

Musicians and critics speak
about George Russell and
his work:

“*The Lydian Chromatic Concept* is one of the two most splendid books about music; the other is *My Musical Language* by Olivier Messiaen. Though I’m considered a contemporary music composer, if I dare categorize myself as an artist, I’ve been strongly influenced by the Lydian Concept, which is not simply a musical method—we might call it a philosophy of music, or we might call it poetry.” —TORU TAKEMITSU

“George enlightened me about a different way of playing music, an analytical way which enabled me to go on learning about music on my own.” —JAN GARBAREK

“The simple melody was an experiment inspired by an evening Miles had spent with . . . George Russell who at the time was working on his . . . *Lydian Chromatic Concept* . . . Miles was fascinated by Russell’s approach. Here was a means for breaking free from tonal clichés while maintaining some amount of restraint. Shortly after his evening with Russell, Miles recorded his new composition demonstrating Russell’s basic principles.”

—ERIC NISENSEN, *Round About Midnight: A Portrait of Miles Davis*

“Consider the circumstances. Miles took his musicians into the studio for the first of two sessions for *Kind of Blue* in March, 1959. At the time modal jazz . . . was not an entirely new idea. . . . Originally, the idea for this kind of playing was the concept of composer George Russell.”

—ROBERT PALMER, liner notes for *Kind of Blue*

“One of the decisive forces in the development of modern jazz.”

—FRANCIS DAVIS, *Philadelphia Inquirer*

“George Russell is the Duke Ellington of our generation.”

—GILLES ANQUETIL, *Le Nouvel Observateur*

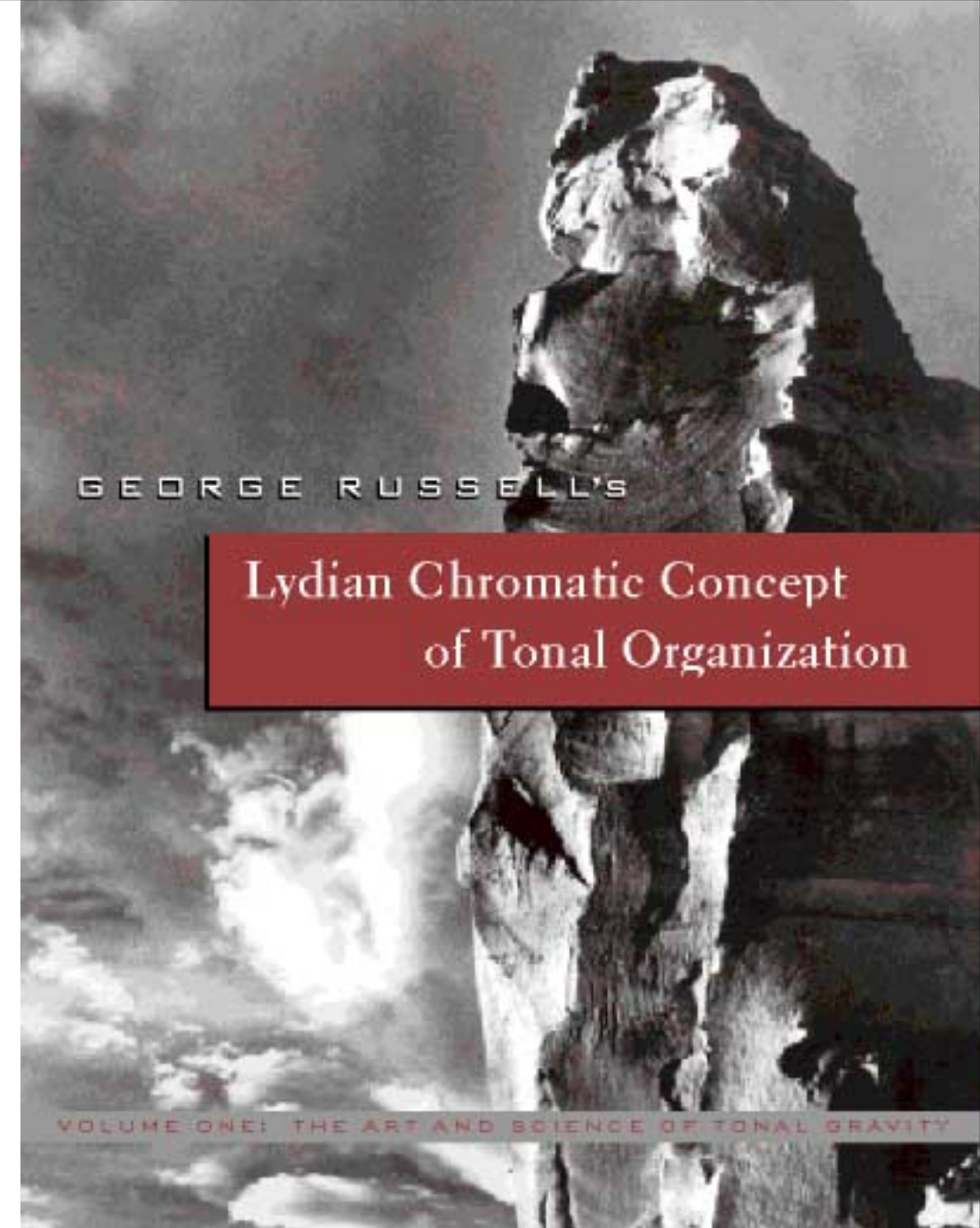
“One of the greatest composer/ bandleaders in jazz, not presently, but in an all-time sense.”

