

Jazz Clinic Information

Jazz education exists alongside band and orchestra training and "stands alone" in its history, performance, and pedagogy. To approach jazz education the same as other genres of musical training would do a disservice to the history of America's original art form and to those legendary musicians who created it. Proper instruction in jazz requires an approach deeply rooted in aural training; listening, transcribing, and emulation of professional musicians is the only way to achieve an authentic sound, style, melodic language, and groove. Creating a program that helps students develop properly can be daunting and even overwhelming for music educators.

My goal as a clinician is to provide support for music educators who are developing jazz pedagogy and, of course, for students who are performing in big bands, combos, and studying improvisation. Below are several topics of interest that can provide focus for your clinic. These topics can be applied to nearly any types of material or repertoire in order to strengthen your ensemble.

Topics of Interest

Jazz Styles

- Learning how to adapt tone, articulation, and feel to create authentic performances of numerous subgenres
 - Traditional/New Orleans, Swing, Bebop, Cool, Modern, Afro-Cuban, Samba/Bossa Nova, Funk, Modal, etc.
- Rhythm Section coaching - feel/groove, comping
 - Guitar/piano chord voicings.
 - Roles of each instrumental voice.

Improvisation

- Transcribing
 - Emulating iconic musicians (i.e. Miles Davis, John Coltrane, etc.)
- Listening
 - What and How?
 - Thoughtful listening

Improvisation, cont'd

- Theory
 - Chord type/Scale type
 - ii/V/I and other common progressions.
 - Form
 - Creating basslines
 - Voice leading/guide tones/target notes

Big Band

- History and application of iconic ensembles (i.e. Basie, Ellington, Schneider, Thad Jones/Mel Lewis, Mingus, etc.)
- Ensemble balance and articulation
- Phrasing

Combo/Small group

- Musical interaction in the small group setting
- Cultivating a "sound"
 - Studying the historic combos (Louis Armstrong/Hot 5/Hot 8, Jazz Messengers, Miles 1st quintet/2nd quintet, etc.)

Coaching/Consultation for Directors

- Creating a rehearsal regimen that achieves short-term and long-term goals in improvisation, style, and ensemble technique
- Best practices in improvisation pedagogy (i.e. should I use the blues scale?)
- Using call and response
- Coaching the rhythm section
- Setup and amplification pitfalls
- Choosing repertoire
- Teaching the concept of "Swing"
- Building an all-inclusive jazz program