



Gene Aitken
Nat'l. Vocal Jazz Chm.

VOCAL JAZZ

Rehearsal Techniques

Errata From Last Issue

Thank you for your calls and your continued interest in the vocal jazz articles. No, d = isn't a new nomenclature in music, it was an interpretation of a quarter note and/or a half note by the Jazz Educator printing machine. Please make the following corrections in the last issue:

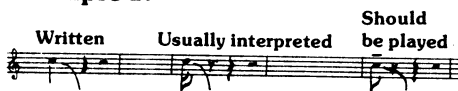
Example 4 should be ♩ = 60, not d = 60
Example 7 should be ♩ = 120, not d = 120
Example 9 should be ♩ = 120, not d = 120

FALL-OFFS

The Fall-off is a musical notation which needs some explanation. Fall-offs are generally accomplished by taking the vowel sound of a word and letting the pitch fall. As you do this, dynamically decrease the sound of the vowel until the sound disappears. Keep

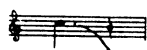
in mind that no matter how short the note of the fall-off is, a tonal center must be established. As an example, this is usually the way a fall-off is interpreted.

Example 1.



In the above figure, since the duration of the note is short, it is not as hard to determine when the fall starts as when the duration of the note is longer. As an example:

Example 2.



In both cases, the end of the fall must be determined. Will the release be a -4, or a -1? This is especially critical when the end sound of the fall is a consonant. Thus, we must ask ourselves two questions in dealing with fall-offs:

1. On what beat does the fall-off begin? and,
2. On what beat does the fall-off end?

Can you imagine what happens on the fall-off release on the word "times" if one person releases on beat 4, another person on beat 4½, and still another person on beat one of the next measure?

Example 3.



The markings on the correct interpretation indicate the fall-off begins on beat 2, and is released on beat 4. As the fall-off begins, maintain a good vowel sound while decreasing the dynamic level. Thus in the final analysis, a lonely dotted half note has many markings.

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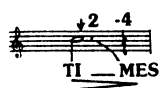
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Example 4.



NOTE SEPARATION

Whether music is stylistically jazz or classical, accented notes following a held note are executed by releasing the held note. By providing the element of space, we accomplish two musical techniques:

1. Bringing out the accented note dynamically, and
2. Attacking the accented note together.

Listen to recordings of good big bands and you will find space between the notes as indicated above. Below are several examples of notes that need space between them. Note that there are two ways of marking these notes . . . a slash, or marking the beat of the release. Below it is marked both ways, although the slash might be easier to read.

Example 5.



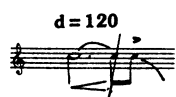
In each of the above examples, one should add a slight crescendo toward the break, or release between the two notes. By adding the crescendo, notice how the break almost seems natural the first time.

Example 6.



Many times the last accent note will have a fall-off. Treat the note in the same manner as if they were separated notes.

Example 7.

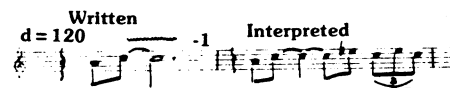
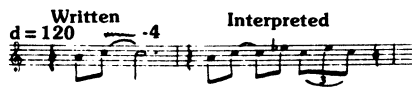


