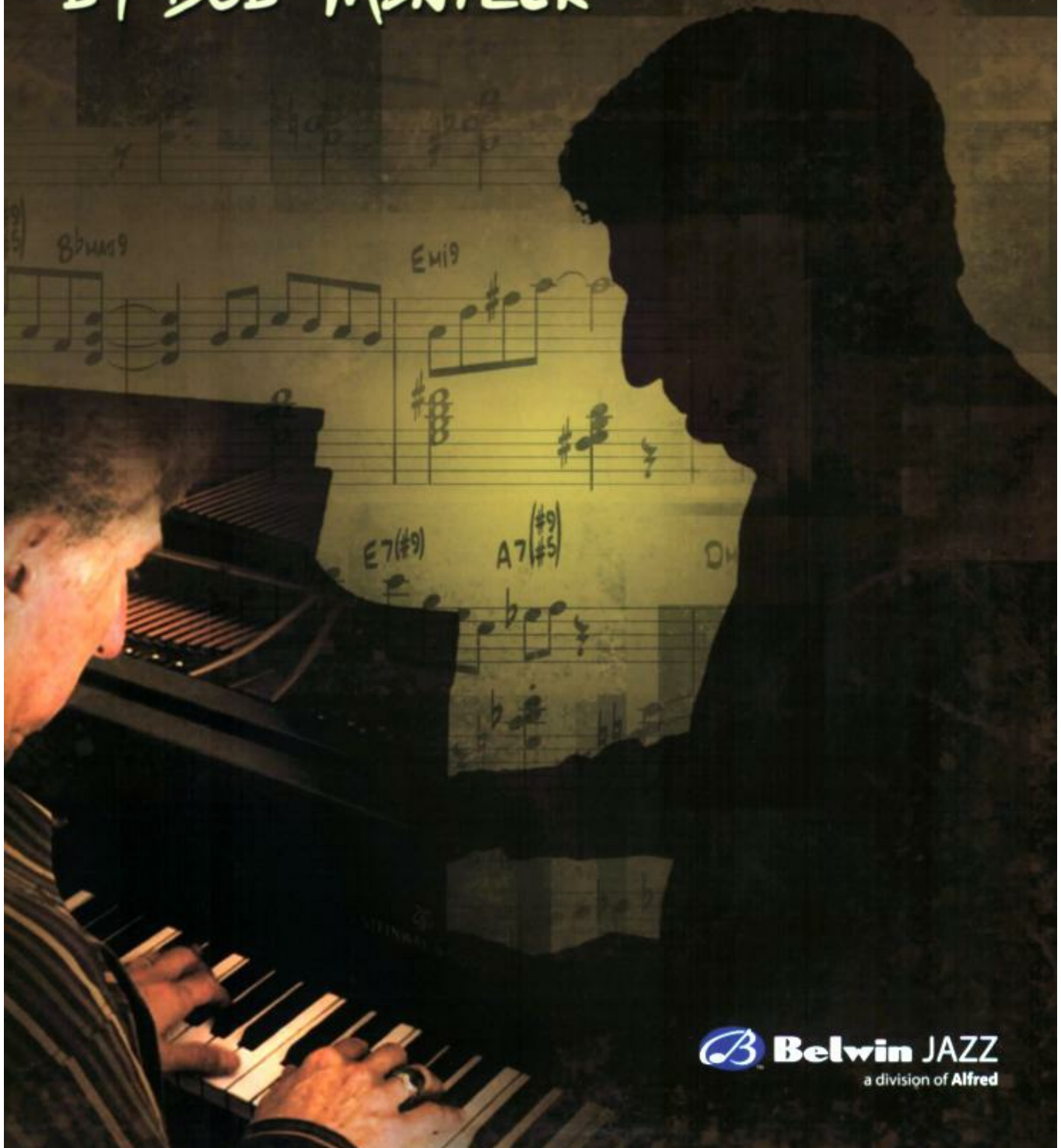


PLAYING JAZZ PIANO

BY BOB MINTZER



 **Belwin JAZZ**
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For an aspiring jazz instrumentalist, playing piano is perhaps one of the most important skills for developing a jazz vocabulary. The piano is the doorway into the world of harmony, melody and rhythm. Regardless of what your primary instrument is, you simply must learn to play the piano. I would not be able to play a good deal of what I do today on the saxophone if I had not established a solid relationship with the piano.

By acquiring piano skills, one can:

- Learn tunes more efficiently
- Explore the more colorful aspects of improvising on tunes
- Develop a more comprehensive relationship with the rhythm section
- Improve your time
- Help take the guesswork out of improvisation
- Develop a harmonic sound and style of your own

I've spent countless hours exploring on the piano, starting from a very early age. The ability to incorporate melody, harmony and rhythm on one instrument was such a revealing and gratifying experience. To play a chord and move the notes around, trying different bass notes against a chord, establishing a groove as the result of the interaction between the two hands, and to play a chord and see what sort of melodic material worked with that particular harmony kept me occupied for long stretches of time. At first, it was the sound and feeling of playing things I'd stumble upon that had an impact. Later, as I began to identify some of the things I was playing by name, I was able to find further continuity in my improvising and composing. But the real benefit came from

playing these sounds and musical shapes and feeling the way certain things resonated in my gut and mind's ear. The content of this book comes from concepts I've discovered through playing the piano, listening carefully to the pianists on my favorite recordings, and emulating the great pianists I've had the great fortune to work with.

Bob Mintzer



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BOB MINTZER BIOGRAPHY

In the jazz world, Bob Mintzer is a household name, usually associated with being a saxophonist, bass clarinetist, composer, arranger, leader of a Grammy-winning big band, member of the Yellowjackets and educator.

Bob has written over 200 big band arrangements spanning a 34-year career, many of which are performed all over the world by both student and pro bands. His own big band has been nominated for four Grammy awards and won a Grammy for Best Large Jazz Ensemble recording in 2001 with *Homage to Count Basie* on the DMP label. Bob has recorded 26 solo CDs with both big band and small jazz ensembles. He is an 18-year member of the Grammy award-winning Yellowjackets, and has recorded 12 CDs with the band. Bob tours four months out of the year with the 'Jackets.

Bob has published four jazz etude books (Belwin Jazz), a solo transcription book (Belwin Jazz), a saxophone method book, four saxophone quartets, 200 big band arrangements (Belwin Jazz, Kendor Music), and has composed several pieces for orchestra. His "Rhythm of the Americas" piece for sax quartet and orchestra (or concert band) was premiered in 2001 by the American Saxophone Quartet and the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. His "Concertino for Tenor Saxophone, Strings and Winds" was premiered in New York City by the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble in 1992.

