

HARMONY OF THE BLUES

NOEL JOHNSTON

THE BLUES SOUND IS NOT TIED TO A SPECIFIC CHORD QUALITY, BUT IT'S MOST OFTEN USED OVER DOMINANT 7TH CHORDS.

THE TENSION OF THE $b3$ BENT UP TO THE MAJOR THIRD, AND THE $b5$ GOING TO THE $\sharp 5$ ARE TWO OF SOME THE DEFINING SOUNDS, AND THIS CAN'T EASILY BE EXPRESSED CHORDALLY. UNLESS YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THE BLUES PROGRESSION, WHICH IS CHORDAL, THE BLUES IS REALLY MELODIC IN NATURE AND SOME OF THE INTERVALS ("BLUE NOTES") DON'T REALLY FIT INTO THE EQUAL TEMPERED SYSTEM OF INTONATION WHICH IS WHY I'M A LITTLE HESITANT TO IMPOSE A STRUCTURE USING IT. HOWEVER, WE LIVE IN A MUSICAL ENVIRONMENT WHERE WE MAKE MUSIC USING AN EQUAL TEMPERED SYSTEM, (AND WE MAKE MUSIC WITH OTHERS USING AN EQUAL TEMPERED SYSTEM) AND USING THE BLUES IN THIS ENVIRONMENT THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ROOTS OF JAZZ. SO, I'LL GO AHEAD AND TALK ABOUT BLUES SCALES

THE BLUES SCALE (AKA "MINOR BLUES SCALE") HAS THE INTERVAL STRUCTURE: 1, $b3$, 4, $b5/\sharp 4$, 5, $b7$

THE MAJOR BLUES SCALE HAS THE INTERVAL STRUCTURE: 1, 2, $b3$, 3, 5, 6 (HAVING THE SAME INTERVAL STRUCTURE AS THE MINOR BLUES STARTING ON THE $b3$)

IF YOU TAKE THE INTERVALS FROM BOTH SCALES STARTING FROM THE SAME ROOT, YOU GET A MAGICAL HYBRID BLUES SCALE:

1, 2, $b3$, 3, 4, $\sharp 4/b5$, 5, 6, $b7$

(MINOR BLUES: 1, $b3$, 4, $\sharp 4/b5$, 5, $b7$)

(MAJOR BLUES: 1, 2, $b3$, 3, 5, 6)

"HYBRID" BLUES SCALE: 1, 2, $b3$, 3, 4, $\sharp 4/b5$, 5, 6, $b7$



FUN FACT!! THIS 9-NOTE SCALE CAN MAKE A LOT OF DIFFERENT CHORDS:

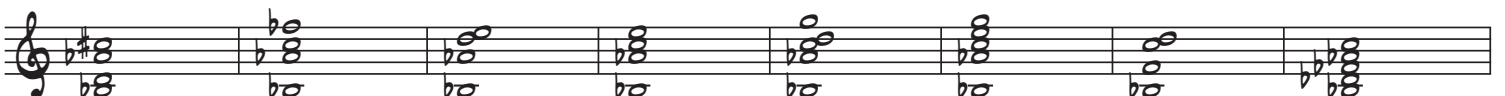
B^b B^b_{MIN} B^b_{\circ} B^b_{SUS} $B^b_{SUS^2}$ $B^b_{7(shell)}$ B^b_{7} $B^b_{MIN^7(shell)}$ $B^b_{MIN^7}$



B^b_{b6} $B^b_{MIN^6}$ $B^b_{MIN^7(b5)}$ $B^b_{\circ 7}$ B^b_{9} $B^b_{7_{SUS}}$ $B^b_{7(ADD^4)}$ $B^b_{9_{SUS}}$



$B^b_{7(\sharp 9)}$ $B^b_{7(b5)}$ $B^b_{7(\sharp 11)}$ $B^b_{9(\sharp 11)}$ B^b_{13} $B^b_{13(\sharp 11)}$ B^b_{b2} $B^b_{MIN^9(b5)}$



ANOTHER FUN FACT!!! THE HYBRID BLUES SCALE CONTAINS THE NOTES OF THESE TONAL SCALES:

MIXOLYDIAN



(V OF E^b MAJOR)

DORIAN



(II OF A^b MAJOR)

DORIAN #4



(IV OF F HARMONIC MINOR)

LYDIAN-DOMINANT



(IV OF F MELODIC MINOR)

LOCRIAN #2 #6



(II OF HARMONIC MAJOR)

(EXTRA NERDY SECTION)

TRITONE BLUES HEXATONIC SCALE??

1/2-WHOLE DIMINISHED (ALMOST RIGHT)

LYDIAN #2 #6 -VI OF HUNGARIAN MINOR (ALMOST RIGHT)

