## **Deborah Henson-Conant Workshop Materials**

## Standard Jazz Arrangement

- 1. The Standard Jazz Arrangement
- 2. Role Playing in Jazz
- 3. Q & A
- 4. Tune(s) for trying out these arrangement ideas!
- 5. A Jazz Lexicon

#### A note to harpers at the Arles workshop:

The arrangement we used in Arles is different than the arrangement in these materials.

I'm pretty sure the arrangement we used went like this:

Rubato Intro (remember... each harp played an arpeggio. I think

the chords were: G-F-Eb-F

**Vamp Intro** (m. 1 - 4, repeated; then m. 5-20)

||: **Melody**:|| (m. 21 - 24, repeated)

Blowing on the Vamp (m. 5-20 -- repeat it, if you wish)

**||: Melody:||** (m. 21 - 24, repeated)

**Blowing on the Vamp** (m. 5-20 -- repeat it, if you wish)

**||: Melody:||** (m. 21 - 24, repeated)

**Blowing on the Vamp** (m. 5-20 -- repeat it, if you wish)

||: Melody :||

||: Melody :||

Repeat the melody as desired

Both the Arles arrangement or the arrangement in the sheet music are fine. Have fun!!!

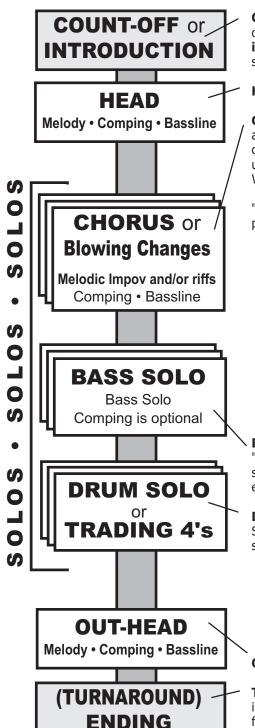
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## 1. The standard jazz arrangement

Most jazz and blues players play standard arrangements of pieces. These arrangements usually follow the same same pattern, something like a"Theme and Variations."

Using this traditional pattern (or arrangement), players anywhere in the world can play together. Knowing the standard pattern of a jazz is like knowing the steps of a folk-dance or the rules of a game. If everyone plays by the same rules, everyone has fun.

Below is the standard jazz form. Remember that this is a GUIDELINE, not a RULE. There are many variations of this basic pattern.



**Count-off or Introduction:** There are many ways to start a tune. The "count off" is when the band leader yells: "One! Two! One-two-three-four!." A **musical introduction** may be a rubato taste of the melody, or a kind of "vamp" that sets up the rhythm, or a gliss - or any combination of those!

**Head:** The "head" is the melody, the tune everyone knows.

Choruses or "Blowing Changes" for "Solos": Each variation or "chorus" is an improvisation of a certain length, with certain harmonic changes. These are called the "Blowing Changes." Most arrangements use the same changes that underly the "head," but some use a different set of special blowing changes. When that happens, those special changes will be written into the music.

" Each "chorus" is like a separate variation; each "solo" is a chance for one person to "shine" while the others accompany.

#### Who solos - and how??

- If the band is small (1-3 people), maybe only one person solos. But she may "take" many "choruses" during that solo.
- If the band is large, usually several people "solo," one after the other, and each solo may last for one or more choruses.

Regardless of how many choruses a solo lasts, each solo ends at the end of a chorus. It never ends in the middle of a chorus.

When one solo is done, the next solo begins at the beginning of the next chorus. There is no lag time in between the choruses, even when the solo player changes.

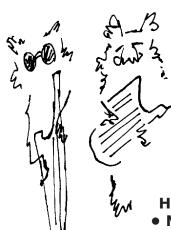
**Bass Solo:** If there is a bass solo, it usually follows the last chorus that a "melodic" instrument takes. Sometimes other players comp (accompany) softly during the bass solo. Sometimes the bass solo is completely solo (i.e. everyone stops playing but the bass player).

