**1/10/12 – in response to “Melodic Lines Over Dominant 7th Chords”**

**Gentlemen**,

Although each of your statements stimulate additional considerations, the following response has been confined to John Amato’s initial question. One of the most essential agreements can be found in this particular comment:

***“I come to the conclusion that there isn't one particular mode or scale you're using”***.

Nothing can be more correct. For one of the most descriptive terms, (for a valid description of my approach, from its beginning, to the present day) is “logic”.  Any approach, in itself embodies regulations, that to some degree confine numerous implications to a smaller fractal of a much larger reality.  Any of the patterns expressed through improvisation are also subject to “dualistic” conditions, and accordingly they can be evaluated as either consonant, or dissonant, major, or minor, etc., etc. It’s most important to keep in mind that my definition of the line forms themselves are never described as “scales, or modes”, but more generally described as melodies. And it’s what’s caused those melodies to emerge that’s most definitive.

In my case there have always been visual shapes that have been a source for theoretical conclusions. One of the clearest examples when referring to “consonance, and dissonance” is a specific cluster.  The **Db Minor 7th b5** chord, when voiced into its inversion that takes place upon the inside 4 strings, **(5432)** with the lowest tone, (Db) on the 5th string, at the 4th fret appears in this order: **Db, G, B, and E**. Not only can it be defined as  a **Db half-dim chord**, (with one name) it can also be seen as **Emi / Db**, (a minimal poly-chord), and even then, (to go one step further) **if we place A natural underneath it, (now seen as C#mi7b5 / A)** we can now refer to it as an **A9**. No matter which of these harmonic transpositions goes into effect, the most relevant factor in each of these transformations is an E minor triad: G, B, and E, (stable on the 4th, 3rd, and 2nd strings). That’s what initially told me that it was “logically” correct to consider Emi7, (along with all of the improvisational melodies that I had experienced so far, (with numerous bands) against that specific topic. That of coarse was only one side of the “dualistic” coin, (consonance) and it became melodically functional not only with a general V7th chord, but also with other comparable **variations like the 9th, the 11th, the 13th**, etc. Its dissonant side then logically appeared as a result that was generated by its Tritone, and that had a physical shape as well.

When the following chord: **A7 (b13b9)** is positioned in a 5 string group, (at the 5th, and 6th frets), the string group being 6-4321, from its lowest tone it stacks up as: **A, G, C#, F, and Bb**. Now consider this, if solely for analysis we remove the root, (A) and the 7th, (G) what’s left is another minor triad, this time **Bb minor** > **Db, F, and Bb**. When we begin to logically apply this second form of substitution to other options that are similar to its initial source, (types of A7 chords with flat, or sharp variables) **like A7#5, A7b5, A7#9, A7b9**, etc.

**The notes E, and Bb are tritones**, and if we place them within the key of A as Mi 7th substitutional departure points, they now represent an interesting phenomenon, that’s based on the following: the most consonant interval is the Perfect 5th, while the most dissonant interval is the Minor 2nd.

Therefore, **in the key of A, for all of the 7, 9, 11, and 13th variables we use Emi7**, (a perfect 5th from the root) while **for the 7b5, #5, b9, #9, etc., we use Bbmi7**, (a mi 2nd from the root). Of coarse if we apply the same thing taking the tritone from the root, (A to Eb) the opposite happens, what was dissonant is now consonant, and the reverse!

That’s the basic fabric of a harmonic logic that took place, and has remained in tact. As far as the melodic line forms themselves, they originally began to emerge through trial, and error as far back as the sixties, and have continued to evolve. They’re directly the result of melodic pleasure, never from technical formulas. Although, I have noticed something that I believe is important. As departure points, scales, and their manipulation into modes can be viewed appearing horizontal on the staff, while arpeggios, (first seen as chords) on the other hand can be seen in a vertical context. Again the opposites prevail, again offering logical dualistic alternatives.

Cheers,

**Pat Martino**