In addition, Bob has had a diverse career as a free-lance musician in NYC. He has recorded with people like Steve Winwood, James Taylor, Aretha Franklin and Queen. He has toured with Buddy Rich, Thad Jones, Mel Lewis, Jaco Pastorius, Tito Puente and Eddie Palmieri. He's performed with the New York Philharmonic and the American Ballet Theatre. Bob has been on the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music and recently joined the faculty of USC in Los Angeles. He also performs 20 workshops at universities all over the globe annually.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

To use this book effectively:

1. Learn the notes slowly at first, then in tempo.
2. Learn to play the etudes with good time and a steady groove.

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3. Strive for a feel that fits with the style of each etude (swing-triplet inflection, Latin even eighth-note feel).

However, always keep in mind that listening to world-class pianists like Red Garland, Bill Evans, Herbie Hancock, Hank Jones, McCoy Tyner and Eddie Palmieri (to name only a few) is an integral piece of this process. I listened and still do!

The 22 etudes utilize three basic categories:

1. Comping chords with the right hand and playing a bass line with the left hand.
2. Comping chords with the left hand and playing a melody with the right hand.
3. Comping chords with both hands.

Some of the later etudes incorporate both the second and third category, because a soloing pianist will typically combine single-note melodic lines with two-handed chordal motion.

Another important focus of this book is to illustrate how pianists employ a melodic quality to the formation of chord progressions, known as voicings. That is, the top note of each chord in a given progression will generally create a strong sense of melodic motion.

At the end of the book you will find a Chord Voicing Glossary reference section with a variety of more advanced chord voicings that I have written throughout the book. Transpose these chords to all keys. Keep in mind, there are countless variations of these chord voicings. By no means is this a complete method for learning to play jazz piano. It is merely a tool to help you get up and running, particularly if you play another instrument.

Bob Mintzer

Etude 1: Begin with This

(Comping chords with the right hand and playing a bass line with the left hand)

If you ask me, it all starts with the blues. Etude 1 is a typical blues progression with a walking bass line in the left hand and an ostinato comp in the right hand. The interaction between the two hands sets up a nice swing feel; therefore, this is a good etude to begin the process. The focus is on developing proper independence and interdependence of hands. The bass line places the roots of each chord on the strong beats 1 and 3 and passing tones on beats 2 and 4. Check out the melodic quality of the bass line. It is this melodic quality that gives a nice sense of forward motion and color to a bass line.

The first chord voicing is a typical dominant 9th voicing with the 9th on top, dominant 7th under that, and 3rd on the bottom. You can also add an A (6th) under the 136, which I do on some of the subsequent dominant chords. Like most of the other voicings, this one does not have the root of the chord in the voicing. It's not needed. It is more important to include color notes such as the 9th, 11th and 13th. Notice that the voicing in measure 2 is a standard 13th voicing, with the 13th on top and the 3rd and 7th below. This voicing has a nice spacious and colorful sound due to the large interval between notes and the presence of the 7th and 13th. By the eighth measure, I begin to configure the chords with a close interval in the center of the harmony surrounded by larger intervals. The A7(#5) has a C next to a C#. I think it is the dissonance of this minor 2nd interval framed by two consonant intervals of a major 3rd and perfect 4th that gives this voicing its unique sound. In measure 9, I use the same configuration with the D9 chord. In measure 23, the first chord is C13, where you will find two close intervals-D and C, and B6 and A, separated by a major 3rd. This also creates a colorful voicing due to the dissonance surrounding consonance.

On this etude, strive to gain consistency on the quarter-note pulse, with the bass line played up on top of the beat but still in a relaxed way. It is the combination of playing "on top" of the time, but with a relaxed feel, that creates the sense of swing. Play this with a metronome with the ultimate goal being that your internal clock becomes the metronome. Having the ability to comp is something you will use frequently as a teacher, a composer experimenting with new ideas, and as a means of learning new tunes. And as a result of being able to play a walking bass line with chordal accompaniment, you will gain some serious insight into the world of the rhythm section, which, as a horn player, is invaluable information.

Etude 1: Begin with This

Chord progression: C9, F15, C9, Gm7, C9

Chord progression: F15, F#7, C9, F15, Em7sus, A7(#9), D9

Chord progression: G15, Em9, A7(#5), Dm9, G15, C9, F9

Chord progression: C9, Gm9, C7(#9), F15, C7(#5), F15, F#7, C15, F9

Chord progression: E7(#5), A7(#9), D9, Dm9, G15, C15, A7(#5), Dm9, G15

Etude 2: Add More Color

(Comping chords with the right hand and playing a bass line with the left hand)

For Etude 2, play with the same rhythm in the right hand as in Etude 1. However, there are a few major differences here:

- (1) The top note on these various voicings forms melodic shapes. This melodic approach to chordal motion gives a nice sense of forward motion and a more colorful quality to the chord progression.
- (2) The other device I use in this version of the blues is the sus chord. The sus chord incorporates the 4th degree in a dominant 7th chord. These chords are configured as major 7th chords a whole step below the root. For example: Cmaj7/D.

The sus chord has an open, airy quality that serves as a nice contrast to the traditional dominant 7th or 9th chord voicing. In measures 9 and 14, the sus chord resolves to a dominant 9th chord. The sus 4 moves to the third in each case. Notice how in any given measure the first chord moves in a melodic fashion to the second voicing. Graceful voice leading is an integral part of providing forward motion to any chord progression.

- (3) The addition of 9ths, 11ths and 13ths to the chord voicings adds a good deal more color to the music. This more colorful harmonic setting allows for more varied and, ultimately, more interesting melodic information in your improvisations.

Etude 2: Add More Color

C⁹ F¹³ C⁹ G^{mi9} C⁷(#9)
 F⁶ C⁷(#9) F⁶ F^{#7} C⁹ F⁷ C⁶/E A⁷(#9)
 C^{mi7}/D D⁹ F^{mi7}/G G¹³ C⁶ A⁷(#9) D⁹ G⁷(#9)
 B^{bmi7}/C C⁷(#9) E^{bmi7}/F F⁹ B^{bmi7}/C C⁹ G^{mi9} C⁷(#9)
 F⁹ C⁷(#9) F⁹ F¹³ C⁹ F⁹ E⁷(#9) A⁷(#9)
 C^{mi7}/D D⁹ D^{mi9} G⁷(#9) C¹³ A⁷(#9) D¹³ G¹³(#9)

Etude 3: The Blues Basic Comp

(Comping chords with the right hand and playing a bass line with the left hand)

In many ways, this piece has a classic jazz quality. The dominant 7th 09 chords in the first four measures move down a half step and then up again. This creates a nice melodic motion to the voicings. The same type of motion continues throughout the piece, with the same two-measure phrase repeated through the two choruses of blues changes.

