

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 musical notation shows a sequence of chords and voice movement in 6/8 time. The chords are: F, E+, Am7(b5), D7, G7, C7, and Fmaj7. The notation includes fingerings (1-4) and circled numbers (4) indicating the starting position of the outer voices. The sequence starts with a first inversion F major triad in the fifth position and moves the outer voices down in half steps.

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:

Example 2 musical notation. The first staff shows a chromatic baseline in 4/4 time with chords: F, E+, Am⁷(b5), and D⁷. The second staff continues with D⁷(b9), C⁷(b9), C⁷(b5), and Fmaj⁷. Fingering numbers (1-4) are provided for many notes. The piece ends with a final chord in 2/4 time.

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:

Example 3 musical notation. The first staff shows chords: F, B^bm⁷/F, E⁺, A⁷/E, E^b6, E^bm⁷, D⁷, and Dm(maj⁷). The second staff shows: G⁷, G⁶(sus), C⁷, Cm(maj⁷), Fmaj⁷, F⁷sus⁴, and B^bmaj⁷. Fingering numbers (1-4) are provided for many notes.