

The Development and Investigation of a Model for Introducing Jazz Education to  
Secondary School Ensembles

By

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## ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at producing a jazz teaching model for the short-term training of students with little or no jazz experience. By using a mainly experiential approach over a set time frame and limiting the instruction to certain elements of jazz interpretation, it aims to present a reasonable introduction to small jazz ensemble performance in the Australian secondary school sector (grade 7-12). The research grows out of more than two decades experience introducing jazz performance to secondary school students where a well-defined pedagogical problem has been identified as a result of the lack of instructional methods for teachers wishing to instruct secondary school students in small jazz ensemble performance.

This tuition model aims to fulfill certain quantifiable criteria over a set period of time. The efficacy of the model is assessed by the success of attaining basic parameters and qualified by the performance outcome at the end of the model implementation period. The project has been structured to establish that the model for instruction, proposed as a solution for a research (teaching-based) problem, is successful. In 2003 eighteen Year 11 Victorian Certificate of Education music students, comprising two classes, were filmed at two-week intervals, over an eight-week period, while being instructed with the model. At the end of the eight-week period they were surveyed to gauge their theoretical and experiential development. The candidate continued to develop the model by adding extra individual instrumental techniques, a list of selected recordings, timetabling for all classes and recommendations for aural training techniques. As a comparison two more Year 11 Victorian Certificate of Education classes, comprising fourteen students, were again filmed at two-week intervals in 2006. Again they were surveyed at the end of the eight-week period to gauge both their development and their reaction to the

classroom model. The results of the surveys from both years are examined along with the visual evidence of the students' performances over the eight week period of instruction that are included on DVDs with this thesis. On this evidence a case is made for the efficacy of the proposed model of instruction.

The research conducted with students for this thesis has received approval from the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee, reference numbers H7040 and H8689. The student guardian, namely Geelong Grammar School, signed a release form for permission of the use of material collected, a letter outlining the project was sent to each students parent and each student signed a consent form and was issued with an information sheet detailing the purpose of study, benefits, confidentiality, freedom to refuse or withdraw and University and school contacts for concerns or complaints. A copy of both the Information Sheet, Statement of Informed Consent and letter to parents appears in the Appendix.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This study aims to counter the perception of jazz teaching in the Secondary School sector as devoid of an effective means of short-term training for non-jazz students. By limiting the instruction to certain aspects of elemental music design it aims to present a reasonable introduction to small jazz ensemble performance in the Secondary School sector over a set time frame. The belief that jazz can only be learned through intuitive musical responses casts an erroneous perception that teaching jazz is reliant upon a purely experiential approach. While this is in some ways correct, the experience must be guided through musical principles that are specific to small jazz ensemble instruction and yet are universal in their educational aims.

This research grows out of more than two decades' experience introducing jazz performance to secondary school students where a well-defined pedagogical problem has been identified as a result of the lack of instructional methods for students wishing to engage in small jazz ensemble performance. At the core of this experiential learning proposal is a pedagogical model that aims to fulfill certain quantifiable criteria over a set period of time. The efficacy of the model is assessed by the success of attaining basic parameters, as listed below and qualified by the performance outcome at the end of the model implementation period. The thesis aims to identify and test a solution to a pedagogical problem by developing the classroom experience of the initial teaching model into a critical text and therefore encourages further explorations of the jazz idiom in such settings. The teaching model devised is presented as a self-contained unit, of which the results can be only qualified in the context of the limitations of the materials used and timeframe given.

The teaching model is both theoretical and experiential by nature. Over an eight-week period secondary school students are introduced to basic jazz harmony and each instrumentalist is guided through the techniques necessary to begin playing jazz in a small ensemble. At the end of this eight-week period students have gained the knowledge and experience to perform three contrasting song forms prevalent in the jazz idiom and have also grasped the basic rules of jazz theory in order to give them the skills to begin improvising in a jazz style.

The project has been structured to evaluate the success of the classroom model, proposed as a solution for the research (teaching-based) problem, by addressing the questions:

1. Do students get a grasp of the Major chordal scale and Major and minor II-V-I chord progressions in the eight-week timeframe?
2. Are students able to perform with confidence and conviction the three set songs encompassing a jazz standard in AABA 32 bar form, a 12 bar blues and a bossa nova after eight weeks of instruction?
3. Does each student understand his or her role when performing the set songs in the jazz combo?
4. Are most frontline musicians, guitarists and pianists capable of playing an improvised solo over each of the three songs after the classroom model has been followed?
5. Is the classroom model a successful way to introduce jazz to secondary school students?

Of the many books, journal articles and dissertations written on jazz education very few deal with the inherent problems of getting young musicians to play jazz in an ensemble for the first time. Others written on jazz theory and harmony, jazz improvisation, classroom lesson plans for jazz education and tutorials for individual instrumentalists wishing to learn to play jazz, along with dissertations dealing with theories of learning, teaching methodologies in music education, jazz education, improvisation and topics related to this thesis, along with many journal articles dealing with all areas of jazz education are reviewed. All sources dealing with the process of jazz education show how the model developed in this thesis fills a gap in music education literature, as it is inherently unique in its theoretical and experiential approach to a pedagogical method for inexperienced secondary school musicians.

The problems of teaching small ensemble jazz performance in a classroom setting, such as getting rhythm section players with no ensemble experience to utilise their individual techniques and play in time together, have given rise to a number of studies. Murdick (2003) deals specifically with this issue in a setting of secondary school-age students with little musical experience. Working with secondary school age students Murdick described his combo as comprising of “one classical pianist who couldn’t spell triads, two non-reading rock bassists, three non-reading guitarists, a non-reading rock drummer, and various horn players with marching-band experience.” (p. 76). Murdick breaks his article into a section for each of the combo instruments. For the pianist his first rule is “Don’t start by teaching theory: get them playing!” (p. 76) To make this possible Murdick uses three simple voicings for the II-V-I progression and gets the student to memorise these chords. He talks about students later developing altered chords, but the section is brief at best. Murdick

suggests that his bass players simply had to learn to read music and then follow simple bass charts, gives some simple drum patterns for the drummer and encourages guitarists to play the chords with a four to the bar feel over all tunes. He talks about choosing songs for the combo, recommends *Blue Bossa* and goes through the application of the blues in learning to play jazz. Murdick's article is a sound introduction to teaching jazz to inexperienced high school musicians, and his practical approach is most engaging. However, it is a short article and brief in all its descriptions but could be an excellent foundation upon which to build a more comprehensive small ensemble method.

Odam (2000), Henry (1996) and Kennedy (2002) all deal with the pedagogical methods utilised when teaching a creative music form, namely composition. Odam looks at the obligatory compositional activity at Key Stage 3 in the National Curriculum of Music for England and Wales. In his research he investigates the methods used to teach composing in the classroom by observation, interviews, questionnaires and discussion. He concludes that the best way to spark exciting ideas about music is the formation of small groups within the student body. In a review of relevant literature Henry examines the best processes for children to achieve creative musical compositions, such as (1) preparation, (2) incubation, (3) illumination to (4) verification. Or: (1) awareness of the problem, (2) structuring the problem to gather information for a solution, (3) divergent and convergent production of ideas for the solution, (4) evaluation to the solutions and storing information in the memory for later use. He suggests that possible reasons for the paucity of creative activities could be lack of teacher training in the creative process or limited instruction time, which may preclude the inclusion of creative activities. The article states that if research is intended to improve and strengthen music

education, music educators must put forth their best effort to apply new research findings. In “Listening To Music: Compositional Processes of High School Composers” Kennedy investigates the compositional processes of adolescents to clarify effective strategies for implementing composition activities in high school music programs. Charting the progress of four high school music students as they completed two separate composition tasks, Kennedy collected data through semi-structured interviews, observation and document analysis. She was particularly interested in the important roles that listening and improvisation played in the final outcomes. At the end of a thorough research project, Kennedy suggests that although there may be common elements in student compositional processes, the nature of the compositional process is idiosyncratic.

Stating the systematic study of creative thinking in music and its meaningful assessment are relatively new concerns for researchers and the most useful work has been completed in the last twenty years, Webster (1992) explores current literature by separating it into three separate areas: Psychometric research, Cognitive research and Environment research. Webster includes his work with high school musicians and musical improvisation. Taking seventy-seven high school instrumental and choral subjects, Webster avoided music notation and put them through a series of improvisational exercises. His conclusion was that correlations of creative thinking scores in music with traditional music aptitude and general intelligence measures were low and not significant. This is a tendency that Webster has shown repeatedly in research on creative thinking in music and in his later article “Creativity as Creative Thinking” (1996) he continues to explore his earlier results. Covering musical imagination in children and measures of creative aptitude, Webster’s answer to developing creative thought in music students is performance, improvisation,

listening and careful analysis. He concludes that creative thinking can be taught by providing children with chances to explore musical images and by applying them in problem solving tasks. Webster is one of the leading researchers into creative musical thought in children and encourages all teachers to excite the imagination of students about music and not leave it to facts and skills alone. It is hoped that the model of education explored in this thesis provides students with experience in performance, improvisation, listening and analysis so that they can learn to be creative musical thinkers.

Exploring what and how musicians are actually learning as they develop within collective improvisations, Thomson (2006) examines the subjective meanings that extend from the repeatable objective meanings that conventional, generic musical educations use. Thomson suggests that the process has much to do with differences in the embodiment of instrumental technique between players and that these differences demand a pedagogical process that is animated by a different model of authority than that of teacher and student which prevails in music education generally. This work stipulates that its methodology of education lies in the passing on of music performance techniques and supports a hands on approach to the teaching of music improvisation as it is passed from one musician to another.

The work of Wiggins (1999/2000) examines the effect that shared understanding among group members has on student success in both composition and improvisation. Drawing upon six instances where students were composing or improvising with peers and/or teacher, one time with a 12 bar blues, Wiggins looks at the empowering of musical thinking and learning of individuals within the group. In a study that supports experiential exercises, Wiggins utilises a teaching

methodology that enables each student to understand and share musical creativity and concludes that such experiences promote and nurture independent musical thinking and generate complex musical ideas reflective of the task at hand and of music in general.

Examining a wide cross section of learning styles in music education Taetle and Cutietta (2002) look at and critique standard educational learning theories and learning theories unique to music. Reviewing the constructs of both behavioral and cognitive theories, they look at their applications to the study of music learning and particularly the developmental stages of children as they pass through stages from mastery (age 0-4) where children develop a response to sound, to imitation (4-9) where children use sounds to represent events or objects, to imaginative play (10-15) where children think of sound more creatively and finally to metacognition (15 and up) as adolescents reflect on their thinking and experience with music. Taetle and Cuietta conclude that learning theories provide guidance and direction to research efforts and that music education is multi-faceted enough to need a variety of diverse theories to explain different phenomena inherent in music learning. This article, with a brief chronology of learning theories, is an excellent guide to both behavioral and cognitive learning methods.

Examining the challenges of teaching a creative art form Rohwer (1997) begins with four terms for describing the component parts of musical creativity: (1) fluency, (2) flexibility, (3) elaboration and (4) originality. Reviewing a wide variety of research on the teaching of creative musicality, Rohwer stresses the importance of appropriate teaching material and curricular sequence. Encouraging musical improvisation in the classroom as a way of promoting creative decision-making,

Rohwer also states that the crux of the matter is that students need more than encouragement to develop creatively; refinement skills are integral to growth. Implying that most creative projects require a qualitative assessment, Rohwer suggests that the most realistic assessment of all may be the performance of the artist's product. This article is an informative resource for those wishing to assess creative musical activities and supports the experiential methods utilised in the pedagogical model in this thesis.

PhD research by Blyth (2004) is particularly relevant to the method of education in this thesis as it was developed within the framework of the Victorian Certificate of Education music curriculum. Blyth concludes that while the philosophy of music education behind the formation of the curriculum can set abstract and impractical goals and standards, the most successful approaches to music education in Victorian schools are those developed by teachers in relation to student needs. This is precisely the manner in which this model for jazz education was formulated.

Caesar (1999) takes twelve secondary school musicians aged between 13 and 15 years, and examines each student's musical experience, ability to play music by ear and his or her cognitive strategies when improvising. His work holds particular relevance to this study. Caesar's found that the processes used by students when improvising music in either the solo or group scenarios were unpredictable and did not follow or produce any specific pattern. The fact that he stresses that the scope of his study was not to develop a model for teaching music improvisation to high school music instrumentalists, it supports the development of this model for jazz education that enables students to be taught specific ensemble techniques that will lead to definite cognitive strategies to begin improvising with confidence and conviction.

From North Texas State University, a university renowned for its jazz program, Zwick (1987) produced a PhD dissertation which researched the emphasis and sequence of selected instructional areas in the work of chosen jazz education texts. Zwick takes complete jazz improvisational methods, some up to four volumes in length, by thirteen of America's most celebrated jazz educators, including Abersold, Baker, Coker, Hearle, LaPorta, Mehegan and Russell, all of whom are mentioned in this literature review, and analyses and reviews their work according to seventeen selected categories: history of improvisation, prerequisites for study of jazz improvisation, jazz improvisation fundamentals, ear training, jazz style, analysis, form and structure of jazz music, melodic improvisation, patterns for improvisation, chord progressions, rhythm section, substitutions, transcription of jazz solos, improvising on jazz music, scales for improvisation, non-harmonic tones and the blues (pp. 64-66). The average number of instructional areas covered by the twelve texts was 12.5 (pp. 442-467) with no text covering all seventeen areas of instruction. The Coker work dealt with the highest number at fifteen, but three of the instructional areas in this work totaled only four percent of the text. Zwick implies in his introduction that all the jazz instructional methods selected were constructed to be used or taught by jazz musicians or educators, a prerequisite that does not apply to the classroom model in this study. All the texts that were selected support the use of the chord/scale approach to improvisation and also the explication of the Major chordal scale. While most methods spent some small percentage of text on the rhythm section, according to Zwick it was only the work of Coker that contained a satisfactory guide to instructing all the instrumentalists in this section, something that is emphasised in this work. Once again all methods reviewed by Zwick seemed to be aimed at students with significant musical experience, and so his dissertation seems

to establish the need for a text aimed at music teachers of all genres enabling them to introduce young musicians with minimal experience to jazz combo playing.

Harley (2006) details the author's efforts to create an interactive ensemble performance experience for non-traditional music students, who had little to no traditional music experience, but a strong interest in music technology. Harley's goals were to give students an opportunity to explore technological tools for creating sound and to give them a framework within which to perform in what was for them a novel ensemble situation. In the context of an accredited university music program students were required to fulfill a number of performance/ensemble credits and develop instrumental facility and interaction with others. Developing a performance piece that derived elements of its structure from two pieces by John Cage, Harley allowed students freedom to create their own vocabulary or repertoire of sounds using the technology/instruments available. Although Harley works with university students his method for introducing improvisation to students via a hands-on approach is very popular. Although the goals set, music performed and results are profoundly different to other studies, the teaching methodology and its effectiveness seem to be parallel.

Dealing closely with jazz education at the secondary level, Coy (1989) looks at two groups of students, all with limited musical experience, aged between 12 and 14 years (a similar age group to those students used in this project) and spent twenty minutes daily for a six week period instructing one group in jazz improvisation while the other was provided with instructional materials but left to their own devices. At the end of the six week period each student was given an improvisation performance test and a jazz rhythm test by an independent examiner and the conclusion was

drawn that those students who had received the instruction had improved at a far greater rate than those with no teacher contact. The timeline chosen by Coy of six weeks of approximately 100 minutes weekly instruction supports the timeline chosen in this work, however Coy only worked with brass and woodwind players whereas this thesis deals with all members of a jazz combo including the rhythm section. To teach the students to improvise Coy used a “linear-melodic approach” but only covered three “swing” blues tunes in the six weeks. This supports the use of the blues as a song form for student musicians. Coy does not deal with any jazz theory, which, I presume, is why he stays with the blues format for the six weeks. In Chapter 2, “Review Of Related Literature”, Coy summarises by saying: “This review of research and method books reveals a striking deficiency of instructional materials for instrumentalists of middle school age. Method books tend to be of a technical nature emphasizing theory, compositional techniques, and repetitive scale patterns with limited melodic interest. A review of research literature reveals recent documents examining performance characteristics of notable jazz performers, but little on instructional methodology, and much less of an experimental nature.” (p. 28) This summary endorses the work presented in this project.

“Can improvisation be taught?” is the pertinent question asked by Morse (2006). To Morse the processes of acquiring skills and knowledge lie at the heart of understanding improvisation. Looking at education systems throughout history he notes the disappearing practice of musical apprenticeships that were the central focus of the study of music in various cultures. This system is somewhat revived in this thesis, in that the methodology of teaching supports the passing of performance techniques used in mainstream jazz song forms, from teacher to student.

Anger (2002), Campbell (2005), Hynes (2000) and Snyder (2003) all deal with a hands-on approach to teaching jazz improvisation. Many of the ideas, particularly those of Hynes and Campbell, could be used in conjunction with the model in this thesis, even though both deal mainly with the construction of the improvised line in the jazz solo and not the formation of an ensemble. Anger deals with the construction of phrases for string players entering the jazz idiom, while Snyder's article is specific to instrumentalists beginning to play jazz and guides students in creating improvised lines.

Work by Baugh (2004) and an interview with the great American jazz educator Jim Culbertson by Streeter (2005), contain sound advice for jazz educators on how to deal with some of the problems they may experience. With sound advice on curriculum issues and solutions, improvisation texts, lesson plans and motivational techniques for students, these articles deal with tested pedagogical methods for teaching jazz improvisation. Meehan (2005) and Helzer (2004) give good and practical methods for developing student jazz composition. Suggesting that students start with the blues form and then move on to the simple transformation to motifs, they go on to deal with structural analysis, the introduction of original harmonic progressions to the compositional process and dealing with modes. Galper (2003) and Tonelli (2004) looked at the psychological aspects of performance and how practice can be used to overcome problems. Examining the relationships between mind, body and emotions during the acts of practicing and performing jazz, these articles review the various levels of concentration utilized in the creative processes of improvisation, both the physical and emotional control needed, the use of aural imagination and the predictable and unpredictable elements present when performing jazz. Knox (2004) provides the only article dealing with a model for jazz

education that is based on the transcribing of the solos of great musicians. He recommends that students begin with some of the easier solos of saxophonists Buster Smith or Johnny Hodges before attempting to transcribe the more up-tempo improvisations of Charlie Parker. His article is, in the main, targeted at students who have had reasonable experience with jazz, as students must first gain the instrumental technique needed to play these solos and reproduce them in a style that is both authentic and accurate.

Bakos (2004) presented a unique article in that it concentrated on exploring the jazz swing feel and the closest way to notate the playing of eighth notes in a swing style. Aimed at exploring altered rhythms Bakos gives excellent advice on how to accent notes and back-beat others to adopt a true swing feel. This article is once again aimed at students at a high level of musical experience.

Rettke (2004) presented a research paper at the IAJE Annual Conference in New York in 2004. The paper concentrates on the role of the rhythm section in student jazz ensembles and is a synopsis of part of the text in this thesis. The section dealing with jazz harmony presents the basis of the section titled “The Language Of Chords” in this work, but this thesis takes the ideas presented in the paper and expands them by giving more examples and pedagogical techniques and exercises for teaching the model in greater detail. The roles of the individual rhythm section members are introduced in the paper, but this thesis deals with a wider variety of teaching methods, gives many more notated examples and alternative techniques for bass, piano and guitar. The paper does not deal with the frontline at all, as it draws the analogy of the manner in which a frame enhances a piece of art and the rhythm section ‘frames’ and enhances the jazz solo in an ensemble (p. 178). This thesis also

approaches the areas of the Major modes, a classroom schedule, a graded repertoire, playing a blues and evaluates the effect of the model on a group of secondary school students, all areas that are not broached in the research paper.

Volz (2005) looks at ways of introducing jazz to the classroom from a base level, and then developing student solos by the teacher offering advice on form, repetition of motifs and rhythmic interpretation. Due to his step-by-step approach, Volz's methodology of teaching is sound and his style of introducing improvisation to students is similar to the style that many educators use in introducing the playing of jazz to an ensemble. So too Ed Sarath, Associate Professor of Music at the University of Michigan, supports a creative classroom method based on group improvisation as stated in an article by Bartlett (1996), which outlines Sarath's pedagogical philosophy for teaching jazz improvisation. Fine (2005) reports on great American jazz bassists taking a double bass seminar and adopting a practical hands on approach to teaching jazz by encouraging relatively inexperienced jazz bassists to allay their fears and perform in ensembles, thus quickly bolstering their confidence and experience in a practical setting.

The importance placed on the II-V-I chord progression in jazz education is supported in the article by Donelian (2005) which states that "the II-V-I progression in all it's forms is the foundation of all tonal music" (p. 60). So too the role of the blues in introducing jazz to secondary school music students is supported in an article by Ryan (2005) which places the importance of the blues in contemporary music.

Masters research by Milne (1998) produced a model for developing a secondary school drama performance, and the pedagogical techniques presented in this dissertation could possibly produce analogous outcomes for music students. Starting with writing the script, through rehearsal processes, to the final performance, Milne gives a step-by-step guide to taking secondary students through the basics of drama performance, as this thesis takes the students through a step-by-step guide to jazz ensemble performance. Milne conducted research through the use of questionnaires distributed to her students and also by videotaping their progress. The same process was adopted for this thesis.

Blom (2001) produced work investigating teaching methodology when dealing with composition students at all educational levels. Blom's improvisation exercises are experiential in nature, and the structure of educational approach is sound. So too a PhD dissertation by Weidenbach (1996), which supports a practical style of instructing pianists, and concluded that novice keyboard instrumentalists who had planned and evaluated practice strategies were more successful achievers. The piano method of instruction in this thesis gives novice pianists a framework for planned, self-regulated practice strategies and a chance to gauge their progress through performance achievement with an ensemble.

In his handbook for jazz ensemble directors Berry (1990) uses techniques and not notation reading to introduce students to playing jazz. Although this book is written for jazz big band directors with little or no experience, Berry's style for introducing the pianist to jazz accompanying and the bass player to playing a walking bass line is similar to the methods used in this thesis. However, Berry's book covers a wide variety of problems that big band directors may encounter and

the main focus of the book is not on the performance techniques to be used by the student musicians. The book is not a teaching method and is not written for small ensembles, but some of the techniques presented would be of great value to student based big band directors.

The books of Levine (1989/1995), have been popular with jazz educators for many years and are exceptionally thorough in their coverage of both jazz piano techniques and jazz theory. The style by which he introduces the Major chordal scale early in both these works has been used as a guide for this method, but Levine then goes on to explain more advanced harmonic, melodic and rhythmic concepts by referencing these to some of the most renowned pianists in the jazz tradition. These books are an invaluable resource to any jazz pianist and lead the way in introducing modern jazz piano techniques and jazz theory.

Inducted into the International Association for Jazz Education Hall of Fame in 1989, Jamey Aebersold is perhaps the most prolific of all jazz educators. His Play-A-Long (book and CD set) series numbers over 100 volumes and his chord/scale analysis of jazz standards has been studied by thousands of jazz students. His books are excellent resources for student jazz musicians and an outstanding tool for developing practice techniques that mirror the performance experience. Aebersold's chord/scale approach to explaining harmony has been the foundation of his work for many years.

Great American jazz educators David Baker (1981/1985/1987), Jerry Coker (1981/1982/1984) and Dan Hearle (1974/1980) have had a major influence on the teaching methodologies of many jazz educators. Although none of the above has

produced a classroom combo method for all instruments, all three authors tend to utilise the chord/scale approach to jazz improvisation, and so this method has been used to introduce a multitude of secondary school students to jazz harmony. Although it is not the only approach to playing and teaching jazz, for twenty years I have found it to be a most effective method of introducing jazz to students for the first time.

Mike Steinel (2004) from the University of North Texas has written a fine method for introducing students with little experience to playing jazz. As with the ensemble method by Dean Sorenson and Bruce Pearson (1998) it starts with one and two bar phrases to ease students into improvising and builds from there. Both methods can be applied to smaller ensembles or can be built up to full big band charts, but once again students need to be able to read notation reasonably fluently to get the most from the lessons.

Sanborn (2002) has written an excellent text to help introduce students to jazz harmony. It is written in a concise and easy to understand manner and Stanton (1976) explains the first steps of jazz harmony in a simple style. So too the explanation of chords and their use in the work of Dunscomb & Hill (2002), which would make great follow up reading for students once they have completed the eight-week course outlined in this thesis, for I feel that this book is not a book for students beginning to play jazz for the first time but a text aimed at instrumentalists with a broader musical experience.

Canadian jazz educator Brian Lillos (2006) has edited and co-authored a book that covers many areas of jazz education including “Learner Styles”, “Teaching

Beginning Improvisation Using a Rhythmic Approach”, “The Jazz Curriculum” and “Towards Teaching Jazz History”. With more than twenty co-contributors, Lillos starts by looking at the different ways that students approach playing jazz and supports the teaching of improvisation by using a mentoring program where the student is guided by what the teacher has learned through experience in both the performing and education arenas. Generally aimed at more experienced musicians than those beginning to play jazz for the first time, this collection supports the passing on of performance techniques and the framing of the improvised solo by utilising a holistic approach to the combo.

Many pianists discover the use of the minor 9th, dominant 13<sup>th</sup> and Major 6/9 voicings when transcribing the work of various jazz pianists. In one of his books Mehegan (1965) uses these exact voicings (pp. 50-63). Coker (1984) also uses these voicings when explaining rootless II-V-I's in Major keys (p. 37). Both books offer young pianists a chance to develop interesting chord voicings in their left hands as they explore improvisation with the right. The structure and language of these books however, can present problems for the novice jazz pianist.

Gillespie (2000) approaches the introduction of piano chord voicings in a distinctly different manner than either Mehegan or Coker. Gillespie distributes the chord tones between both left and right hands and in his chapter titled “Rootless II-V-I Voicings” (p. 36) tends to take a more modern approach to utilising the piano as part of the accompanying ensemble. Levine (1989) utilises the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> left hand voicings in his chapter “Upper Structures” (p. 117) but with altered notes in the right hand. This method of piano accompaniment is more prevalent in combo playing today.

The guitar comping method of playing all four beats in a bar with a long-short pattern has been adapted from the Freddie Green style of play in the Count Basie Orchestra. Leavitt (1971) in his series *The Berklee Guitar Method: Books 1, 2 and 3* uses this style to introduce guitarists to comping and Akkerman (2004) in his Jazz Education Journal article, advocates this style of play when both guitar and piano are playing at a medium swing tempo. My guitar teachers introduced me to the chord shapes that are recommended playing in this thesis, but the book by Baker (1955) lays out these chords in a progressive guitar method.

Many books listed in the Bibliography deal with introducing jazz in the classroom or combo models. Books by Silver (1971), Rinzler (1994) and Hearle (1980) all rely on students being able to read music notation reasonably well. They present each student musician with an arranged part and rely heavily on the fact that each student is familiar with notated charts.

Excellent resources for any jazz educator have been presented by Baker (1987), Collier (1975), Dunscomb & Hill (2002) and Jarvis (2002). These books cover everything from starting a jazz ensemble, rehearsal techniques, organising a tour, to most of the theoretical and musical areas that a teacher will encounter. However, none of these texts contain a model to introduce jazz to a student combo starting at base level.

