

THE Scott Henderson

GUITAR ♦ BOOK

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INTRODUCTION

Hi! Thanks a lot for checking out this book! I hope you have fun playing the tunes. For those of you who are studying composition, I hope this book will provide you with some insights.

I tried to pick tunes that are my favorites to play, and that can be played by a four-piece band. There may be one or two exceptions, but basically a guitar player, bass player, drummer and a keyboard player who is good at playing two-keyboard parts can easily handle this music.

In my notes on the tunes, I mainly talk about the composing end of things, because to cover the way I approach improvisation would take up too much space. If you're interested in my soloing concepts, check out the videos I've done.

Thanks again, and I hope you enjoy the book!



BIG GIRL BLUES from the album *Tribal Tech*

I named this tune for Cheryl Graul, a friend of mine I call "Big Girl."

I grew up playing blues and Albert King was always a big hero of mine. He and Albert Collins are my favorite blues players.

Even though the changes are hardly what you'd find in a typical blues, the feel of this tune really makes it easy to get those blues licks in there. By figuring out which pentatonic scales work over certain chords, I'm usually able to get my blues licks in no matter what the chord progression is.

The **B** section and coda have some big band-style voicings that are difficult but playable on the keyboard. The changes on the keyboard solo allow you to play F blues-based ideas except for over the Fmaj13, where you need that Lydian sound.

I normally use humbucking pickups, but on this tune I used single coils to get that funky blues tone. This is one of those "go-for-the-throat" tunes that went down live in the studio, so what you hear is what you get.

CARIBBEAN from the album *Spears*

The bass at line **A** was written first. I wanted two steel drums to play the melody, but when we did the album I wasn't using guitar synth so I took my guitar up an octave with a pitch transposer.

After I had finished the main section I wrote the intro. The intro melody (bar 26) that starts on G13 (#11) is used again later in an interesting way. In the **B** section, I used the same chords again with the same melody notes on top, but the chords move at half-speed and are played staccato on rhythmic accents. The bass plays a counterpoint role, sometimes playing with the chords, and sometimes by itself. Then I wrote a very legato melody, to be played over this section by Bob Sheppard and myself. I like the blend of soprano sax and guitar.

I improvise over those same changes. I think the solo turned out to be very melodic, but inside the chords. That's okay because the changes are weird enough anyway. I usually play "out" stuff over traditional changes, because people know what to expect from the harmony and playing "out" gives you an element of surprise.

One more note about this tune - the chords that come in on the **A** section before the melody starts were discovered by messing around with my pitch transposer tuned a perfect fourth down. When you play a double stop on the guitar (for example C and E) you get a voicing that sounds (from top to bottom) E C B G because B is a fourth down from E and G is a fourth down from C. It's a fun thing to experiment with. By moving two notes around on the guitar, you can come up with voicings that would be impossible to play in the normal way.

ELVIS AT THE HOP from the album *Tribal Tech*

I was inspired to write a funk tune when I heard "Release It" on Prince's *Graffiti Bridge* album. I also hadn't written a blues tune in a long time, so I

combined the two ideas and came up with what I call a mixture of “Hound Dog” and “Sex Machine.” Somehow the vision of Elvis going to a discotheque and starting a fight came to mind. That’s actually a sample of “The King” before the guitar solo. It’s more of a bluesy rock and roll solo, though there are moments where I make the standard jazz blues changes. The next section has some bass and guitar doubling that reminds me of “Mission Impossible.” After that we repeat part of the funk section, and the melody comes back in. I like the walking bass against a hip-hop groove on the drums. The ending riff, which also appears a few times in the body of the tune, is a rhythmic figure I’ve loved ever since I heard “Over The Hills And Far Away” on Led Zeppelin’s *Houses Of The Holy*. I’m still a big Led Zeppelin fan. So obviously, here’s a song that came from quite a few influences.

MANGO PROM from the album *Dr. Hee*

This is the oldest song I’ve ever recorded. It was written in 1978, when I was still in school, but I revised it a bit for the record.

Here is another example of motific development. Although there are different groups of changes in the song, the melody pretty much sticks to its basic motif. Guitar and steel drum play the melody over a chord progression based in the key of E. Next we modulate to B♭m and the sax plays the melody over a different group changes. The notes have to be changed to fit the chords, but the motif is still there.

