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# PREFACE

The famous Jazz trumpet player Dizzy Gillespie often said “You have to know the piano”. If you listen to and analyze his numerous compositions, it quickly becomes clear that this outstanding musician knew his harmony and voice leading and thus knew his way around the piano as well.

*Jazz Piano – Voicing Concepts* is primarily directed at “non-pianists” (saxophonists, guitarists, singers etc.) who would like to expand their knowledge of Jazz piano. The only prerequisite for working with this book is the ability to read notation in the treble and bass clefs. You should also be familiar with the layout of the piano and possess basic theoretical knowledge about keys, intervals and the major scale. As the book is designed for self-study, you can find proposed solutions for all the exercises in the separate accompanying Solution Key. It is recommended to start working with the book from the beginning so that the contents can be retained in an effective manner. Even advanced pianists should work through the first *BASICS* chapter to be assured that they don't have any knowledge gaps when it comes to constructing chords. In contrast to classical piano methods, you won't find any technical finger exercises in this book. What will primarily be shown is voicings (chord structures). Additionally study with a qualified teacher is highly recommended so you can learn the other aspects of piano playing such as flexibility, notation, repertoire, interpretation, improvisation etc. *Voicing Concepts* is conceived to complement traditional piano instruction when it comes to the topic of creating and playing chords.

Almost all of the practical examples have been derived from well-known Jazz standards and thus allow direct application to your playing. But a book can never be an equivalent substitute for the musical experiences you make when playing with other people. Put what you have learned into practice as soon as possible by playing with other musicians.

The accompanying CD contains the most important exercises. Many exercises are repeated several times. At first, the piano should play the exercises as notated. The rhythms and voicings that a piano player would use with a rhythm section can then be played on the repeats. Using the balance knob on your stereo, you can fade out the recorded piano part.

The “Jazz Piano Concepts” series also includes the following titles: *Jazz Piano – Solo Concepts* (Solo Jazz Piano) and *Jazz Piano – Improvisation Concepts* (Jazz improvisation). It is recommended to work with all 3 books simultaneously.

Special thanks again to Nico Schliemann for his excellent and patient layout work in this book and to Jan Reinelt for his critical and constructive reading of the manuscript. Very special thanks also goes to my excellent editor Brigitte Windolph who manages to find (almost) every mistake as well as to Detlef Kessler and the team at AMA Publishing for their confidence in me.

I dedicate this book to my wife Claudia because, as a singer, she not only appreciates her pianist but good piano voicings as well.

Finally, I would like to wish much fun and success working with this book!

Philipp Moehrke

Bad Krozingen, Dezember 2006

### EXERCISE:

- Play the classical major and minor cadence at a slow tempo in all keys. Use the same pattern you used for the triads and 4 note chords.
- Sing the individual parts (i.e. G–A–G–G; E–F–D–E; C–C–B–C). This will help you to grasp and comprehend the voice leading better.
- Keep track of your progress using the check boxes.

Root position                      1st inversion                      2nd inversion

C   F   G   C                      C   F   G   C                      C   F   G   C

### CHECK BOX

C MAJOR	F MAJOR
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B $\flat$ MAJOR	E $\flat$ MAJOR
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A $\flat$ MAJOR	D $\flat$ MAJOR
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G $\flat$ MAJOR	B MAJOR
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E MAJOR	A MAJOR
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D MAJOR	G MAJOR
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

An overview of the most common voicings used in Jazz follows. As you can see, the voicings are always constructed according to the rules of the voicing pyramid. All the voicings shown here will be discussed in this book.

### All the Voicings for C7

#### Root Voicings

Root      Bud Powell      3 Note Open      4 Note Open      5 Note Open      5 Note Open (closed)

#### Rootless Voicings

Guide Tones      3 Note Left Hand      4 Note Left Hand      Drop 2      Drop 2 & 4      Upper Structure

#### Root Voicings

Root      Bud Powell      3 Note Open      4 Note Open      5 Note Open      5 Note Open (closed)

