

Pathways To Improvisation

Concert Band is My Life, Teaching Improvisation Is My Job!!!

by Denis DiBlasio

Baritone saxophone and flute Artist, **Denis DiBlasio**, directs the jazz program at Rowan University in New Jersey. He is also the Executive Director of the Maynard Ferguson Institute of Jazz at Rowan. DiBlasio is known throughout the world as a Yamaha clinician, arranger, composer, and educator.

Midwest 2011
Friday, December 16, 2011
9:00-10:00 A.M.
Meeting Room W192

Denis DiBlasio, clinician
with the
University of Illinois Concert Jazz Band

#1 The Major Scale

The Major Scale contains seven individual tonalities or modes depending on what step of the scale you start on. By learning the Major Scale you actually learn seven tonalities.

Modes of the Major Scale

- #1 fits Major (Maj) chord (Ionian)
- #2 fits Minor (min) chord (Dorian)
- #3 fits min 7th chord (Phrygian)
- #4 fits Maj7+11 chord (Lydian)
- #5 fits 7th chord (Mixolydian)
- #6 fits min 7-6 chord (Aeolian)
- #7 fits min 7-5 chord (Locrian)

Play in all keys

Musical notation for the major scale in treble clef, showing four measures of the scale with chord labels above the notes:

- Measure 1: CMaj7
- Measure 2: Dmin7
- Measure 3: Emin7 E7⁻¹³/₊₉
- Measure 4: Fmaj7+4
- Measure 5: G7
- Measure 6: Amin7-6
- Measure 7: Bmin7-5
- Measure 8: CMaj7

Play in all keys

Musical notation for the major scale in bass clef, showing four measures of the scale with chord labels above the notes:

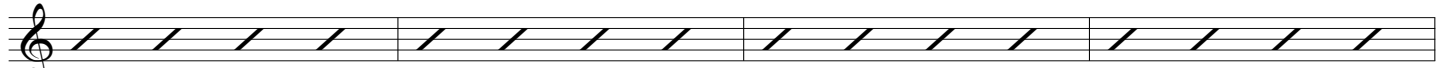
- Measure 1: CMaj7
- Measure 2: Dmin7
- Measure 3: Emin7 E7⁻¹³/₊₉
- Measure 4: Fmaj7+4
- Measure 5: G7
- Measure 6: Amin7-6
- Measure 7: Bmin7-5
- Measure 8: CMaj7

DiBlasio's Pathways To Improvisation

(C) C Maj7



D \flat Maj7



(B \flat)

D Maj7



E \flat Maj7



E Maj7



F Maj7



F \sharp Maj7



G Maj7



A \flat Maj7



(E \flat)

A Maj7



B \flat Maj7



B Maj7



DiBlasio's Pathways To Improvisation

Major Scale

(C) CMaj7



D♭Maj7



(B♭) DMaj7



E♭Maj7



EMaj7



FMaj7



F#Maj7



GMaj7



A♭Maj7



(E♭) AMaj7



B♭Maj7



BMaj7



Major Scale

The image displays 12 musical staves, each representing a major scale in bass clef for a specific chord. The scales are written in a consistent rhythmic pattern of quarter notes. The chords and their corresponding scales are:

- CMaj7
- D \flat Maj7
- DMaj7
- E \flat Maj7
- EMaj7
- FMaj7
- F \sharp Maj7
- GMaj7
- A \flat Maj7
- AMaj7
- B \flat Maj7
- BMaj7

DiBlasio's Pathways To Improvisation

Major chord to 13th

(C) CMaj7

D♭Maj7

(B♭) DMaj7

E♭Maj7

EMaj7

FMaj7

F♯Maj7

GMaj7

A♭Maj7

(E♭) AMaj7

B♭Maj7

BMaj7

Major chord to 13th

CMaj7

D \flat Maj7

DMaj7

E \flat Maj7

EMaj7

FMaj7

F \sharp Maj7

GMaj7

A \flat Maj7

AMaj7

B \flat Maj7

BMaj7

#26 Combining Harmonic Material With a Given Strategy

Different effects can be achieved by making certain predetermined choices in regard to harmonic material and strategy. Apply any combination (below) to a song's chord changes. Mix and match. This is also a great way to start improvising.

An example would be (#5) Solo using pentatonic with (#13) Playing lyrically, or (#8) Emphasize the 13th with (#16) Using 16ths.

Drills #1 to #12 (In bold) create material to consciously use for improvising.

Drills #13 to #30 (Italicized) create strategies that can apply to chosen material.

1. **Solo using 1, 3 and 5 of the chords only.**
2. **Solo using 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the scale.**
3. **Solo using 1, 2 and 5 of the chords.**
4. **Solo using 1, 3, 5 and 7.**
5. **Solo using pentatonics.**
6. **Solo emphasizing the 9th.**
7. **Solo emphasizing the 11th**
8. **Solo emphasizing the 13th.**
9. **Solo using only Blue scales.**
10. **Solo using a third based scale pattern**
11. **Solo applying a learned pattern**
12. **Solo using only bebop scales**
13. *Solo playing lyrically.*
14. *Solo using eighth notes predominantly.*
15. *Solo using triplets.*
16. *Solo applying 16th notes.*
17. *Solo using ideas that ascend.*
18. *Solo using ideas that descend.*
19. *Solo using ideas that 'arc. (Up and down or visa versa).*
20. *Solo starting on the same note that the last phrase ended on.*
21. *Solo while aiming for specific notes in each chord.*
22. *Solo incorporating staccato.*
23. *Solo while consciously imitating a particular favorite player.*
24. *Solo just using your ear.*
25. *Solo within the range of a chosen octave.*
26. *Solo within the range of a given 5th.*
27. *Solo only in the bottom octave of your instrument.*
28. *Solo only in the top octave of your instrument.*
29. *Solo using ratio of notes to space. (Ex. Notes = 60% Space = 40%)*
30. *Combine drills (Ex. #9 and #19 or #10 and #23).*

#27 Tips For Soloing On One Scale

This is a great method for beginning as well as advanced improvisers. Sometimes just a point of view can help unlock creativity. Try these simple approaches and see what happens. Remain open. Interpret the Treatments (or point of view) using your own sensibilities. This is a good technique to use with a play along recording.

