

**Improvisation for Watermelon Man,
Cantaloupe Island and Tenor Madness**
Bb instruments:

Watermelon Man

Chords: G9 C9 D9

Scales choices:

a) G Blues Scale over all the chords – a great choice but a bit limited: G Bb C C# D F G

b) Dominant 7th Pentatonics – a great way of outlining the chord changes

G Dom 7 Pentatonic over G9 (G A B D F)

C Dom 7 Pentatonic over C9 (C D E G Bb)

D Dom 7 Pentatonic over D9 (D E F# A C)

c) Mixolydian Modes over each chord – more notes than above

G A B C D E F G (you could view this as either the Major scale with the seventh note flattened, or C Major scale starting on F)

C D E F G A Bb C

D E F# G A B C D

Cool alternatives!

Pentatonic minors on the dominant (=5th) note of each chord, i.e.

Over G9 – D Pent Minor: D F G A C

Over C9 – G Pent Minor: G Bb C D F

Over D9 – A Pent Minor: A C D E G

Chromatic scale – after playing any of the above for a few bars, just throw in a chromatic run, then return to the scales

Side stepping – easy on guitars, less so on other instruments, but well worth experimenting with. Play a short phrase on any of the above scales, then play the same phrase one semi tone higher or lower, before returning back to the scale. The semi tone shift will sound out of tune, but is quickly resolved. It will work if you do it with confidence ☺

Cantaloupe Island

Chords: Gm Eb7 and Em –

Scale Choices

G Blues – the scale of choice, as it works over all the chords. Notice how the character of the blues scale notes changes as the chords change. Same notes, different feel.

Gm

- a) G Dorian: G A Bb C D E F – F Major scale starting on G
- b) G Pent Minor: G Bb C D F

Eb7

- a) Eb Mixolydian Mode: Eb F G Ab Bb C Db
- b) Eb Lydian 7: Eb F G A Bb C Db – the same as above but with an A natural instead of an Ab

Em

- a) E Dorian: E F# G A B C# D (D major scale starting on E)
- b) E Pent Minor: E G A B D
- c) F# Pent Minor: F# A B C# E – my personal favourite.
- d) As the parent scale here is D Major, any arpeggio in D Major will fit: D Major (DF#A), E minor (EGB), F# minor (F#AC#), G Major (GBD), A Major (AC#E), B minor (BDF#), C# dim (C#EG)
- e) E Phrygian: C Major scale starting on E

Tenor Madness

Chords: C7 F7 Dm7 G7

Scale Choices

C Blues Scale – works over entire form, but limiting

C7

- a) Mixolydian: C D E F G A Bb
- b) Dom 7 Pent: C D E G Bb

F7

- a) Mixolydian: F G A Bb C D Eb
- b) Dom 7 Pent: F G A C Eb

Dm7

D Dorian: D E F G A B C

G7

- a) Mixolydian: G A B C D E F
- b) Dom 7 Pent: G A B D F

Cool alternative: In bar 4, just before the chords change from C7 to F7, play an F#7 Pent arpeggio: F# A# C# E. It clashes against the C7 chord, but resolves quickly.