Collier, The Making of Jazz.  
(New York: Granada Publishing Co., 1978), pp. 35-42.



By the 1930's, the booming of record sales was an indication that blues music was beginning to spread rapidly. Consequently, this has ensured the perpetuation of the blues as a sub-culture.

Here is an example of the basic blues structure, which uses chords built on the tonic, sub-dominant and dominant degrees of the scale.

Bar	1	2	3	4
Chords	C / / / /	C / / / /	C / / / /	C / / / /
Bar	5	6	7	8
Chords	F / / / /	F / / / /	C / / / /	C / / / /
Bar	9	10	11	12
Chords	G7 / / / /	G7 / / / /	C / / / /	C / / / /

The blues is not the only common form used in jazz. Jazz musicians appropriated a vast number of 'tunes' originally composed for Broadway or Hollywood musicals by professional song-writers. The so-called 'standards' in the jazz repertoire are usually in what is known as 'popular song form,' a formula favoured by professional composers.

The 'popular song form' is usually 32 bars long, and normally uses an AABA structure. Each section of this structure is 8 bars long. The first A section is repeated, using the same chord sequence. The B section, otherwise known as the "bridge", has contrasting material and as such uses a different chord sequence. Often the bridge sequence is made up of dominant seventh chords which resolve to the original key.

This feature/...

This feature is referred to as the cycle of fifths, and is characteristic of the popular song form.

Here is an example of George Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm".

A section

Bar	1	2	3	4
Chords	B <sup>b</sup> G -7 /	C-7 F7 /	B <sup>b</sup> G-7 /	C-7 E7 /
Bar	5	6	7	8
Chords	B <sup>b</sup> B <sup>b</sup> 7 /	E <sup>b</sup> E <sup>b</sup> - /	B <sup>b</sup> F7 /	B <sup>b</sup> /

B section

Bar	17	18	19	20
Chords	D7 /	% /	G7 /	% /
Bar	21	22	23	24
Chords	C7 /	% /	F7 /	% /

(5) IMPROVISATION/...

241 00/9

## (5) IMPROVISATION

Improvisation is by far the most vital ingredient of jazz, and one that warrants careful examination. It is defined as being the spontaneous performance of musical ideas, otherwise referred to as instantaneous composition. It is the most creative aspect of the jazz style, and allows the jazz musician the liberty to communicate his thoughts and feelings. Improvisation is very much a thinking process, during which the personality and character of the soloist becomes apparent. During the developmental periods of jazz, performers approached improvisation in different ways. Consequently, the present jazz performer has a wide variety of resources to draw on.

Improvisation is where one's ability to execute musical phrases on the spur of the moment is put to the test. Many jazz performers throughout history of jazz have reached great heights in their improvisation, and have achieved memorable moments. The development of improvisation reached its climax during the so-called "free era" of jazz during which jazzmen like John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman began to move away from the limitations of tonality. However, no matter which period jazz musicians lived in, the principles of improvisation as well as the objectives they attempted to accomplish have remained constant, even though their styles were so diverse.

One of the important principles of improvisation is that it occurs over a steady tempo. This is usually maintained by the rhythm section. The tempo of the tune is to a large extent dependent on the character of the tune itself. In other words, if the tune is a ballad, then the tempo will have to be fairly slow. A "swing" tune on the other hand might have a medium or even a fast tempo. Therefore, the tempo varies from tune to tune, and is normally determined by the performers.

The next principle which affects improvisation is the style of the tune. In other words, the improvisation that occurs on a "Dixieland" tune will differ greatly from the improvisation on a "Bebop" tune. The soloist therefore needs to be sensitive to the style of a particular tune. Consequently, the improvisation needs to be a reflection of the style of playing of a particular era. Once again, this can be left to the discretion of the soloist. As such, the soloist can use different techniques to enhance the quality of his playing, for example, trills, harmonics or different kinds of breathing.

The third principle with regard to improvisation is that of coherence. The solo needs to have a sense of direction, which involves a definite beginning and end. These solos should be looked upon as being musical statements. It is therefore the task of the soloist to try to build an interesting solo, by using ideas which are fresh. Repetition of the same musical ideas can sometimes prove to be boring for the listener.

Improvisation is therefore the most important component of jazz, and as such needs to be given special consideration. The approaches to improvisation together with the processes involved are discussed later in section D.

(C) THE/...

(c) a. THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF UTILIZING JAZZ IN MUSIC  
EDUCATION

1. Problems with acceptance of jazz by society

Janos Gonda,<sup>1</sup> a jazz educationist, stated in his article entitled "Jazz Education: Improvisation and Creativity" that jazz is a form of music which ranks among the century's most important cultural developments. Therefore, he continues, that it should be given the same exposure as any other art form. Certain forms of prejudice have hindered the spread of jazz as well as deterred formally trained middle-class musicians from becoming actively involved in it. Jazz was resisted because of its association with the negro. In fact, black music was generally held in low esteem, because it was linked in the minds of many with crime, violence and sexual immorality. The term "jazz" itself tended to reinforce the notion that moral and aesthetic degeneracy was rife amongst black people, and the fact that some whites liked the music, or even played it, confirmed it was dangerously contagious. To this day most jazz musicians feel their music has been stuck with a negative, misleading and vulgar label that established custom won't allow them to shed.

Jazz was often thought of as being "commercial music". During some phases of its history it certainly was that, but by and large, commercial incentives have always been greater in other fields of music. Indeed the term "commercial" as used by the jazz fraternity has strong connotations of artistic compromise.

The music/...

(1) Janos Gonda, "Jazz Education: Improvisation and Creativity".

The music establishment also reacted negatively towards jazz. Classical musicians opposed jazz as it contradicted existing standards of musicality. The combination of instruments used in jazz groups, typically dominated by brass and percussion, was quite different to those used in a classical ensemble. As a result, the overall sound produced by a jazz group was "loud" by contemporary standards and difficult for middle-class audiences to enjoy at first. Furthermore, the element of improvisation, which forms the basis of any jazz work, was not part of musical works that established musicians were accustomed to.

A few critics also attacked jazz. An editorial of the London Musical Times in 1924 stated:

"They claim that it (jazz) is a new force that will revitalise the poor old jaded art of music. What has it to offer? Nothing in rhythm, for its rhythmic peculiarities are merely developments of something music has already. It has nothing new in melody or harmony".<sup>1</sup>

Thereafter in 1933, jazz was attacked by critics once more:

"Those who pretend that jazz makes any great demand on the intellect are deceiving themselves, they would however have a straight case if they stated that jazz is sexually exhilarating ..... jazz is essentially an aphrodisiac and should not pretend to be other than such."<sup>2</sup>

Another viewpoint concerned particularly with the music education of young people is that:

"The musical ideals of jazz are in general of a low order. It thrives on distorted tonal values; both the instruments and voices are encouraged to make sounds which are not just different from what we are used to but definitely less beautiful, less pure and noble. It appeals mostly to the less civilized part of one's nature - the purely physical, the more violent emotions .... Rhythmic vitality is its foremost attraction, allied to a basic simplicity of form which enables the most untrained to understand it."<sup>3</sup>

(1) Graham Vulliamy, Pop Music In School.

(2) REASONS/...

(2) Reasons why Jazz should be included in the Music Education programme

Before going on to considering the value of jazz in music education, it is important to examine what the aims of music educators are and then to see to what extent jazz fulfills these aims.