—JACK COOKE, *Wired*

GEORGE
RUSSELL

was born in Cincinnati in 1923, the adopted son of a registered nurse and a chef on the B&O Railroad. He began playing drums with the Boy Scout Drum and Bugle Corps and eventually received a scholarship to Wilberforce University where he joined the Collegians, whose list of alumni include Coleman Hawkins, Benny Carter, Fletcher Henderson, Ben Webster, Cootie Williams, Ernie Wilkins and Frank Foster. But his most valuable musical education came in 1941, when, in attempting to enlist in the Marines, he was diagnosed with tuberculosis, spending six months in the hospital where he was taught the fundamentals of harmony by a fellow patient. From the hospital he sold his first work, “New World,” to Benny Carter. He joined Benny Carter’s Band, but was replaced by Max Roach—after Russell heard Roach, he decided to give up drumming. He moved to New York where he was part of a group of musicians who gathered in the basement apartment of Gil Evans. The circle included Miles Davis, Gerry Mulligan, Max Roach, Johnny Carisi and, on occasion, Charlie Parker.

It was a remark made by Miles Davis when George asked him his musical aim which set Russell on the course which has been his life. Miles said he “wanted to learn all the changes.” Since Miles obviously knew all the changes, Russell surmised that what he meant was he wanted to learn a new way to relate to chords. This began a quest for Russell, and again hospitalized for sixteen months, he began to develop his *Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization*. First published in 1953, the Lydian Concept is credited with opening the way into modal music, as demonstrated by Miles in his seminal *Kind of Blue* recording, and with formulating many of the ideas now used in jazz education. Using the Lydian Scale as the PRIMARY SCALE of Western music, the Lydian Chromatic Concept introduced the idea of chord/scale unity. It was the first theory to explore the vertical relationship between chords and scales, and was the only original theory to come from jazz.



The legendary work is now available
in a final, greatly expanded edition.

THE YEAR NINETEEN FIFTY-NINE witnessed a revolution in jazz, the effects of which are still being sorted out by factions of composers and performers. Three important record albums made that year were Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue* (the best selling jazz record of all time), John Coltrane's *Giant Steps*, and George Russell's *New York, New York*. These albums share two common threads: the appearance of John Coltrane in each and

the overarching influence of the musical theories of George Russell. Russell's Lydian Chromatic Concept, first described in a self-published pamphlet in 1953, marks a radical expansion of the harmonic language for both composition and analysis and also marks an abandonment of the major-minor system that dominated Western music for over 350 years. Radical as that may seem, the theory is more than one person's eccentricity, having considerable precedent in the work of Ravel, Scriabin, Debussy, and in some of the learned works of Bach. His work stands head-to-head with Arnold Schoenberg's "liberation" of the twelve-tone scale, the polytonal work of Stravinsky, and the ethnic-scale explorations of Bartók and Kodály.

