

BEYOND APPEARANCES

Start with the written notes, but put yourself in it, too.

by Andy LaVerne

A lead sheet of a song is merely a guide or outline of what to play — though when you're starting out, playing the melody as written is a good beginning. As you're getting used to playing the melody as written with simple chordal accompaniment as you see in the examples here, listen to some of the master artists who perform the songs you're working on to see how they interpret melodies, changing the rhythm and phrasing to make the songs come alive. There are many artists to emulate, especially vocalists such as Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Joe Williams, Billie Holiday, Tony Bennet, Bobby Short, Frank Sinatra, Diana Krall, Harry Connick, Jr., Michael Feinstein, and many others. Of the hundreds of great jazz instrumentalists that musicians often cite as phrasing influences, you can't lose if you start with Oscar Peterson, Miles Davis, Chet Baker, Lee Konitz, Coleman Hawkins, or Ben Webster.

Then there's Dave Brubeck. He melodic sense is equal to the best vocalists. His phrasing and sophisticated harmonic sense form rich veins of creativity that you can mine as you study how to make music from lead sheets. Dave's solo piano rendition of "Indian Summer" is a great example of how to bring a lead sheet to life. Let's take a look at a more literal interpretation of the first four bars of "Indian Summer" and then compare it to Brubeck's version, as he puts his stamp on those same four bars.

Ex. 1. Though originally written in the key of G, let's see how you might play "Indian Summer" in F, as Dave Brubeck does on Indian Summer. At first, play the melody as written, with shell voicings outlining the basic chord tones (roots, thirds, and sevenths) in your left hand, as you see here. As you get comfortable playing the written melody with this simple accompaniment, experiment with varying the phrasing of the melody. How do you do that? Well, look at bar 17 in the full transcription on page 48 to see how Dave does it on this very tune.

As you see in the full transcription, Dave opts to transpose the melody up one octave, which makes the it speak more and stand out dramatically over the left hand; that's an easy way to get some variation into your reading of any jazz standard. He manipulates the rhythm of the melody slightly: In measure 17, he waits until the second beat, which offsets the melody from the written version. In measure 18, he changes the rhythm slightly, and incorporates the C as a kind of pick-up ornament. In bar 19, he swings the melody a little, rather than playing the second note right on beat 2. Following the emphasis on the chord change on beat 1 of bar 4, Dave makes an unexpected register shift that keeps the listener interested. You'll notice that he also changed the harmony a bit in his left hand, replacing the ii-V progression in bar 18 and the B \flat 7 in bar 20 with a C7 altered sound. That might seem like a big jump ahead if you're just starting out, but there are things that you can do with your left-hand accompaniment parts that Dave does, too. For one thing, he varies the register of his left-hand part, bringing it up an octave to match the register shift of the melody. Rather than just play on the chord changes, he keeps the left-hand rhythm going with a steady but soft quarter note pulse.

♩ = 60 Fmaj7 Gm7 C7 Fmaj7 B \flat 7 \sharp 11

NO HARM IN REHARM

Change a single note or a bunch of 'em, it'll make your performance more personal.

by Andy LaVerne

Jazz musicians often personalize standards, show tunes, and pop songs by reworking the harmony, a process known as reharmonization. A recharm can be as complex as adding some approach chords or a total reworking of the chord progression of a song. It can be as simple as a chord quality change (i.e., Cmaj7 to C7sus4). Dave Brubeck employs all of these techniques in his stunning solo piano version of "Indian Summer." Example 1 is an excerpt of a basic arrangement; refer to it as well as Example 1 in the Advanced section as we talk about Dave's recharm, which is transcribed on pages 48–49.

The tune starts in bar 17 of the transcription, and you can see right away when you compare bar 18 with Example 1 here, or Example 1 in the Advanced section that Dave has eliminated the ii-V progression and replaced it with a V7 chord with an altered sound; he's done the same with the IV7 chord that happens in bar 4 of the original tune. That altered tonality works great with the melody at that point, which consists of C, D, and E; the overall sound has a distinctly whole-tone scale effect to it. Replacing a ii-V with the V chord is a common recharm technique; and the reverse is common, too! Comparing bars 21 through 23 of the transcription with bars 5 through 7 in the original (Example 1 in the Advanced section), you'll see a more extensive recasting of the progression; keep in mind the original is in the key of G whereas Dave's version is in F. The original treats the melody notes of bar 6 as the root and fifth; Dave's recharm casts those notes as the third and major seventh. Bar 7 of the original requires a diminished chord to accommodate the \sharp 11 sound of the Em; Dave makes that same note the root of his Dm7. Melodies with wide leaps such as this offer excellent opportunities for largescale harmonic shifting.

