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The rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing language of Lennie Tristano: Analysis and strategies for incorporation in modern jazz improvisation

Austin Salisbury

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The rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing language of Lennie Tristano: Analysis and strategies for incorporation in modern jazz improvisation

Austin Salisbury

This dissertation is presented for the degree of Bachelor of Music (Honours)

Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA)

Edith Cowan University

2018
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Abstract

Pianist Lennie Tristano is regarded as one of the most original voices in jazz history. His uncompromising adherence to artistic ideals led to both great innovation and obscurity, limiting his impact on future generations of musicians. Until recently, his music has been largely overlooked by musicians and academics alike. Coinciding with a revival in interest in Tristano and his music by modern jazz musicians, this dissertation seeks to investigate the transferability of several aspects of Tristano’s rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing vocabulary to modern jazz improvisation. Building upon existing literature concerning his pedagogy and musical analysis, this research emphasises Tristano’s relevance to modern jazz musicians. Through transcription analysis of two of Tristano’s compositions, *Lennie’s Pennies* and *317 East 32nd Street* as well as *Line Up*, an improvisation from the 1955 self-titled album, Tristano’s approach to rhythm, harmony and phrasing is discussed and several idiosyncratic devices are drawn out for use in the following section of the thesis. These devices include diminution/augmentation, polyrhythm, asymmetrical rhythmic grouping, manipulation of harmonic rhythm, chromaticism, reharmonisation, asymmetrical phrasing, and extended phrase length within an improvised line. Following on from the analysis, the final chapter investigates the transferability of the devices to modern jazz improvisation. A systematic approach to practicing selected devices with the intention of applying them in modern jazz improvisation is developed. These strategies are designed to allow modern jazz musicians to see the relevance of Tristano’s style and facilitate the incorporation of his rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing devices in new settings. Approaching Tristano’s music in this way sustains a model of recontextualising the music of the past to bring innovation in the music of the present.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

During the bebop era, jazz became synonymous with the style of bebop giants such as Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, setting the direction for generations of future players. However, innovation and creativity was not exclusive to the pioneers of bebop. Lennie Tristano is a pianist, composer and educator whose progressiveness paralleled that of Parker and Gillespie, but whose musical influence did not extend as broadly. In an article published after Tristano’s death, British critic Max Harrison described the pianist as "a marginal figure because, on the stylistic level, his work has exerted little influence on later jazz."¹

Drawing from this unique musical background, Tristano formulated an approach to composition and improvisation that drew, yet stood apart from bebop. It should be acknowledged that his approach progressed throughout his career and this research will be focusing on his style throughout the 1950’s. The hallmarks of his style in this period include diminution/augmentation, polyrhythm, asymmetrical rhythmic grouping, manipulation of harmonic rhythm, chromaticism, reharmonisation, asymmetrical phrasing, and extended phrase length within a melodic line. The uniqueness of Tristano’s approach is remarkable in comparison to his contemporaries and worthy of study. Anthony Braxton writes in the liner notes to his album Eight (+3) Tristano Compositions 1989 - For Warne Marsh:

And the music... what can I say? There was something special about Mr. Tristano’s melodic world – plus his lines were so unique in the same way Bird’s lines were…”²

It is fair to say that Tristano’s style was ahead of its time due to its melodic, rhythmic and harmonic complexity, a sentiment affirmed by modern jazz pianist Ethan Iverson, who in 2008 wrote, “Line Up from the 1954 Atlantic LP Lennie Tristano still sounds like the future.”

Further contributing to the ‘futuristic’ nature of the music, Tristano’s conception of rhythm, harmony and phrasing in improvisation remains applicable to today’s jazz musicians. Tristano’s music has recently become the subject of great interest for prominent modern jazz musicians such as Kurt Rosenwinkel and Mark Turner. This dissertation seeks to define and discuss unique aspects of Tristano’s style and develop strategies for incorporating them in modern jazz improvisation.

Research Aims

To date, there has been thorough research into the biography and music of Lennie Tristano. The recent revival in interest in Tristano’s music among modern jazz musicians – recognised by Nate Chinen in a 2011 article entitled “Tristano School, Back in Session” – serves as the stimulus for this research, investigating the relevance of Tristano’s approach to modern jazz musicians and providing a structured approach for the successful incorporation of his devices. The aims of this research are as follows:

i. To define and discuss idiosyncratic rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing devices employed by Tristano in 317 East 32nd Street, Lennie’s Pennies and Line Up.

ii. To design practice studies and improvisation exercises facilitating the incorporation of Tristano’s idiosyncratic devices in modern jazz improvisation.

5 Ibid.
Scope of Research

Tristano’s career in music performance spanned nearly thirty years. His style throughout his career was constantly evolving and his musical environment ranged from bebop to avant-garde, making it impossible to comprehensively capture his total rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing language in an honours level dissertation. With this in mind, this research is limited to the analysis of three of Tristano’s seminal works from the 1950’s. The works have been selected to capture specific rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing devices unique to Tristano and that can be effectively incorporated into jazz improvisation.

The nature of Tristano’s approach to composition in the 1950’s makes compositions such as *Lennie’s Pennies* and *317 East 32nd Street* ideal candidates for the study of Tristano’s improvisation style. Max Stehr writes:

Composition with [Tristano’s] students was an advanced exercise in improvisation. Tristano would ask his students to compose what he called “lines,” which was their ideal improvisation over the chord changes to a standard. This not only allowed them to exercise their creative process, but also gave them a chance to implement harmonic and rhythmic concepts that they were working on, such as chord superimpositions, cross rhythmic figures and polyrhythmic figures.⁶

*Lennie’s Pennies* and *317 East 32nd Street* are both considered “lines” and contain in high concentration many of the rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing devices that Tristano was developing into his improvisation. *Line Up*, from the album *Lennie Tristano*,⁷ is an example of the same devices applied in a truly improvised sense. *Line Up* is an appropriate selection as it is widely recognised as one of Tristano’s seminal improvisations, with Iverson commenting:

*Line Up* from the 1954 Atlantic LP *Lennie Tristano* still sounds like the future… [it] is in a class of one, and should be considered one of the highlights in the whole discography of jazz.⁸

---

⁶ Max W Stehr, "Bird’s Words and Lennie’s Lessons: Using or Avoiding Patterns in Bebop" (PhD diss., University of Nebraska, 2016).
This research is not a comprehensive analysis of the selected works, rather an attempt to draw out the idiosyncratic aspects of Tristano’s improvisational style. The aim is to discuss devices unique to Tristano that are transferable to modern jazz improvisation. His music is deeply rooted in the bebop tradition, with one of Tristano’s most renowned students, Lee Konitz recalling:

We were trying to play the tunes that Charlie Parker was playing, standard tunes usually, and we wrote lines on those progressions - that’s all we played with Tristano. It was in the tradition of bebop, but hopefully an extension in some direction-longer lines or more harmonic additions, and rhythmic differences.9

These “extensions” will be the focus of this research. The following devices will be considered standard bebop devices and although they may be evident in the analysis of Tristano’s improvisations, they will not be discussed in detail. They are drawn from Owens’ book “Bebop: The Music and its Players.”10

i. Swing eighth notes, articulated in a weak to strong manner.

ii. Accents at the highest point in a melodic contour.

iii. Arpeggios and scalar material.

iv. Upper chord extensions such as 9, #11 and 13.

v. Altered chord extensions on dominant chords.

vi. Extensive use of syncopation.

By omitting these generally accepted bebop devices from the general discussion of this research project, a greater focus can be put on devices idiosyncratic to Tristano’s style.


Chapter 2: Literature Review

This section will review the sources most pertinent to understanding Tristano and his music, as well as developing effective practice methods for improvisation. The chapter will be organised according to the sources’ subject.

Biographical Literature, Musical Analysis and the ‘Tristano School’

Information about Tristano and his music is readily available in various formats. Given his outspoken nature and controversial music, magazine and journal articles dating back to 1949\textsuperscript{11} discussing his music and life are accessible. It is only in the last thirty years that Tristano has received some attention from academics. Although this dissertation focusses on Tristano as a performer and composer, he is often regarded foremost as an educator. His pedagogy is the focus of John McKinney’s doctoral dissertation “The Pedagogy of Lennie Tristano”.\textsuperscript{12} It investigates Tristano’s pedagogical and musical background, the criteria for student selection, content and process of instruction and the effect this instruction had on students. McKinney excludes any analysis of Tristano’s musical output that does not directly relate to his pedagogy, due to the pedagogical focus of the research project. Given that the paper was published in 1978, prior to the wave of renewed interest in Tristano among modern jazz musicians, McKinney’s discussion of Tristano’s impact and influence on future generations of jazz musicians is relatively brief. In the light of the recent Tristano school revival, this topic now has scope for detailed discussion. Both of these areas of discussion – musical analysis of Tristano’s works and the application of his musical techniques to modern jazz improvisers – are encompassed in the research questions in chapter one of this dissertation. McKinney’s research is thorough and is founded on primary sources, however in the light of later research by Eunmi Shim,\textsuperscript{13} some doubt arises regarding accuracy of McKinney’s information. Shim writes, “there are many factual errors which make McKinney’s work a problematic source despite the wealth of

\begin{itemize}
  \item Barry Ulanov, "Master in the Making," \textit{Metronome}, August 1949.
  \item John Francis McKinney, "The Pedagogy of Lennie Tristano". (PhD diss., Farleigh Dickinson University, 1978).
\end{itemize}
information contained in it."\textsuperscript{14} Despite this, McKinney’s work is important to this research as it contains interviews with students of Tristano outlining their personal practice routines and exercises they were given by Tristano to incorporate his musical concepts into their own improvisation. Tristano’s own practice recommendations will be considered in the development of practice methods and improvisation exercises in chapter 5.

Eunmi Shim’s dissertation published in 1999 entitled “Lennie Tristano (1919–1978): His Life, Music, and Teaching” is the most comprehensive account of Tristano’s career. Shim rectifies McKinney’s inaccuracies and presents a detailed account of Tristano’s biography, pedagogy and musical works. In the chapter pertaining to pedagogy, Shim elaborates on McKinney’s work by giving specific notated examples of exercises for incorporating Tristano’s concepts into improvisation, which inform the development of practice techniques in chapter 5 of this paper. Of most significance to this research is Shim’s transcription and analysis of Line Up. The final chapter in Shim’s work is dedicated to uncovering Tristano’s legacy and influence on future generations of jazz musicians, however this research was published before a renewed interest in Tristano was prevalent.

