

# MO-IAJE

## *Fall/Winter Newsletter 2007-08*



Dear Jazz Educators,

Hello! This is my first edition of the official MO-IAJE Newsletter since I was elected to the office of the MO-IAJE secretary. I want to give Jeff Melsha, previous secretary and current webmaster, great thanks for the years of service and contribution he has made to MO-IAJE and jazz education in Missouri, and for all the information I keep asking him. I hope you find this newsletter full of useful information. Another great place to find everything you wanted to know about Jazz Education in Missouri is our wonderful website: [www.moiaje.org](http://www.moiaje.org). In fact, if you would like to become a member of IAJE, you can visit our website for information on joining.

This Fall/Winter edition of the MOIAJE Newsletter contains some noteworthy news about the upcoming MMEA clinics, performances, and meetings at Tan-Tar-A, All-State Jazz Audition Stats, Jazz Festivals, Clinicians and a special Guest Column.

Thank you all for the support you have shown to the state organization. If you have any questions regarding our organization or the national IAJE organization, want to contribute ideas, suggestions, and articles for the upcoming newsletters, please feel free to contact me or any executive board member.

Sincerely,

*Lori*

Lori Hutton  
MOIAJE Secretary

## ***In this Issue...***

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**GUEST COLUMN - TIM AUBUCHON**



## **2008 MMEA Jazz Performances**

Congratulations to the following groups who have been selected to perform  
at the 2008 MMEA Conference:

***Univ. of Missouri-Columbia – Dr. Douglas J. Leibinger, Director***

***Thursday, 4:30 pm***

***Fort Zumwalt West High School Jazz & Madrigal Ensemble***

***Beth Enloe-Fritz; Friday 4:15***

***Blue Springs High School – Tim Allshouse, Director***

***Friday, 5:30 pm***

***All-State Jazz Band – Michael Philip Mossman, Director***

***Saturday, 2:00 pm***

# 2008 MMEA Jazz Conference Clinics

There are many clinics and sessions this year that deal with jazz including general and choral music. Please check them out.

- Wednesday 8:00 PM    MO-IAJE Jam Session
- Thursday 9:00 AM        “Beginning Jazz Improvisations in the Classroom Grade 5 Through 8” - Martin Norgaard
- Thursday 11:30 AM      “Ideas on Starting and Maintaining a Jazz Program at the Middle School and High School Level” - Garry Anders
- Thursday 2:15 PM        “Samba to Salsa - A guided tour through the fertile (if Confusing) world of Latin/Jazz styles - James Dreier
- Thursday 3:15 PM        “Performing Jazz Pieces with Your High School Orchestra Or Chamber Group” - Martin Norgaard
- Thursday 3:30 PM        “SmartMusic: Reinventing Jazz Education” - Leigh Kallestad
- Thursday 5:00 PM        “Structured Jazz Practice Routines for Time Constrained (Normal) People” - Michael Philip Mossman
- Thursday 10:15 PM      “MO-IAJE Reading Session”
- Friday 12:45 PM         “I Would Do Jazz with My Choir, But I Don’t Know How” - Dr. Robert Lawrence and Brian Reeves
- Friday 1:15 pm          “What’s In A Title? Choosing Appropriate Literature For Your Jazz Ensemble” - Bob Long & Garry Anders

# All-State Jazz Audition Statistics

A big thanks goes to Steve Sampsell, All-State Coordinator, for a wonderful job of making state jazz auditions go smoothly. Steve has provided us with the following stats. The number of students who made District Bands was 355. The number of students that signed up to audition was 297. The number of students who actually auditioned was 277.

	Could Have Auditioned	Did Audition
Northwest #1	23	21
Northeast #2	24	21
K.C. Metro #3	49	46
West Central #4	24	22
Saint Louis Suburban #5	30	29
Central #6	39	21
East Central #7	32	21
Saint Louis Metro #8	37	28
South Central #9	43	29
Southeast #10	32	21
Southwest #11	22	18

The following is a breakdown by districts of students that made the group as members or alternates.

	Members	Alternates
Northwest #1	1	3
Northeast #2	2	1
K.C. Metro #3	4	1
West Central #4	0	0
Saint Louis Suburban #5	7	2
Central #6	1	0
East Central #7	0	1
Saint Louis Metro #8	3	4
South Central #9	1	2
Southeast #10	0	4
Southwest #11	1	2

## **All-State Jazz Rehearsals at MMEA**

You are welcome to sit in on the Jazz Rehearsals. All rehearsals are in the Auditorium which is the small building down the hill at the end of the circle drive. This is a great opportunity to meet the All-State Director and pick up a lot of ideas on rehearsal techniques and jazz pedagogy. Michael Philip Mossman, the 2008 All-State Jazz Band Director, is director of the Jazz Studies program at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College/CUNY. You can find great information about him and also a picture in the 2007 Summer Newsletter, which can be found online on our website.

## **Jess Cole Award**

The Jess Cole Award, instituted and sponsored by Arch Martin, will be presented to an outstanding contributor to the causes of jazz performance and education in Missouri. This year, the presentation will take place immediately before the University of Missouri - Columbia Jazz Ensemble Concert on Thursday, January 24 at 4:30 PM.

## **2008 Jazz Festivals**

Please check out our website for a listing of Jazz Festivals held around the state. You'll find dates, contact information, guest artists and even online applications. This is a great educational avenue for both the director and the students to learn more about jazz.

