

## TONY CAMPISE'S 7 STEPS TO HEAVEN

This practice procedure comes to us from Tony Campise, a terrific jazz woodwinds player who lived in Austin, TX. (Tony died in March, 2010 at age 67) The title *7 Steps to Heaven* is also the name of a famous Miles Davis song, so it makes a nice tie in for aspiring jazz musicians.

1. melody/chords (in class)
2. roots of chords in whole notes
3. root and 3<sup>rd</sup> of each chord in ½ notes
4. root, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> of each chord in quarter notes
5. scale ascending in eighth notes starting on the root of each chord
6. scale descending in 8<sup>th</sup> notes starting on the root of each chord
7. melody/chords

Each of these steps represents a complete run-through of the chord progression of the song you're studying. During class time half the chordal instruments will play the melody at the beginning, and the other half will play the chords, and then they will switch at the end. When you are practicing by yourself you can add the chords as an extra step.

Caution: There is a tendency for more technically skilled musicians to want to skip the "easy" steps, such as the roots in whole notes, but don't do it. The goal isn't to build up your speed, but to *learn to hear and navigate the chord progression*, and the "easy" steps lay that foundation more firmly than the scales. Consider scales "the icing," but the early steps are "the cake."