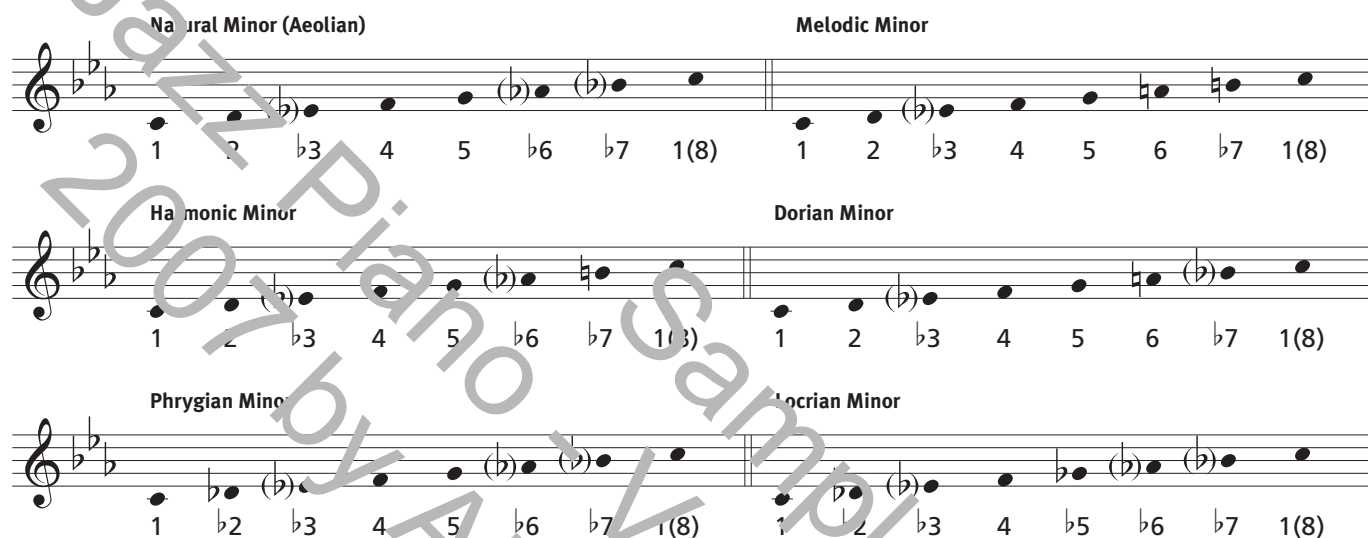
#### Rootless Voicings

Guide Tones      3 Note Left Hand      4 Note Left Hand      Drop 2      Drop 2 & 4      Upper Structure

# CHAPTER 3: MINOR DIATONIC

## DIATONIC CHORDS IN MINOR

Diatonic chords can be derived from a minor scale as well as from a major scale. There are different minor scales:



The image displays six minor scales on a treble clef staff, each with its degree numbers listed below the notes. The scales are:

- Natural Minor (Aeolian):** 1 2  $\flat 3$  4 5  $\flat 6$   $\flat 7$  1(8)
- Melodic Minor:** 1 2  $\flat 3$  4 5 6  $\flat 7$  1(8)
- Harmonic Minor:** 1 2  $\flat 3$  4 5  $\flat 6$   $\flat 7$  1(8)
- Dorian Minor:** 1 2  $\flat 3$  4 5 6  $\flat 7$  1(8)
- Phrygian Minor:** 1  $\flat 2$   $\flat 3$  4 5  $\flat 6$   $\flat 7$  1(8)
- Locrian Minor:** 1  $\flat 2$   $\flat 3$  4  $\flat 5$   $\flat 6$   $\flat 7$  1(8)

## MODAL INTERCHANGE

Many jazz standards, although written in a major key, use diatonic chords from a related minor scale. This substitution of diatonic chords is called modal interchange. Often the diatonic chords of the melodic minor scale are used here.

Therefore it is recommendable to know the diatonic chords of the melodic minor scale and to be able to play these using standard voicings.

### EXERCISE:

- Play the diatonic chords of the **melodic minor** scale ascending and descending with the following voicings in all keys.
- Take as much time as you need and play, if necessary, out of tempo.
- Speak the degree of the scale and the chord name out loud before playing as demonstrated on track 7 of the CD.
- Keep track of your progress by using the check boxes again.

# UPPER STRUCTURE VOICINGS

Another kind of two handed voicing is the “upper structure voicing”. It usually consists of two guide tones played with the left hand and an ordered upper structure of notes (a triad or structure of fourths). The upper structure usually consists of several chord extensions and is played with the right hand.

<p><b>D Major Triad over C7</b></p> <p>C7(<sup>#13</sup>/<sub>#11</sub>/<sub>9</sub>)</p>	<p><b>Fourths structure built on the sixth degree over C7</b></p> <p>C7(<sup>13</sup>/<sub>9</sub>)</p>

An upper structure voicing must have **at least one chord extension**:

<p><b>Upper Structure Voicing</b></p> <p>C7(#9)</p>	<p><b>Not an Upper Structure Voicing</b></p> <p>Cm7</p>

It is possible to use a guide tone in the upper structure. To avoid doubled notes (especially doubled thirds) it might be recommended to play the root note with the left hand.

<p><b>Doubled Note</b></p> <p>C7(<sup>13</sup>/<sub>9</sub>)</p>	<p><b>No Doubled Note</b></p> <p>C7(<sup>13</sup>/<sub>9</sub>)</p>

**Tip:** Try to play the lowest note of the upper structure no further away than a sixth from the uppermost guide tone. Otherwise the sound of the upper structure will get lost. The upper structure triads can obviously be played in other inversions as notated above.

# CHAPTER 7: GROOVES

## RHYTHM PATTERNS FOR JAZZ ACCOMPANIMENT

Up to this point, most of the examples were chosen so that the voicings would and should be played on a beat. This form of accompaniment is especially liked by vocalists (“Less is more!”). For a rhythmically more interesting accompaniment, some already established rhythm patterns can be used.

One main feature of jazz is syncopated playing. In rhythmical jazz accompaniment, chords are often played before or after their notated time.

**Common:**

Dm7      G7(9)      CΔ7

**Anticipation:**

Dm7      G7(9)      CΔ7(13)      CΔ7(9)

**Delay:**

Dm7      G7(9)      G7(♭9)      C°7      CΔ7