The dominant 7th #9 voicing is a great color alternative to a straight dominant 7th or 9th voicing. The half-whole diminished scale can be played over this voicing, with various configurations. For improvisation, you may also use these two approaches: root, minor 3rd, 4th, 5th and dominant 7th; or root, minor 3rd, major 3rd, 5th and dominant 7th as a melodic approach over this voicing. Notice that the voicing in the second chorus, beginning at measure 13, is different. For one thing, the top notes of the chords are higher than in the previous chorus. This makes for a lift in energy, and provides contrast from one chorus to the next. Secondly, the voicings in the second chorus have more of a spread as opposed to the closer voicings in the first chorus. This change will give the second chorus more of an open sound.

The interaction of the left-hand bass line and the chords played in the right hand sets up a nice half-time swing groove. Once you've got the notes down, play this piece many times in a row. You have now entered the world of swing!

Etude 3: The Blues Basic Comp

Musical notation system 1, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The system is marked with a **D7(#9)** chord above the first measure. The melody in the treble clef consists of eighth and quarter notes, while the bass clef provides a simple harmonic accompaniment.

Musical notation system 2, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The system is marked with a **G15** chord above the first measure and a **D7(#9)** chord above the second measure. The melody in the treble clef consists of eighth and quarter notes, while the bass clef provides a simple harmonic accompaniment.

Musical notation system 3, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The system is marked with an **A7(#9)** chord above the first measure and a **D7(#9)** chord above the second measure. The melody in the treble clef consists of eighth and quarter notes, while the bass clef provides a simple harmonic accompaniment.

Musical notation system 4, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The system is marked with a **D7(#9)** chord above the second measure. The melody in the treble clef consists of eighth and quarter notes, while the bass clef provides a simple harmonic accompaniment.

Musical notation system 5, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The system is marked with a **G15** chord above the first measure and a **D7(#9)** chord above the second measure. The melody in the treble clef consists of eighth and quarter notes, while the bass clef provides a simple harmonic accompaniment.

Musical notation system 6, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The system is marked with an **A7(#9)** chord above the first measure and a **D7(#9)** chord above the second measure. The melody in the treble clef consists of eighth and quarter notes, while the bass clef provides a simple harmonic accompaniment.

Etude 4: The Blues Right-Hand Solo

(Comping chords with the left hand and playing a melody with the right hand)

As you know, for a single-note instrumentalist it is quite beneficial to have the option with the piano to play a chord in one hand, and then play melodies that correspond to that chord with the other hand. Not only is this ability to hear the relationship between harmony and melody such an asset, but also being able to visualize all that you are playing is a great help. I've found this to be a handy way to get further into the twelve tones in a way that will ultimately allow you to hear and think music away from an instrument.

The rhythm of the left-hand chords is similar to the first two etudes, so by now you should be familiar with the sound and feel of this approach. For this etude, imagine that there is a bass player and drummer playing in your head, laying down a steady and energetic quarter-note pulse. The lefthand chords should be played in this context, with a relaxed precision and a somewhat percussive quality, or accent on all the attacks. The right-hand melodies should be played with a swing feel. Swing feel can be simply described as an implied eighth-note triplet feel. When playing eighth-note lines, the first of two eighth notes should have the value of a quarter note in a triplet configuration, and the second eighth played as the third eighth in the triplet.

Notice that the interaction of the two hands and the way they compliment each other rhythmically sets up the groove. There are places where both hands play on the same beat, but the majority of the piece finds the two hands independent of each other, very much like what a drummer does with his or her four limbs. To make an analogy to a drumset, it is the interaction between ride cymbal (on quarter notes), hi-hat (on 2 and 4), and bass and snare drum (frequently playing syncopated patterns) that a pianist creates when comping with the left hand and soloing with the right.

In this etude, there are three places where both hands come together to play a chord which sets up a sense of variety offering a contrast from the pattern of chords with the left hand and eighth-note melody with the right hand. This also is a nice way to create a pause or breath in the flow of notes. The first of these chords occurs at the end of measure 10, the second at the end of measure 12, and the last one at the end of measure 22, the third measure from the end. As the etudes progress, we'll get further into integrating two-handed chords and soloing. Melodic material in the right hand is straight from the be-bop vocabulary, both in terms of melodic and rhythmical shape. Notice that

I never play the root or tonic of a chord on the strong beats 1 or 3. It is much more interesting and colorful to play either the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th or 11th on beats 1 and 3. In measure 13, there is a little eighth-note figure played in thirds that I think adds a nice sense of arrangement and variety to the etude.

Etude 4: The Blues Right-Hand Solo

C⁹ F¹⁵ C⁹ Gmi⁹ C⁹ F#¹⁵
 F¹⁵ C⁷(#⁹) F¹⁵ F#⁷ C#⁷ F⁹ Emi⁷sus A⁷(#⁹)
 Cmaj⁷/C D⁹ Dmi⁹ G⁷(#⁹) Emi⁹ A⁷(#⁹) Dmi⁹ G⁷(#⁹)
 C⁹ F#¹⁵ F¹⁵ G⁷(#⁹) C⁹ Bbm⁷/C C⁹ C⁷(#⁹)
 F¹⁵ C⁷(#⁹) F¹⁵ F#⁷ Cmaj⁷ F¹⁵ C⁹ A⁷(#⁹)
 D⁹ G⁷(#⁹) C⁹ A⁷(#⁹) Dmi⁹ G⁷(#⁹)

Etude 5: The Blues Comp Chords

(Comping chords with both hands)

This one involves the two hands playing chordal figures using a series of stacked 4th interval voicings. The sound of these voicings is very flexible and open sounding. The root and 5th of each chord is played at the beginning of each phrase, thus adding a bass element to the "comp" and generally rounding out the harmony. Notice how the top note of the various voicings creates a nice melodic shape. So in a sense, this might be something that could be played as a piano solo or as accompaniment to another soloist.

On beat 2 of the second measure, I've implemented a C7(#9) chord. This chord is the 5 (V) chord to the tonic key of F. This is a device that works well any time you are playing over the tonic chord for a while and want to add some extra harmonic movement. Measures 9 and 10 contain a small side trip away from the C7(#9) tonality. This could also be described as a C pedal with a series of chords that don't actually relate to C7(#9), at least the two chords at the beginning of measure 10. What is created is an arc of chords with the top notes outlining the C half-whole diminished scale which does relate to C7(#9).

