

SECOND EDITION

BEGINNING

BLUES GUITAR

DAVID HAMBURGER

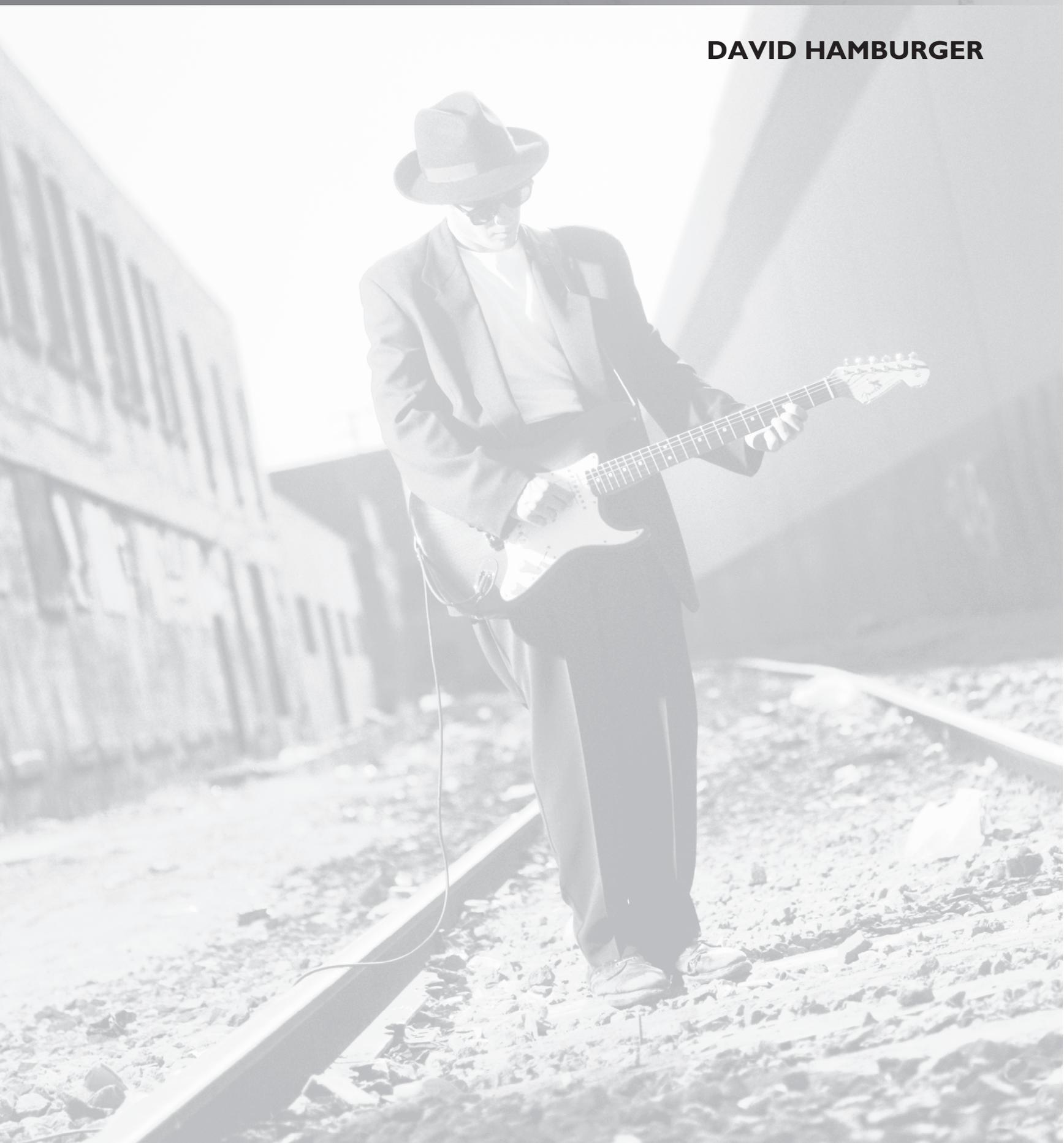


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BLUES HARMONY

Guess what—half of this goes out the window as soon as you begin to play the blues. But it's important to know how the blues differs from classical music. Classical music is based on this diatonic harmony, where the I, IV, and V chords are major and the only dominant 7th chord in a key is on the V chord. However, in the blues, every major chord can be a dominant 7th chord (the I, the IV, and the V). The basic 12-bar blues progression is usually composed entirely of 7th chords. The slashes in the music represent the four beats of each measure, although you can strum any blues rhythm you like.

