

Gloucestershire Jazz Live - Pianist Expectations

1 - Preparation and practice

a) As a matter of principle ALL musicians should **arrive punctually at rehearsals / performances** in good enough time to set-up and work through individual warm-ups prior to the rehearsal / performance start time. Bringing a reliable music stand and 2 pencils is also expected.

b) All GJL members should **ensure they can perform their part to each piece**. If not then practising the necessary parts independently is expected.

c) Be able to **set-up, tune-up and sound-check with amplifiers** independently and properly. GJL will communicate what portable stage pianos and amplifiers they can provide, however the GJL pianists are responsible for ensuring stage pianos and amps are set-up properly and any respective leads are returned to the respective owner. Any issues with amplifier / lead provision should be reported to the GJL Director.

2 – Development of listening skills

a) Listening should be a staple part of developing your musicianship. All GJL members are expected to **be familiar with the main developed jazz related genres**; (Blues), Dixieland, 1920s New Orleans style, Chicago “hot” style, Swing (1930-1950s Big Band music), Bebop, Bossa Nova, Latin, Funk and Fusion.

b) If unfamiliar then **the following styles should also be explored** (by listening and practising) as a developing jazz musician; Charleston, Stomps, Beguine, Foxtrot, Cha-cha, Quickstep, Jungle, Rhumba, East-Coast Jazz (1950s), West coast jazz (1950s), Soul Jazz plus more contemporary / modern styles (late 1960s onwards – eg. Free Jazz, Hip-hop) and more global styles (Cuban, Afro-Cuban, Salsa, Township etc.)

c) **Pivotal jazz pianists** to listen to – (Scott Joplin - Ragtime), (Meade Lux Lewis, Clarence Williams – Boogie Woogie), Fats Waller, Jelly Roll Morton, Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn, Teddy Wilson, Count Basie, Art Tatum, Earl Hines, Oscar Peterson, Thelonius Monk, Horace Silver, Keith Jarrett, Bill Evans, McCoy Tyner, George Shearing, Dave Brubeck, Monty Alexander, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Joe Zawinul, Lyle Mays, Brad Mehldau, Dave Newton, Tim Richards, Diana Krall, Jonathan Taylor and Abdullah Ibrahim.

d) For more pianists to discover please ask your band-leader or your instrumental teacher.

3 – Musical Knowledge

a) All GJL members are expected to be able to read musical notation, perform up to the expected standard of their band and be developing their improvising skills with their progressing knowledge. As a pianist this should mean:

Knowledge and understanding of:

- **Technical skills and techniques** (in both hands)

- **Time signatures:** 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, 6/4, 7/4, 6/8 and 9/8

- **All Italian tempo directions**

- **Structural / textural terminology:** eg. A theme, B theme, Binary form, Ternary form, Rondo form, 32-bar song form, accompaniment, ad lib, bridge, break, chorus, fills, homophonic, intro, imitation, Instrumental, monophonic, octaves, polyphonic, solo, soli, tag, tutti, unison,

- **Specific jazz terminology:** Charleston, comping, head, solo “chorus,” improvisation, riff, “time.”

- **Rhythms:** semibreves [whole notes] to semiquavers [16th notes], triplets, quintuplets, sextuplets, cross-rhythms, polyrhythms, offbeat, syncopated and tied rhythms.

- **Dynamic markings:** from fff to ppp, crescendo, diminuendo, sforzando (sfz), subito forte-piano (sfp).

- **Articulation / phrasing markings:** legato, staccato, accents, clipped notes, grace notes, phrase marks and vibrato.

Understanding of jazz chord shapes (close and spread voicings) is vital as well as arpeggios

Major, minor, major 6, minor 6, major 7, minor (major 7), minor 7, 6/9, 7, 9, 13, (b5), (#5), (b9), (#9), (#11)

Understanding of basic and jazz associated scales is also vital

Ionian, Natural minor (Aeolian), Harmonic minor, Jazz “Natural” minor, Chromatic, Blues, Mixolydian, Dorian, Lydian, Lydian Dominant, Phrygian, Locrian, Whole-tone, Altered, Diminished (half-whole), Diminished (whole-half)

Understanding the difference between straight, swing, shuffle and 12/8 grooves is vital to all jazz musicians

4 – Technical Ability

a) Ability to perform the following techniques – (ambiguous voicings – highly advanced skill), boogie-woogie style, broken chords, glissando, montuno, octaves, quartal / quintal harmony, rootless chords, sixths, split chords, stride, thirds, triads, tremolando, two-handed voicings and walking bass.

b) As a matter of principle all musicians should practice sight-reading on a bi-weekly basis (at least)

c) Developing the ability to perform from tempo 45 to 240 bpm