Keith Wilson,<sup>1</sup> in his article entitled "Jazz at Secondary School" says that progressive music educators such as John Dewey advocate a creative approach to music education. Creativity is seen as being innate in all individuals. According to these music educators, music education should attempt to utilize the student's creative powers. Qualities such as self-expression, originality, and individuality need to be given prominence in music education. Apart from merely gaining knowledge, students need to be able to apply what is learnt to other situations.

In the light of the above, jazz is able to meet these aims in the following way. The creative aspect of jazz is found in improvisation. In this improvisation, qualities such as spontaneity, self-expression and individuality are enhanced. Improvisation also allows for students to respond at their particular levels of musical development. Therefore in jazz, the emphasis is more on expression rather than accumulation of knowledge. The element of transfer is found in student's creating new improvisations on new tunes. As is evident jazz education is in keeping with the aims expressed by the music educators above and adequately complies with the aspect of creativity in music education.

Keith Wilson/.....

- 1) Keith Wilson, "Jazz at Secondary School", The Australian Journal of Music Education (April, 1982), p. 23.

1

Keith Wilson, in delineating points in favour of jazz, deals with the eclectic capacity of jazz. The writer feels that by studying jazz, students are being exposed to a form of music which developed from diverse sources, bearing in mind that jazz is a hybrid form integrating elements from different countries. In doing so, students are exposed to different styles and forms of music outside their culture.

Secondly, the writer contends that generally, music education has not kept abreast with technological advances in the particular environment. In this respect he considers the modern electronic instruments, for example synthesizers and electric piano. By emphasizing the use of these instruments, and other advances in jazz, rock, or pop, a study of jazz motivates students.

Consequently, a third idea presents itself. The writer also feels that a study of jazz motivates students to become involved in music generally. Therefore, by using jazz as a stimulus, students who were disillusioned because of a "conventional" music education programme, will be motivated to become involved in all kinds of music. However, he states that no form of music should take precedence over another.

According to Janos Gonda,<sup>2</sup> a jazz educationist and writer, jazz is an integral part of music education in other countries, for example, Germany, Australia and Hungary. I suggest that jazz be given the same amount of prominence in South African schools, as it is in schools in other countries.

Janos/...

- 1) Keith Wilson, "Jazz at Secondary School", The Australian Journal of Music. (April, 1982), p.22.
- 2) Janos Gonda, "Jazz Education: Improvisation and Creativity", International Journal of Music Education. November, 1983) p. 20.



Janos Gonda makes a case for jazz by saying that children should be exposed to jazz.

Gonda has the following to say with regard to the value of jazz education. He says that:

"One of the most overlooked aspects of jazz education, especially in Europe, is the education of teenagers and children. The musical instruction of children affects the cultural tastes of future audiences, their receptivity to jazz, the level of competence of amateurs, the quality of professional training, the future development of the art of jazz in the country. Jazz instruction, in terms of developing an awareness of the basis, improvisation and creativity shouldn't begin at the size of 16 - 18. Childhood is the most productive period for the development of creative playfulness. The flexibility that is so necessary for improvisation is more readily found in children than in adults".<sup>1</sup>

If one considers the South African jazz scene, one notices that the musicians involved represent a good cross-section of the cultural groups in the country. Jazz is in fact a unique language through which musicians can identify and empathise with each other. As a long-term objective, jazz can act as a catalyst in integrating the different cultural groups by promoting a deeper understanding and tolerance of each other.

As Darius Brubeck, jazz lecturer at Natal University, stated:

"Jazz will not solve South Africa's problems, but it offers a model of what South African life might look like without them".<sup>2</sup>

(b) Improvisation/...

- 1) Janos Gonda, "Jazz Education: Improvisation and Creativity", International Journal of Music Education. (November 1983) p. 21.
- 2) Darius Brubeck, "From Durban to Detroit", Motivation for Jazzanians tour of the U.S.A. (December 1987), p.2.

(b) IMPROVISATION AND ITS POTENTIAL IN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC EDUCATION  
(TWO VIEWPOINTS)

1. Bert Konowitz

According to Bert Konowitz,<sup>1</sup> improvisation and its use in general music education has been misunderstood. One misconception is that teachers think of improvisation as being a unique musical skill which can be acquired by a few. Another misconception has to do with the term improvisation itself, in that it is associated with contemporary rock music or organ performance in the 16th and 17th centuries. Konowitz sees improvisation as something which is not inexplicable, but rather, something which develops as skills are developed. However, in terms of its educational potential, improvisation is not to be used merely for the development of skills, but rather as a vehicle for experimental and discovery-oriented activities.

In other words, it is performance whereby one's creativity can be displayed. Through this sort of experience students are able to inquire for themselves by responding at their own levels. Improvisation serves as a catalyst for other musical encounters, which under normal circumstances would not be possible. Every student becomes a participant, by taking part in the various aspects of music making, which are, performing, conducting, arranging, and improvising. Bert Konowitz advocates the following stages in the improvisation process.

The first phase deals with working at the level of the student, however fundamental. The second phase deals with the expansion of skills through improvisation/...

1) Bert Konowitz, Music Improvisation as a Classroom Method  
 (New York: Alfred Publishers, 1973), pp. 1, 2.

improvisation by experimentation. The third phase deals with skills that would enhance performance levels and provoke inquiry on the part of the students. In doing so, the student is becoming involved in all aspects of making music such as performance, composition, conducting, arranging and improvising. This means that it is the task of the teacher to establish an environment which is conducive to this kind of experience. Konowitz also states that in the present society one needs to be flexible enough to adapt to the changing standards and norms of the environment. As such, improvisation benefits are not confined to musical situations, but also serve to equip individuals to cope with the reality of an ever changing world.

## 2. David Baker

## 2. David Baker

The author states that little has been done in terms of utilizing improvisation as a teaching tool in Music Education, and in fact progress in improvisational techniques has only been made in the field of jazz. However, improvisation, apart from being a valuable teaching aid, can be used as a catalyst in developing other skills, and as such, it should be seen as being a vital ingredient of general Music Education.

The author continues that the most significant reason for using improvisation in the educational process, is that it ensures active participation from both teacher and pupil. The principle of acquiring new information and transferring it, also becomes apparent. In other words, students can learn new concepts and approaches and apply these almost simultaneously to a different situation.

Baker also states that improvisation should not be carried out in a "mechanical" fashion, that is, without direction or order. In this respect, a good knowledge of the characteristics of a particular style is necessary, so that students can improvise within prescribed parameters and in the context of a given style. In doing so, students are exposed to a variety of improvisational approaches, and are able to gain perspectives on the historical development of jazz.

A study/...

A study of scales and modes can be approached through the use of jazz improvisation. In order to improvise effectively, students need to have a prior knowledge of the various scales and modes which are used in the jazz idiom. Generally, scales and modes are meant to be practised rigorously, and usually, very mechanically. However, when used in improvisation, a particular scale or mode becomes easier to learn, because the student is able to ascertain precisely how it is applied in the performance situation.

Improvisation and its practice also facilitates the development of a good technique by playing different scales/chords or tunes without written aid. By improvising more, the performer is invariably improving his technique over the whole of the instrument. Improvisation aids in the development of a good ear as well.

