



“Progressive Music And Beyond”

A discussion with Ivan Bertolla

Chord Families – Getting Out Of The “5 Chord” Syndrome

I am amazed how many guitar players that I come across do not know any chords aside 5 chords (power chords) and a few open major/minor chords.

If you are starting out on the guitar or want to add more “color” to your sound I would suggest learning at least up to the seventh chord level.

Another very important aspect of chords is to familiarize yourself with how they are spelt.

For example a major chord is spelt (1 3 5)

Last month I told you that the major scale is important for many reasons and one of them is that it helps you determine the spelling of a chord. Let us think C Major Scale.

Note	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
Degree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

CHORD FAMILIES in C

POWER CHORDS	5 Chords (1 5 8) C - G - C		
TRIADS	Major Chord (1 3 5) C - E - G	Minor Chords (1 b3 5) C - Eb - G	
7th CHORDS	Major 7th Chord (1 3 5 7) C - E - G - B	Minor 7th Chord (1 b3 5 b7) C - Eb - G - Bb	Dominant 7th Chord (1 3 5 b7) C - E - G - Bb

Naturally this is just the start of the family tree. Altered chords, 9ths, 11ths, 13ths and polytonal chords are even more interesting to explore.

You will see how colorful 7th chord progressions are when you start putting them together. In addition here is 7th chord harmony in E Major

EM7 - F#m7 - G#m7 - AM7 - B7 - C#m7 - D#halfdim7

Notice how a cadence from B7 to EM7 sounds so much more colorful than just using 5chords (B5 to E5) . Instead of using I IV V in 5 chords or triads try it in 7th chords.

Remember what I said in a previous column about using pivot chords or tonicisation. In other words - using chords in a harmony to move into other harmonies. In the above key of E try and pivot (move) to the B key and use all the chords in the B harmony. Here is an example.

A chord progression of 6 chords. 3 chords from the key of E and 3 from the key of B

Theme 1 = EM7 - F#m7 - G#m7

Theme 2 = B7 or BM7 - C#m7 - D#m7

Notice what happens at D#m7. It is a new chord which doesn't belong in the key of E but makes an impact because we have moved to the key of B in a subtle way.

Some tips on practice routine:

Many teachers out there on any instrument will understand what I am about to say. I get many students who come to me and say “I have practiced all week and but I am getting nowhere” . My answer is always “But is it **quality** practice time” . As I always say, a student who practices properly for 20 minutes a day can achieve more than a student who is practicing for 2 hours in front of a TV or other distractions. I suggest that you practice 1 hour a night if you are serious about high results in music. Set up a repertoire. If you have 30 songs that you have learnt with your teacher play them all as your practice warm up routine from easiest to hardest. Therefore the last song you play is the new one you are learning. Do not forget your old songs. Use them all as warm ups. What is the point learning songs then forgetting them? If you have a good music teacher on whatever instrument then you should be playing songs which have different challenges . Different techniques or different genres etc. If you are studying at uni or school and have to plan your time to practice your instrument try this. Break up your study with a 20 minute practice session on music . ie Every 1 hour pick up the guitar for 20 minutes. You might find this as a tension release for your hard study and a really intense 20 minutes of practice.

Practice alone without anyone else to distract you. If a difficult technique is not getting anywhere on your instrument work out why? Deal with it and find out what is going on rather than just skipping through it every night thinking it will happen by itself.

Now do me a favor. From now on, when you play chords, at least know where they come from .

Until next month ..Have fun with this. Stay progressive!

Ivan Bertolla is a Melbourne based composer/producer/guitar instructor who has released his debut CD worldwide of cinematic music “Beyond The Skies Eternity”. He runs Mastermind Productions and Macleod Guitar School and can be contacted at his web site www.bertolla.com

Everything is Happy Underground

by Ben Christie

I really don't want to discuss it right now, because I'm too upset about it as it is. **Elliott Smith** unexpectedly took his own life at his LA home on October 21st. His death was confirmed by the fansite sweetadeline.net, and has affected many fans and fellow musicians the world over. In recent times he was hard at work on what will probably still be his follow up to 2000's *Figure 8*, *From A Basement On A Hill*. Rest In Peace.



Having been dragged back into the limelight in recent years by his old working partner David Bowie and, most notably, Mercury Rev, 70's superproducer **Tony Visconti** has now been enlisted to produce the next **Manic Street Preachers** album. The band has flown to New York to begin sessions with Visconti for a more 'elegiac, stripped-down pop album' in contrast to the harsher tones of their last LP, 2001's *Know Your Enemy*. Among the songs that will be worked on in the sessions include “Emily”, a tribute to Suffragette movement leader Emmeline Pankhurst, and “Everything Will Be”, which they previewed at their Glastonbury Festival appearance earlier this year.



