

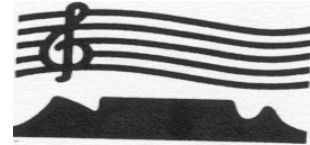
# UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



## South African College of Music

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### UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN SA COLLEGE OF MUSIC



#### MASSIMO MORGANTI IMPROVVISAZIONE IMPRO(VE)!

Un percorso ragionato per la pratica dell'improvvisazione a tutti i livelli

Volontè & Co, Milano

2019

189 pages

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I first met Massimo Morganti at the Arcevia Jazz Feast, (Arcevia, Italy) in 2011. Over the past 8 plus years I have continued to be impressed with his work as an educator, world-class trombonist, outstanding composer and arranger, conductor and now as an author of a very impressive jazz improvisation method **IMPRO(VE)!** As someone who has written four books around various improvisation concepts and is somewhat familiar with the general jazz improvisation landscape, when looking at a book to purchase for myself or program, has this information been covered in another book - and the short answer is no.

The release by Italian publishers Volontè & Co is well presented in terms of layout and enables the practitioner to easily dive into any number of musically rewarding concepts, with concise and clear examples, and come out refreshed and invigorated, *and improved*. The limited text in Italian (myself from another language base) does not hinder the reader, as the book is filled with musical examples that musically present the topic at hand. Perhaps future publications are planned in English, and other widely used languages. Transposed editions in E<sup>b</sup>, B<sup>b</sup> and Bass Clef would be fantastic in classroom settings and for mixed instrument teaching. The on-line video section offers great insight with one hundred well-recorded demonstrations by some of Italy's best instrumental jazz musicians covering all topics presented in the book. This is an added value for the buyer seen in very few methods that normally focus on one instrument or specific topic.

The 189 pages are broken down into specific sections that cover some of the most important and central components of music, and jazz improvisation. The book is divided into three main sections as *Melodia e Armonia/Melody and Harmony*, *Ritmo/Rhythm* and *Comporre Improvvisando/Composer Improviser*. There is much to gain in each section which moves from the most basic, such as fundamental chord structures and scales, to the more advanced in demonstrating multiple variations within each topic and coupled with analysis. The same beginning to advanced pattern is applied to bebop scales and usage, pentatonics, scalar-playing, use of chromatics and its development and creating rhythmic interest through the use of syncopation. The added fun of Massimo's approach throughout this book is the use of common frameworks used as vehicles for jazz improvisation, which include the Blues form, 32-bar song structures, rhythm changes and Donna Lee, and the "Giant Steps" (Coltrane) 16-bar cycle. For the more advanced improviser, the use of triads with substitute triads, are applied to the previous song forms to offer another creative path for improvisation and offered up with a good dose of syncopation. Each example is spot on, clear and concise. Each example has a clear intended goal for the player that when applied elsewhere is sure to work. The overall musicality of the examples is rarely seen in other methods and most welcome in a jazz improvisation classroom setting.

Looking at other methods over the years that are filled with continuous 8<sup>th</sup>-note technical based passages, Massimo creates numerous rhythmic examples from melodic 8<sup>th</sup>-note lines that become transformed into additional worthy musical lines and shapes. The use of syncopation throughout cannot be stressed enough as an important tool for the improviser. This approach is applied to the earlier song forms that are central to any player's repertoire and development. This material comes out as "music" in the broadest sense, thus making the important connection with the "improviser" as "composer". The "jazz tradition" connection is another thread that embraces forms from early jazz to the present while stressing the importance of the bebop language and understanding the "use" of functional harmony and practices while expanding basic chordal playing. Use of passing chords, upper structures etc., demonstrates the author as a complete musician offering any player interested in a multi-faceted approach. This book could possibly have been broken down into separate volumes, however anyone who purchases this book finds a tremendous value for money spent.

There is also much for the interested jazz pianist here with the use of block chords and passing chord based material that is not normally found in single line method books or other improvisation methods. The author shows the importance of understanding harmony and line writing and development with clear examples of how to create melodic interest through the use of carefully placed chromatic tones. There are numerous examples derived from common bebop scales that are musically and melodically presented by the author. Again, using the four common song forms as a basic thread throughout, Morganti demonstrates yet again another approach to chord change playing by employing associated scale tones rather than the common chord-scale approach. This approach ties into another very important *walk before you can run* approach with a focus on creating a longer and stronger melodic line rather than the start-stop approach that is so often found in chord-scale playing.

In short, this is a wonderful and rewarding book that will further enhance and broaden any musician and serious improviser's approach to creating "in the moment" music. Get it now!

Massimo Morganti demonstrates a keen compositional mind and ear throughout this book that is only found in the very best of improvisers. Grazie mille to publishers Volontè & Co. for their role in offering a first-rate jazz improvisation publication. The music contained within these pages is of the highest order. With Morganti's **IMPRO(VE)!** you definitely will improve.

Mike Rossi

10 September 2019

Cape Town, South Africa

**MIKE ROSSI saxophonist - educator - composer**

American born Rossi is Professor in Jazz and Woodwinds at the SA College of Music, University of Cape Town, South Africa. His achievements include numerous recordings, and international stage appearances as leader, soloist, and sideman with Tony Bennett, Dave Liebman, Winston Mankunku Ngozi, George Russell, Clark Terry, Alessio Menconi and Darius Brubeck amongst others. He is an exceptional saxophone and woodwind player, and an artist for Rampone & Cazzani Handmade Italian saxophones. He has performed around the globe in small and large ensembles and gives workshops on South African jazz worldwide. As a composer and performer he has appeared on numerous jazz and classical recordings, and has written a series of method books on jazz improvisation, with translations in other languages, along with many compositions, all published by Advance Music and Schott Music. In 2018 he became a Knight of the Order of the Star of Italy (Cavaliere dell'Ordine della Stella d'Italia).

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