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LESSON 7: 16-BAR RAGTIME BLUES

Now, we're going to play "Alice's Red Hot Electric Rag," a 16-bar blues and ragtime progression that uses the counterclockwise circle of 5ths progression. A number of classic songs use this same chord progression, including Bessie Smith's "Electric Chair Blues," Robert Johnson's "Red Hot," Sippie Wallace's "Women Be Wise," and Arlo Guthrie's "Alice's Restaurant."

In C, the V chord is G7, the V of G7 is D7, and the V of the D7 is A7. The A7 naturally leads back to the D7, and the D7 naturally leads back to the G7, our original V chord in C.



In the first four measures, we begin on C, and then jump to A7 to start working our way back through the cycle of 5ths to C. In the second four measures, we again begin on C, jumping to A7 to cycle back to G7, which then leads us to the third line. This third group of four measures is like a turnaround (I–I7–IV–IV°) and leads us to the final four measures, which are the same as the first.

Now, let's play "Alice's Red Hot Electric Rag."



ALICE'S RED HOT ELECTRIC RAG

The diagram shows the guitar chord diagrams and musical notation for the 16-bar blues progression. The chords are: C, A7, D7, G7, C (measures 1-4); C, A7, D7, G7 (measures 5-8); C, C7, F, Fdim (measures 9-12); C, A7, D7, G7, C (measures 13-16). The musical notation consists of four staves, each with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The first staff covers measures 1-4, the second staff covers measures 5-8, the third staff covers measures 9-12, and the fourth staff covers measures 13-16. The notation includes a series of diagonal lines representing a steady bass line.

LESSON 2: ALICE'S RED HOT ELECTRIC RAG (FINGERSTYLE VERSION)

Now, we'll revisit "Alice's Red Hot Electric Rag," using a couple of the fingerpicking patterns just covered. As you become proficient with this song as written, try varying the patterns so that each pass through sounds slightly different.



ALICE'S RED HOT ELECTRIC RAG (FINGERSTYLE VERSION)

1 C A7 D7 G7 C

5 C A7 D7 G7

9 C C7 F F#dim7

13 C A7 D7 G7 C



ASHGROVE (CHORD-MELODY)

1 F Dmin Gmin C

TAB: 0 1 0 0 3 1 0 1 1 3 0 1 0 3 1 0 0 0

0 2 0 2 2 2 0 3 0 0 0 0 0 0

5 F B^b F C | 1. F | 2. F

TAB: 1 3 0 3 1 0 2 1 2 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0

2 2 3 3 1 0 2 2 0 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

1 3 0 3 1 0 2 3 1 2 0 1 0 0 1 0 1 0

10 F Gmin C7 Dmin

TAB: 3 0 1 3 5 3 1 0 1 0 1 3 1 0 0 1 3 0 1

2 2 2 2 2 3 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 2 2 2 2

3 1 0 3 4 3 1 0 1 3 0 1 4 1 0 0 0 1 3 0 1

2 2 2 2 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 3 2 2 2 2

16 C G7 C F Dmin Gmin

TAB: 3 2 3 0 3 1 0 0 3 1 0 1 1 3 0 1 3 1

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

0 3 3 0 3 0 1 0 0 3 1 0 1 1 2 0 1 0 3 1

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

21 C F B^b F C F

TAB: 0 0 0 1 3 0 3 1 0 2 1 2 0 1 0 1 0 1


0 0 0 2 2 3 3 2 0 2 2 0 2 2 2 2 2 2

0 0 0 1 3 0 3 1 0 2 3 1 2 0 1 0 0 1 0 2

0 0 0 2 3 3 2 2 0 2 2 0 2 2 2 2 2 2

LESSON 3: SOLOING USING THE MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE

Using our 12-bar blues progression in C from Chapter 3, we'll play a sample solo based on the minor pentatonic scale. Also, remember the syncopated rhythms using triplets that we covered in Chapter 2? We'll use one of them to create the melodic idea. When we get to the V chord, we vary the original melodic idea by moving it up a whole step. Finally, we end with one of the turnarounds in C that we covered in Chapter 3. Recycle and reuse!

60 

Swing 8ths

1 C 3 C7

8 8 6 7 6 8 9 10 8 6 8 (8) (8) 6 7 6 (6)

3 3 | 2 | 3 3-3 3 | 3 | 1 2 |

5 F 3 C

8 8 8 6 7 6 8 9 9 8 6 8 6 8 (8) (8) 6 7 8 (8)

3 3 3 | 2 | 3 4 4 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 2 3

9 G7 F C 3 G7

10-10-10-8 7-10-7 9 10 8 (8) 6 8 (8) 7 6 5 3 3 3 3 (5) (5) (5)

4 4 4 2 | 4 | 1 4-4 3 | 1 3 2 3 2 2 3 2 2 3 2 | 1 3 3 | 2 3 3