

What Goes Up Should Come Down

By Mick Goodrick

UPON SEEING THE SERIES OF chord symbols *Cmaj7-Dm7-Em7-Fmaj7-G7-Am7-Bm7b5-Cmaj7*, most guitarists would probably play something like the sequence in Ex. 1a, where all voices move up the scale diatonically. Observe that the voices move in combinations of parallel and similar motion. Although this is okay for most purposes, it isn't correct from the standpoint of proper voice-leading.

Upon examining Ex. 1a closer, you'll find that there is always a common tone going from one chord to the next. By keeping the common tone in the same voice (soprano, alto, tenor, or bass; or highest voice, second highest, third highest, lowest, respectively), you arrive at the set of voicings in Ex. 1b (the dotted lines indicate common tones). Observations: (1) now the progression resolves downward instead of upward; (2) in this instance the sequence of common tones moves from the bass to the soprano to the tenor to the alto, etc.

Now play Ex. 2 (the solid lines indicate voice movement). Observations: (1) this example resolves upward; (2) any three successive chords share two common tones; (3) the one moving voice follows the same pattern of tenor, alto, bass, soprano, as the common tones in Ex. 1b. Also notice how each common tone tends to "hang in there" for four consecutive chords (if the progression is extended both in front and back).

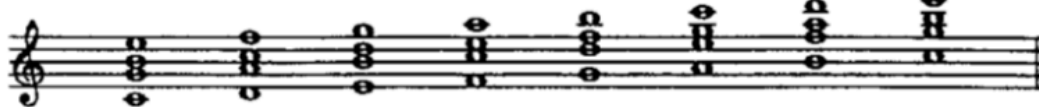
Play Ex. 3 now. Observations: (1) it resolves downward; (2) now there are two common tones between adjacent chords; (3) two voices move from chord to chord, while two stay the same. Things to do: Play all of the previous examples in C melodic minor, changing the E's to E \flat 's. Next, play the previous examples in C harmonic minor, changing the E's to E \flat 's, and the A's to A \flat 's. Finally, play and analyze Ex. 4 through Ex. 8 in the same manner, working in the major mode, and then with melodic and harmonic minor. You guessed it, they're intended for fingerstyle.

Take a look at Ex. 9. Can you find the first seven chords of this progression on page 61 of my book *The Advancing Guitarist*? Can you voice-lead the first seven chords of Ex. 9 so that the progression resolves upward? (Big hint: E \flat , E \flat , F, A \flat , A \flat , A \flat , B, D, D, D, E \flat , G, G, G, A \flat , C, C, C, etc. Little hint: two common tones.)

Finally, more than half of "In Praise Of Bass Desires" is derived from material on pages 57, 58, 60, and 61 of *The Advancing Guitarist*. The piece is dedicated to Mark, Peter, John, and Bill.

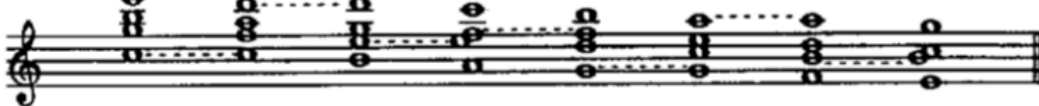
Ex. 1a

Cmaj7 Dm7 Em7 Fmaj7 G7 Am7 Bm7 \flat 5 Cmaj7




Ex. 1b

Cmaj7 Dm7 Em7 Fmaj7 G7 Am7 Bm7 \flat 5 Cmaj7



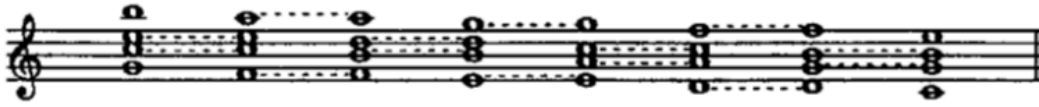
Ex. 2

Cmaj7 Em7 G7 Bm7 \flat 5 Dm7 Fmaj7 Am7 Cmaj7



Ex. 3

Cmaj7 Fmaj7 Bm7 \flat 5 Em7 Am7 Dm7 G7 Cmaj7



Ex. 4



Ex. 5



Ex. 6



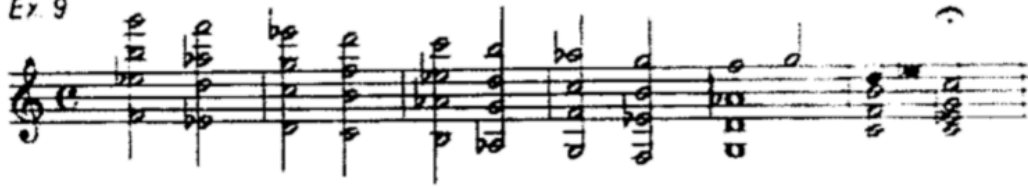
Ex. 7



Ex. 8



Ex 9



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