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Intermediate Jazz Improvisation By George Bouchard

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CHAPTER ONE

CHROMATICISM - Written Examples (usually in "C" for ease of understanding)

Consult the Chord Charts in Part Two for the sequence of keys for all exercises.





Tune 9-Sweet Georgia Brown

This [A B A C] tune starts on the "six" chord, F7, commonly notated as VI7, and is very cyclical (or cycle-like) for the A section and for the first ending, B. The second A changes direction into the second ending, however, so the 8th bar (the 24th bar of the tune) is changed on the repeat, unlike our other [A B A C] tunes in which the A sections were exactly alike. Sometimes in [A B A C] tunes the last bar of A is different on the repeat, because the first chord of each ending is different. This is not the norm, however. Similar to Green Dolphin Street, Sweet Georgia Brown is straightforward and direct until the 2nd ending, when the harmonic rhythm (frequency of the chords) picks up. It is easy to get tangled up unless you know what you are doing and (hopefully) have worked out some choices.

When the 4-bar dominant chords are sounding, it is an excellent option to alter every 4th bar, since you are playing the "cycle"—F7 to Bb7 to Eb7 to AbΔ—and altered-dominant structures sound great when the roots are moving up in perfect 4ths. As stated in the exercise text, a quick way to find the best notes when altering a dominant is to think "up a 1/2 step" and play an altered pentatonic from that point (1-2-3-5-6 of the Dorian located there). For example, in A—F7 in 4th bar—use F\$ Altered Pentatonic.

F# Altered Pentatonic = F# G# A C# D#—notes of F# Dorian scale Then: "resolve" (or "connect") to Bb7 in the next bar.

This is merely a thought in case you don't as yet have a lot of technique developed for playing altered structures. F‡ Altered Pentatonic also fits B7, a good approach to B17.

In some ways, this tune is little more than a gigantic turnaround with an excursion into and out of F Minor in the second ending.

Miles Davis wrote a bebop head (melodic line) over these changes, called *Dig* You should find it and play it (practice it in all keys?). There is the same educational value for study with this tune as there is in comparing *Ornithology* by Charlie Parker, with *How High the Moon*, a standard; and by comparing *Groovin' High* by Dizzy Gillespie, with *Whispering*, another standard. Of special melodic interest, in the case of *Dig*, is:

- 1. The use of chromaticism (notes outside the scale of the chord),
- Lydian notes (the raised 4th of dominant or major scales used in the tune—sometimes thought of as the "flatted 5th"), and
- 3. Use of space—there is no melody in the resolution (AbΔ) of the first ending. This composition is still another clue to the part of the bebop encyclopedia available as a result of studying and understanding a specific written melody in a specific harmonic context.