

6

MACROCOSMOS

Bass
Guitar

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GUITAR

Book 6 Overview

The expectation of this book is to broaden the musical knowledge of an already intuitive Bass Player. It provides a pathway to those who might aspire to a higher creative ideal not only as an accomplished performer but as a music teacher who understands harmony, who reads music and ultimately is able to express themselves by improvising and composing the music they love.

Book 6 is a reference to educational objectives that detail the following.

- 1 *The overtone series*
- 2 *The Chromatic scale*
- 3 *Diatonic tonalities*
- 4 *Arpeggios*
- 5 *Melodic development*
- 6 *Symmetrical structures*
- 7 *Modulation*
- 8 *Modal music*
- 9 *Rhythm and kinetics*
- 10 *Transient structures*
- 11 *Twenty-two sequential etudes*

The sublime contribution that the west has given to music is undoubtedly harmony. It also happens to be the fundamental tonal element that a Bassist engages with. Book 6 of *Macrocosmos for Guitar* focuses on providing a clear understanding of this vital musical component.

Instruction on the ability to emotionally interpret music by reading it and to objectively hear its form and content is central to the aim of this offering. One learns to transform tone and time into an artistic musical experience.

Contents

Introduction

Overview of Book 6. Macrocosmos education model. 1-5

Part 1

Fundamentals

8

Education of music. Music. Electric bass guitar. Overtones. 9-14

Kinetics. Textural strokes. Hammer on. Pull off. Glissando. 15

Harmonic. Multi-physics. Snapping. Tapping. Slapping. Choking. 16-17

Muting. Vibrato. Changing textures. Texture key. Isometrics 1 & 2. 18-21

Part 2

The Chromatic - Major scale - Triads

22

Scale stratagems. Scales by two species. Diatonic & Symmetric. 23

Open and 2nd pos Gmajor scale. 2nd and 8th pos C major scale. 24

Chromatic scale. Major scales. 25

Triad degrees qualities. Chromatic Matrix. 26-29

Part 3

Arpeggios - Diatonic Progressions - Cadences

30

Arpeggios. Arpeggiated scales C major 2/2 1/2 3/2 3/2 2x 8va. 31-33

Diatonic progressions. Roman numerals. Fingering. Dynamics. 34

Inversions. Displacement. Root movement. 35

Maj Scale prog 1/2 2/2 3/2. Cadences. Arpeg scales Cmaj 1/3 2/3. 36-39

Major Scale Prog 1/3 2/3. Compose your own Progressions. 40-42

Part 4

Minor Scales - Arpeggios - Progressions

43

Minor Mode. Diatonic triads of A minor mode descending & 44

ascending. Arpeggiated scales of ascending minor mode. 45

Minor scale prog 1/2 2/2 3/2. Minor scale prog 1/3 2/3. 46-49

Part 5

Symmetrical triads - Melodic formula - 7th chords

50

Diminished, Augmented triads. 7th's chords. Melodic formula, 51

Returning tone, Passing tone, Suspensions, Anticipations, 52-53

Unprepared Suspensions. Motific development, Melodic development. 54-57

Contents

Part 6

<i>Diatonic Modulation</i>	58
Modulation C major to G major. Modulation C major to A minor.	59-61
Modulation C major to F major. Modulation C major to D minor.	62-63
Modulating diatonic tonalities C G & F. More possibilities.	64-65

Part 7

<i>Modal Music - Chromaticism - Diminished Harmony</i>	66
Modal music. D Dorian mode. E Phrygian mode. B Locrain mode.	67-71
F Lydian mode. Mixolydian mode. Modal cells. Modal modulation.	72-76
Modality & Chromaticism. Altered qualities. Further examinations	78-80
of diminished chords. Other perspectives of diminished 7th's.	81-82
Root of diminished 7th's.	