32

17 IV7 I7 I7

5 IV7 IV7 I7 I7

9 V7 IV7 I7 V7

A 12-Bar Blues in C

C7 F7 G7

X 3 2 4 1 0 | 1 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 2 0 0 0 1

33

1 C7 F7 C7

5 F7 C7

9 G7 F7 C7 G7

HAMMER-ONS AND PULL-OFFS TOGETHER

Okay, so everyone knows the blues isn't about *speed*, it's that *feel* thing, that *taste* thing, right? Well, this is true, but then again what about Robben Ford? Or Buddy Guy?

“Um, excuse me, Mr. Guy, a few of us were talking and we thought you should know, all those fast licks you play, it kind of undermines your credibility as a blues player and, well, frankly we’ve noticed that while you’ve gotten faster and faster over the years, you’re playing with less and less feel.”

Is this the case? Of course not.

All right then! Speed is valuable as an option, although not for its own sake. Combining hammer-ons and pull-offs can be used to create a smoother, more fluid sound and, yes, by playing more notes with each right-hand pick stroke, you can play faster as well. Here are a few exercises to get going. Try to keep the accent on the first and third beats.

▣ = Pick down
 ∇ = Pick up

68

P H P H P H P H P H P

T
A
B

6 3 6 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 6 3 6 3 6 3

4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

69

H P H P H P H P H P

T
A
B

3 6 3 6 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 6 3

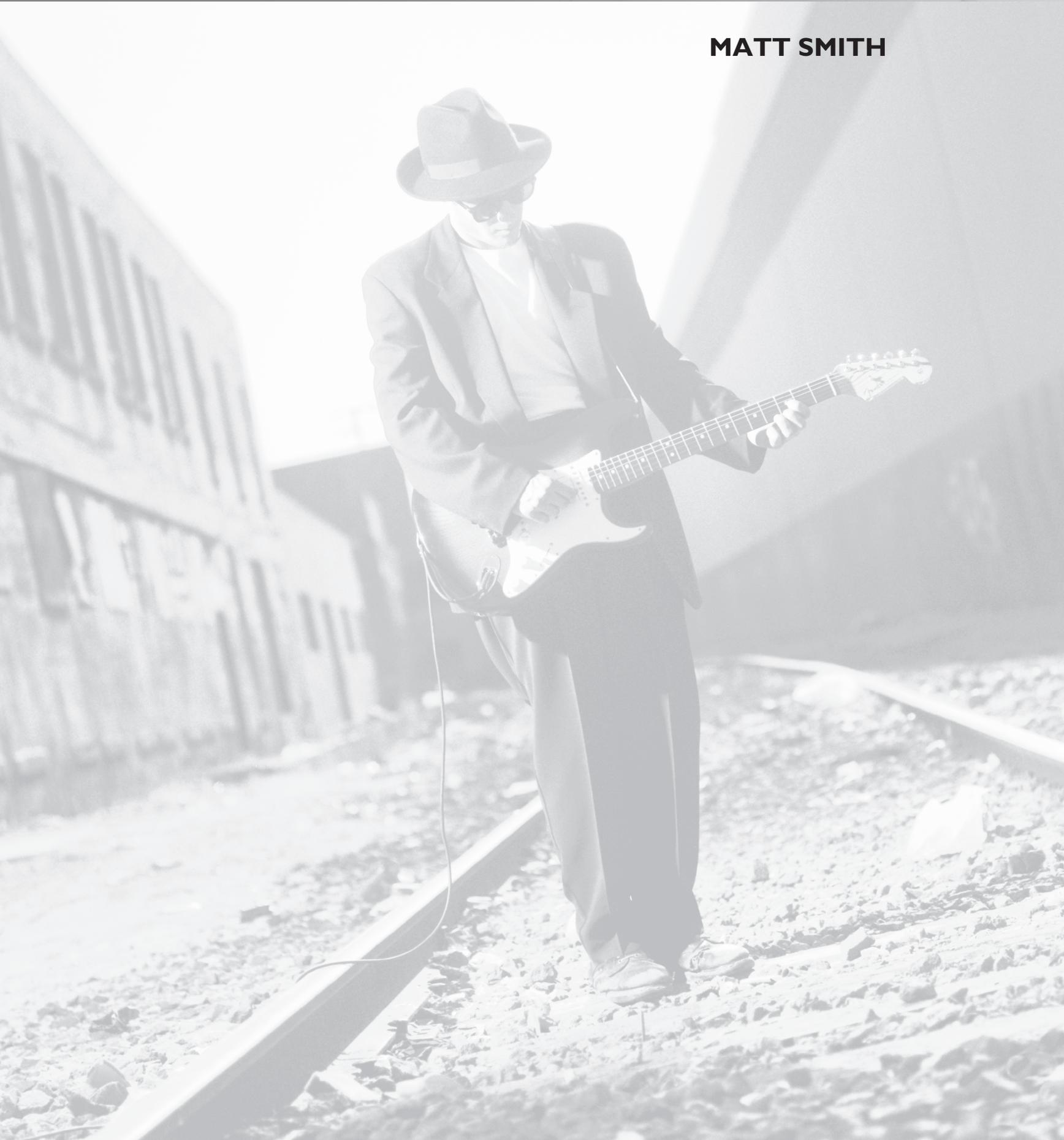
| 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | | 3 | 3 | 4 |