SHAKES

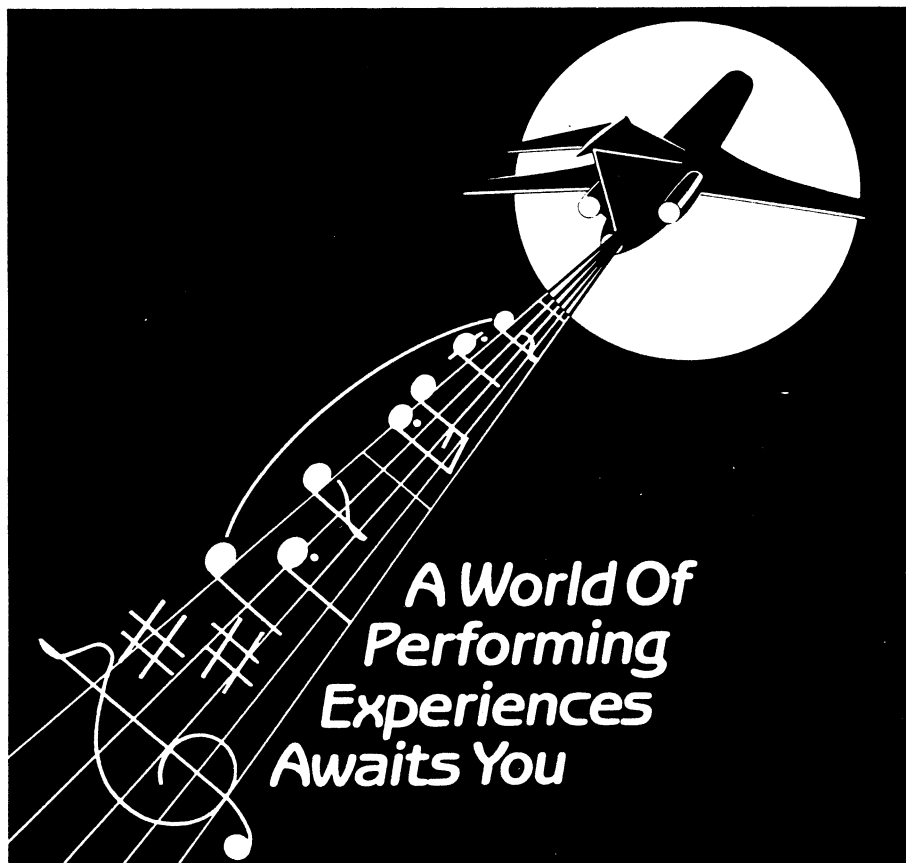
Although the shake is addressed more than any other vocal jazz technique, I would like to offer a few additional thoughts other than . . . "the

shake should generally be the interval of a minor third." A shake must have a beginning and an ending. In order to determine when the shake is to begin, you must determine when the release is to be made. Usually in notes that are of a longer duration, the shake will begin later.

Example 8.



All notes that have shakes indicated must be first held to determine the tonality . . . much like the fall-off. Usually notes that have shakes are of a duration of at least a quarter note or more at a medium groove tempo. Below are examples of shakes as they may appear in a piece of music.



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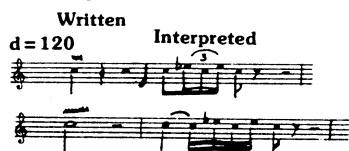


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Example 9.



Mark the shakes so the individual knows when the shake is to begin and when the shake is to be released.

Example 10.



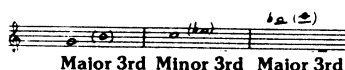
The next musical question is, "Are the shakes to be slow or fast, or do they start out slow and then get faster toward the end of the note?" There is no hard and fast rule, but generally slower tunes tend to have slower shakes, and faster tunes, faster shakes. For effect, sometimes you can employ a shake that starts slow and gets faster. Below are examples of slow, fast, and slow-fast shakes.

Example 11.



Also, shakes are not metrically the same with each individual in the section, they are approximates in terms of either slow or fast. Shakes executed together would sound like one of the well-known old-time bands. The interval of a shake is usually a minor third . . . except that the higher the note the less the interval, and the lower the note, the wider the interval.

Example 12.



In the next issue will be some ideas on the most controversial subject of all

. . . VIBRATO. If you have any thoughts on this ahead of time, let me know. Other than that, thanks for reading the article and let me know of additional concepts you would like me to cover.

Gene Aitken, Director of the Jazz Studies Program at the University of Northern Colorado, is one of the most exciting, energetic clinicians available today. His enthusiasm never fails to captivate both performers and audiences.

Gene has extensive background as a professional musician, including appearances with performers such as Vicki Carr, Accidentals II, Four Freshmen and Henry Mancini. He has taught in Seattle and Renton, Washington, and Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon, where he was manager of the Eugene Symphony and administrative consultant to the Oregon Arts Commission. Active in numerous professional and community organizations, he currently serves a National Vocal Jazz Chairman for the National Association of Jazz Educators and is widely sought after as a clinician in both classical and jazz fields.

During the past two years, the UNC jazz Studies Program has won fifteen Down Beat Awards, a Big Band Magazine citation for the New Recording of the Month (March, 1980), funding support for special projects from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Colorado Council on the Arts and Humanities, plus invitations to appear as featured performers in a number of major festivals and music educators conventions across the nation.

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