

Intro for Quartel Harmony by Pete McCann

Many of you have been practicing chord scales from root position, and the various inversions.

Have you ever considered practicing chord scales voiced in 4th's?

First off, write out a scale – let's say C major. Now, from the first note – C, go up a 4th and you will get the note F. Continue up another 4th, and you will get B. Note that the interval between F and B is a tritone. No worries, a tritone is really an augmented 4th. Finally, go up another 4th and you will arrive at E. Play these notes together, and you will have a very hip voicing for a Cmajor 7th with an added 11th in the middle of the chord. For those of you who play a non-chordal instrument such as the sax, try and play through the notes from bottom to top like an arpeggio. Next, write out the remaining chords from the scale. All of the chords will have an 11th in them. Once you have written out the chord scale in C, write out the remaining 11 scales and fill in the chords. This might take a while, but I think you will find these chord scales very useful for comping and soloing. I also practice chord scales (in 4th's) in Harmonic minor, Melodic minor and Harmonic major.

One of my heroes in Jazz is the great McCoy Tyner. His comping style has had a huge effect on the way I think about comping behind a soloist. His use of chords voiced in 4th's made me investigate ways of how I can play chords on the guitar. I highly recommend listening to any recording of the John Coltrane Quartet (early '60's) which included McCoy on piano. I think you will find his voicings and comping to be quite an inspiration. Good luck and keep practicing.

Regards, Pete McCann