Following on from Shim, numerous articles and dissertations concerning Tristano and his students began emerging from 2000 to the present. Peter Ind, a former student and bass player for Tristano wrote the book “Jazz Visions: Lennie Tristano and His Legacy,”\textsuperscript{15} giving interesting insight into Tristano’s life and music from an ‘insider’s’ perspective. It includes musical analysis and practice exercises personally recommended by Tristano, informing chapters 4 and 5 of this dissertation. However, some of Ind’s writing is limited by his personal relationship to Tristano and in a review of the book, Shim writes, “Ind’s portrayal of Tristano is somewhat limited, perhaps stemming from an effort to present him in the best light possible.”\textsuperscript{16}

In a 2016 dissertation entitled “Bird’s Words and Lennie’s Lessons: Using or Avoiding Patterns in Bebop”,\textsuperscript{17} Max Stehr juxtaposes Tristano’s approach with that of Charlie Parker. Parker’s

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid. 47
\textsuperscript{15} Peter Ind, Jazz Visions: Reflections on Lennie Tristano and His Legacy (London: Equinox, 2005).
\textsuperscript{17} Stehr, (2016).
improvisational style is fundamental to modern jazz musicians, described by Stehr as a “foundation over which to develop and expand jazz vocabulary.”18 Supplementing Stehr’s study, Thomas Owens’ book “Bebop: the Music and its Players”19 was useful in giving a summary of the mainstream bebop style of the 1940’s. Taken together, Stehr and Owens enable us to see where Tristano’s style aligns with and departs from bebop, allowing the discernment of musical devices idiosyncratic to Tristano’s style.

Dissertations on the music of Tristano alumni, namely Warne Marsh and Lee Konitz are helpful in giving further examples of successful incorporation of Tristano’s rhythmic and harmonic concepts into another musician’s vocabulary and the process undertaken to achieve this. The book “Conversations on the Improvisor’s Art”20 and the article “Musical Koryu: Lineal Traditions in Jazz - Lennie Tristano/Lee Konitz”21 investigate Konitz, outlining how he both conformed to and departed from Tristano’s style of improvisation. The discussion around Warne Marsh is less thorough than that of Konitz; informing this study is a book entitled “An Unsung Cat: The Life and Music of Warne Marsh”22 and a dissertation entitled “The Jazz Improvisations of Tenor Saxophonist Warne Marsh”,23 providing biographical information and musical analysis. Given the scope of this research, these sources are useful only to the end that they provide definitions and discussion of musical devices taught by Tristano. The exception is Jimmy Jared Emerzian’s particularly relevant dissertation “Saxophonist Mark Turner's Stylistic Assimilation of Warne Marsh and the Tristano School”.24 This paper determines key characteristics of Marsh’s improvisation assimilated by Turner, many of which can be traced back to Tristano. Emerzian focusses on broad principles of improvisation, such as avoidance of ‘licks’ and ‘quotes’, and commitment to spontaneous organic improvisation. Specific

18 Stehr (2016), 1
19 Owens (1993).
24 Jimmy Jared Emerzian, “Saxophonist Mark Turner's Stylistic Assimilation of Warne Marsh and the Tristano School” (M.M., California State University, Long Beach, 2008).
devices are discussed in a comparison between the styles of Marsh and Turner. Emerzian’s work is particularly relevant to this research, not only because a modern jazz musician like Turner has incorporated the style of a Tristano disciple into his own improvisation, but has shown the possibility for the innovative application of these techniques in modern jazz settings. Emerzian thoroughly analyses Turner’s composition *Lennie Groove*, detailing the effectiveness of Tristano’s techniques within a composition consisting of an odd meter and a modal harmonic setting. Application of these techniques to a modern setting is only considered in a compositional sense, with only vague references to Turner implementing them in an improvisational setting. While Emerzian’s work outlines the way Tristano’s music can inform modern jazz composition, this research is located within Tristano-informed improvisation.

**Tristano’s Relevance to Modern Jazz Musicians**

As previously mentioned, there has been a renewed interest in Tristano by modern jazz artists and academics. This is apparent in the concentration of academic articles and dissertations on Tristano and his alumni since the turn of the century. The connection between Mark Turner and Warne Marsh made by Emerzian has been previously discussed, but there is various other literature detailing the influence of the Tristano school on Turner’s music, such as Kevin Sun’s “Every Single Tree in the Forest: Mark Turner as Seen by his Peers.” Another modern musician associated with Tristano is guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel. Both Rosenwinkel and Turner are associated with the Tristano school in Nate Chinen’s New York Times article “Tristano School, Back in Session” and in a 2011 interview Rosenwinkel directly cites Tristano as one of his influences. These sources give insight into the nature of Tristano’s influence on modern jazz musicians. Emerzian summarises this:

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26 Emerzian cites Turner’s playing on John Patitucci’s “Imprint”, Pete Christlieb’s “Conversations With Warne” and Turner’s own version of Coltrane’s “26-2” as examples of the influence of Marsh and Tristano in an improvisational setting.
Exact replication of a certain musician's style or a stylistic period, while entertaining, typically bears no positive effect on the vitality of a growing art form… He [Turner] has at once created a new interest in the music of these artists who inspired him—by performing Tristano and Marsh-related material—and has synthesised crucial elements of their work into his forward-thinking and eclectic modern style.\(^{30}\)

A 2008 article entitled “All in the Mix (Lennie Tristano)”\(^{31}\) written and posted by Ethan Iverson to his blog provides an in-depth analysis of Tristano and the Tristano school from both a musical and socio-cultural perspective. Despite the blog not being peer-reviewed academic writing, Iverson’s opinions as a prominent modern jazz pianist are nonetheless valid. Musically speaking, Iverson tracks the progression of Tristano’s career, discussing his approach to spontaneous improvisation, his relationship to the drums and bass on Line Up, and his “unique take… on bebop’s newly-freed melodic line.”\(^{32}\) Iverson is also critical of Tristano’s commentary on jazz. He challenges many of Tristano’s criticisms of the Chicago jazz scene, suggesting they have racial rather than musical origins. Despite this, Iverson remains in curious admiration of Tristano’s music, describing him as “a hermetic genius… somewhere in the constellation with Nancarrow and Charles Ives, both experimental American hermits who decided not to play with others.”\(^{33}\) As a contemporary jazz pianist, Iverson acknowledges Tristano as an influence on his own playing as far as they share the influence of western classical music and also notes Tristano’s influence on pianist Mike Kanan and saxophonist Wayne Shorter. The connection between Tristano and Shorter is mediated by Warne Marsh. In an update to “All in the Mix”, Iverson adds reputable jazz critic Stanley Crouch’s thoughts on Tristano. Although disapproving of Tristano’s school, Crouch’s insistence that Shorter was heavily influenced by Tristano and Marsh adds considerable weight to the argument for Tristano as an important figure in the development of jazz. In another entry in Iverson’s blog entitled “Interview with Wayne Shorter”,\(^{34}\) Shorter himself acknowledges Marsh as an influence.

\(^{30}\) Emerzian (2008), 30
\(^{32}\) Ibid.
\(^{33}\) Ibid.
Although not cited as a direct influence, it is fair to say that parallels can be drawn between the style of modern New York drummer Ari Hoenig and Tristano’s rhythmic approach, particularly his use of polyrhythm. Jerad Lippi’s dissertation “Time Travels: Modern Rhythm Section Techniques as Employed by Ari Hoenig” discusses complex rhythmic devices such as cross rhythm and superimposition in jazz improvisation. The remarkable similarity between Hoenig and Tristano’s rhythmic approach, despite the significant time gap between their careers suggests that aspects of Tristano’s approach are still relevant and transferable to jazz musicians today.

Given the vast scholarly research and emergent interest from modern jazz musicians in Tristano’s music, this research will be a useful contribution by furthering the analytical discussion of Tristano’s music and bringing to light the transferability of specific devices to modern jazz improvisation.

Analysis and Jazz Theory

In order to analyse Tristano’s music and define specific devices employed by Tristano, a wide array of jazz pedagogical texts were examined. These include Levine’s “The Jazz Theory Book”, Coker’s “Elements of the Jazz Language for the Developing Improviser”, Magadini’s “Polyrhythms: The Musician’s Guide”, and Hal Crook’s “How to Improvise: An Approach for Practicing Improvisation”. In conjunction with jazz pedagogy literature, various dissertations discussing jazz improvisation proved relevant. The most pertinent studies were Stephen Love’s “On Phrase Rhythm in Jazz”, Haruko Yoshizawa’s “Phraseology: a Study of Bebop Piano Phrasing and Pedagogy”, Vaughn Beaver’s “The Adventurous Monk: a Discussion of Eric Reed’s Improvisational Techniques

35 Jerad Lippi, "Time Travels: Modern Rhythm Section Techniques as Employed by Ari Hoenig" (Masters diss., SUNY Purchase, 2008).
Jazz and Improvisation Practice Methods

One of the aims of this research is to develop strategies for the incorporation of Tristano’s language into the modern jazz settings. Linda Oh’s dissertation “New Method of Rhythmic Improvisation for the Jazz Bassist: An Interdisciplinary Study of Dave Holland's Rhythmic Approach to Bass Improvisation and North Indian Rhythmic Patterns” gives a methodology for codifying specific devices into practice exercises for jazz improvisation. In a 2016 study, Chris Tarr investigated effective practice methods specifically relating to jazz performance. Many of the findings in his paper “Practising Jazz Performance: An Investigation into the Process that Underpins Optimal Instrumental Practice in the Jazz Idiom” directly impact the design of the practice strategies in chapter 5.

Previously mentioned sources, by Crook, Love and Ind all examine practice methods that also inform the development of the practice strategies. Further discussion of the relevance of these texts to this dissertation is included in the methodology section.

