

COOKIN' WITH JAZZ: Tips from Top Jazz Educators

The 68th Annual Midwest Clinic

Friday, December 19, 2015 – 8:30-9:30am

McCormick Place - Meeting Room W192

Clinicians:

Mary Jo Papich, Moderator

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Jamey Aebersold

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Steve Wiest

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David Fodor

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Clinic Synopsis:

A panel of experienced jazz educators from the high school, collegiate, and professional fields will present teaching techniques that focus on three important areas of jazz pedagogy. The panel includes contributing authors to “The Jazzer’s Cookbook” (Meredith Music Publications). Clinic topics will include Advanced Improvisation Skills, Trombone Performance Techniques, and Combo Coaching Tips.

Clinic Moderator: Mary Jo Papich – *Co-Founder of The Jazz Education Network*



Like food, the best music is often simple, sincere, seasoned with love, and from the heart. The best jazz is seasoned with soul, handled with respect, and served with joy.

Many of us are more instinctive chefs. We don't use measuring cups. However, it can pay to follow a recipe – especially one prepared by master educators/performers.

Just as quality ingredients like fresh vegetables, healthy meats and fragrant spices make everything taste good, quality ingredients make the difference in the rehearsal room.

As educator Theresa Ripley says, “Jazz allows us to build chefs who make choices...not cooks who merely follow the recipe.” We utilize the skills (communication, spontaneity, creative solutions, freedom of expression, etc.) jazz teaches us in *everyday* life and we use them forever.

We hope you enjoy our sampling of recipes from “The Jazzer’s Cookbook.” We hope that they will inspire creativity in your “cooking,” and encourage improvement in your young “chefs!”

Jamey Aebersold - *Advanced Jazz Improvisation...How to Cook*



Jamey comments on twenty ingredients “that the professional jazz musician needs to have under control in order to *cook* with confidence and make music in the jazz genre.”

The list of *ingredients* includes:

Memorization, listening, sight reading, ears, scales, keyboard skills, bass lines, singing, altered dominants, twelve keys, transposition, transcribing, blues, ballad (see below), freedom via discipline, rhythm changes, fast playing, time, composing (see below), and inspiration.

Here are two sample *ingredients* from Jamey’s article:

Ballad playing usually takes more time to perfect due to the slow tempo and the exposed nature of the harmony. Also, your sound coming out of your instrument is more exposed when playing whole and half notes. Work on sound every day. Listen to the masters every day. Your **SOUND** is an important part of your musical personality. Who do you want to be? Learn a ballad in the original key and then move it up or down a half step. Stick with it until you’ve mastered the new key. Don’t leave the practice room until it’s yours. Then tomorrow, try it again and see how long it takes to put the pieces back together again. After you do this in a new key several times your fingers will learn the new patterns and the sound of the new changes and you’ll be off and running again except now, you’ll be able to solo on the ballad in two keys instead of only one.

Composing is an important part of musical expression. Write songs [down] that come to your mind. Some people keep a musical notebook of their original ideas. You’ll find that what you think today can often be reshaped tomorrow into something you never dreamed could be. Don’t let original ideas for songs escape you. Write them down, or play and record them. Capture them while they have life. Finalize the song and make it yours. Types of songs: Bebop, Swing, Latin, Bossa Nova, Originals, Ballads, Odd meter, mixture of Latin and swing, etc., free form or free form combined with any of the above. Composing a melody and hearing it played by a competent group is quite exciting.

Steve Wiest - Cookin' In The Trombone Zone



Steve describes how to find and develop a state of relaxation he calls the “Trombone Zone,” in which players *infuse* the *ingredients* of air, embouchure, tonguing, and alternate positions to create a relaxed, professional performance style.

The *ingredients* covered in his article are:

1. The Concept of “Let”
2. Tear Down That Wall
3. The Trombone Zone Menu “How To”
4. Buzz Words
5. Eliminating Redundant Tonguing: Eliminating Redundant Tonguing
6. Alternate Dimensions
7. Some Additional Condiments and Side Dishes

Here is an excerpt from Steve’s recipe describing the **Concept of “Let:”**

Check out any great trombonist and you witness an optical illusion. As they play superfast and leap into the extremities of range, they seem to be totally relaxed. It almost looks as though they are “lip syncing.” They just can’t be actually playing what you hear...it just looks too easy! That’s because when one is in the zone...The Trombone Zone...it IS easy!

The basic concept is this: establish a concentrated state of relaxation. To quote that well-known philosopher Yoda: “There is no try, there is only do or do not.” In our case, think of the word “let” rather than any other stress-producing term such as “push, shove, support, move, blow, rip, snort”, etc. (especially those last two. OUCH!).

When you are in the zone, the air is doing all the work. Your body is merely the engine and the horn is simply the amplifier. *Let* the air do the work for you. In my studies, Jay Friedman turned me on to most of these concepts. Just watch him play. Turn the sound down and you can’t tell when he is playing something challenging! His body doesn’t register the challenge at all. Jay is *always* in the zone. The same is true when you watch J. J. Johnson play. We all need to get into that zone (and maybe change our names to Jay...can’t hurt).