## **Area Jazz Educator Clinicians**

There are a lot of area jazz educators and performers that would be more than willing to come to your school and clinic your jazz band(s). Check out our website under Jazz Directory for a current list. Also, check area colleges and universities as well. This is especially useful in preparing for jazz festivals and a great tool if you are not able to go to a jazz festival.

# Guest Column: Tim AuBuchon

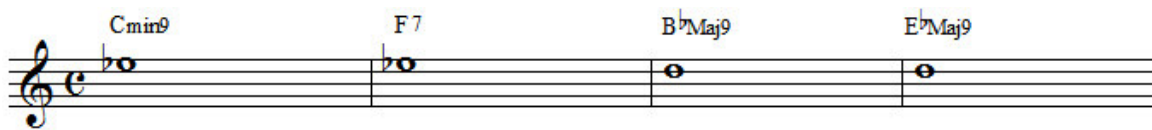
## Using the Melody as a Starting Point in Jazz Improvisation

By Tim AuBuchon

There is probably more information available today than ever dealing with the subject of jazz improvisation. Besides the numerous books published by Jamey Aebersold, David Baker, Jerry Coker, and many others, there are internet sites with theoretical information and discussion groups. You can even get online lessons! However, the more I teach improvisation, the more I realize that musically satisfying results generally do not happen without a solid foundation in the melody of a tune - even if the student is using all of the theoretically correct notes. Even advanced players often treat the melody like a piece of wrapping paper – something to get through on the way to the good stuff, and then immediately put aside.

Using the melody as an improvisational tool requires practice. Here are some techniques I have found to be useful when working with melodies.

When learning a new tune, I memorize the melody first, but while I am doing this, I try to also memorize the chord progression. A strong connection between the melody and chord progression is essential to understanding the tune. Such a connection improves melodic playing and helps the soloist keep the form of the tune. It enables the improviser to hear chord/scale degrees melodically. For example, one of the most basic melodic lines in jazz is found in the standard tune Autumn Leaves. Here is a reduction featuring the most important notes of the melody. (The original melody is not published in this article, but can be found in numerous fake books and playalongs, including Jamey Aebersold Vol. 54 *Maiden Voyage* and the *New Real Book* Vol. 1.)



The melody perfectly outlines a guide tone line over a ii-V-I progression – the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the ii and the 7<sup>th</sup> of the V are the same, and the 7<sup>th</sup> of the V resolves by step to the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the I.

One effective way to associate the sound of the chord roots with the melody is to simply play both. This is easiest on piano, of course, but can be done on any instrument. Note that the bass note anticipates the new chord by an eighth note. This is common practice for jazz rhythm sections.



Don't worry about keeping steady time with this exercise – the goal is to hear how the melody relates to the harmonic progression. Remember that the original melody always sounds good over the chord progression. Melodies by jazz composers like Charlie Parker and Tadd Dameron are rich with ideas from the bebop language, which is still considered to be the model for playing over chord changes.

After learning the melody and bass notes, add other chord tones to the melody – start with one per chord.



Practice varying the melody more extensively using the original notes as a framework. This can be a virtually inexhaustible source of improvisational ideas. Besides being very helpful in improving your improvisation, melodic variation is common performance practice. When a jazz musician performs a standard tune, he or she does not perform the tune as it would appear on a lead sheet or in a fake book. This is especially true for tunes by non-jazz composers, i.e. the Tin Pan Alley Songbook (Rodgers and Hart, Gershwin, etc.). Playing these tunes WITHOUT melodic variation is decidedly un-jazzlike.

Knowing the melody of a tune well can also help unlock more complex chord progressions or at least simplify their performance. The chord progressions of some jazz tunes appear to be extremely complex, but their melodies are still memorable, and jazz musicians still play beautiful, melodic solos over them. Many compositions by Thelonious Monk exhibit these traits. Playing around the melody in Monk tunes is sometimes the only way to sound good on the progression! Learn to use melodies to gain information about harmonic tension and release. The guide tone line in Autumn Leaves is a good example; here is a more complex example, written on the chord progression of Bemsha Swing by Thelonious Monk.

basic structural pitches from melody

17 C A7 A<sup>b</sup>7 D<sup>b</sup>7 C A7 A<sup>b</sup>7 D<sup>b</sup>7

solo using structural pitches

21 C A7 A<sup>b</sup>7 D<sup>b</sup>7 C A7 A<sup>b</sup>7 D<sup>b</sup>7 C

When learning a new tune with your big band or combo, try to find a lead sheet with the melody and chord progression, or make one yourself. This is good for the whole band, but is especially useful for soloists. If they are serious about improvisation, have your students memorize the melody and chord progression, then work on varying it. You should see an immediate improvement in the maturity of their improvisations. There are many accurate sources for lead sheets, including the *Real Book*, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition published by Hal Leonard and the *New Real Books* published by Sher Music. Although it does take time and planning, teaching from the melody can be very effective with a group, and it doesn't require much theory to get started.

Sometimes the amount of theoretical information available is simply overwhelming for students getting starting in improvisation. Working with melodies is a great way for those students to get over the theory hurdle. For students with a better grasp of jazz theory, starting from the melody of a tune will lead to more musical and meaningful improvisations.

Tim AuBuchon is Director of Jazz Studies at Truman State University and President of the Missouri Unit of the International Association for Jazz Education.