

"Rhythmic Invention"

The five concepts of rhythmic invention are quite simple. They all involve modification of the original rhythm without adding any new melodic tones.

No 1: Any note of the existing melody can be repeated in groups of two or three or for that matter, in some other rhythmic device that fills the same amount of metric space as the original note.

This by itself will not necessarily produce great jazz but if used wisely and perhaps sparingly, can make a melody more interesting.

Play with a swing

You might try the above rendition without a swing and change your accompaniment to a "light rock" or a "bossa nova" rhythm.

On a more sophisticated tune, this rhythmic device may be more successful. When the repeated note idea is used in conjunction with some of the other rhythmic inventions which follow, you will see exactly what is meant.

Excessive repetition will produce "pencil music." In other words, it will look more spectacular but that is where the goodness ends. Here is a modest example of pencil music using this tune.

To carry on any farther with this example would be mentally and aurally painful.

Choose some standard tune and write several versions of the song with only repeated note modifications. I would suggest some moderately paced swing tune or perhaps some good ballad.

Remember that you should first learn to play the chosen song in the octave shown and also 8va in all kinds of fingering permutations. Improvising over a tune that you do not know generally will produce little in the way of good music. The famous "universal solo" might rear its ugly head.