

THE JAZZ WORSHIP

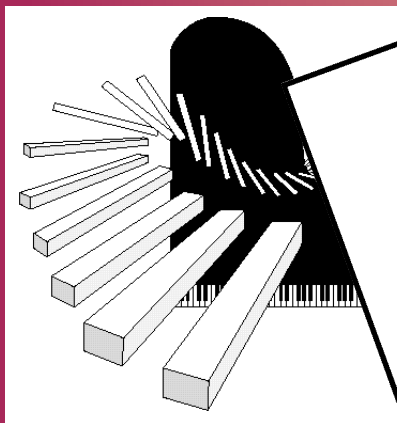
A Step by Step
Improvisation
Tutorial

KEYBOARDIST

Part 1: Raised 11th

Jazz Harmony in Hymns and Choruses
Using Raised Eleventh Chords

- 4 Chapters, 92 Pages
- 122 musical examples
- Advanced Level



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Barry Liesch

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Chapter 1 of 6 Why Use Raised Elevenths?

- 5 pages
- 2 examples

These chapters apply an aspect of jazz and pop harmony to hymns and choruses--the use of raised elevenths. The raised eleventh is particularly useful in projecting a sense of intimacy in worship. However, it is somewhat challenging to employ. It's a complex sound which often demands that other related complex sounds (quartals, lowered or raised 9ths, 13ths) be present in the musical context in order for the music texture to sound consistent.

This presentation is intended to unravel that complexity and make the sound understandable and accessible. My task is to clarify, to point out possibilities, and to provide a profitable path for integration for different kinds of learners. In terms of difficulty, the material would likely be covered in the fourth year of a college music program or at the graduate level.

The chapters use a variety of techniques to help you assimilate this sound thoroughly into your keyboard style. Numerous short examples of hymns and choruses help fix this sonority indelibly in your ears. Fill-in-the-blank examples are furnished--so you can acquire some hands-on experience inserting raised elevenths yourself. I will show you the theory. I'll offer highly concentrated, analytic exercises which reveal the basic relationships. Finally, you'll experience some long examples so you can see how raised elevenths function in a musical context. The chapters will not, however, deal with any rhythmical issues--only harmony.

Overview

Chapters 3 and 5 contain the core ideas of the presentation. Chapter 1 offers a rationale for studying this chord, and how different kinds of learners might best proceed with the material. Chapter 2 explains what a raised eleventh is and reveals its alternative forms. Chapter 3 shows how it functions in V-I relationships. Chapter 4 extends the

V-I relationships to other scale degrees-- its use in secondary dominants. Chapter 5 concentrates on the descending second root movement, a highly expressive use of the raised eleventh. Chapter 6 provides 8-16 measure examples which show how the raised eleventh functions in extended musical contexts.

Why employ Complex Chords in a Worship Setting?

You might ask, "Why use complex chords in a church or worship setting anyway?" That's a legitimate question. Think of it this way. Music is a language. Chords are like words. When you add new chords to your musical language you're adding new words that can offer new shades of meaning, new subtleties, and increased precision of expression.

When we're writing an important letter, for example, we search for and agonize over exactly the right words to express our deepest thoughts and feelings. In leading worship, too, songs need to be communicated with just the right feeling. To do that you need a lot of harmonic possibilities.

When we learn new chords, we are increasing our musical vocabulary, our musical options, and the array of musical colors we have available. And when we acquire some understanding of how to connect new chords together, and begin to discern more comprehensively their function, we are taking powerful steps toward improving our musical flexibility.

The raised 11th chord (in particular) is useful for projecting a sense of intimacy in worship. It can sound evocative, and can inject a great deal of emotion into musical textures. It can be used to help young people connect with hymns and choruses that may have become dulled with use over the years. Do you have the skill to revitalize hymns and reshape choruses? That's a key issue today.

