AUTUMN LEAVES — JOSEPH KOSMA

IMPROVISATION CLINIC
Basics to Get Started Improvising

© 2012, BERT LIGON
WHEN the SAINTS GO MARCHIN' IN

CENTERPIECE – HARRY “Sweets” EDISON
Find the principle notes of the melody. Some analysis will be helpful. What is the relationship of the primary melody notes to the chords? What key[s]? Improvise lines leading to these notes. The 3rd is a common principle note for melodies. Any vocabulary you can develop here will help you with other tunes.

Here is a simple “improvisation” aiming for the principle pitches.

The primary notes may be connected by a descending scale. Parts of this harmonic progression occur in almost every jazz standard. Find vocabulary that connects these primary pitches.
This short phrase uses scale motion to connect the principle melodic pitches.

Repeated notes can add some rhythmic interest to a simple line.

A chromatic approach and delayed resolution.

Up the scale before descending.

Arpeggiation before descending.

A chromatic approach to the principle notes.

Can you hear or find the simple descending scale passage in this example?

Is this the melody or a jazzy improvisation?
Basic Triad
With two extra notes = Pentatonic Scale
Pentatonic + ChPT = Major Blues Scale