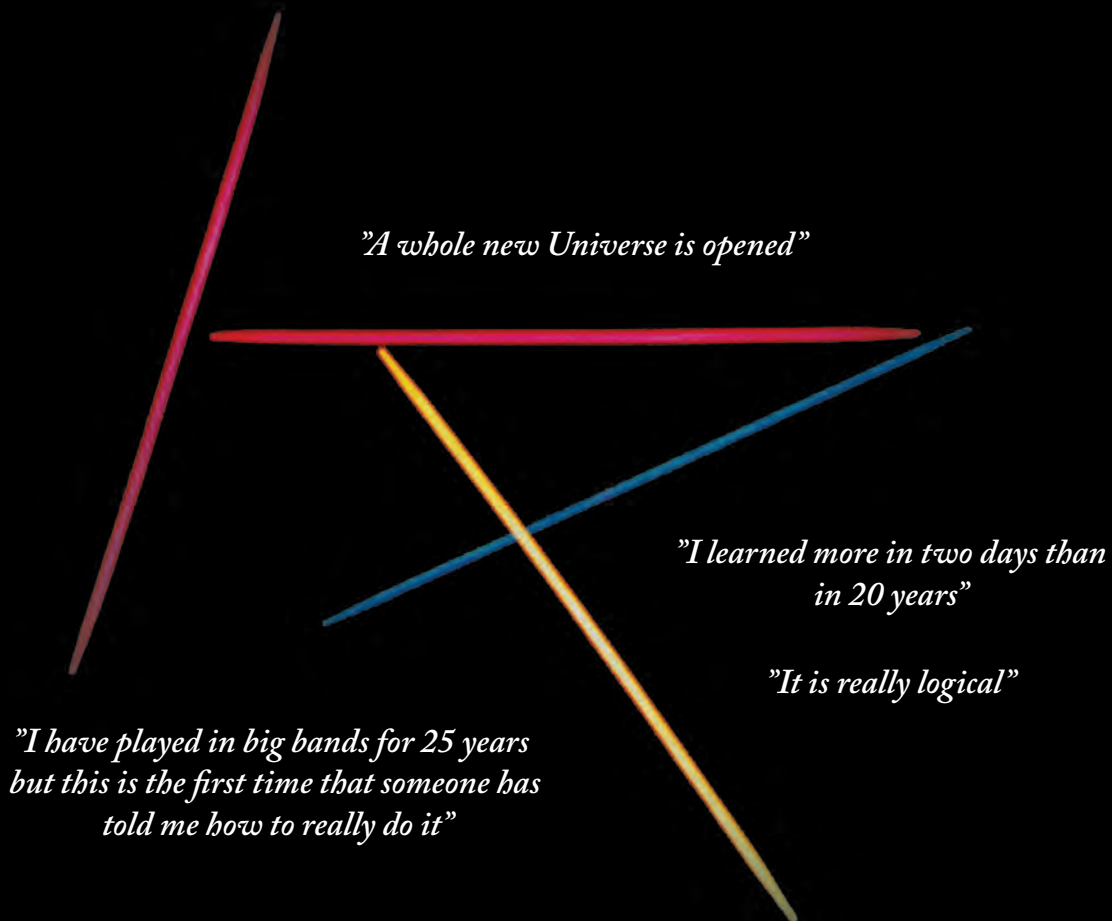


Mats Holmquist



The General Method

A New Methodology for a Tighter Big Band



"A whole new Universe is opened"

*"I learned more in two days than
in 20 years"*

"It is really logical"

*"I have played in big bands for 25 years
but this is the first time that someone has
told me how to really do it"*

Who's in charge of Timing? Which notes are most important?
What is an "Inverted Accent"? What is the best way to improve your band?

Jamey Aebersold Jazz®



Mats Holmquist

The General Method

A New Methodology for a Tighter Big Band



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To Beatrice

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And to KULTURAMA, where I could try all my ideas.

TIPS FOR THE JAZZ SOLOIST

by Jamey Aebersold

1. KEEP YOUR PLACE. Don't get lost. If you do get lost LISTEN to the rhythm section. The drummer will often give a little crash at the beginning of new sections. If you hit a note that is not what you intended, move it up or down a half-step and you'll probably be back in the scale (or chord). Remember, jazz music usually moves in two, four and eight bar phrases. You're never far from a new phrase beginning.

