Integrating Jazz Improvisation Materials Into Trumpet Warmup and Development Routines

Brian Lynch
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For the jazz trumpeter or jazz trumpet instructor, designing and implementing robust and flexible maintenance and development routines can be a challenging task. In the studio or the practice room, a common tendency is to separate the warmup and maintenance portion of one’s routine from the practice of material associated with the development of improvisational technique, relying on traditional routines and studies. Often, at the conclusion of a routine robust enough to prepare the player for the demands of the day, there is very little bandwidth left, physical or mental, to practice improvisational materials. As a result, jazz trumpeters may skimp on their warmup and other routines important for the preservation and development of essential technique in order to have sufficient practice time to work on improvisation and repertoire.

In this lecture/demonstration, original exercises and practice routines that aim to integrate sound warmup/maintenance/developmental principles with musical concepts and material conducive to gaining improvisational fluency in the jazz idiom will be presented.
Goals Of These Exercises

• To develop technical parameters of good brass playing (sound, flexibility, note connectivity, efficiency, endurance/strength, range, etc.) while using materials and concepts relevant to improvisation.

• To encourage good form and high level execution by brass players when practicing improvisational technique.

• To encourage a creative and problem solving approach in practice for the improvising brass player.

• In general, to integrate technical and improvisational concepts; to combine the routine and the “shed”.
Warmup & Flow Exercises: “Pentatonic Pairs”

- Pentatonic pairs term first introduced to BL by Willie Thomas

- Pentatonic Pair - the four notes in common between two adjacent pentatonic in the cycle of fourths

- Pentatonic Pairs Flow Exercises influenced by Cichowitz Flow Studies and other flow exercises

- Whole steps in pairs reminiscent of James Stamp Warmup

- Bends can be incorporated
PENTATONIC PAIR WARMUP & FLOW ROUTINE 2018

PLAY THIS LINE AT INTERVALS BETWEEN SUCCESSIVE ASCENDING LINES AS NEEDED...

B

Music notation image.
Pentatonic Pairs Around The Circle

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Bryan Lynch

Suggested Pedal Points:
1) Single Tongue (tenuto), other articulations

Music Staff
Flexibility Studies
Incorporating Triad Pairs
Range Expansion Through Dominant Scale Exercises
Range Expansion Exercise #2

Play Surved and With "Bebop" Articulation

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Adapting Chord Qualities (Arpeggios and “Grip” Formations) To Traditional Routines
Core Scale Routine Condensed - Major (4)  

TRUMPET

Play Routine Also in Melodic Minor (b3), Harmonic Minor (b3, b6, b9); Harmonic Major (b6); Lydian Dominant (b5, #7); Altered Dominant (b2, b3, #5, b5, b6, b7); Lydian 7

Notes and Their Modes:

1. 1a-3

1b-9 Also 6va

1c-3

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12 Key Condensed And Abbreviated Scale Routine

1c-3

1d-9

Alt. EVA

2a-8

Alt. EVA

2b-2
The “Phil Woods” Exercise
Getting The Most Out Of Exercises

• Be aware of the technical aspects and challenges of an exercise and what areas an exercise can develop.

• Break up exercises to focus on specific technical elements and issues. Incorporate and vary articulation throughout all exercises and routines.

• Developing the ability to “get off the page” is vital - this is really internalizing the musical content of the exercise and being able to play it at any pitch level.

• Be creative with the exercises - explore the possibilities both musically and technically.

• Understanding the technical and conceptual principles involved will enable the player to alter any exercise to suit their own needs from day to day; and also to devise their own exercises based on their improvisational goals and needs.