42 Vaughn Beaver, "The Adventurous Monk: A Discussion of Eric Reed’s Improvisational Techniques and the Influence of Thelonious Monk" (B.Mus (Honours) diss., Edith Cowan University, 2015).
43 Christopher Foster, "Using Clare Fischer's Solo Piano Approach in Yesterdays to Reinterpret Jazz Standard Repertoire" (B.Mus (Honours) diss., Edith Cowan University, 2011).
45 Linda M. Oh, "New Method of Rhythmic Improvisation for the Jazz Bassist: An Interdisciplinary Study of Dave Holland's Rhythmic Approach to Bass Improvisation and North Indian Rhythmic Patterns" (B.Mus (Honours) diss., Edith Cowan University, 2005).
46 Chris J Tarr, "Practising Jazz Performance: An Investigation into the Process That Underpins Optimal Instrumental Practice in the Jazz Idiom" (Masters diss., Edith Cowan University, 2016).
Chapter 3: Biography, Selected Works and Methodology

Brief Biography

Leonard Joseph Tristano, was born in Chicago on 19 March 1919. His musical training began with his mother, a pianist and opera singer, and continued through school where he studied several instruments and music theory. Blind from the age of ten, Tristano demonstrated a natural aptitude for music. Upon admission to the American Conservatory in Chicago, teachers were warned by Tristano’s school music teacher, “pay particular attention to this boy, because he's going to do everything faster than you're used to.” Whilst the focus of his formal education centered around classical repertoire, from a young age he was immersing himself in African-American culture and music. He is quoted in an interview:

…during the thirties, and the early forties, until I came to New York, I used to hang out in the black ghetto in Chicago, which is about the biggest black ghetto you could find. And in those days, I was the only white person for miles.

Other anecdotes include Tristano sneaking into clubs aged 13 or 14 to hear trumpeter Roy Eldridge play.

After leaving university, Tristano worked briefly in Chicago before moving to New York in 1946. Here he became both a prominent performer and educator, with some of his notable students including Lee Konitz, Warne Marsh, Billy Bauer and Sal Mosca. From 1946 to 1969, he recorded fifteen albums with various labels. His musical output included standard jazz repertoire, compositions known as ‘lines’, original compositions and free-improvisations.

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51 Ulanov (1949).
52 Shim (1999), 57
53 Ibid. 57
54 Commonly referred to as ‘contrafacts’. Shim describes ‘lines’ as compositions using the harmonic and formal framework of popular songs merely as a springboard and writing intricate melodies over it, sometimes transforming the harmonic structure to introduce extended and altered harmonies.
55 Tristano is commonly cited as one of the forerunners in free improvisation, recording some of the first examples of free improvisation in 1949, Intuition and Digression.
Selected Works

All scores can be found in the Appendix section and relevant recordings in the discography.

317 East 32nd Street

317 East 32nd Street is a 32-bar composition by Tristano based on the harmonic structure of Jonny Green’s *Out of Nowhere*, a popular jazz standard. The tune consists of four eight-bar sections – A, B, A, C. The melody is through-composed while the chords repeat according to the sections. Perhaps Tristano’s most widely performed composition today, notable versions of it include versions by Mark Turner, Warne Marsh and Anthony Braxton.

Lennie’s Pennies

Like 317 East 32nd Street, Lennie’s Pennies is a variation of a contrafact tune. It is a Tristano melody based on the changes of Arthur Johnston’s *Pennies from Heaven*. Whilst *Pennies from Heaven* was composed in a major key, Tristano’s composition is based on the same harmony in the parallel minor key. The form is made up two sixteen bar sections – A and B – and the melody is through-composed, making frequent use of polyrhythm throughout (discussed in detail in chapter 4).

Line Up

This improvisation has had the most attention from academics given its unusual nature. *Line Up* contains no statement of a recurring theme, only a seven-chorus improvisation on the harmonic structure of the popular jazz standard *All of Me*. The majority of the improvisation features only the pianist’s right hand, playing single note lines in the low register of the piano. Adding to the unusual

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58 Contrafacts are defined as compositions using the harmonic and formal framework of popular songs merely as a springboard and writing intricate melodies over it, sometimes transforming the harmonic structure to introduce extended and altered harmonies.
nature of the recording, Tristano used multi-taping techniques to record the piano part separately to the drums and bass. Further, there is speculation that Tristano speeded up the recording up post-performance. He is quoted in a 1956 interview for Downbeat, saying “if people want to think I speeded up the piano on East Thirty-Second and Line Up, I don't care. What I care about is that the result sounded good to me.” Despite its unusual nature, the musical content is remarkable for the year, making it a significant recording in jazz history. Shim articulates this saying, “Line Up occupies a significant position in the development of chromaticism in jazz history.”

**Methodology**

This research will be undertaken in two main sections: analysis of the selected works, and development of practice studies and improvisation exercises.

**Analysis**

Chapter 4 concerns itself with analysis only. The scores of three selected works will be analysed in three categories: rhythm, harmony and phrasing. The rhythmic analysis of the selected works draws largely from Lippi’s dissertation analysing the music of Ari Hoenig. Lippi’s clear definitions of ‘cross rhythm’ and ‘superimposition’ as two types of polyrhythm have been adopted in this research to clearly define aspects of Tristano’s rhythmic concept within his lines. Supplementing Lippi’s work is Magadini’s “Polyrhythms: The Musician’s Guide” and sections of Crook’s “How to Improvise: An Approach for Practicing Improvisation”. The harmonic analysis is centered around jazz pedagogical texts as well as analytical dissertations of other jazz musicians’ improvisations. Levine’s comprehensive study of the jazz piano idiom “The Jazz Theory Book” and Coker’s publication

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61 Shim (1999), 520-21
62 Lippi (2008)
63 Magadini and Sykes (1987)
64 Crook (1991)
65 Levine (1995)
“Elements of the Jazz Language for the Developing Improviser”\(^{66}\) are useful in defining and discussing key concepts utilised by Tristano, such as chord substitution and side-slipping. Shim’s term ‘interpolation of chromatic harmonies’ (abbreviated to ICH) is heavily referred to in the harmonic analysis of Line Up as it best describes his chromatic approach to harmony. To analyse Tristano’s use of chromaticism within a melodic line, Ballin’s dissertation “A Formulaic Analysis of Three Performances from Chick Corea’s Recording: Now He Sings, Now He Sobs”\(^{67}\) is useful in conjunction with the previously mentioned jazz pedagogy and theory publications. His term ‘chromatic connection material’ (abbreviated to CCM) outlines three types of chromaticism used by Corea: chromatic scale material, bebop phraseology and chromatic enclosures. Of the many dissertations discussing chromaticism reviewed, the terms used by Ballin best encapsulate Tristano’s use of chromaticism within a line. Phrasing analysis in jazz remains a relatively unexplored area, with the main contributions coming from Stephen Love’s “On Phrase Rhythm in Jazz”\(^{68}\) and Haruko Yoshizawa’s “Phraseology: a Study of Bebop Piano Phrasing and Pedagogy".\(^{69}\) These sources discuss phrasing in terms of symmetry and asymmetry creating consonance and dissonance in a phrasing context. Beaver’s dissertation “The Adventurous Monk: a Discussion of Eric Reed’s Improvisational Techniques and the Influence of Thelonious Monk”\(^{70}\) draws on Yoshizawa’s research in discussing Monk’s approach to phrasing, which is comparable to Tristano’s given its asymmetrical nature. Finally, Shim’s analysis of Tristano’s music informs all categories of analysis, discussing idiosyncratic devices such as asymmetrical rhythmic grouping and interpolation of chromatic harmony in detail.

Recurring devices across the studied works are defined and discussed in the light of the texts mentioned above. The devices are isolated, defined and musical examples from the scores are included in the analysis. A complete list of devices and where they occur in the scores can be found in

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\(^{66}\) Coker (1991)  
\(^{67}\) Ballin (2013)  
\(^{68}\) Love (2011)  
\(^{69}\) Yoshizawa (1999)  
\(^{70}\) Beaver (2015)
Appendix D. Taking from the model in Foster’s dissertation,\textsuperscript{71} chapter 4 concludes with a table summarising all the devices discussed and references to all examples from the scores.

**Development of Practice Studies and Improvisation Exercises**

Following on from the analysis of Tristano’s works, these specific devices are codified into practice studies and improvisation exercises facilitating the incorporation of Tristano’s idiosyncratic devices in modern jazz improvisation. This chapter aims to develop new practice methods for devices unique to Tristano. Therefore, devices discussed in chapter 4 are first assessed for their transferability to modern jazz improvisation and if an exact device has been adequately covered by other jazz pedagogical literature, it will not feature in chapter 5.

The justification for using written exercises to facilitate spontaneous improvisation is drawn from Tristano’s own pedagogy. Ind writes, “Lennie realised that by deliberately practicing such exercise patterns, eventually this aspect of music would be instinctively absorbed and would express itself in improvisation.”\textsuperscript{72}

Existing works from Oh, Love and Crook are drawn together to set out a method for developing effective practice exercises to incorporate Tristano’s material into improvisation. The format of the practice studies is structured as per the following framework, adapted from Oh:

i. Concept: The device isolated and presented in its most basic form.

ii. Short exercises: The device applied in a scale or arpeggio based pattern aimed toward gaining facility with the device.

iii. Contextualisation: Composed etudes designed to be a short representative of the device applied in a musical context, extending it beyond pattern-based application.

iv. Written solo: An example of the device incorporated in a written solo over common jazz forms,\textsuperscript{73} original modern jazz compositions or modal settings.

