

CHAPTER 3A: ADDING TO THE SKELETAL STRUCTURE

You can add a note above, in between, and below the guide tones to create hundreds of 3-note trombone voicings over bass notes. This technique can be used to create major, dominant, sus, minor, half-diminished, and diminished voicings. Often what is added to the skeletal structure is an available tension or fifth of some kind.

For our purposes we will be building voicings by adding notes above or in between the guide tones. This will form the template for building many of the voicings used in this chapter. Keep in mind that your right thumb will almost always be playing a 3rd or a 7th except in the case of a sus chord in which the 3rd would be replaced with a 4th, or in the case of a sixth chord in which the 7th would be replaced with a 6th.

In the following example, 3-note trombone voicings over bass notes are created by adding a note above 3-7 guide tones; adding a note above 4-7 guide tones; adding a note in between 3-6 guide tones; and adding a note above 7-3 guide tones. See below.

FIG. 1

FIG. 1 shows four measures of 3-note trombone voicings over bass notes for the chords F maj9, D 7sus, B \flat 6, and E \flat 13. The notation is in 4/4 time, with the right hand (RH) in treble clef and the left hand (LH) in bass clef. The bass notes are: F (root), D (root), B \flat (root), and E \flat (root). The RH voicings are: F maj9 (F, A, C), D 7sus (D, F, A), B \flat 6 (B \flat , D, F), and E \flat 13 (E \flat , G, B \flat).

Keeping your RH shape within an octave, compile a catalogue of 3-note trombone voicings over bass notes in which you build above and in between the guide tones. It is also interesting to explore building voicings by adding the note underneath the guide tones, although that displaces our RH thumb. The beauty of our voicings, is that it is easy to track the thumb to both keep track of the voicing's identity and to make it easy to create smooth voice leading.

In order to practice these new trombone voicings, let's apply this style to a standard. I have selected Matt Dennis' "Everything Happens To Me" to illustrate how you can play through a standard using simple, 4 note voicings (3-notes in your RH over a LH bass line) while still creating a satisfying arrangement.

Comping Exercise #35: Applying 3-note TVs Over a Bass Note to Standards.

In the following example, the first four bars of the accompaniment are done for you. Play the melody with your fourth or fifth finger in your RH (not notated) over the skeletal structure while your LH plays the root. It is important to find the closest SS under the melody so that the 3-note voicing can fit in your right hand. It's ok to double 3rds or 7ths. Alternatively, if the melody is part of the skeletal structure and the melody is low

enough, you may simply use a 2-note RH voicing (consisting of only guide tones). Play through the entire tune using this technique. Select another standard of your choice and play in the same way.

FIG. 2

Cm9 F7 Dm7 D^b7 Cm7 F7 Dm7(b5) G7

Comping Exercise #36: Harmonizing a Melody using 3-note TVs Over a Bass Note.

Using the chord symbol as a guide, fill in the missing two notes under the melody to create 3-note TVs over a bass note. For most of the examples, simply find the associated guide tones. If the melody happens to be a guide tone, refer to the chord symbol for clues. First find the other guide tone. The other missing extension or chord tone can be played in between or underneath the guide tones. Keep in mind that the 5th is an option sometimes not reflected in the chord symbol.

FIG. 3

Cm7(b5) F7 B^bmaj7(b5) E13 A maj7(b5) E^b7(b5) A^bmaj9

CHAPTER 3B: ii-V-I PROGRESSIONS WITH TROMBONE VOICINGS

The melodic connection between chords should always be foremost in your mind. Below are some examples of ii—V—I progressions using 3-note and 4-note RH voicings over a root. The progressions are first organized by skeletal structure: P1 and P2 begin with the RH thumb on the 7th; P3 and P4 begin with the RH thumb on the 3rd. Progressions found in FIG 2 and FIG 3 follow the same template. Besides illustrating the familiar 3-7-3 and 7-3-7 motion, progressions 1-12 also show 5-9-5 and 9-5-9 motion. When practicing these ii-V-I's be aware of whether the V chord contains notes from the *mixolydian scale* or from the *altered scale*. For now, we are separating ii-V-I's into these two general categories: unaltered and altered. P1, P3, P5, and P7 are examples of ii-V-I's using unaltered dominants for the V chords. P2, P4, P6, and P8-P12 are examples of ii-V-I's using altered dominants for the V chords.

Comping Exercise #37: Playing Through ii—V—I Progressions using TVs. Observe the melodic and inner voice motion as you play through these progressions in all 12 keys. To make reading easier, some of the RH notes are written in the bass clef. **Play the top 3 or 4-note TV with your RH. Only play the bass note with your LH.** Sing or hum the horizontal melodic connections between chords (notated with numbers above and below the RH voicing). This horizontal motion is the real secret to chord playing and comping. Play along with **CD 1 Track 7** (starting with ii-V-I in Bb) as you transpose the following eight progressions.

Progressions 1-4 (in C major) 3-note TV's over a root

FIG. 1

P1
Dm7 G9 Cmaj7
5 9 5

P2
Dm7 G7(b9) Cmaj7
5 b9 5

P3
Dm9 G13 Cmaj9
5 9 13 9

P4
Dm9 G7(#5) Cmaj9
9 #5 9