

A Lesson From Jimmy Wyble

Harmonic Comparisons

Edited by David Oakes

Editors Note: This is an excerpt from a seminar that Jimmy Wyble gave on Thursday May 29, 2008 at the Musicians Institute. Jimmy consistently looks at chord shapes and tries to find different ways to name the same chord from different roots, he will also look for different chord shapes that are inside a larger shape. This lesson will outline this kind of thinking and how Jimmy uses this concept. Two other ideas were presented in this lesson as well. One was a great contrapuntal chromatic scale for the students to practice. The other idea was for a student who needed a two bar dominant idea for a C7 chord. This “lick” is what Jimmy came up with on the spot. It is a fantastic idea. I then took a portion of this idea and went to work on it myself. The last pages of this seminar are some of the ways I incorporated Jimmy’s ideas into my own playing. I took one bar of the C7 lick and used it in four different arrangements resolving the idea to different tonal centers. This lesson sheds a lot of light on the creative process of manipulating Jimmy’s ideas.

P.S. “*The Art of Two Line Improvisation*” is only available through the www.melbay.com website. Please order copies right there at the website. Mel Bay will print one up and mail it directly to you. I have seen this book advertised on the web for much more money because it is widely believed that the book is out of print.

Example #1: This first example is based off of the 1 – 5 – 7 - #11 voicing. This voicing can be transferred to three different string sets. Within each of these 4 note chord shapes, I see two different 3 note major 7th chord voicings. Practice these shapes across the neck and then chromatically up the neck.

①

Gmaj7(#11)

Cmaj7(#11)

Fmaj7(#11)

Gmaj7(#11) Gmaj7 Dmaj7 Cmaj7(#11) Cmaj7 Gmaj7 Fmaj7(#11) Fmaj7 Cmaj7

Harmonic Comparisons

Examples #2 and #3 applications: Try breaking these Maj7(#11) chord shapes up into two note groups by using different right hand fingering combinations. Go slowly! Don't over practice these ideas. Play each example just a few minutes each day. Try to lift your fingers to get a connected "piano" sound as well as letting the sounds ring over. Remember that you are using all four fingers in both hands. Move these shapes up the fingerboard chromatically.

2

Gmaj7(#11) Cmaj7(#11) Fmaj7(#11)

m a m a m a m a
p i p i p i p i

3

Gmaj7(#11) Cmaj7(#11) Fmaj7(#11)

a m a m a m a m
p i p i p i p i

Example #4: Here is one voicing that can be named from two roots. First take an E7 voicing at the 5th fret voiced 5 – 3 – b7 – R and then lower the 5th a half step. You then have the first chord shown below (E7b5). Next take a Bb7 voicing at the 6th fret voiced (R – b7 – 3 – 5) and lower the 5th a half step. You now have the second chord shown below (Bb7b5).

4

E7(b5) Bb7(b5)

Examples #4a application: This idea shows the E7b5 or Bb7b5 movement in a II7 – V7 – I line. I tried to use some of Jimmy’s voicings as well as some chord/scale motion.

Editors Note: The chords below are the voicings that Jimmy was thinking or used when creating this line. I love his use of altered tones in the lower line although Jimmy would say that those are only note choices and not the only notes. This idea also appears in the packet “*Contrapuntal Concepts*”.

4a

E7(b5) A13 A9(b5) Dmaj13

STELLA

Example 5b: (Shown on page 6) This example shows the line as it relates to a V – I progression in A major. The C7 idea now has to fit against an E7 chord. This is a very altered sound. I missed not hearing a 3rd against the E7 chord in this phrase. Because of the lack of a 3rd, I felt that this might be a hard sell. I used it in a chord melody to “*Like Someone In Love*”. Again, I used a little of the chord melody so you could get the sound of the melody in your ear before you play the lick. I used some other contrapuntal devices in this arrangement like a walking bass line ala Ted Greene as well as some block chords. The first two bars of the bottom line is one of my favorite ideas that I learned from Ron Eschete. There is a lot of good information in these 16 bars. The rhythmic idea that I used on the bass line helps to imply the bass line when playing a chord melody. It also helps the swing feel of the tune. That was a great tip from Ted. Play the “+ of three” so that it is almost on top of the down of four.

Harmonic Comparisons

E7(alt) Amaj7

5b

b7 b9 R #9 b5 11 b5 #5 b7 R b5

LIKE SOMEONE IN LOVE

Cmaj7 E7/B Am7 Am/G D/F# F9(#11) Em7 A7

Dm7 G7 Db7 C6/9 Ab9 Gm7 Db13 C13 C+7

F6 Bm7 E7(b9) Amaj7

Am7 D6 Db7 D13 D7(b9) Dm7 Dm9 Ab9 G9 G7(#5,#9)

Harmonic Comparisons

Example 5d: This line shows the line as Jimmy intended to use it as a C7 idea. I used it in a chord melody to “*Have You Met Miss Jones*”. The first chord is one of Jimmy’s favorite chords to work with using all four fingers. This gives Jimmy the ability to move voices easily. I have learned to use this kind of fingering whenever possible although I am never against using a bar.

5d

C7(alt) F6

9 4 3 5 b7 6 b7 9 R b9 b5 3 b7

MISS JONES

Fmaj7 B^b9 Am7 A^b7 Gm7

④ ③ ⑥ ④

C7(alt) Am¹¹ Dm7

⑤ ⑤ ④ ⑤

Harmonic Comparisons

Jimmy spent the remainder of this class working with contrapuntal scales similar to the patterns in the “*Contrapuntal Scales*” packet and then tossed this idea out for the students. I think that it is a great idea and I hope that you enjoy it!