**Drum Solo or Trading 4's:** The drummer is often the last to take a solo. Sometimes the band will "trade 4's" with the drummer instead of having a straight drum solo.

**What is "trading 4's?":** One player improvises for 4 bars, then everyone stops and the drummer plays for 4 bars. Then somone else "solos" for 4 bars, then the drummer plays alone for 4 bars; and so on . . . until the correct number of bars has been played so the drummer ends at the end of a chorus.

Out-Head: Play the melody again at the end (like a "Recapitulation")

**Turnaround / Ending:** Every tune has some sort of ending: Standard endings include a "turnaround" (repeating one or two measures just before the final ending), a "vamp and fade," a ritard and certain "stock endings."



#### 2. ROLE PLAYING in JAZZ

These are the standard "roles" of jazz players:

Melodic	Accompanimental	Bassline	Percussion
(soloist)	(comping)	(bass)	(drums)

**The harp** is one of the only instruments that can play ALL four jazz roles. That means you must be aware of what role you are playing and change your playing to fit that role.

Here are the basic guidelines for playing each role:

- Melodic (soloing): play above middle C preferably keep most of the melody at least an octave above that; double your melodic line if possible, play hard and loud; play single lines (no chords!!!)
- **Accompanimental (comping):** dry, unarpeggiated chords; Range: G above middle C down to C an-octave-below mid-C.
- Bass: "Bassline type" etouffer (thumb only), or octaves (but must damp them); if you break an octave, break from top to bottom (not bottom to top); Range: low C and below.
- **Percussion:** All harp playing in jazz is rhythmic. If you are actually taking on the role of the drums, play the soundboard lightly, or damp the metal strings with your LH and strum rhythmically with your RH (esp. good when playing Latin tunes).

### 3. Q & A

What is a Jazz Solo? In a jazz solo, at least part of the band keeps playing, but only one person has the "role" of soloist. That person usually usually "solo's" by improvising melodically or playing "riffs." During this solo, the other instruments either "lay out" (don't play) or play accompanimental roles ("comping," "bassline" and "percussion").

**How long is a chorus?** A "chorus" is "one time through" the "blowing changes."

**What are "changes"?** Changes or "blowing changes" are the underlying "harmonic changes" or harmonic form that people "take solos on."

**How long is a solo?** A solo must begin at the beginning of a chorus and end at the end of a chorus -- but it can last for as many choruses as the soloist wants -- or until the rest of the band clobbers her.

**How do you know when to start your solo?** Either the band-leader will decide before the tune what order people will solo in, or the band-leader will point to you (or give you some visual signal) just before it's time for you to solo. Your solo will begin when the current soloist ends -- but always at the beginning of a "chorus."

**How do you know when to end your solo?** A beginner usually just "takes" one or two choruses. An intermediate player often decides how many choruses they'll take ahead-of-time. An advanced player creates an "arc" in their solos (so no matter how many choruses she takes, it sounds like one sweeping idea, or a connected, arching series of ideas) and solos "until they're done."

INTRO 1 (OPTIONAL):

SOLO RUBATO CELTIC MELODY

INT20 2:

# Drunken Sailor Improv (for lever harps in $8^{\flat}$ , $E^{\flat}$ , or $A^{\flat}$ )

ARR DEBORAH HENSON-CONANT

BEGIN THIS LH SLAP VAMP BELOW







### BLOWING (IMPROVISE WITH R.H. OVER THIS BASSLINE)

If you're "comping" for others, play both hands (play soft, strong, rhythmic, unbroken)

IF YOU'RE "SOLDING" (WITH OTHERS COMPING), SOLD "OVER" THIS VAMP (DON'T PLAY IT). PLAY LOUD, DOUBLED, SINGLE-NOTE LINES.

IF YOU'RE PERFORMING THE PIECE SOLO, PLAY THE LH AND "SOLO" WITH THE RH





41 PLAY 4X, GETTING LOUDER EACH TIME. 4TH TIME, UP AN OCTAVE. STAMP YOUR FEET IN RHYTHM, IF POSSIBLE.