Play this piece slowly at first, trying to absorb the lush sound of these voicings. Eventually get the tempo up to a comfortable swing feel with triplet inflection in the playing of the eighth notes. Also try for a nice connection or legato between the chords. In order to do this, you must play the notes long and with precision. Do not hit the keys too hard. Rather, go for a round, full sound.

Another side adventure might be to take the first phrase and play it in all the different keys. This is one sure-fire way to insure that you will have this shape under you fingers and in your musical vocabulary when it comes time to play some piano. Pianists to listen to who play in this style are Herbie Hancock (Miles Davis recordings from the early '60s), McCoy Tyner (John Coltrane Quartet, early to mid '60s), and Cedar Walton (Art Blakey, mid '60s). When you listen to these artists, really try to focus on the inner notes in the voicings the pianist is playing.

Etude 5: The Blues Comp Chords

First system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of two flats, 4/4 time. Chord symbol: F7sus. The system consists of two staves with piano accompaniment.

Second system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of two flats, 4/4 time. Chord symbols: Eb7 and F7sus. The system consists of two staves with piano accompaniment.

Third system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of two flats, 4/4 time. Chord symbols: C7(#9) and F7sus. The system consists of two staves with piano accompaniment.

Fourth system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of two flats, 4/4 time. Chord symbols: F7sus, F7/O, and F7(#5). The system consists of two staves with piano accompaniment.

Fifth system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of two flats, 4/4 time. Chord symbols: Bb7sus and F7sus. The system consists of two staves with piano accompaniment.

Sixth system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of two flats, 4/4 time. Chord symbols: C7(#9) and F7sus. The system consists of two staves with piano accompaniment.

Etude 6: Rhythm Changes Comp with Bass Line

(Comping chords with the right hand and playing a bass line with the left hand)

Rhythm changes ("I Got Rhythm") in a harmonic progression, along with the blues, is one of the war horses of jazz improvisation. I strongly suggest you strive to play rhythm changes in a variety of keys and tempos. Once you learn this piece, play these changes in all keys as an exercise. Do it, you'll be glad you did!

In this etude, chords are played with the right hand and a bass line with the left. Like Etudes 1 and 2, try for a steady and forward-moving quarter-note pulse in the bass line and a nice crisp attack in the right-hand chords. Once again, the top note of the chord voicings forms a melodic shape that sits nicely on the chord progression. The rhythm of the right-hand chords against the bass line establishes a sense of swing that is so very characteristic of the bebop tradition. These rhythms create a sound that is reminiscent of a big band horn section. In fact, the highly seasoned jazz pianist Hank Jones comes to mind because he has the ability to improvise an accompaniment that in some ways is just as interesting as what the soloist is playing.

There is a lot to be gained as a horn player in learning piano language as it applies to forming melodic lines. A nice exercise might be to try singing a solo line while playing the piece. See if the vocal line can interact with and compliment the piano accompaniment in a musical way. This is the language of the soloist versus accompanist that is so very important and makes for the conversational aspect of jazz music.

As a point of reference, listen to one of the Yellowjackets recordings like Mint Jam, Time Squared or Altered State and see how pianist Russell Ferrante and I leave space to accommodate each other's playing. We constantly are tossing ideas back and fourth. Along with this conversational element, Russ is contributing to the groove in a big way with other devices he uses. Listen and check it out.

Etude 6: Rhythm Changes Comp with Bass Line

8b6 G7(#5) Cm7 F15 D7(#5) G7(#9/#5) C15 F15

Fm19sus Eb7(#5) Ebmaj9 Eo7 Bb6/F G7(#9/#5) C9 F9

Bb15 G7(#5) Cm7 C#o Dm19sus G7(b9/#5) Cm9 F15(b9) Bb15

Bb7(#9/#5) Ebmaj7 Eo7 F7sus F15(b9) Bb6

Au19sus D7(#9) Dm9 G7(#9/#5)

Gm9 C15 C7(#9/#5) Cm9 F#15 Ebmaj7/F F7(#9/#5)

8^b6 G7([#]9) Cm7 F9 Dm7sus G15([#]9) Cm9 F15(^b9)

A^bmaj7/^bB^b B^b7([#]5) E^bmaj9 A^b7 E^bmaj7/^bF F15(^b9) 1. B^b6/9 F15

2. B^b6 G7([#]9) Cm7 F15 Dm7sus G7([#]9) C7 F15

D7(^b9) G7([#]9) Cm9 F15(^b9) Dm7sus G7([#]9) Cm9 F15

B^b15 A^b15 B^b15 A^b15

B^b15 A^b15 B^b15([#]11)

Etude 7: Rhythm Changes Comp Chords

(Comping chords with both hands)

This etude is what a jazz pianist might play to accompany a soloist, or perhaps play as a piano solo. Once again, the top voice of each chord creates a nice melodic shape. The rhythms form a varied and swingin' accompaniment, very much like what a big band horn section might play on this groove. The pianists I like to play with are able to lay down a chord progression in this fashion, which creates an energetic sense of swing and forward motion. In the process they contribute to the groove, as well as respond to the soloist playing a rhythmical figure in the spaces between the soloist's phrases. Pay close attention to the way the notes in the voicings are distributed. Check out how they sound and feel. A good solid voicing has a nice ring to it while also being colorful and interesting in texture. These voicings are abounding in the more colorful notes, as in 9ths, 11ths and 13ths.

When playing this etude, try to imagine the drummer and bassist laying down a strong quarternote pulse. This quarter-note pulse is the underlying foundation for which the rhythms are based. It's really all about the quarter note! Notice that at this tempo, any eighth-note movement should have a triplet feel rather than an even eighth feel. Playing voicings like these can open up your ears to the more interesting side of melodic playing. Challenge yourself to explore what scales go with each respective voicing.

Etude 7: Rhythm Changes Comp Chords

Handwritten musical notation for the first system, featuring chords: Bb13, G7(#5), Cm9, F13(b9), Bb6/9, G7(#5), and Cm7sus.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system, featuring chords: F13, Fm9, Bb7(#9), Ebmaj9, Ab13, Dm9/F, and G7(#9).

Handwritten musical notation for the third system, featuring chords: Cm9sus, F13(b9), Bb6/9, G13(b9), Cm7sus, F13(b9), and Bb6/9.

