

# 7. Quartal Comping & Combination Diminished

These two-handed voicings for a minor 7th chord are an extension of Miles Davis' 'SO WHAT' voicing, over the whole Dorian scale. The starting point for the first chord is R47 in left hand, 35 in right hand.

The R47 left-hand voicing (two perfect 4ths) is played on 2, 5 and 6 of the scale, but on b3 an augmented fourth (tritone) must be introduced to avoid departing from the mode.

The four chords in bars 7-8 of each key are second inversion MAJOR TRIADS moving up (or down) in minor thirds, with a single left-hand note a semitone up from the root of the triad. These voicings are derived from a diminished scale - the combined effect is of a dominant chord with b9, #9, #11 and 13.

Alternatively you could think of the four C7 chords below as Db<sup>o</sup>, E<sup>o</sup>, G<sup>o</sup> and Bb<sup>o</sup>, all of which come from the same diminished scale. That's why this is called COMBINATION DIMINISHED. Get used to moving these shapes up and down in minor thirds!

All these voicings are used extensively by contemporary pianists, especially when comping. I've found that practising them like this is an invaluable routine to help get them under one's fingers. Play as smoothly as possible; if you have trouble getting a legato effect, use a tiny bit of sustain pedal.

♩ = 144 Swing 8s

Tim Richards

1 Cm7 (Dorian)

R 2 b3 5 6

5 Cm7 C#m7 Cm7 C7b9

side-slipping C/Db Eb/E F#/G A/Bb

b9 up in minor 3rds

9 Fm7 (Dorian)

3T

13 Fm7 F#m7 Fm7 F7b9

side-slipping B/C Ab/A F/F# D/Eb

5 down in minor 3rds

17 **Bbm7 (Dorian)**

21 **Bbm7 Bm7 Bbm7** **Bb7b9**

**Bb/B Db/D E/F G/Ab**

**b9**

25 **Ebm7 (Dorian)**

29 **Ebm7 Em7 Ebm7** **Eb7b9** **Ab9**

**A/Bb Gb/G Eb/E C/Db**

**5**

When you have mastered these voicings and can play them from memory, try similar routines over the following chords:

- Em7 - Am7 - Dm7 - Gm7 (8 bars in each key)
- Abm7 - Dbm7 - F#m7 - Bm7 (8 bars in each key)

Use the Dorian voicings in any tune that has two bars or more on a minor chord. Play around with the timing as well, rather than confining yourself to the rhythms given - they're merely a suggestion. See 'Quartal Comping' in 'Exploring Jazz Piano' Vol 2, pp. 44-45.

Use the Dominant voicings when you want to create interest in a V-I cadence - if the dominant chord lasts a bar only, play the chords in quarter notes! Practise resolving them to both major and minor chords. See 'Exploring Jazz Piano' Vol 2, pp. 245.