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# Jazz Arranging and Performance Practice:

*A Guide for  
Small Ensembles*

PAUL E. RINZLER

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by  
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## PREFACE

*Jazz Arranging and Performance Practice: A Guide for Small Ensembles* is a compendium of arranging techniques for the small jazz ensemble. This book not only covers the *rudiments* of arranging (such as notation, ranges, transpositions, and voicings), but deals with the real issues of arranging for a small jazz group, that is, the *structural elements* of arranging (intros, endings, accents, breaks, dynamics, style changes, time changes, form changes, rhythm section approaches, and so forth).

In the case of small groups, these elements of arranging are inseparable from performance practice. Performance practice is the set of conventions and rules that performers use to create a performance. It has traditionally centered on the problems of the authentic interpretation of early music. The conventions that enable a jazz performer to create a performance (aside from improvisation) are actually arranging techniques. Usually, arranging has been narrowly defined to include only that which can be written. But in jazz, performance practice and arranging are intertwined: significant compositional and arranging decisions are left to the performer, and not determined in advance by the composer/arranger. Jazz performers are also arrangers, whether the arranging is done two months before a performance and well rehearsed, or two minutes before the performance and merely discussed, or during the performance spontaneously. Included in this book are arranging techniques that must be notated for performers and are commonly discussed in small group arranging books, as well as techniques that are capable of being discussed immediately before (or sometimes even during) a performance and are rarely mentioned in small group arranging books.

The rules and principles outlined in this book are descriptive in

that they outline what common practice is in jazz and some of the ways that common practice has been or may be stretched or changed. Because jazz inherently requires a great amount of creativity from the performer, common practice in jazz should not be seen as a set of absolute, proscriptive rules, but rather as guidelines. Almost any technique not normally a part of common practice can be made to work, much like a mistake in improvising can be made to work if the improviser is clever enough. Also, whether a principle of common practice is actually applied or not depends on the musician's orientation toward creativity and craft. If one's goal is faithfulness to a style and to the craft of music, then common practice defines what is appropriate. If one's goal is to be creative, then common practice defines the starting point for further creative developments as well as the context in which the musician's creativity is heard. In the end, it is up to the individual musician to decide (either spontaneously or in a prearranged fashion) the musical effect desired, and then to choose the appropriate technique to produce that intended result. By defining common practice principles in jazz and some of the ways they have been developed, the foundation for jazz performance practice as well as the starting point for further creative developments is outlined.

The following factors were considered when choosing tunes to illustrate various arranging techniques. A tune or a specific recording was a candidate for inclusion if it was one of the following:

- Part of the standard repertoire
- Available in some written form, such as a published arrangement
- Arranged in an especially interesting manner
- Considered to be the definitive version
- Recorded or easily available on LP
- Recorded by a prominent jazz artist
- Representative of a particular jazz style
- Of historical interest

The musical examples in this book are excerpts intended to illustrate certain arranging techniques. However, the reader is encouraged to listen to the original recordings in their entirety. Hearing the music is essential to understanding the arranging techniques discussed. Also, in order to put these arranging techniques into practice, the musician should seek out the written version of the tunes.

An index of those tunes cited in this book has been provided (see "Index of Tunes"). This index cross-references the titles of tunes cited, the artist and LP from which the reference is drawn (if any), the arranging technique discussed, and the page number where the discussion occurs in the text.

To the extent they were available and I was able to locate them, copyright notices for all musical excerpts used in this book are shown by each musical excerpt. Where works were published without copyright notice, or with incomplete copyright notice, I was unable to place a notice on those excerpts. Any failure to place any copyright notice is accidental and unintentional.

I would like to thank Gene Aitken at the University of Northern Colorado for his advice and suggestions on the draft of the manuscript for this book, as well as the University of California, Santa Cruz radio station KZSC for the generous use of their facilities. I would especially like to thank my wife, Susan, for all her help and encouragement.

## CONTENTS

Preface	v
I. BEGINNINGS (INTROS)	1
Turnarounds	1
Material from the Head	2
New Material	6
Pick-up Notes	14
Free Time	15
Vamps	16
Pyramids	17
No Intro	17
II. ENDINGS	18
Tags	18
Similar Endings and Intros	21
Linking Several Endings	21
Cliché Endings	22
Fermatas	22
Staccato	24
Vamps	25
New Material	26
Ritard	26
III. ACCENTS, BREAKS, DYNAMICS	27
Accents	27
Breaks	38
Dynamics	42
IV. STYLE CHANGES	43
Style Changes within a Chorus	43
Style Changes between Choruses	44
Style Changes for an Entire Tune	45
Free Jazz	47