Part 8

<i>Rhythm</i>	83
Rhythm. Syncopation 1. 2. Poly-rhythms 3/4. 5/2. Rhythmic teasers.	84-90

Part 9

<i>Pedal Point - Distant Modulation</i>	91
PP & Mod. A minor to A major. C major to A major to F# minor.	92-94
C major to E major. C major to E major to C# minor. C major to	94-95
C minor. C major to Ab major. C major to F minor. C major to	96-98
Db major. A minor to Eb major. A minor to Ab major. A minor	98-100
to E major. A minor to C# minor.	100-101

Part 10

<i>Subdominant minor region - Transient Structures</i>	102
Subdominant minor region. Neapolitan chord.	103-107
Transient structures. Tritone rule & dominant 7ths.	108-109
Alternative developments to VI II V I progression.	110-111

Part 11

<i>Twenty-two Etudes for Bass Guitar</i>	112
Guidelines for Etudes	113-114
Etudes 1 to 22.	115-139

Major Scale Progressions

Examples (i - p) are progressions outlined by the arpeggios from string sets 1/3 and 2/3, they demonstrate a two part or counterpoint approach to the progressions. This increases the likelihood of the unfolding arpeggio to be sustained and by doing so the technical demands also escalate. Choose appropriate tempos so that the examples are accessible. A brief synopsis of their content follows.

In (i) II VI sound a weak RM with 3rd's on beat 1, where as V has its root, with a RM of a 4th, bar 4 ends on the tonic. There are two rhythmic cells; bars 2, 4 and 1, 3. The fingering suggests a smooth sustained approach rather than the notes being separated or played staccato.

In (j) the same slurred effect as (i) is declared, where harmony is not so much an arpeggio but an unfolding homophonic production of a chord, i.e. simultaneous tones. The III chord in the 2nd bar has some failings as it moves via a 5th from the VI chord and is in 2nd inversion, perhaps if the III was followed by the VI a better progression would result, try it. (k) sounds the three primary triads of a major scale. (l) is similar to (j).

In (m) the root movement is weak and stops on an unresolved VI chord. The rhythmic element gives the progression some hope, as the two quavers act as a precursor to the melodic direction given by the minim.

In (n) we hear two voices as counterpoints. The progression is strong due to the RM of 4th's. Caution needs to be exercised in the final bar making sure that the tonic C is clearly heard. Having good technique will ensure that all voices are sustained and not muted.

In (o) the use of the diminished triad and its RM of up a 4th to III is positive although its tonic B is in the top voice rather than in the bass. In the final bar it appears on a weak beat and sounds as a leading tone to C. The diminished triad BDF can act as a substitute for G7 GBDF and offers resolution to the I chord via a step up, more on this chord latter.

In (p) the RM is unusual; V to IV leading back to VII, a substitute for V7, with the dissonant RM of a tritone F to B. Be careful when dealing with this symmetrical interval. In bar 3 beats 2, 3 its tension is diluted by the counter balance of the octave F resolving to E. The mirroring of bars 1 and 2 provide rhythmic interest with their roots being minims. The 3rd bar is a development and the final bar acts as a book end to bar 1.

Major Scale Progressions 1/3 2/3

The image displays eight musical staves, labeled i through p, each showing a progression of chords in the bass clef. The chords are indicated by Roman numerals and their corresponding fingerings (numbers 0-4) are shown above the notes. The time signature is 3/4 for all staves.

- i**: $\frac{2}{3}$ II, $\frac{1}{3}$ VI, $\frac{2}{3}$ V, I
- j**: $\frac{1}{3}$ VI, $\frac{2}{3}$ III, V, I
- k**: $\frac{1}{3}$ IV, V, I
- l**: $\frac{1}{3}$ IV, III, $\frac{2}{3}$ V, I
- m**: $\frac{1}{3}$ II, $\frac{2}{3}$ VI, $\frac{1}{3}$ V, VI
- n**: $\frac{1}{3}$ I, $\frac{2}{3}$ II, V, I
- o**: $\frac{1}{3}$ VII, III, $\frac{2}{3}$ VII, I
- p**: $\frac{2}{3}$ V, $\frac{1}{3}$ IV, $\frac{2}{3}$ VII, I

Pedal Point & Modulation

When modulation is between two tonalities that share the same tonic, e.g. A minor to A major, we may take the opportunity to delay the shift to the new sonority by introducing a compositional element called the Pedal Point. Usually this produces oblique motion with the tonic sustained by the bass while an appropriate melodic figure or harmonic pattern is played by the another part. In our situation we need to arrange the material so as to allow the bass to play both the passive and active parts. This presents opportunities to improvise the motif being developed. These and other techniques will be discussed shortly but for the moment let us explore the framework associated with the overlap of two tonalities.