SECOND EDITION

INTERMEDIATE

BLUES GUITAR

MATT SMITH



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DOMINANT BLUES SUBSTITUTIONS

You know that a major blues primarily uses dominant chords on I, IV, and V (remember the bingo-call analogy from page 105?). So, in an A Major blues, the I chord is A7, the IV chord is D7, and the V chord is E7. With chord extension substitution you may substitute any dominant chord. Your choices are shown on the right:

I	IV	V
A7	D7	E7
A9	D9	E9
A11*	D11*	E11*
A13	D13	E13

**These jazzy chords don't sound much like the blues.*

All of this may mean nothing to you without chord forms to work with, so retire to your favorite practice space and work on these!



DOMINANT CHORD FORMS

A few different voicings are shown for each chord. Notice where the roots are located.

7th

x x | 3 2 4

R 5 \flat 7 3

7th

x 3 2 4 | x

R 3 \flat 7 R

7th

x | 3 | 4 |

R 5 \flat 7 3 5

7th

| 3 | 2 | |

R 5 \flat 7 3 5 R

7th

x x x 4 3 |

3 5 \flat 7

9th

x 2 | 3 3 3

R 3 \flat 7 9 5

9th

x x 3 2 | 4

\flat 7 9 3 R

9th

x x 2 | 4 3

R 3 \flat 7 9

9th

2 | 3 | 4 x

R 3 \flat 7 9 5

13th

| x 2 3 4 4

R \flat 7 3 6 9

13th

3 x 4 2 | |

R \flat 7 9 3 6

13th

x 2 | 3 3 4

R 3 \flat 7 9 6

81

2 2 6 \flat 5 \flat 5

H P P P P P

T
A
B

3 4 3 | 4 | 4 3 | 4 | 4 3 | 3

82

3 3 3 3

H

T
A
B

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

Gary Clark, Jr. uses non-scale tones in this example, which is in the style of "Bright Lights, Big City."

83

2 \flat 5

H P P H P

T
A
B

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

Swing the eighths!