Two classroom methods by Taylor (2005) and Frampton (1992) approach the teaching of jazz in very different ways. Frampton starts with recordings by some of Australia's best musicians and then goes into a brief chord/scale explanation of the

harmonic progression. Taylor also uses the chord/scale approach but with emphasis on the formation of the improvised line. Both methods are informative, but neither text discusses techniques for forming a small jazz ensemble.

There are many books that aim at developing improvised solos through developing knowledge of chord and scale relationships. Baker (1985), Coker (1970), Aebersold (1967) and Ricker & Weiskopf (1984) are all excellent methods to improve scale knowledge and provide students with many scale patterns that can be practised and utilised in their playing. These books are for individual development, and the chord/scale approach to jazz theory is used in each text. The book recommended for all students working with this model is by Gabriele (1991), which takes students through a series of techniques for embellishing the improvised line. Chapters include “Passing Tones” (p. 5), “Broken Lines” (p. 20), “Linear Displacement” (p. 54), “Turnbacks” (p. 45) and “Appoggiaturas” (p. 27). This text gives students the techniques necessary for chromatically enhancing the scales that are recommended when students are encouraged to take a chord/scale approach to improvisation.

The websites listed in the Bibliography serve varied purposes for the jazz educator and should be viewed as an extended teaching resource. The International Association for Jazz Education website is a definitive resource for anyone teaching jazz. With reviews of new educational materials, interviews with musicians and educators and news of festivals, conferences and seminars any teacher can keep in touch with jazz education throughout the world, and use this website as an essential teaching resource.

The Australian website *Jazclass* (Michael Furstner) is a great site for jazz students. Using the chord/scale approach, Furstner deals with online lessons, rotating theory classes and aural training, covers nearly all areas of early jazz tuition, and his style in explaining the II-V-I progression and chord-scale relationships is very similar to the one used in this thesis. What it does not cover is a method for forming a small jazz ensemble, however all students should be encouraged to use this website.

*Making The Complicated Simple – Jazz* (Gough 2005) is a website dealing with Gough's approach to playing jazz. He too utilises the chord/scale approach and bases his method on the use of arpeggios embellished with passing tones. *A Jazz Improvisation Primer* (Sabatella 2002) deals with everything jazz, but as with *Making The Complicated Simple – Jazz*, all instructions are in text with no music notation. Sabatella's work is very thorough, and his explanation of the Major Chordal Scale is similar to many other teaching methods. Neither of these websites deals with a method for introducing jazz to a small ensemble and both have been designed for vastly different purposes.

All the jazz theory books reviewed tend to cover the incipient rules of jazz harmony in only one chapter or section and then quickly move on to more advanced theoretical concepts, making them too involved for the type of secondary school student for which this model has been developed. So too the individual instrumental methods cater for students with greater technical proficiency on their instruments or more advanced notation reading skills. The classroom models and websites did not deal with the individual instruments within a jazz combo as this model does, and all these methods were designed to be used by teachers versed in jazz. This work

however, is designed to be utilised by not only jazz musicians but also music teachers with little or no experience in the jazz medium.

The journal articles reviewed support the model for instruction used in this work and many of the ideas presented in these articles were already covered, albeit in a different manner and style, in this method of jazz education. So too the dissertations reinforce the content and process of introducing secondary school students to playing jazz and make the research, development and evaluation of this teaching method the natural consequence of a pedagogical need. While many academic works and teaching models were reviewed and listed in the Bibliography, none dealt with the category of student, the background of the instructor, nor the complete ensemble instrumental techniques that this work does, and so this thesis fills a gap that exists in music literature.

As noted in the literature review there has been a large amount of research into various approaches that can be used to introduce musical improvisation to students, however none of these approaches includes the basic functionality of a complete jazz ensemble. Most research has endeavored to explore and develop instrumental pedagogical techniques or a complete and extended program aimed at experienced musicians. The model presented in this thesis deals with the first step in introducing ensemble techniques to relatively inexperienced secondary school musicians and in doing so is the missing link needed before most other methods can be successfully utilised.

## 2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODEL

This model has been developed as a classroom teaching guide to facilitate basic traditional jazz ensemble playing through the exploration of individual instrumentalists functioning within a small jazz ensemble. It is a synthesis of many different individual methods put together over a period of twenty years. Improvisation using traditional jazz instruments such as piano, bass, guitars and saxophone will generally require a certain level of technique for them to be effective: however, a young musician can suffice on less than fully formed dexterity to play in a jazz ensemble. While the limitations of such inexperience are addressed in the general contents of the model, it would be assumed that some students may have had classical/traditional instrumental training prior to the unit of study. As long as basic Major and minor scales can be played slowly, one should be able to begin to improvise and develop an appropriate technique.

As this model is for guiding secondary school ensembles without experience in jazz idiom ensemble playing, it is limited to acting as an introduction. The style of musicianship focuses on three song forms prevalent in the traditional as opposed to avant garde jazz repertoire – the 32 bar jazz standard (AABA form), the twelve bar blues and the bossa nova. The timeframe for implementation is an eight to ten week period (one secondary school term) where one class of one and a half hours is taken weekly or, alternatively, two weekly classes of forty-five minutes. Ideally this model should take around twelve hours of instruction and in that time students should gain a very basic knowledge of traditional jazz harmony and learn to perform the selected songs in a jazz ensemble. A model that is designed to take twelve hours of instruction will have limitations. A definitive knowledge of jazz harmony is not possible for high school students within this time frame and performance techniques

of high proficiency are not the purpose of this model. Instead, the three classic jazz song forms are experientially explored and in their exploration some basic knowledge of jazz theory is introduced. Limited notational and chord chart reading are assumed. The underlying tenet of this model is to utilize a chord/scale approach to introduce students to improvisation. As such it represents a continuum in worldwide approaches to traditional jazz teaching, in this case specifically extended to the small ensemble of inexperienced players.

The method proposed and evaluated in this thesis is a complete ensemble guide in that it not only gives all instrumentalists the basic knowledge to begin to improvise, but also presents the rhythm section with a framework to accompany the improvising soloist. This is achieved by presenting students with a variety of performance techniques that they can use and develop. In most other teaching methods the rhythm section is presented with either a simple chord chart or notated part. In this model each member of the rhythm section is instead presented with a variety of techniques to develop his or her ensemble skills. In this manner students develop performance techniques that can be applied to a multitude of jazz standards. If the solo remains the central work of art, the rhythm section constitutes its frame, helping to enhance and interpret the work of the solo performer. With this in mind, this model presents a holistic approach to jazz education.

The bassist is presented with a series of phrases from which he or she can structure a walking bass line over various common chord progressions. The method is not based on the bass player being able to read music notation, but instead the ability to understand and interpret the chord progression of each tune and apply the techniques that are presented.

The pianist is given a choice of chord voicings and a variety of comping rhythms to choose from. Originally the model used only the min9-dom13-6/9 voicings, doubled in both right and left hands, for all three songs. The value found in this technique is the fact that pianists found it easier to play the chords in the left hand when soloing if they had been doubling the voicings when comping. Realising that doubling the same chord in both hands is not the ideal way to voice most jazz chords, it has been found to be the fastest and most productive method for getting pianists started in the jazz medium. The presumption is made that pianists will 'grow out' of this method with time and experience. . However, as the model has developed a decision was made to list some alternate voicings. Those teachers who wish their students to comp with open voicings, can use these suggested voicings as a guide.

The guitarists play the chords with a four to the bar feel over all swing tunes, a technique used extensively in jazz. Charts with chord diagrams are included along with an alternative accompanying method that can be used with the bossa nova rhythm. The model also uses techniques for getting drummers to play their full role, by building the appropriate feel with a series of progressive steps for both the swing and bossa nova rhythms.

The model concentrates on introducing the ability to read and interpret chord progressions by all players. With a section dealing with the Major Chordal Scale and a chordal analysis of each of the songs used, the horn players are given a direction to take when improvising by learning which scales to apply to each chord progression, Other sections including 'The Language of Chords', 'The Major Modes' and 'Teaching a Repertoire', along with the complete instructional guide for introducing

each ensemble member to three separate jazz song forms, make this model a complete eight-week course for secondary school teachers.

In the explanation of jazz harmony I have chosen to use as little music notation as possible and instead use letter names for notes. This is because the target group listed above is inexperienced in reading notation. Also, as most jazz is the art of improvising over a chord progression, and generally no notation is used, students must learn to read and understand chord progressions quickly and easily, and sometimes those students who are reliant on notation tend to ignore the relationships between chords and simply concentrate on the notation. The Jazz Combo Series, published by Hal Leonard, where all parts and solos are notated, is a typical example of a jazz combo method that relies solely on each ensemble member reading his or her individual part.

All discussions in this paper are at concert pitch. This is of no consequence in the section “The Language of Chords”, but with any song analysis, B<sup>b</sup> instruments should transpose the chord chart and relevant scales up a tone, and E<sup>b</sup> instruments should transpose up a sixth (or down a minor third).

Scale degrees are notated as the number with a circumflex above as is the commonly accepted theoretical usage.

When reading chord symbols throughout this model, Maj will represent Major, 7 will represent dominant seventh, min will represent minor, and min7<sup>b5</sup> will represent the half diminished chord.

All drum set notation is based on the recommendations of the Percussive Arts Society (in Norman Weinberg's book, *Guide to Standardized Drumset Notation*).

In 2003 eighteen Year 11 Victorian Certificate of Education music students, comprising two classes, were filmed at two-week intervals, over an eight-week period, while being instructed in the model, and surveyed to gauge their reaction to the effectiveness of the model. As a comparison two more Year 11 Victorian Certificate of Education classes, comprising fourteen students, were again filmed at two-week intervals in 2006. Again they were surveyed to gauge their reaction to the classroom model. The results of the survey have been graphed and appear in the chapter titled "Evaluation". Two DVDs accompanying the thesis follow all four classes progress over the eight-week period. Another is a short movie made for the International Association for Jazz Education annual conference in New York in 2004 and gauges student perceptions of the model after having continued their jazz studies for another six months.

The success of the application of the teaching model presented is evaluated by assessing the students' progress at three separate levels. Firstly on a performance basis, secondly on the basis that all students gained a basic knowledge of jazz music theory and finally by gaining student perceptions of the model and its pedagogical applications. The success of the research project is directly related to the answers to the questions related to the teaching-based research problems presented earlier. All these assessments take place in the chapter titled "Evaluation".

### 3. THE METHOD

#### The Language of Chords

When introducing jazz to students I start by encouraging them to view jazz as a language of chords. By knowing the chord that is being played, the jazz musician understands the relationship between the melody and the chords, and what scales and arpeggios can be used in improvisation.

Jazz uses a 'shorthand' method of chord symbols to denote where and when each chord is to be played. The skilled jazz musician reads the chord progression like a book, understanding the relationships between the chords and what keys the chords are progressing through.

Generally, classical and jazz musicians view modulations, or changes of key, within a song in a different way, with each method being valid and having merit. Classical musicians tend to relate all chords to the tonic key. Jazz musicians, on the other hand, may tend to view any chord outside the key to be a modulation. For example: CMaj7 Gmin7 C7 FMaj7 in a piece written in the key of C Major, is generally viewed by classical musicians as 1-5min7-1dom7-4, so everything is related to C Major. A jazz musician, on the other hand, will tend to view this progression as the I chord in C Major, followed by a II-V-I progression in F Major. Through seeing progressions this way a jazz player sees most tunes as a series of modulations, and improvises accordingly.

These are the most commonly used chords in jazz, and how they are formed.

1. The Major seventh chord (Maj7) is made up of the first, third, fifth and seventh notes of the Major scale. So CMaj7 is made up of C E G B or 1357.
2. The dominant seventh chord (7) is made up of the first, third, fifth and flattened seventh notes of the Major scale. So C7 is made up of C E G B<sup>b</sup> or 135<sup>b</sup>7.
3. The minor seventh chord (min7) is made up of the first, flattened third, fifth and flattened seventh notes of the Major scale. So Cmin7 is made up of C E<sup>b</sup> G B<sup>b</sup> or 1 <sup>b</sup>3 5 <sup>b</sup>7.
4. The half diminished or minor seventh flat five chord (min7<sup>b</sup>5) is made up of the first, flattened third, flattened fifth and flattened seventh notes of the Major scale. So Cmin7<sup>b</sup>5 is made up of C E<sup>b</sup> G<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> or 1 <sup>b</sup>3 <sup>b</sup>5 <sup>b</sup>7.
5. The diminished seventh chord (<sup>o</sup>7) is made up of the first, flattened third, flattened fifth and double flattened seventh (the double flattened seventh is the same as the sixth note of the scale, and we call it the double flattened seventh so that all the above chords are versions of 1 3 5 7) of the Major scale. So C<sup>o</sup>7 is made up of C E<sup>b</sup> G<sup>b</sup> B<sup>bb</sup> (or A) or 1 <sup>b</sup>3 <sup>b</sup>5 <sup>bb</sup>7.

#### CHORDS

Maj7	1 3 5 7
7	1 3 5 <sup>b</sup> 7
min7	1 <sup>b</sup> 3 5 <sup>b</sup> 7
min7 <sup>b</sup> 5	1 <sup>b</sup> 3 <sup>b</sup> 5 <sup>b</sup> 7
<sup>o</sup> 7	1 <sup>b</sup> 3 <sup>b</sup> 5 <sup>bb</sup> 7

The Major Chordal Scale

A Major scale consists of the sequence of seven intervals in the order of tone, tone, semitone, tone, tone, tone, semitone. However, one can superimpose notes on each degree of any Major scale and so form the Major chordal scale. An intimate understanding of the chordal scale is essential if one is to become an improvising jazz musician.

We have seen that the most commonly used chords in jazz are made up of 1357, or variations thereof. So we can say that chords are generally made up of superimposed thirds i.e.: take the first note, skip one, take the next, skip one, take the next, skip one, and take the next.

Let's take the C Major scale to begin with. If we superimpose thirds on each of the notes in the scale we get the following:

I C E G B

II D F A C

III E G B D

IV F A C E

V G B D F

VI A C E G

VII B D F A

All of the above chords are made up of notes from the C Major scale, so this is the jazz C Major chordal scale.

Let's now examine these chords more carefully. The I chord is C E G B, or 1357 in the C Major scale, so this chord is CMaj7 (check with the chord table above).

The II chord is DFAC or Dmin7

The III chord is EGBD or Emin7

The IV chord is FACE or FMaj7

The V chord is GBDF or G7

The VI chord is ACEG or Amin7

The VII chord is BDF A or Bmin7<sup>b5</sup>

So, the C Major chordal scale is:

CMaj7	Dmin7	Emin7	FMaj7	G7	Amin7	Bmin7 <sup>b5</sup>
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII

**Fig. 1 The C Major chordal scale**

The construction of chord types for the chordal scale remains constant for every key. Thus the chordal scale for E<sup>b</sup> Major (which has B<sup>b</sup>, E<sup>b</sup> and A<sup>b</sup>) is:

E <sup>b</sup> Maj7	Fmin7	Gmin7	A <sup>b</sup> Maj7	B <sup>b</sup> 7	Cmin7	Dmin7 <sup>b</sup> 5
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII

Or for A Major (key signature of F<sup>#</sup>, C<sup>#</sup>, G<sup>#</sup>).

AMaj7	Bmin7	C <sup>#</sup> min7	DMaj7	E7	F <sup>#</sup> min7	G <sup>#</sup> min7 <sup>b</sup> 5
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I      II      III      IV      V      VI      VII

So, all jazz musicians should be aware that the Major chordal scale is:

Maj7    min7    min7    Maj7    7    min7    min7<sup>b5</sup>

I      II      III      IV      V      VI      VII

and we use this chordal scale to let us know which scale to use when soloing. For

example, if we have a I-VI-II-V progression in the key of C Major:

CMaj7    Amin7    Dmin7    G7

I      VI      II      V

All these chords are made up of notes from the C Major scale, so the parent scale, or the scale we would use to improvise with, would be C Major.

Jazz musicians often use numbers to represent chord progressions. For example, a III-VI-II-V progression in C Major would be:

Emin7    Amin7    Dmin7    G7

III      VI      II      V

or a II-V-I-IV progression would be:

Dmin7    G7    CMaj7    FMaj7

II      V      I      IV

And once again all the chords are made up of notes from the C Major scale, so the parent scale, or the scale we use to improvise with, is C Major.

There are many different scales that can be used over the progressions above, but students of jazz should first be able to recognise and use the parent scales before experimenting with substitutes.

The next step is to recognise that there are three min7<sup>th</sup> and two Maj7<sup>th</sup> chords in the chordal scale, thus a min7<sup>th</sup> chord could be in one of three Major keys, and a Maj7<sup>th</sup> chord could be in one of two Major keys. For example, a min7<sup>th</sup> chord is in position II, III and VI, so a Dmin7 chord could be the II chord in C Major, the III chord in Bb Major, or the VI chord in F Major. The Maj7<sup>th</sup> chord is in position I and IV, so a CMaj7 chord could be the I chord in C Major or the IV chord in G Major.

By looking for the 7<sup>th</sup> (dominant 7<sup>th</sup>) chords we recognise which key these chords are in. The 7<sup>th</sup> chord occurs just once in the chordal scale in position V, so a 7<sup>th</sup> chord can only be in one key. G7 is the V chord in C Major, and can only be in C Major (remember that only Major keys are being discussed at the moment). D7 is the V chord in G Major, and can only be in G Major. A7 is the V chord in D Major, and can only be in D Major, and so on.

Now let's look at some chord progressions and examine which key they are in. Remember that the I chord is the same as the prevailing key, and the same as the parent scale for that progression.

FMaj7	Dmin7	Gmin7	C7
I	VI	II	V

The C7 is the V chord in F Major, so the above progression is in the key of F Major.

Dmin7	G7	CMaj7	FMaj7
II	V	I	IV

The G7 chord is the V chord in C Major, so the above progression is in the key of C Major.

Dmin7	Gmin7	Cmin7	F7
III	VI	II	V

The F7 chord is the V chord in B<sup>b</sup> Major, so the above progression is in the key of B<sup>b</sup> Major.

Through review of the three chord progressions above, it is clear that in the first the Dmin7 is the VI chord in F Major, in the second the Dmin7 is the II chord in C Major, and in the third the Dmin7 is the III chord in B<sup>b</sup> Major. In the first progression the FMaj7 is the I chord in F Major, while in the second the FMaj7 is the IV chord in C Major. This is why it is so important to recognise which key the 7<sup>th</sup> (dominant 7<sup>th</sup>) chord is in.

#### The II-V-I Progression

Undoubtedly the most common chord progression in jazz is the II-V-I progression. It occurs in thousands of tunes and has been used by hundreds of composers. The II chord is a min7<sup>th</sup>, the V chord is a 7<sup>th</sup> (dom7<sup>th</sup>) and the I chord is a Maj7<sup>th</sup>.

min7<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> Maj7<sup>th</sup>

II V I

Whenever a min7<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> Maj7<sup>th</sup> appear in order, it is almost always a II-V-I progression. Students must learn to recognise this progression quickly, and remember that the I chord is the same as the prevailing key. For example:

Dmin7 G7 CMaj7

II V I

is a II-V-I progression in the key of C Major, and the C Major scale could be used to solo over this progression.

Gmin7 C7 FMaj7

II V I

is a II-V-I progression in the key of F Major, and one would use the F Major scale to solo.

Fmin7 B<sup>b</sup>7 E<sup>b</sup>Maj7

II V I

is a II-V-I progression in the key of E<sup>b</sup> Major, and one would use the E<sup>b</sup> Major scale to solo.

Sometimes we use the II-V progression without resolving to the I chord. For example:

Amin7 D7

II V

is a II-V progression in the key of G Major and one would solo using the G Major scale.

E<sup>min</sup>7 A7

II V

is a II-V progression in the key of D Major, and one would solo using the D Major scale.

### Keep Quizzing The Students

After introducing the chordal scale to students, repeated quizzing confirms a firm grasp of chordal theory. Five to ten minutes of each class should be spent asking questions such as:

What is the III chord in F Major? (A<sup>min</sup>7)

What is the VII chord in A Major? (G<sup>#min</sup>7<sup>b5</sup>)

Which Major keys can E<sup>min</sup>7 be in? (II in D, III in C, VI in G)

Which Major keys can B<sup>b</sup>Maj7 be in? (I in B<sup>b</sup>, IV in F)

Name the II-V-I progression in G Major. (A<sup>min</sup>7 D7 G<sup>Maj</sup>7)

Name the II-V-I progression in E<sup>b</sup> Major. (F<sup>min</sup>7 B<sup>b</sup>7 E<sup>b</sup>Maj7)

Name the II-V progression in A Major. (B<sup>min</sup>7 E7)

Name the II-V progression in E Major. (F<sup>#min</sup>7 B7)

D<sup>min</sup>7 G7 C<sup>Maj</sup>7 is in which key? (C Major)

B<sup>bmin</sup>7 E<sup>b</sup>7 A<sup>b</sup>Maj7 is in which key? (A<sup>b</sup> Major)

G<sup>min</sup>7 C7 is a II-V progression in which key? (F Major)

C<sup>#min</sup>7 F<sup>#</sup>7 is a II-V progression in which key? (B Major)

The quicker jazz students can come to grips with the language of chords, the sooner they will be able to improvise with confidence and conviction.

## The First Tune

Once students are introduced to the Major chordal scale, which is usually in the first lesson, they are immediately instructed to play a song, as this is the fastest way to get them to use their newly acquired harmonic knowledge and to keep them interested. The process used to introduce tunes is:

1. Analyse the chord progression
2. Listen to a recording of the selected song
3. Instruct the rhythm section<sup>1</sup> to play through the changes
4. Instruct the frontline<sup>2</sup> to play through the melody
5. Play the chord progression slowly and give each player a chance to solo

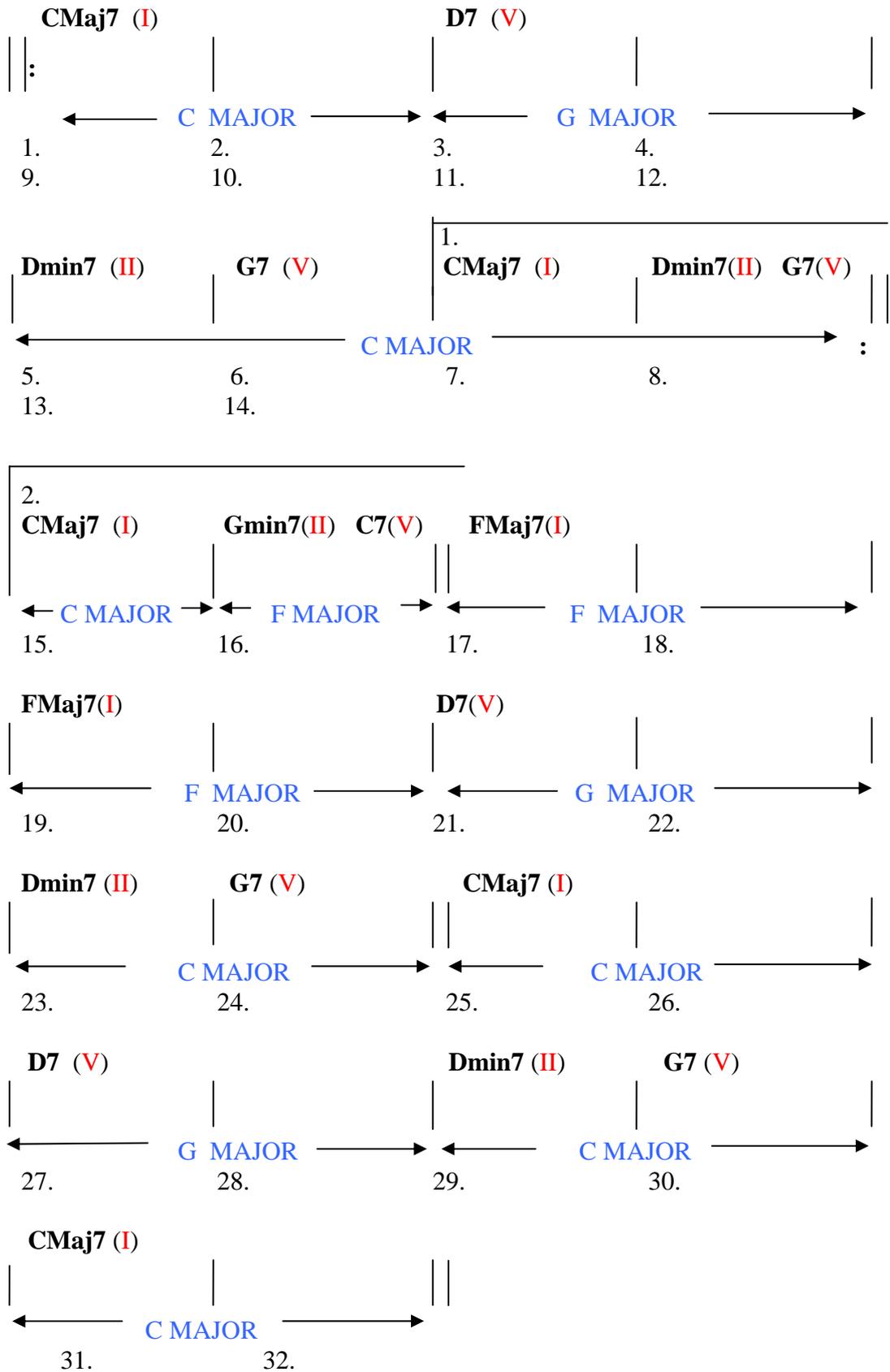
The song I usually use to introduce students to jazz is the Billy Strayhorn / Duke Ellington classic *Take The A Train*. This tune is in 4/4 time, is 32 bars in length, and is in the classic AABA form (each section is 8 bars long), so students really only need to deal with two different eight bar sections. It stays in each key for at least two bars, so students have time to cope with the modulations. Here is the chord progression of *Take The A Train*:

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<sup>1</sup> The rhythm section generally consists of piano, bass and drums, but may also include guitar.

<sup>2</sup> The frontline generally consists of brass or woodwind instruments, but may include any instrument which plays the melody of the song.

## Take The A Train



**Fig. 2** Chord progression of *Take The A Train* by Strayhorn/Ellington

## Analyse The Chord Progression

*Take The A Train* is in the key of C Major (there are no sharps or flats in the key signature) so the CMaj7 chord in bars 1 and 2 (10 and 11) is the I chord in C Major, so the C Major scale is the scale of the tonic key of C.

The next chord is D7<sup>3</sup> (bars 3 and 4, 12 and 13). The easiest way to teach students to improvise over this D7 is to treat it as the V chord in G Major. This model also gets students used to recognising the dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chord as a V chord. In Fig. 2, the numbers in parenthesis after each chord symbol, show the place in the relevant chordal scale where each chord falls.

Bars 5 to 8 contain a II-V-I-II-V progression (Dmin7 G7 CMaj7 Dmin7 G7) in the key of C Major once again, so the scale of the tonic key is C Major. After this the repeat bars indicate a return to the start where bars 9 to 14 are the same as bars 1 to 6.

The first bar of the second time bar, or bar 15, is CMaj7 or once again the I chord in C Major. Bar 16 is Gmin7 C7 or a II-V progression in the key of F Major, with the F Major scale being the parent scale.