The guitar solo on this one is interesting. Although there’s no keyboard comping, the actual progression is E7(#9) for one bar, then C7, A7, F#7, B7 for one beat each in the next bar, followed by another bar of E7 (#9). Next those punches come in at A13(♭9) and D7 (#9). At times in my solo I tried to outline each chord, but for a lot of it I used diminished ideas since the same diminished scale works for C7, A7 and F#7, and the diminished scale down a half step works over the B7 and D7.

The next part of the song develops the melody a third time, over a group of changes that Bob Sheppard later improvises over. The remaining part of the tune repeats earlier sections.

I decided to use the “sax section” approach for the third melody. Doing so gave it a completely different sound from the earlier appearances of the motif in the tune, where it was one guy playing the melody and someone else playing chords.

By the way, “Mango Prom” is short for Mango Promenade, which is a little street in West Palm Beach, Florida, where I grew up.

NOMAD from the album *Nomad*

The idea for this tune came from a jam session. I was using my pitch transposer with a delay looped into it to create a “machine-like” sound. I turned that idea around creating the sequence that you hear at the beginning of the tune. To me the melody sounds very “American Indian.” That’s where the cover art on the album comes from. It’s futuristic Indian telling a story to the Indians of the past.

I decided to keep the melody very simple and surround it with bass melodies to keep it flowing. One of the main motifs of the tune is the first one played by the bass, a line in fifths that was inspired by a lick I learned from Joe Diorio.

The bridge is next. One of the nice things about this section is the background steel drum line, which kind of “glues” the chords together. Any chord can sound good going to any chord, but a smooth line like this running through the changes really ties them together. The bass line here is also very important, because it’s so active and helps propel the music along.

After the bridge, there’s a modulation to C minor, where I played an altered version of the bridge melody over some very strange chords against a C minor type bass line. This is that “theme and variation” thing again. When the melody is over, a new section comes in that powers its way back to B major and G# minor for the keyboard solo. After that it goes back to the bridge. When we play live, we forget the melody and I solo over the bridge changes leading into the E

(whatever) solo. Luckily, the E demented solo really seemed to pull it back to Cm for the climax of the tune, this time with more of a rhythmic accent on those weird chords.

This simple idea from a jam session turned into sort of an "epic" and it seems to be one of the audience's favorite tunes when we play live.

PERU from the album *Tribal Tech*

The intro to this song comes from an improvised duet between Dave Goldblatt and me. I improvised something that I liked a lot (I heard it on tape later), so I wrote a little melody over it, filled a few of the spaces with bass notes, and that's what became the intro on the record.

The main melody comes in, followed by some soloing in B \flat minor. The melody returns, followed by rhythmic counterpoint section that modulates to D minor, then to B7alt for a keyboard solo. I wanted to keep this tune pretty open so that the solo sections could be as long as we wanted, although we kept them fairly short for the record. Live, those sections sometimes aren't solos per se, but jamming sections where anything can happen.

Dave plays a great keyboard solo, with a lot of space in it, which really fits the tune. The melody is stated again with some development, then I solo over some changes that are very close to the ones over the main melody. I like the way this solo came out; I feel I was able to find some phrases that made musical sense to one another, which is my main concern when I play.

The thing I dig about this tune is that we've been able to make it sound different every time we play it because of all of the little open places where we can jam. We created a nice ethnic feel on this tune, which was a good change of pace from the more "electric" sounding tunes on the *Tribal Tech* album.

RITUALS from the album *Nomad*

Again, I had that "American Indian" theme in my head, so this song is a musical impression of some kind of Indian ritual.

There's a really nice modulation into the bridge at [C], followed by an A \flat phrygian jam where Dave Goldblatt and I trade musical ideas until I take over soloing on the changes. My favorite part of this tune is the transition to the climax which happens at letter [E]. Check out the background line four measures before [E] that splits off from the melody and continues down while the melody goes up. This really helped in bringing the main melody to a climax. There's also a nice harmonic movement when it goes to D \flat m9 and then to the 5/4 bar at the end of the tune.

SIGNAL PATH from the album *Tribal Tech*

This is the first tune I wrote using the Macintosh computer with Performer software. I don't think it changed my composing style, but it did create many ideas for me when it came time to choose sounds and arrange my music. Before I got the Mac, I used a 4-track with a drum machine on one track and guitar on the rest. I would pitch-transpose my guitar down an octave for the bass track.

Using the computer and synthesizers opened up another dimension for me. I found myself writing things that were inspired by the sounds I came up with, rather than writing the notes and trying to find the sounds later.