V.	TIME AND TEMPO CHANGES	49
	Definitions	49
	Tempo Changes	51
	Time/Feel Changes	53
	Meter Changes	56
	Playing Behind and Ahead of the Beat	58
VI.	FORM CHANGES	59
	Standard Forms	59
	Standard Jazz Arrangement	60
	Changing the Chorus Structure	61
	Number of Heads	66
	Solos	67
	Changing the Melody	70
	Fours	72
VII.	RHYTHM SECTION PROCEDURE	74
	Different Procedure in Head	75
	Dropping Instruments Out	78
	Deviations From Standard Patterns	79
VIII.	JAZZ HARMONY	86
	Chord Symbols	86
	Relationship between Chords and Scales	86
	Notating Extensions and Alterations	91
	Chord Progressions and Substitute Chords	91
	Common Turnarounds	94
	Reharmonizing the Given Chord Progression	96
IX.	HARMONIZATION AND ORCHESTRATION	98
	One-part Writing	99
	Two-part Writing, Note-to-Note	100
	Three-part Writing, Note-to-Note	104
	Spacings and Inversions	107
	Combinations of Instruments	108
	Limited Harmonization	109
	Counterpoint and Backgrounds	110
	New Melodies	116
	Appendix A. Notation	118
	Appendix B. Instrumentation	122
	Appendix C. The Rhythm Section	126
	Appendix D. Annotated Arrangement	132
	Glossary	141
	Bibliography	147
	Discography	150
	Index of Tunes	158
	General Index	169



## I. BEGINNINGS (INTROS)

Listeners immediately begin to form a wealth of associations as soon as the first notes of a piece of music are heard. It is at this point that the listener's attention and interest must be caught and held. Often, intros give the listener an opportunity to expect and predict mood, style, and the like. At other times, the intro may surprise the listener by having no connection to the rest of the tune. An intro is usually long enough so that it does not appear arbitrary or too abrupt, but also short enough so that it does not detract from the tune itself. For the sake of variety, tunes should not begin in the same way or with the same kind of intro.

### TURNAROUNDS

The most common type of all intros is a turnaround, a two-bar (or sometimes a four-bar) chord progression that is usually taken from or inserted into the last two bars of an eight-bar phrase. If the last two bars of a phrase do not already contain a turnaround progression but are merely, for instance, two bars of the tonic chord, a turnaround is typically performed anyway. As an intro, a turnaround must lead into the first chord of the head in a harmonically satisfactory manner. Some common turnarounds that lead into a tonic  $C^{\Delta}7$  are given in Ex. 1. Many more variations are possible through the principles of chord substitution (see page 95).

## 2 Jazz Arranging and Performance Practice

### Ex. 1 Common Turnarounds

C <sup>Δ</sup> 7	A-7	D-7	G7	C <sup>Δ</sup> 7
C <sup>Δ</sup> 7	A7	D7	G7	C <sup>Δ</sup> 7
C <sup>Δ</sup> 7	Eb <sup>Δ</sup> 7	Ab <sup>Δ</sup> 7	Db <sup>Δ</sup> 7	C <sup>Δ</sup> 7

### Length and Number of Repetitions

In its most typical form, the turnaround intro is played three times. Depending on its length, a turnaround may be played once, twice, or more than three times. For instance, the chord progression in the last four bars of *Bluesette* is a common turnaround, and can be played either two or three times (Ex. 2).

### Ex. 2 Turnaround for *Bluesette*

$\frac{3}{4}$  D-7 | G7 | C-7 | F7 :|| Bb<sup>Δ</sup>7

Playing it only once would tend to make the intro seem abrupt. A short turnaround played more than three times should be considered a vamp.

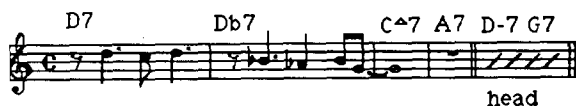
## MATERIAL FROM THE HEAD

Using material from the head for an intro establishes a basic unity in an arrangement. While the following outlines common ways in which material from the head may be borrowed for intros, any distinctive aspect of the head may be used, whether it is a rhythmic idea, a special chord or progression, a distinctive melodic phrase, etc. This distinctive part of the head needs only to be developed slightly in order to make an effective intro.

### Parts of Phrases

Chord progressions or parts of phrases taken from the head can be used as intros. Often, the intro will be the last four bars of a phrase. For instance, the last four bars of *Satin Doll* make a medium-length intro (Ex. 3). Clifford Brown's *Daahoud* uses an intro that is derived from the first phrase of the head (Ex. 4), as is Thelonious Monk's solo piano intro to *Misterioso* (Ex. 5).

Ex. 3  
Intro for *Satin Doll* #1



Ex. 4  
Intro for *Daahoud*



Ex. 5  
Intro for *Misterioso*



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### Complete Phrases

Entire phrases are easily used as intros. They may be played with the accompanying melody, without the melody, or with a short solo. Often, the first phrase of a chorus is used for an intro. The C section of an ABAC tune (such as *All of Me*) is a common choice for an intro for that tune. Bobby Hutcherson uses the C section for an intro in his version of *Some Day My Prince Will Come*.

## 4 Jazz Arranging and Performance Practice

### Complete Chorus

A whole chorus may even be used as an intro. Joe Sample solos for one chorus while bass and drums provide fills in the intro to his version of *On Green Dolphin Street*.