\textsuperscript{71} Foster (2011)

\textsuperscript{72} Ind (2005), 137

\textsuperscript{73} Forms considered common in jazz include ’12 bar blues’ and ‘rhythm changes’.
This structure aligns itself with Crook’s “target approach” to practicing improvisation. It involves isolating one specific device at a time, taking it out of its musical context to thoroughly practice it before reintegrating it in spontaneous improvisation in a musical context. Crook compares his process to that of a mechanic learning about or repairing an engine:

First, the parts are observed in a state of interaction to understand their purpose, function and relationship to the whole. Then, they are isolated (removed from the whole) where they can be examined individually, studied more closely, and fixed if necessary, i.e. improved. Finally, they are reassembled and tested again in relation to the rest of the engine.74

Crook points out the value in focusing on one topic or device at a time, suggesting students are “sure to develop more ability with that particular topic than solo[ing] without any specific objective. Other areas may suffer temporarily, but that's okay because they’re not being targeted right now.”75

In a 2016 study, Tarr observes one of the difficulties in learning improvisation from notated music:

The improviser is playing different notes in a different order to that which they have been played before. This is a difficult skill to practise because instead of practising specific musical passages, jazz musicians practise language and manipulation of that language.76

Offering a solution to this problem, Tarr and Crook stress the importance of engaging with improvisation conceptsaurally and practicing spontaneous improvisation. Tarr suggests that “ear to instrument connection and intuitive performance can have a major impact on the performance of improvisation.”77

In the light of Tarr and Crook’s comments, each section concludes with exercises asking students to improvise musically and creatively but within the framework of a selected restriction, allowing their ear and intuition to inform their improvisation while still focussing on a particular

74 Crook (1991), 11
75 Ibid, 11
76 Tarr (2016), 1
77 Ibid, 123
device. To aid aural engagement with the concepts it is recommended that students record and listen back to themselves improvising with the material, as well as immerse themselves in the music of Tristano – in particular his musical output from the 1950’s and 1960’s. Further listening should include Tristano’s notable students, namely Marsh and Konitz, and modern artists who have adapted aspects of Tristano’s style in modern jazz settings, for example Rosenwinkel and Turner. This approach to aural engagement is endorsed by Tarr, who suggests two new ideas in the pedagogy of jazz improvisation that inform this study:

1. In order to improvise ‘in the moment’, the artist must spend time practicing ‘in the moment’.

2. Listening to music and listening to oneself through recording is also an important part of the process of learning how to improvise.\(^{78}\)

In summary, each device discussed in the analysis in chapter 4 is assessed for its transferability to modern jazz improvisation. If an exact device has been adequately covered in another pedagogical text, it will not be included in chapter 5. The remaining devices are codified into progressive practice studies, beginning with a simple exposition of the device and concluding with an example of the device incorporated in a written solo. Given the focus of this dissertation is on learning improvisation, the written practice studies are supplemented with improvisation exercises asking students to improvise musically and creatively but within the framework of a selected restriction. Many of the specific exercises offered by Oh, Love and Crook and exercises from Tristano’s own pedagogy will be adjusted and incorporated into the practice strategies set out in chapter 5.

\(^{78}\) Ibid, 92.
Chapter 4: Analysis and Presentation of Prominent Devices

This chapter defines and discusses devices commonly used by Tristano across the selected works and gives musical examples of each device. For a complete list of musical examples, see Appendix D. The analysis will be organised in three groups – rhythmic analysis, harmonic analysis and phrasing analysis.

Rhythmic Analysis

The following devices are the most significant and interesting rhythmic features found in the three studied works.

Diminution/Augmentation of Melodic Fragments

Rhythmic diminution and augmentation is a device used by Tristano to achieve rhythmic variation. Oxford Dictionary of Music defines this technique as “the respective lengthening and shortening of the time-values of the notes.” By considering a traditional conception of an eighth note line, it can be seen that Tristano alters the flow of consecutive eighth notes by diminishing or augmenting the otherwise consistent values of fragments of the line. Both diminution and augmentation are used in the opening phrase of 317 East 32nd Street, shown in figure 1.

![Figure 1: Diminution and augmentation in the opening phrase of 317 East 32nd Street](image-url)

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The effect of this device is twofold: An increase in rhythmic activity and variety, and displacement of the line’s point of resolution. This type of rhythmic inflection through augmentation and diminution leads to a sense of unpredictability and rhythmic interest in the melodic line. In figure 2, the stream of eighth notes and turns is disrupted by augmentation and delays the resolution point of the line from a predictable beat one to a less conventional beat two.

![Figure 2: mm.17-20 of Lennie's Pennies, demonstrating augmentation of a melodic fragment](image)

**Polyrhythm**

Tristano’s use of polyrhythm is remarkable given his complex approach to implementing it in composition and improvisation, getting far beyond the most basic ‘3 against 2’ variation. Polyrhythm is described as “two or more rhythms played simultaneously, or against each other. [they] can also be thought of as two different meters (time signatures) played against each other.”

Lippi elaborates on the confusion around the use of the term:

> The most misleading part of the word polyrhythm is the suffix “poly”. It doesn’t necessarily have to be two rhythms that are played at the same time, but an implication of a new pulse or time signature that is somehow mathematically related to the original… The subject is very broad. There are several rhythmic devices that fall into this category.

Rhythmic analysis of the selected works revealed two categories of polyrhythm:

1. Cross rhythm
2. Superimposition

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80 Magadini and Sykes (1987), 1
81 Lippi (2008), 7
Cross rhythms are repeated rhythmic ideas made up of an odd number of beats. They take a standard note value and phrase them in groupings that do not divide evenly into one bar. The effect of cross rhythm is the implication of a new time signature, conflicting with the existing time signature.

The three beat repeated idea in figure 3 establishes a 3/4 time signature against the 4/4 time signature, or a perceived ‘down beat’ every three beats in the 4/4 time signature (shown by dotted lines). Here, the basic quarter note pulse remains unchanged and a new time signature is implied by grouping the quarter notes in groups of 3.

![Figure 3: mm.10-12 of Lennie's Pennies demonstrating 3/4 cross rhythm (accents show 'perceived down beats')]({})

Tristano also applies this technique to the eight note pulse. In figure 4, beginning on beat 3, a 5/8 time signature is implied against the 4/4 time signature.

![Figure 4: mm.21-23 of Lennie's Pennies, demonstrating 5/8 cross rhythm]({})

A subtler approach to cross rhythm is employed by Tristano in Line Up, where heavy accents within a continuous eighth note line imply the cross rhythm. Tristano places a heavy accent on every third note of the phrase in figure 5 to imply a 3/8 time signature over the existing 4/4 time signature.

![Figure 5: Ch.III mm.17-18 of Line Up, demonstrating cross rhythm using accents]({})

The second category of polyrhythm is superimposition, which involves playing a new rate of notes over the existing pulse. In the works studied, Tristano only superimposes triplet based rhythms. Drummer and educator John Riley suggests the effect of such devices can “create a sense of urgency
and acceleration” or “make the pace of the music feel like its slowing down or relaxing”. The superimposition of an eighth note triplet rate in figure 6 gives the temporary illusion of a faster tempo, while the quarter note triplet based superimposition of figure 7 suggests a slower tempo. Triplet based superimposition is often combined with accents in groups of two or four to highlight the illusion of a new temporary tempo.

Tristano’s idiosyncratic use of polyrhythm can be attributed to his flexibility in where he begins a polyrhythm within a bar. Figures 6 and 7 both demonstrate polyrhythms beginning on beat one or three, however there are instances where cross rhythms and superimpositions begin on less conventional parts of the bar. For example, figure 8 shows a 3/8 cross rhythm beginning on the last eighth note of bar 13.

Figure 9 demonstrates a superimposition beginning on beat 4, adding further sophistication to the polyrhythm; listeners perceive a new temporary tempo beginning part way through a bar of the original tempo. The polyrhythm obscures the existing barlines allowing the improviser to conceal

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82 Ibid.
Asymmetrical Grouping

Asymmetrical grouping is a device similar to cross rhythm, however where cross rhythm groups notes into symmetrical odd groups and can feature varied rhythms or rests, this device occurs within a constant stream of eighth notes and uses rhythmic or melodic accents to delineate groupings of varying length. This device can imply multi-meter passages or simply unpredictable melodic contour and rhythmic accents. Peter Ind, a student of Tristano’s, recalls practice exercises given to him by Tristano to facilitate asymmetrical rhythmic groupings:

Rhythmic freedom can be reached by practicing melodic exercises built on scale patterns and superimposing other rhythmic patterns, such as 5/8 (3 plus 2) or (2 plus 3), 7/8 (4 plus 3) or (3 plus 4).^{84}

In the light of Ind’s comment, it can be helpful to perceive combinations of odd groupings as multi-meter, particularly when undertaking the practice exercises in Chapter 5, even though listeners may perceive it as simply unpredictable rhythmic accents in 4/4. Shim, in his transcription and analysis of

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^{84} Ind (2005), 136
Line Up notates the entire solo in multi-meter according to the rhythmic groupings of eighth notes as shown in the example below.

Figure 10: Excerpt from Shim’s transcription of Line Up

Particularly prevalent in Line Up, odd groupings are delineated by heavy accents accompanying a change in direction of the line or an intervallic jump breaking the contour of the line. For example, in figure 10, two bars of eighth notes are grouped 6–4–6 by a change in direction of the line at the beginning of each new group. The first stave (i) shows the asymmetrical grouping notated in the original time signature and the second stave (ii) is the same phrase renotated according to the implied meters.

Figure 11: Ch.II mm.9–10 of Line Up, demonstrating asymmetrical grouping of eighth notes implying multi-meter

Another example of this device is seen in figure 11. The asymmetrical grouping, again 6–4–6 over two bars, is delineated by accents and a break in the contour of the descending line.

Figure 12: Ch.V mm.25–26 of Line Up, demonstrating asymmetrical grouping of eighth notes implying multi-meter
Emerzian details an example of this device successfully applied to a modern jazz setting, illustrated in figure 12. In his analysis of Mark Turner’s composition, Lennie Groove, he and Turner state that in the A sections, even though they are in 5/4, two bars of the 5/4 time can be considered as a measure of 4/4 followed by two measures of 3/4, providing “rhythmic interest and blur[ing] the significance of the bar lines.”

He [Turner] said it also may help to feel the A sections in 10/4… downbeat emphasis can be created by subdividing 10/4 into a measure of 4/4 and two measures of 3/4.

In Line Up, smaller groupings are often used to divide single bars to give the melodic line an unpredictable contour. Figure 13 demonstrates a phrase in which the eighth notes are asymmetrically

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85 Emerzian (2008), 35
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid., 36
grouped within a single bar. In (i), the eighth notes are grouped $2 - 4 - 2$ followed by $5 - 3$ in (ii).

When played in sequence, the result is an unpredictable melodic contour and striking accents.

![Figure 14: Ch. VII mm.14-15 of Line Up, demonstrating asymmetrical grouping within a single bar](image)

While all of the examples from *Line Up* are constructed by a quick succession of groupings of varied and seemingly arbitrary lengths, one instance can be found of this device in which the length of each grouping is determined by a pattern. In figure 14 from *317 East 32nd Street*, the length of each grouping contracts by one note (except the first group, which contracts by two notes). Triplets are asymmetrically grouped beginning with a group of seven with each subsequent group getting smaller, obscuring the bar lines and the time signature. This is the only example found in the three studied works of asymmetrical grouping occurring according to a discernable pattern.

