

out what to do with a tooth. A typist doesn't look to the typewriter to find out what to type. In music, the instrument should be thought of in much the same way. Don't look to the fingerboard in the search for expressive musical statements. As Schumann put the matter, "What the mere fingers create is nothing but mechanism; but that which you have listened to when it resounded in your own bosom will find its echo in the hearts of others."

### 132. "How can I use the melody to the tune I'm playing in developing a solo?

**The reason I want to do this is to give the solo on each tune a distinctive stamp, to give it the mark of that tune. It's all too easy to just play the melody and then go to the same old stuff I play on every tune. In this way, they all run together, and over the course of a night I end up playing a four-hour tune interrupted by various melodies. There's nothing unique to each song."**

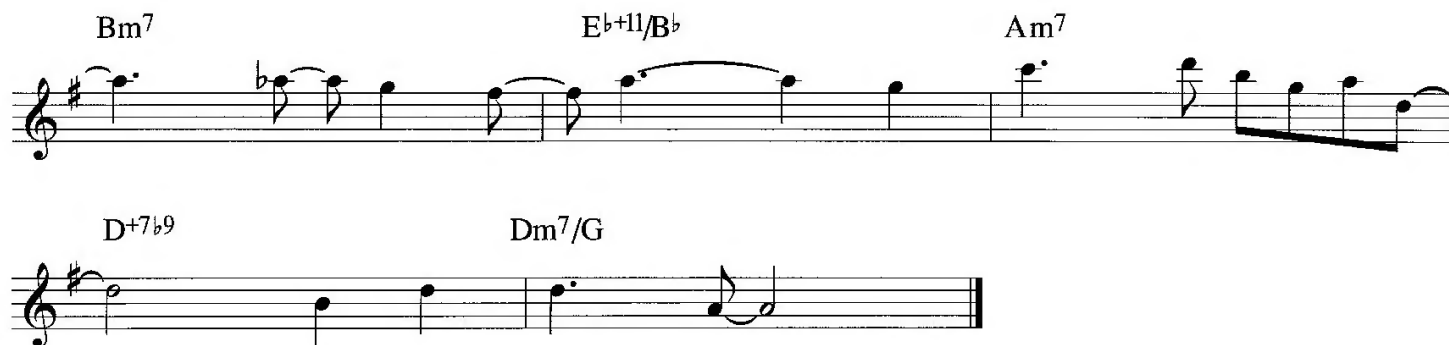
#### Diagnosis:

The problem is all too obvious - the melody is totally lost as soon as the solo begins. Some way needs to be found to preserve the melody so that the listener recognizes, at least in part, what is heard. (One may say that one knows what one likes, however, along with Stravinsky, we might think it closer to the truth to say that one likes what one knows.)

#### Remedy:

- (1) Play the entire melody, keeping it wholly intact, but insert fills in the open spaces where the melody isn't moving. This is illustrated in the following:

The musical notation illustrates the remedy for losing the melody during a solo. It shows a melody line with various chords (Gmaj7, C+11, Bm7, E7, Am7, F+11/C) and fill marks indicating where the melody is interrupted by non-melodic material. The notation is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is shown in a single line, with various chords and fill marks indicating where the melody is interrupted by non-melodic material. The notation is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is shown in a single line, with various chords and fill marks indicating where the melody is interrupted by non-melodic material.



(2) Preserve the melody in terms of the melodic contour, but shorten the duration of the held tone so that much more fill space is available. For example, if the melody in (1) rested on a whole note, abbreviate that to an eighth note and fill through the remaining space. But keep in mind: the general melodic shape is preserved so that if lines were drawn connecting the notes, the contour would be the same as the original melody (here designated by arrows).

A series of four musical staves illustrating the process of 'eroding' a melody into fill. Each staff shows segments of 'Melody' (indicated by arrows) and 'Fill' (indicated by brackets). The chords and melodic shapes evolve across the staves.

- Staff 1: Melody (Gmaj7), Fill, Melody (C9), Fill, Melody.
- Staff 2: Melody (Gmaj7), Fill, Melody (Bm7), Fill, Melody.
- Staff 3: Melody (Am7), Fill, Melody (F9/C), Fill, Melody.
- Staff 4: Fill (Bm7), Melody (E7), Fill, Melody (Am7), Fill, Melody (D7), Fill (Ab9/Eb), Melody (Dm9).

(3) The next step leads to the total erosion of the melody. The fill areas remain as fill areas and melody areas are now replaced by fills also. The melody of the tune is gone, and the improviser is left free to move with no melodic constraints. This point was just a point where the ailment started, but now this point has been arrived at logically, and the listener has been taken along, step by step.

Gmaj7#4

C+ 11

Gmaj7#4

Bm7

E13b9

Am7

F+11

Bm7

E7b9

Am7

D+7b9

### 133. "How do I connect the five scale patterns and reach the point where I can flow from one to the other without interruption?"

#### Diagnosis:

Once again, this is a simple matter. Your skills on the guitar, including your technical ability to execute passages, as well as your ear-abilities, i.e. knowing what a certain movement of the finger will sound like in advance of playing it, are centered around position playing. This is a vicious cycle that is easily fallen into. If we play better a certain way, then we will play that way, and as a result we get even better. The gap widens, and lengthwise playing falls further and further behind position playing. The gap needs to be closed by putting special emphasis on lengthwise playing.

#### Remedy:

- (1) Play (a) and (b) on the top two strings only; (c) is on strings two and three. Improvise many other similar studies that are in a given key; this will strengthen the ear-hand connection for lengthwise playing.

#### Example a