Chords: Cm19sus, F15(b9), Fm19, Bb7(#9), Ebm19, Eo7, Ebm17/F

Chords: F15(b9), Bb6, Am19sus, D7(#9), Ab7sus, G7sus

Chords: G7(#9), Bbm17/C, C15, Bbm17/C

Chords: Cm19sus, F15, F7(#9), A15, Bb15, G15(b9), Cm19sus, F15

Chords: Cm19sus, Dbm19, Cm19, F15, F7(#9), Fm19sus, Bb7(#9), Ebm19, Ab6

Chords: F7(#9), A6, Bb6

Etude 8: Rhythm Changes Right-Hand Solo

(Comping chords with the left hand and playing a melody with the right hand)

This 32-bar AABA-form etude is an opportunity to see how the pianist accompanies a soloist with certain chord voicings. Only in this case, it is the pianist soloing with the right hand and the accompaniment is with the left hand. Notice that the roots of the chords are seldom played-leave that to the bass player. But the combination of the rhythm and the distribution of the notes in the left hand, combined with the melody in the right hand, provides a complete package. As always, play along with the rhythm section in your head.

In measure 2, on beat 3, the right hand plays the 6⁹ and then the #9 against the F7(#9#5) chord. This is a colorful, lush sound that resolves nicely to the major 6/9 chord on the downbeat of measure 4. In measure 5, on beat 3, there is a #11th which resolves to the perfect 5th on beat 4. The sound of the #11 on a strong beat against the 6⁶(6⁹) chord is colorful and interesting.

At the beginning of the bridge, the etude breaks into two-handed block chords, which serve as a contrast to the single-note lines in the right hand. Also in this bridge you will find an occasional stab at the root of the chord. In measure 24, the last measure of the bridge, the right-hand melody actually outlines a tritone substitution to F7, so I use notes which spell F#mi7 to B7. This technique works well against any dominant 7th chord with a #5 and #9. In measures 31-34, I employ a series of quartal harmonies, which are stacked fourth intervals that move somewhat randomly. This kind of harmonic motion generally calls for a more chromatic line in the right-hand solo. In measures 33 and 34, the right-hand melody involves a I-IV-V pattern that repeats a minor third apart. This device can be a nice departure from the more diatonic changes. It can create a sense of tension which, if resolved properly, can be very dynamic and effective. Check out the last two chord voicings in the last two measures. These voicings have almost every note of the half-whole diminished scale in them. A real ear opener!

Etude B: Rhythm Changes Right-Hand Solo

Handwritten musical score for piano in B-flat major, 4/4 time. The score consists of three systems of music. The first system has four measures with chords: Bb7, G7(#9), Cm9, F7(#9), Dmi7sus, G7(#9), Cm9, F#9, and F7(#9). The second system has four measures with chords: Fmi9, Bb13(b9), Eb6/9, Ab13, Dmi7sus, G7(#9), Cm9, F#9, Bb6/9, and Bb6/9. The third system has four measures with chords: G#9, Cm9, F7(#9), Dmi7sus, G7(b9), Cm9, and F#9. The score includes a treble and bass clef for each system, with notes and rests in the treble and chords in the bass.

15

F#m9 Ebm9 E7 Cm9sus F#9(b9) Bb9 Bbm9sus

17

A#m9sus D7(#9) Ab15 G15 G7sus G15 G7(#9)

18

C7 C9(#4) C9sus C9 Cm9 F7(#9)

19

Bb9/F G15(b9) Cm7 Eb15 F#9 Dm7sus G7(#9) Cm9 F#9(b9) F7(#9)

20

Bb7(#9) Eb15 C7(#9) F#9

21

F#9 Bb7alt

Etudes 9-17

The next nine etudes (9-17) are based on three different sets of standard chord changes and utilize the three different comping techniques: (1) comping chords with the right hand and playing a bass line with the left hand, (2) comping chords with the left hand and playing a melody with the right hand, and (3) comping chords with both hands.

The following comments apply to the next 9 etudes:

Once you've learned the notes, try for a nice feel and sense of swing. Playing these harmonic progressions typical of the American popular song of the '30s and '40s are crucial to developing a sound vocabulary in jazz music. When something in one of these etudes catches your ear, go a step beyond the page and try the following:

- Isolate the chord or series of chords and play the chord/progression in different keys to unlock the possibility of becoming more articulate with jazz harmony.
- Read the notes in the left hand and improvise off the chord changes with the right hand.
- Move the progression around in a variety of ways to achieve the flexibility to take a harmonic shape and utilize it in whatever key you may be playing in.
- Play a fixed rhythm in the right hand like a series of quarter notes, or quarter-quarter-quarter-quarter-quarter-eighth-eighth, which is a unifying element that will help organize your improvising skills.

Etude 9: Standard #1 Comp with Bass Line

(Comping chords with the right hand and playing a bass line with the left hand)

Etude 10: Standard #1 Comp Chords

(Comping chords with both hands)

Etude 11: Standard #1 Right-Hand Solo

(Comping chords with the left hand and playing a melody with the right hand)

Etude 12: Standard #2 Comp with Bass Line

(Comping chords with the right hand and playing a bass line with the left hand)

Etude 13: Standard #2 Comp Chords

(Comping chords with both hands)

Etude 14: Standard #2 Right-Hand Solo

(Comping chords with the left hand and playing a melody with the right hand)

Etude 15: Standard #3 Comp with Bass Line

(Comping chords with the right hand and playing a bass line with the left hand)

Etude 16: Standard #3 Comp Chords

(Comping chords with both hands)

Etude 17: Standard #3 Right-Hand Solo

(Comping chords with the left hand and playing a melody with the right hand)

Etude 9: Standard # 1 Comp with Bass Line

Fmaj7 Am7(b5) D7(#9) Gmi9 Bmi7(b5) E7(#9) Fmaj9
 Bb13 Am7 Eb9 D7sus D13(b9) Gmi9 Bmi9 Eb9 F#9
 Emi9 A7(#5) Dmi9sus G13(#11) G9 Gmi9 Ami9 Bbmaj7 C13(b9)
 Fmaj9 D7(#9) D7(b9) Gmi9 Bmi9 E7sus Fmaj7 Bb13
 Bb13 Emi9 A7(#5) D7sus D7(#9) Gmi9 Bmi9 Eb13
 Fmaj9 Bb7 Am7(b5) D7(#9) G13 G7(#5) Gmi9 C13(b9) F6 D7(#9)/C Gmi7/C C13(b9)

Etude 10: Standard #I Comp Chords

F#9 Bb9 Am7(b5) D7(#9) Gmi7 Bmi9sus E7(b9) F#m9

Bb15 Am7(b5) Dmi7(#9) D15(b9) Gmi9sus E7(#11) F#m9

A7(#9) Dmi9sus Ab15 G15(#11) G15 C7sus G15(b9)/C C7sus C15(#9)

F#m9 Am7(b5) D7(b9) Gmi9sus Bmi9sus E7(#9) F#m9 B7(#9/5)

Bb15(#11) Bb15 Emi9sus A7(#9) Cm7/O D7(#9) Gmi9sus Eb9 Eb15(#11) F#m9 Bb15(#11)

Am9sus D7(#9) G15 G7(b5) Bbm7/C C15(b9) F#9 D15(b9) Gmi9sus Bbm7/C

Etude 11: Standard # I Right-Hand Solo

Handwritten musical score for piano in B-flat major, 4/4 time. The score consists of six systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). Chord symbols are written above the treble staff, and measure numbers (5, 10, 15, 19, 24, 29) are written below the bass staff. The music features a mix of eighth and quarter notes in the right hand and block chords and simple bass lines in the left hand.