![Figure 15: mm.6-8 of 317 East 32nd Street, demonstrating asymmetrical grouping according to a contracting pattern](image)

**Harmonic Analysis**

The harmonic analysis of the selected works is grouped into the application of the following three devices. Tristano’s approach to harmony involves using manipulation of harmonic rhythm, chromaticism, and reharmonisation to create what Shim describes as a “superstructure” on the form – complex and often spontaneous departures and embellishments of the basic harmonic structure of a composition.
Manipulation of Harmonic Rhythm

Tristano creates interest in the melodic line implying a new harmonic rhythm against the existing harmony outlined by the rhythm section. The harmonic disparity between the melodic line and the song’s form creates tension in the music. Manipulation of harmonic rhythm is applied in 2 categories:


According to Crook, chord expansion occurs when “the soloist extends (lengthens) the duration of a selected chord in a progression by one (or more) beats into the next chord of the progression, thereby delaying the change to next chord,” and is illustrated in figure 15. Chord contraction, seen in figure 16, is the opposite of chord expansion, where the duration of a selected chord is shortened and the following chord anticipated.

Figure 16: Ch.II mm.4-5 of Line Up, demonstrating chord expansion

Figure 17: mm.9-10 317 of East 32nd Street, demonstrating chord contraction

88 Harmonic rhythm is defined as “literally, the rhythm or rhythmic pattern of harmonic progression in a musical passage; that is, the rhythm articulated by the chords that make up the progression. Usually, however, the term refers simply to the rate of change of chords, which could equally well be called ‘harmonic tempo’.
89 Crook (1991), 136
The second way Tristano manipulates harmonic rhythm is by delaying or anticipating broader units of harmony. The length of each chord remains intact and broader harmonic units such as ii-V-I’s are shifted. Figure 17 demonstrates a three chord unit delayed by two beats.

Figure 17: mm.9-11 of Lennie’s Pennies, demonstrating delay of a harmonic unit

**Chromaticism**

Extensive use of chromaticism characterises much of Tristano’s catalogue and set his improvisational style apart from mainstream bebop. A testament to his pioneering use of chromaticism, Shim claims that “Line Up occupies a significant position in the development of chromaticism in jazz history.”

Across the selected works in this study, Tristano’s use of chromaticism can be classified in the following three categories:

1. Enclosure.
2. Chromatic Connection Material (CCM).
3. Interpolation of Chromatic Harmony (ICH).

Chromatic enclosure is a commonly used device in bebop. Coker defines it as “a linear or melodic device in which an object note (a chord tone or another consonant note) is approached by both the upper and lower leading tones.” Tristano’s extensive use of enclosure identifies him to some extent as a ‘bebop pianist’.

Figure 19: mm.20-21 of Lennie’s Pennies, demonstrating enclosure

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90 Shim (1999), 520-521
Tristano increases the chromaticism within his line by sequencing enclosures. Figure 19 shows a common chromatic phrase found in his improvisations. The phrase consists of two enclosures, the first enclosing the upper leading tone of the target note, and the second enclosing the target note itself. The result is a descending chromatic scale in major 2nds.

![Figure 20: Ch.V mm.16 of Line Up, showing a frequently used chromatic enclosure]

The second category in which Tristano’s use of chromaticism can be analysed is Chromatic Connection Material (CCM). CCM is a term coined by Ballin in his research on post-bop pianist Chick Corea, describing the use of chromatic material to link two musical ideas. CCM is found in both Tristano’s compositions and improvisations and links the last note of one musical phrase to the first note of the next phrase via the chromatic scale (in sequence or according to an intervalllic pattern). When CCM is used, Tristano briefly departs from the harmony, clearly returning to it at the commencement of the next melodic fragment. In figure 20, the first idea begins in Ab major and is connected to the following idea by CCM. The second idea clearly begins on the E natural – a chord tone of C7 – as the line returns to the harmony.

![Figure 21: Ch.VI mm.18-20 of Line Up, demonstrating Chromatic Connection Material]

The same concept is evident in Tristano’s compositions, demonstrated in figure 21 below.

![Figure 22: mm.24-26 of Lennie’s Pennies, demonstrating Chromatic Connection Material]

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92 Ballin (2013), 22.
The final category of chromaticism is labelled by Shim as Interpolation of Chromatic Harmony (ICH). This concept in particular set Tristano apart from his bebop contemporaries due to its progressive approach to harmony. Shim suggests that *Line Up* occupies an “intermediate position between bebop and modal jazz”. It involves interpolating chords into the standard chord progression a half or whole step away from a target chord, or a series of chords a half or whole step apart leading to a target chord. This device can be seen most prevalently in *Line Up*. This device is similar to “side-slipping”, a term attributed to Coker and described as “events in a solo where the improviser is deliberately playing ‘out-of-the-key’ for the sake of creating tension…. [and players] derive their note content simply by focusing on the only ‘wrong’ notes of a chord.” Figure 22 shows an example of a side-slip, or the interpolation of a single chromatic chord into the existing progression.

![Figure 23: Ch.VII mm.25-26 of Line Up, demonstrating interpolation of a single chromatic chord](image)

Tristano develops this concept further in *Line Up*, exploring the interpolation of a series of chords into a progression. Figure 23 demonstrates a target chord ($C^7$) approached from three half steps away, resulting in the interpolation of three chromatic chords.

![Figure 24: Ch.VI mm.3-5 of Line Up, demonstrating interpolation of multiple chromatic chords](image)

When interpolating complex series of chromatic chords, Tristano’s note choice is simplified. In comparison with figure 22, in which only one chord is interpolated and the note choice is diatonic to the scale, figure 23 clearly outlines the three interpolated chords with chord tones from the triad or pentatonic material. This approach to superimposing complex harmonic structures can be seen as a

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93 Shim (1999), 521.
predecessor to Coltrane’s improvisations on the 1960 album *Giant Steps*.95 For example, like *Line Up*, Coltrane’s improvisations on *Giant Steps* and *Countdown*96 rely heavily on pentatonic scale and triadic material to navigate the complex harmonic progressions. The cellular nature of the melodic material allows the interpolated harmony to be clearly perceived and facilitates melodic continuity – “one of the keys to successful side-slipping” according to Coker.

Chromaticism is most prevalent in *Line Up* within the selected works. Tristano’s unusual approach to this improvisation – mostly single note lines played in the right hand with no left-hand accompaniment – facilitates the incorporation of such devices. The lack of chordal accompaniment softens the chromaticism; the melodic line sounds against a bass note only rather than the entire chord. This ambiguity and subtle approach to harmony allows for the successful incorporation of chromatic concepts and distinctive ‘weaving’ nature of Tristano’s melodic line.

**Reharmonisation**

Reharmonisation occurs when the existing chordal structure of a song is altered. In the bebop era, it was commonplace for popular show tunes to be reharmonised by jazz musicians, for example Sonny Stitt’s composition *Eternal Triangle*.97 Like many other tunes of the era, it was based on the harmony of George Gershwin’s *I Got Rhythm*, however Stitt famously reharmonised the bridge of the tune using a series chromatic ii-V progressions. Reharmonisation was usually associated with the superimposition of additional chord changes, for example, secondary dominant chords.98 However, Levine outlines four ways in which reharmonisation can occur: Altering the chords, increasing the number of chords, decreasing the number of chords or substituting chords.99 Analysis of the selected works reveals examples of three of the four types of reharmonisation, with Tristano rarely decreasing the number of chords. His use of reharmonisation allows his compositions and improvisations to

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96 *Countdown* is a based on the chord progression to the jazz standard *Tune Up*, with the standard ii-V-I progressions superimposed with “Coltrane changes” – a series of V-I progressions descending in major thirds.
98 Owens (1993), 5
reflect his unique style, despite being based on ‘standard’ chord progressions. Although many of the discussed reharmonisation techniques are common in bebop, it is important to see how Tristano’s approach both aligns with and extends bebop conventions.

The first type of reharmonisation evident is chord alteration. The opening of the melody in 317 East 32nd Street is an example of a common alteration used by Tristano, turning a tonic major chord into a Major7#5 chord. The same alteration is made to the tonic chord in bar 49 of Line Up.

![Figure 25: Chord alteration – Major 7 to Major 7#5 in mm.1 of 317 East 32nd Street](image)

Figure 25: Chord alteration – Major 7 to Major 7#5 in mm.1 of 317 East 32nd Street

![Figure 26: Chord alteration – Major 7 to Major 7#5 in Ch.II mm.17 of Line Up](image)

Figure 26: Chord alteration – Major 7 to Major 7#5 in Ch.II mm.17 of Line Up

Tristano also employs a wide variety of alterations on dominant chords, particularly altered 5ths and 9ths, as was common practice in bebop.

Increasing the number of chords, or ‘interpolation’ has already been discussed in the previous section on chromaticism. Apart from ICH however, there are several other approaches to interpolation evident in the music. In figure 26 over two bars of a minor chord, Tristano interpolates a V chord, creating the progression i – V – i.

![Figure 27: Ch. I mm.23-24 of Line Up, demonstrating interpolation of a V chord](image)

Figure 27: Ch. I mm.23-24 of Line Up, demonstrating interpolation of a V chord
Furthering this concept, multiple chords descending by perfect 5th intervals are interpolated, creating additional II7 – V7 – I progressions. The harmonic strength of the descending 5th intervals in the bass movement allow for more colour to be played over a static chord.

![Figure 28: Ch. III mm.4-5 of Line Up, demonstrating interpolation of II-V](image)

Finally, Tristano employs tritone substitution to reharmonise a chord progression. Because a dominant chord shares the tritone interval between 3rd and b7th with the dominant chord a tritone away, the two chords can be interchanged without compromising the voice leading in the harmony. For example, D7 shares F# and C with Ab7, allowing Tristano to substitute D7 for Ab7 in the melody of Lennie’s Pennies. Over the D7 chord, the line ascends an Ab13#11 arpeggio from the 9th.

![Figure 29: mm.7 of Lennie’s Pennies, demonstrating tritone substitution](image)

Tristano’s approach to tritone substitution diverges from common use of the device in bebop as it crosses into the territory of interpolation of chromatic harmony. In Line Up, V7 chords are substituted for the tritone, however Tristano often alters the quality of the substituted chord. Figure 29 can be considered both tritone substitution and ICH as the substituted chord is a tritone away from the original and the new chord is the same quality as the tonic chord and approaches it from a semitone above.