The bridge or B section begins at bar 17 with an FMaj7 chord for four bars. Students should treat this chord as the I chord (after the Gmin7 C7, II-V progression)

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<sup>3</sup> This chord is really a D13<sup>#11</sup> or D7<sup>b5</sup>. A D13<sup>#11</sup> chord is generally called the Lydian Dominant chord and is the IV chord in A melodic minor, thus the scale is D E F<sup>#</sup> G<sup>#</sup> A B C or 1 2 3 <sup>#</sup>4 5 6 <sup>b</sup>7. An easy way to recognise Lydian Dominant chords is to look for any dominant chord that is not part of a II-V progression, and does not resolve V-I. The easiest way to improvise over a 7<sup>b5</sup> chord is to use the wholetone scale. So over D7<sup>b5</sup> the D wholetone scale or D E F<sup>#</sup> G<sup>#</sup> A<sup>#</sup> C(1 2 3 <sup>#</sup>4 <sup>#</sup>5 <sup>b</sup>7) would be used.

in F Major and use the F Major scale to solo. The next two bars of the bridge, or bars 21 and 22, are D7 and once again this chord is viewed as the V chord in G Major, then bars 23 and 24 are Dmin7 G7 or II-V in the key of C Major.

The final eight bars, or bars 24 to 32, are a repeat of the A section, or bars 1 to 8, and can be treated the same way.

Students should mark or colour code their charts to show the scales of the tonic keys, as shown in the example in Fig. 1. This makes it easier for them to know where they are located in the tune, and to recognise what scale they should be utilising. The basic scales needed to improvise over the chord progression of *Take The A Train*, are C Major, G Major and F Major, so students should be encouraged to practice these scales and become most familiar with them.

#### Listen To A Recording Of The Selected Song

Guided listening is the next step in the instructional process. The recordings of *Take The A Train* that I use and recommend are Duke Ellington and His Orchestra: *Treasury Shows, Vol.II*. Storyville Records 717101901128, 1945, which is a wonderful live recording of this tune, and The Ray Brown Trio: *Soular Energy*. Concord K32Y 6050. The Duke Ellington recording gives students an historic perspective for the song, while the Ray Brown Trio version is taken at a slow tempo and gives students a chance to concentrate on listening to the chord progression.

On the first playing of the recorded version, instruct students to listen to the rhythmic feel of the song and the way that the swing feel is interpreted. Encourage

discussion on the way that the eighth notes are played, the cohesion between the bass and drums, and way that the piano plays the chords behind the soloists. This type of discussion gives students an insight into the rhythmic interpretation of the swing style.

During the second playing get students to follow the chord progression on their colour coded chord charts. Get all students to call out the chord progression as it passes on one chorus and then call out the parent scales as they change on another chorus. This gives students a chance to feel how long each chord is played for and also gives them a basis to start hearing the chord progression as it passes.

I recommend that teachers regularly revisit the selected recordings throughout the eight weeks of instruction. After the students can play the melody of *Take The A Train* and find their way through the solos, it is of great advantage to them to again listen to a recording. This listening exercise gives all students a chance to review their own interpretations of their individual parts and to try and adopt the feel that is created in the recording. Most students are also excited by the fact that they can now follow the chord progression with much more ease and are beginning to aurally recognise the chord changes.

#### Instruct The Rhythm Section To Play Through The Changes

In my experience frontline players usually settle into the world of jazz quicker than bassists and pianists. Perhaps this is because the rhythm section plays constantly, laying down the beat and the chord progression, while saxes and trumpets are allowed to rest after their solos. Many of the best student musicians are frontline players, but generally they don't have to change their technique drastically to play

jazz, whereas classically trained pianists and bassists must approach their instruments and their concept of harmony in a completely new manner.

### The Piano

Sometimes young pianists know five or six classical pieces, and their reading of notation is fair to good, but they frequently have no experience in interpreting a jazz chart.

There are two different techniques that I use to introduce student pianists to playing the chords in a combo. Both work in a satisfactory manner and students can choose which technique feels most comfortable to them.

The first technique that I have found to be of use is the method of doubling the chord in both hands. The chords to be used should be played in both the right and left hands together, an octave apart, with the left hand not venturing any lower than the E below middle C. By using this technique players learn to use four note chords in the left hand when it comes time to solo with the right hand. We are discussing young pianists with very limited jazz experience, and by doubling the chords in both hands it gives them some extended chord voicings to play when they are improvising with their right hand.

Substitute a 6/9<sup>4</sup> chord for the Maj7<sup>th</sup> chords, a dominant 13<sup>th5</sup> for the 7<sup>th</sup> (dominant 7<sup>th</sup>) chords, and a minor 9<sup>th6</sup> chord for the min7<sup>th</sup> chords. All these substitutions intensify the harmonic function of the chord for which it is substituting, and it is important for pianists to learn to use extended chords as soon as possible.

CHORD	SUBSTITUTION	NOTES
CMaj7	C6/9	E G A D
D7	D13	F# B C E
Dmin7	Dmin9	F A C E
G7	G13	F A B E
Gmin7	Gmin9	B <sup>b</sup> D F A
C7	C13	B <sup>b</sup> D E A
FMaj7	F6/9	A C D G

**Fig. 3 Piano chord substitutions for *Take The A Train* (doubled voicings)**

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<sup>4</sup> Notes 3, 5, 6 and 9 from the tonic scale.

<sup>5</sup> Notes 3, <sup>b</sup>7, 9 and 13 from the tonic scale.

<sup>6</sup> Notes <sup>b</sup>3, 5, <sup>b</sup>7 and 9 from the tonic scale.

The piano chord chart for "Take The A Train" is presented in seven systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The chords and their voicings are as follows:

- System 1:** C $\%$  (Treble: C4, E4, G4; Bass: C3, E3, G3) and D $^{13}$  (Treble: D4, F#4, A4, C5; Bass: D3, F#3, A3, C4).
- System 2:** Dm $^9$  (Treble: D4, F4, A4; Bass: D3, F3, A3, C4), G $^{13}$  (Treble: G4, B4, D5; Bass: G3, B3, D4, F4), C $\%$  (Treble: C4, E4, G4; Bass: C3, E3, G3), 1. Dm $^9$  (Treble: D4, F4, A4; Bass: D3, F3, A3, C4), and G $^{13}$  (Treble: G4, B4, D5; Bass: G3, B3, D4, F4).
- System 3:** 2. Gm $^9$  (Treble: G4, Bb4, Db5; Bass: G3, Bb3, Db4, F4), C $^{13}$  (Treble: C4, E4, G4, B4; Bass: C3, E3, G3, B3), and F $\%$  (Treble: F4, Ab4, C5; Bass: F3, Ab3, C4).
- System 4:** D $^{13}$  (Treble: D4, F#4, A4, C5; Bass: D3, F#3, A3, C4) and Dm $^9$  (Treble: D4, F4, A4; Bass: D3, F3, A3, C4).
- System 5:** G $^{13}$  (Treble: G4, B4, D5; Bass: G3, B3, D4, F4), C $\%$  (Treble: C4, E4, G4; Bass: C3, E3, G3), and D $^{13}$  (Treble: D4, F#4, A4, C5; Bass: D3, F#3, A3, C4).
- System 6:** Dm $^9$  (Treble: D4, F4, A4; Bass: D3, F3, A3, C4), G $^{13}$  (Treble: G4, B4, D5; Bass: G3, B3, D4, F4), C $\%$  (Treble: C4, E4, G4; Bass: C3, E3, G3), and D $^{13}$  (Treble: D4, F#4, A4, C5; Bass: D3, F#3, A3, C4).

Fig. 4 Piano chord chart for *Take The A Train* (doubled voicings)

The second technique is to get students to play the third and seventh of the chord in the left hand and two complimentary notes in the right hand. This opens up the voicings and some students find this method much easier to comprehend. As with the doubled voicings, all the chords suggested contain no root note. This is due to the fact that the pianist is playing with a bass player who will sound out the root note of the chord on beat one, thus giving the student pianist a chance leave out the root note and instead play a colour tone. When it comes time for the pianist to solo, students can keep playing the thirds and sevenths of the chords in the left hand while they solo with the right hand.

CHORD	SUBSTITUTION	LEFT-HAND / RIGHT-HAND	
CMaj7	CMaj9	E-B	D-G
D7	D13	F# -C	E-B
Dmin7	Dmin9	F-C	E-A
G7	G13	F-B	E-A
Gmin7	Gmin9	F-B <sup>b</sup>	D-A
C7	C13	E-B <sup>b</sup>	D-A
FMaj7	FMaj9	E-A	C-G

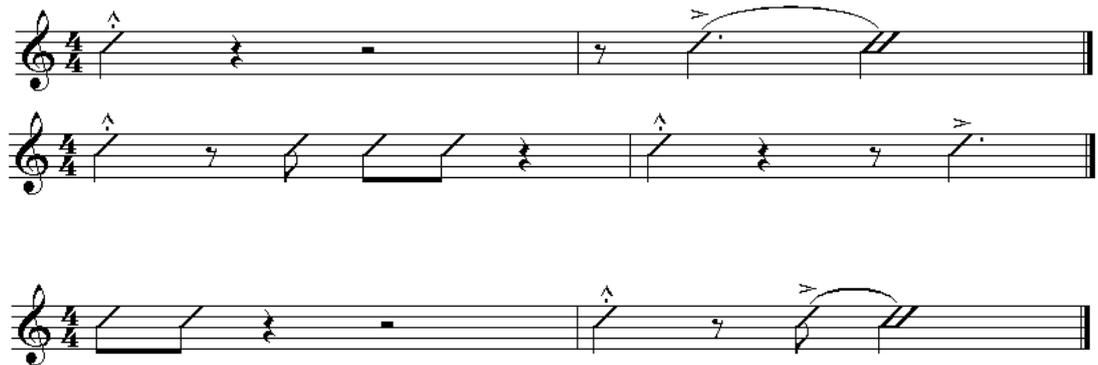
**Fig. 5 Piano chord substitutions for *Take The A Train* (open voicings)**

The image displays a piano chord chart for the song "Take The A Train" using open voicings. The chart is organized into six systems, each consisting of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with chord symbols and musical notation. The chords and their voicings are as follows:

- System 1:** Chords are Cma<sup>9</sup> and D<sup>13</sup>. The notation shows a whole note chord in the treble clef and a half note chord in the bass clef.
- System 2:** Chords are Dm<sup>9</sup>, G<sup>13</sup>, Cma<sup>9</sup>, 1. Dm<sup>9</sup>, and G<sup>13</sup>. The notation shows a whole note chord in the treble clef and a half note chord in the bass clef.
- System 3:** Chords are 2. Gm<sup>9</sup>, C<sup>13</sup>, and Fma<sup>9</sup>. The notation shows a whole note chord in the treble clef and a half note chord in the bass clef.
- System 4:** Chords are D<sup>13</sup> and Dm<sup>9</sup>. The notation shows a whole note chord in the treble clef and a half note chord in the bass clef.
- System 5:** Chords are G<sup>13</sup>, Cma<sup>9</sup>, and D<sup>13</sup>. The notation shows a whole note chord in the treble clef and a half note chord in the bass clef.
- System 6:** Chords are Dm<sup>9</sup>, G<sup>13</sup>, and Cma<sup>9</sup>. The notation shows a whole note chord in the treble clef and a half note chord in the bass clef.

**Fig. 6 Piano chord chart for *Take The A Train* (open voicings)**

Next, introduce students to some *comping*<sup>7</sup> rhythms to practise. All these rhythmic patterns are two bars in length and each should be played right through the tune with the chords played in either the open or doubled voicings. Once each pattern can be played confidently, the student can play one after the other, or mix them up to gain some variety of rhythm when comping.



**Fig. 7 Comping rhythms**

Sometimes pianists with limited experience have trouble playing chords in the left hand while trying to solo with the right hand. In such circumstances let the pianist solo with the right hand only so that he or she can concentrate on following the chord changes as the solo proceeds. Encourage them to practice playing either of the left hand voicings suggested above while soloing simply and evenly. A beneficial practice exercise is for the pianist to play the left hand chord voicings on all four even beats in the bar while trying to improvise in the right hand. When young pianists can do this they are usually able to sound out the left hand chord voicing at the beginning of each bar when soloing with the combo.

### The Bass

Whether acoustic or electric bass, unless students have played some jazz they invariably have trouble playing a walking bass line<sup>8</sup>, a style synonymous with jazz.

<sup>7</sup> A common abbreviation for accompanying.

<sup>8</sup> A bass line of four crotchets in each bar, see fig.8.

The easiest way for young bassists to learn to play such a style is to teach them a series of ‘licks’ or phrases to be played over certain chords and progressions and then have the student play the appropriate ‘lick’ over the appropriate chord. Once again music notation is avoided, as I find that the notation confuses students who do not read well, and those that are good readers tend to rely on the notation instead of memorising the ‘licks’.

Bass ‘Licks’	
Chord Type	Lick
Maj7 <sup>th</sup> or 7 <sup>th</sup>	1 3 4 #4 5 4 3 2
II-V Progression or min7 <sup>th</sup> 7 <sup>th</sup>	1 2 3 5 4 3 2 1

**Fig. 8 Bass ‘licks’**

With the two ‘licks’ in Fig. 6 we can play through all of *Take The A Train* in a simple manner, but one that will keep the rhythm going and establish the chord progression. The bass player should use a walking bass line for both the melody and solos, since it will keep the momentum going. Fig.7 shows these licks applied to the chart in Fig. 2.

Chord	‘Lick’
CMaj7	C E F F# G F E D
D7	D F# G G# A G F# E
Dmin7 G7	D E F A G F E D
FMaj7	F A B <sup>b</sup> B C B <sup>b</sup> A G

**Fig. 9 Bass ‘licks’ for *Take The A Train***

All these phrases are two bars in length, but if a chord is played for only one bar, as the CMaj7 is in bar 7, students are instructed to play half the ‘lick’, or C E F

F#. If there are two chords to the bar, as the Dmin7 G7 is in bar 8, the bassist is instructed to play the root note twice on each chord or DD-GG.

This is a simple way of playing a walking bass line, but is the most effective way to get young bassists to learn to play a walking bass line quickly.

The bass chart for "Take The A Train" is written in 4/4 time and consists of six staves of music. The chords are: Cma7, D7, Dm7, G7, Cma7, 1. Dm7 G7, 2. Gm7 C7 Fma7, D7, Dm7, G7, Cma7, D7, Dm7, G7, Cma7.

**Fig. 10 Bass chart for *Take The A Train***

If the student is able to master this style of play quickly, some more two bar phrases over the Major and dominant chords can be taught so that the student can learn to substitute a variety of 'licks' over those chords. The first phrase below sounds out the chord arpeggio, while the second jumps an octave from the root note and then descends the appropriate scale. Remember that the student bassist must play the root note of the chord on beat one whenever the chord changes.

Chord Arpeggio 'Licks'

CMaj7 C E G B C B G E



D7 D F# A C D C A F#



FMaj7 F A C E F E C A



Chord Scalic 'Licks'

CMaj7 C (jump one octave) C B A G F E D



D7 D (jump one octave) D C B A G F# E

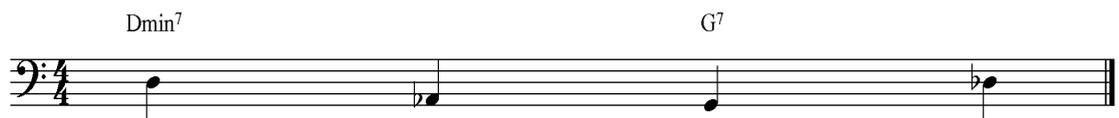


FMaj7 F (jump one octave) F E D C B<sup>b</sup> A G



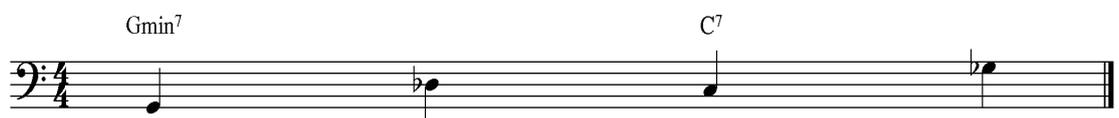
Fig. 11 Alternative bass 'licks' for *Take The A Train*

For more advanced students I usually take this opportunity to introduce them to one of the applications of chromaticism in a walking bass line. This is easiest to achieve in the bars that contain two chords, one played on beat one of the bar and one played on beat three. For example in bar eight, or the second bar of the first time bar, the chords are Dmin7 for two beats and then G7 for two beats. Tell the students that the bass note that can precede the root note of any chord, remembering that they have already been instructed to play the root note on beat one of each new chord, is the note one semitone above. For example, in the bar just mentioned the D note is played on beat one, followed by an Ab which is one semitone above the next root note which is the G of the G7 chord, and then a Db which is one semitone above the C or the root note of the next chord to be played, which is CMaj7.



**Fig. 12 Bass line over Dmin7 G7 using chromaticism**

The same technique can also be applied to bar 16, or the second bar of the second time bar, which is Gmin7 for two beats and then C7 for two beats before resolving to FMaj7. Student bassists can play the G note on beat one, then D<sup>b</sup> or one semitone above C on beat two, the C or root note of C7 on beat three and then G<sup>b</sup> or one semitone above the next note which is the F of the FMaj7 chord.



**Fig. 13 Bass line over Gmin7 C7 using chromaticism**

By using this method of passing notes the magnetism of the half step enables the advanced students to begin to hear the pull and resolution of the bass line so that they can learn to comprehend and apply this technique on their own.

I have used flats and not sharps when describing the licks above because jazz musicians, particularly those that make up the rhythm section, spend more time playing in the 'flat' keys than the 'sharp' keys and are generally more accustomed to discussing intervals using flats. This is probably due to the prevalence that B<sup>b</sup> and E<sup>b</sup> instruments have played in the historical development of jazz.

## The Guitar

The best role for the guitar when attempting the first jazz tune, is to support the bass player's walking bass line by strumming the chords four times to the bar. This way both players accent all four beats in the bar together and lay down a strong rhythmic pulse. The guitar should not play all four beats evenly though; instead the guitarist should play beats 1 and 3 long, and beats 2 and 4 short in every bar. The feel created by the long-short, long-short strum will help make the rhythm section set up an even groove.

Below is a chord chart for *Take The A Train* with chord diagrams of guitar chords that I would recommend. These chords are typical jazz voicings for guitar, however it is not mandatory that they are the shapes used. If student guitar players who have more experience playing rock music are more comfortable playing bar chords then let them play these chords until they are secure in playing the new voicings. The problem with bar chords is that they generally sound out five or six strings, doubling notes (particularly the root and fifth) of the chord. This can lead to a somewhat muddied sound when put with the rest of the rhythm section. The chord voicings below contain just the four notes in each chord and are a more balanced option for playing jazz in a combo.

The guitar chart for "Take The A Train" is presented across six staves, each with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The chart includes the following chord progressions and diagrams:

- Staff 1:** Cmaj7 (measures 1-2), D7 (measures 3-4).
- Staff 2:** Dm7 (sfr) (measures 1-2), G7 (measures 3-4). **1. Cmaj7** (measures 5-6), Dm7 (sfr) (measures 7-8), G7 (measures 9-10).
- Staff 3:** **2. Cmaj7** (measures 1-2), Gm7 (measures 3-4), C7 (measures 5-6), Fmaj7 (measures 7-8).
- Staff 4:** D7 (measures 1-4).
- Staff 5:** Dm7 (sfr) (measures 1-2), G7 (measures 3-4), Cmaj7 (measures 5-8).
- Staff 6:** D7 (measures 1-2), Dm7 (sfr) (measures 3-4), G7 (measures 5-6), Cmaj7 (measures 7-8).

**Fig. 14** Guitar Chart for *Take The A Train*

## The Drums

Drummers, who are inexperienced with playing jazz, simply need to play a swing feel on the ride cymbal, while keeping the hi-hat on beats 2 and 4.



Fig. 15 Simple swing pattern for drums

When confident with the feel above, drummers can then progress to a full swing feel, adding the bass drum on all four beats and a rimshot on beats 2 and 4:



Fig. 16 Swing pattern for drums

Allow each member of the rhythm section to practise their parts individually, and then assemble them as an ensemble. Always give the group or section a count in before playing, even if rehearsing only a few bars. This is most important as it will not only give the group a steady pulse to begin, but also give each instrumentalist a chance to put all his or her concentration into starting in exactly the right place at the correct tempo. Set up the tempo by clicking fingers, or if this is difficult by clapping, on beats 2 and 4 for at least four bars. Then count one bar in half time or 1/click/2/click, followed by a 1-2-3-4 count for the following bar. To summarise, click on 2 and 4 for at least four bars and then count in 1/click/2/click/1-2-3-4 with the fingers continuing to click on beats 2 and 4 in the last bar. Continue this practice for all songs in this model and for the eight weeks of instruction.

Play through the changes at approximately 100mm. Instruct the students to keep the time steady, and to listen for where the changes fall. Get the drums and bass to play through the chord changes without the rest of the ensemble so that they can concentrate on listening carefully to each other, and instruct all other combo members to follow the changes on their charts as this is done. This exercise not only gives the bass and drums a chance to develop a co-operative rhythmic approach, but also enables the other ensemble members to begin to establish aural recognition of the chord changes from the walking bass line. In addition it also allows each student to begin placing his or her own instrument within the ensemble, or in other words listening to the other combo members as they themselves play.

#### Instruct The Frontline To Play Through The Melody

Since this paper is mainly about instructing young musicians to improvise, little time will be spent dealing with the melody. The music for *Take The A Train* is available in many “Real” and “Fake” books, and there are numerous recordings of the tune. Most young frontline players can read the melody slowly, as it is technically quite simple, and need practice and some aural review of the melody to make it swing.

Once the frontline can play the melody, and the rhythm section can play through the changes, the ensemble should play together slowly and accurately, in their group practice of the tune.

## Give Each Player A Chance To Solo

Now that the melody is learned, it is time to give everyone a chance to improvise. Instruct all instrumentalists to solo, but if the bass player is inexperienced, simply allow them to concentrate on walking through the changes. The drummers can take fours<sup>9</sup> if they are comfortable doing so.

Keep the tempo at around 100mm, and let each player solo for a full 32 bar chorus. Help them by reminding them where they are in the tune, if they need it, or by calling out the scale they should be using. As they move from scale to scale encourage the students to sound out the notes that are changing.

For example, in bar 3 where the tonic scale changes from C Major to G Major, instruct the student to play F# as their first note in bar 3. This not only lets them know where they are located in the tune, but also enforces the fact that the difference between the keys of C and G Major is F#. When the tune returns to C Major in bar 5, ask the students to make the F natural their first choice. Keep up this practice for the full 32 bars.

Instruct the students to refrain from playing too many notes, but instead play short phrases and then wait for the next change. The most important thing is for students to know exactly where they are in the tune when they are soloing. Instruct the rhythm section to play the changes while the frontline call out the chord names as they go past. This helps everyone to learn to hear the changes.

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<sup>9</sup> A practice where a musician will solo for four bars, and then all players sit out the next four bars while the drummer solos. This process continues for a full 32 bar chorus.

Most young musicians do not have the aural perception to repeat a theme through modulations. In order to give their solos some continuity, instruct the students to take a short rhythmic pattern and repeat this motif through the changes in key. This technique also helps students remember where they are located in the tune.

Periodically get the combo to stop midway through one member's solo and then ask one of the rhythm section to sing or hum the last phrase that was played by the soloist. If that member is unsuccessful go around the other members of the rhythm section asking them to do the same. Explain to the rhythm section that they are accompanying a soloist and must begin to listen to what is being played if they are to learn to react in a musical and creative manner to an improvised solo. Being able to hear all the other instruments while one is playing is a skill that must be nurtured even at this incipient level.

### Guide Tones

'Guide Tones' is a term frequently used by jazz musicians to describe the main movement between chord progressions. Usually it is the movement between the thirds and sevenths of the chords, but may include other chordal tones depending on the progression or the melody.

If we take a II-V progression in C Major, Dmin7 G7, the third and seventh notes of Dmin7 are F and C respectively, while the third and seventh of G7 are B and F respectively. Both these chords share the F note, so the 'Guide Tone' movement between the two chords is C to B, and it is important for more advanced students to try and sound out this movement in their improvised solos so that the chord

progression is being stated. I have often said to students that they should be able to recognise which song each is improvising over, even though the soloist is playing alone and playing a monophonic solo. This will be achieved much more quickly if the student is playing through the 'Guide Tones' in his or her solo.

Students with little or no experience playing jazz may find the 'Guide Tone' concept difficult to deal with during the first eight weeks of instruction. However, I feel that it is important for students to begin aurally recognising the movement between the thirds and sevenths as soon as possible. This can be achieved by getting all students to write the third and seventh beside each chord on their chord chart, and then encouraging them to sound out these notes in their solos. Such an exercise prepares students for the 'Guide Tone' concept to be introduced at a later stage of their jazz education. I would encourage teachers to continue the process of getting students to write the third and seventh beside each chord symbol for all three songs in this model.

### The Ordered Process For Instructing Students

Once again, remember the ordered process for instructing students:

1. Analyse the chord progression
2. Listen to a recording of the selected song
3. Instruct the rhythm section to play through the changes
4. Instruct the frontline to play through the melody
5. Play the chord progression slowly and give each player a chance to solo

## The Blues

The blues is a black Afro-American song form dating back to the early years of slavery in the southern states of America. As black musicians developed their technical and theoretical skills, so the blues evolved into a more complex musical style.

The early stages of the blues were based around the I, IV, and V chords only, played in a 12 bar form. Yet in the 1940's Charlie Parker composed *Blues For Alice*, also in a 12 bar form, but with a chord progression that modulates eight times in the 12 bars and contains no less than sixteen different chords.

Below is a chord chart for a simple “jazz” blues. As already stated, there are many chord progressions that can be used in a blues, but this is a good example to start with.

B <sup>b</sup> 7	E <sup>b</sup> 7	B <sup>b</sup> 7
B <sup>b</sup> 7		
E <sup>b</sup> 7	E <sup>b</sup> 7	B <sup>b</sup> 7
B <sup>b</sup> 7		
Cmin7	F7	B <sup>b</sup> 7
Cmin7 F7		

**Fig. 17 Chord progression for a jazz blues in B<sup>b</sup>**

As can be seen, this blues is in B<sup>b</sup>, a key most common for jazz musicians as it puts the B<sup>b</sup> and E<sup>b</sup> instruments, trumpets and saxophones particularly, in the keys of C Major and G Major respectively. These keys are usually the keys that young musicians on these instruments are most familiar and most comfortable with.

I have kept to the most commonly used 12 bar form, and made the chord progression quite simple. One of the anomalies of the blues is that the tonic chord is always a dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chord.

### The Blues Scale

The blues scale is the most common way to improvise over a blues. Its sound is synonymous with contemporary music, and can be heard in jazz, rock, funk and of course blues music. It consists of 1,  $\flat 3$ , 4,  $\sharp 4$ , 5 and  $\flat 7$ . So the  $B\flat$  blues scale would be:  $B\flat$ ,  $D\flat$ ,  $E\flat$ , E, F and  $A\flat$ . This scale can be played over the whole 12 bars of the  $B\flat$  blues, and it will sound fine.

### Vertical And Horizontal Improvisation

Once students are comfortable soloing with the blues scale, the concepts of vertical and horizontal improvisation can be introduced. Horizontal improvisation is where a single scale is used to solo over a chord progression. For example: in previous sections I have discussed the II-V-I progression.  $D\text{min}7$   $G7$   $C\text{Maj}7$  is a II-V-I in C Major. If the C Major scale is used to improvise over this progression, one would be improvising horizontally. Solos over a blues using the blues scale, would be improvising horizontally, since a given chord progression and a single scale forms the basis of the solo. One scale used over a progression of chords is referred to as a horizontal approach.