Among the different kinds of hearing are the following:

- i) "Environmental hearing - the ability to improvise while simultaneously reacting to environmental musical stimuli (piano, bass, drums, guitar, background horns, and so on)
- ii) Prehearing - the ability to hear an idea, place it in a tonal perspective, translate it into actual notes for an instrument, and play it, all of this being done in a split second..
- iii) Practical instrumental hearing - the ability to immediately translate what is heard (outside or inside the head) into sound without writing it down or consciously figuring it out.
- iv) Anticipatory hearing - the ability to hear a melodic, harmonic, or rhythmic idea and predicated on the style, era, and other environmental conditions, predict with reasonable certainty the probable consequences".<sup>1</sup>

(D) A MODEL/...

1) David Baker, "Improvisation: A Tool for Music Learning", Music Educator's Journal. (January, 1988) p. 50.

**(D) A MODEL FOR TEACHING JAZZ**

The teaching of jazz needs to take place in a workshop-type atmosphere.

The only prerequisite for doing the course is that students must have a reasonable degree of proficiency on their instruments. The activities in the course are designed mainly for the use of the piano, because of its versatility. However, other instruments may be incorporated depending on their availability. If so, the keys of certain activities will need to be transposed to suit the instruments in question.

The main objective of the course is to enable students with little or no prior experience in music making to improvise, or have some knowledge as to how this can be accomplished. The course is divided into different sections, incorporating performing, composing, listening and improvisational activities. These activities range from improvisation on simple melodic motives, culminating in the approach to improvising on the Blues. This is in fact the final point of the course. As is evident, the activities are performer-orientated, but under no circumstances should the value of other activities be underestimated. Listening is something that should be done regularly, for it is here that students will hear and begin to appreciate the different stylistic approaches to jazz improvisation. Depending on the availability of instruments (and students to play them), it would be worthwhile to form a jazz combo or ensemble, as the merits of that somewhat "defunct" institution, the "jam session", can also not be underestimated. Learning in such a situation, takes place from the interaction of the students with each other.

The course is not intended to be adhered to rigidly, but rather, serves to initiate the improvisational process. Therefore, if activities need to

be repeated/...

be repeated, then teachers should be flexible enough to accomodate this. Finally, the course is intended for students with different abilities and aptitudes. Some might find it relatively easy to cope with new activities, while others will require more attention.

Jazz takes the form of a theme and variations, where, during the improvisation, the melody, primarily is varied. This takes place over a definite time signature or pulse, as well as a steady chord progression.

In most performances, the tune is first played through after which improvisation takes place, and once again, the tune is repeated. The sequence of the performance therefore resembles the following diagram.

Theme	-	Variations	-	Theme
or Head	-	Solo	-	Head Out,

The chord sequence which is repeated while a solo is being performed is usually referred to as the "chorus". The number of choruses varies from performance to performance, and is left to the discretion of the soloist. During choruses, the rhythm section plays a key role, in that it serves as a driving force behind the soloist by creating and maintaining rhythmic interest. In other words the rhythm section is said to support and "punctuate" the solo.

In such a situation, teachers should allow the students to respond at their respective levels of development, in other words, individuality should be encouraged and under no circumstances stifled. The benefits of the course will only be attained if both the teacher and students possess the correct attitudes toward learning.



(1) MOTIVIC IMPROVISATION (general)

As mentioned earlier, jazz melodies comprise numerous fragments called motives.

These motives, when varied, constitute improvisation. Here is an example:



When grouped correctly :



The note values could be changed, thus:



The rhythm of the melody can also be changed through syncopation.



The/...



The melody can also be changed by the inclusion of more notes, without changing the direction of the melody too much.



### ACTIVITIES

1. Have the class experiment with different possibilities of varying the above motive.
2. The students should be encouraged to play possibilities to each other.
3. Try combining these motives.
4. Split the class into smaller groups, and have them compose something together.
5. Here is another motive which could be used:



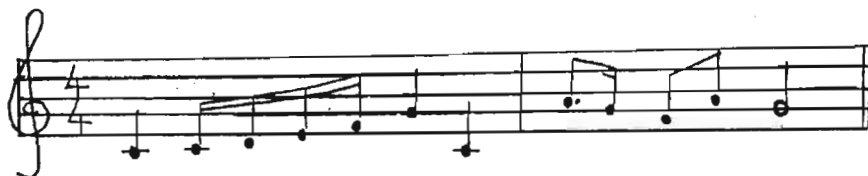
Have the class experiment in a similar manner.

6. After having discovered different possibilities, have the class transpose these motives to the keys of F and G major respectively.

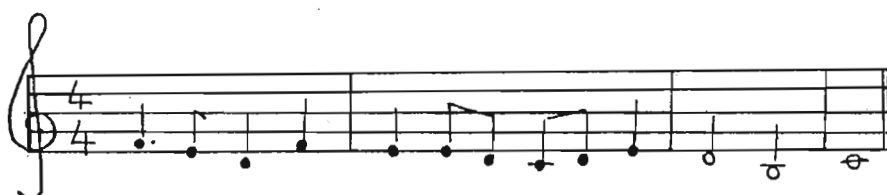
(2) QUESTION AND ANSWER PHRASES

The next stage is to improvise melodies as an "answer" to an opening phrase. This particular concept is also referred to as a consequential phrase. As a start, here is a 2-bar phrase:

Example (a)



A possible answering phrase could be:

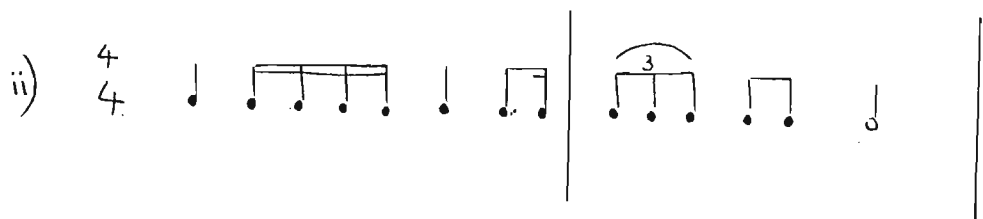


1. Have the class compose an answering phrase of two bars to the phrase given in example (a).
2. Now attempt a phrase of four bars to example (a).
3. Have the class compose their own "question" phrases.
4. Divide the class into groups of two, Let one person play a "question" phrase while the other plays an "answer" phrase.
5. Thereafter the class may attempt composing "question" phrases which could perhaps vary in length.
6. Once again, transpose these phrases into other keys, including F major and G major.

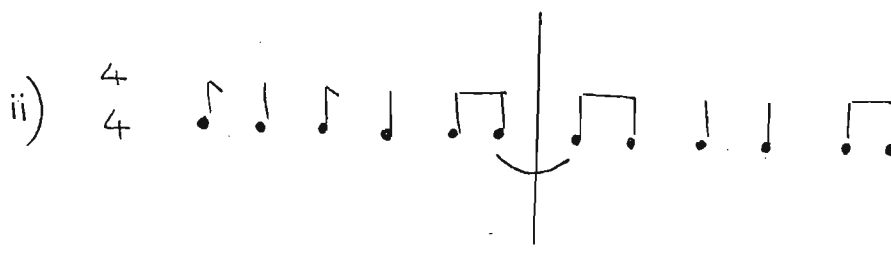
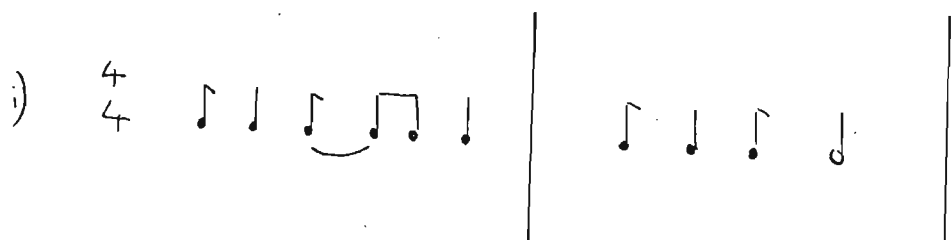
(3) Imitation/.....

