

LINEAR JAZZ IMPROVISATION

Bichordal Triad Pitch Collection Etudes

Book 4

FOR ADVANCED JAZZ IMPROVISATION

—ED BYRNE

Introduction

24 Bichordal Pitch Collection Etudes for Advanced Jazz Improvisation extends the *Linear Jazz Improvisation Method* by systematically combining every combination of Major and Minor triads into close position Pitch Collections (pcs). Since they have the most sonority of the four triad types, we combine Major with Minor, Minor with Minor, and Minor with Major. In the process, some very unusual pcs of tetrachords (four-note collections), pentachords (five), and hexachords (six) are achieved. All of these pcs can be played in any *mode* (inversion), and any pitch class can be considered the priority note. With these parameters we arrive at twenty-four pcs, of which twelve are Hexachords, nine are Pentachords, and three Tetrachords. These pcs can be played in any *mode* (inversion), and any note of a given pc can be the priority note—if you want one.

PCs which leave one or more gaps tend to be more melodic than seven-note scales, which foster conjunct lines that don't allow a line to breathe. Moreover, even by systematically omitting a note or more from a common scale or mode makes the collection profoundly different. For example, try improvising on a typical Lydian mode without the second degree. It's very different than using the entire seven-note scale.

While we supply these pcs in three keys here to get you started, they should be practiced in all twelve keys throughout the entire range of your instrument, and then improvised on. They will add a great deal to your musical vocabulary for jazz improvisation. To some practitioners, many of these examples will appear like modes or other common scales, only missing notes, but those absences create something different, similar to the difference which exists between the Major and Pentatonic scales. While these collections can be assigned to specific chordal situations in a progression, we shall leave that up to you, since we do not base improvisations on Chord Scale Theory.

Linear Improvisation Method places primary importance on the composition's salient characteristics: melody, guide tone lines, and root progression. Improvisations based on these elements will work over virtually any harmonic style. Indeed, the chord progression does not rule, but merely co-exists with lines. While pianists tend to keep both hands in a sort of lockstep chord scale paradigm in which each chord symbol equals

one of a few scales, they *should* be independent of each other. Therefore, we view this technique as a means of learning vocabulary that will find its way into playing naturally as it is internalized, and they will serve as color and added expression to these most important linear elements of the composition.

Our focus here is only on lines for improvisation, since these exercises are designed to be the latest addition to *Linear Jazz Improvisation Method*. They work well over standard chordal situations, but in line playing we are rather unconcerned here with orthodoxy—only with coloring and enhancing the melody. An example of pc usage over a specific chord, however, is the pc for C/Db, in which we combine the two triads for the following composite scale: C, Db, E, F, G, Ab, C, which is one of the twenty-four bichordal pcs. This particular pc will work over: C7, DbMA7, Cm7, Fm7—and many more.

These pcs also make good close position or cluster voicings—but with gaps. This technique was derived from analysis of the music of Maurice Ravel and Claude Debussy in particular, composers who would treat a pc as *either* a chord or a line—in any combination thereof. A good line will also make a good voicing and vice versa, since line is a *melted chord*, and a voicing is a *frozen line*. Moreover, they can all be voiced in virtually any inversion, starting with any of the five or six notes in the same succession, in the voicing's top or bottom. At various times, depending upon the tempo of a given piece, a six-note set may work better than an eight-note scale to enable a comfortable run that adheres to the beat without getting into tuplets (like those septuplets you often see in string and woodwind parts to cover an octave), since most players play cleaner scalar passages if they're written in groups of six and eighths, rather than in tuplets. This technique can be used to great polytonal and pantonal effect as well.

PRACTICING LJI WITH NOTEPAD PLAYBACK

Read only to get started: Sing and play the entire book back in *Finale Notepad* by rote until internalized. Then play each exercise from memory with a metronome alone.

1. Play and Sing each exercise as written (separately and simultaneously);
2. Play and Sing without looking (by rote);
3. Improvise on each; experiment with different jazz articulations, inflections, vibratos, tempos, and rhythmic styles.
4. Play back one exercise type in *Notepad*, such as the reduced melody, while practicing another (guide tone line or root progression).
5. While the book is programmed to play back at q.n. = 80, you can set the document for any tempo for each exercise in the tempo menu at the top.
6. Measure numbers are supplied, since with the free Notepad program you will need to type that number into the measure box at the top in order to restart at a specific place.
7. Keyboard players should do all of these exercises in octaves—with both hands, while not looking at the keyboard or your fingers.
8. Do all of the above in all keys.
9. Do all of the above throughout your instrument's entire range.

24 BICHORDAL TRIAD PITCH COLLECTIONS

6 MAJOR TRIAD BICHORDAL PCS

ON C

1. C & C# HEXACHORD

2. C & D HEXACHORD

3. C & D# PENTACHORD

4. C & E PENTACHORD

5. C & F PENTACHORD

6. C & F# HEXACHORD

6 MINOR TRIAD BICHORDAL PCS

7. Cm & C#m HEXACHORD

8. Cm & Dm HEXACHORD

9. Cm & D#m PENTACHORD

10. Cm & Em PENTACHORD

11. Cm & Fm PENTACHORD

12. Cm & F#m HEXACHORD

12 MAJOR/MINOR TRIAD BICHORDAL PCS

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13. C & Cm TETRACHORD

14. C & C#m PENTACHORD

15. C & Dm HEXACHORD

16. C & D#m HEXACHORD

17. C & Em TETRACHORD

18. C & Fm PENTACHORD

19. C & F#m HEXACHORD

20. C & Gm PENTACHORD

21. C & G#m HEXACHORD

22. C & Am TETRACHORD

23. C & A#m HEXACHORD

24. C & Bm HEXACHORD

C & D BICHORDAL HEXACHORD

A musical score for a bichordal hexachord, consisting of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 2/4. A second ending bracket is placed over the first two measures of the first staff. The music is written in a single melodic line, featuring a sequence of notes and rests across the eight staves. The notes are primarily eighth and quarter notes, with some sixteenth notes. The key signature remains consistent throughout the piece.

C & F# BICHORDAL HEXACHORD

A musical score consisting of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The music is written in a single melodic line across all staves, featuring a sequence of notes and rests that explore the hexachordal structure. The notes are primarily eighth and quarter notes, with some rests. The key signature remains consistent throughout the piece.