Vertical improvisation, on the other hand, is where each chord is treated individually. Improvising vertically over  $D\text{min}7$   $G7$   $C\text{Maj}7$ , means thinking of the  $D\text{min}7$  as though it were a tonic and choosing a scale or arpeggio to play over it, then approaching the  $G7$  in the same manner and choosing a scale or arpeggio to play

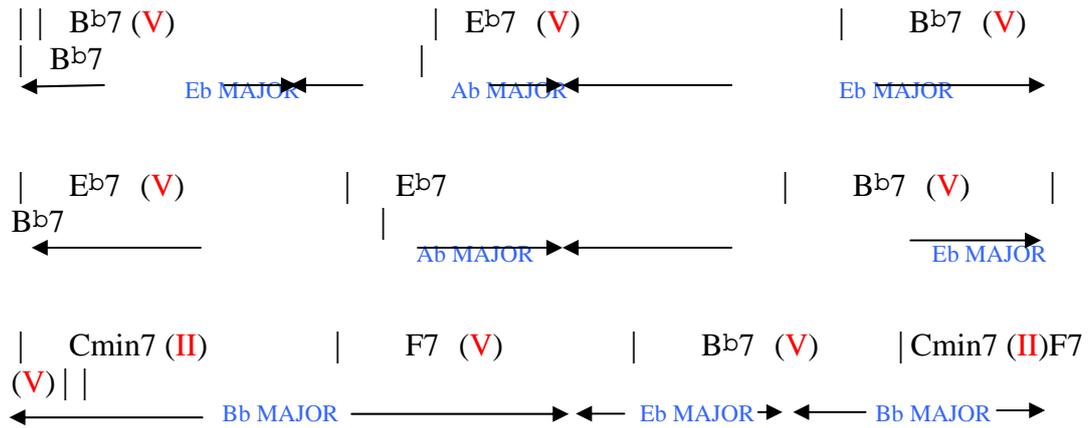
over it, and finally thinking of the CMaj7 as if a tonic and deciding what to play over it.

Both approaches have their strengths. Professional musicians use both horizontal and vertical improvisation, and tend to move from one to the other easily and effortlessly. These are the concepts used to help describe different approaches to soloing over a given chord progression

### Using Vertical Improvisation Over The Blues

Earlier we examined the chordal scale, and discovered that the dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chord is the V chord in a Major key. Most of the chords in a blues are dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chords, so if treated as V chords a different way of soloing over them in a blues is required. This implies a vertical approach to the blues, since each chord can be dealt with individually

Let's take the B<sup>b</sup> blues as an example. The first bar is a B<sup>b</sup>7 chord, which is the V chord in E<sup>b</sup> Major, therefore an E<sup>b</sup> Major scale can be used to improvise over it. The second bar is E<sup>b</sup>7, or the V chord in A<sup>b</sup> Major, therefore the A<sup>b</sup> Major scale is employed to solo here. Bars 3 and 4 are again B<sup>b</sup>7, so once again E<sup>b</sup> Major can be used. Bars 5 and 6 are E<sup>b</sup>7, so A<sup>b</sup> Major is thought of as the tonic. Bars 7 and 8 are B<sup>b</sup>7, so once again E<sup>b</sup> Major is thought of as the tonic. In bars 9 and 10 a horizontal approach makes things simple – the chords are Cmin7 F7, or a II-V progression in B<sup>b</sup> Major, so a B<sup>b</sup> Major scale can be used. Bars 11 and 12 are B<sup>b</sup>7 followed by Cmin7 F7, again the E<sup>b</sup> Major scale followed by the B<sup>b</sup> Major scale is used. This is a way to improvise vertically over a blues, and is directly linked to the chord progression of the tune.



**Fig. 18 Chord chart for B<sup>b</sup> blues showing tonic keys**

When instructing students to improvise vertically over the blues, get them to colour code their charts as done in *Take The A Train*. If students can colour code for all three Major scales used, they will find it much easier to follow the chord progression and to move from scale to scale.

Instruct students to sound out the notes that are changing from key to key. For example as the progression goes from E<sup>b</sup> Major to A<sup>b</sup> Major encourage students to play the D<sup>b</sup> note, the only note that differs between the two keys, as this will sound out the change in tonality. When the tonal centre returns to E<sup>b</sup> Major get the soloist to play a D natural, which shall announce the resolution back to the original key. I also recommend that students write the third and seventh of each chord after the chord symbol, as recommended in *Take The A Train*, and be guided to sound out these notes in their improvised solos, as this will help in this exercise. Teachers can call out these notes as the progression is played to encourage students to sound out the movement between the thirds and sevenths. This is great preparation for the playing of guide tones, as explained previously, when and if the students progress past this introductory model.

Of course one can use both horizontal and vertical approaches when soloing. As long as a sense of place in the form is firmly retained, one can use both the blues scale and the vertical method to solo. This takes practice and experience, since one must develop the ability to move from one to the other effortlessly, keeping a firm understanding of place in the tune at all times.

#### Listen To A Recording Of The Blues

The recordings I use and recommend for the blues is *Sonnymoon For Two* from the CD *Sonny Rollins/Thad Jones*. Zeta 704, 1956/57, or *Cool Blues* from the CD *Charlie Parker: Bebop and Bird*. Hipsville R2 70198, 1946-52. Both songs are easy blues melodies consisting of one phrase<sup>10</sup> played three times per chorus and taken at a medium tempo.

On the first listening get the students to listen once again to the rhythmic feel including the interpretation of eighth notes, the feel created by the bass and drums and the comping techniques used by the pianist. Encourage open discussion on all aspects of the playing, trying to get students to express what they like and dislike in the rhythm section playing and the improvised solos.

During the second listening instruct students to call out the chord names as the progression passes for one or two choruses. If students are up to soloing in a vertical manner get them to call out the parent scales as they pass. This exercise gives students a feel for the chords and develops aural perception.

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<sup>10</sup> One note only is flatted on the second phrase of *Cool Blues*.

Once again I recommend that teachers regularly revisit the selected recordings. Regular listening to the playing of the melodies gives students a much firmer grasp of the swing feel and also gives them a chance to understand the interpretation of the melodies. Listening to the solos of great jazz musicians enhances the students' ability for melodic and rhythmic development, while helping to develop aural recognition of the chord progressions that they have been playing over.

### Playing The B<sup>b</sup> Blues

The rhythm section must learn to play through the blues changes at a steady tempo. Here again is a simple way to allow the piano, bass, guitar and drums to get started.

### The Piano

Once again the pianist can double the chords in left and right hands an octave apart and in the range previously discussed, or play the open voicings set out below.

Doubled Voicings:

Chord	Substitution	Notes
B <sup>b</sup> 7	B <sup>b</sup> 13	A <sup>b</sup> C D G
E <sup>b</sup> 7	E <sup>b</sup> 13	G C D <sup>b</sup> F
Cmin7	Cmin9	B <sup>b</sup> D E <sup>b</sup> G
F7	F13	A D E <sup>b</sup> G

**Fig. 19 Piano chords for B<sup>b</sup> blues (doubled voicings)**

The image shows a piano chord chart for Blues in B<sup>b</sup> in 4/4 time, featuring doubled voicings. The chart is organized into three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system contains three measures of B<sup>b</sup>13 and E<sup>b</sup>13 chords. The second system contains two measures of E<sup>b</sup>13 and B<sup>b</sup>13 chords. The third system contains five measures of Cm<sup>9</sup>, F<sup>13</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>13, Cm<sup>9</sup>, and F<sup>13</sup> chords. Each chord is shown as a pair of notes in both the treble and bass staves, with a slash indicating a repeat of the voicing.

**Fig. 20 Piano chord chart for Blues in B<sup>b</sup> (doubled voicings)**

Open Voicings:

Chord	Substitution	Left Hand/Right Hand	
B <sup>b</sup> 7	B <sup>b</sup> 13	A <sup>b</sup> -D	G-C
E <sup>b</sup> 7	E <sup>b</sup> 13	G-D <sup>b</sup>	F-C
Cmin7	Cmin9	B <sup>b</sup> -E <sup>b</sup>	G-D
F7	F13	A-E <sup>b</sup>	G-D

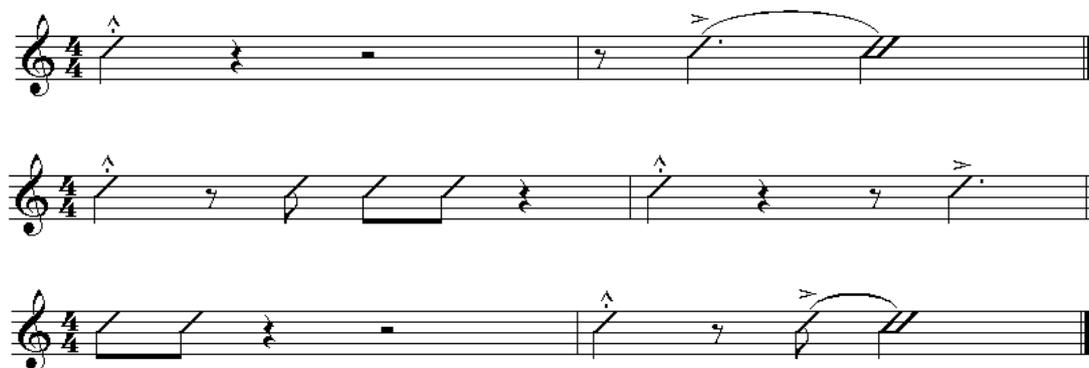
**Fig. 21 Piano chords for Bb blues (open voicings)**

The figure displays three systems of piano chord charts for Blues in Bb, showing open voicings for various chords. Each system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with chord symbols above the notes.

- System 1:** Shows B<sup>b</sup>13, E<sup>b</sup>13, and B<sup>b</sup>13. The first measure has B<sup>b</sup>13 in both hands. The second measure has E<sup>b</sup>13 in both hands. The third measure has B<sup>b</sup>13 in both hands. The fourth measure contains a double slash (/) in both hands, indicating a rest.
- System 2:** Shows E<sup>b</sup>13 and B<sup>b</sup>13. The first measure has E<sup>b</sup>13 in both hands. The second measure contains a double slash (/) in both hands. The third measure has B<sup>b</sup>13 in both hands. The fourth measure contains a double slash (/) in both hands.
- System 3:** Shows Cm<sup>9</sup>, F13, B<sup>b</sup>13, Cm<sup>9</sup>, and F13. The first measure has Cm<sup>9</sup> in both hands. The second measure has F13 in both hands. The third measure has B<sup>b</sup>13 in both hands. The fourth measure has Cm<sup>9</sup> in both hands. The fifth measure has F13 in both hands.

**Fig. 22 Piano chord chart for Blues in Bb (open voicings)**

The inexperienced jazz pianist can use the same comping rhythms as those set down for *Take The A Train*:



Again, as with *Take The A Train*, if the pianist has trouble playing left hand chord voicings when trying to solo over the blues, let him or her solo with the right hand only until he or she is comfortable with the left hand chords. This builds confidence until young pianists can develop the technique of sounding out the harmonies with the left hand while improvising with the right. The practice exercise of playing the left hand chords on four even crotchets to the bar and soloing with the right hand is of value when trying to develop hand separation in young students.

## The Bass

The inexperienced bassist should treat this chord progression as a series of licks. So for B<sup>b</sup>7 the bassist could play B<sup>b</sup>-D-E<sup>b</sup>-E-F-E<sup>b</sup>-D-C or 1-3-4-#4-5-4-3-2 as in *Take The A Train*. For bar 1 and bar 11, or one bar of B<sup>b</sup>7, the bassist could just play the first four notes.

For E<sup>b</sup>7 the pattern E<sup>b</sup>-G-A<sup>b</sup>-A-B<sup>b</sup>-A<sup>b</sup>-G-F or once again 1-3-4-#4-5-4-3-2 could be played for two bars, and just the first four notes for bar 2.

For the Cmin7 F7 in bars 9 and 10, the same II-V lick as in *Take The A Train*, of 1-2-3-5-4-3-2-1 or C-D-E<sup>b</sup>-G-F-E<sup>b</sup>-D-C is recommended. For bar 12 where a split bar occurs with two beats on Cmin7 and two beats on F7, the novice bass player simply plays the root note twice on each chord, or CC-FF.

The image shows a bass chart for B<sup>b</sup> blues in 4/4 time, consisting of three staves of music. The key signature has two flats (B<sup>b</sup> and E<sup>b</sup>). The first staff contains three measures: the first measure is labeled B<sup>b</sup>7 and contains the notes B<sup>b</sup>, D, E<sup>b</sup>, and E; the second measure is labeled E<sup>b</sup>7 and contains the notes G, A<sup>b</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>, and A<sup>b</sup>; the third measure is labeled B<sup>b</sup>7 and contains the notes B<sup>b</sup>, D, E<sup>b</sup>, and E. The second staff contains two measures: the first measure is labeled E<sup>b</sup>7 and contains the notes G, A<sup>b</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>, and A<sup>b</sup>; the second measure is labeled B<sup>b</sup>7 and contains the notes B<sup>b</sup>, D, E<sup>b</sup>, and E. The third staff contains five measures: the first measure is labeled Cm7 and contains the notes C, D, E<sup>b</sup>, and G; the second measure is labeled F7 and contains the notes F, G, A<sup>b</sup>, and C; the third measure is labeled B<sup>b</sup>7 and contains the notes B<sup>b</sup>, D, E<sup>b</sup>, and E; the fourth measure is labeled Cm7 and contains the notes C, D, E<sup>b</sup>, and G; the fifth measure is labeled F7 and contains the notes F, G, A<sup>b</sup>, and C. The chart ends with a double bar line.

**Fig. 23 Bass chart for B<sup>b</sup> blues**

Again if the bassist masters this walking bass line quickly and easily, he or she can begin to substitute other 'licks' over the dominant chords in the progression. Remember that the root note of each chord is played on beat one for each chord

change, and if the chord is played for only one bar, the first four notes of the phrase are played.

Chord Arpeggio 'Licks'

B<sup>b</sup>7 B<sup>b</sup> D F A<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> A<sup>b</sup> F D



E<sup>b</sup>7 E<sup>b</sup> G B<sup>b</sup> Db E<sup>b</sup> Db B<sup>b</sup> G



Chord Scalic 'Licks'

B<sup>b</sup>7 B<sup>b</sup> (jump one octave) B<sup>b</sup> A<sup>b</sup> G F E<sup>b</sup> D C



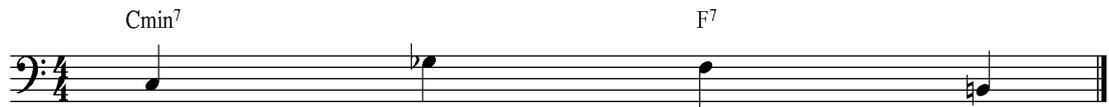
E<sup>b</sup>7 E<sup>b</sup> (jump one octave) E<sup>b</sup> Db C B<sup>b</sup> A<sup>b</sup> G F



**Fig. 24 Alternate bass 'licks' for the blues**

Once again advanced bass students can utilise chromaticism by the technique outlined in *Take The A Train* over the bar that contains two chords. There are two chords, Cmin7 and F7, in bar twelve, so students can precede each root note by the note a semitone above. Thus bar 12 would be C, or the root note of Cmin7, followed by G<sup>b</sup> the note one semitone above the next root note, then F or the root note of F7

and finally the B natural which is one semitone above the root note of the chord B<sup>b</sup>7 that starts the progression once again.



**Fig. 25 Bass line over Cmin7 F7 using chromaticism**

### The Drums

To be effective the drummer just needs to follow the instructions for the swing feel in *Take The A Train* (refer page 19). Once again if the drummer is relatively inexperienced he or she can begin with just the ride cymbal and hi-hat:



then progress to the full swing feel:



I have found that if the drummer has mastered the full swing feel in *Take The A Train*, he or she generally has no trouble in replicating the technique in the blues. It is a worthwhile exercise getting the drums and bass to play through the blues changes without the rest of the combo, concentrating on getting each to listen to the other carefully and keeping the time feel constant. Encourage the bassist to focus on the drummer's ride cymbal during this exercise until each beat in the bar is played evenly.

## The Guitar

The guitarist can comp effectively by applying the instructions used for *Take The A Train* (refer page 20). Once again the guitarist should play all four beats to the bar with beats 1 and 3 long, and beats 2 and 4 short, creating the long-short, long-short effect. Encourage the bassist and guitarist to listen carefully to each other and concentrate on getting all four beats in the bar played evenly. Try getting both musicians to play through the chord changes without the rest of the ensemble, making sure that both students stay together. If the bassist and guitarist can keep the time stable, the rest of the ensemble will find it easier to play their parts with confidence and conviction.

Below is a chart for the guitar with chord diagrams of recommended jazz voicings. Once again if the guitarists are more comfortable playing the chords using bar chords in different positions let them proceed in this way until they feel confident with the new voicings.

The figure shows a guitar chart for Bb Blues, consisting of three staves of music. Each staff contains four measures of music, with the notes represented by diagonal lines. Above each measure, a chord diagram is provided for a specific chord. The chords are: Bb7 (first measure of the first staff), Eb7 (second measure of the first staff), Bb7 (third measure of the first staff), Eb7 (first measure of the second staff), Bb7 (second measure of the second staff), Cm7 (first measure of the third staff), F7 (second measure of the third staff), Bb7 (third measure of the third staff), Cm7 (fourth measure of the third staff), and F7 (fifth measure of the third staff).

**Fig. 26 Guitar Chart for Bb Blues**

Once the rhythm section can play the B<sup>b</sup> blues progression slowly and evenly, the frontline should solo using the blues scale through all twelve bars. When they are confident with this, introduce the more challenging vertical approach and help students by signaling where the tonic key changes are.

### Blues Tunes

In jazz the most common keys for the blues are B<sup>b</sup> and F, so these are the two keys most suitable for beginning instruction. For the B<sup>b</sup> blues use Sonny Rollins' *Sonnymoon For Two*, which is a simple four bar phrase, built around the blues scale, repeated three times. For an F blues, Charlie Parker's *Cool Blues* is relatively easy for students to interpret. Remember that these melodies are to be played in the first and last choruses only, and the real emphasis should be on the soloing. Before introducing a standard blues melody instruct the students to improvise over the blues progression.

Once students are comfortable with the blues in B<sup>b</sup>, introduce the blues in F in an identical manner, and with the same chord progression. The result should be that students are able to change key relatively quickly and easily.

To summarize, the steps taken to instruct students in playing a blues are:

1. Introduce the standard jazz blues chord progression, listen to a recording of a jazz blues and instruct the rhythm section to play the progression slowly and evenly.
2. Teach students the blues scale, and instruct them to solo slowly and evenly over the progression using the blues scale.

3. Introduce students to the concepts of vertical and horizontal improvisation, explaining how vertical improvisation can be applied to a blues.
4. Instruct students to improvise over the blues progression slowly and evenly using a vertical approach.

## The First Bossa Nova

Brazilian music, and in particular samba and bossa nova, has always been popular with jazz musicians. The interesting chord progressions and syncopated rhythms associated with the songs of Antonio Carlos Jobim, Luis Bonfá and Vinícius Moraes have presented varied challenges to the improvising musician.

The first bossa nova tune to be introduced to students, *Blue Bossa*, was not composed by a Brazilian, but by a black American trumpeter, Kenny Dorham. *Blue Bossa* is a simple 16 bar tune that allows novices the chance to become comfortable with the bossa nova rhythm, in a song that is not too challenging harmonically.

Cmin7	Cmin7	Fmin7	Fmin7	
Dmin7 <sup>b5</sup>	G7	Cmin7	Cmin7	
E <sup>b</sup> min7	A <sup>b</sup> 7	D <sup>b</sup> Maj7	D <sup>b</sup> Maj7	
Dmin7 <sup>b5</sup>	G7	Cmin7	Dmin7 <sup>b5</sup> G7	

**Fig. 27 Chord chart for *Blue Bossa***

### The Easiest Approach

The first thing that students must be made aware of is the fact that Latin tunes are not swung. In other words, all eighth notes are played evenly, both in the melody and the solos. Usually this is not a problem for students, as they seem to be familiar with musical styles based on even eighth notes.

To give students confidence and a feel for the song, have the students solo over the changes using just two scales. E<sup>b</sup> Major can be used over bars 1 through 8, and bars 13 through 16. This is not the perfect choice, but students will gain confidence being able to use just one scale for twelve bars. Bars 9 through 12 are a II-V-I progression in D<sup>b</sup> Major, so a D<sup>b</sup> Major scale can be used for soloing. Using just the two scales, students can concentrate on grasping the change of key in bar 9, and then returning to E<sup>b</sup> Major in bar 13.

This approach usually allows students time to think and be aware of their position in the song, and their solos gain fluency and conviction within a relatively short space of time. Once students are comfortable with this approach, it is time to move on to a more thorough examination of the chord progression.

#### Analysis Of The Chord Progression

*Blue Bossa* is written in the key of C minor. As the first chord is Cmin7 or C E<sup>b</sup> G B<sup>b</sup>, we cannot use the C harmonic or jazz melodic minor scales to improvise with, as both contain a B natural in the scale.<sup>11</sup> Instead students should begin by treating all min7 chords as II chords in a Major key. Thus, Cmin7 is the II chord in B<sup>b</sup> Major and the B<sup>b</sup> Major scale is used to solo with, and Fmin7 is the II chord in E<sup>b</sup> Major and the E<sup>b</sup> Major scale is used to improvise with. This method of looking at min7<sup>th</sup> chords is the quickest and easiest way to encourage students to solo fluently.

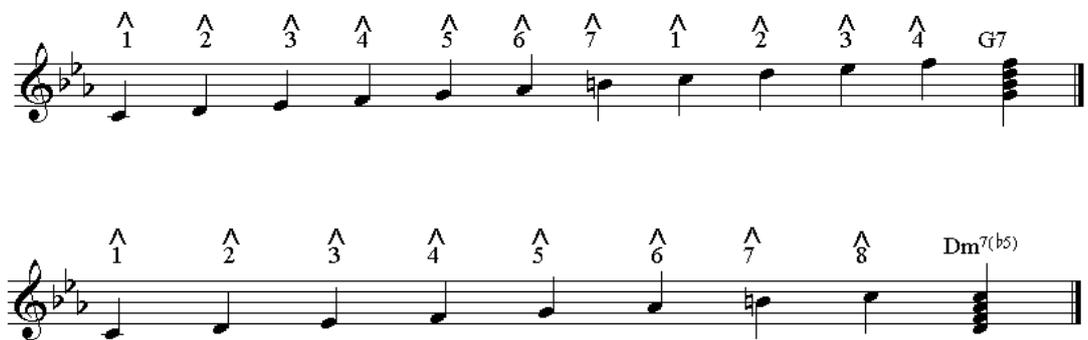
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<sup>11</sup> C harmonic minor is C D E<sup>b</sup> F G A<sup>b</sup> B.

C jazz melodic minor is C D E<sup>b</sup> F G A B. This is the jazz melodic minor scale and is played the same way ascending and descending, unlike the classical melodic minor scale.

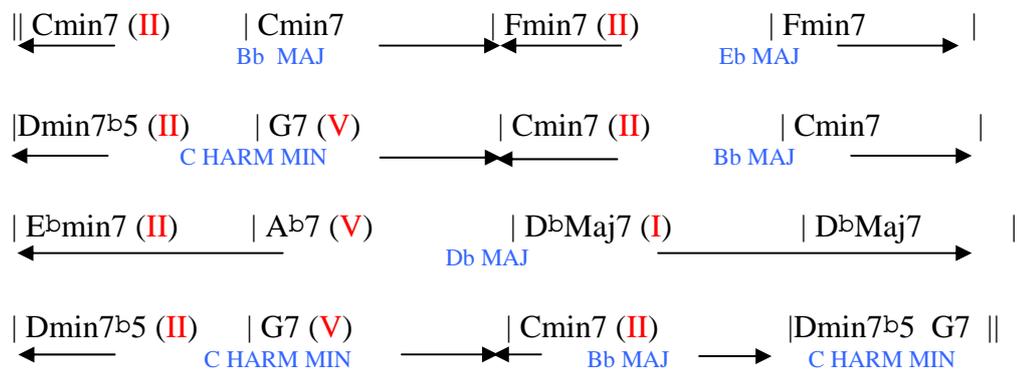
## The Minor II-V Progression

Bars 5 and 6 of *Blue Bossa* feature the chords Dmin7<sup>b5</sup> followed by G7. In an earlier section it was explained how Dmin7 G7 is a II-V progression in C Major. In *Blue Bossa* I discuss the minor II-V progression, by telling the students that Dmin7<sup>b5</sup> G7 is a II-V progression in C minor. Make sure that students understand that a min7<sup>b5</sup> - dom7<sup>th</sup> is to be treated as a II-V in the relevant minor key and that the scale that fits the minor II-V is the relevant harmonic minor scale. Thus, C harmonic minor or C D E<sup>b</sup> F G A<sup>b</sup> B, is the scale to play over Dmin7<sup>b5</sup> G7, or the II-V in C minor.



**Fig. 28** The II and V chords from the C Harmonic Minor scale

Bars 9-12 contain E<sup>b</sup>min7 A<sup>b</sup>7 D<sup>b</sup>Maj7, or a II-V-I progression in D<sup>b</sup> Major (as mentioned above), therefore the D<sup>b</sup> Major scale is the parent scale. Bars 13-14 contain Dmin7<sup>b</sup>5 G7 again, or the II-V in Cminor (use the C harmonic minor scale), bar 15 contains Cmin7 or the II chord in B<sup>b</sup> Major, and bar 16 contains Dmin7<sup>b</sup>5 G7 or the II-V progression in Cminor, therefore the C harmonic minor scale can be used again.



**Fig. 29** Chord chart for *Blue Bossa* showing the tonic keys

BARS	CHORD PROGRESSION	SCALE TO BE USED
1 and 2	Cmin7	B <sup>b</sup> Major
3 and 4	Fmin7	E <sup>b</sup> Major
5 and 6	Dmin7 <sup>b</sup> 5 G7	C harmonic minor
7 and 8	Cmin7	B <sup>b</sup> Major
9 to 12	E <sup>b</sup> min7 A <sup>b</sup> 7 D <sup>b</sup> Maj7	D <sup>b</sup> Major
13 and 14	Dmin7 <sup>b</sup> 5 G7	C harmonic minor
15	Cmin7	B <sup>b</sup> Major
16	Dmin7 <sup>b</sup> 5 G7	C harmonic minor

The scales needed for *Blue Bossa* are B<sup>b</sup> Major, E<sup>b</sup> Major, D<sup>b</sup> Major and C harmonic minor.

Again get the students to colour code their charts so that each of the above scales are clearly visible and students can follow the chord progression more easily. If students can visually recognise the use of the B<sup>b</sup> Major scale in bars 1 and 2, 7 and 8, and 15 they will feel more comfortable following the chord progression. Similarly, if bars 9 to 12 are coded a separate colour students will find it easier to recognise the modulation.

By once again bracketing the third and seventh of each chord after the symbol on the chart, and being encouraged to play these notes, soloists will also find it easier to sound out the chord progression. For example the third and seventh of Cmin7 is E<sup>b</sup>

and B $\flat$  respectively, while the third and seventh of Fmin7 is A $\flat$  and E $\flat$ . If students play the A $\flat$  note as the chord changes to Fmin7 the improvised solo will sound convincing.

