

GENERAL INFORMATION

This booklet is designed to give you the basics which you will need in order to learn the art of improvising in music. Many feel that people who improvise or play jazz are special. If they are special, it is because they have spent their time wisely learning the tools of the trade. A few of the tools are: scales, chords, patterns, licks, songs (standards and originals), training the ear, listening to records of jazz greats and any other thing which they feel will contribute to the growth of a well-rounded musician.

I feel it is good to establish a practice routine, especially for those of you who are new to learning the language of jazz. To play jazz requires discipline, and discipline is good for all of us.

The language of jazz or the jazz idiom is in a constant state of flux. In order to be a part of the jazz movement one must accept change. Jazz has changed greatly over the past 85 years and is presently in transition. Each generation of jazz musicians contribute their own unique ideas, feelings, and sound to the music and this is what creates the change. If you equip yourself well, you may be one of those people who influence others and set new trends in jazz.

If you want to get it all together, I suggest reading each of the pages in this booklet very carefully. Mark with pen or pencil points that you feel are important so when you flip through the pages in the future your eye will catch them. ***Listen, listen, listen*** carefully to anyone playing jazz or improvising. You can learn much from live performances as well as records. Start a record collection and listen to what has been recorded over the past 70 years. You are in for a treat!

Spend your practice time wisely. Don't play things over and over that you can already play. This is great for the ego but does little to advance your musical progress. Be patient with yourself. Don't expect everything to come at one setting. They say that things come to us when we are ready to accept them. A healthy mental state is also responsible for progress when practicing.

Gradually train your ears to really HEAR music and all of the components that make the final product. Read the pages on Ear Training carefully and institute a daily routine to improve your perception. There are also other pages that help spell out an excellent practice routine.

Since most of us do not have a good rhythm section at our disposal, I recommend practicing and soloing with the play-a-long records. Each volume contains a book and one or two recordings. Many professionals use these recordings to warm-up, keep in shape, practice new patterns or licks, or to learn new songs and improvise on the chord/scale progressions.

During the past ten years, many private teachers as well as high school and college teachers have made the recordings part of their daily or weekly teaching assignments. It is good to begin playing with a rhythm section as soon as possible and the better they are the more you can benefit from the experience.

Playing jazz teaches self-esteem and independence.

I also highly recommend our **SUMMER JAZZ WORKSHOPS** which are offered in the U.S. each summer. Some of the finest performers and teachers of jazz appear at these weeklong workshops. Write care of Summer Jazz Workshops, P.O. Box 1244, New Albany, IN 47151-1244, or see our website at <http://www.jazzbooks.com> for more info.

Last but not least, play on the best instrument that you can afford and study with the finest teachers available.

May your journey in music, and jazz in particular, be as enjoyable as it has been for me in putting this booklet together for you.

Jamey Aebersold