![Figure 30: Ch. I mm.29-31 of Line Up, demonstrating tritone substitution of a major 7th chord](image)

100 This reharmonisation technique is often referred to in jazz as “back-cycling”.

Ind recounts another instance of Tristano’s unusual use of tritone substitution:

On the track “All the Things You Are,” recorded with Lee Konitz at the Confucius Restaurant in New York City in 1955, Lee takes the first solo and then Lennie commences his solo…

The original chord to the first bar is an F minor seventh. But Lennie’s eighth-note phrase (starting on the second beat) commences with an A concert, down to F sharp, down to D natural and B natural, resolving neatly into the following chord of B flat minor seventh.\(^{101}\)

This substitution is unusual in that it occurs over a minor chord rather than a dominant chord and like the example from *Line Up* could be interpreted as ICH, with Bmi\(^7\) approaching the following Bbmi\(^7\) from a half step above.

**Phrasing Analysis**

In a 1999 study,\(^{102}\) Haruko Yoshizawa investigated “the characteristics and functions of phrasing in bebop style jazz piano performance”.\(^{103}\) Yoshizawa investigated seven prominent bebop pianists, however Tristano was not included. This section aims to fill in the gap left by Yoshizawa on the idiosyncratic phrasing of Tristano.

Similar to bebop contemporary Thelonious Monk,\(^{104}\) Tristano’s approach to phrasing is characterised by asymmetry – phrases that start and end in unexpected places. The selected works in this study are all standard 32-bar song forms arranged in four and eight-bar sections. The interaction between Tristano’s melodic phrases and these existing metrical structures is what Love calls “phrase

---

101 Ind (2005), 134
102 Yoshizawa (1999)
103 The characteristics discussed by Yoshizawa include:
   1. Playing a pair of eighth notes unevenly without accents.
   2. Grouping a string of eighth notes into two-note sub-phrases that start on the weak part of a beat by using legato and detached articulation.
   3. Grouping a melodic line into various lengths of phrases by using legato and detached articulation.
   4. Playing notes on the weak part of a beat in a syncopated figure in a detached manner.
   5. Playing the final note on the weak part of a beat within a phrase short.
   6. Accenting the high pitch notes in a melodic line.
   7. Accenting the weak part of a beat in a syncopated figure.
   8. Accenting the anticipated first note in a phrase that ties to a down beat.
   9. Accenting the final note on the weak part of a beat in a phrase.
   10. Using ghost notes.
104 In his 2015 study “The Adventurous Monk: a discussion of Eric Reed’s improvisation techniques and the influence of Thelonious Monk”, Vaughn Beaver identifies asymmetrical phrasing as one of the characteristic of Monk’s improvisation.
rhythm”. Tristano’s asymmetrical phrasing and tendency to play over the barline obscures the form and creates ‘phrase rhythmic dissonance’. This occurs when the phrasing of the melodic line conflicts with the four or eight-bar divisions of the form, shown in figure 30 where the melodic line begins in the third bar of the four-bar division, crosses over the four-bar section and finishes in the second bar of the following four-bar section.

Tristano’s use of asymmetrical phrasing is extreme. For example, of the eleven phrases that make up 317 East 32nd Street, only a single phrase begins on beat one of the bar, while eight phrases begin on off beats. Phrase length varies between phrases, from one bar to six bars in length. Table 1 is a breakdown of the phrasing in 317 East 32nd Street, showing the phrase length, and beginning and end points of each of the eleven phrases that make up the composition. Phrases are delineated by “rests and relatively long notes” and numbered accordingly by the author.

Figure 31: Excerpt from Line Up, demonstrating asymmetrical phrasing across four-bar sections

---

106 Love defines phrase rhythmic dissonance as “the flow of tension and release in phrase rhythm”.
Table 1: Phrase analysis of 317 East 32nd Street

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Length (Bars/beats)</th>
<th>Start (Bar:Beat)</th>
<th>Finish (Bar:Beat)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 bars 3.5 beats</td>
<td>1:1+</td>
<td>3:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 bar 1.5 beats</td>
<td>5:1+</td>
<td>6:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 bar 3 beats</td>
<td>6:3</td>
<td>8:1+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 bar 3 beats</td>
<td>9:1</td>
<td>10:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 bars 3.5 beats</td>
<td>10:4+</td>
<td>13:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2 bars 2 beats</td>
<td>14:4</td>
<td>17:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 bar 2.5 beats</td>
<td>18:1+</td>
<td>19:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1 bar 1.5 beats</td>
<td>20:1+</td>
<td>21:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2 bars 3.5 beats</td>
<td>22:2+</td>
<td>25:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1 bar 0.5 beats</td>
<td>25:2+</td>
<td>26:2+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>6 bars 0.5 beats</td>
<td>26:4+</td>
<td>32:4(2nd triplet)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perhaps the most extreme example of asymmetrical phrasing occurs in the opening phrase of *Line Up*. Tristano leaves the first eight bars of the form as rest and begins his improvisation in the ninth bar of the form, which is perceived by listeners as the top of the form. This highly displaced approach to phrasing is idiosyncratic to Tristano’s style.

The second hallmark of Tristano’s approach to phrasing is extended phrase length – uninterrupted melodic passages lasting six or more bars. The most prominent exemplar of extended phrase length is *Line Up*. In the seven chorus’ of improvisation, eleven phrases consist of or exceed six bars in length, with the longest phrase extending fourteen bars in chorus III.

---

108 Crook defines a ‘long’ phrase as consisting of approximately 24 beats or six bars.
37

Figure 32: Example of extended phrase length in Lennie’s Pennies

“Concinnity”

Concinnity is a term defined by LaRue\(^{109}\) as interconnection and correlation between musical elements. It is helpful in analysing Tristano’s style as while the devices he uses fall within the categories of rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing, there is a high level of concinnity between categories and devices. For example, a key phrasing device in Line Up is extended phrase length. Within an extended phrase however, asymmetrical rhythmic grouping and the interpolation of chromatic harmony often facilitate the length of the line by creating harmonic and rhythmic tension and release. An example of this can be seen in bars 81-95 of Line Up. Shim also identifies concinnity in his analysis of Line Up, noticing a connection between ICH and asymmetrical rhythmic grouping. He writes, “the interjection of chromatic harmonies often coincides with the change in direction of the melody, of which the asymmetrical length is emphasised by accents.”\(^{110}\) Other devices that appear to be complimentary are diminution/augmentation and superimposition, CCM and polyrhythm, manipulation of harmonic rhythm and polyrhythm, and interpolation of chromatic harmony and manipulation of harmonic rhythm. The correlation between musical devices will be explored in the development of practice studies and improvisation exercises in the following chapter.


\(^{110}\) Shim (1999), 521.
Summary and Classification of Results

Table 2 lists all of the devices discussed in the analysis of the three selected works that define Tristano’s idiosyncratic approach. Table 3 outlines the evidence of each device across the three selected works.

**Table 2: Summary and classification of devices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rhythmic</th>
<th>Harmonic</th>
<th>Phrasing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diminution/Augmentation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Manipulation of Harmonic Rhythm</strong></td>
<td><strong>Asymmetrical phrasing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Chord expansion/contraction</td>
<td>ii. Delay/anticipation of harmonic rhythm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Polyrhythm</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chromaticism</strong></td>
<td><strong>Extended phrase length</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Cross rhythm</td>
<td>i. Enclosure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Superimposition</td>
<td>ii. Chromatic connection material (CCM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Interpolation of chromatic harmony (ICH)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asymmetrical Grouping</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reharmonisation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3: Evidence of devices across the three selected works**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>317 East 32nd Street</th>
<th>Lennie’s Pennies</th>
<th>Line Up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diminution/Augmentation</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polyrhythm</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymmetrical Grouping</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation of Harmonic Rhythm</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chromaticism</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reharmonisation</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymmetrical Phrasing</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Phrase Length</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eight devices in total have been defined and discussed in this chapter. The first research aim was to define and discuss the devices Tristano employed in improvisation that are idiosyncratic to his style. This chapter expresses a deeper insight into Tristano’s music and the complex devices he was employing during the 1950’s. The next chapter aims to show the transferability of these devices to modern jazz improvisation.
Chapter 5: Incorporation of Devices in Modern Jazz

Improvisation

This chapter aims to investigate the transferability of the devices discussed in chapter 4 to modern jazz settings by providing a framework for incorporating the devices into modern jazz improvisation. It will be presented as a series of practice exercises based on previously mentioned methodologies by Oh, Love and Crook. The format of the practice studies is as discussed in the methodology:

i. Concept: The device isolated and presented in its most basic form.

ii. Short exercises: The device applied in a scale or arpeggio based pattern aimed toward gaining facility with the device.

iii. Contextualisation: Composed etudes designed to be a short representative of the device applied in a musical context, extending it beyond pattern-based application.

iv. Written solo: An example of the device incorporated in a written solo over common jazz forms, original modern jazz compositions or modal settings.

Rationale

The resurgence in interest in the ‘Tristano school’ of improvisation by various modern jazz musicians, namely Mark Turner and Kurt Rosenwinkel was the catalyst for undertaking this research. Following on from the analysis of Tristano’s style in chapter 4, this final chapter aims to not only engage musicians in understanding the devices that feature in Tristano’s own work, but also facilitate the transfer of the devices into modern jazz settings. Emerzian summarises this, writing:

Exact replication of a certain musician’s style or a stylistic period, while entertaining, typically bears no positive effect on the vitality of a growing art form… He [Turner] has at once created a new interest in the music of these artists who inspired him—by performing Tristano and Marsh-related material—and has synthesised crucial elements of their work into his forward-thinking and eclectic modern style.\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{111} Forms considered common in jazz include ‘12 bar blues’ and ‘rhythm changes’.
\textsuperscript{112} Emerzian (2008), 30.
Just as Tristano’s own music can be considered a creative extension of bebop, this chapter encourages musicians to innovatively employ Tristano’s rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing devices in new settings.