Check out bar 1 of Example 1 in this section, and compare it with bars 32 and 33 in the full transcription. What the ...? Here's where you can begin to appreciate the difference between a very good player and a master such as

Dave Brubeck. To extend the approach into the melody, he uses a very cool iii-VI-ii-V progression followed by a Circle of Fifths movement using major seventh chords, finally landing on his target, the *Fmaj7* on beat 1 of bar 34. Even with all this harmonic motion, Brubeck manages to keep most of the melody intact. After he lands on the prescribed *Fmaj7*, he doesn't linger; though he slows the harmonic movement, there's no let up in the motion and drive of the phrase. Melody notes are still retained, although they're embellished with some hip passing tones. Classic Brubeck!

Ex. 1. This is an excerpt of a simple arrangement using the original chords and melody of "Indian Summer." It's the second A section, with the first bar being the pickup and the tune beginning in bar 2.

♩ = 60 C7 Fmaj7 Gm7 C7 Fmaj7 B \flat 7 \sharp 11

A BIG IMPRESSION

Even modern jazz can take a page out of the French Impressionist book.

by Andy LaVerne

Dave Brubeck is not only a master composer and pianist, but also a superb arranger and orchestrator as well. His stunningly beautiful rendition of "Indian Summer" is a great example of these skills — and he came up with it spontaneously in the studio, right on the piano, without even the benefit of sheet music. His intro is a study unto itself, and it's so good it could even be developed into a whole separate piece. Transcribed on page 48 in measures 1–16, the intro exhibits classic Brubeck devices such as polytonality, motivic development, and harmonic invention — some of which Dave may have absorbed from his composition teacher, Darius Milhaud.

The first four bars boil down to this: An *F* pedal with some groovy triad motion above it. One way to look at it is as though it's one altered dominant chord, as the left-hand part provides the pedal *F* and the major third, *A*. The notes of the triads cover just about all the extensions present in an altered harmony: $\flat 9$, $\sharp 9$, $\flat 5$, $\flat 13$. Another way to interpret it is as polytonal chord movement. Parallel second inversion triads provide a sound that I believe had its start in French Impressionist compositions, a style that was influential on the development of American jazz. Such parallelism lends itself well to the arranging technique of "constant structure/variable function," which is a good way to harmonize a melody.

In bar 5, Dave combines the left-hand motif from bar 1 with more of the second-inversion triads; the melodic motion is derived from bars 5–7 of the original melody this time. In bar 8, he takes the melodic motif from bar 2 and adapts it to a succession of dominant and major seventh harmonies that build tension up to the dominant chord preceding the statement of the tune.

Ex. 1. Here's the melody and original chords for the first half of "Indian Summer"; compare this with the transcription on page 48 and with the analysis in the Intermediate section and the text above.

Easy swing Gmaj7 Am7 D7 Gmaj7 C7 \sharp 11
1
5 Bm7 B \flat dim7 Am7 D7
9 F \sharp m7 \flat 5 B7 \sharp 9 Em7 A7
13 Em7 A7 Am7 D7

“INDIAN SUMMER”

Music by Victor Herbert

transcribed by Tom Brislin and Andy LaVerne

Like so many pianists, I began my jazz journey with Brubeck, having been inspired by one of his recordings. I've had the pleasure of spending time with Dave and his lovely wife Iola, through two of Dave's sons. Chris Brubeck (bass and trombone), and Dan Brubeck (drums), and I formed a trio in the mid '80s, appropriately named BLT (Brubeck/LaVerne Trio). We spent a fair amount of time rehearsing at Dave's house, where I got to play his beautiful Baldwin concert grand. Chris and Dan prove that the apples don't fall far from the tree, as they both possess a strong Brubeckian musical talent, as do two of Dave's other sons, Matthew (cello), and Darius (piano/keyboards). Dave graciously appeared as a special guest at one of BLT's concerts, at which Dave and I played four hands on one piano. We produced as much sound as Dave does all on his own! Along with Dave's amazing talent comes a quick wit. I recall laughing harder than I ever had at a dinner one evening at the Brubeck house, as Dave related one hilarious story after another. Dave's humor, wisdom, warmth, and intellect are reflected in his music, as you'll see when you listen to "Indian Summer" and play through the following lessons and transcription. Thank you, Mr. Brubeck! **Andy LaVerne**

1 **F7alt**
Rubato throughout

5 **Fm11** **Ebm11** **C#mb6**

9 **G7#11** **Dmaj7** **D7** **Dmaj7**

13 **G7sus** **Cm7** **C7(13)**

17 **Fmaj7** **C7alt** **Fmaj7** **C7alt**
a tempo

21 Fmaj7 A7 Dm7 Gm7

25 C7(13) C#dim7 Dm Dm,maj7 Dm7

29 G7 C7 Em7 Dm7 Cmaj7 A7 G7

33 Fmaj7 Ebmaj7 Dbmaj7 Gm7 Gb7#11 Fmaj7 Gb7#11 Fmaj7 Gb7#11 Fmaj7 Dm7
Bbmaj7 Abmaj7 Gbmaj7 C7

36 Gm7 Eb7 A7 F Eb7 Eb,#11D7#9 Db,#11 C B7#11 Bb7

40 Db7 F/C Gb7#11 Fmaj7 etc.