(3) IMITATION

Another very useful learning device is that of imitation. This is a test of one's memory powers. In this instance, the teacher should begin by clapping a few rhythms, and thereafter the class responds by doing likewise. To begin with, a  $\frac{4}{4}$  time-signature should be employed. Here are a few examples of rhythms that could be used:



Here are a few more complex rhythms. Take note of the syncopation.



Have the class experiment with their own rhythms. Allow one person to clap a few rhythms while the rest of the class responds by doing likewise.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. For the second part of the exercise, have the class create melodies out of the above rhythmic phrases.
2. Thereafter, they may create melodies out of their own rhythmic phrases.
3. Using the above rhythmic ideas, have the class create a short melodic piece of about eight bars.
4. Divide the class into smaller groups, and let them play their compositions to each other.

(4) IMPROVISING/...

(4) IMPROVISING BASS LINES

The aim of this section is to compose bass motives, which are repeated.

Here is an example of a bass line motive:



The bass line motives are usually simpler, shorter in length. This normally provides the steady pulse that forms the foundation for any combo.

ACTIVITIES

1. Have the class experiment with their own bass line motives, of about two bars in length.
2. These should be played on their instruments or else on the piano.
3. Now have the class create a counter-melody to the bass line motive.

An example is shown below.

Counter - melody

Bass-line motive

4. Divide the class into pairs. Have one person play a bass line motive, while another plays a counter-melody.
5. Have one half of the class play the bass line motive shown in the above example, while the other half responds with a counter-melody.
6. Using the counter-melody shown in the above example, have the class create four different variations of melody.

### **(5) APPROACHES TO IMPROVISATION**

There are various approaches to improvising on tunes. To a large extent, the approach one uses depends on the tune itself, as well as the style from which it evolves. In other words, the improvisation that takes place on a traditional "swing" tune would be different to that which takes place on a modern tune. The performer is therefore left with the task of assimilating the materials available for improvisation in order to produce a solo which is coherent. However, there are in fact four main approaches to improvisation. These are:

- (a) Variation of the melody. This is by far the most common approach to improvisation. In this instance, the jazz work takes on the form of a theme and variations. The melody is therefore "coloured" by using various "melodic" devices, for example, passing tones, neighbouring tones, appoggiaturas.
- (b) The chordal approach. Here the performer utilizes the notes of the chord or harmony as the basis for improvisation. This occurs by using arpeggios or runs to articulate the chordal notes.
- (c) The scalar approach. In this case, scales, derived from the harmonies, provide the framework for improvisation. The harmonies therefore perform a secondary function, whereas the main concern is employing scales (or modes) that are in keeping with the tonality implied by the chords.

(d) The/.....

- (d) The fourth approach is concerned with the use of melody patterns or passages practised before-hand, or perceived instantaneously.

In jazz parlance, these patterns are sometimes referred to as "licks".

This approach is different to the first three in that these "licks"

have a definite melody and rhythm and are applied as melodic formulas.

These then are some of the approaches which could be used, and is in no

way exhaustive. Very often performers develop their own styles of

improvisation which are distinct from others. Ultimately, improvisation

needs to be looked upon as being a vehicle for the expression of one's

feelings and ideas, and not merely as a mechanical exercise.

#### (6) CHORDAL IMPROVISATION

Here, we will confine ourselves to improvisation on one chord for a start.

The aim in this section is to create a melody over a given chord.

The simplest way to do this would be to utilize the notes of the chord,

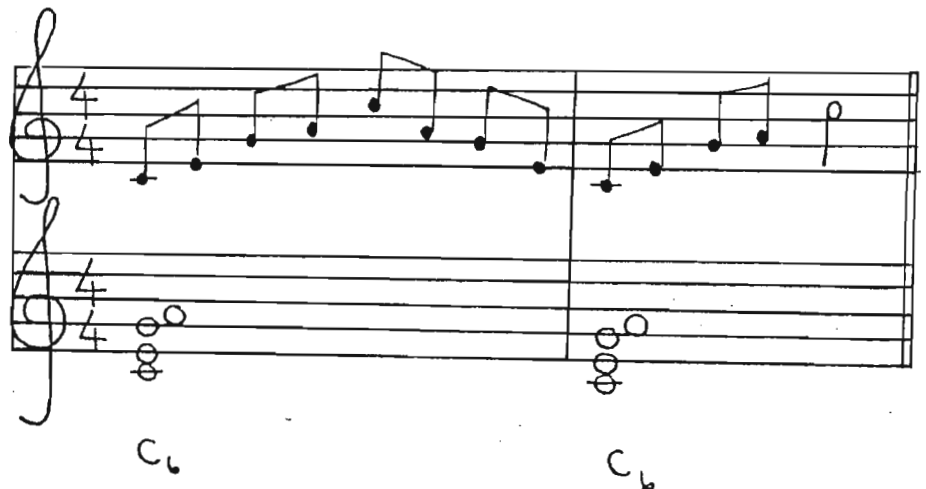
in other words, the chordal approach. From the previous section, another

possible approach to utilize could be the scalar approach, in other words,

applying a scale to fit the chord. But first, we will begin with the

improvisation based on the notes of the chord. Here is an example :

Example 1



This is the basic melody that could be derived from chordal notes. To make the melody more interesting, the same notes could be articulated in a different manner, using different rhythmic possibilities. For example:

Example 2



### ACTIVITIES

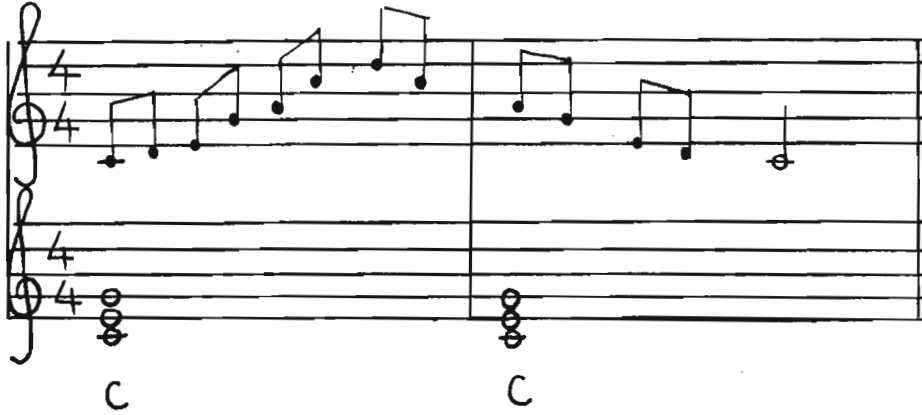
1. Have the class play the notes of the C<sub>6</sub> chord as shown in example 1.
2. Using the same notes, play a melody of not more than two bars as shown in Example 2.
3. Now transpose the notes in Example 1 to the keys of F major and G major and improvise melodies of 2 bars in these respective keys.