**Selection of Devices**

To refine the content in this chapter and avoid unnecessary repetition of pedagogical material, the selection of devices to include in the practice studies was dependent on the extent to which they are have been covered in other pedagogical texts. Some devices, despite being a key feature of Tristano’s style, have been comprehensively covered by other authors and will not be included in this chapter. Other devices, such as polyrhythm have been covered in other texts, however Tristano’s application of them is unique to his style. These devices will be included in the practice studies. Below is a summary of the selection of devices:

*Table 4: Selection of Device for Practice Studies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>Included in this Study</th>
<th>Adequately covered in another pedagogical text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diminution/Augmentation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes – Crook, 101.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polyrhythm</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymmetrical Grouping</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation of Harmonic Rhythm</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes – Crook, 133-137.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpolation of Chromatic Harmony</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chromatic Enclosure</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes – Coker, 50.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chromatic Connecting Material</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes – Crook, 163.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reharmonisation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes – Levine, 259.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymmetrical Phrasing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Phrase Length</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using the Practice Studies

It is recommended by Crook that students practice multiple exercises in small, time-restrained blocks every day.\textsuperscript{113} For example, a student might practice the exercises associated with a single device for 20 minutes each, and repeat this daily until satisfactory progress has been achieved, then move on to a new device. Exercises, etudes and written solos should be played through using various modes of accompaniment suggested by Crook: comping track/play-along, metronome only, another player (any instrument) and no accompaniment. The written exercises should be practiced with a focus on accuracy, not speed. The goal of the written exercises is for students to understand the ‘sound’ of each concept and apply them in an improvisatory sense rather than recite specific exercises note for note in a solo. This is drawn from Tristano’s own pedagogy, with Ind writing,

Lennie realised that by deliberately practicing such exercise patterns, eventually this aspect of music would be instinctively absorbed and would express itself in improvisation.\textsuperscript{114}

Following on from the written exercises, students are encouraged to improvise musically and creatively within the restriction of the device in focus. It is recommended students practice improvising with the devices in the following harmonic settings:

i. Single chord, unlimited duration (modal).

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{Cm7}
\caption{Cm7}
\end{figure}

ii. Chord progressions.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{Em7_A7_Dm7_G7}
\caption{Em7, A7, Dm7, G7}
\end{figure}

iii. Complete chord progressions of jazz standards (e.g. 12 Bar Blues, Rhythm Changes, All of Me etc.).

\textsuperscript{113} Crook (1991), 12.
\textsuperscript{114} Ind (2005), 137.
iv. Without chord changes (free).

N.C.

Finally, when both playing the written material and improvising using the devices, it is important to remember to play “musically and creatively”. As Tarr puts it,

The interpretation of written music lies not just in playing the corresponding pitch and rhythm on an instrument, but in shaping and delivering the note in an expressive way. For the improvising musician tempo, tone, texture and detailed rhythmic shape are of prime concern, especially in the jazz context, as much of the musical nuance is based on “how” the note is played rhythmically, tonally and texturally.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Tarr (2016), 21.
Practice Studies and Improvisation Exercises

Rhythmic Devices: Cross Rhythm

i. Concept

a) Basic 3/4 cross-rhythm

b) Basic 3/8 cross rhythm

c) Basic 5/8 cross rhythm

ii. Short Exercises (The following exercises should be applied in all keys and to a variety of scales)

a) 3/8 cross rhythm applied to C major scale.
b) 3/4 cross rhythm

C major scale

\[ \text{\footnotesize\text{\textbf{Cross-rhythm: G dorian}}} \]

\[ \text{\footnotesize\text{\textbf{Cross-rhythm: C Dominant 8-note}}} \]

c) 5/8 Cross-rhythm

d) The following exercises incorporate specific rhythmic figures played by Tristano in the studied works.

Bars 1-3 of Lennie’s Pennies

Bars 14-15 of Lennie’s Pennies
f) Bars 21-23 of Lennie’s Pennies

Cross-rhythm: Bb Lydian

iii. Short Etudes

Etude #1: 3/4 Cross-rhythm
swung 8ths

Etude #2: 3/8 Cross-rhythm
straight 8ths
iv. **Written Solo**

Solo over Blues in F incorporating various Cross-rhythms

\[ \text{swung 8ths} \]

\[
\text{F}^7 \quad \text{Bb}^7 \quad \text{F}^7 \quad \text{Cm}^7 \quad \text{F}^7
\]

\[
\text{Bb}^7 \quad \text{Bb}^7 \quad \text{F}^7 \quad \text{Am}^7 \quad \text{D}^7
\]

\[
\text{Gm}^7 \quad \text{C}^7 \quad \text{F}^7 \quad \text{D}^7 \quad \text{Gm}^7 \quad \text{C}^7
\]

\[
\text{F}^7 \quad \text{Bb}^7 \quad \text{F}^7 \quad \text{Cm}^7 \quad \text{F}^7
\]

\[
\text{Bb}^7 \quad \text{Bb}^7 \quad \text{F}^7 \quad \text{Am}^7 \quad \text{D}^7 \quad \text{Gm}^7 \quad \text{C}^7
\]
**Improvisation using Cross Rhythm**

Improvise incorporating various cross rhythms in the following harmonic settings:

i. No Chord (free).

ii. Single Chord – Unlimited Duration (modal).

iii. Chord Progressions.

iv. Tune Progressions.

---

**Rhythmic Devices: Superimposition**

i. **Concept**

a) Basic 1/4 Note Triplet Superimposition

b) Basic 1/8 Note Triplet Superimposition

---

ii. **Short Exercises** (The following exercises should be applied in all keys and to a variety of scales)

a) 1/4 Note Triplet Superimposition
b) Practice exercises a) and b) beginning on varied beats of the bar i.e. Beat 2, Beat 3+ etc.

c) Practice exercises a) and b) beginning on varied beats of the bar i.e. Beat 2, Beat 3+ etc.

d) 1/8 Note Triplet Superimposition

e) Practice exercise iv. beginning on all partials of the triplet.

iii. Short Etudes

Etude #4: 1/4 Triplet Superimposition

swung 8ths

Gmaj7

C7

Gm7

D7

Gmaj7
iv. **Written Solo**

Solo over Blues in F incorporating Superimposition

\( \text{Bb}^7 \) \( \text{F}^7 \) \( \text{Am}^7 \) \( \text{D}^7 \) \( \text{Gm}^7 \) \( \text{C}^7 \) \( \text{F}^7 \) \( \text{D}^7 \) \( \text{Gm}^7 \) \( \text{C}^7 \)
**Improvisation using Superimposition**

Improvise incorporating various superimpositions in the following harmonic settings:

i. No Chord (free)

ii. Single Chord – Unlimited Duration (modal)

iii. Chord Progressions

iv. Tune Progressions

**Rhythmic Devices: Asymmetrical Grouping**

i. **Concept**

a) One Bar Variations (numbers preceding each example indicate the specific groupings of eighth notes, for example, 2-6 indicates a group of two eighth notes followed by a group of 6 eighth notes).

\[
\begin{align*}
   & \text{2-6} \\
   & \text{3-5} \\
   & \text{5-3} \\
   & \text{6-2} \\
   & \text{2-3-3} \\
   & \text{3-2-3} \\
   & \text{3-3-2}
\end{align*}
\]
b) Two Bar Variations – the following examples are possible configurations of two bars of 4/4 time.

The accents within each bar are only some of the possible solutions and students are encouraged to experiment with different accents within longer groupings.

\[6-4-6\]

\[6-3-4-3\]

\[4-3-2-4-3\]

\[5-4-3-4\]

**ii. Short Exercises**

It is important to exaggerate accented notes in the following exercises. For reference, listen to Tristano’s accented eighth note lines on *Line Up*, evident throughout the entire performance.

a) C major (one bar)

\[2-6\]
b) G major (one bar)

\[ \text{G major (one bar)} \]

\[ \text{D major (two bar)} \]

\[ \text{A major (two bar)} \]

iii. Short Etudes

Etude #6: One Bar Asymmetrical Grouping

\[ \text{Swung 8ths} \]

\[ \text{Em7} \]

\[ \text{Dm7} \]

\[ \text{Gmaj7} \]
iv.  Written Solo

Solo over Blues in F incorporating Asymmetrical Grouping

\[ Cm^7 \]
\[ F^7 \]
\[ Dm^7 \]
\[ G^7 \]

\[ Cm^7 \]
\[ F^7 \]
\[ Bm^7 \]
Improvisation using Asymmetrical Grouping

i. Improvise incorporating various one bar asymmetrical groupings in the following harmonic settings:

a. No Chord (free).

b. Single Chord – Unlimited Duration (modal).

c. Chord Progressions.

d. Tune Progressions.

ii. Improvise incorporating various two bar asymmetrical groupings in the previously mentioned harmonic settings.

iii. Improvise using a combination of one and two bar asymmetrical groupings in the previously mentioned harmonic settings.

Harmonic Devices: Interpolation of Chromatic Harmony (ICH)

i. Concept

a) Key of C: Interpolation of a single chord (side-slipping)

\[ \text{C}^{\text{maj7}}, \text{D}^{\text{maj7}}, \text{C}^{\text{maj7}} \]

b) Interpolation of two chords (chromatic approach)

\[ \text{D}^{\text{maj7}}, \text{D}^{\text{maj7}}, \text{C}^{\text{maj7}} \]

c) Interpolation of three chords (chromatic approach)

\[ \text{E}^{\text{maj7}}, \text{D}^{\text{maj7}}, \text{D}^{\text{maj7}}, \text{C}^{\text{maj7}} \]
ii. Short Exercises

a) Arpeggio material – also practice with the following chord qualities: minor 7th, dominant 7th, half-diminished, minor-major 7th.

b) Pentatonic material – also practice using minor pentatonic scale.

c) Interpolation of a single chord (side-slipping)

d) Interpolation of two chords (chromatic approach)
e) Interpolation of three chords (chromatic approach)

...continue transposing around cycle of 4ths

iii. Short Etudes

Etude #8: Interpolation of a Single Chord (side-slipping)

swung 8ths

G7

Cm7

Etude #9: Interpolation of Multiple Chords (chromatic approach)

swung 8ths

Em7
iv. **Written Solo**

**Solo over Blues in F incorporating Asymmetrical Grouping**

_swing 8ths_

\[
\begin{align*}
F^7 & \quad Bb^7 \quad F^7 \\
Bb^7 & \quad Bb^7 \quad F^7 \quad Am^7 \quad D^7 \\
Gm^7 & \quad C^7 \quad F^7 \quad D^7 \quad Gm^7 \quad C^7 \\
F^7 & \quad Bb^7 \quad F^7 \\
Bb^7 & \quad Bb^7 \quad F^7 \quad Am^7 \quad D^7 \\
Gm^7 & \quad C^7 \quad F^7 \quad D^7 \quad Gm^7 \quad C^7
\end{align*}
\]

b) The harmonic setting of the following example is static (8 bars of C Dorian mode). Chord symbols indicate the implied harmony of the line.