84

\flat 5 6

T
A
B

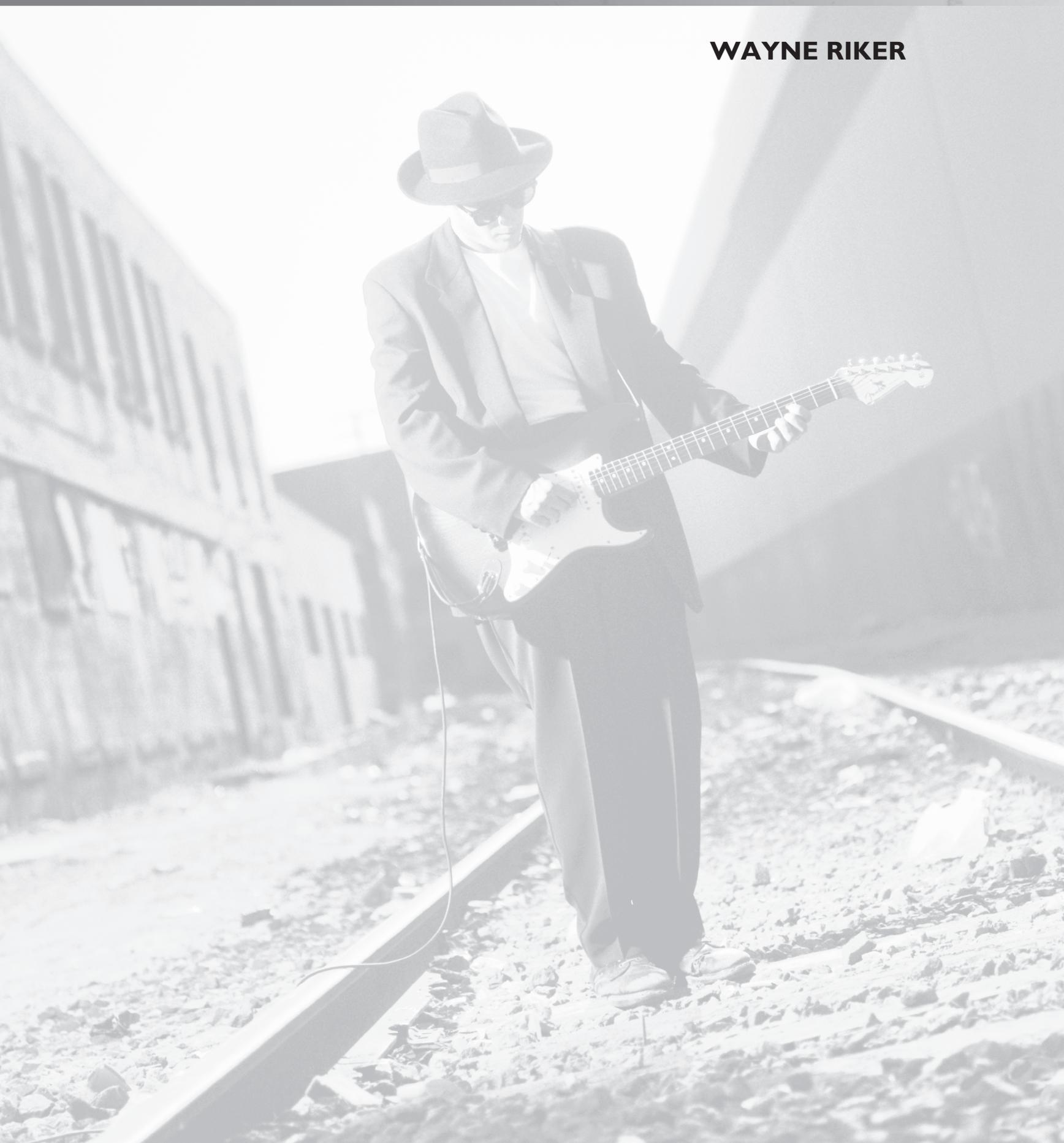
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SECOND EDITION

MASTERING

BLUES GUITAR

WAYNE RIKER



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Oblique Motion

In this example, the E note on the 3rd string remains constant as the notes on the 4th string move in half steps.

26 *Swing 8ths*

E7 E A7 B^b7 B7

T 5 9 6 7 (7)
A 6 9 6 7 9 7 8 8 9 6 7 8 (8)
B 7 6 6 7 7 8 8 9 5 6 7 (7)

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

In the Style of Freddie King

27 *Swing 8ths*

E B7

T 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2
A 0 4 4 3 2 0 1 2 0 2 (2)
B 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 2

0 0 2 0 2 2 0 0 2 0 1 0 3 0 3 4

0 1 3 2 0

In the Style of John Lee Hooker

28 *Swing 8ths*

A

T 2 2 1 1 1 0
A 2 5 2 5 4 2 4 3 2 3 2 1 2 1 0
B 0 0 0 5 4 0 4 3 0 3 0 1 1 2 3 2 1 0

3 4 4 3 3 2 2 3 2 1 0 4 0 2 1 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 2 1 2

In the Styles of T-Bone Walker, Jimi Hendrix, and Stevie Ray Vaughan

Here's a blues lick with a colorful 9th tone added, the B note on the 1st string.

116

T
A
B

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

F# Blues Scale Lick in the Style of Jimmy Page

117

T
A
B

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

In the Style of Tommy Castro

This one consists of a straight-ahead A Minor Pentatonic phrase followed by a stock double-stop riff and culminating in an A Major Pentatonic phrase in the second measure.

118

T
A
B

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