So too for the minor II-V progression. The third and seventh of Dmin7 $\flat$ 5 is F and C, and the third and seventh of G7 is B and F respectively. If students can sound out the B note as the chords progress from one to the other they will learn to aurally recognise the subtle change from chord to chord, the corollary of which will be a logical progression to the playing of guide tones as they progress through their study of jazz.

Spend a little extra time at this point quizzing students on Major and minor II-V progressions. Explain to them that the min7<sup>th</sup> is the II chord in a Major key, while the min7 $\flat$ 5 is the II chord in a minor key, and that the dom7<sup>th</sup> chord remains the V chord for both. Ask questions like: What is the II-V progression in F Major? (Gmin7 C7). What then is the II-V progression in F minor? (Gmin7 $\flat$ 5 C7), stressing all the time that the only difference between the two is that the II chord in a Major key is a min7<sup>th</sup>, while the II chord in a minor key is a min7 $\flat$ 5. Also, stress the fact that the harmonic minor scale is the easiest way to approach the minor II-V progression.

## Listen To A Recording Of The Selected Song

The two recommended recordings of *Blue Bossa* are from the Dexter Gordon Quartet, *Biting The Apple*. SteepleChase SCCD 3180 and Joe Henderson, *Page One*. Blue Note 98795, 1963.

Before the first listening instruct students to pay particular attention to the playing of even eighth notes during both the melody and solos. After listening for the first time encourage open discussion on the overall feel created by the rhythm section, the difference in interpretation between *Blue Bossa* and *Take The A Train* or the blues and what other styles of music have a similar rhythmic approach to a bossa nova. Students should feel free in expressing their views on both the individual and group performances on the recording used.

On the second listening once again get the students to call out the chord progression as it passes for a chorus or two. Then get them to identify the modulation to D<sup>b</sup> Major in bar 9. This will make the students feel more comfortable when it comes time to play the tune.

When the complete combo is able to play the melody of *Blue Bossa* and most of the students have had a chance to improvise over the chord progression, go back and listen to the selected recording again to reiterate the points made in the original listening. Concentrated listening at this time will also give students the chance to continue to develop their aural recognition of the chord changes of the tune.

The Piano

Once again instruct the piano to double the chords an octave apart, in the range previously discussed, or to play the open voicings

DOUBLED VOICINGS

CHORD	SUBSTITUTION	NOTES
Cmin7	Cmin9	B <sup>b</sup> D E <sup>b</sup> G
Fmin7	Fmin9	A <sup>b</sup> C E <sup>b</sup> G
Dmin7 <sup>b</sup> 5	Dmin7 <sup>b</sup> 5(b9)	F A <sup>b</sup> C E <sup>b</sup>
G7	G7 <sup>#</sup> 5 <sup>b</sup> 9	F A <sup>b</sup> B E <sup>b</sup>
E <sup>b</sup> min7	E <sup>b</sup> min9	G <sup>b</sup> B <sup>b</sup> D <sup>b</sup> F
A <sup>b</sup> 7	A <sup>b</sup> 13	G <sup>b</sup> B <sup>b</sup> C F
D <sup>b</sup> Maj7	D <sup>b</sup> 6/9	F A <sup>b</sup> B <sup>b</sup> E <sup>b</sup>

Fig. 30 Piano chords for *Blue Bossa* (doubled voicings)

The musical score for piano chords in *Blue Bossa* is presented in six systems, each consisting of two staves. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The chords and their voicings are as follows:

- System 1:** Cm<sup>9</sup> (first staff), Fm<sup>9</sup> (second staff). Both are shown as doubled voicings with a slash in the second measure of each staff.
- System 2:** Dm<sup>7</sup>(b5) (first staff), G7(b9) (second staff), Cm<sup>9</sup> (third staff). The Cm<sup>9</sup> is shown as a doubled voicing with a slash in the second measure of the third staff.
- System 3:** E<sup>b</sup>m<sup>9</sup> (first staff), A<sup>b</sup>13 (second staff), D<sup>b</sup>ma<sup>7</sup>6/9 (third staff). The D<sup>b</sup>ma<sup>7</sup>6/9 is shown as a doubled voicing with a slash in the second measure of the third staff.
- System 4:** Dm<sup>7</sup>(b5) (first staff), G7(b9) (second staff), Cm<sup>9</sup> (third staff), Dm<sup>7</sup>(b5) (fourth staff), G7(b9) (fifth staff). The Cm<sup>9</sup> is shown as a doubled voicing with a slash in the second measure of the third staff.
- System 5:** Dm<sup>7</sup>(b5) (first staff), G7(b9) (second staff), Cm<sup>9</sup> (third staff), Dm<sup>7</sup>(b5) (fourth staff), G7(b9) (fifth staff).

**Fig. 31 Piano chord chart for *Blue Bossa* (doubled voicings)**

OPEN VOICINGS			
CHORD	SUBSTITUTION	LEFT HAND/RIGHT HAND	
Cmin7	Cmin9	E <sup>b</sup> -B <sup>b</sup>	D-G
Fmin7	Fmin9	E <sup>b</sup> -A <sup>b</sup>	C-G
Dmin7 <sup>b</sup> 5	Dmin7 <sup>b</sup> 5( <sup>b</sup> 9)	F-C	E <sup>b</sup> -A <sup>b</sup>
G7	G7 <sup>#</sup> 5 <sup>b</sup> 9	F-B	E <sup>b</sup> - A <sup>b</sup>
E <sup>b</sup> min7	E <sup>b</sup> min9	G <sup>b</sup> -D <sup>b</sup>	F- B <sup>b</sup>
A <sup>b</sup> 7	A <sup>b</sup> 13	G <sup>b</sup> -C	F-B <sup>b</sup>
D <sup>b</sup> Maj7	D <sup>b</sup> Maj9	F-C	E <sup>b</sup> -A <sup>b</sup>

**Fig. 32 Piano chords for *Blue Bossa* (open voicings)**

The chord chart for Blue Bossa is presented in four systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a 4/4 time signature. The chords and their voicings are as follows:

- System 1:** Cm<sup>9</sup> (measures 1-2), Fm<sup>9</sup> (measures 3-4). The Cm<sup>9</sup> and Fm<sup>9</sup> chords are shown as open voicings in both staves.
- System 2:** Dm<sup>7</sup>(b5b9) (measures 1-2), G<sup>7</sup>(#5b9) (measures 3-4), Cm<sup>9</sup> (measures 5-6). The Dm<sup>7</sup>(b5b9) and G<sup>7</sup>(#5b9) chords are shown as open voicings in both staves.
- System 3:** E<sup>b</sup>m<sup>9</sup> (measures 1-2), A<sup>b</sup>13 (measures 3-4), D<sup>b</sup>ma<sup>9</sup> (measures 5-6). The E<sup>b</sup>m<sup>9</sup> and A<sup>b</sup>13 chords are shown as open voicings in both staves.
- System 4:** Dm<sup>7</sup>(b5b9) (measures 1-2), G<sup>7</sup>(#5b9) (measures 3-4), Cm<sup>9</sup> (measures 5-6), Dm<sup>7</sup>(b5b9) (measures 7-8), G<sup>7</sup>(#5b9) (measures 9-10). The Dm<sup>7</sup>(b5b9) and G<sup>7</sup>(#5b9) chords are shown as open voicings in both staves.

**Fig. 33 Piano chord chart for Blue Bossa (open voicings)**

Fig. 34 illustrates a two bar rhythmic pattern that can be applied to any chordal instrument when playing a bossa nova. Instruct the keyboard player to repeat this pattern for the entire tune, using either of the chord voicings above, and it will provide a solid rhythmic accompaniment for the soloists.

The rhythmic pattern for Bossa Nova comping is shown in a single staff with a 4/4 time signature. It consists of a sequence of notes: a quarter note on the first beat, a quarter note on the second beat, a quarter note on the third beat, and a quarter note on the fourth beat. The notes are connected by a slur, indicating they are played together as a single rhythmic unit.

**Fig. 34 Bossa Nova comping rhythm**

## The Guitar

The guitarist should play the chords (using either fingers or plectrum) using the same rhythm as the keyboard:



Below is a chord chart for the guitarist with diagrams for recommended chord voicings. Again if the students are more comfortable playing different chords let them play their shapes and encourage them to practise the new voicings until they are confident enough to try them with the rest of the ensemble.

A guitar chart for the piece 'Blue Bossa' in 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. Each staff shows a two-bar rhythmic pattern. Chord diagrams are placed above the notes in each bar. The first staff shows Cm7 in the first bar and Fm7 in the second bar. The second staff shows Dm7b5 in the first bar and G7 in the second bar. The third staff shows Ebm7 in the first bar and Ab7 in the second bar. The fourth staff shows Dm7b5 in the first bar, G7 in the second bar, Cm7 in the third bar, Dm7b5 in the fourth bar, and G7 in the fifth bar. The diagrams include 'x' marks for fretted strings and 'sfr' for strings to be silenced.

**Fig. 35 Guitar Chart for Blue Bossa**

Note that the bossa nova comping rhythm is written in this chart and that when the chord changes fall half way through the two-bar rhythmic pattern the new chord is anticipated half a beat before the second bar (as in bars 5 and 6, and bars 9

and 10). This makes the change of chord much easier for the student guitarist and can enhance the syncopated effect.

Spend some time getting the piano and guitar to comp the chord changes together making sure that the rhythm is kept even.

### The Bass

The bassist can play a pattern based on the root and fifth of the chord being played. Thus if a Cmin7 chord is being played, the bass will play a C and then a G. If an Fmin7 chord is being played, then the bass will play an F followed by a C.

Below is a table explaining the notes to be played over each chord:

CHORD	NOTES TO BE PLAYED
Cmin7	C to G
Fmin7	F to C
Dmin7 <sup>b5</sup>	D to A <sup>b</sup> (b5)
G7	G to D
E <sup>b</sup> min7	E <sup>b</sup> to B <sup>b</sup>
A <sup>b</sup> 7	A <sup>b</sup> to E <sup>b</sup>
D <sup>b</sup> Maj7	D <sup>b</sup> to A <sup>b</sup>

**Fig. 36 Bass notes over *Blue Bossa* chords**

Each note is played twice to the rhythm below, so for Cmin7:



**Fig. 37 Bossa Nova rhythm for bass**

This pattern can be played throughout each two bar group of *Blue Bossa*.



**Fig. 38 Bass chart for *Blue Bossa***

### The Drums

For drummers who are relatively inexperienced in playing latin rhythms, the full bossa nova pattern can be too difficult for them to begin with. Instead, instruct young or inexperienced drummers to begin with only the ride cymbal playing constant even eighth notes, and the hi-hat on beats 2 and 4:



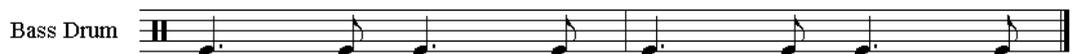
**Fig. 38a Beginner drum pattern for Bossa Nova**

When they are confident with this add a rimshot, played with the left hand, to the rhythm written below, while maintaining the constant eighths on the ride cymbal and the hi-hat on 2 and 4:



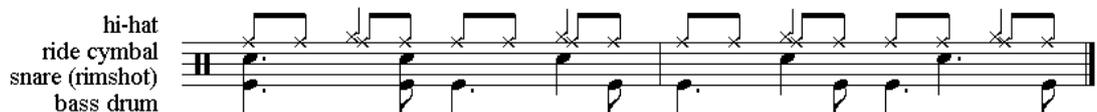
**Fig. 38b Rimshot pattern for Bossa Nova**

Finally, when this is working well, the complete bossa nova pattern can be introduced by adding the bass drum with a dotted croquet-quaver rhythm, played continuously:



**Fig. 38c Bass drum pattern for Bossa Nova**

The complete pattern would be written as:



**Fig. 38d Complete Bossa Nova pattern for drums**

Once again it is a worthwhile exercise isolating the drums and bass and getting them to play through the chord changes together. Try getting the bassist to listen carefully to the bass drum pattern, as it is identical to the rhythm played by the bass. Encourage the rest of the ensemble to listen carefully to this exercise and identify the chord changes from the bass line. This will improve aural recognition of the harmonies involved and help stop students getting lost during their solos.

As explained in *Take The A Train*, stop the rhythm section midway through one students' solo and ask one of the members to sing or hum the last phrase played

by the soloist. Alternatively, if singing causes some embarrassment among students, ask one of the rhythm section members to clap out the rhythm of the last phrase played by the soloist. If the first student asked fails to be able to do this, keep going around the members of the rhythm section until one can fulfil the task. Explain to students that they are accompanying a soloist and that this is an exercise to help them listen to the whole group as they are playing. Stress the importance of each member of the combo being able to place his or her own instrument in the group and so being able to achieve a good sound balance for the whole combo.

## The Major Modes

Most sources describe the modes as related to their relevant Major scale, and very few explain their use and function in music. To describe a Dorian scale as a Major scale with a  $\flat 3$  and  $\flat 7$ , or a Locrian scale as a Major with a  $\flat 2$ ,  $\flat 3$ ,  $\flat 5$ ,  $\flat 6$  and  $\flat 7$  is not only confusing, but leaves students wondering if they have to relearn all their Major scales with the appropriate alterations – a daunting task to say the least!

Leave the explanation of the modes until students can play the three songs covered thus far. In doing so they are already playing the modes, and it is much easier for them to grasp the modal concept. It is always easier for students to understand a theoretical concept once they can play music built on that concept.

The Major modes can be explained as names given to the seven degrees of the Major scale. For example, the C Major chordal scale is represented thus:

I CMaj7 II Dmin7 III Emin7 IV FMaj7 V G7 VI Amin7 VII Bmin7 $\flat 5$

The knowledge that all of the above chords are made up of notes of the C Major scale, as explained previously, acknowledges that the C Major scale can be used to improvise over these chords. However, technically one must name the scale used after the chord being played. If the rhythm section is playing a Dmin7 chord, the soloist using a C Major scale must name the scale after the chord. Therefore the scale must be some form of D and this is where the modes come in. If a Dmin7 chord is being played and the soloist is playing a C Major scale, they are really playing a D

Dorian scale, as D Dorian is the second degree of C Major or D to D in C Major or D E F G A B C D.

If a II-V-I progression in C Major, or Dmin7 G7 CMaj7, was being played and the improvising soloist was using a C Major scale, they would theoretically be playing a D Dorian scale over the Dmin7, a G Mixolydian scale over the G7 chord and a C Ionian scale over the CMaj7. Despite theoretical modal nomenclature, the student is really playing a C Major scale.

Remembering that any scale must be named after the chord being played, the Major modes are just the Major scales beginning on the different notes of the scale. Here is a table for C Major, listing the notes, chords and modes:

DEGREE	CHORD	MODE	SCALE
1. C	CMaj7	Ionian	C to C
2. D	Dmin7	Dorian	D to D
3. E	Emin7	Phrygian	E to E
4. F	FMaj7	Lydian	F to F
5. G	G7	Mixolydian	G to G
6. A	Amin7	Aeolian	A to A
7. B	Bmin7 <sup>b5</sup>	Locrian	B to B

**Fig. 39 Modes of the C Major scale**

If playing a Dmin7 G7 CMaj7 FMaj7, or II-V-I-IV progression, and using a C Major scale to improvise with, one would actually be playing a D Dorian scale, then a G Mixolydian scale, then a C Ionian scale, followed by an F Lydian scale, as

these chords were passing, since the underlying chord dictates the scale form used over it.

If playing Emin7 Amin7 Dmin7 G7 and using a C Major scale to solo, one would be playing a III-VI-II-V progression in C Major and using an E Phrygian scale over the Emin7, an A Aeolian scale over the Amin7, a D Dorian scale over the Dmin7, and a G Mixolydian scale over the G7.

The modes can also be used to name chords. Thus, the Dorian chord in C Major is Dmin7, the Phrygian chord is Emin7, the Lydian chord is FMaj7 etc.

For a further example, examine the key of E<sup>b</sup> Major:

DEGREE	CHORD	MODE	SCALE
1. E <sup>b</sup>	E <sup>b</sup> Maj7	Ionian	E <sup>b</sup> to E <sup>b</sup> (with B <sup>b</sup> , E <sup>b</sup> , A <sup>b</sup> )
2. F	Fmin7	Dorian	F to F (with B <sup>b</sup> , E <sup>b</sup> , A <sup>b</sup> )
3. G	Gmin7	Phrygian	G to G (with B <sup>b</sup> , E <sup>b</sup> , A <sup>b</sup> )
4. A <sup>b</sup>	A <sup>b</sup> Maj7	Lydian	A <sup>b</sup> to A <sup>b</sup> (with B <sup>b</sup> , E <sup>b</sup> , A <sup>b</sup> )
5. B <sup>b</sup>	B <sup>b</sup> 7	Mixolydian	B <sup>b</sup> to B <sup>b</sup> (with B <sup>b</sup> , E <sup>b</sup> , A <sup>b</sup> )
6. C	Cmin7	Aeolian	C to C (with B <sup>b</sup> , E <sup>b</sup> , A <sup>b</sup> )
7. D	Dmin7 <sup>b</sup> 5	Locrian	D to D (with B <sup>b</sup> , E <sup>b</sup> , A <sup>b</sup> )

**Fig. 40 Modes of the E<sup>b</sup> Major scale**

The Dorian chord in E<sup>b</sup> is Fmin7, and the Dorian scale is F to F in E<sup>b</sup> Major. The Locrian chord is Dmin7<sup>b</sup>5, and the Locrian scale is D to D in E<sup>b</sup> Major. If playing a Gmin7 Cmin7 Fmin7 B<sup>b</sup>7 E<sup>b</sup>Maj7 chord progression, and using the E<sup>b</sup> Major scale with which to improvise, one would be playing a III-VI-II-V-I progression in E<sup>b</sup> Major, and thus would actually be playing a G Phrygian scale over the Gmin7, a C

Aeolian scale over the Cmin7, an F Dorian scale over the Fmin7, a B<sup>b</sup> Mixolydian scale over the B<sup>b</sup>7, and an E<sup>b</sup> Ionian scale over the E<sup>b</sup>Maj7. In reality all these scales are simply E<sup>b</sup> Major, but as the scale must be named after the chord being used, so it is common to give them the names of the modes.

### Why Learn The Modes?

With most serious young jazz musicians now being familiar with music notation, using the names of the modes is a convenient way to discuss the chordal scale and to venture into the realm of modal composition and improvisation. If a teacher refers to the Mixolydian chord in D Major, and students recognise this to be A7, or the teacher instructs students to treat an Amin7 chord as a Dorian, and the students immediately know to treat this Amin7 as the II chord in G Major, jazz musicians then have a precise and convenient way to refer to the degrees of the Major scales. It is important to stress to students that the Major modes are a method of naming the scale being used after the chord being played. They are Major scales beginning on the different degrees of the parent or tonic scale.

## Quiz The Students

After explaining the modes to students, spend some time over the next couple of weeks quizzing them on the modes so that they will become more comfortable with the concept. Questions such as:

QUESTION	ANSWER
Name the Dorian chord in G Major.	Amin7
If I play an A Mixolydian scale, which is the prevailing Major key?	D Major
What is the Lydian chord in F Major?	B <sup>b</sup> Maj7
What is the parent scale of F <sup>#</sup> Locrian?	G Major
If a Dmin7 chord acts as an Aeolian, which Major key is the parent scale?	F Major
What is the Mixolydian chord in E <sup>b</sup> Major?	B <sup>b</sup> 7

## Timetabling Classes, Teaching a Repertoire and Aural Development

### Timetabling

This model has been developed for a twelve-hour instruction period consisting of bi-weekly classes of forty-five minutes or one weekly class of ninety minutes over an eight-week period. The rate of progress will vary slightly according to the age, experience and abilities of the students; however below I have presented a class timetable which, over the time that the model has been developed, is representative of the rate at which the concepts could be presented to an ensemble with limited musical experience and of average ability. The timetable presented below is for two weekly classes of forty-five minutes, but if one weekly class of ninety minutes is to be taught simply plan to teach two classes at one time.

CLASS 1: 'The Language of Chords'	Introduction to the construction of chords, the Major chordal scale and the II-V-I progression.
CLASS 2: 'The First Tune'	Analyse the chord progression of <i>Take The A Train</i> ; listen to a recording; instruct the rhythm section to play through the changes; instruct the frontline in the interpretation of the melody.
CLASS 3: 'The First Tune'	Quiz the students on the Major

chordal scale; go over the analysis of the chord progression of 'Take The A Train'; get the rhythm section and frontline to play the melody together; give each student a chance to solo.

#### CLASS 4: 'The First Tune'

Quiz the students on the Major chordal scale; get the whole ensemble to play 'Take The A Train' slowly and evenly giving each student a chance to solo; be prepared to stop and repeat certain sections of the tune for those soloists who are having difficulty.

#### CLASS 5: 'The Blues'

Introduce the students to the blues scale; listen to a recording; instruct the rhythm section how to play through the blues chord progression; choose a simple blues melody for the frontline to play and help with the interpretation and phrasing of the chosen melody.

#### CLASS 6: 'The Blues'

Instruct the students in playing the blues; give each student a chance to solo using the blues scale; introduce

the concepts of vertical and horizontal improvisation.

CLASS 7: 'The First Tune'  
and 'The Blues'

Revise *Take The A Train* getting the ensemble to play the melody slowly and evenly and then giving each player a chance to solo; play the blues slowly and evenly giving each student a chance to solo using the blues scale.

CLASS 8: 'The Blues'

Quiz the students on the Major chordal scale; re-introduce the students to the concepts of vertical and horizontal improvisation; get the students to play the blues using the blues scale (horizontal improvisation) to solo, then get them to improvise using vertical improvisation.

CLASS 9: 'The First Tune'  
and 'The Blues'

Spend the class revising both *Take The A Train* and the blues; encourage students to use rhythmic motifs in their solos; be prepared to repeat sections of the two tunes if students are having difficulty.

CLASS 10: 'The First Bossa Nova'	Introduce students to 'Blue Bossa'; instruct the rhythm section in playing the bossa nova feel, getting them to play through the changes of 'Blue Bossa' slowly and evenly; instruct the frontline in the interpretation of the melody of the song.
CLASS 11: 'The First Bossa Nova'	Analyse the chord progression of <i>Blue Bossa</i> ; listen to a recording; get the ensemble to play through <i>Blue Bossa</i> giving all students a chance to solo using the easiest approach; introduce students to the minor II-V chord progression.
CLASS 12: 'The First Bossa Nova' and 'The Blues'	Start by getting the students to revise the blues; play <i>Blue Bossa</i> getting students to solo using the easiest approach; continue playing 'Blue Bossa' getting students to solo using the scales introduced in the chordal analysis.
CLASS 13: 'The First Bossa Nova' and <i>Take The A Train</i>	Revise <i>Take The A Train</i> by getting students to play slowly and evenly; play <i>Blue Bossa</i> concentrating on the minor II-V progression.

CLASS 14: 'The Major Modes'

Quiz the students on the Major chordal scale and minor II-V progression; introduce students to the Major modes using examples taken from the three songs played.

CLASS 15: 'The First Tune', 'The Blues' and 'The First Bossa Nova'

Quiz students on the Major modes; revise all three songs addressing any problems that students may have.

CLASS 16: Revision

Revise all theoretical concepts; have students play all three songs and celebrate their experience.

## Teaching a Repertoire

Professional jazz musicians are generally familiar with a repertoire of jazz standards so that they can play together without notated music and improvise freely over the chord progressions of these tunes. Encourage students to memorize the chord progressions of the three songs treated in this study and always come back and play these tunes concurrent with new songs being learned. This allows students a chance to develop and memorize their own repertoire so that they can be confident playing with other musicians and enjoying the art of playing jazz.

Once students can play the three tunes selected, introduce the following songs in the order listed below. These tunes are graded in order of difficulty and each will offer new challenges to students without presenting insurmountable problems. Introduce the songs using the technique used in previous sections:

1. Analyse the chord progression
2. Instruct the rhythm section to play through the changes
3. Instruct the frontline to play the melody
4. Allow each player a chance to solo over the chord progression

### A Graded Repertoire

1. *Mr. PC* by John Coltrane – A minor blues in C minor with a very similar chord progression to *Blue Bossa*, but played with a swing feel.
2. *Out Of Nowhere* by Green/Heyman – A swing standard that stays in each new key for at least two bars before modulating, which gives students time to settle into each new key.

3. *Footprints* by Wayne Shorter – A 6/8 modal song in C minor. *Footprints* has a catchy repetitive bass line and a chord progression once again quite similar to *Blue Bossa*.
4. *Now's The Time* by Charlie Parker – A lively blues in F Major.
5. *Little Boat (O Barquinho)* by Boscoli/Menescal – A sixteen bar bossa nova that is basically a four bar chord progression that descends in tones. Great for working on minor 2-5 progressions.
6. *There Will Never Be Another You* by Warren/Gordon – Another swing standard that modulates through the most common keys of IV, V and VI.

All of these songs can be found in most “Real” and “Fake” books available on the commercial market.

#### Aural Development

This model for instruction has been developed with a view to introducing jazz to student musicians over one school term. It deals solely with the performance aspects of the ensemble and making students familiar with three aspects of the jazz repertoire, that is a jazz standard, a blues and a bossa nova. Ideally the model should be taught with an aural development program that gives students a chance to improve their recognition of intervals, chords, rhythms and chord progressions. There are numerous aural development methods on the market, which are more than adequate in improving student’s aural skills, and most music teachers have developed their own methods for teaching aural development that may or may not include commercial texts and or computer software. However, below are two of the resources that I have used with students over the years and would recommend to any

music teacher. If extra classroom time is available I would suggest that the teacher use one or more of these, or similar methods as an aid to improving student's aural skills, so that eventually they will be able to hear where they are in each of the tunes introduced, and to hear their improvised lines before they are played. This should be a goal for each student of jazz.

*AURALIA: Complete Ear Training for All Musicians* (1996-2003). Copyright: Rising Software.

*Auralia* is a computer program that includes recognition of intervals, scales, chords, rhythm, pitch and melodies. The student can choose which area of training he or she would like to develop and then work their own way through a series of graded exercises. *Auralia* can be adapted to cater for all students from beginner to advanced.

*Musicianship & Aural Training for the Secondary School. Music Group Performance (Units 1 to 4)* (Smith 2002).

Developed specifically for the Victorian Certificate of Education music syllabus units 1-4, this book/CD set has a student and teacher edition so that students can work alone on the exercises or have them set as homework by the teacher. There are eight sections including scales and keys, intervals, melody, chords, chord progressions, rhythm, singing, worksheets and practice exams. Smiths' book not only covers aural development but also delivers a guide to general musicianship as new exercises are introduced. This method is designed to cover two years of classroom instruction, but any of the exercises could be used in any order or at any time. *Musicianship & Aural Training for the Secondary School* is an excellent resource for any music teacher.

#### 4. EVALUATION

The process of evaluation of the success of the teaching model has been undertaken by following the progress of four separate Year 11 classes as they are taken through the model over an eight-week period. The students needed to be evaluated on three separate levels: performance, knowledge and student perception of success.

As the model is experiential by nature, filming each of the ensembles at two-week intervals and viewing the separate performances as students progress through the repertoire introduced in the model, can ascertain the musical progress of all four ensembles. As one of the principal aims of the project is to introduce jazz performance to secondary school students, this process enables evaluation of ensemble performance.