(7) THE SCALAR APPROACH

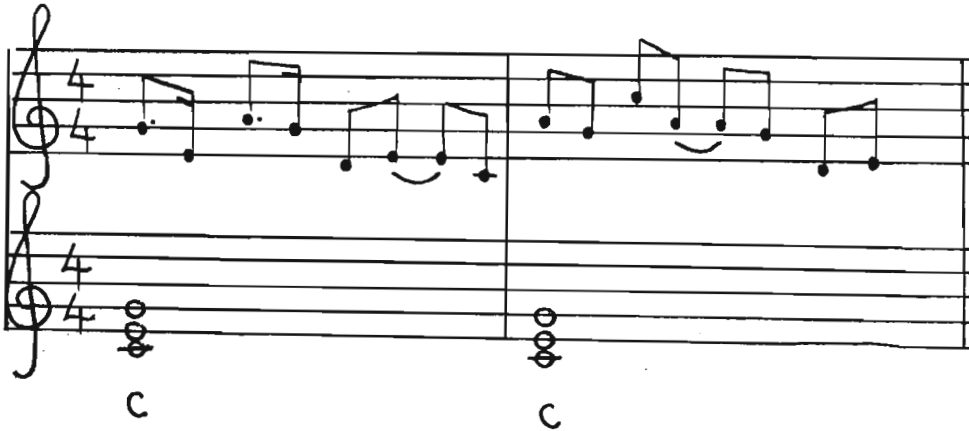
In this section, various scales could be used as the basis for improvisation. However, we will place emphasis on the use of the pentatonic scale, which uses the first, second, third, fifth and sixth degrees of the scale. Here is an example:

Example 1



Once more, the same notes may be used to form a different melody, as shown in the following example:

Example 2

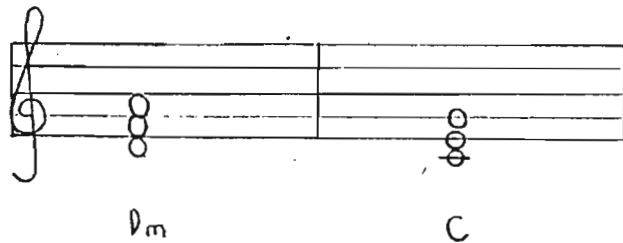


**ACTIVITIES**

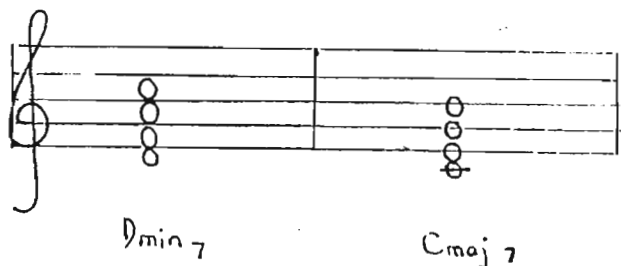
1. Have the class practise the pentatonic scale utilizing the first, second, third, fifth and sixth degrees of the C major scale, as shown in Example I.
2. Now play a melody of two bars using the notes of the pentatonic scale.
3. Have the class experiment with different possibilities of patterns based on the same scale.

**(8) TWO CHORD IMPROVISATION**

The next step involves improvisation over two chords. In this section, we will combine both the scalar and the chordal approaches. The chords utilized for this exercise are those of the supertonic and tonic in the key of C major. The aim here is to get the students to compose melodies over these particular chords:



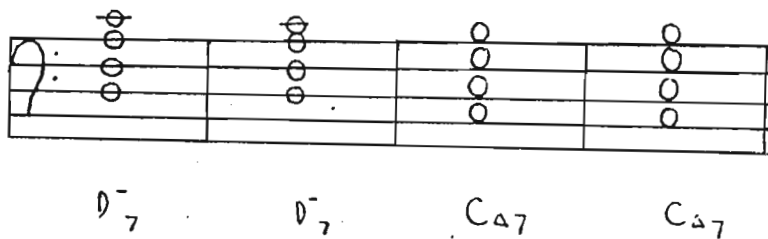
However, to make the progression more interesting, we will add sevenths to both chords, thus:



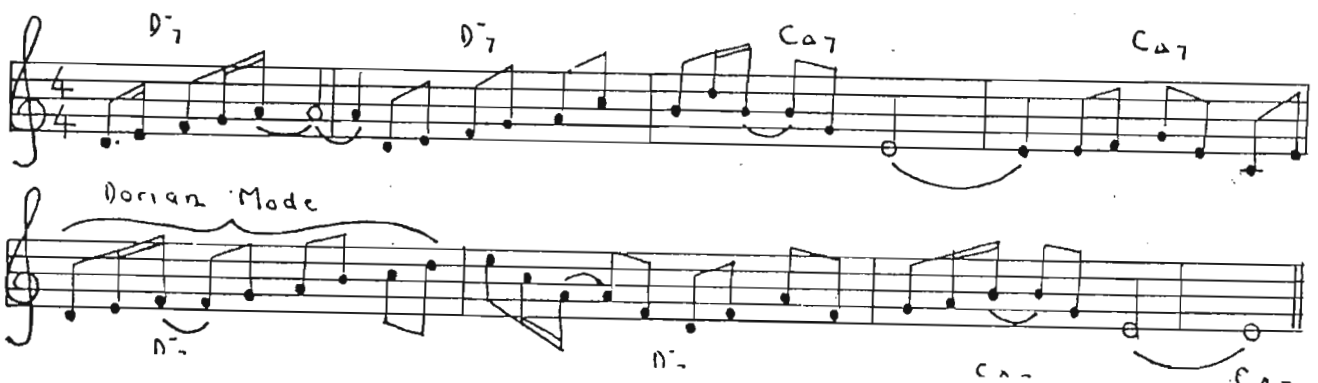
The C major scale may be applied to both chords, however, in the case of the D minor chord, we use the mode which begins on the note "D", commonly referred to as the Dorian mode. This mode uses the notes of the C major scale. By using the mode, we can apply the notes of the C major scale over both chords. In this case, this is an imperative. Here are the notes of the Dorian mode in the key of C major:



The melodies should be based on a four-bar structure which should be repeated several times, as follows:



The idea here is to play the chord changes with the left hand and improvise with the right, on the piano. If other instruments are to be incorporated into this exercise, then the chords must still be sounded on the piano while students are improvising. Here is an example of a possible improvisation:



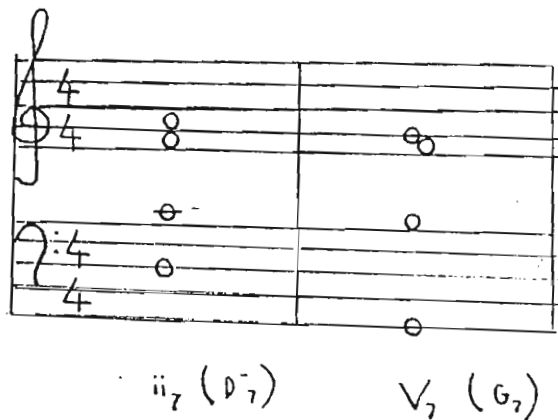
### ACTIVITIES

1. Have each student practise the Dorian mode in the key of C major.
2. Give a few students the opportunity to sound the chords on the piano, over a four-bar structure. Keep a steady four-beat tempo.
3. Now have two people sit at the piano. One plays the chords in the bass while the other improvises freely. The above example may be used.
4. The same procedure should be followed if other instruments are to be used. The improvisation here should take place individually. Students should be encouraged to listen to each other.