A Harmonic Demonstration

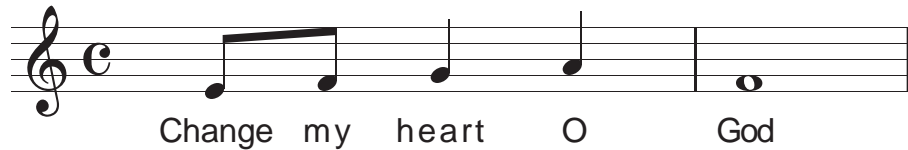
If someone gave you a tune and said, "play me five or ten variations of this phrase"-- could you do it? How many options would you have at your disposal?

Below, I've written the opening line of a well-know worship chorus. I'm asking you--right now--to play five or ten variations of this

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phrase. Harmonize it at least five different ways. Can you do it?
Take a moment now.

Example 1



There must be at least fifty harmonic variations possible on this little phrase alone! I've written out twenty-one of them below. No doubt you thought of some I didn't.

The twenty-one variations begin simply and grow in harmonic complexity. Toward the end I employ quartal chords, raised ninths, and raised elevenths. As you play these variations, think of the various feelings they might engender in a worship situation, and how nice it would be to have instantly at your command a harmonic vocabulary of this or even a greater level of subtlety and sophistication. That's my goal of this chapter-- to help you achieve greater expressiveness in your playing.

If you master the materials in this and the following chapters on the raised eleventh, I'm certain you will acquire a thorough knowledge of how this sound functions, and learn how to create many new harmonic variations.

Example 2

Twenty-one variations



First system of musical notation, consisting of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The music is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. It features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef, with various chords and intervals.

Second system of musical notation, continuing the piece with similar melodic and harmonic structures in the grand staff.

Third system of musical notation, showing further development of the musical themes.

Fourth system of musical notation, featuring more complex chordal textures and melodic movement.

Fifth system of musical notation, continuing the melodic and harmonic progression.

Sixth system of musical notation, concluding the piece with a final melodic phrase and chordal resolution.

Ways to Use these Chapters: Strategies for Different Learners

In learning to improvise, individuals use different methods to achieve mastery. Some, for example, may want to study the materials in a non-linear fashion while others prefer a step-by-step approach. Here are some optional ways of exploring these materials.

1. For creative, strong-willed, learners. Concentrate on the answers at the end of the chapters--don't bother reading the paragraphs in sequential form initially. Then go to chapter six and try to employ raised elevenths of your own in the tunes given (text is included)--or in pieces of your own choosing. Compare your results with mine by looking at the answers at the end of the chapter. Then go back and study individual chapters in detail as needed.

2. For analytic learners. Focus on the exercises near the end of chapters where the concepts are expressed in their most concentrated, abstract, and generalizable form. Generate your own examples using these ideas.

3. For sequential learners. Sequential learners who prefer a step-by-step approach can simply go through the presentation page by page. I'm guessing that most of you will (and should) choose this approach.

The next chapter shows how the raised eleventh is formed, explores close and open voicings, indicates various harmonic alterations, and reveals its voice leading tendencies.

I heard Dallas Willard say

*I don't want you to think of art as a
little whipped cream on the cake of life.
It's more like steak and potatoes.*

Chapter 2 of 6 Introduction to the Raised 11th Chord

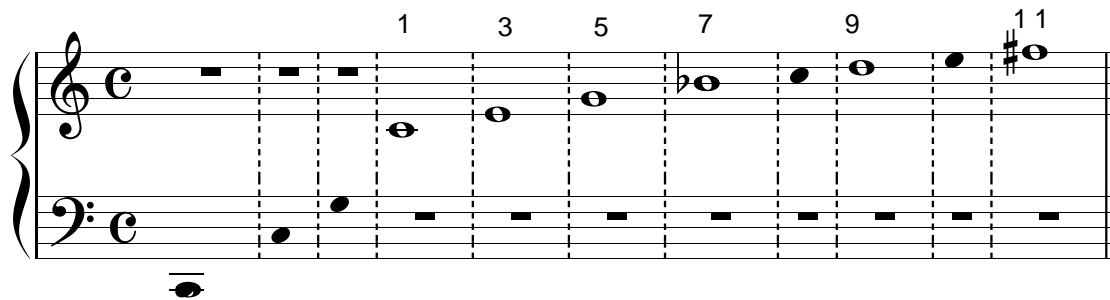
- 6 pages
- 12 examples

Derivation of the Raised Eleventh Chord

Some theorists derive the raised 11th chord from the harmonic series. The root, third, fifth, flatted seventh, ninth, and raised ninth of a C chord (the whole notes below) are present in the harmonic series.

