

## Some ideas for bands with both guitar and piano

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When I began playing in groups with pianists, I quickly realized that there are some special considerations that need to be taken into account. The problems I encountered were that piano and guitar often have the same function. We also generally fill the same frequencies and when comping together our separate interpretation of chord tensions and rhythmic ideas just made mud. I thus began to listen to as many guitar/piano recordings as I could get my hands on. I have a short list of albums to check out further down and a transcription I did ages ago of Jim Hall comping for Bill Evans. Enjoy!

### Ideas for getting piano and guitar to work together.

- Most important is to listen. Listen hard to what is going on.
- The next important is communication between the guitarist and pianist. Before the gig you can discuss strategies, during the gig you can use eye contact and signals.
- An easy solution is to take turns comping. Perhaps the piano plays over one soloist and guitar over another. Remember not to “hog the puck”. (Ok, you caught me, yes I am a Canadian and a hockey reference was bound to happen sometime)
- Guitar can play “Freddie Green” style (playing quarter notes 4 to the bar) while the piano adds splashes and accents.
- Freddy Green style doesn’t work so well on piano, but the pianist could play a repeating rhythm. This would allow the guitar to either join the rhythm or compliment it.
- Guitar or piano can lay a chord on the one of every bar and let the other comp freely. The held chord should be very generic and not contain too many tensions. ([3 note voicings are good for this.](#))
- It helps to have a working knowledge of both piano and guitar voicings. This will help you predict what may be coming.
- You can work out the same voicings and rhythms over sections. This sounds really cool and so you should try it sometime.
- When comping for a piano solo, the pianist could leave out the left hand leaving room for the guitar to pick up the harmony.
- Single note lines, counter melodies, background shots and guide-tone lines are all great as long as you don’t get in the way and are musical about it.
- Guitar can be the higher part of a piano type block chord. Note: I will address block chords in the future.
- In Latin tunes, the Guitar usually plays ostinato(repeating rhythms) style and piano is more freely improvised.

Transcription of Jim Hall’s comping over Bill Evans solo on My Funny Valentine

If you want to hear how great piano and guitar can sound together and get some great ideas, check out this album. If you don't own it...shame on you! You NEED to check it out. You can get it [here](#).

Note: Transcription begins around 2:35. I have omitted a lot of Jim's ghost notes for clarity. Listen closely to the recording and you can hear tons of rhythmic ideas that aren't necessarily chords. Also the chord symbols should be used as a rough guide and to keep your place. (There is more going on here than I notated)

# Jim Hall's Comping for Bill Evans Solo My Funny Valentine: Undercurrent

*mf*

Chords: Cm7, G7, Cm7, Cm9, AbMaj7

Chords: Dm7b5, G7, Cm7, CmMaj7, Cm7, Cm6

Chords: AbMaj7, Abmin6, Bb7, EbMaj7

Chords: G7, Cm7, G7, Cm7, Cm6/A, Ab7(13), G7

TAB notation for guitar (Treble, Alto, Bass staves) is provided for each system.

31 Cm7 Bm7 Bbm7 Eb7(9) AbMaj7 Bb7(13) EbMaj7 Eb7(#9)

36 Dm7b5 G7(b13) Cm7 Eb7 D7 G7 Cm7 Cm7

41 Bb7 Ab6 Bb6 Fdim Gdim G7 Cm7 Eb7

46 D7 G7 C7 D7 C7 G7 Cm6 Bbm6 Dm7 Gdim

51 Fm7 Gdim Abdim EbMaj7 C7 Bb7 EbMaj7 C7

TAB

8 7 6 6 6 8 6 (6) 7  
8 7 6 6 5 7 5 (5) 6  
8 7 6 5 5 6 (5) 5  
8 7 6 4 6 (6) 6

6 4 8 10 11 12 10 10 9 9 10 12 11 9 8 8 9 7 8  
5 3 6 8 10 10 9 11 10 8 10 11 10 8 8 8 7 7  
4 3 8 10 11 11 10 9 10 9 10 11 10 8 8 9 8 8

8 8 7 7 5 5 7 7 1 1 3 3 4 4 4 4 8 10 12 12  
8 8 6 6 3 3 5 5 0 0 2 2 3 3 3 3 8 10 11 11  
8 8 6 6 4 4 6 6 1 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 8 10 11 11

11 11 10 10 9 12 11 10 9 11 10 10 8 8 6 6 5 5 3 2  
10 10 9 9 8 11 10 9 8 10 9 9 7 7 5 5 3 3 2 1  
10 10 9 8 11 10 9 8 11 10 9 8 8 6 6 5 4 3 2

1 3 4 7 11 11 11 9 8 8 8 11 11 12 10 9 8 11 11  
1 3 4 6 11 10 8 7 6 7 6 8 12 9 8 9 12 10 9 8  
1 3 4 6 11 10 8 6 6 6 6 8 11 9 8

56 Fm7 Bb7 Eb6 G7 C7 Bb7 Eb7 AbMaj7 Adim

61 Cm D7 G7 Cm Fm7 Gm7 Adim Bdim

67 Cm7 Bm7 Bbm7 Eb7 A7 Abmaj7 Bb7 Eb6 G7

73 Cm AbMaj7

79 Dm7b5 G7 Cm9

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- ## Further Listening

- Pat Metheny/Brad Mehldau: [Metheny / Mehldau](#)
- Pat Martino/Joey DeFrancesco: [Live at Yoshi's](#)
- Jake Langley/Joey DeFrancesco: [Diggin in](#)