### (9) THE ii - V SEQUENCE

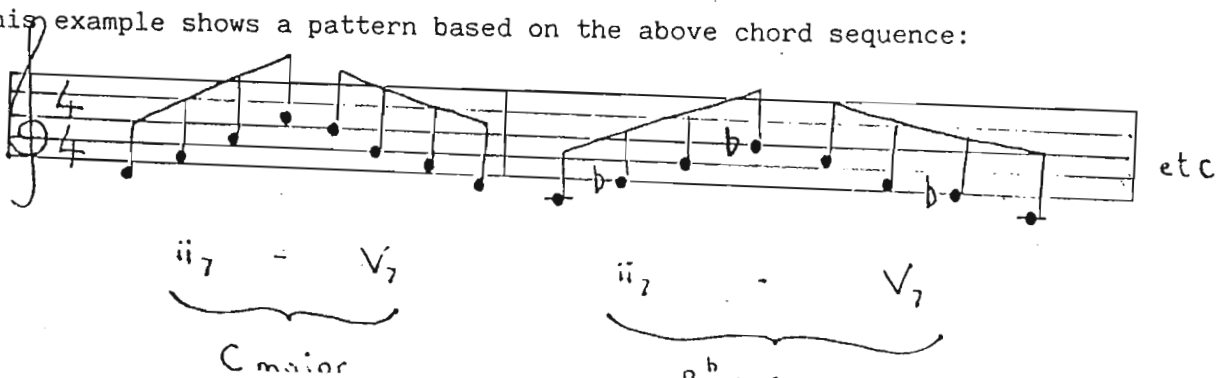
The ii - V sequence is by far the most popular as well as the most constructive for the jazz musician. It serves as one of the most viable ways of developing one's technique, that is, when scales and arpeggios are applied over the chords. Moreover, the root of each chord is a perfect fifth below the root of the chord which preceded it. Here is an example of the sequence, in the key of C major, in four parts:

Example 1



Example 2

This example shows a pattern based on the above chord sequence:



This pattern may be varied in a number of ways. Here is one such variation:

Example 3

etc.

This particular sequence enables us to apply the next of our approaches to improvisation, and that is, the use of patterns or melodic formulas.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Have the class practise the pattern shown in the first example several times.
2. Now have the class continue the progression into the various other keys, as shown in Example 2.
3. As a keyboard exercise, let the students play the ii - V progression in four parts, in as many new keys as possible.
4. Have the class create variations based on the ii - V progression, as shown in example 3. They may extend this to the remainder of the progression as well.
5. Once again, while one student plays the chords for the progression have another create different patterns.

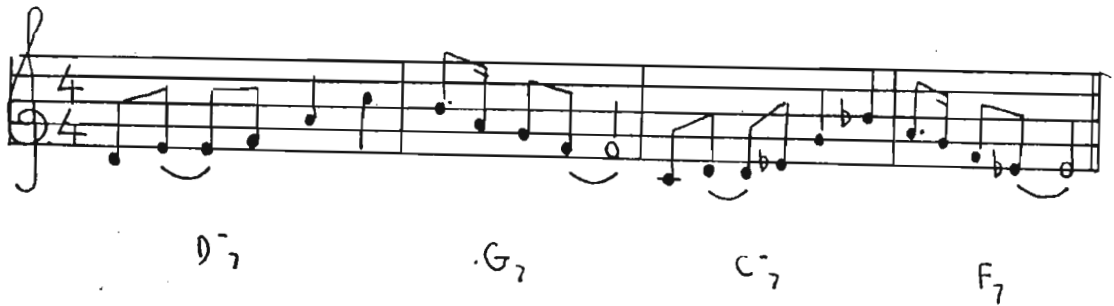
6. As/.....

6. As far as possible, try to rotate this so that students have the opportunity to play the chord progression as well as improvise.

### (10) SEQUENCES

For the second part of the exercise, we will concentrate particularly on the composing of short melodic formulas called sequences. These sequences, when transposed from one key to another, are a very useful improvisational device.

Here is an example of a sequence based on the same chord progression :



As can be seen, the same formula is merely transposed to the new key.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Have the class create melodic sequences in two keys, as shown in the above example.
2. Extend the same sequence to other keys that form part of the  $ii_7 - V_7$  progression.
3. Let one student play the chords while another plays the sequence.
4. To test the ability of the students to play in different keys, let one student play in the first key. Have another play in the key that forms the next part of the progression.

5. Keep/.....

5. Keep cycling the progression until the students are able to play the sequences maintaining a consistent tempo throughout.

In addition to sequences based on the  $ii_7 - V_7$  progression, here are more exercises based on other scales. The last two exercises are based on chord progressions.

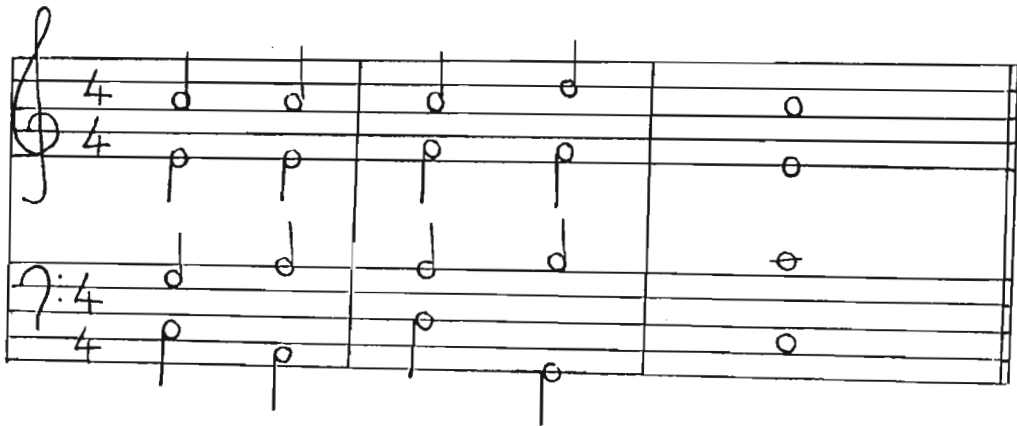
i) 
  
ii) 
  
iii) 
  
iv) 
  
v) 
  
vi) 
  
vii) 
  
vii)



These exercises are devised to develop technique, and should therefore be practised consistently.

(ii) "RHYTHM CHANGES"

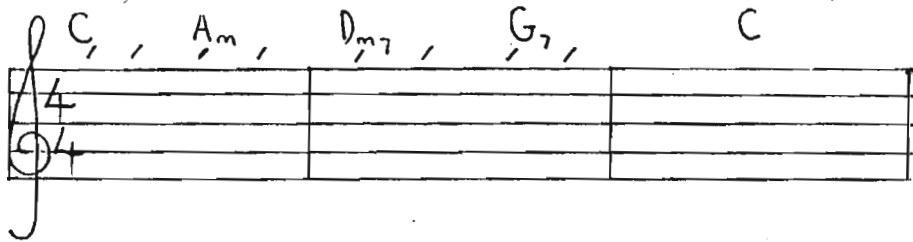
"Rhythm Changes" is a term which is applied to the chord progression, I, vi, ii, V, I. This progression is also used quite frequently in jazz tunes, for example, "I Got Rhythm". In the key of C major, the "Rhythm Changes" progression would look like this, in four parts:



C : I vi ii<sub>7</sub> V<sub>7</sub> I



In this section, the improvisational approach that we will employ primarily is that of varying the melody. Another way of writing the above progression would be to use the chord symbols. Once again, in the key of C, the progression would look like this:



The tune that we will consider improvising on is called "Christopher Columbus", and is based on the 'Rhythm Changes' progression. Here is the tune with the melody and chord changes:

Chord Changes

The next step in the improvisational process is to "play around with the melody", in other words, use the melody as the basis for improvisation. The approach to use with this kind of tune would therefore be that of a theme and variations. Here is an example of an improvisation:



As can be seen, the melody is still retained and may be used in several different ways. It may be paraphrased, in other words, interpreted in the individual style of the soloist. The melody of a tune may be hinted at during the course of a solo. Finally, the melody may provide the framework upon which a soloist may wish to build an entire solo.