Chord symbols: F#9, Bb9, Am7(b5), D7(#9), Gm7, Bm9sus, E15, F#m9, Bb15, Am7(b5), D7(#9), Gm9, Eb7sus, Eb9, F#m9, Em9, A7(#9), Dm9sus, G15, Gm9, Am7, Gm9, C15(b9), F#9, Am7(b5), D7(#9), Gm9, Bm9sus, E7(#9), F#m9, Bb15(#11), Am7(b5), D7(#9), Gm9sus, Bm9sus, Eb15(#11), Eb9, F#m9, Bb15(#11), Am7(b5), D7(#9), Gm9, Ab15(#11), Gm9, C11, F#9, D7(#9), G15, C7(#9).

Etude 12: Standard # 2 Comp with Bass Line

C9 Bm7(b5) E7(#9) Am9sus Abm9 Gm9 C15 Fm9 Bb7

Em7 A7(#5) Dm D9 Dm9 G7(#9) C#6 Bm7(b5) E7(#9) Am9

Abm9 Gm9 C15(b9) Fm97 F# C#m7/G A7(#9) D15 G15(b9) C#m6 Ab15

Gm9 C7(#9) Fm9 Gm9 Ab0 F#6/A Bbm9

Em A#6 Abm9 Dm9 G7(#5) C#6 Bm9(b5) E7(#5) Am9sus Abm9

Gm9 C15 Fm9 F# C#m7/G A7(#9) D9 G15(b9) C#m6 G15(#11)

Etude 13: Standard # 2 Comp Chords

Handwritten musical notation for the first system, measures 1-5. Chords: C6/9, E7(#9), E9(#11), Am9sus, Gm9, C7(#9), F6/9.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system, measures 6-11. Chords: E7sus, A7(#9), D11(#11), Dm9sus, G11(b9), C6/9, Bm7(b5), E7(#9), Am9sus, Abm9sus.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system, measures 12-17. Chords: Gm9sus, C11(b9), Fm9, Bb11(#11), Em7, A7(#9), Dm9sus, G11(b9), C6/9, Abm9.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system, measures 18-23. Chords: Gm9, C11(b9), Fm9, Bm9sus, Eb11(#11).

Handwritten musical notation for the fifth system, measures 24-29. Chords: Am9, Abm9, Dm9, G11, C6, Bm7(b5), E7(#9), Am9sus.

Handwritten musical notation for the sixth system, measures 30-35. Chords: Gm9sus, C11(#11), Fm9, Bb11(#11), Em7, A11(b9), A7(#9), Dm9sus, G11(#11), C6/9, G11(#11).

Etude 14: Standard #2 Right-Hand Solo

Cmaj9 Bmi7(b5) E7(#9) Ami9 Abmi9 Gmi9 C15
 Fmaj7 Bb15(#11) Emi9 A7(#9) D7sus D9(#11) Dmi9 G7(#9) C6/9
 Bmi7 E7(#9) Ami9 Gmi7 C7(#9) F6/9 F#o7
 Cmaj7/G A7(#9) Dmi9 G15(b9) C6/9 Abmi9 Gmi9 Ami7 Gmi9 C15(b9)
 Fmaj9 Gmi9 C15(b9) Fmaj6 Bbmi9sus Eb7(#9) Abmaj9
 Dmi9 G15 C6/9 Bmi9(b5) E7(#9) Ami9 Abmi9 Gmi9 C7
 Fmaj9 Bb15 Emi9 A7(#9) Dmi9 G15(b9) C6/9 G7(#9)

Etude 15: Standard # 3 Comp with Bass Line

This page contains six systems of piano accompaniment. Each system consists of a treble and bass clef staff. The music is written in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes chords, melodic lines, and dynamic markings.

System 1: Chords: Dmi15, E7(b9) A7(#9), Dmi9 B7(#9), Bb15 A7(#9), Dmi15 A7(b9).

System 2: Chords: Dmi7 B7(#9), E7(#9), A7(#9), D11 D15(b9), G11 G7(#9).

System 3: Chords: C11 C15, Cmi9 F9, Bbmaj9 Eb9, Emi9 A7(#9).

System 4: Chords: Dmi7 E7(#9) A7(#9), Dmi7 B7(#9), E7(#9) A7(#9), Dmi15 A7(#9), Dmi9sus.

System 5: Chords: Bmi7sus E7(#9), A7(#9), Cmaj7/D D15(b9), Fmaj7/G G7(#9).

System 6: Chords: Bbmaj7/C C7(#9), Cmi9 F15, Bbmaj7 Ebmaj9, Emi9 A7(#9).

Etude 16: Standard # 3 Comp Chords

Dmi9sus Emi9(b5) A7(#9) Dmi9sus E7(#9) A7(#9) Dmi9sus A7(b9)

Dmi7sus Bmi9sus E7(#9) A7(#9) Ami9sus D7(#9) Fmi7/G D7(#9)

Gmi9 C7(#9) Cmi7sus F#11(b9) Bb6/9 Emi9sus(b5) A7(#9)

Dmi9sus Emi9sus(b5) A7(#9) Dmi9sus E7(#9) A7(#9) Dmi7sus A7(#9)

Dmi9sus Bmi9sus E7(#9) A7(#9) D11 D7(#9) Fmi7/G

Bbm7/C C7(#9) Cmi9 F#11(b9) Bb6/9 Emi9sus(b5) A7(#9)

Etude 17: Standard #3 Right-Hand Solo

Dmi7sus E7(#9) A7(#9) Dmi15 Emi7(b5) A7(#9)
 Dmi15 A7(#9) Dmi9 Dmi15 Bmi9(b5) E7(#9)
 A7(#9) D7sus D7(#9) Fmaj7/G G15 Gmi9 C7(b9) Cmi9sus
 F7(#9) Bbmaj9 Emi9 A7(#9) Dmi15 A7(#9)
 Dmi7 E7(#9) A7(#9) Dmi15 Dmi(maj7) Dmi9
 Bmi7(b5) E7(#9) A7(#9) Cmaj7/D Dmi9 G7(#9)
 Gmi9 C7(#9) F15 F7(#9) Abmaj7/Bb Bb15 Emi9sus(b5) A7(#9)

Etude 18: Another Blues Right-Hand Solo

(Comping chords with the left hand and playing a melody with the right hand)

For Etude 18, as in the other etudes, there are places where both hands join together to play a two-handed voicing. You will find dominant 7 sus chords throughout this etude. In measure 16, there is a tritone substitution (instead of Fmi7/B67, I use Bmi7/E7).

