

## Scavenger Hunt

Scavenger hunts, Saturday yard sales, shopping for antiques around town – fun for a lot of people, maybe boring for some. Or maybe you're into recycling. Whatever your tastes, get ready to find, reuse, and polish those hidden gems – you know, *the gems you have already played*.

## Keep Your Eyes Open

As any good treasure hunter knows, you've got to keep your eyes open. The best things are often hard to spot at first. So what are you looking for? Something quirky, something elegant, something compelling ... in what you just played (or what the rhythm section just played). Remember, all that glitters is not gold, so you'll be setting a lot of material aside. But those little gems can turn into big ones with some careful musical *development*.

## The Exhibition

As you gather your gems, you'll find a thousand ways to polish them (well, maybe a few hundred) ... Remember, the goal is interest, not perfection. Ironically, perfection will come and rest on your shoulder every once in a while as you're searching for the interesting.

This process is such a magical one as it unfolds! It builds as much excitement in you as it does in the audience. Too bad most improvisers seem to ignore it to search for something bigger and better. But when you start with small things, you can turn them into bigger and better, a step at a time. In doing so, you create a bond between you and the music, and between you and the audience. Once you discover how to do this, you'll wonder why so many players settle for less. Hmm ... they get less by trying to do more, and you get more by carefully using less. That's one to think about.

Of course, there are times to open the throttle and let it all go. In those cases (and you have to sense *when* they're right), taking your sweet time is the wrong thing to do. So it comes down to the back-and-forth motion – sometimes slowly building the heat, and sometimes letting it explode.