It is also interesting to note how the bass line fits in with the tune.

Here is an example of a possible bass line:



These bass lines are derived from the diatonic scale. There are a number of variations to this bass line, therefore students should feel free to experiment with the different possibilities. The important point to remember here is that, as far as possible the root of the chord should be sounded on the chord change.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Have the students play the chord progression as shown in the first example, on the piano.
2. Now ask the class to play the tune "Christopher Columbus" on their instruments. Let one student accompany the class by playing the chords on the piano.
3. Improvisation in this type of situation should be done individually. Students should use the technique of varying the melody, as a basis for their improvisation, as shown in the example.
4. Then, have a few students improvise bass lines, using the diatonic scale.
5. Depending on the availability of instruments, try an ensemble situation. Have a few students play the tune while another plays the chords simultaneously. If possible, have another student improvise a bass line during the playing of the tune as well as during the improvisation.

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. As a further means of practice, students should experiment with the other approaches to improvisation, namely, the chordal approach, the scalar approach, and the use of general patterns. The aim of this exercise is to discipline the students by getting them to think about the notes they are using for their improvisation. However, if the

students/.....

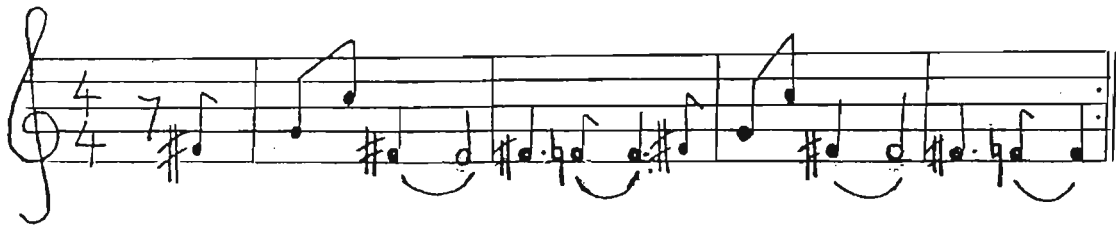
students do happen to use notes that do not belong to a particular scale or chord, these should not be considered "wrong". In such a situation, teachers need to be sensitive to correcting the students by encouraging them, rather than condemning them for using the "wrong" notes. Here is an example of how to utilize chordal patterns on the chord changes:



2. To reinforce the scalar approach let the students improvise patterns based on the pentatonic scale, (as referred to on page 38). These exercises are devised to acquaint students with the notes of the various scales and chords.
3. Transposition to other keys should also be attempted.

(12) COUNTER - MELODIES

These are melodies which are played in the background while the tune is being played. This 'new' melody also serves to enrich the 'old' melody, as well as reinforcing the existing harmonies. This kind of technique is often used in the big band situation where certain instruments, for example, the trombones, support the lead instruments, for example, the saxophones, by playing counter-melodies. Here is an example of a counter-melody to the tune, "Christopher Columbus".



2. Use one of the student's counter-melodies as an example. Get one half of the class to play this particular melody while the other half plays the tune. Ensure that the melodies interlock.
3. After this, there should be an opportunity for individual improvisation. Anyone should feel free to improvise.
4. As an experiment, have the class try some collective improvisation. As a word of caution, the teacher should ensure that this kind of situation does not become disorderly. Rather, collective improvisation should be very controlled through the use of dynamics. In other words, students need to be sensitive to each other's playing. In a group situation, it is vitally important to be able to hear the others clearly. At no time should one person be louder than the next, unless that person is the soloist.

#### POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN CONSTRUCTING MELODIES

- (i) Avoid too much repetition of the same melodic idea. If repetition is to be effective, then it needs to be handled skillfully.
- (ii) The principle of tension and relaxation is a good technique and ensures variety in the melody.
- (iii) Generally, melodies should aim towards a climax point. This ensures that the melody has a sense of direction.
- (iv) Avoid awkward skips and intervals.

Bearing these guidelines in mind, have the students construct a melody of eight bars using the 'Rhythm Changes' progression.

(13) IMPROVISING THE BLUES

This section is the focal point of the course. The blues sequence has always been a source of creativity for the jazz musician, partly because of the endless possibilities of utilizing the material. As such, the playing of the blues generates an effervescent atmosphere which, apart from being enjoyable, is also very educational.

Undoubtedly, much depends on the abilities of the performers to communicate and interact with each other. Learning takes place when there is this mutual interaction with each other.

As pointed out earlier, the blues, in its simplest form, uses mainly the primary chords. However, there are other chords which could be added to make the progression more interesting. Here is one such example:

Bar	1	2	3	4
Chords	C / / / /	F7 / / / /	C / / / /	C7 / / / /
Bar	5	6	7	8
Chords	F / / / /	F7 / / / /	C / / / /	A7 / / / /
Bar	9	10	11	12
Chords	D- / / / /	G7 / / / /	C / / / /	C / / / /

However, during the development of jazz, harmonies used in the blues sequence became more complex. One technique that is used fairly frequently in jazz generally, is that of chord substitution. This implies that extra chords are added to enrich the harmonic progression. One sequence which is used quite readily in the process of chord substitution, is the ii - V progression. This creates a harmonic motion that serves as a driving force for the soloist. Moreover, the use of the extra

harmonies/.....

harmonies means that the resource material upon which the solo can be built is increased. Consequently, the melodic lines that the soloist uses are far more appealing. Here is an example of a blues progression that uses the ii - V<sub>7</sub> sequence.

Bar	1	2	3	4
Chords	F / / / /	B <sup>b</sup> / / / /	F / / / /	Cm F <sub>7</sub> / / / /
Bar	5	6	7	8
Chords	B <sup>b</sup> / / / /	B <sup>b</sup> / / / /	Cm <sup>7</sup> F <sub>7</sub> / / / /	Am <sub>7</sub> D <sub>7</sub> / / / /
Bar	9	10	11	12
Chords	Dm <sub>7</sub> G <sub>7</sub> / / / /	Gm <sub>7</sub> C <sub>7</sub> / / / /	F <sub>7</sub> / / / /	F <sub>7</sub> / / / /

A further example of chord substitution is sometimes used in the last two bars. In this instance, the 'Rhythm Changes' progression is made use of. This feature is commonly referred to as the "turn-around".

The main purpose in using this sequence is to prepare for the next cycle of the blues progression, not forgetting that the blues progression is a recurring one. Once again, there are various forms of turn-arounds, but the most popular is the I, vi, ii, V, I.

Here is/.....



Here is an example of a blues sequence with the "turn-around" in the last two bars.

Bar	1	2	3	4
Chords	F	B <sup>b</sup>	F	Cm F
Bar	5	6	7	8
Chords	B <sup>b</sup>	B <sup>b</sup>	F	Am D <sup>7</sup>
Bar	9	10	11	12
Chords	Gm	C <sub>7</sub>	F Dm turn-around	Gm C <sub>7</sub>

In terms of melody, the blues uses the notes of blues scale. Once again, with the addition of the "blue" notes, namely, the flattened third and the flattened seventh, the performer has more melodic resources at his disposal. The actual blues tunes are fairly simple in their melodies, and are made up of short motives. Here is an example of a blues tune called "C-jam Blues".