Computer-to-Midi technology has also been important for the *Tribal Tech* records. It lets us do a lot of our recording at home, saving thousands of dollars in studio time. The move to computers and synths has more than paid for itself, creatively and financially.

Now, about "Signal Path" - this song has a strong melody that is stated over four different groups of changes. Notice that even though the notes are different, the basic contour of the melody is the same on each set of changes. Developing a melody by changing the harmony under it is something I really like to do in my writing. There are a couple of motifs in there - the repeating sixteenth notes (the "Signal") and the eighth note - quarter note rest - eighth note rhythmic figure that happens throughout the tune.

My solo starts on guitar synth, and I add the guitar halfway through. It's basically a C \sharp minor solo although I took it out just a little. The synth solo

changes are the same as the [C] section. Dave Goldblatt plays a really melodic solo on this one. I had originally planned to repeat the melody four times at the end of the tune, but the changes were so much fun to blow over I couldn't resist soloing on the two middle choruses.

SPEARS from the album *Spears*

This bluesy, big-band inspired tune is meant to be played loud and with an attitude. It's been one of my favorites to play over the years.

The melody is based on the of an E7($\frac{\#9}{\#5}$) arpeggio going up to a blues riff in F. This chromatic movement gives the tune it's "outness," sort of like Thelonius Monk's "Well You Needn't."

The intro is chromatic as well, going up in half steps. I wrote a bass figure for Willis and me to play under later in the tune.

Section [C] is the bridge. Live, I play the melody. On the record we played it in the big band style, the way it's written at the end of the guitar solo. My solo is over E "whatever," so I just went for some sounds, but a feeling of E blues is still there. When the A7 comes in I go strictly for the blues licks.

There's a section of this tune that I like a lot. After the drum solo the melody is played by keys and mallets while Willis and I play a bass part under it that gives the tune a "rock you, Cleveland" vibe. This section must be played especially loud!

The ending riff is the first eight notes of the melody transposed to A \flat and repeated, with no rests between repeats. This turns it around rhythmically, although it starts over every four bars. I moved the lick up a minor third at the fifth bar. Remember: the louder you play this one, the better it sounds!

SUB AQUA from the album *Tribal Tech*

The harmony in this tune is kind of angular. Even though the basic key is C \sharp m, "out of key" chords, like C/D and B \flat m give it color. My favorite part is at measure 37 where it goes from D \flat add9/F to Am7(\sharp 5) and back to D \flat 6/9. This is what I call "angular" harmony.

The bass solo on the Bm7(\sharp 5) section has an interesting story behind it. When I wrote the tune, I improvised a solo on that section, but then I decided that I'd rather play on the changes that come in later, so I gave the Bm(\sharp 5) section to Willis. We worked on that section for three days, but we couldn't make it happen - Willis was soloing great, but somehow between what he was playing and the ways we were comping, it always seemed out of context for the tune. We listened to my composition tape and decided that the original improvisation was really what the tune needed, so Willis learned it note-for-note, we doubled it with a steel drum sound, and I composed the chords and the little "voice" things behind it. Sometimes, you improvise such a strong melody that nothing can take its place. The changes to the guitar solo at the end of tune are fun to blow over, because you can just rock out in E7, except for one B \flat m measure where I usually go up a half step and play F minor pentatonic.

It's a fun tune to play.

Big Girl Blues

by Scott Henderson

Intro

Moderately Slow ♩ = 78

Absus2 8 fr. Gsus2 7 fr. Fm11 3 fr. G13

Gtr. *f* (steady gliss) * slight bend

Bass * played on ⑤ string bass

Absus2 Gsus2 D \flat (\flat 9) 6 fr. D \flat m9/B 5 fr.

let ring -----

Absus2 Gsus2 Fm11 3 fr. G13

let ring -----

Absus2 Gsus2 D \flat (\flat 9) D \flat m9/B

let ring

Mango Prom



by Scott Henderson

Intro




Moderately ♩ = 98 (Swing Feel)


Drums







Gtr. 
Bass 

A13 5 fr.  B13 4 fr. 

Gtr. 
Bass 

A \flat 13 4 fr.  B13 7 fr.  A \flat 13 4 fr. 

Gtr. 
Bass 

D \flat 13 6 fr.  C13 5 fr.  G13 \flat 9/G \sharp 3 fr.  G \flat 13 \flat 9/G 2 fr.  B7 \sharp 9 \flat 5  E7 \sharp 9 

8va -----

Gtr. 
Bass 