Step 1. Pick a scale to use.

Ex. F Dorian – (F, G, A^b, B^b, C, D, E^b, F)

Step 2. Pick a treatment.

Treatments:

1. Think lyrically.
2. Make ascending lines.
3. Ascending staccato ideas.
4. Think ascending lyrical ideas.
5. Think descending pointillist ideas.
6. Think descending lyrical ideas.
7. Think spiral shapes.
8. Stress specific intervals (3rds, 4ths, etc.).
9. Use octave displacement of specific notes up or down an octave.
10. Develop from a single idea only.
11. Use melodic rhythm of another song. Ex. Use “the” rhythm from Happy Birthday.
12. Use 3 Number sets of notes in scale (125, 134, 167, etc.).
13. Use 4 Number sets (1256, 2346, 1267, etc.).
14. Use pentatonic from within scale (A^b, B^b, E^b).
15. Arc a technique. Start soft get louder and get softer.

For more variety combine treatments:

1 – 8, 10 – 9, 2 – 5, Etc.

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Steve Wiest:

Director of The One O'Clock Lab Band, The University of North Texas

Denis' book lays the foundation for the basics that one needs in order to become a true jazz player. I like the way the book is laid out so each instrument can play together in unison. Overall, a great addition to the jazz education library.

Jamey Aebersold

I find Denis DiBlasio's new book "Pathways to Improvisation" to be a wonderful aid in teaching jazz improvisation for either a single student or in a group setting... a varied, flexible approach to finding their own 'pathway' to improvising. I liked the layout of... exercises and how they can be played at the same time from the same book if used in a group setting!... the comprehensiveness of the book is terrific!... This book is a terrific aid for students and educators alike!

Chip McNeill, Chairman Jazz Division, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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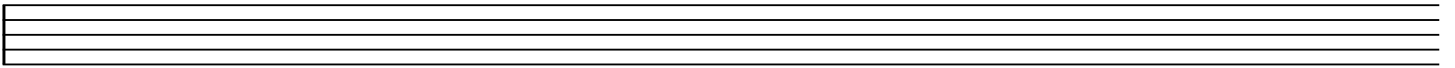
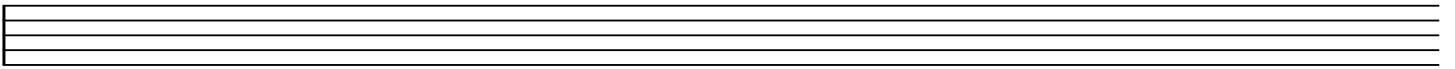
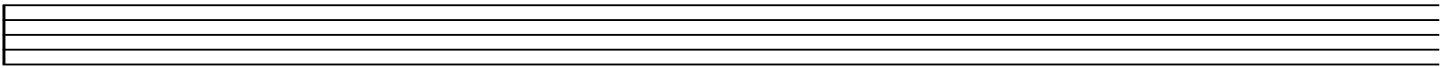
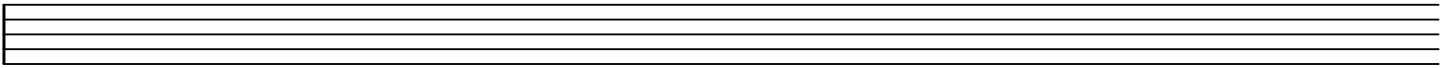
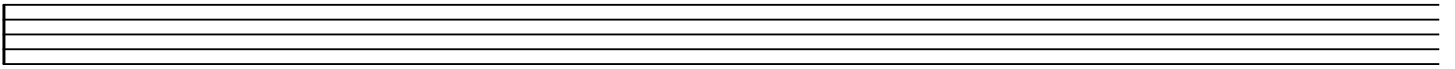
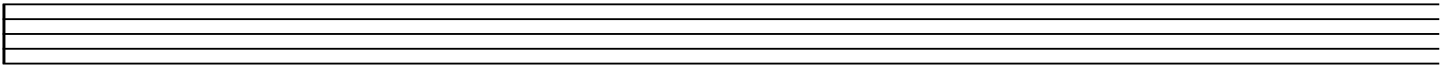
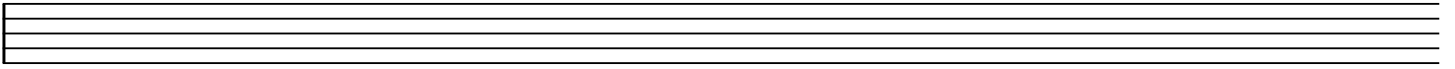
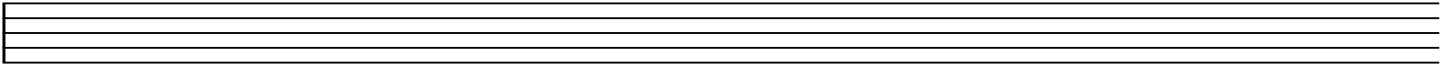
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Notes



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