Check out the sound and shape of the piece, and see how the two hands interact. There is a real conversational quality to the relationship between hands. One always compliments the other. When this same kind of empathy can happen between an instrumental soloist and the pianist, then you're really saying something. This is why it is so crucial that, as a horn player, you are familiar with the language of piano comping. With this familiarity comes the ability to truly converse with the pianist in a call-and-response fashion, constructing your phrases in a way that breathes and leaves room for input from the pianist.

I've found that accompanying instrumental students on the piano has increased my awareness of the relationship between piano and soloist. You can really feel if the soloist is phrasing in a sensible way from the piano chair. When a horn player constructs phrases that make good musical sense in their improvisations, it is easier to accompany on the piano. When the instrumentalist is over-playing, or playing in a way that is not in context, you have to work much harder at the piano to keep the music moving forward.

Etude 18: Another Blues Right-Hand Solo

8b15 8b7(#9) Eb9 8b15 Abmaj7/Bb

8b9 8b7(#9) Dbmaj7/Eb Eb9 Ebm19 Ab9 8b15 Eb9

Dm19 G7(#9) 8bmaj7/C C9 Cm19 F7(#9) 8b15 G7(#9)

C15 F7(#9) 8b15 Eb9sus4 Eb9 Abmaj7/Bb

Bm17sus E7 Eb7sus Eb9 Eb7sus Eb9 8b15 A15

Ab15 G15 G7(#9) C9sus4 C15 Cm19 F15 Bb7(#9) G7(#9) C15(b9) F7(#9)

Etude 19: Another Blues Comp Chords

(Comping chords with both hands)

Etude 19 is a blues comp that might be played as an accompaniment to a horn solo. You could conceivably play this in a piano solo as well. The voicings are colorful and lush-sounding. Play this piece slowly and absorb the sound of the voicings and how they move. It is these types of chords that helped to open my ears as an improviser. They are abounding in 9ths, 11ths and 13ths. Many of the voicings also have a half-step interval somewhere in them, which creates a nice harmonic tension surrounded by more spacious intervals such as 3rds and 4ths. The stacked fourth interval sound demonstrated here is widely used by all the modern pianists, and is paramount to the jazz piano vocabulary.

Once you've learned the notes and can play the piece in tempo, play along to a metronome where the $\sim = 100$. You can have the clicks on 1 and 3, or 2 and 4. Play off the quarter-note pulse by hearing the ride cymbal and walking bass line in your head.

If you can get this to feel good, you may be ready for your first piano jazz gig! Incidentally, think about notating these voicings for the horns—they will sound quite good. You might try writing a blues in this style for six horns (2 trumpets, 3 saxophones and 1 trombone). The main consideration here is that the notes lie in a good range for the instruments.

Etude 19: Another Blues Comp Chords

8b15 F#i7sus 8b9 Eb/Ab 8b7sus 8b7(#9)

Eb9sus Eb15 F9sus F7(#9) 8b15 G7(#9) C9sus F#15(#11) F15

F15(b9) 8b9 F15 F7(#9) 8b15 F#i7sus 8b15

F7(#9) 8b15 8b7ALT(#9) Eb9 Eb9sus Eb15 F7(#9) 8b15

Ab15 G7(#9) C7(#9) F7(#9) 8b7(#9)

F7(#9)

Etude 20: Ballad

(Combine: Comping chords with the right hand and playing a bass line with the left hand, and comping chords with both hands)

This piece should be played at a slow tempo, $\text{♩} = 60$. The key to making this etude effective is to focus on playing in a legato fashion where there is a smooth connection between notes and a beautiful sense of phrasing. In general, all notes should be played long.

Try to think horizontally, moving gracefully from one chord to the next. You will find instances of inner motion, where a secondary melody is played and, if possible, bring these moving lines out a bit. In the 10th measure I use a G pedal with an ostinato chord progression that creates a sense of suspension for four measures. The ostinato rhythm continues in measures 14-17, but this time in the left hand.

What I tried to do with this piece is to provide a variety of textures from phrase to phrase. In a slow tempo like this, it is imperative that you play in a beautiful and interesting way. There is no place to hide when playing slow tempos. I sometimes think of making each phrase "sing."

Etude 20: Ballad

Gmaj9 C#m C#m7(b5) F#7(b9) Bmi7sus Emi7sus
 Gmaj9 F#m Gmaj9 C#m7(b5) F#7(b9) Bmi7sus Emi7sus

Ami(b6) D7sus Gadd Gmaj(b6) Gmi(maj9#11) G#m G7(#5) F7sus Emi7sus

Ami7 Eb15(#11) D11 D15(b9) Ami9/G Gb6acc9 Gsus(b2) Cmi9sus/G

Ami9/G Gb6acc9 Gsus(b2) F#mi9 B7(#5b9#9) Am7/B Em9/B A6/B Em9/B

Cmaj7/D Gmaj9 Cmaj7/D Gmaj9 Fmi9sus Bb15 Dbmaj7/Eb Cmi9sus G9(#5) Cmi9sus

F#mi7(b5) B7(b5) Em10 Bb15 A15sus D11 D15(b9) Gmaj9 C11 Gmaj9 F11

Gmaj9 C#mi7(b5) F#7(b9) Bmi7sus Emi7sus Ami7sus D15(b9) Ami9/G Gb6acc9

Gsus(b2) Cmi9sus/G Ami9/G Gb6/9 Fsus(b2) Em15

Etude 21: Latin Comp Chords

(Comping chords with both hands)

This etude is a blues comp that can be played in a cha-cha tempo. I wrote a tonic bass note on the "and" of beat 1 in alternating measures for rhythmical emphasis. Regarding feel or concept, try to play this one on top of the beat with an even eighth-note feel. Needless to say, it is essential to check out a few Latin piano recordings of artists like Eddie Palmieri and Tito Puente to see what this is all about. In the mean time, Etude 21 is a piano etude to work on and absorb.

