

Piano Accompaniment from Pop/Rock to Praise & Worship

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Music available on iTunes

Workshop Goals

Goal #1: How to accompany off a lead sheet or chord chart

Goal #2: Using this as a way of teaching chord structure and theory

Through out workshop I'll be moving between "How to teach this" and "How to play this"

My Music Theory Disconnect

Until I understood how to implement Music Theory in 'REAL TIME,' theory was an abstract concept. There was little understanding, but rather a lot ambiguous rules and tricks.

For example:

Why is the 4th and 5th interval called Perfect?
How do you find the relative Minor to a Major Scale?

Prerequisites for Success

The more options in your pallet the more versatile you will become. Here's a few must haves:

All the Chords/Triads/Shapes in a major scale

Scales Beyond Major & Minor

- ✓ Blues
- ✓ Pentatonic

Keep it Simple & Practical

Which means:

- start with simple chords (C, E-, G, D, A-)
- start with simple songs they already know

How skilled is the soloist?

Low Skill

Lot's of Melody support from piano

High Skill

Accompaniment can move further and further away from melody and rhythm
but still let the soloist be the STAR

Can't Help Falling in Love (As an example)

Chord Shape can give the song it's color

Idea #1 (Low Skilled Soloist):

R.H. Using the melody note as the anchor
playing the chordal harmony down
L.H. Play the root and 5th

Idea #2 (High Skilled Soloist):

Stay away from melody altogether
Start incorporating rhythm/harmony
L.H. using arpeggiations
Fill in the blanks

Chord Shape Tips

A Couple Do's and Don'ts
of Chord Changing

- ✓ Stay away from melody (with higher skilled soloist)
- ✓ Try to avoid repetitive root position
- ✓ Don't have to play entire chord
 - ✓ Find those common notes
 - ✓ 'Force' a common note
i.e. add 2nd or 4th to tie chord together
 - ✓ Subtle/Easy Changes
 - ✓ Subtle=Warm
 - ✓ Block=Power

Harmonize to the Melody

A Couple Ideas to Experiment with:

- ✓ 3rd's, 4th's, 5th's and 6th's
- ✓ Parallel harmonies—watch 5th's they tend to sound real clunky
- ✓ Don't have to change all the notes with melody note changes
- ✓ Again, find those common chord notes
- ✓ Again, 'Force' a common note in both Left & Right Hand

Fill the Spaces

Fill the space where the melody takes breaks...Improvisation!!!!

The role of scales really takes off with this knowledge.

If you stick to in key notes it will usually sound good (although some notes do sound better than others)

Couple tips:

- ✓ Create space between melody and improvisation
- ✓ Keep it simple
- ✓ Don't overshadow the real melody
- ✓ Start simple

You Raised Me Up

Here's what you will hear:

- ✓ L.H. a lot of broken chords, arpeggios, and scales
- ✓ R.H. Creates space between melody and improvisation
- ✓ Simple harmonies...very little out of key notes
- ✓ Don't overshadow the real melody

Workshop Goals

Goal #1: How to accompany off a lead sheet or chord chart

KEEP LEFT HAND SIMPLE AND WIDE (think 1st, 5th, & 8th) & RIGHT HAND CHANGES NEED TO BE SUBTLE (usually)

Goal #2: This teaches and reinforces chord structure and theory

USING LEAD SHEETS REINFORCES THE PRACTICE APPLICATION OF CHORD SHAPES AND USAGE

(and is more interesting than arpeggios and traditional warm-up)

Can't Help Falling in Love--Pre Teaching Ideas

Chords in Isolation...showing these gives students the visual for chord changes

Three staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, showing chords in isolation. The first staff shows F (F4, A4, C5) and Am (A3, C4, E4). The second staff shows Bb (Bb3, D4, F4) and C (C4, E4, G4). The third staff shows Gm (G3, Bb3, D4) and Dm (D3, F3, A3). Each chord is shown in a single measure, with the chord name labeled above or below the staff.

Every chord in root

Musical notation for piano showing every chord in root position. The right hand plays chords in root position, and the left hand plays single notes in root position. The chords are: F, Am, Dm, Bb, F, C, Bb, C, F, Gm, F, C, F.

Left Hand is as simple/hard as you make it

Musical notation for piano showing the left hand playing chords in root position. The right hand plays chords in root position, and the left hand plays chords in root position. The chords are: F, Am, Dm, Bb, F, C, Bb, C, F, Gm, F, C, F.

Add some 'forced' notes...works well if the 'forced' note is in the next chord

Musical notation for piano showing 'forced' notes between chords. The right hand plays chords in root position, and the left hand plays chords in root position. The chords are: F, Am, Dm, Bb, F, C, Bb, C, F, Gm, F, C, F.

Leaving out Root Note

Musical notation for piano showing the root note of the next chord being omitted. The right hand plays chords in root position, and the left hand plays chords in root position. The chords are: F, Am, Dm, Bb, F, C, Bb, C, F, Gm, F, C, F.

Start adding some rhuthm

F Am Dm Bb F C Bb C F Gm F C F

Chord Shape Doesn't Matter...but try different ideas.

F Am Dm Bb F C Bb C F Gm F C F

Adding some improve...but still using chord notes...cause they always work.

F Am Dm Bb F C Bb C F Gm F C F

Experiemnt with some 'forced' notes...i.e. notes not in the chord but still in the scale (F Major)

F Am Dm Bb F C Bb C F Gm F C F

F Am Dm Bb F C Bb C F Gm F C F