

A Cross-intervallic Chromatic Concept

Stretch your improvisational thinking by using wide-interval leaps and chromatic elements

After initial inspiration from my teacher Joe Viola, and the experiences of my own 20 years of playing and teaching, I have developed a method which helps to expand upon the traditional approaches to improvising over chord changes. I call it the "cross-intervallic, chromatic approach." It involves playing both small and large intervals coupled with chromatic approaches to, and departures from, the notes as a method of ex-

panding the traditional bebop style of soloing over chord changes.

To learn it, increase your fluidity by practicing leaps of fourths and fifths in succession. Working on them in all keys will develop facility and prepare you for playing wide-interval figures such as those found in example 1. After practicing in a constant eighth-note rhythm, vary the rhythms a little to keep the intervallic leaps from sounding repetitive.

Once you have mastered this wide-interval concept, start introducing some chromatics. Inserting them in strategic places will keep your lines from sounding too pattern-like and create melodic flow (see example 2). These chromatics are also instrumental for passing subtly from one unrelated harmonic area to another and for superimposing various harmonic structures over an already-established tonality (see example 3). This provides freedom from the bebop approach, opening the door to a non-harmonic or even atonal approach.

Depending on the musical situation you

by
**George
Garzone**
'72
and
**Joe
Viola**
'53



George Garzone, left and Joe Viola. Viola is chair emeritus of Berklee's Woodwind Department and Garzone's mentor. An associate professor and widely renowned saxophonist, Garzone has just released *It's Time for the Fringe* on the Soul Note label with his free jazz trio the Fringe.