2. PLAY RIGHT NOTES. This really means play the notes you hear in your head ... the notes you would sing with your mouth. Having the scales and chords in front of you on a piece of paper is merely a guide. They don't provide the actual music that's going to be played. THAT comes from YOUR imagination. If you've got the scales, chords, and chord/scale progression MEMORIZED it provides courage to your imagination and allows you to operate from a more creative natural basis. It allows you to take some chances. It helps remove FEAR.

3. Using REPETITION and SEQUENCE is natural in music. It's found in all types and styles of music. The novice improviser often feels that if they repeat an idea, everyone knows they are going to repeat it, so why do it; plus it's not original enough for your EGO so you don't play it. WRONG! The listener needs to hear some repetition and sequence or else they can't remember anything you play. Repetition and sequence are the glue that holds solos together. The usual number of times something is repeated depends on you but the average is 2 or 3 and then your mind will tell you when to repeat and/or when to use sequence. It's a part of the way we hear music played by others.

4. CHORD TONES (the 1, 3, 5, & 7 of a scale) are great notes to begin and end a phrase with. Just sing a phrase and see if you don't follow this simple rule. Our ears HEAR chord tones first so it's natural to begin and end there. Plus, it gives us and the listener what we're listening for - *harmonic stability*.

5. SOUND. Be sure that you are getting a good, full sound on your instrument (or voice). Don't let the scales and chords or the progression or tempo intimidate you. Sound is foremost and is the FIRST thing a person latches onto when you sing or play. It leaves a lasting impression. So, be yourself and let your voice or instrument ring out. It's the main ingredient of your musical personality.

6. LISTENING. There's no way anyone is going to play jazz or improvise well without **listening** to those musicians who have come before. Through listening alone you can find ALL the answers. Each musician is a result of what they have listened to. It's easy to determine who people have listened to by listening to them play. We all tend to use imitation and it's good to do this. Some feel that if they listen to others they'll just sound like them. This is not true but your ego will try to convince you it's true. The ego hates competition or what it perceives to be competition. Don't let it fool you. If no one listened to anyone else, why play music? Music is for everyone and truly is a universal language.

7. Everyone has the ability to improvise. From the youngest child to the senior citizen. You have to have desire and set aside time to work at it until moving your fingers becomes automatic and the distance between your mind and fingers grows smaller and smaller to where you think an idea and your fingers are already playing it. It's not magic. If it is, then magic equals hard work and perseverance. When asked, "What is the greatest obstacle to enlightenment?" The Buddha replied, "Laziness." ***I agree!***

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Mats Holmquist (b. 1960)

Mats Holmquist is a composer/arranger, big band leader of Swedish origin currently working as artistic director of JZ All Star Big Band, Shanghai (generally regarded as China's leading big band). He studied six years at the Royal College of Music, Stockholm and two years at University of North Texas receiving Master of Music/Composition degrees, from both these institutions. As a leader he has composed and arranged music for four albums of his own: three albums with his professional big band "Mats Holmquist Stora Stygga – Big Bad Band" and one with his own quintet, vocals and string quartet. He has performed with his own groups at international jazz festivals like Montreux, The Hague, San Sebastian, Pori, Aarhus, Oslo, Stockholm, Riga, Shanghai and many more. Three new CDs are planned; 1. "A (minimalist) Tribute

to Wayne Shorter" 2. "Big Band Minimalism", the origin of Mats' own minimalist style and 3. "To Herbie", a Tribute to Herbie Hancock (also in his minimalist style).

His band is the only Swedish big band ever to receive a 4 1/2 (four and a half) star review for his CD "A Tribute to Chick Corea" on the leading music website; allmusic.com. They have performed with most established Swedish vocal artists at concert halls and festivals all over Sweden visiting more than 75 cities and six other countries, performing more than 350 concerts in fifteen years time. They have performed for Bill Clinton, the German president in Berlin, the Swedish Royal family etc. His album "12 Standards" featuring twelve of Sweden's foremost pop singers, interpreting jazz standards, was the first big band album in Sweden released on a major pop/rock label (Stockholm Records). "Stora Stygga" has