A particular function of the pedal point is to decelerate forward motion by holding back the flow, this in turn accumulates energy that builds to the point of release. To assist this process the preferred RM's are those that slow forward motion. These include up a 5th or 3rd, up or down a 2nd, and chords that change their quality but not their roots, D minor to D major.

At this early stage the chords used in the pedal point should be ones that are equally at home in both tonalities. The descending and ascending tones of the minor key need not be strictly adhered to as they can be interpreted as part of the major key. However some chords are more tenuous than others. In minor the natural III should be avoided although when the C note is dissonant as in an ascending VI, then it is ok as it should be resolved to B. The root movements from the connecting chord are as follows: II is ok, III and VII are to be avoided, IV is ok as is VI particularly with F# as tonic.

Obviously, the more remote the tonalities are the fewer the number of shared chords that are available. However, the valued inclusion of non-diatonic tones along with chords that evolve from a single tonality present alternative routes to these distant keys.

A minor to A major

For a direct link we realise the V of A minor E, is also the V of A major. The examples (a-i) express this; the chord or phrase leading into the the V of A minor is to be on the strong 1st beat of bar 1. The pedal point or connecting chord appears on the weak 3rd beat and is consonant at the point of entry. The point of departure repeats the V, this time belonging to A major and is on the strong 1st beat of bar 2 and is a different phrase or voicing to the first one leading into the V from A minor. In (j) and (k) all conditions are met including rules I and 2 for the minor mode, although in (k) note the chromatic bass in bar 2 that introduces the pedal E.

Modulation via Pedal Point

Musical notation for modulation via pedal point, measures a through i. The notation is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are:

- a: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)
- b: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)
- c: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)
- d: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)
- e: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)
- f: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)
- g: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)
- h: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)
- i: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)

 Chord symbols below the notes:

- a: II
- b: II
- c: II
- d: IV
- e: IV
- f: IVo
- g: IIo
- h: VIo
- i: VI

A minor to A major

Musical notation for modulation from A minor to A major, measure j. The notation is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are:

- j: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)

Amin: III I IV III V II Amaj: V I II V I

Musical notation for modulation from A minor to A major, measures k through the end of the first line. The notation is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are:

- k: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)

Amin: I II V7 VI Amaj: V II IV II

Musical notation for modulation from A minor to A major, measures through the end of the second line. The notation is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are:

- End of second line: F#2, F#3, F#4, F#5 (pedal point F#2)

V7 I II7 V7 I

Enharmonic spelling

#'s & b's

on strings ① ②

Etude 4

RP

mm 120

Musical score for Etude 4, measures 120-124. The score is written in bass clef with a 3/4 time signature. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of *mp* and a fermata over the first note. The second staff has a dynamic marking of *mf*. The third staff has dynamic markings of *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, and *mp*. The fourth staff ends with a repeat sign and a double bar line.

#'s & b's

on strings

② ③ ④

Etude 5

RP

mm 150

Musical score for Etude 5, measures 150-154. The score is written in bass clef with a 5/4 time signature. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of *mf* and a fermata over the first note. The second staff has dynamic markings of *mp*, *f*, *mf*, and *mp*. The third staff has dynamic markings of *mf*, *mp*, *f*, *mf*, and *mp*. The fourth staff has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a fermata over the first note. The fifth staff has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a fermata over the first note.

Etude 17

p ^{*m*}
_{*i*}

mm 60

R Pell

The musical score for Etude 17 is written in bass clef, 4/4 time, and the key of B-flat major. It consists of ten staves of music. The piece begins with a dynamic of *mf*. The first staff contains a sequence of notes with fingerings 3, 1, 3, 1, 2, 3, 4, 2, 3, 4. The second staff continues with notes and fingerings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. The third staff features a *p* dynamic and includes a *Sim* (simulazione) marking. The fourth staff has a *f* dynamic and includes *Sl Sn Sn* and *Sim* markings. The fifth staff continues with a *f* dynamic and includes *Sim* markings. The sixth staff has a *p m* dynamic and includes *Sim* markings. The seventh staff has a *p* dynamic and includes *Sim* markings. The eighth staff has a *m* dynamic and includes *Sim* markings. The ninth staff has a *p* dynamic and includes *Sim* markings. The tenth staff concludes with a *p* dynamic and includes *Sim* markings. The piece ends with a final chord at the 12th fret, indicated by a circled '12 fret' and a circled '4'.

Ritard..... P to rh i