Knowing that the instruction is limited to certain aspects of elemental music design due to the constraints of the time frame selected, ascertaining that all students gained a basic knowledge of jazz music theory is essential. By surveying all students at the end of the eight-week period and graphing out their responses to theoretical questions covered in the model, it is possible to evaluate the students comprehension of basic jazz harmony.

Finally, by addressing student reactions to the teaching methodology and the role it plays in their approach to jazz performance, student perceptions to the success of the model and its pedagogical applications can be evaluated. In this way it can be

ascertained that individual students felt a sense of achievement on completion of the classroom method.

Just as there are many instruction manuals for individual instruments, there are also numerous arrangements written for small jazz groups. However, these arrangements do not deal with the improvisational aspects of jazz, nor with the role played by the rhythm section. My model concentrates on the most important element of jazz – improvisation, and teaches all members of the jazz group to begin to understand the practical and theoretical skills needed for improvisation. In the DVDs accompanying this document, notice how quickly students wholeheartedly approach their turn to improvise while taking their music very seriously. All students, after the initial explanation of chordal theory, are keen to try improvising and all members of the rhythm section do their best to support and enhance the solos taken.

The model also consists of a detailed approach to the introduction of jazz for those musicians who have had little or no experience with improvisation. An introduction to chordal harmony as well as an analysis of the chord progression of each new song introduced, gives each student the theoretical knowledge to start improvising. Notated charts support explanations of the roles played by the piano, guitar, bass and drums when accompanying a soloist, so that those musicians with reading skills can better understand the concepts put forward. On both DVDs, scenes 8 and 9 show that the rhythm sections in all four classes are able to provide both a rhythmic and harmonic foundation for the improvising soloist on all three song forms.

For the past fourteen years this model for introducing students to jazz has been developed and improved. During this time I have used the model while teaching Year 11 students, who are taking music as a subject, at the research site. Around 100 students have been instructed using the model, with all achieving a degree of proficiency improvising over the three songs used, in an 8-week period.

I began using the basis of this model when taking improvisation classes and jazz workshops at Deakin University between 1990 and 1992. These workshops were made up of adult musicians, numbering around 50, of differing musical experience and proficiency. The model was also used at the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music when taking student workshops in 2002 and 2003. These adult classes have assisted in the research and development of this secondary school model by helping to formulate a classroom method that can be interesting and challenging to musicians of vastly different experience and ability.

Obviously the degree of proficiency reached when instructed in the model is directly proportional to the students' musical ability, application and practice regimen. However, all students were eventually able to play the three songs used, and all were able to make an attempt at improvising over the chord progressions. As seen in the research and viewed in scenes 2 and 3 of each performance DVD, the more proficient a student is on their chosen instrument, the quicker they will master the technical resources needed to improvise over the selected songs. Some students are also much quicker to understand the theoretical aspects outlined in the model.

However, even though the more advanced musicians and the intellectually gifted progressed at a faster rate, at the end of the selected time frame all students

were able to perform in a jazz ensemble and improvise over the selected songs. All four Year 11 classes, comprising students of vastly varying abilities and experience, demonstrate this fact in scenes 8 and 9 on each performance DVD. Of course, progress was dependant on students completing regular individual instrumental practice.

Once the 2003 cohort had completed the eight weeks of instruction and answered the survey questions, an active research process commenced, based around a plan, implement review, modify plan, implement review model. Step one involved reviewing performances on the film and evaluating survey answers. After this it was observed that some students, particularly drummers and bassists, had trouble coming to terms with the concept of numbered chord progressions. In response to this pages of the section titled “The Language of Chords” were reviewed and rewritten.

Step two was to gauge student feedback on the model and to consult with individual instrumental teachers, professional jazz musicians and classroom teachers. Student feedback can be gauged by viewing the DVD titled “Student Perceptions” made for the International Association of Jazz Education Annual Conference in 2004 and contains interviews with the cohort of 2003 six months after having been introduced to jazz performance with the teaching model. Each target group was consulted to gauge his or her opinion of the teaching model and ideas for improvement. As a consequence more changes were made to the original model by adding choices with piano voicings, including extra bass techniques for the more advanced student and providing diagrams for all guitar chords. By adding the alternate piano voicings, more advanced pianists are immediately able to use the broken voicings used by most professional pianists, while inexperienced pianists will

be more comfortable doubling the chords in both hands which also gives them a left hand voicing when soloing with the right hand. The inclusion of more bass phrases came about in response to the requests of two talented bassists who found little challenge in the original bass techniques. Diagrams for all guitar chords were added as an alternative to the bar chords that most young guitarists rely on and to present an extra challenge to more experienced players.

Step three involved re-working the model as it was introduced to two more Year 11 classes in 2004 and two more in 2004. During this stage the sections “Timetabling Classes”, “Teaching A Repertoire” and “Aural Development” were added as a guide for classroom teachers.

The final step was implementing all research and development with the cohort of 2006. Once again they were filmed at two-week intervals. The delay in the time frame of the filming was due to the fact that term one was only of six-weeks duration, so the final two weeks of instruction took place at the beginning of term two. On completion of the time frame all students were surveyed once again.

Surveys

<b>Year 11 Students – Geelong Grammar School</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Number of Students surveyed</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>
1. Instruments	1 Trombone 1 Alto saxophone 1 Tenor saxophone 1 Clarinet 3 Trumpets 3 Drums 1 Piano 2 Bass guitars 5 Guitars	1 Trombone 1 Flute 1 Clarinet 2 Drums 4 Pianos 2 Bass guitars 3 Guitars
2. Students average age	15.7 years	16.07 years
Average time that each student had been taking formal private instrumental tuition	3 years	3 years

Even though both 2003 and 2006 students had an average instrumental tuition time of 3 years, the 2003 students had far more extensive ensemble experience in concert bands, stage bands and brass bands. This is evident when viewing scenes 2-5 of each performance DVD as the 2003 groups are more settled in their approach to group performance. The 2003 musicians generally possessed a more developed technique on each of their instruments and, as a consequence, found it easier than the 2006 students to begin improvising. However, it should be noted that by week 8, scenes 8 and 9, all 2006 students are playing with much more confidence and conviction.

Throughout the rest of this chapter the results of survey questions 3 through to 13 have been tabled with the data for each year group, 2003 and 2006, and graphed separately so that comparisons may be made and evaluations calculated. Each pair of graphs is followed by a synopsis of the results and a discourse on the outcomes.

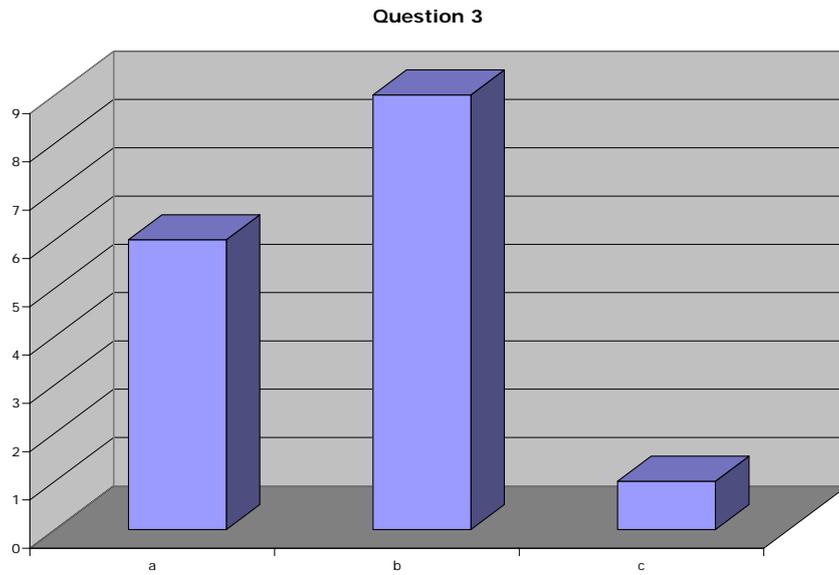
3. When improvising are you aware of the Major Chordal Scale?

Always

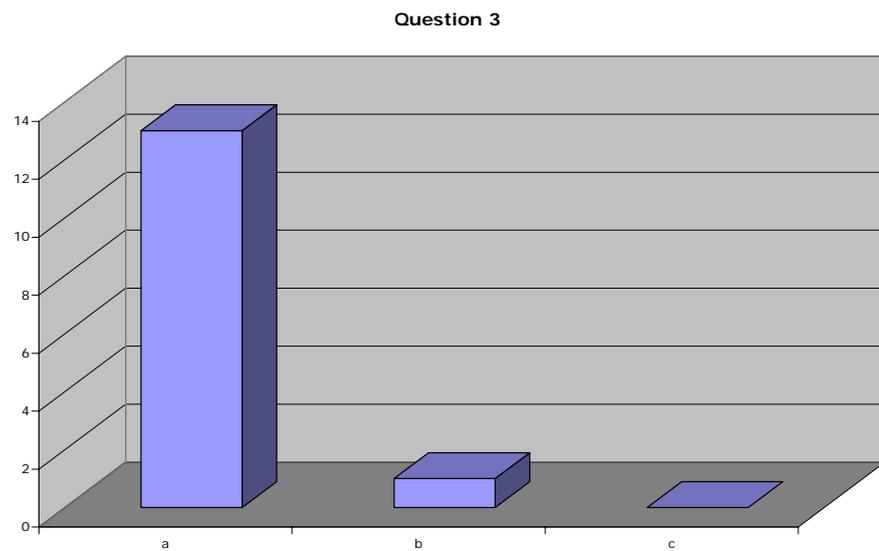
Sometimes

Never

2003



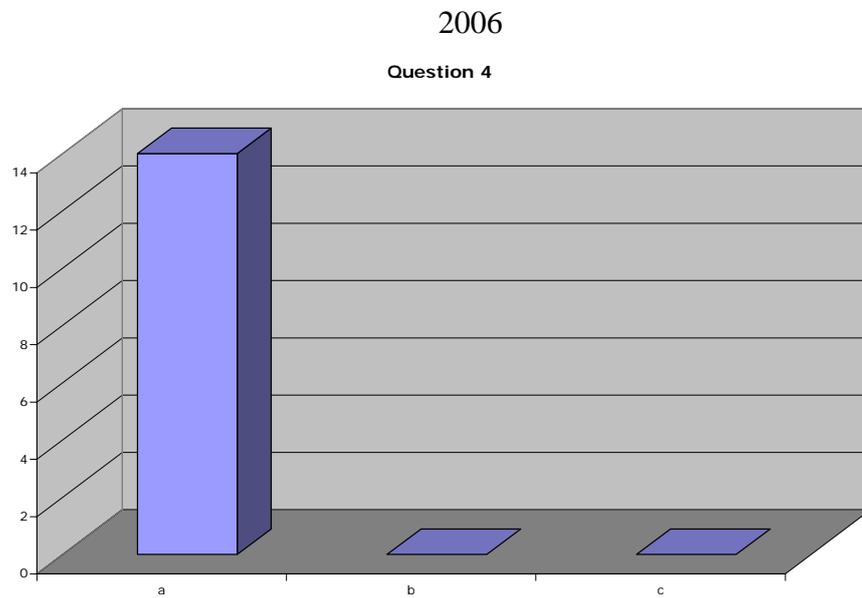
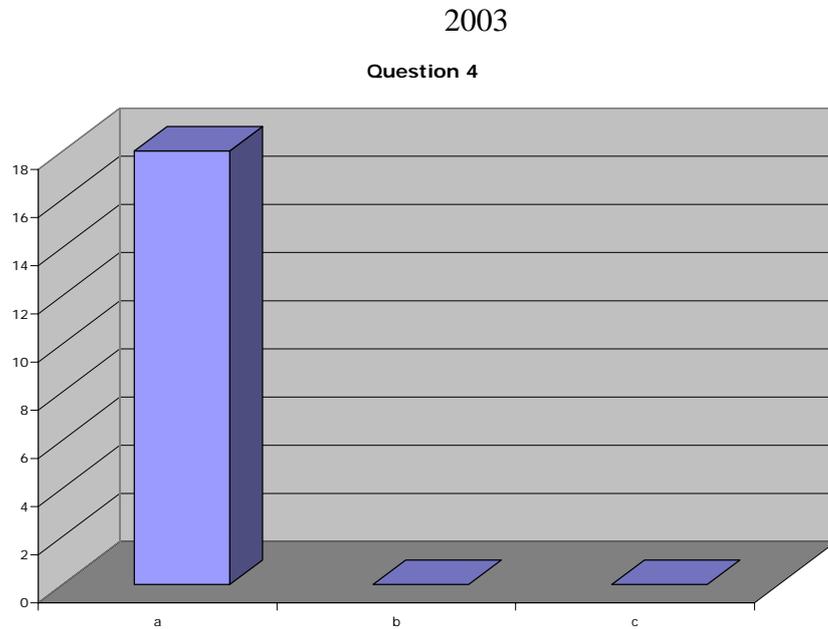
2006



The survey was given to the Year 11 students after eight weeks of instruction. Before this time only one 2003 student had any knowledge of contemporary chordal theory and the rest were unaware of the chordal scale. In 2003, 17 of 18 students were aware of the significance of the chordal scale when improvising, with 33% always aware of its importance. Two students did not answer this question. By 2006 all students were aware of the significance of the chordal scale, with all except one saying that they were always aware of the chordal scale when improvising. When viewing the DVDs it is evident that all soloists become more confident as they become more comfortable with their new theoretical knowledge.

4. What does the chord progression Gmin7 C7 FMaj7 mean to you?

- a) II-V-I in F Major
- b) A modulating chord progression
- c) Unsure

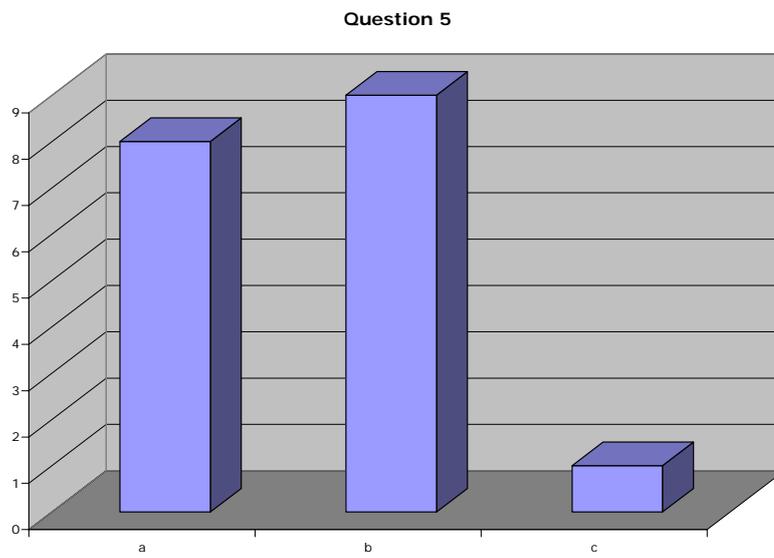


After eight weeks, all students in both years were able to recognise a II-V-I progression, and were comfortable with its application to their improvising skills. Scenes 6 and 7 show students comfortable with this in their playing by week 6.

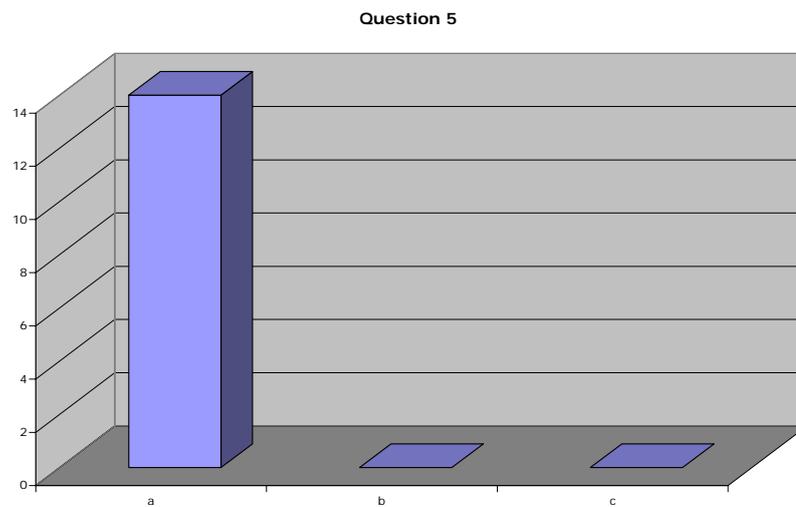
5. Are you aware of numbered chord progressions, i.e. II-V-Is, when you improvise?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Never

2003



2006



In 2003, 17 of 18 students were aware of the chordal scale's role when they attempted improvising, for at least some of the time. This is a high percentage considering that only one student was aware of the chordal scale eight weeks prior to the survey. The one student who was not aware of the chordal scale's role was an ESL (English – Second Language) student and had difficulties with expression of the English language. As a consequence, he had trouble understanding most academic principles in all subjects, but was a fine musician possessing a natural feel for music and came to grasp the theoretical concepts utilised in this model later in the academic year.

In 2006 all students were always aware of the chordal scale's role when they attempted improvising. This is remarkable considering that no student had any knowledge of the chordal scale until beginning instruction eight weeks previously. All students relied on their analysis of the chord progressions to provide a foundation to their improvisations.

Even though a high percentage of students were aware of the chordal scale's role in determining their improvisations, this did not mean that all students were able to utilise the correct scales at all times. As viewed in the DVDs students still occasionally become lost in the song form or played notes outside the recommended scale. Sometimes this was due to technical difficulties and at others due to a lack of theoretical knowledge when applied to their instrument. This was to be expected as the model is an introduction to jazz for secondary students and cannot replace experience in practical application.

6. When playing *Take The A Train*, do you think of the CMaj7 as:

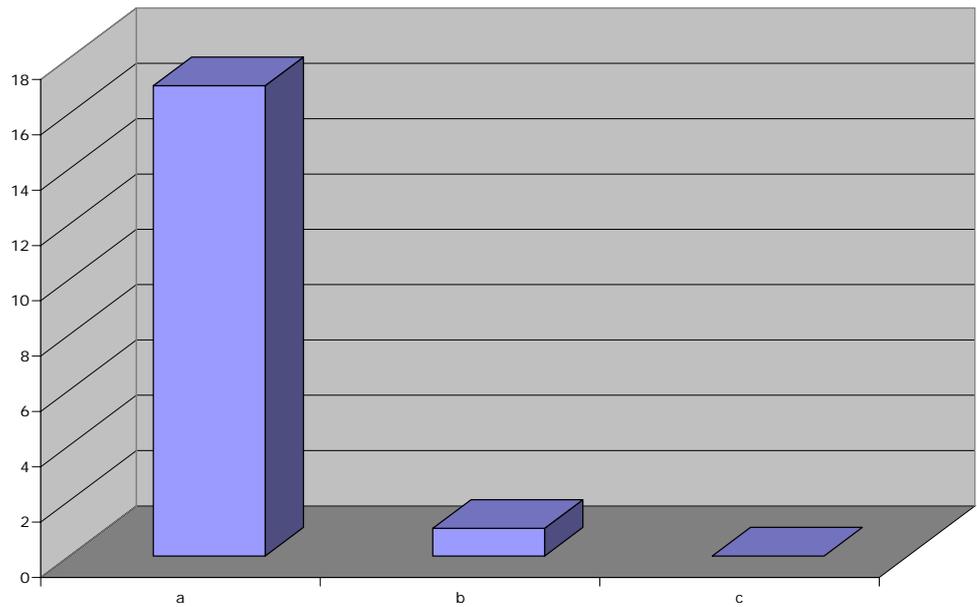
a) The I chord in C Major

b) The IV chord in F Major

c) Other

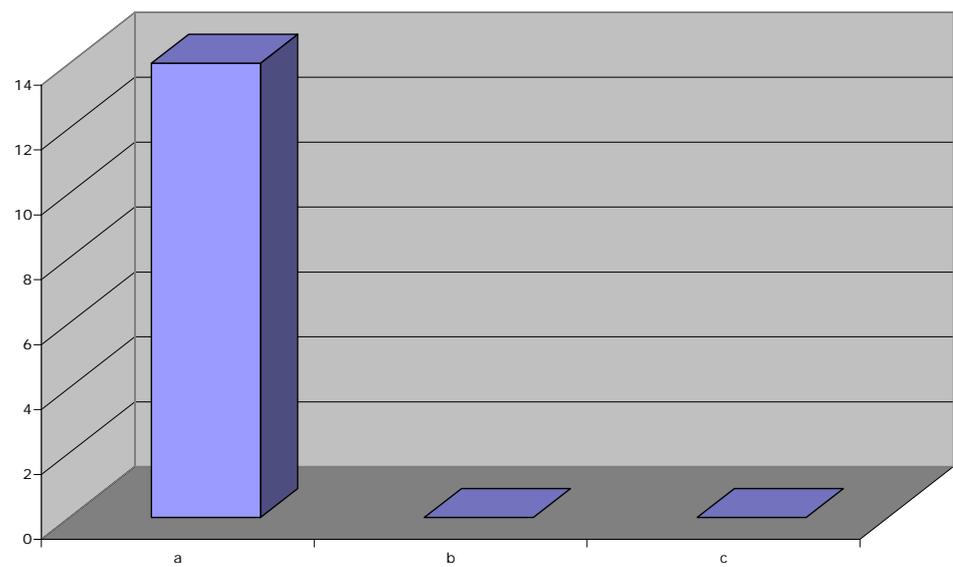
2003

Question 6



2006

Question 6



All students in 2003 except one had become comfortable with dealing with the first chord of *Take The A Train* as I of C Major. Again the one student who was not comfortable with the question was the ESL student. By 2006 all students understood the value of treating the first chord in *Take The A Train* as the I chord in C Major immediately the concept was introduced to them.

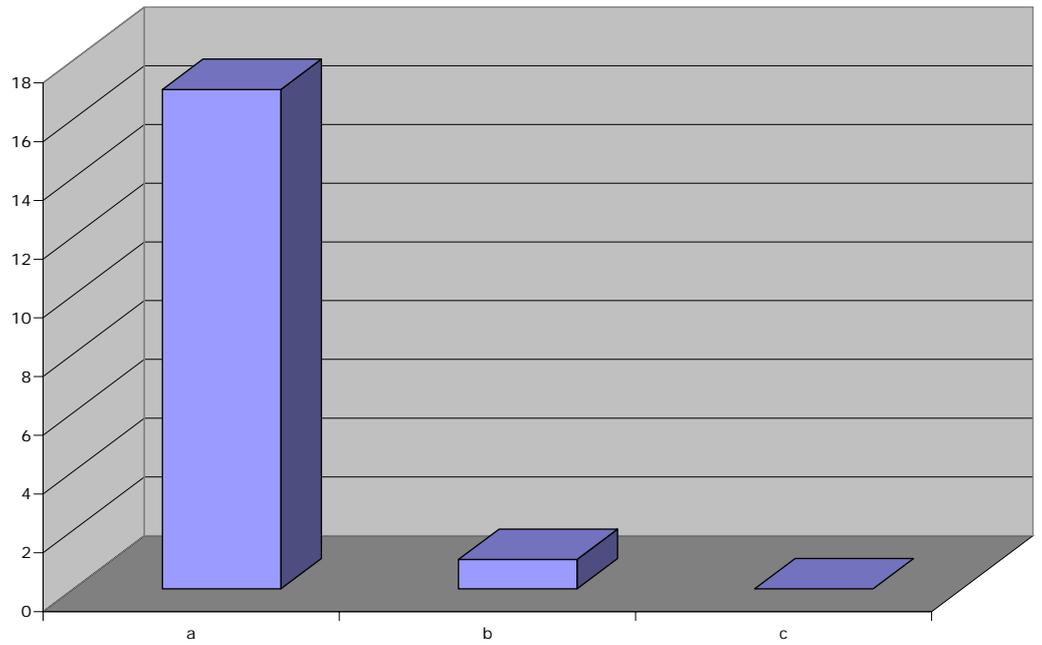
When viewing the performance DVDs it can be noted how each of the soloists lack confidence when playing over the first chord of *Take The A Train* in week 2 (scenes 2 and 3). However, by week 8 (scenes 8 and 9) each of the soloists generally improvises over this chord with conviction.

7. In *Take The A Train* do you think of the Dmin7 G7 as:

- a) II-V in C Major
- b) Each chord in a separate key
- c) Other

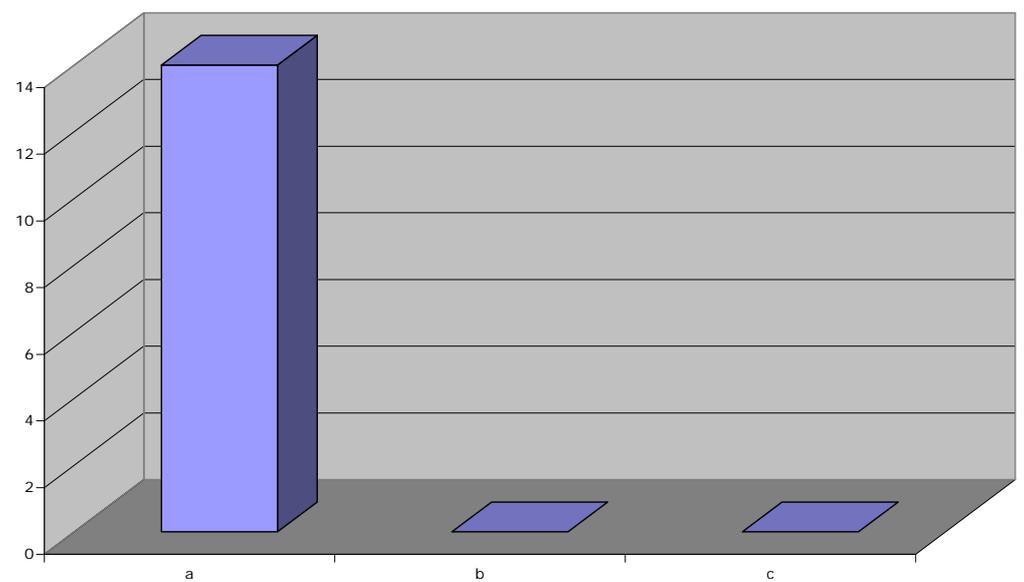
2003

Question 7



2006

Question 7



Once again, all 2003 students but one, and the same student who differed from all others in question 6, had come to use the knowledge given to them in the chordal analysis prior to playing *Take The A Train*. 2006 saw all students able to understand and use the concept of D-7 G7 as the II-V progression in C Major. In eight weeks students had become comfortable thinking of this chord progression in it's numerical form.

