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FOREWORD

This study, PROGRESSIVE IDEAS FOR POP PLAYING FOR ACCORDION is especially designed to benefit the advanced student who is about to embark on a professional career, or one who has the ability to read and play music in the modern idiom, or any student who is desirous of creating a style of his own and develop his talents in the matter of improvisation. Students such as these may, to coin a term, be called "In-betweens" - those who have learned the general technical problems but who seek suggestions and ideas in the ultra modern idiom, in order to increase their knowledge of accordion technique - especially in the field of popular music.

The student who has more so-called "feel", but has less technique, will find that, by transposing the exercises in this book to various keys, his technique will gradually improve and his playing become more enhanced.

Anthony Mecca, an accomplished performer and instructor, who is thoroughly experienced in the execution of modern music has, herein, divulged some of his secrets and ideas in laying a solid foundation to the art of improvising and creating original introductions, modulations, turn-arounds, endings, etc.

In conclusion, we wish to state that we strongly and sincerely recommend this study for the advanced student, the embryonic professional or, for that matter, any aspiring accordionist with a certain amount of training ability – one who desires to become proficient in mastering the modern idiom.

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ABOUT TONY MECCA

Anthony Mecca, native of Waterbury, Conn., came by his love for the accordion through his brother Dominick who was his first instructor when a mere youngster.

Decision to make the accordion his career, brought him to New York where he furthered and completed his studies with Joe Biviano, well known accordion virtuoso and instructor.

After his discharge from the army in 1946, Tony Mecca turned his attention to professional playing and soon was in great demand for radio and television work and recordings. He has worked under such famous conductors as Leonard Bernstein, Alfredo Antonini and Raymond Scott and has recorded for practically all well known record companies.

It is this background of study and experience that enables him to write this important and authoritative accordion work, which will soon be followed by other works in the popular field.

THE PUBLISHERS

INTRODUCTIONS

An INTRODUCTION generally "sets the scene" for what is to follow, in regard to the key and rhythm of the composition. It may be any reasonable number of measures in length but usually consists of four or eight measures. It must be definite in formulating the pattern of the composition itself. Occasionally, when called for, a "pick - up" is inserted in the final measure of the introduction.

Introductions usually end on the dominant 7th (V_7) chord*, because this chord is the most logical and strongest one to lead into the subsequent strain; however, variations of this chord, such as the dominant 9th, the flatted 9th, etc., may be used as a substitute. Any plausible harmonic progression leading to V_7 is permissible. Each basic progression, given here, is followed by applications in the same and other keys.







^{*}A complete list of dominant and secondary 7th chords, based on the degrees of the major and minor scales, will be found on page -35.



























TURN-AROUND is another name for a first (repeat) ending; however, it is also used wherever the melody of the given composition ends on the tonic chord. In a thirty-two measure strain, this sometimes occurs in measures seven and eight and (or) in measures fifteen and sixteen. In places such as these, rhythmic, melodic and harmonic variance provides especial interest.

The most commonly used turn-around is the progression $I-VI-II-V_7$. The roots of these chords construct a theme with which all musicians, especially those connected with dance bands, are quite familiar.



The above progression may be used instead of the following easier ones.



Harmonic variations of the above example.

(a) Slow Basic (Example 1) G⁷ Dm⁷ Am m (b) Bounce (c) Fast 3 m m M etc. m (a) Transposed (c) Transposed 3 3 3 m d m etc. m 5 Μ M Basic(Example 2) (a) Slow gliss. Dm⁷ G⁷ m 0 (c) Fast (b) Bounce (Pick-up) 3 etc. m (c) Transposed (a) Transposed gliss. 3 3 3 etc. Μ m m M

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The following are a few exercises in single - note and chord styles, in various tempos. These are based on the theme mentioned on the previous page, and include harmonic variations of the theme.

Basic(Example 4)

NOTE: The following turn-arounds furnish additional material for introductions.

- 1. In a slow ballad, a two-measure introduction may be sufficient.
- 2. A four-measure introduction may be formed by combining two of the examples, or by repeating one example.
- 3. A slow, "double-time" two-measure turn-around may be used for a four-measure introduction, in a fast tempo; or as a four-measure turn-around in a sixty-four measure show tune.

ENDINGS

The *ENDING* of a composition, consisting of a reasonable number of measures in length, must be definite. By using similar material as that used for the introduction or turn-arounds, the ending can lend effectiveness to the arrangement.

One-Measure Endings

These endings are to be used for tunes in which the melody ends on the down-beat of the last measure. This simple progression does not interfere with the melody note, which is held throughout the chord progression.

Transposed to key of F.

The following progression is in the nature of a short "tag".