**ICH incorporated in a Modal/Odd Time setting**

_Med. Slow Swing_

\[
\begin{align*}
Cm^7 & \quad 3 \quad 3 \quad 3 \\
Cm^7 & \quad 3 \quad 3 \quad 3 \\
Cm^7 & \quad 3 \quad 3 \quad 3 \\
Cm^7 & \quad 3 \quad 3 \quad 3
\end{align*}
\]
Phrasing Devices: Asymmetrical Phrasing

The following exercises are based on Love’s work and aim to develop facility in asymmetrical phrasing through imitation of Tristano’s own phrasing. Love writes:

As in most sorts of practice, the goal is not for the student to quote consciously the work of others while performing; rather, through deliberate practice, aspects of the noteworthy performer’s style penetrate the student’s subconscious, and spontaneously come to the surface.\footnote{Love (2011), 203}

The following exercises outline the phrase rhythm of 317 East 32nd Street, Lennie’s Pennies, and chorus II of Line Up according to which students can improvise. These are followed by a written example of Tristano’s phrase rhythm being employed in an improvised solo on ‘Rhythm Changes’.

a. Improvise, phrasing according to the slash marks in each of the following exercises, plus or minus one eighth note (i.e. if the phrase rhythm is marked on beat 2, begin your phrase on beat 1+, 2 or 2+). Use the chord changes above the stave or any 32-bar standard song form.
Ex. 1 Phrase Rhythm of *317 East 32nd Street* applied to a jazz standard (Rhythm Changes)
Ex. 2 Phrase Rhythm of *Lennie's Pennies* applied to an original jazz composition
(Wayne Shorter's *Prince of Darkness*)

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Cm}^7 & &\text{Gm}^7 \\
&\text{Bm}^7 & &\text{Gm}^7 \\
&\text{Gm}^7 & &\text{Bm}^{maj(11)} & &\text{Bm}^{maj(11)} \\
&\text{Bm}^7 & &\text{Es}^7 & &\text{Gm}^7 \\
&\text{Cm}^7 & &\text{Gm}^7 \\
&\text{Bm}^7 & &\text{Gm}^7 \\
&\text{Gm}^7 & &\text{Bm}^{maj(11)} & &\text{Bm}^{maj(11)} \\
&\text{Bm}^7 & &\text{Es}^7 & &\text{Gm}^7 \\
\end{align*}
\]
Ex. 3 Phrase Rhythm of *Line Up* Chorus II applied in a modal setting (McCoy Tyner's *Passion Dance*)

F7(sus4)
i. **Written Solo**

Solo over Rhythm Changes using Phrase Rhythm from *317 East 32nd Street*
Phrasing Devices: Extended Phrase Length

Controlling phrase length in an improvised solo is a topic well covered by Crook. The focus of this section is “concinnity” – using combinations of Tristano’s rhythmic and harmonic devices studied in this dissertation to achieve extended phrase length. As discussed in the analysis of Tristano’s phrasing, the melodic interest created by employing various rhythmic and harmonic devices in combination can facilitate extended phrase length. Below is an example of a possible combination of devices that could be used in this manner.

Cross Rhythm/Chromatic Connection Material

i. Concept

a) 

![3/4 Cross-Rhythm]

CCM 3/8 Cross-Rhythm

b) 

![5/8 Cross-Rhythm]

CCM 3/8 Cross-Rhythm

---

117 Crook, 26-29.
ii. Short Exercises

a) C major scale

b) Eb Lydian

iii. Short Etudes

Etude #10: Cross-rhythm/CCM

Etude #11: Cross-rhythm/CCM in a modal setting
iv. **Written Solo**

**Solo over Blues in F incorporating Cross-Rhythm/CCM**

![Musical Notation](image)

**Improvisation using Extended Phrase Length and Concinnity**

i. Improvise extended phrases by combining cross rhythm and CCM in the following harmonic settings:

a. No Chord (free).

b. Single Chord – Unlimited Duration (modal).

c. Chord Progressions.

d. Tune Progressions.

ii. Improvise extended phrases using other combinations of devices including but not limited to:

a) Asymmetrical Rhythmic Grouping/Interpolation of Chromatic Harmony.

b) Superimposition/Manipulation of Harmonic Rhythm.

c) Superimposition/Chromatic Connection Material.

d) Interpolation of Chromatic Harmony/Manipulation of Harmonic Rhythm.

e) Asymmetrical Rhythmic Grouping/Manipulation of Harmonic Rhythm.
Conclusion

Just as bebop musicians drew from the swing era to innovate new styles in the 1940’s, many modern jazz musicians feel the same calling: to understand, then reinvent and reimagine the music of the past. Kurt Rosenwinkel and Mark Turner are two such musicians on the cutting edge of modern jazz, who are drawing on the music of Lennie Tristano to inspire and inform their creative endeavors. The transferability of Tristano’s style, and timely relevance to such modern jazz musicians has served as stimulus for undertaking this research.

The aims of the research were twofold. Firstly, to define and discuss idiosyncratic rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing devices employed by Tristano in *Lennie’s Pennies, 317 East 32nd Street* and *Line Up*. After becoming familiar with the existing literature concerning Tristano and jazz improvisation pedagogy in chapter 2, it became apparent that whilst Tristano’s pedagogy and biography had been comprehensively covered, a gap in the research existed in relation to the integration of his rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing devices into the musical vocabulary of modern jazz musicians. The literature review also found there was room for more detailed analysis of some of Tristano’s idiosyncratic musical devices. Chapter 4 provided an in-depth discussion of eight of the idiosyncratic devices used in his improvisation. The devices discussed were diminution/augmentation, polyrhythm, asymmetrical rhythmic grouping, manipulation of harmonic rhythm, chromaticism, reharmonisation, asymmetrical phrasing, and extended phrase length. These findings are considered the fulfillment of the first research aim.

The second research aim was designed toward the transferability of selected devices from chapter 4 – cross rhythm, superimposition, asymmetrical grouping, interpolation of chromatic harmony, asymmetrical phrasing and extended phrase length – to modern jazz improvisation. To do this, a series of practice studies and improvisation exercises were developed to facilitate deep learning and musical aptitude around Tristano’s idiosyncratic devices incorporated in improvisation. These studies were carefully developed according to previous works by Oh, Love and Crook and designed to allow modern jazz musicians to innovatively employ Tristano’s rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing devices in modern jazz settings.
As a jazz pianist, my own improvisation has benefitted greatly from both studying Tristano’s works in such detail as well as personally undertaking the practice studies and improvisation exercises. As my facility with each of the devices improves, the possibilities for incorporating them within a multitude of modern improvisation settings become apparent. My experience has shown the devices to have the potential to be successfully employed in modern jazz improvisation over jazz standards, modal and non-functional harmonic settings, and odd meter settings. Through the development and undertaking of these practice studies, the second research aim has been fulfilled, showing great potential for the transfer of Tristano’s rhythmic, harmonic and phrasing devices to modern jazz improvisation.

This research aligns itself with other academic research investigating the recontextualisation of the music of the past – whether from jazz or other traditions – and its application in modern jazz improvisation and composition.

Ultimately, the musical devices codified within these exercises managed to address gaps in the literature not covered well (if at all) in other jazz pedagogical texts. Further, the exercises and etudes themselves are a positive first step and contribution towards engaging the minds and imaginations of others wishing to methodically approach and express some of Tristano’s ingenuity and aesthetics. Approaching Tristano’s music in this way sustains a model of recontextualising the music of the past to create innovation in the music of the present.
Bibliography


Foster, Christopher. "Using Clare Fischer's Solo Piano Approach in Yesterdays to Reinterpret Jazz Standard Repertoire". B.Mus. (Honours), Edith Cowan University, 2011.


Gillespie, Dizzy, Sonny Stitt and Sonny Rollins, Sonny Side Up, audio CD, Verve Records 825 674-2, 1986


Stehr, Max W. "Bird’s Words and Lennie’s Lessons: Using or Avoiding Patterns in Bebop". Ph.D., University of Nebraska, 2016.


Appendices

Appendix A: 317 East 32nd Street Lead Sheet

Med. Swing

Transcribed by A. Salisbury from The Complete Recordings of Lennie Tristano, Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh
Mosaic Records MD6-174

Lennie Tristano
Appendix C: Line Up Transcription

I: 1 A\textsuperscript{b}maj\textsuperscript{7}  

\begin{musicnotation}
\bar{1} \quad \text{\textsuperscript{4}}
\end{musicnotation}

I: 5 F\textsuperscript{7}  

\begin{musicnotation}
\bar{5} \quad Bm\textsuperscript{7}
\end{musicnotation}

I: 9 C\textsuperscript{7}  

\begin{musicnotation}
\bar{9} \quad C\textsuperscript{7}
\end{musicnotation}

I: 13 Bb\textsuperscript{7}  

\begin{musicnotation}
\bar{13} \quad Eb\textsuperscript{7}
\end{musicnotation}

I: 17 A\textsuperscript{b}maj\textsuperscript{7}  

\begin{musicnotation}
\bar{17} \quad C\textsuperscript{7}
\end{musicnotation}

I: 21 F\textsuperscript{7}  

\begin{musicnotation}
\bar{21} \quad Bm\textsuperscript{7}
\end{musicnotation}

I: 25 D\textsuperscript{b}maj\textsuperscript{7}  

\begin{musicnotation}
\bar{25} \quad Dbm\textsuperscript{7}
\end{musicnotation}

I: 29 Bm\textsuperscript{7}  

\begin{musicnotation}
\bar{29} \quad Eb\textsuperscript{7}
\end{musicnotation}

The remainder of the Line Up transcription has been excluded from the online version of this thesis due to copyright issues.
## Appendix D: Complete Analysis of Selected Works

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>317 East 32nd Street</th>
<th>Lennie’s Pennies</th>
<th>Line Up</th>
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- Diminution/Augmentation
- Cross-Rhythm
- Superimposition
- Asymmetrical Grouping
- Manipulation of Harmonic Rhythm
- Enclosure
### Chromatic Connection Material

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### Asymmetrical Phrasing

- Evident throughout composition
- Evident throughout composition
- Evident throughout improvisation

### Extended Phrase Length

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