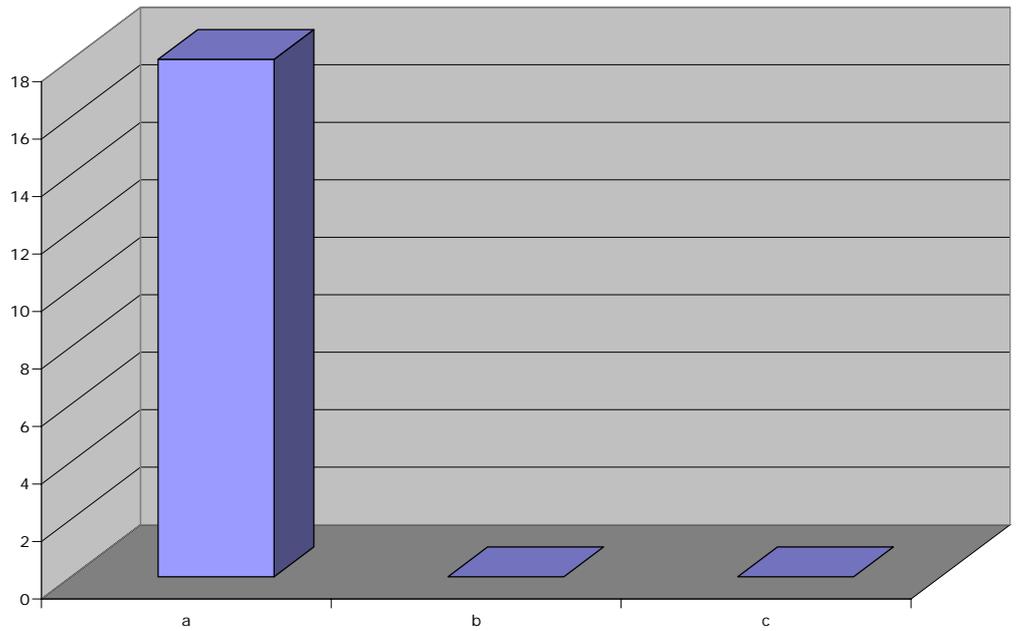
When viewing the performance DVDs growing student confidence as they play over the D-7 G7 progression can be noted from week 2 (scenes 2 and 3) to week 4 (scenes 4 and 5) and finally week 8 (scenes 8 and 9).

8. In *Blue Bossa* do you approach the Cmin7 and Fmin7 as:

- a) II chords in a Major key
- b) VI chords in a Major key
- c) Other

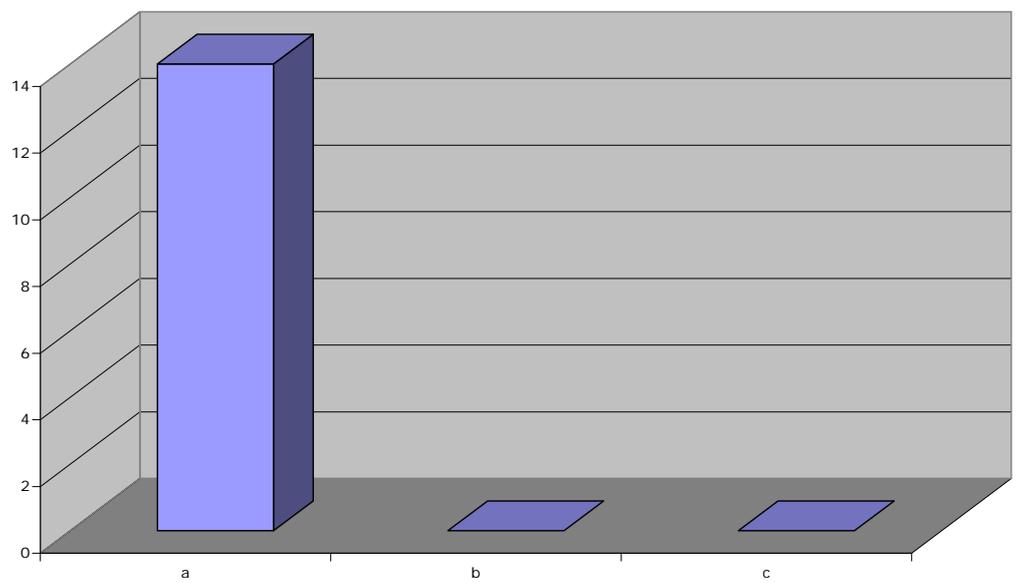
2003

Question 8



2006

Question 8



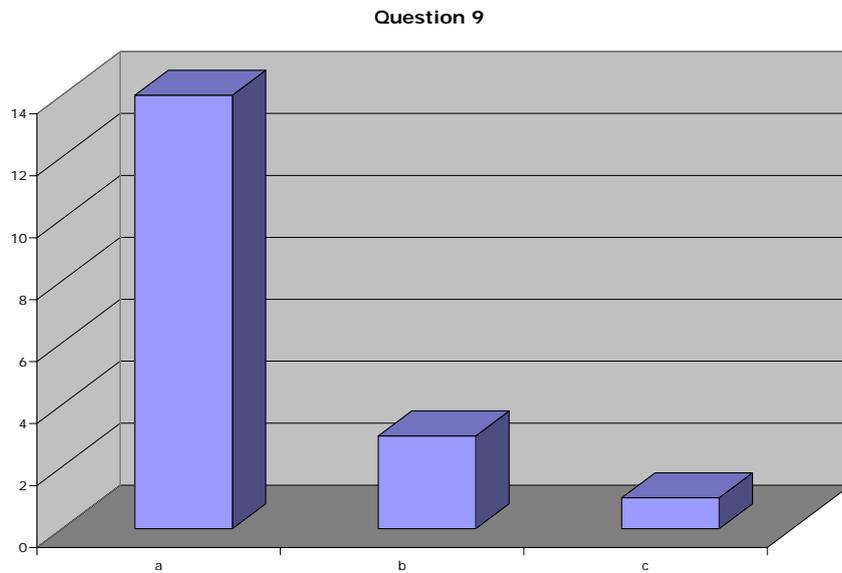
All 32 students had become comfortable with treating the min7<sup>th</sup> chords as II chords in a Major key, a concept introduced to them during the chordal analysis of *Blue Bossa* prior to their first rehearsal of the song. Students felt confident dealing with a key modulation when moving between the two minor chords.

Even though all students had become comfortable with the theoretical concept of treating the min7<sup>th</sup> chords as II chords in a Major key, most tended to stay with the E<sup>b</sup> Major scale over both chords. Even in week 8 (scenes 8 and 9) most students stay with this scale. This presents a disparity with the survey results, but it should be noted that the more experienced and more gifted students were comfortable with the modulation, while those less experienced had technical difficulties changing scales and concentrating on performance.

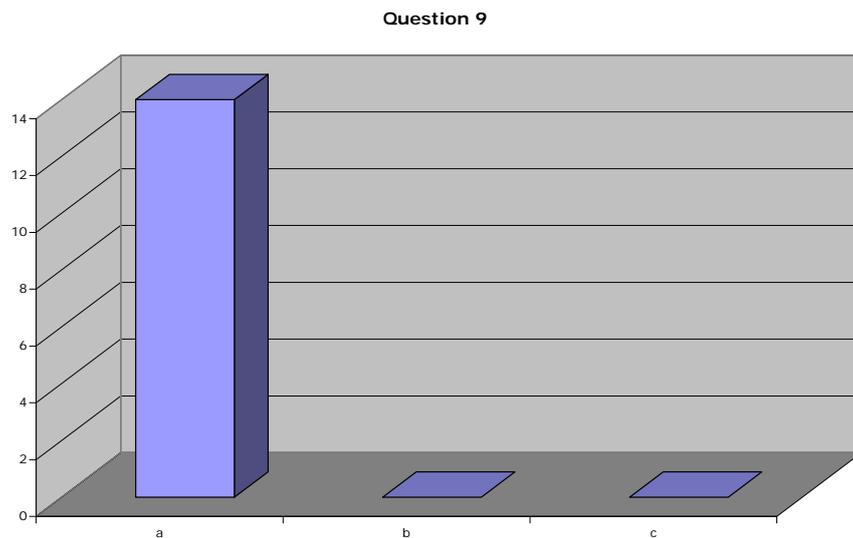
9. In *Blue Bossa* do you approach the  $D_{min}7^b5$   $G7$  chords as:

- a) The II-V progression in C minor
- b) The VII chord in  $E^b$  Major followed by the V chord in C Major
- c) Other

2003



2006



2003 results show that 14 of the 18 students were able to grasp the minor II-V concept, which was a high percentage considering that this was a chord progression

that they had not dealt with in either of the previous two songs. However, by 2006, with revised teaching methods, all students were comfortable in understanding the concept of the minor II-V chord progression by week four, even though some had trouble utilising this knowledge in their performances.

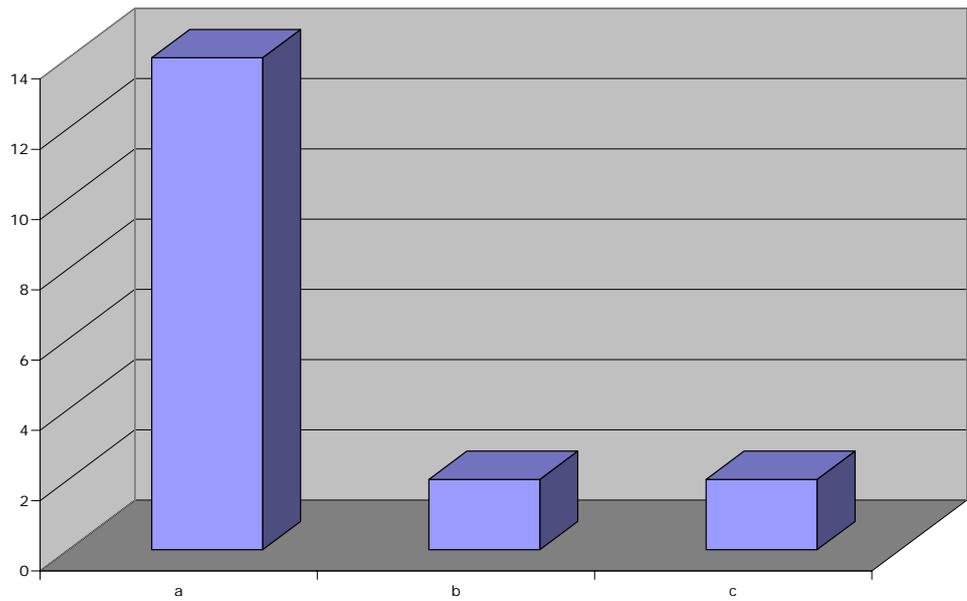
Once again the more experienced students utilised the B natural of the C harmonic minor scale over the minor II-V progression, whereas the less talented students tended to stay with the E<sup>b</sup> Major scale or “The Easiest Approach” (scenes 6 and 7). What was encouraging was that a high percentage of students were able to grasp the concept of the minor II-V progression, which would give them a platform from which to improve their improvisatory skills.

10. When comping in *Blue Bossa* was the latin rhythm shown to you:

- a) A great help
- b) Of some use
- c) Irrelevant

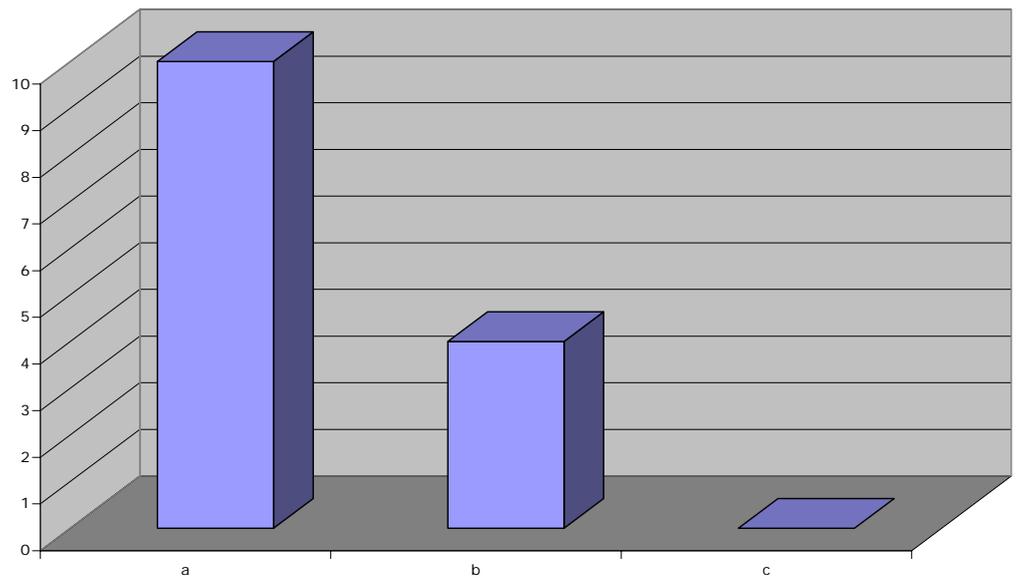
2003

Question 10



2006

Question 10



Nearly all instrumentalists found the latin comping rhythm to be of great help. Once again the results in 2006 were more conclusive due to improved teaching methods, when all 14 students found the latin rhythm to be of help.

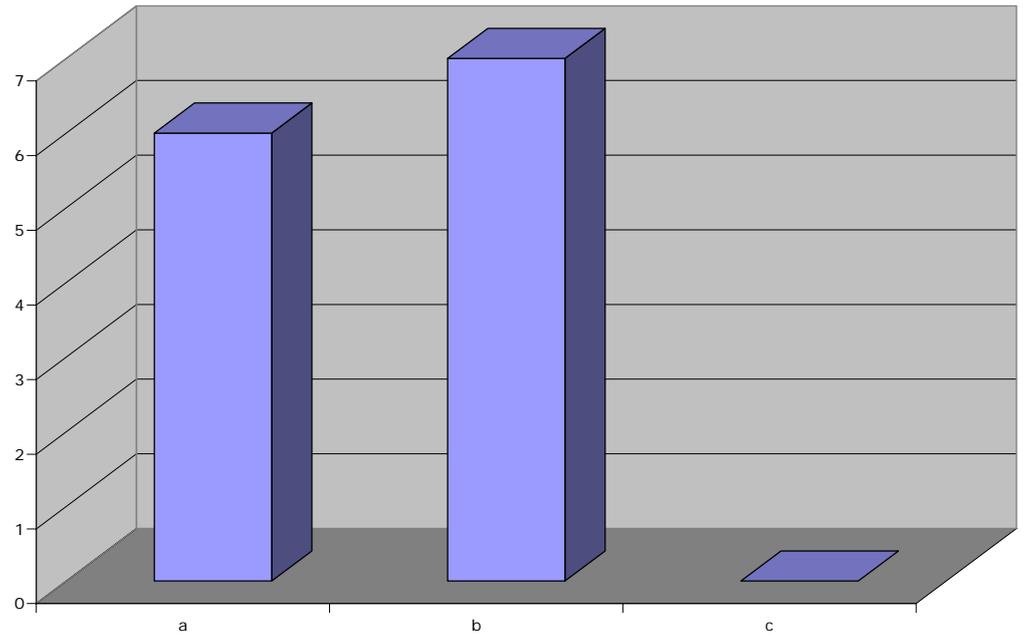
Right from week 6 (scenes 6 and 7), which is the first filming of the students playing *Blue Bossa*, it can be noted that the piano and guitar players feel most comfortable utilising this rhythm in their accompaniment of the soloists and the playing of the melody.

11. In a B<sup>b</sup> blues do you use the blues scale to solo:

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Never

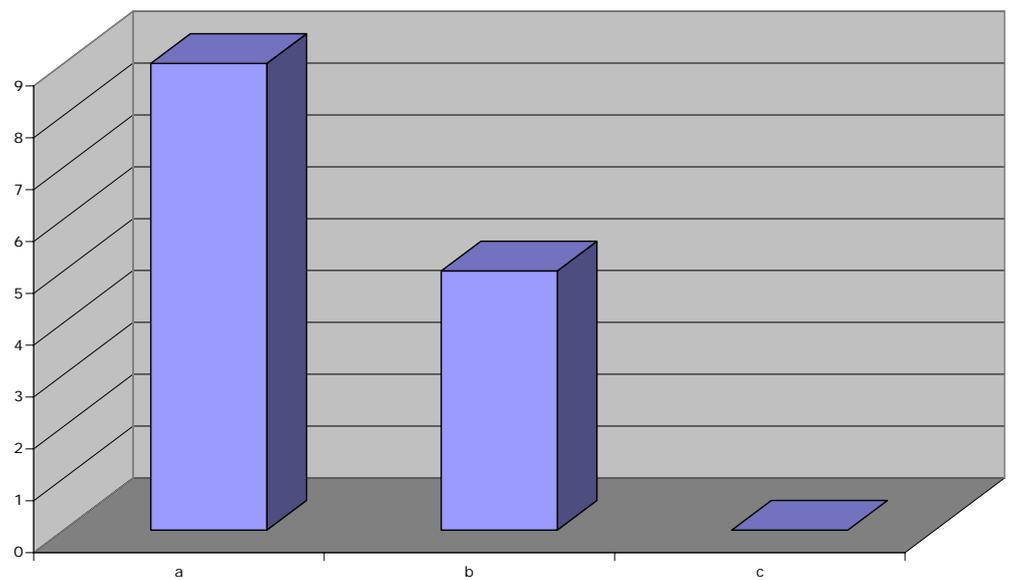
2003

Question 11



2006

Question 11



All students relied on the blues scale at some time to structure their improvisation. This was a predictable answer as many students found it less intimidating keeping to the one scale right throughout their solos. However, 12 students were already experimenting with fluctuations between vertical and horizontal improvisation. For an unknown reason five students declined to answer this question in 2003.

In week 4 (scenes 4 and 5), which is the first filming of the students playing the blues, it can be noted that all students use only the blues scale to improvise.

12. In a blues do you ever treat the dom7<sup>th</sup> chords as V chords in a Major key:

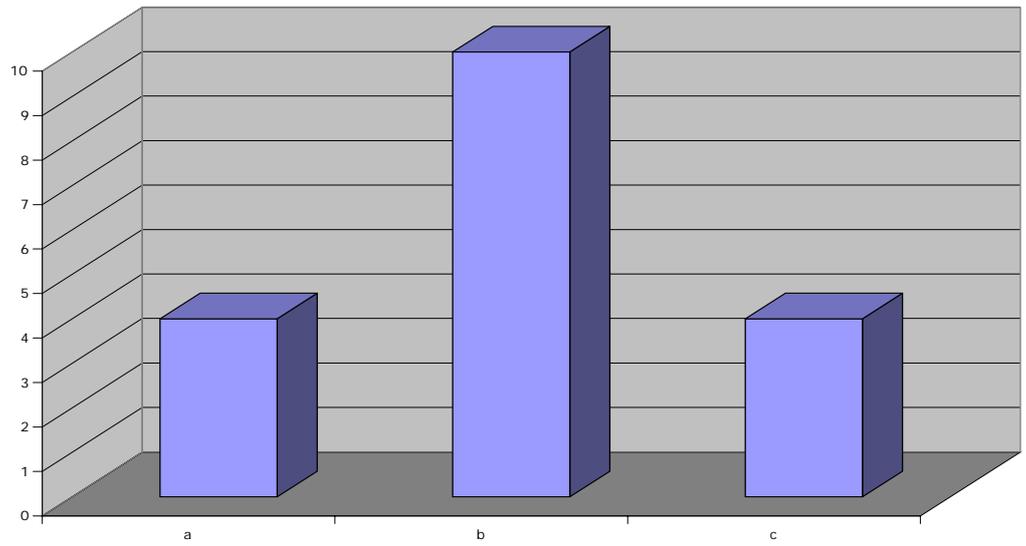
a) Always

b) Sometimes

c) Never

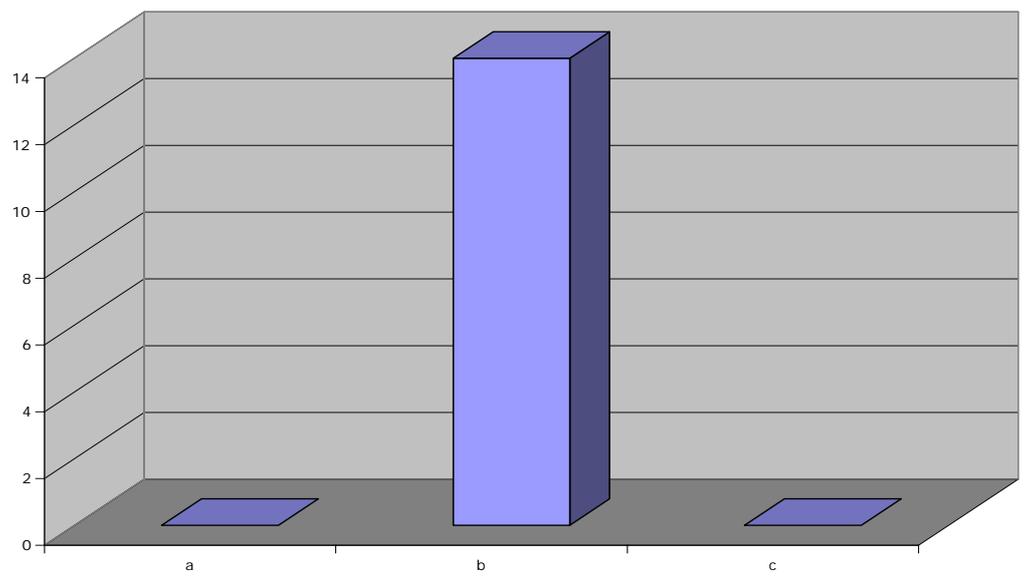
2003

Question 12



2006

Question 12



In 2003, 14 students had attempted the second approach to the blues, with 4 using this approach all the time. By 2006 all students made an attempt to treat the dom7<sup>th</sup> chords as V chords in a Major key at some time during their improvised solos. No student tried this approach constantly, but as supported by the answers to question 11, each student attempted at some period of time to incorporate this approach with consistent use of the blues scale. An interesting result as the 2003 students were generally more experienced with group performance.

In week 6 (scenes 6 and 7) and week 8 (scenes 8 and 9) the more advanced students can be heard trying to regularly use the relevant Major scales to solo over the blues. Most students can be heard trying this concept with varying effect while some tend to concentrate mainly on the blues scale.

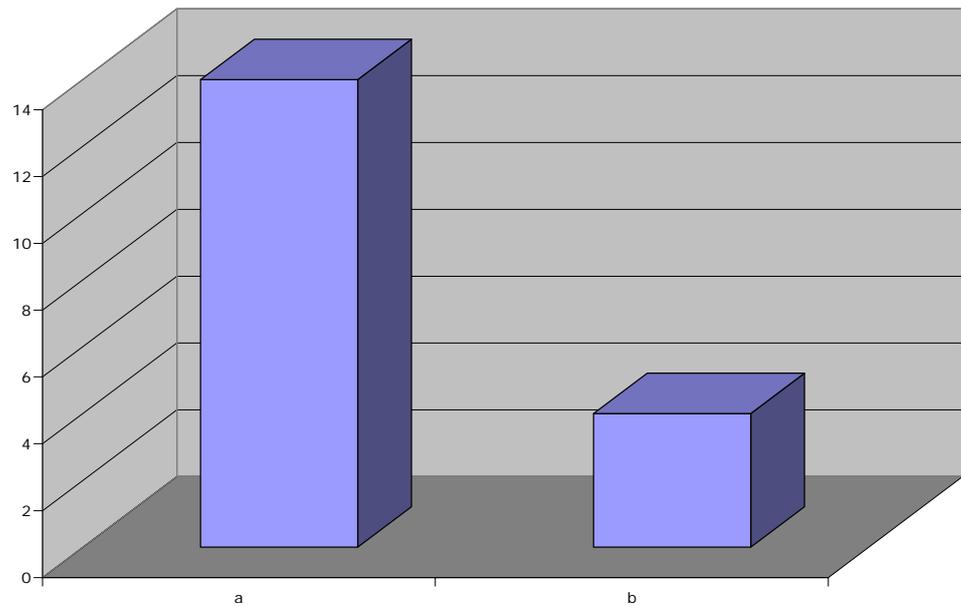
13. Were you aware of both approaches:

a) Yes

b) No

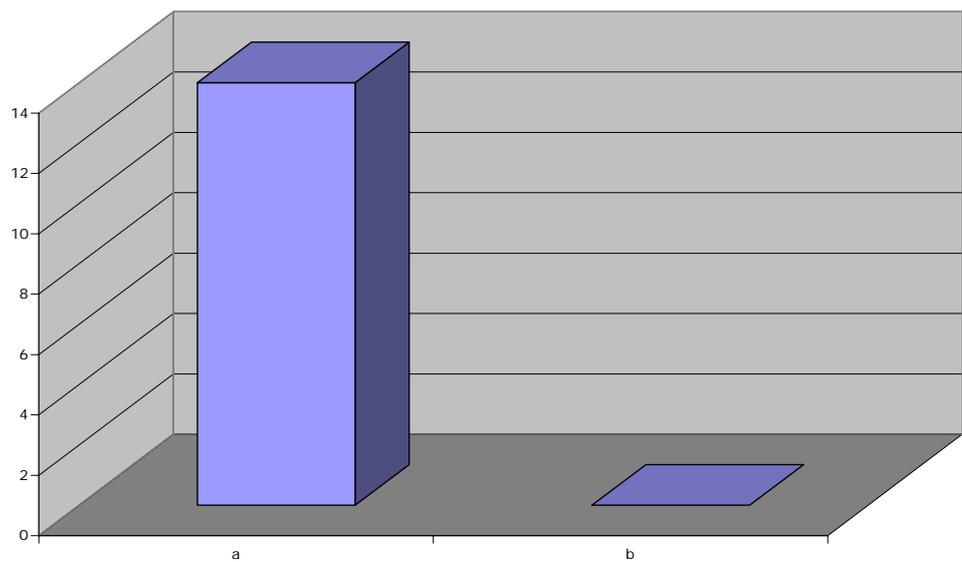
2003

Question 13



2006

Question 13



Fourteen of eighteen students were able to grasp the theoretical basis behind both improvisatory techniques for the blues in 2003. This figure rose to 100% in 2006 when all students became aware of both approaches and in doing so gained an insight into both vertical and horizontal improvisational techniques.

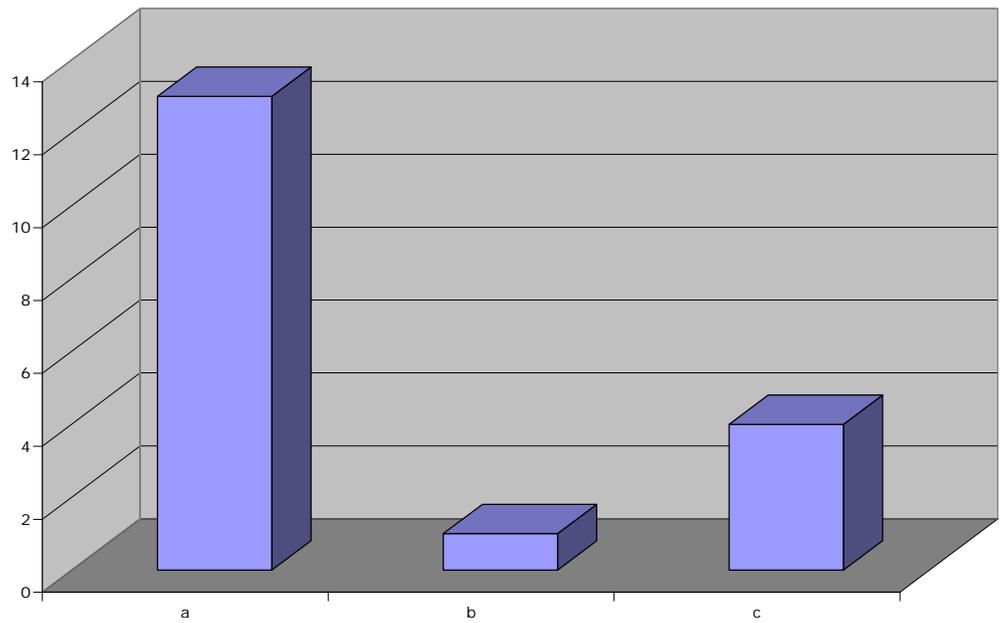
It can be heard in the performance DVDs that most students are aware of both approaches, but that the horizontal approach to improvisation is still the most popular with students. The blues scale tended to be the basis on which most students constructed their solos, but it was encouraging to hear them exploring a vertical approach from time to time.