David Fodor - Three Combo Rehearsal Appetizers



David offers three rehearsal techniques to inspire new listening skills, create unexpected improvisational settings, and promote student-created arranging techniques. His three *appetizers* presented are:

1. Sounds in the Dark
 - *Increasing listening for interaction*
2. Mix It Up
 - *Unexpected improvisation duos*
3. Old Wine in New Bottles
 - *Creating a tasty new arrangement*

Here's a sample from Dave's recipe:

Mix It Up! - *Unexpected Improvisation Duos*

Ingredients:

- One small group of jazz students eager to experiment

Serves: Small samples of one-on-one musical interactions, with a side of creative thinking and focused listening.

1. For this little dish, begin by selecting a tune from the group's repertoire, and asking them to play it all together once. Take careful note of how the soloists interact with the rhythm section as they play.
2. Once they finish, select one soloist and one member of the supporting rhythm section. For this example, I might select a tenor saxophonist from the front line, and the drum set player from the back line. Place the saxophonist directly in front of the drum set player so they are facing each other. Now, ask them to play one time through the solo section together and just see what happens.
3. There are many possible scenarios for how the students will react to this, based on their level of improvisational experience. Tailor your comments accordingly. If one member of the duo takes on a supportive role for the other, then have them reverse roles on the next chorus. On the third run, encourage both to become equal partners in the improvisation and to react to each other's ideas. Suggest common musical elements they can utilize when interacting - for example: trading rhythmic riffs or patterns; melodic or scalar motifs; or allowing space for each other to respond back- and-forth.
4. Select another pairing and repeat the process. You will find that students enjoy being placed "outside of the box" when it comes to this form of musical expression. There is something different about sharing an improvisatory moment with just one other person that allows students to hear their interactive roles in a new light.

Clinician Biographies

Mary Jo Papich is a Co-Founder and Past President of the Jazz Education Network. She served as music teacher/band director/fine arts administrator for thirty-five years in public schools, rural to suburban. She now focuses her time on JEN, JEN Outreach and local civic arts projects. Her recent honors include receiving a Lifetime Jazz Achievement Award from DownBeat magazine, the Arts Inspiration Award from The Art Center, Superintendent's Recognition Award, the Huespid Distinguido from the Mayor in Puerto Vallarta and the Prestigious Women in Jazz Award from the Chicago Jazz Ensemble. She currently serves on the selection committee for the NARAS Grammy Music Educator of the Year award. She continues to share her passion all over the globe! From Chicago to South Africa, she advocates for all the arts, especially jazz!

Jamey Aebersold is an internationally known saxophonist and authority on jazz education and improvisation. He is the recipient of the 2014 National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master Award. Jamey was chosen as the first Jazz LeJEND of Jazz Education honoree, and was the recipient of the 2014 A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Award for Jazz Advocacy, which is bestowed upon an individual who has contributed significantly to the appreciation, knowledge, and advancement of the art form of jazz. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Music by Indiana University in 1992. In 1989, he was inducted into the International Association of Jazz Educators Hall of Fame. Jamey has been a driving force in America's native art form, Jazz, and continues to kindle the fires of musical imagination in those with whom he comes in contact.

Steve Wiest is an Associate Professor in the Jazz Studies and Commercial Music program at The Lamont School of Music at The University of Denver. Along with a wide range of duties at Lamont, Steve is the Coordinator of the 21st Century Music Initiative which is an all-inclusive program being developed that will explore all aspects of what it means to be an artist in the ever-changing landscape of the 21st Century. A three-time Grammy nominee, Steve is a multiple-discipline artist with activities as a composer, trombonist, educator, cartoonist and science fiction author all to his credit. Steve's most recent project "Concerto for Folded Space" (a modern jazz composition programmatically informed by his novel The Dover Stone) was just released via ArtistShare® and is available on their site, iTunes, Amazon, etc.

David Fodor is currently the Coordinator of the Student Composer Showcase sponsored by the Jazz Education Network, as well as a Reviewer of new jazz music and materials for The Instrumentalist Magazine. He is the conductor of the Wilmette Community Band, and is a published author, clinician and performer. David taught instrumental music and music technology at Evanston Township HS from 1990-2013. Prior to ETHS, he was Asst. Director of Bands at Western Illinois University from 1984-88. He began his teaching career in Herscher, Illinois teaching instrumental music from 1976-82. Dr. Fodor holds a Ph. D. in Music Education from Northwestern University (1998), an M. A. in Percussion Performance from Western Illinois University (1984), and a B. S. in Music Education from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana (1976).



“The Jazzer’s Cookbook” is published by Meredith Music Publications, and is available from your favorite local or on-line music dealer.

You are also invited to visit the **J. W. Pepper booth #807** immediately following this presentation, for a book signing by many of the fifty-seven authors – come and hang with us!

We offer a special thanks to **The Jazz Education Network (booth #1018)** for their support of our clinic, and for supporting the cookbook project. For more information about JEN, please visit: <http://jazzednet.org>, and consider joining us next month in San Diego, California for the 6th Annual JEN Conference!

Keynote Speaker:
Herbie Hancock

Gordon Goodwin's
Big PHAT Band

Ann Patterson's
Maiden Voyage

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