

NMQ WORKSHOP PLAN [2023 National Tour]

1) Play tune (Cantaloupe Island) (15 min)

2) Define & contextualize the music (20 min - Maclean)

- Historically
 - 1930s - play F blues in a Louis Armstrong style
 - 1940s - play F blues in the style of Be-Bop
 - 1950s - Swing/Cool - play 'If I Was A Bell' & 'Freddie Freeloader'
 - 1960s - Postbop - play 'Footprints'
 - 1970s - Fusion - Red Clay
- Modern Proponents
 - This ensemble is trying to take the ethos of that music and bring it in to the modern day, and there are a number of groups today doing that sort of thing as well
 - Branford Marsalis Quartet, Avishai Cohen, Alex Sipiagin, Wayne Shorter Quartet, and us

3) Elements of Music (45 min - Maclean)

- We're here to teach the students about improvisation. Improvisation is about spontaneously creating music in the moment, but it's not about just 'making it up as you go along'. There are rules and structures that need to be observed in order to do it successfully
- Take the students through the 3 elements of music - these 3 elements form the foundation of the information that's needed for improvisation, so we need to lay the foundation before we can get into improvising properly
- Melody (15 min - Maclean)
 - What makes a strong melody?
 - Contains repeating elements - elements that develop
 - Thematic development
 - Why the Caged Bird Sings
 - Mostly stepwise motion with some leaps
 - True North
 - Angularity vs Singability
 - Madness of Nero (A)
 - Brotherhood (S)
 - Has a strong relationship with the HARMONY of the tune
 - Segue into Harmony
- Harmony (15 min - Brownman)
 - Brown's quick Harmony explanation
 - Play triad guessing game (5 triads - maj, min, aug, dim, sus)
 - Discuss the difference between pop music & this kind of music, harmonically - contrast between Michael Jackson, noting both are beautiful... one just has less information. "High Information Music" -- jazz, classical, some world music -- encourage them to Google it.
- Rhythm (15 min - Brownman)
 - Rhythm section - what are you doing rhythmically when you vacillate between different styles?

- Rhythmic precision
 - Have them clap the Goldberg bass rhythm figure
 - Clapping beat divisions (downbeats, upbeats)
 - Rhythmic dodgeball
- Different eighth note feels
 - Straight eighths vs swung eighths, vs latin eighths vs strung eighths

4) Improvisation (Brownman) (60 min)

- Improvisation is best thought of as -- the instantaneous creation of **melodies**, using notes chosen from knowledge of **harmony** and then applied to a **rhythmic** framework
- Ideology
 - When soloing what are you thinking about? (answer: story-telling & narrative)
 - How do you decide what story to tell and what direction it goes?
 - Does the rhythm section play a role in that? (answer: support and interaction)
- Technique/Theory
 - What role does technique and theoretical knowledge of the 3 elements of music play in improvisation? (answer: it governs one's ability to play what we hear in our heads)
 - Horn execution (Brown pitch exercise)
 - Recognizing weaknesses and internalization being the road to mastery -- mention Malcolm Gladwell's "Outliers" and the 10,000 hour principle + the idea of 'effortless mastery'
 - What would be the fundamentals that a new improviser should address first? (answer: Harmony)
- Improvising on Bb7
 - show what notes "work" on a Bb7 -- Bb, D, F, Ab.
 - Show what scale "works" in Bb7 -- Bb, C, D, Eb, F, G, Ab, Bb
 - then, using ONLY those 8 note choices, demonstrate quarter note improvisations (band accompanying). Then eighth note.
 - try quarter note improvisations first and then 8th note (if they can handle it)
 - figure out who the strongest of the improvisers are and then ask them to play longer sections with the band accompanying them.

5) Open questions from students

6) Play Wisdom of Aurelius to end (10 min)