14. Do you think that relating chords to the chordal scale is a good approach to improvisation:

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Perhaps

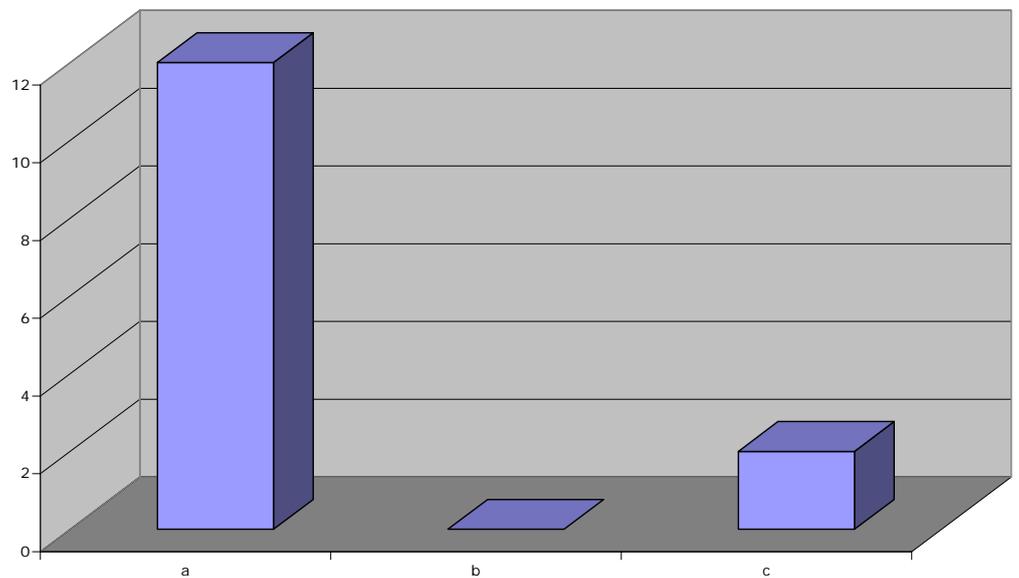
2003

Question 14



2006

Question 14



A very high percentage of 2003 students thought that the relationship between the chords and the chordal scale was a good method of approaching improvisation, with only one student, the ESL student, not agreeing with the concept. 12 of the 14 students of 2006 thought that relating chords to the chordal scale was a good way to approach improvisation. The two drummers thought that while of some value, this approach was not of the same importance for them as it was for the other instrumentalists.

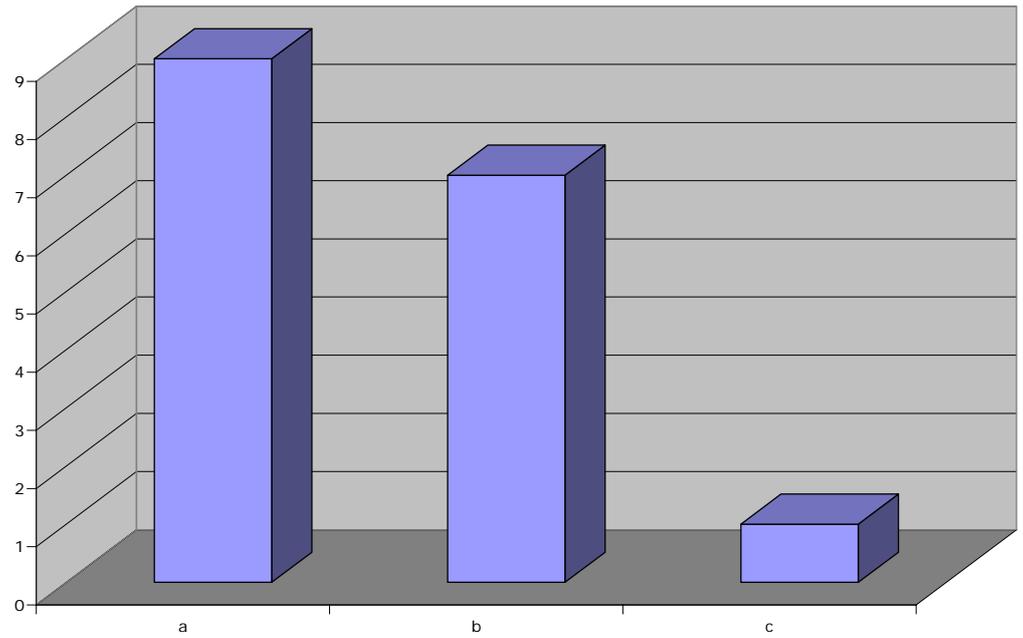
By week 8, as can be viewed on the DVDs (scenes 8 and 9), all students were basing their improvisations on the relevant scales. They can be heard trying to apply the correct scale to the corresponding chord progression and even though they may not be successful at all times, they were still attempting to construct melodic solos using the recommended scales.

15. Did you find the analysis of the chord progressions prior to rehearsal:

- a) Imperative
- b) Helpful
- c) Of no use

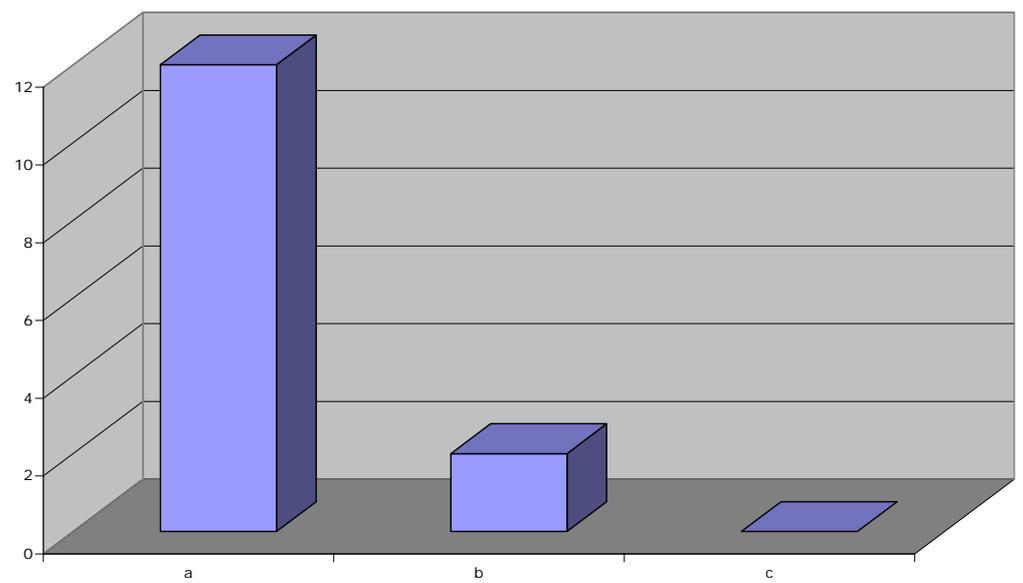
2003

Question 15



2006

Question 15



2003 results show that fifty percent of the students found the analysis of the chord progressions imperative, while 7 of the 18 students found the analysis helpful. One student found the concept irrelevant to his performance and one other declined to answer the question. In 2006 12 of the 14 students found the chordal analysis to be imperative to their performance, while the other two found the analysis helpful. All 2006 students came to rely on the chordal analysis to support their approach to jazz improvisation, which was a large percentile rise from 2003.

The results of the survey clearly indicate that most of the 2003 Year 11 student cohort were able to grasp the concept of chordal harmony in an eight-week period and were also able to utilise these concepts when playing in a jazz ensemble. One or two students had some difficulty comprehending the idea of numbered chord progressions, but these students were a very small percentage of the number surveyed, and generally these students had difficulty understanding most academic principles. History indicates that these students would eventually come to grips with the theoretical aspects of improvisation, but it may take more time for them to fully understand the implications of a numbered chordal scale. The results of the survey of the 2006 Year 11 student cohort were even more comprehensive than those of 2003. During the eight week period all students were able to grasp the basic concepts of chordal harmony and able to utilise these concepts when playing in their jazz ensembles. All students felt comfortable with the idea of a “Language of Chords” and all related the concepts introduced to the songs performed.

The drummers and bassists of 2003 had the most difficulty in utilising the new concepts introduced. This was mainly due to the fact that drummers use rhythm only when they improvise, and as a consequence tend to take much longer to grasp

the theoretical aspects of chordal harmony. For drummers, the comprehension of chord progressions tends to be a purely intellectual exercise with no practical application. Thus, it generally takes a longer period of time for them to understand the utilisation of chords and chord progressions.

According to the survey results, drummers and bassists were quicker to understand the theoretical aspects of chordal harmony in 2006 than in 2003. This is probably due to improved timetabling methods, the development of the section titled “The Language of Chords” and the academic abilities and experience of the musicians involved. Again the drummers did not place as much importance on the chordal harmony introduced as other instrumentalists as they concentrate on the rhythmic aspects of the music. This is to be expected, but both drummers in 2006 made it clear in the survey that they felt that their knowledge of the chordal scale improved their general musicianship and were keen to improve their understanding of harmony. One drummer suffers from a severe learning disability and had virtually no musical experience, but made an incredible effort to comprehend the academic principles introduced in the firm belief that it would make him a better musician.

With the bassists involved in the Year 11 groups, a majority of their time and effort was taken up trying to play their supportive role in the ensemble. For bassists who are inexperienced in the playing of jazz, the playing of a walking bass line or a two feel latin rhythm can be quite daunting, and most tend to spend the first eight weeks of their education in jazz understanding their ensemble role. As the bass player in a jazz group is constantly sounding out the chordal harmony while maintaining the rhythm within the band, it is usual to let them develop these skills before introducing them to improvisation. It would not be until bassists are completely confident in their ensemble role that they could be expected to start

taking solos. Thus, in the first eight weeks of instruction, the bassist is not practically using the newfound knowledge of chordal harmony, and as a consequence, can take a longer period of time to fully understand the theoretical concepts involved.

As in 2003, the bassists in 2006 spent the eight-week period concentrating solely on performing their role in the ensemble and not on improvisatory techniques. The two bassists were very inexperienced with group performance and spent the time developing their integral role in the combo. Both bassists were able to utilise their knowledge of the chordal scale by recognising common chord progressions and applying the appropriate licks.

The standard of performance reached by the students is reasonably consistent with all groups that have used this model. As viewed in scenes 8 and 9 of each performance DVD, by the end of the 8-week period all groups have been able to perform the three songs used, and most instrumentalists have been able to improvise within the ensemble context. The standard of performance is usually directly related to each student's musical experience, age, technique, capacity for practice and, of course, ability. Notice how more experienced the students are in scenes 2-5 of the 2003 DVD. However, the model has allowed all students to perform and improvise over the three songs used, no matter how simply, in the 8-week period. When viewing the DVDs there is solid improvement in the melodic content of the improvisations played by each soloist as he or she becomes more familiar with chord/scale relationships, even though some students have trouble playing through the pertinent scales. Notice the increased conviction with which they improvise as they learn to follow the chord progressions in scenes 6 and 7 and feel more

comfortable with the modulations within each song. With this confidence comes a remarkable rate of improvement as students explore their musical horizons

All four Year 11 classes used in this project had a positive experience in beginning to play jazz in the group situation. Students supported and encouraged one another in their first attempts at improvisation, while the rhythm sections were keen to do their best to provide a strong harmonic and rhythmic foundation for the soloist, which is in evidence when viewing the final two scenes of each performance DVD. All students perceived the methodology of teaching to be both effective and enjoyable, an opinion that is supported by the student interviews in the “Student Perceptions” DVD, which contains a short movie made for the International Association for Jazz Education annual conference in New York in 2004 and gauges student reactions to the model.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The research project was structured to evaluate whether the classroom model is successful by surveying the students at the end of the tuition period and viewing the performance DVDs. In this manner the research questions are addressed:

1. Do students understand the Major chordal scale and Major and minor II-V-I chord progressions in the eight-week timeframe?

From the results of the surveys of all four Year 11 classes it is consistent that all students were able to grasp the basics of jazz theory in the eight-week time frame. All students were able to visually recognise a II-V-I progression and an extremely high percentage were comfortable with the Major chordal scale and minor II-V progression. It can therefore be concluded that the section titled “The Language of Chords” was most successful in introducing students to chordal theory.

2. Are students able to perform with confidence and conviction the three set songs encompassing a jazz standard in AABA 32 bar form, a 12 bar blues and a bossa nova after eight weeks of instruction?

When viewing the “Week 8” chapters of both DVDs it can be ascertained that students, in an eight-week period, have developed the performance techniques necessary to perform the three set songs with confidence and conviction. Students with greater musical experience and the more gifted students obviously perform at a higher standard, but all students are capable of playing his or her individual role with the ensemble.

3. Does each student understand his or her role in the jazz combo?

Each student began the eight-week course of instruction with a varying level of musical experience. However, it can be stated that most guitarists, bassists and drummers had had some experience playing rock music but little or no experience reading music notation or playing jazz. The pianists had played some classical music but little or no contemporary music and while the frontline players had the most extensive experience in reading music notation they had no experience at all in jazz. By following the progress of all four ensembles at regular intervals, the accompanying DVDs indicate that each member of each ensemble was able to develop an understanding of his or her role in the jazz combo and the musical skills to contribute. Scenes 1 and 2 (week two) on each of the DVDs show the rhythm sections of all four ensembles working to develop a cohesive swing feel, while each of the soloists struggles to place his or her instrument in the framework of the group. However, by week six (scenes 5 and 6) all rhythm sections have been able to assimilate both the swing and bossa nova feels and the soloists seem more secure in following the chord changes and improvising with the appropriate scales. The final two scenes (week eight) show each drummer playing the appropriate rhythmic feel, and each bassist mastering a walking bass line for each of the swing songs and a two feel bass line for the bossa nova. The pianists and guitarists are able to voice appropriately the chords that were recommended and all frontline instrumentalists are demonstrably capable of playing the melodies and performing an improvised solo. The solos by nature remain simple in both note selection and rhythm. The soloists, while capable of stating all key modulations within each tune, tend to stay

within a comfortable range and utilise standard rhythmic features due mainly to their restricted experience and limited instrumental technique.

4. Are most frontline musicians, guitarists and pianists capable of playing an improvised solo over each of the three songs after the classroom model has been followed?

Each frontline player, guitarist and pianist was capable of playing an improvised solo over each of the three songs. Each of these students had only been playing jazz for an eight-week period and consequently the improvised solos are not of a professional standard. Once again the standard of performance was directly related to musical experience and ability, but each of these instrumentalists was capable of playing an improvised solo nonetheless. Due to their role in the ensemble and their relative lack of experience, drummers and bassists were encouraged to concentrate on their ensemble roles, as has been explained in the body of this work.

5. Is the classroom model a successful way to introduce jazz to secondary school students?

From the student perceptions gauged from the analysis of the surveys presented and the improvement of each student displayed in the accompanying DVDs, the classroom model is clearly a successful way to introduce jazz to secondary school students. Considering that the average time that each student had been taking formal private instrumental tuition was 3 years, that most students had had little to no ensemble playing experience and that no student had played jazz

before the eight-week period, the model was able to give all students the necessary techniques to perform the three set songs in a combo context as well as give them an introduction to the basics of jazz harmony and rhythm.

The originality of the teaching model outlined in this thesis lies in the fact that the model deals with all members of any small jazz ensemble, and that the emphasis is placed on the improvisational aspect of jazz and the role that the rhythm section plays in supporting the soloists. There are numerous teaching methods dealing with jazz instruction for individual instruments. Texts for saxophone, guitar, piano, bass etc. abound, but few instruction manuals exist for all members of a jazz group. With this model, any music teacher with some classroom experience should be able to facilitate establishing a student jazz combo. As seen with all four Year 11 student classes, the model outlined was responsible for instructing all students in an improvising ensemble in a short period of time. Even though a music teacher may only be proficient on one family of instruments, for example, brass or woodwind, the model outlined will give that teacher the necessary skills to instruct all the instruments in the group. With the charts written and explained for all members of the rhythm section, any music teacher will be able to establish a group, provided that all group members have a basic grasp of their respective instruments.

While attending or speaking at music education seminars, I have heard many secondary music teachers express the desire to include jazz combos in their curricula, but lack the necessary experience in the idiom. As an introduction to jazz, this model attempts to address a void in the available teaching material. The other group of music teachers that would benefit are jazz musicians/teachers who would like to start a secondary school jazz ensemble but have only taught individual instruments and

not combos in a classroom scenario. Many young jazz musicians feel confident when addressing students who play the same instrument, but are unsure how to get students on other instruments started. For example, a jazz trumpeter might feel comfortable when addressing and guiding frontline players in the art of playing jazz, but does not know how to get the bassist to play a jazz bass line, or what chord voicings the piano player should play. This model is intended to help those teachers to get the complete ensemble started. It is left to those teachers to enhance this model with their own experience and also to include some form of instruction aimed at developing aural perception, as mentioned in a previous section. The model would need to be adapted to suit varying instrumentation. For example, an ensemble with no frontline instruments but two or more guitar players would need to utilise one guitar as the frontline instrument, but this can be achieved with relative ease. I would also recommend that classroom teachers liaise with students' instrumental teachers where possible, so that instrumental teachers can assist the classroom teacher in helping students gain the necessary technical skills on their instruments as quickly as possible. Many of the students instructed with this model have gone on to tertiary music studies or successful professional careers in all areas of contemporary music including jazz, pop and rock. The model has proved to be most successful with students who are not only eager to begin to improvise on their selected instrument and perform in an ensemble, but also to have a strong and fulfilling musical and creative relationship with other ensemble members.

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## GLOSSARY

<b>Back-Beat</b>	The technique of accenting the notes that fall between the main beats in any time signature.
<b>Bar Chords</b>	Guitar chords where the index finger covers five or six strings.
<b>Bossa Nova</b>	Portuguese for “new beat”. A style of music that originated in Brazil in the early 1960’s.
<b>Changes</b>	(Chord changes) The chord progression of a song or phrase.
<b>Chart</b>	An arrangement or composition, which usually includes the melody and chord progression.
<b>Chord Chart</b>	A copy of a songs chord progression, which includes bar lines and chord progression only.
<b>Combo</b>	A group or ensemble usually comprising no more that eight or nine musicians.
<b>Comp</b>	(Accompany) To play the chords of a song with short ad lib. phrases. This term usually just applies to the piano and guitar.
<b>Fake Book</b>	A compilation of jazz tunes presented as melody with chord symbols.
<b>Frontline</b>	The group of instrumentalists that front a combo. Usually includes saxophone, trumpet or trombone, but may include any instrumentalist that plays and interprets the melody of a song.
<b>Groove</b>	The beat, time or feel provided usually by the bass and drums.
<b>Head</b>	The melody of a song which is interpreted by the frontline.
<b>Hi-Hat</b>	The two cymbals that crash together when played by the drummers left foot. In common time the hi-hat is usually played on beats 2 and 4.
<b>Latin</b>	A style of music that is strongly syncopated and originates from Cuba or Central and South America.
<b>Lick</b>	A musical phrase. Often two bars in length, but may be as short as two notes.
<b>Real Book</b>	A compilation of jazz tunes presented as melody with chord symbols.

<b>Rhythm Section</b>	The section of the group that provides the rhythmic foundation for the ensemble and gives the group its groove. Usually consists of bass, drums and piano or guitar, but might include both piano and guitar.
<b>Ride Cymbal</b>	The cymbal that is usually played in a constant pattern by the drummer's right hand during a swing feel.
<b>Rimshot</b>	A drumming technique that involves the drummer playing the stick against the rim of the snare drum.
<b>Snare</b>	The small drum that sits on its own stand and is positioned between the drummer's legs.
<b>Solo</b>	The improvised line played over a song's chord progression.
<b>Standard</b>	A song or melody that has been part of the jazz repertoire for an extended period of time.
<b>Swing</b>	To interpret the playing of quavers in an uneven manner. Sometimes notated as a dotted quaver followed by a semi-quaver, or as a crotchet and quaver triplet, the true swing feel is more subtle than this and impossible to notate, as it can change from musician to musician and also from one tempo to the next.
<b>Tune</b>	A musical selection or song that includes the melody and chord progression.
<b>Time</b>	The pulse of a song that is usually established by the bass and drums working together.
<b>Voicing</b>	The manner, order or style in which the notes that make up a chord are played
<b>Walking Bass</b>	A style of bass playing that consists of playing four even crotchets to the bar.

In 2006, the Information Sheet, Statement of Informed Consent and letter to parents were distributed giving the project title as "The Investigation Into and Development of a Classroom Model for Introducing Jazz Combo Performance to Secondary School Students". This change of title from the project begun in 2003 had not been advised in the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee application in 2006. However, after consultation with and advice from the supervisor, the project was returned to its original title. The Human Research Ethics Committee have advised that no change to the project need take place provided that this paragraph, explaining the situation, be inserted.

## APPENDIX



# UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

## INFORMATION SHEET

**Title of Investigation:** The Development and Investigation of a Model for Introducing Jazz Education to Secondary School Ensembles

**Chief Investigator:** Dr. Anne-Marie Forbes

**Other Investigators:** Paul Rettke

**Purpose of Study:** As part of research for a Masters degree, Paul Rettke will develop and evaluate a method for the instruction of student jazz ensembles, and in this study he will follow the progress of groups of student musicians as they follow the model. Dr. Anne-Marie Forbes, from the Conservatorium of Music at the University of Tasmania, is supervising Paul.

**Benefits:** To evaluate the efficacy and benefits of a teaching method for group-based jazz instruction and as an outcome of the completed research develop a teaching aid and instruction manual for music teachers at all levels.

**Why have I been invited to participate in this study?** You have been invited to be a participant in this study because you are a student in one of Mr Rettke's Year 11 Victorian Certificate of Education music classes in 2006.

**Study Procedures:** You will be asked to perform certain songs with a jazz ensemble, and to be filmed rehearsing and performing these songs at regular intervals. You will be filmed playing selected songs at weeks 2, 4, 6 and 8 of an eight-week instructional course. The DVD will be used as proof of the success of the classroom model and the results of the questionnaire will be analysed, graphed out and produced in the text of the thesis to support the teaching methodology and the outcome that the musical processes and techniques produce

At the end of the eight-week instruction period, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire/survey dealing with specific processes used to introduce musical concepts. The results of the questionnaire will be graphed and produced in the text of the thesis. A copy of the Questionnaire/Survey is attached at the end of this document.

You may also be requested for a 10-15 minute interview regarding the success of the methodology of instruction. You will only be interviewed if you volunteer and feel confident being filmed while discussing both the methodology of instruction and the enjoyment had in taking the class.

**Confidentiality:** Your name will not be disclosed in the thesis. However, as all video material will be stored on DVD and attached to the thesis, you will likely be identifiable by virtue of your appearance in the DVD. However, in the DVD no more than first names will be used, and a pseudonym will be used for students in interviews.

**Freedom to Refuse or Withdraw:** Your participation is entirely voluntary, and evidenced by signing a consent form. In any event, if you decide to take part in the study, you are free to withdraw at any time. Your withdrawal will not affect your normal course assessment in any way. Participation in the project will take place in the Year 11 Victorian Certificate of Education music classes and will involve no extra work or study outside the normal syllabus. If you do not wish to participate, you will not be disadvantaged in any way, and will participate in the classes as normal, but will not take part in the filming.

**Contact Persons:** For more information contact:

Dr Anne-Marie Forbes

Ph: 03 62267314

E-mail: [a.forbes@utas.edu.au](mailto:a.forbes@utas.edu.au)

OR

Mr Paul Rettke

Ph: 03 52232516

E-mail: [prettke@ncable.net.au](mailto:prettke@ncable.net.au)

**Ethics Approval and Contacts:** This project has received approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tas) Network, and has the approval of the principal of Geelong Grammar School. Any concerns of an ethical nature or complaints about the manner in which the project is conducted, should be directed to the Executive Officer of the Network, Amanda McAully (Ph 62262763; email: [Amanda.McAully@utas.edu.au](mailto:Amanda.McAully@utas.edu.au))

Geelong Grammar School students may discuss concerns with the Head of Student Welfare.

Geelong Grammar School Head of Student Welfare

Mr John Hendry

Ph: 03 52276230

E-mail: [johnh@ggs.vic.edu.au](mailto:johnh@ggs.vic.edu.au)

**Access to results of study.** A copy of the results of this study will be published in the final thesis, which will be stored in the University of Tasmania library, which can be contacted on [www.utas.edu.au/library/](http://www.utas.edu.au/library/)

You may retain a copy of this information sheet, and of the statement of informed consent. If you wish to participate, please sign the Statement of Informed Consent.

Statement of Informed Consent

*Title of project:* The Development and Investigation of a Model for Introducing Jazz Education to Secondary School Ensembles

.....

1. I have read and understood the 'Information Sheet' for this study.
2. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
3. I understand that the study involves
  - being filmed as part of a student jazz ensemble performing relevant songs;
  - completing a 10 to 15 minute student questionnaire regarding the methodology of instruction; and
  - potentially a 10 to 15 minute interview regarding the effectiveness of the teaching model.
- .....
4. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
5. I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published, and understand that in the film I may be identified as a participant in the film.
6. I agree to participate in this investigation and understand that I may withdraw at any time without prejudice.

Name of participant.....

Signature of participant.....Date .....

---

**7. Statement by investigator:**

I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

Name of investigator .....Paul Rettke

Signature of investigator

.....Date.....

---

Dear (parent's name),

I am currently undertaking a Master of Music degree through the University of Tasmania Conservatorium of Music with a thesis titled "The Development and Investigation of a Model for Introducing Jazz Education to Secondary School Ensembles".

As part of the research project, and with the schools permission and support, I filmed students in my Year 11 classes in 2003 performing in a jazz ensemble over the first eight weeks of Term One. Students were filmed at week two, four, six and eight performing three jazz songs that they had been studying in class. The purpose of this filming was to prove the success of the classroom model and to follow the improvement in the students playing and was no interruption to their music studies in any way.

I was hoping to film my 2006 Year 11 classes as a comparative exercise in the development of the model. The filming would be identical to that done in 2003. The film would then be included in my completed thesis. Some selected students may also be interviewed as to their opinion of the teaching method used.

Please note that participation in the project will take place in the Year 11 Victorian Certificate of Education music classes and will involve no extra work or study outside the normal syllabus.

This project once again has the school's full support and has been granted approved by the University of Tasmania's Ethics Committee. Each student will receive an information sheet outlining all relevant data. Students would be asked to participate, but participation is not mandatory and any student can choose to end participation at any time. Students who elect not to participate will not be disadvantaged in any way, and will participate in the classes as normal, but will not take part in the filming. Please note also that no full names of students will be used in any of the filming.

If you have any questions regarding this project please feel free to contact me on [paulr@ggs.vic.edu.au](mailto:paulr@ggs.vic.edu.au) or by phone on 03 52232516.

In anticipation of your support I thank you.

Yours sincerely,  
Paul Rettke  
(Head of Jazz Studies)