

Some Ideas on Moving Voices

By Nick Fox

A note from David Oakes: Nick Fox is a recent GIT graduate. He had the opportunity to study with Jimmy Wyble during his first six months at GIT. In the past year he has continued to study Jimmy's materials as well as writing his own etudes and contrapuntal exercises. Last week he brought this material into our lesson. He gave me permission to share it with you.

I hope that you enjoy this post,

David Oakes

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Jimmy Wyble spent a lot of time saying the phrase "What If"? So here goes: What if I started with a first inversion F major triad in the fifth position and moved the outer voices down in half steps? Ex 1:

The image shows a musical exercise on a single staff in 6/8 time, starting with a first inversion F major triad in the fifth position. The exercise consists of seven measures, each with a chord label above it: F, E+, Am7(b5), D7, G7, C7, and Fmaj7. The notes are connected by stems, and the outer voices (soprano and bass) move down by half steps from one measure to the next. Fingering numbers (1-4) are written below the notes. A circled '4' is placed below the bass line of each measure, indicating a four-measure cycle. The exercise ends with a double bar line.

The first thing that I noticed was that I was starting to move through a cycle of 4ths so I ended the pattern with a ii – V – I tag to get back to the beginning.

What if I added a chromatic baseline and picking pattern and use the tritone sub for G7 keeping the baseline intact. Ex 2:

2

Chords: F, E+, Am⁷(b5), D⁷, D^b7(b9), C⁷(b9), C⁷(b5), Fmaj⁷

p a i m a p m a

What if I took the same chords from example 2, and lowered the note on the 4th string while raising the pitch on the 3rd string. (Editors note: This is one of Jimmy's favorite ways for creating moving lines). Let's move the cycle one 4th further by altering the F chord to go to Bb. Ex 3:

3

Chords: F, B^bm⁷/F, E⁺, A⁷/E, E^b6, E^bm⁷, D⁷, Dm(maj⁷), G⁷, G⁶(sus), C⁷, Cm(maj⁷), Fmaj⁷, F⁷sus⁴, B^bmaj⁷