The following examples are similar to Example 1, except for the delayed chord progressions. Example 3. Transposed to key of F.

 $\frac{1}{2}$ Transposed to key of A^b.

Similar to Example 3.

These endings are to be used for tunes in which the melody ends on the down-beat of the measure next to the last one.

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In a deceptive ending, instead of playing the usual tonic chord against the melody, an unexpected chord is struck-giving the impression of a suspension, which resolves to the tonic chord. The latter may be slightly altered, such as: maj.6, maj.7, etc.

In the following exercises, the usual two-measure ending is extended to four measures.

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Replacement Endings

Replacement Melody and Harmony

Occassionally, the original melody is abandoned before its last note is sounded and is replaced by a more "final-sounding" melody. The most important feature of an ending is the feeling of finality.

Replacement of Melody and Harmony in the Final Three Measures of a Given Melody (Where the tune has a two-measure ending)

MODULATIONS

A MODULATION is comparable to a turn-around except that, instead of returning to the key proper, it modulates to a different key.

The usual modulation is two or four measures in length; it may, however, consist of any reasonable number of measures.

The simplest modulation is the one based on a nearby position of the dominant 7th (V_7) chord of the new key. The following are all based on two-measure endings.

When modulating to a minor key, the procedure is the same as that used when modulating to a major key.

Modulations Based on II_7 and V_7 of the New Key.

This modulation is extremely interesting and practical, as well as being quite popular. Thorough acquaintance with this form of modulation is very important.

When modulating to a minor key, the procedure is the same as that used when modulating to a major key.

Modulations Based on the Preceding Chord Progressions.

*This chord—one half-step above the new key, instead of the V_7 chord—is commonly used in modern arrangements. 8039-44

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In this type of modulation, a turn-around is played in the old key just as though the next chorus (or strain) were to be in the same key. The new key appears by surprise on the down-beat – a truly smooth, melodic "lead-in."

(New key instead of expected key of C)

The following effect, similar to the one given in Ex. 1 (a), is frequently used by name singers on popular records. This is a surprise (sudden) modulation into a key a minor 3rd higher than the original key.

Another surprise modulation into a key a major 3rd lower than the original key may be used, as follows:

The following modulation is often used for a subtle change to the key one half-step above the original key. The common-tone modulation is especially helpful to a singer as a lead into the new key.

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Another simple method of modulation is to play a certain figure in the old key—then transpose it, without preparation, to a new key, as follows:

Cmaj. to D^bmaj.

Cmaj. to E^bmaj. Bounce

B^bmaj. to Cmaj.

MELODIC IMPROVISATION

A question often asked by some student is: "How can I learn just what to play when the harmonization calls for F7 or, for that matter, any other chord?" The answer is given here, as follows:

Using only the chordal tones of F7 (for example), even in an interesting rhythmic style, would sound rather academic-like some one practicing arpeggios. The best jazz musicians play melodic figures consisting of a combination of the chordal and passing tones. (The latter are also known as auxiliary or neighboring tones and embellishment.) The melodic figures, or melodies, are usually so flexible' that they can be suitable for any number of chord progressions.

It is not of vital importance that these "improvised melodies" be original; they frequently are more plausable when they are developed from some familiar material, especially from a part of the original tune itself.

*Excerpt from "Flight to Mecca"

(Notes marked x indicate passing (auxiliary) notes. They may be either diatonic or chromatic.)

One way, in which to develop the above style, is to transpose the passage to various keys, as follows:

Another way to practice the above is by means of rhythmic figuration, as follows:

F⁷ Cm7 Bb (maj. 7 Cm⁷ ote Two beats earlier. F7 F7 $B^{\flat}(maj. 7)$ Cm7 Cm⁷ 3 F⁷ $\mathbf{B}^{\flat}(maj.7)$ Cm7 Dm7 One beat later. $Cm^7 F^7$

*"Flight to Mecca" will be found on page 39.

One beat earlier.

The following exercises should be practiced in various keys and rhythmical patterns. They may also be practiced in various tempos.

*Excerpt from "Boppin' the Blues."

Excerpt from" Flight to Mecca."

Ex.15(a) Following are two more ways of harmonizing Ex: 15.

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Ex.18

Ex.18(a) Another way of harmonizing Ex. 18.

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COMPLETE LIST OF 7th CHORDS BASED ON THE DEGREES OF THE MAJOR AND MINOR SCALES

Bounce tempo

ANTHONY MECCA

BOPPIN' THE BLUES

Bounce tempo ANTHONY MECCA B^{♭6} B₆ $D^{\flat \circ}$ C^bmaj.⁷ Cm⁷ Срп-Dm⁷ G^bmaj.⁷ D^b M 201. 2 3 2 4 3 2 3 3 3

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