For searchers like Miles and Coltrane and Bill Evans, and many in the generations that followed them, Russell's theories provided a harmonic background and a path for further exploration. If you've listened to jazz during the last fifty years, you've heard a good deal of George Russell's ideas.

The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization, Russell's major theoretical writing, was expanded several times since its first appearance in 1953. Here it is in its fourth and final edition.

“The past, the present, the future, all in one. A must for the serious musician.”

—ART FARMER

“Far ahead of any book in the field.” —GIL EVANS

“Surpasses any musical knowledge I’ve been exposed to.” — ORNETTE COLEMAN

“The foremost theoretical contribution of our time—destined to become the most influential philosophy of the future.” —DAVID BAKER

“Gives you so much more to work with.”—ERIC DOLPHY

LYDIAN AUGMENTED MODE +V Seventh *5

The Lydian Augmented Scale sounds a unity with the seventh *5/₃/₉/₁₁/ Principal Chord Family residing on its +V modal tonic degree, G₁ in this case.

- C LYDIAN AUG MODE +V: +V VI VII I II III +IV
G₁ A B C D E F_#
- CHORDS PRODUCED: C LydianAugmentedMode +V, seventh +5,
Principal Chord Family

EXAMPLE III: 10

Musical notation for Example III: 10. It shows two staves. The top staff is labeled "PRINCIPAL CHORD MODE" and contains five chords: G₁, G₁+5, G₁+9, G₁, and G₁+5+9+11. The bottom staff is labeled "SUB-PRINCIPAL CHORDS" and contains five chords: G₁, G₁+5, G₁+9, G₁, and G₁+5+9+11. The notes are written in treble clef with various accidentals.

The G₁seventh *5, ₃, ₉, ₁₁/ Principal Chord produced by the C Lydian Augmented Scale on its augmented fifth modal tonic degree is the first and mostinggoing Principal Chord of its type within this unique Principal Chord-mode category. Together with its primary modal tonic degree +V of the LC Scale, this Primary Principal Chord founds the +V seventh *5 Primary Modal Genre of the LC Scale. This is the least ingoing of the LC Scale's eight Primary Modal Genres.

These eight PMG of the LC Scale listed on the left side of Chart A inhabit the title of their primary Principal Chord. They represent the Primary Chord/Parent Scale unities (vertical colors) of the equal tempered tonal spectrum.

The left side of Chart A explains the process that allows virtually all chords of Western music's tonal spectrum to be identified with their proper

ERIC DOLPHY'S SOLO ON 245

Eric Dolphy and I crossed paths in the early/960's. I first heard him when he emerged out of Los Angeles with Chico Hamilton's ensemble. He stayed on in New York to join Charlie Mingus's group. I heard them at a club called The Open Door. After introducing myself, I invited Eric to my apartment on Bank Street. I discussed my ascent, my contract with Riverside Records and invited him to record with us. Orin Keepnews and Bill Graham were the founders of Riverside Records, a very adventurous and progressive label. I had a contract for three albums. Eric performed on one of them, *Symbiosis*.¹ The LC Concept's second edition was published in /959, so Eric and I spent several sessions discussing its various applications. I've always treasured the card sent me from Paris shortly before his death.

ERIC DOLPHY'S SOLO ON 245

Musical notation for Eric Dolphy's solo on 245. It shows four staves of music. The first staff is labeled "F₁ (II)" and "A₁ Lyd Aug". The second staff is labeled "B₁ (III)" and "F₁ (II)". The third staff is labeled "A₁ Lyd Aug" and "F₁ (II)". The fourth staff is labeled "A₁ Lyd Aug" and "F₁ (II)". The notes are written in treble clef with various accidentals.