### Seamless Transition to the Head

One of the most obvious but effective sources of material for intros is the texture of the head. By using a special rhythm section figure or pattern for the intro in addition to the beginning (or more) of the head, a seamless transition can be made between the intro and head. This is opposed to cleanly articulating the beginning of the head by means of a break, accents, or other methods, as is often the case. The intro to *Arcade* by John Abercrombie features a short, repeated bass line played by the piano and the bass, and continues unchanged as the head begins. The same technique is used for *Footprints*, as recorded by Miles Davis. In this case, a special bass line is played during every single chorus, heads and solos included. Because this sometimes can become monotonous, the bassist may decide to walk a bass line during the solos. A seamless transition from the intro to the head can be easily applied to a tune like *Stolen Moments*, which also has a short, repeated bass line. The bass lines for *Arcade*, *Footprints*, and *Stolen Moments* are given in Ex. 6-8. A similar seamless transition occurs on Eric Dolphy's version of *On Green Dolphin Street*, in which a dissonant horn background serves as the intro as well as the background for the first eight bars of the head (Ex. 9). Quest, with David Liebman, has recorded a version of Ornette Coleman's *Lone Woman* that also makes such a transition, in this case in a free-time, pulseless style.

Ex. 6  
Bass Line for *Arcade*



Ex. 7  
Bass Line for *Footprints*



Ex. 8  
Bass Line for *Stolen Moments*



Pub. by Noslen Music Co.--BMI

Ex. 9  
Intro for *On Green Dolphin Street*



**Other Parts of the Head**

Any distinctive part of the head is often a good choice for an intro. For instance, the distinctive leap to the G# in the third bar of *Take the A Train* is also part of the intro normally played to this tune (Ex. 10).

Ex. 10  
Intro for *Take the A Train*



## 6 Jazz Arranging and Performance Practice

The melody to *Blue Bossa* is basically a series of descending scales with a particular rhythm. This feature can be used to create an original intro, using a turnaround for the chord changes (Ex. 11).

Ex. 11  
Intro for *Blue Bossa* #1



Herbie Hancock's live version of *Maiden Voyage* uses the chords from the head in a distinctive way. The tune begins with a piano solo based on the characteristic rhythm of the piece, but using the second chord in the progression, C-7/F. This is done to set up a contrast between the intro and the head; the change to the first chord of the progression signals the end of the intro (even though the head itself begins after another eight bars). This is illustrated in Ex. 12.

Ex. 12  
Intro for *Maiden Voyage*

8X  
||: C-7/F :||: A-7 :|| head  
vamp

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### NEW MATERIAL

An intro need not always be taken from material used in the head. In contrast to material from the head, the use of newly composed material as an intro keeps the listener in doubt as to what will follow. The intro usually retains some basic similarities to the tune that will follow (such as style, feel, or tempo). The intro to *Sugar* by Stanley Turrentine (Ex. 13) is not found in the head, but is still very similar to

Ex. 13  
Intro for *Sugar*



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the head. However, intros also can be created that have very little relation to the head. By varying the tempo, feel, key, changes, dynamics, etc., such intros can establish varying degrees of surprise.

### New Progressions

Often, a simple chord progression can serve as an intro, as in the intro to *Sugar* noted above, if it leads into the first chord of the head in a harmonically satisfactory manner (Ex. 14).

Ex. 14  
Intro for *Summertime*

D-7 | Eb-7 | D-7 | Eb-7 | D-7 | Eb-7 | Bb7 | A7 || D-7

Note in Ex. 14 that the seventh and eighth bars do not automatically repeat the two-chord progression. In this case, the progression moves to the dominant in order to lead to the first chord of the head (minor tonic chord).

On the other hand, an intro may be based on a chord progression that may be as complex as desired and have little relation to the head. This provides a high degree of contrast between the harmonies of the head and those of the intro.

### New Melodies

In contrast to intros that are based on harmonic factors, melodies can also be the basis for intros. *Confirmation* is often played with the riff-like intro in Ex. 15 (the bass line and chords beneath the melody are optional). Almost any simple, repeated riff can be used as an intro

## 8 Jazz Arranging and Performance Practice

### Ex. 15 Intro for *Confirmation*

(bass line & chords optional)

F7

© Sonet Productions Ltd., 1975

### Ex. 16 Intro for *Salt Peanuts*

(Horns)

(Piano) to head

© 1973 Prestige Records

for almost any mainstream or bebop tune. The intro for *Salt Peanuts*, also used for the ending, is based on a two-note melodic idea (Ex. 16).

### Intros for Some Common Tunes

*Airegin*, *All the Things You Are*, *Joyspring*, *My Favorite Things*, *Nica's Dream*, *Satin Doll*, and *Seven Steps to Heaven* have intros that



are not derived from the head but are commonly played (Ex. 17-23). 'Round Midnight has two different intros associated with it: one based on the intro used in a Miles Davis recording of the tune (Ex. 24), and the other based on the intro used by Thelonious Monk, who composed 'Round Midnight (Ex. 25).

Ex. 17  
Intro for *Airegin*

4X

F-7

Gb<sup>7</sup>

3

3

2

3

3

2

Ex. 18  
Intro for *All the Things You Are*

Db-(<sup>7</sup>)

C-(<sup>7</sup>)

1.

2.

C7

F-7

head