Example 1

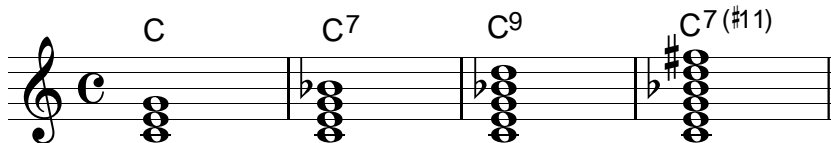
The harmonic series.



Example 2.

Chords derivable from the harmonic series

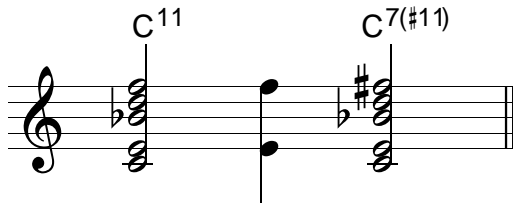
Here are the basic chord possibilities derivable from the harmonic series above: C, C⁷, C⁹, and C⁷(#11).



In general, the C⁷(#11) is used more frequently than a straight C¹¹ chord (C, E, G, B, D, and F--not F#) in contemporary music. Why is that? The answer is explained in example 5. If we listen carefully to the C¹¹ chord below, a strong clash occurs between E (the third) and F

(the eleventh), represented by quarter notes. Composers do not find that clash useful musically.

Example 3
The C¹¹ clash



In the raised eleventh chord, however, that dissonance (m9--E to F) is softened (E to F♯ is less harsh than E to F), and the total, resultant sound is much more resonant.

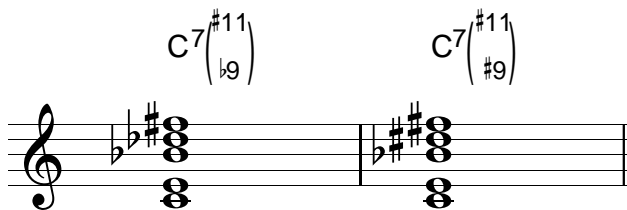
On the other hand, if a straight 11th chord *is* employed, composers and arrangers often omit the third and thus avoid the clash.

Other Raised Eleventh Extensions

The raised eleventh can also occur in combination with a lowered ninth, a raised ninth, a thirteenth chord, or a thirteenth chord with a minor ninth. Let's look at the raised eleventh inflected with a lowered ninth and a raised ninth first.

Example 4

Raised 11th chord with a lowered and raised ninth respectively.

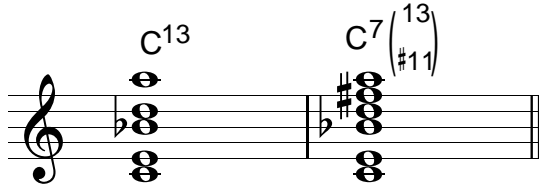


Now let's look at the raised eleventh in a thirteen chord.

Example 5

Raised 11th embedded in a thirteenth chord

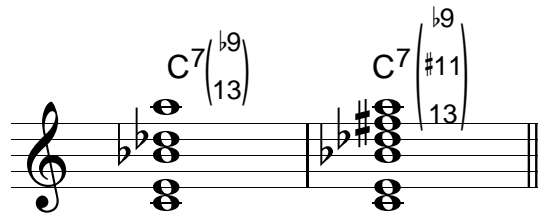
The first chord is a C¹³, a C7 chord with a ninth and thirteenth, while the second chord adds a raised eleventh.



Now we add a minor ninth (Db) to the thirteenth chord (below). The raised eleventh sounds good in this environment too, as illustrated in measure two of example 8.

