



Lesson 20 - Chromatic Approaches - Final Exam

- Welcome to lesson 20, so this is your final exam. Good work on those last two sections and by now you have two really solid techniques writing chromaticism into your target note approaches. So you have an exhaustive, purely chromatic approach that completely ignores the surrounding chord scales. So that's 12 different combinations. And then you have a three-note forward motion approach using one chromatic note strategically slotted into the existing scale of the moment. So having targets for where you want your musical phrases to start, pass through, and end are basically the rules of the game of jazz improv. And practicing chromatic approaches is like learning the critical sport maneuvers, such as layups in basketball, spike in volleyball, or wrist shots in hockey. That's what I mentioned at the beginning. So we worked a lot on those quick little moves, and we didn't really talk about the game itself. So now we're going to put you to the test. This final section is your exam for the course. It won't be graded, although we could. But whether or not you can confidently apply the techniques you have been drilling will tell you if you've passed the course, or if you need to keep studying. The exam is just like the studies you've played before, but will be entirely improvised. This is over the changes to the Horace Silver tune Strollin, and you will have your improvised approaches to whole-note targets, and then again over half-note targets. If you can improvise approaches to half-notes well, then you've passed. Even if the tempo is relatively mild, like 80 BPM or 100 BPM. This is a good chance for you to be your own coach, and I always encourage you to take, and re-take the exam multiple times. The whole point is to focus on your practice, and practicing your weak points, so try it out using just purely chromatic approaches. And then try it out using just the forward motion approaches. Your goal is to be able to access any approach at any time, from any starting point without thinking about it. Just like you need to be able to do, say, on a basketball court, you don't think you just play. Someone throws the ball at you and you know to dribble, and get to the net, and et cetera. So now, remember, the whole point of this section is to simply set a benchmark for you to know if you had a good handle on the

techniques that you've learned in this course. And as I've mentioned in every section, it's always a good idea to revisit the drills found here to strengthen your ability with these techniques. However it's even more important... this, I mentioned earlier too... to adapt these drills and exams over all the songs you're learning. Or, the songs you currently know. So, if you wanna know if you're adept at chromatic approaches, see, try, All The Things You Are, you know? Can you do it? See if you can write out a half-note target study and improvise both types of approaches without hesitating. Are you confident with one and two-note chromatic approaches, but not with the three and four-note approaches? Or vice versa. It's really time to revisit those specific drills once you notice something that is, that sounds like an imbalance in your playing. Aside from the whole-note and half-note improvisation exams, I have also included a single-note solo study, based on the half-note targets. So based on the hardest one. This is a demonstration of mixing simple diatonic chord scale motion that you learned in improv 101 and 102, with purely chromatic and forward motion approaches on half-note targets, and in this case you'll find that playing three note approaches of any sort will result in constant stream of eighth notes. Lots of ammo to keep going. This is a good time to mention that you'll need to be thinking ahead at all times towards the next target. If you think about the notes you're currently playing, or even the moment, you'll lose your place. You need to look ahead, always, like one driving. You look at the next target, not this is where your mind is. Additionally, you might notice that we used the purely chromatic approaches primarily on the harmonically messy areas of the form. So, most notably, anywhere you see a two-five cell, a half-step away from another two-five cell, we don't use the forward motion stuff, we use the pure chromatic. Lastly, we'll also be taking a third pillar concept to our approaches by using displacement. Shifting, or how I like to say, rhythmic displacement, or Rhythmic Displacement, so you're shifting some of the targets earlier or later, depending on the effect we want. So, this study, the written solo is great for showing you some of the places to use or not use chromaticism in your approaches. So, keep... Take a look at it and practice what works best for you and learn what you can from the rest. You don't need to memorize the solo. You can just, you know, take a look at it, listen to it, grab a few licks that you enjoy. Good luck, don't be afraid to go back and review what you feel shakiest on. Please keep me posted if you have any questions and have fun with this.