

## **Jazz & 20th Century Improvisational Curriculum ~ Condensed**

### **Prerequisite knowledge;**

- Ear Training: ability to aurally identify intervals of minor 2nd - Octave.
- Music Reading ability and comprehension of rhythmic notation.
- Scales; 12 Majors/ Traditional minors
- Some knowledge of triads, chords helpful.
- Foundation in good piano technique.

### **Topics;**

#### **- Theoretical / Technical;**

- Scales; Majors/minors/diminished/Whole Tone
  - Parallel in Octaves, 3rds, 6ths, 10ths. Contrapuntal motion.
- Modes; history, construction.
- Non-traditional scales; Pentatonics, others

#### **- Triad and Chord Building**

- Types and construction
- Inversions
- Voicing
- Diatonic organization, function.

#### **- Progressions**

The ability to hear and spell harmony, and understand it's function in the structure of a work is an essential skill for any musician. Proficiency in this area is imperative for an improviser. Students are given exercises based on the most common chord progressions, designed to;

- Build ear training, transposing skill.
- Acquaint student with keyboard geography - familiarity in all keys.
- Promote "thinking" in music and harmony independent from the written page.

#### **- Transposition**

- **Left Hand Chord Voicing;** the 3rd, 7th and color tones (upper harmonics: 9th, 11th, 13th).

#### **- Improvisation;**

- Motif development and the syntax of musical phrasing.
- Melodic Patterns;
  - Diatonic
  - Non-diatonic

#### **- Repertoire, repertoire, repertoire !**

- Titles drawn from the "American Songbook," including Broadway, standards, traditional folk melodies, significant popular composers, singer-songwriters from the 1960's - 1970's.
- Survey of works associated with the great jazz pianists.
- Survey of works from the standard jazz repertoire.

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### **- Styles;**

- Overall approach to solo performance styles. (arranging; using the piano like an orchestra.)
- Blues.
- Boogie Woogie.
- Stride.
- Gospel.
- Block Chording.
- Melodic Octave Harmonization. [Erroll Garner style, others]
- Left Hand / Bass Independence;
  - Contrapuntal technique; walking
  - Even eighth note based rhythmic patterns
  - Funk
  - Folk/Pop/Third Stream styles

### **- Memorization** and repertoire building.

- Recommended reading and listening lists, supplemented with online video of significant practitioners of the idiom.