Example 6

Raised eleventh in a thirteenth chord with a minor ninth.



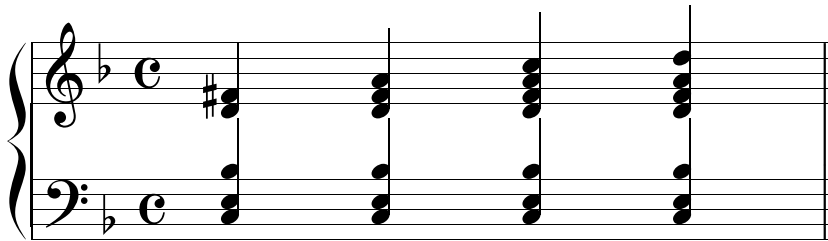
These are the most frequent extensions of the raised eleventh chord which occur in contemporary music, and you will find them embedded in the music in the remainder of this and the next chapters.

Voicing the Raised Eleventh Chord

Both close and open voicings of the eleventh chord produce useful effects. Example 9 illustrates various close voicings and doublings employing the raised eleventh.

Example 7

Close Voicing



Example 8

Change My Heart O God with close spacings.

Here's how raised eleventh chords look with close spacings.

Musical notation for Example 8, showing three measures of music in C major. The first measure is labeled $B\flat 7(\#11)$, the second $A\flat 7(\#11)$, and the third $G 7(\#11)$. The notation shows close voicings for these chords in both the treble and bass staves.

When open (wider) voicings are employed, the third or the seventh of the chord often occurs as the lowest note in the left hand. I want to draw your attention, particularly, to the left hand in the following examples.

In example 11 (below), obviously the lowest bass is a C. But observe that when the left and right hand chords are struck together (beat two), the tone E occurs as the lowest note in the left hand. This voicing, with the third so positioned, is a favorite with many keyboardists and occurs frequently.

Example 9

Open voicing. Third as lowest note in left hand.

Musical notation for Example 9, showing four measures of music in C major. The notation shows open voicings for chords in both the treble and bass staves, with the third of the chord being the lowest note in the left hand.

Left hand chords also frequently employ a seventh as the lowest note when eleventh chords are played.

Example 10

Open voicing. Seventh as lowest note in left hand.

Musical notation for Example 10, showing a piano accompaniment. The piece is in 4/4 time and the key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music consists of four measures. The right hand plays chords with a raised eleventh (F#) and a natural eleventh (F). The left hand plays a single note in each measure, which is the seventh of the chord: Ab in measure 1, Ab in measure 2, F in measure 3, and F in measure 4.

Example 11

Change My Heart O God with open spacings.

Here is the same excerpt of Change My Heart O God used above, but now with open spacing. Notice that the left hand employs the seventh as the lowest tone (i.e., the Ab in m1, beat 1; Ab in m2, beats 3 & 4; F in m3, beat 3).

Musical notation for Example 11, showing a piano accompaniment with open spacing. The piece is in 4/4 time and the key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music consists of three measures. The right hand plays chords with a raised eleventh (F#) and a natural eleventh (F). The left hand plays a single note in each measure, which is the seventh of the chord: Ab in measure 1, Ab in measure 2, and F in measure 3. Above the first measure is the chord symbol Bb7(#11). Above the second measure is the chord symbol Ab¹³(#11). Above the third measure is the chord symbol G7(#11).

What are the voice leading tendencies of the raised eleventh?

Voice Leading Characteristics

The raised eleventh often rises. For example, in the first measure below the F# (raised eleventh) rises a half step to the fifth of the chord (G). The raised eleventh can also remain stationary as in measure two below.

Example12
Voice leading



The Next Chapter

The next chapter, containing 21 pages and 39 examples, explores the raised 11th in V-1 relationships and the cycle of fifths. My goal is not only to clarify how the raised 11th works, but also to provide a pathway for you to integrate this sound into your style. I'll invite you to fill in the blanks of short hymn and chorus examples. I'll provide practice exercises designed to aid the integration process.

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It's more like steak and potatoes.*