

INCORPORATING THE DOMINANT PENTATONIC WITH OTHER CONCEPTS

Now that you are starting to master the dominant pentatonic scale concept, it is vital to understand that most solos incorporate additional concepts besides the dominant pentatonic. A soloist does not ONLY use the dominant pentatonic scale or any other single concept in their solos. Using multiple improvisational concepts creates diversity in your solos and will make the music become more alive!

The following pages contain a transcription and analysis of a solo I played over the chord progression of a song I call "Take The C Train" (maybe you can guess what this is based on). Over the B7#11 chord on bar 3 of the form, I use the dominant pentatonic scale built off the **2** to highlight the #11 alteration.

We have discussed how to use pentatonics over dominant and minor chords, but not over an unaltered major chord yet. You can use the minor pentatonic scale built off the **3** over a major chord.

Figure 16 – C# minor pentatonic scale over Amaj7

Play the minor pentatonic scale built off the 3 over major chords in all 12 keys to become accustomed to this sound. I have also recorded some improvisation over the following chord progression for you to hear the minor pentatonic scale built off the 3 on a major chord.

Figure 17 – Using the minor pentatonic scale built off the 3 on maj7 chords 

Another option is to use the minor pentatonic scale built off the 7 on a major chord. This scale will highlight the #11, or #4/b5, alteration. It is not required that the major chord inherently contains a #11 for you to use this scale. By playing this option over a regular major chord, you have the opportunity to change the DNA of the chord and create new sounds!

Figure 18 – G# minor pentatonic scale over Amaj7

Play the minor pentatonic scale built off the 7 over major chords in all 12 keys to become accustomed to this sound. Be sure to try using this option over both regular major chords and major chords with a #11. I have also recorded some improvisation over the following chord progression for you to hear the minor pentatonic scale built off the 7 on a maj7#11 chord.

Figure 19 – Using the minor pentatonic scale built off the 7 on maj7#11 chords 

Now that we have discussed these pentatonic options, you will see how these concepts can be tied together with bebop language in the following solo. If you are familiar with bebop language, this solo clearly demonstrates how to combine it with pentatonics. If not, don't worry! We will be going over how to formulate bebop language in the third chapter of this book. The goal of this transcription and analysis is simply to understand how different concepts, including the dominant pentatonic, can be combined melodically to sculpt a diverse solo.