The first voicing is a Dsus7 and is sometimes called Cmaj7/D or simply C/D. One of the interesting things about this first voicing is the half-step interval at the bottom (C against B). I like the sound of this a lot. That little bit of dissonance provides a nice texture to an otherwise opensounding voicing. I use this chord a lot in my writing.

In the 12th measure, the A7(#9#11#5) has an interesting sound. The inner voices are close together (C, D6, E6, F), thus creating a thickness and richness that has a lot in the way of rhythmical impact when played in this context. Play it and listen and you will hear what I'm describing. The syncopated quality of this piece can be somewhat challenging if you haven't had exposure to this kind of music. It should be played very deliberately with lots of weight given to each chord. Although these articulations are marked staccato, they should not be played too short but instead, with a fatness and funkiness-the staccato suggests separation, not duration.

Etude 21: Latin Comp Chords

Sheet music system 1. Chords: D7sus. Measure numbers: 5, 9.

Sheet music system 2. Chords: C7sus, D7sus. Measure numbers: 5, 9.

Sheet music system 3. Chords: G15, F15, Ew7(b5), A7(#11), D7sus, D15, A7(#11). Measure numbers: 9, 13.

Sheet music system 4. Chords: D7sus, D15, C7sus, D7sus, D15, D7ALT(#9). Measure numbers: 13, 17.

Sheet music system 5. Chords: C7sus, C15, C7sus, D7sus, D15, C7sus, D7sus. Measure numbers: 17, 21.

Sheet music system 6. Chords: G15, F15, Ew7(b5), A7(#11), D7sus, D15, C7sus. Measure numbers: 21, 25.

Etude 22: Latin Comp with Bass Line

(Comping chords with the right hand and playing a bass line with the left hand)

This etude utilizes a typical Latin bass line in the left hand combined with two commonly played comps, or montunos, in the right hand. It may take a minute to get this up and running rhythmically. But once you do, it feels really great to play. Practice it slowly and gradually increase the tempo. This is a good etude to play for as long as you can. The idea is to get to the point where you can play this on auto-pilot, not thinking at all about what you are doing. You can play with a metronome set at a variety of tempos, where the click is set to the half note.

The combination of left and right hand sets up one of the greatest and most interesting grooves that I know. Getting this groove into your bones will most certainly help your jazz playing, as well as help your sense of timing in whatever music you choose to play. With all the syncopated figures, a lot is implied rather than stated. The fact that the bass line hits on beat 4, rather than on the downbeat of the next measure, creates this beautiful floating sensation that propels the music along in such a cool way. Latin music is such an integral part of jazz music. Everyone should have some idea of how Latin rhythms function, particularly from the piano chair.

Hopefully these two Latin-based etudes will get you started. I strongly suggest you continue with the Latin groove and check out other Afro-Caribbean recordings!

Etude 22: Latin Comp with Bass Line

Musical notation system 1, measures 1-4. Chords: D7sus, D9, D7sus, D9.

Musical notation system 2, measures 5-8. Chords: D7sus, D9, D7sus, D9.

Musical notation system 3, measures 9-12. Chords: G13, F9, E7(#9), A7(#9), D7sus, D9.

Musical notation system 4, measures 13-16. Chords: D7sus, D9, D7sus, D9.

Musical notation system 5, measures 17-20. Chords: D7sus, D9, D7sus, D9.

Musical notation system 6, measures 21-24. Chords: G13, F9, E7(b9), A7(#9), D7sus, D9.

Chord Voicing Glossary

Chord progression 1: C9, C13

Chord progression 2: C7sus

Chord progression 3: Cm9

Chord progression 4: Cm9, Cm9sus, Cm13sus, Cm13sus

Chord progression 5: C7(#9), C13(#9), C7(#11), C13(#11), C13(b9#9#11), C7(#9)

Chord progression 6: C7(#9), C7(#5b9#9), C7sus(#5b9)

Bob Mintzer Selected Discography

As Leader

1980 Horn Man (Canyon Records)

1981 The Source (Canyon Records)

1984 Papa Lips (CBS Sony)

1985 Incredible Journey (DMP)

1985 The First Decade (compilation) (DMP)

1986 Camouflage (DMP)

1988 Spectrum (DMP)

1989 Urban Contours (DMP)

1990 Hymn (OWL)

1990 The Art of the Big Band (DMP)

1991 I Remember Jaco (Jive/Novus)

1991 One Music (DMP)

1991 Departure (DMP)

1993 Only in New York (DMP)

1994 Twin Tenors (Novus)

1995 Big Band Trane (DMP)

1996 Live at Jazz Club Fasching (Dragon)

1998 Latin from Manhattan (DMP)

1998 Quality Time (TVT)

2000 Homage to Count Basie (DMP) (GRAMMYTM)

2003 Gently (DMP)

2004 Live at MCG (MCG Jazz)

2005 In the Moment (Art of Life Records)

2006 Old School New Lessons (MCG Jazz)

2008 Swing Out (MCG Jazz)

With the Yellowjackets

1990 Greenhouse

1991 Live Wires

1992 Like a River

1993 Rynferyerlife

1994 Dreamland

1995 Blue Hats

1997 Club Nocturne

2000 Mint Jam

2002 Time Squared

2004 Altered State

2005 25

2008 Life Cycle

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1980 Buddy Rich Live at Ronnie Scott's
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1981 Jaco Pastorius Birthday Concert
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1985 Bobby McFerrin Best of Bobby McFerrin
1986 Steve Winwood Back in the High Life
1987 Marianne Faithfull Strange Weather
1988 Peter Erskine Motion Poet
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1990 Don Grolnick Weaver of Dreams
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1992 GRP Big Band
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1993 Michael Franks Dragonfly Summer

1993 GRP All Star Big Band GRP All Star Big Band: Live!

1994 GRP All Star Big Band All Blues

1995 Steve Winwood Finer Things

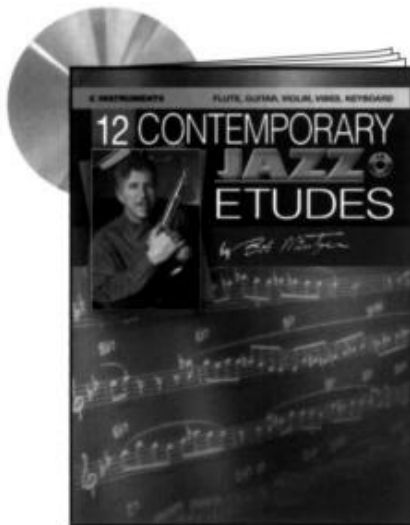
1995 Michael Franks Abandoned Garden

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