CHAPTER VII: ALTERNATE & CONCEPTUAL PARENT LC SCALES

EXAMPLE VIII: 8 Nine-Tone Order Official Scales

I V II VI III VII +IV +V +VI	
LYDIAN ¹ : I (a) ¹ b ³ c ⁴ +d ⁵ e ⁶ f ⁷	MODE VI MINOR: 6 ¹ I (a) ¹ b ³ c ⁴ +d ⁵
C (D) E ^b F ^b G A B	A B C (D) E ^b F ^b G
MODE III MINOR: c ⁴ +d ⁵ e ⁶ f ⁷ I (a) ¹ b ³	
(HARMONIC MINOR) E ^b F ^b G A B C (D) E ^b	

EXAMPLE VIII: 9 Ten-Tone Order Official Scales

I V II VI III VII +IV +V +VI +VII	
LYDIAN DIAZ ¹ : I a ¹ b ³ +c ⁴ +d ⁵ e ⁶ f ⁷	MODE VI MINOR: 6 ¹ I a ¹ b ³ +c ⁴ +d ⁵
C D E ^b F ^b G A B [#]	A B [#] C D E ^b F ^b G

EXAMPLE VIII: 10 Eleven-Tone Order Official Scales

I V II VI III VII +IV +V +VI +VII +VIII	
PAN LYDIAN: I a ¹ b ³ (a) +c ⁴ +d ⁵ e ⁶ f ⁷ (g)	
C D E ^b (D) E ^b F ^b G G [#] A B	
MODE VI MINOR: 6 ¹ (f) I a ¹ b ³ (a) +c ⁴ +d ⁵	
A B C D E ^b E ^b F ^b G G [#]	

EXAMPLE VIII: 11 Twelve-Tone Order Official Scales

I V II VI III VII +IV +V +VI +VII +VIII +IX	
1. PAN DIMINISHED BLUES: I a ¹ (a) b ³ c ⁴ +d ⁵ e ⁶ f ⁷ (g)	
C D [#] (D) E ^b E F ^b G A B [#] (B)	
MODE VI MINOR: 6 ¹ b ³ (f) I a ¹ (a) b ³ c ⁴ +d ⁵	
A B [#] (B) C D [#] (D) E ^b E F ^b G	
2. PAN MAJOR +5: I (a) a ¹ (a) b ³ c ⁴ +d ⁵ +e ⁶ f ⁷ (g) (Stitches of Spain)	
C (D [#]) D (E ^b) E F ^b G G [#] (B)	
MODE VI MINOR: Though lacking the sixth degree, this scale is nevertheless applicable to VI minor PMG chords.	

¹ The parentheses and degree of a scale is relative.

Ondine

VTC Analysis and Commentary by Bill Geba and George Russell

Debussy assigned a two-sharp signature to Ondine indicating the traditional key of D major. However the use of C in bars 4 and 6 together with his exploitation of the g t.o. using three-note Lydian Major Seventh Chords reveal a much broader concept of key. In those two bars the two-sharp key signature already accounts for a similar exploitation of the C [LC] g t.o. occurring in bar 7, also validated by the law of correspondence.

Musical notation for Ondine by Claude Debussy. It shows two staves of music. The first staff is labeled "C Lyd Aug" and "A₁ Lyd Aug". The second staff is labeled "O Lyd Aug" and "A₁ Lyd Aug". The notes are written in treble clef with various accidentals.

¹ Lydian major chords of the type used in bars 4, 6 and 7 are absolutely positive in their tendency to blend with any of the eight PMG of the LC Scale. PMG II is selected in bar 2 because it seems to be Debussy's EMG of choice (along with PMG I) in this composition.

THE LYDIAN CHROMATIC CO

Sample pages—size much reduced

CHAPTER VII: SUMMARY OF THE LEVEL OF VTC 239

GEORGE RUSSELL'S Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization

is now available for immediate delivery. The book comprises 268 pages measuring 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ " printed on fine acid-free stock and bound (sewn) in full cloth. Included is a foldout chart listing all permutations of the Primary Modal Genres and the seven Principal Scales of the Lydian Chromatic Scale.

The cost of the book is \$125 (U.S. dollars, applicable sales tax included).

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