

Disscretion Is The Better Part or Valor: Rethinking Chart Selection For Jazz Ensembles

Shawn Bell

Improving Piano Parts

Example comping rhythms

Piano

Pno.

Creating idiomatically correct piano voicings

Level 1: 3rds and 7ths in the left hand

Pno.

Bb⁷ Eb⁷ Bb⁷ F⁻⁷ Bb⁷ Eb⁷

Level 2: Adding 1 extra chord tone in right hand, always 5th or root

Pno.

Bb⁷ Eb⁷ Bb⁷ F⁻⁷ Bb⁷ Eb⁷

Level 3: Adding 2 extra notes in right hand, always root and 5th

Pno.

Level 4: Subbing out roots to 9ths or 5ths to 13ths

Pno.

*each extension is highlighted in red

Improving/Creating Walking Bass Lines

Level 1: Roots and 5ths

U. Bass

Level 2: Roots and 5ths plus a lower approach note

U. Bass

Level 3: Roots, 5ths, and approach notes plus stepwise motion

U. Bass

*All non root/5th notes highlighted in red

Example #1
"Off The Beaten Path" medium swing

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Medium Swing

The score is for a medium swing piece in 4/4 time, featuring a variety of instruments. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb). The piece is divided into two main sections by a double bar line. The first section consists of 8 measures, and the second section consists of 8 measures. Dynamics are marked throughout, including *f*, *fp*, *f*, and *mf*. The Flute, Clarinet in Bb, Alto 1, Alto 2, Tenor Saxophone, and Baritone Saxophone parts are identical in the first section. The Trumpet 1 and 2 parts are identical in the first section. The Trombone 1 and 2 parts are identical in the first section. The Vibraphone part is identical in the first section. The Piano part is identical in the first section. The String Bass part is identical in the first section. The Drum Set part is identical in the first section. In the second section, the Flute, Clarinet in Bb, Alto 1, Alto 2, Tenor Saxophone, and Baritone Saxophone parts are identical. The Trumpet 1 and 2 parts are identical. The Trombone 1 and 2 parts are identical. The Vibraphone part is identical. The Piano part is identical. The String Bass part is identical. The Drum Set part is identical. A "fill" is indicated above the Drum Set staff in the second section.

Flute
Clarinet in Bb
Alto 1
Alto 2
Tenor Saxophone
Baritone Saxophone
Trumpet 1
Trumpet 2
Trombone 1
Trombone 2
Vibraphone
Piano
String Bass
Drum Set

f *fp* *f* *mf*

fill

This musical score is for a jazz ensemble. It features the following instruments and parts:

- Flute (Fl.):** Melodic line with dynamics *fp* and *f*.
- Clarinet (Cl.):** Melodic line with dynamics *fp* and *f*.
- Alto 1:** Melodic line with dynamics *fp* and *f*.
- Alto 2:** Melodic line with dynamics *fp* and *f*.
- Ten. Sax. (Tenor Saxophone):** Melodic line with dynamics *fp* and *f*.
- Bari. Sax. (Baritone Saxophone):** Melodic line with dynamics *fp* and *f*.
- Tpt. (Trumpets):** Two staves, both playing a rhythmic eighth-note pattern.
- Tbn. (Tubas):** Two staves, both playing a rhythmic eighth-note pattern with dynamics *fp* and *f*.
- Vib. (Vibraphone):** Playing a rhythmic eighth-note pattern.
- Pno. (Piano):** Accompanying chords and bass line.
- S. Bass (Double Bass):** Playing a walking bass line with dynamics *fp* and *f*.
- Dr. (Drums):** Playing a consistent rhythmic pattern, with a "fill" indicated at the end of the piece.

The score is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature (C). The woodwinds and saxophones have dynamic markings of *fp* (fortissimo piano) and *f* (fortissimo). The brass instruments also have dynamic markings of *fp* and *f*. The piano part consists of chords and a bass line. The double bass part is a walking bass line. The drums play a consistent rhythmic pattern throughout the piece.

Example #2 "Scrunk" Funk

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Funk ♩=110

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The top four staves are for saxophones: Alto Saxophone 1, Alto Saxophone 2, Tenor Saxophone, and Baritone Saxophone, all in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The next four staves are for brass instruments: Trumpet in B♭ 1 and 2 (treble clef, key signature of three flats), Trombone 1 and 2 (bass clef, key signature of three flats). The piano part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a key signature of three flats. The upright bass part is in bass clef with a key signature of three flats. The drum set part is in a standard drum notation with a key signature of three flats. The score is divided into four measures. The saxophones are silent throughout. The trumpets and trombones play a rhythmic pattern of eighth and quarter notes. The piano provides harmonic support with chords Eb7, Eb7, Bb7, and Eb7. The upright bass plays a walking bass line. The drum set provides a steady funk groove.

This musical score is for a jazz ensemble and is divided into two systems. The first system includes four saxophone parts (Alto Sax, Tenor Sax, Bari. Sax) which are currently silent, and four brass parts (two Trumpets and two Trombones) playing a melodic line. The second system includes Piano (Pno.) with block chords, Upright Bass (U. Bass) with a walking bass line, and Drums (Dr.) with a steady rhythmic accompaniment. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is marked with various dynamics and articulations, including accents and slurs.

System 1:

- Alto Sax. (Silent)
- Alto Sax. (Silent)
- Ten. Sax. (Silent)
- Bari. Sax. (Silent)
- Tpt. (Melodic line)
- Tpt. (Melodic line)
- Tbn. (Melodic line)
- Tbn. (Melodic line)

System 2:

- Pno. (Block chords: Bb7, Eb7, Bb7, Eb7, Bb7)
- U. Bass (Walking bass line with notes: Bb, Eb, Bb, Eb, Bb, Eb, Bb, Eb, Bb, Eb)
- Dr. (Rhythmic accompaniment)

Example #3
"Second Time Around" Basie style shout section

Med. Swing ♩=128

The musical score is arranged in a standard jazz band format. The top section consists of five woodwinds: Alto 1 and 2, Tenor 1 and 2, and Baritone Saxophone. The middle section features four trumpets and four trombones (including a Bass Trombone). The bottom section includes Piano, Bass Guitar, and Drums. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked as 'Med. Swing' with a quarter note equal to 128 beats per minute. The score begins with a 16-measure rest for the woodwinds, followed by a 16-measure rest for the brass. The woodwinds then enter with a melodic line marked *mf*. The brass instruments enter with a rhythmic pattern, with the first two trumpets and two trombones marked *mp* and the other two trumpets and the bass trombone marked *mf*. The piano and bass guitar play a steady accompaniment marked *mp*. The drums provide a consistent rhythmic foundation. Chord symbols are placed above the piano and bass guitar staves, indicating the harmonic structure of the piece.

Alto 1
Alto 2
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Bari. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Tpt. 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3
B. Tbn.
Pno.
Bass
Dr.

f *mf* *cresc.* *f*
f *mf* *cresc.* *f*
f *mf* *cresc.* *f*
f *mf* *cresc.* *f*
f *mp* *cresc.* *f*
f *mp* *cresc.* *f*
f *mp* *cresc.* *f*
f *mp* *cresc.* *f*
mp *cresc.* *f*
mp *cresc.* *f*
mp *cresc.* *f*

G-7 C7 F#7 E-7b5 E7#5 A7b9b13 A-7/D Bb-7/Eb D13 Db7#11 G7 Db7
G-7 C7 F#7 A-7/D Bb-7/Eb D13 Db7#11 G7 Db7
fill