

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

Harmonic Comparisons

Example #5 – Editor’s Note: At this point in the lecture, a student asked Jimmy what he would do over a static C7 type chord phrase. The student was looking for something new and fresh to play. Jimmy came up with this line and I transcribed it for him. He experimented with it rhythmically and decided that he liked this way the best. He then went through the line and analyzed each note as C7 chordal harmony. I could tell that Jimmy really liked what he came up with. I think that you will enjoy this line as well.

Editor’s Note: I basically took these ideas at this point and went to work on Jimmy’s concepts of Harmonic Comparisons. I started with the second part of example #5 and looked at this phrase in as many ways as possible. My goal was to use this C7 idea in different keys and different situations resolving the idea to different chords. I decided that the first 3 beats of this phrase would remain the same and the last beat would have to be different in order to resolve the line.

Example 5a: This line shows the line as it relates to a ii – V – i progression in D minor. One of my first comparisons was the fact that this line and lick #5 from the packet “My Favorite Wyble licks” are very similar. I then used it in a chord melody version of “Stella By Starlight”. I wrote out a little more of the chord melody just so you can get the sound of Stella in your ear before you play the lick. I also tried to use some other contrapuntal techniques in this arrangement such as counter lines.

STELLA

Em7(b5) A7(b9) Cm7 F7

Fm7 Bb7 Ebmaj9 Ab9

Bbmaj7 Em7(b5) A7(b9) Am7(b5) Dm9 Bbm7 Eb9

Fmaj7 Em7(b5) A7(b9) Am7(b5) D7(b9)

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)

Example 5c: This line shows the line as it relates to a Bb7 chord. My first point of concern was the A natural in the line against the b7 of a Bb7 chord. The “A” felt like a passing tone, so my ear did grow accustomed to the sound. I used this idea in my chord melody to “On Green Dolphin Street”. The beginning of this chord melody is from the packet “Creative Thinking”. I started from the 2nd 8 bars of the A section.

Example 5c musical notation showing a line of music in 4/4 time. The key signature has two flats. The first measure is labeled **Bb7(alt)** and the second measure is labeled **Eb6**. The notes are: Bb, A, G, F, Eb, D, C, Bb. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4. Scale degrees are indicated by numbers 1-7 and b5. A circled 5 is shown below the Eb6 chord.

GREEN DOLPHIN ST.

Green Dolphin St. musical notation in 4/4 time. The first line contains chords **Dm11**, **G7**, and **C6/9**. The second line contains chords **Fm7**, **Bb7**, **Eb6/9**, and **G+7**. Fingerings and scale degrees are indicated throughout the piece.

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.

Example 5d shows a musical line in 4/4 time. The first measure is labeled C7(alt) and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 2), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 1). The second measure is labeled F6 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 1), and a quarter note E4 (finger 3). The third measure is labeled F6 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 2), a quarter note F4 (finger 4), and a quarter note E4 (finger 3). The fourth measure is labeled F6 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 2), and a quarter note E4 (finger 1). The fifth measure is labeled F6 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 1), and a quarter note E4 (finger 2). The sixth measure is labeled F6 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 1), and a quarter note E4 (finger 2). The seventh measure is labeled F6 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 1), and a quarter note E4 (finger 2). The eighth measure is labeled F6 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 1), and a quarter note E4 (finger 2).

MISS JONES

Miss Jones shows a musical line in 4/4 time. The first measure is labeled Fmaj7 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 2). The second measure is labeled Bb9 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 3), a quarter note F4 (finger 1), and a quarter note E4 (finger 2). The third measure is labeled Am7 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 2). The fourth measure is labeled Ab7 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 3), a quarter note F4 (finger 2), and a quarter note E4 (finger 1). The fifth measure is labeled Gm7 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 3), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 1). The sixth measure is labeled Gm7 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 3), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 1). The seventh measure is labeled Gm7 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 3), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 1). The eighth measure is labeled Gm7 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 3), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 1).

Miss Jones shows a musical line in 4/4 time. The first measure is labeled C7(alt) and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 2), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 1). The second measure is labeled C7(alt) and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 1), and a quarter note E4 (finger 3). The third measure is labeled C7(alt) and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 2), a quarter note F4 (finger 4), and a quarter note E4 (finger 3). The fourth measure is labeled C7(alt) and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 2), and a quarter note E4 (finger 1). The fifth measure is labeled Am11 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 2). The sixth measure is labeled Am11 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 2). The seventh measure is labeled Dm7 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 2). The eighth measure is labeled Dm7 and contains a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note F4 (finger 3), and a quarter note E4 (finger 2).

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!