The secret's out – **Radiohead** are touring Australia for the first time in over *half a decade*, though I hate to say that this only applies to all the residents of Sydney and Melbourne, who will be treated to an elaborate arena show in each city next April. With that exciting news out the way, the band have since completed their contract with Parlophone, which Thom Yorke is convinced will give Radiohead further opportunities to be more self-sufficient with future releases. Yorke is already implying that the next major Radiohead release will most likely be an EP instead of an album, just for the sake of defying tradition.



Kiwi rock pigs **The Datsuns** have courted former Led Zeppelin bassist John Paul Jones to produce their second album, and will hit the studio towards the end of the year with him. “We've got eight songs written [for the album],” says the band's Dolf. “It's a pretty much a rock and roll record but there's going to be songs on the new record that are actually older than the ones on the first album.” No other surprises there, then.

TOUR UPDATES

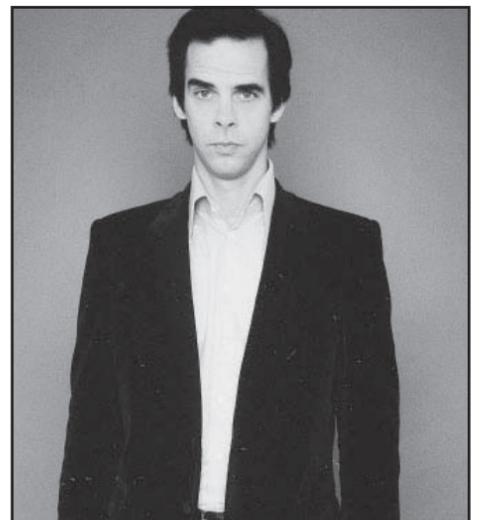
The 2004 Big Day Out might be being headlined by Metallica, but there are enough amazing acts booked so far to make up for this grave disappointment – **The Strokes**, **The Mars Volta**, **The Flaming Lips**, **Aphex Twin**, **Peaches**, **The Dandy Warhols**, **Jet**, **Gerling**, **the Datsuns**, **Something For Kate**... and the **Hoodoo Gurus**. An exhaustingly good lineup for sure and there's more to come, even.

The very special Meredith Music Festival at, erm, Meredith is back on for December 12th to 14th, with no shortage of esoteric delights, including **Bob Log III**, **Architecture In Helsinki**, **Augie March** and **The Sleepy Jackson**. Also making their national debut as part of Meredith is New Mexican pop darlings **The Shins**, Welsh post-hardcore trio **Mclusky** and the Jack White-endorsed **Modest Lemon** (you can catch these guys at club shows nationally as well). Completing the lineup to date includes **Tim Rogers (and the Temperance Union)**, **Radio Birdman**, **Magic Dirt** and **the Mess Hall**.

Falls Festival at Lorne has some more rock action on offer to help bring you into the new year. Luckily for the Tasmanians, they will be getting it as well for the first time at Marion Bay. Falls goes shall be exposed to very exclusive performances from **Michael Franti and Spearhead** and **G Love and Special Sauce**, in addition to **Turin Brakes**, **The Mess Hall** and the **Beautiful Girls** among others. Aren't we spoilt?

Echo and the Bunnymen return for their 25th Anniversary tour later this month. To coincide with the tour and silver jubilee, five of their early albums, including *Porcupine* and *Ocean Rain*, have been specially remastered, so there's a treat for all you thirtysomethings who were there at the time.

Super Furry Animals have been a long time gone from our part of the world, but now with their latest album *Phantom Power* receiving the critical plaudits they are well used to, they make a return late this month.



Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds do another round of the country next month, with some amazing support acts in tow – **Calexico** and **Neko Case**. If you feel like a dose of Americana with your Gothic madness, this is for you.

Mike Patton aficionados unite! The Ipecac Geek Tour in early December will be like all your birthdays come at once, with a triple bill that features **Fantomas**, **Tomahawk** and **the Melvins**. Not for the faint hearted I should imagine.

Direct all comments/encouragement/criticisms/suggestions/death threats/love letters etc. to benjysponder@yahoo.com.au. Keep hanging around as next month I will be delivering the obligatory round-up of the years' best (and possibly worst) releases!

Requiem for the Great Mr. Smith:-

1. The Strokes – *Room on Fire*
2. Belle and Sebastian – *Dear Catastrophe Waitress*
3. The Shins – *Chutes Too Narrow*
4. Desert Sessions 9 & 10 – *See You Hearin' Me*
5. Chicks on Speed – *99c*