The musical notation for "C-jam Blues" is presented in three staves, each with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written in C major, with notes grouped by slurs and ties. The chords are indicated by letters below the staff.

Staff 1: C, F<sub>7</sub>, C, C<sub>7</sub>

Staff 2: F<sub>7</sub>, F<sub>7</sub>, C<sub>7</sub>, C<sub>7</sub>

Staff 3: Dm<sub>7</sub>, G<sub>7</sub>, C, Am, Dm, G<sub>7</sub>

As can be seen, this melody comprises a motive made up of two notes. In this regard, much depends on the performer who is improvising to create musical interest. However, a further point to take note of here is the fact that supporting the harmony and melody is the bass line. This bass line, usually called the "walking bass", creates a forward motion that also lends itself to effective improvisation. The bass line, derived from the chord progression contains passing tones, as well as notes which are chromatically altered. Here is an example of a possible bass line:

The musical score shows a walking bass line across three staves. The first staff contains four measures with chords C, F<sub>7</sub>, C, and C<sub>7</sub> indicated below. The second staff contains four measures with chords F<sub>7</sub>, F<sub>7</sub>, C<sub>7</sub>, D<sub>m</sub>, E<sub>m</sub>, and A<sub>m</sub> indicated below. The third staff contains four measures with chords D<sub>m</sub>, G<sub>7</sub>, C, A<sub>m</sub>, D<sub>m</sub>, and G<sub>7</sub> indicated below. The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style with eighth and quarter notes.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Begin by playing a recording of a blues tune. As far as possible, students should be encouraged to listen to jazz records.
2. The first task is to acquaint students with the harmonies contained in the blues progression. Have the students play the chords in the left hand,

using/.....

using a steady tempo, in the following manner:

Three staves of music showing a blues progression in C major. Each staff has four measures. The first two staves show triads for C<sub>7</sub>, F<sub>7</sub>, C<sub>7</sub>, and C<sub>7</sub>. The third staff shows triads for G<sub>7</sub>, G<sub>7</sub>, and then a sequence of chords: C, A<sub>m</sub>, D<sub>m</sub>, G<sub>7</sub>.

3. The next step is to become acquainted with the blues scale in the key of C, thereafter, the blues scale should be played in the keys of F and G respectively. This could be done as a group or individually.
4. Students should then be encouraged to formulate patterns based on the blues scale. These patterns should then be executed over the blues progression. Here is one such pattern over the C major chord:

A musical staff in 4/4 time showing a blues scale pattern over a C<sub>7</sub> chord. The pattern consists of eighth and quarter notes, including a tritone (F#) and a flat (F), ending with a whole note C.

This pattern should then be transposed to the keys of F major and G major.

5. Have the class play the tune, "C jam-blues", with chordal accompaniment on the piano.
6. For a start, improvisation at this point should comprise small motives, which could be applicable over the F and G chords as well.
7. Those who find motivic improvisation at this stage difficult, should be encouraged to write it down. One "chorus" or one cycle of the blues should be attempted for improvisation.
8. Those students who are more adventurous, might attempt one chorus of motivic improvisation with another chorus of improvisational patterns based on the blues scale.

#### BLUES LYRICS

A study of the blues would be incomplete without any consideration being given to the lyrics. The blues lyrics are also very expressive and are a reflection of various aspects of life. Students should be encouraged to listen to recordings of blues singers, for example, Bessie Smith's "Hard - time Blues". Here is an example of a blues tune by Sonny Terry called "Dark Road Blues".

Well, my baby left this morning when the clock was striking four  
 well, she left this morning when the clock was striking four  
 Well, when she walked out, the blues walked in my door.

Well, she's gone, she's gone, she won't be back no more  
 Well, she's gone, she's gone, she won't be back no more  
 Well, what hurt me so bad, she's gone with Mr So-and So.

I looked down the road far as I could see  
 Well, I looked down the road far as I could see  
 Well, a man had my woman, the blues sure had poor me.

Well, I walked and I walked, my feet got soaking wet  
 Well, I walked and I walked, till my feet got soaking wet  
 Well, I ain't got my baby and I ain't stopped walking yet.  
 (FOLKWAYS RECORDS)

Here/.....

Here is an example of another blues tune, called "Prison Bound Blues".

Early one morning the blues came falling down  
 Early one morning the blues came falling down  
 All locked up in jail and prison bound

All last night I sat in my cell alone  
 All last night oooo— I sat in my cell alone  
 Thinkin' of my baby and my happy home

Actual  
 Key A $\flat$   $\text{♩} = 82$  (initial), 84 (final)

All last night I sat in my cell a-lone

All last night oooo I sat in my cell a-lone

Think-in' of my ba - by and my hap - py home

When I had my trial baby you could not be found  
 When I had my trial baby oooo— you could not be found  
 So it's too late now mistreating mama I'm prison bound

Baby you will never see my smiling face again  
 Baby you will never see my smiling face again  
 But always remember your daddy has been your friend

Sometimes I wonder why don't you write to me  
 Sometimes I wonder why don't you write to me  
 If I been a bad fellow I did not intend to be

### ACTIVITIES

1. Have the class compose blues lyrics on any given subject. The teacher might have to suggest a few topics.
2. Students should be encouraged to share their lyrics with the rest of the class.
3. Those who wish to put music to their words should do so, however this is not necessary.

CONCLUDING/...

### CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES

By this stage, students should now be equipped to improvise fairly confidently. Ultimately, to fully appreciate playing the blues, there needs to be a rhythm section together with lead instruments. Teachers, therefore have to be flexible enough to adapt the tune to their availability of instruments. This together with the sequence of the performance, or the way a particular tune is approached, is called an arrangement.

Here, in the form of simple instructions, is a simple arrangement based on the tune "C jam - Blues".

1. Have the entire class play the tune or the "head" through twice.
2. Let one student improvise over a few "choruses".
3. The next section of the tune should comprise what is called a "riff".

A "riff" is a melodic motive which is repeated over the progression.

Students should feel free to improvise "riffs". These should be done over two choruses.

4. Thereafter, as many students as possible should have the opportunity to improvise.
5. The tune should then be played once more.
6. As a conclusion, students should then attempt evaluating each other's solos, with the guidance of the teacher. In doing so, the students will invariably learn from each other's mistakes as well as good points.

This course is intended purely as a guide, and will be most effective if it is used as a basis for the creation of further creative activities.

CONCLUSION/...

## CONCLUSION

As is evident from the above exposition, the introduction of jazz into secondary schools warrants serious consideration. Jazz does have very definite educational benefits, which can only be fully realized if a wider audience can be reached. Undoubtedly, as I have substantiated, the secondary school level is where this exposure should occur. Then only will trained musicians and educators make a significant impact on the development of jazz, in South Africa, and generally.

Apart from being one of the most important cultural developments of this century, jazz is also an international language, a form of music which is gaining widespread appeal among different nations. One of the contemporary trends in music education, is what is known as the "multi-cultural approach". This implies incorporating the music of other cultures into school programmes. In this respect, the introduction of jazz into our schools would be an effective point of departure, as it is conducive to learning about other musics as well.

Finally it needs to be emphasized, that this responsibility is one that should be borne by the music educators in South Africa. It is therefore their task to take up the challenge, and to consider how to introduce a study of jazz in South African schools.

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