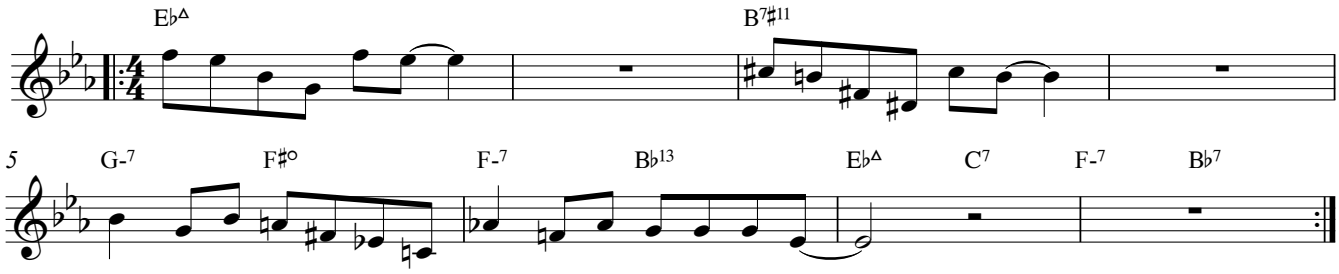
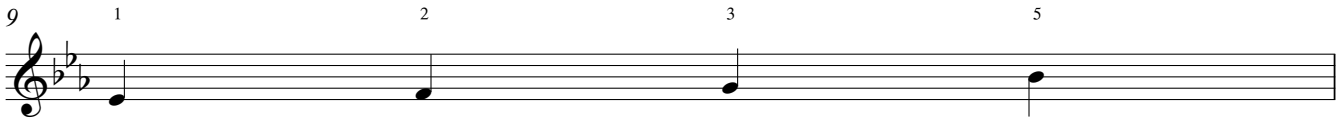
Robbin's Nest - Session 1 (Bb)

This session adresses the A section of the tune - with a view to using the melody as a template for improvisation. Below is a simplified version of the melody. Notice how the decorative pickup into bar 1 and bar 3 are missing - this will be expanded on in a separate session.

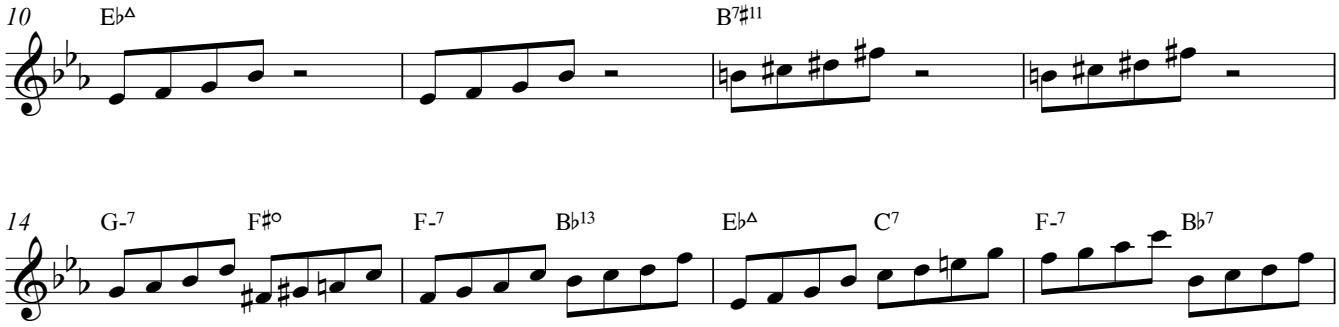


The phrase in bar 1, which is repeated (and transposed) in bar 3 is made up of a common four note cell, with the first two notes repeated to end the phrase. It's useful to analyse this as a four note cell, discounting the repeated notes at the end of the phrase initially, and then reintroducing them later as we will in another session.

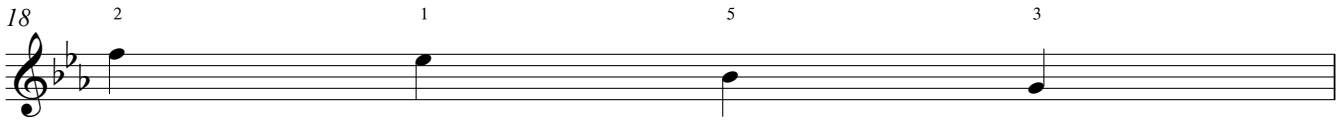
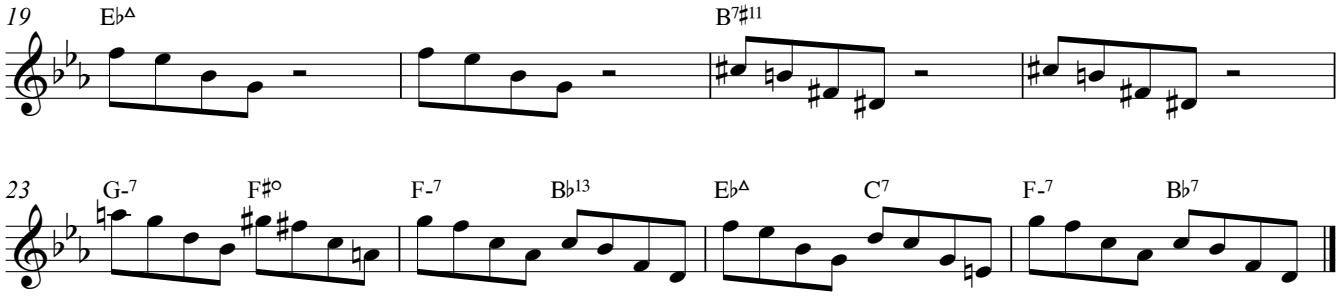
The cell often appears in it's simplist form: 1,2,3,5 (shown below) - as in the melodies of 'Out Of Nowhere' and 'Beautiful Love' and employed to great effect in John Coltrane's improvisations during the 'Giant Steps' period.



This pattern can be applied to each chord, through the sequence, as shown below:



There is a large, but finite, number of permutations of this cell, the one present in the melody can be described as: 2,1,5,3. Shown below:



Practicing this permutation throughout the sequence introduces two concepts. Over the opening four bars, this can be viewed simply as a rhythmic variation of the melody. Using this cell in bars 5-8, we are now 'improvising' with melodic material from one section of the composition while outlining the harmony of another section. This is notated below. Try altering the rhythm, mising out, repeating and decorating notes to add an improvisation element to this exercise.