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INTRODUCTION

EVEN THOUGH THE TITLE OF THE BOOK SUGGESTS THAT IT MERELY CONTAINS WARM-UP EXERCISES, IT IS IN FACT THE ULTIMATE COORDINATION EXERCISE TREASURY FOR STRINGED INSTRUMENTS. THE MAIN REASON I NAMED IT AS I DID IS SIMPLY THAT MOST PEOPLE WHO PLAY STRINGED INSTRUMENTS SEEM TO SHY AWAY FROM UNMUSICAL CHROMATIC EXERCISES, AND USE THEM ONLY FIFTEEN MINUTES BEFORE HITTING THE STAGE. THESE PEOPLE WANT TO HEAR MUSICAL PHRASES AND IDEAS WHEN THEY PRACTICE. THAT'S ALL GOOD, BUT WHAT I'VE LEARNED DURING MANY, MANY YEARS OF PRACTICING AND TEACHING IS THAT THE MOST EFFECTIVE EXERCISES AREN'T USUALLY MUSICAL AT ALL. THE MOST EFFECTIVE EXERCISES ORDINARILY CONCENTRATE ON COORDINATION, WHICH IS BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT TECHNICAL SKILL A MUSICIAN CAN HAVE. THINK ABOUT IT. YOU NEED COORDINATION TO PLAY YOUR FAVORITE LICK IN YOUR FAVORITE SONG (IN WHICH ORDER DO YOUR FINGERS MOVE ON WHAT STRING AT ANY GIVEN TIME? WHERE IS YOUR PICK IN RELATION TO YOUR LEFT HAND FINGERS ON EACH OF THE NOTES?). YOU EVEN NEED COORDINATION TO PLAY ONE SINGLE NOTE ON ANY INSTRUMENT (CHOOSE A RANDOM NOTE SOMEWHERE ON THE FRETBOARD AND PLAY IT). WITH INFERIOR COORDINATION, YOU CAN MESS UP EVEN THAT. EVERY NOW AND THEN YOU PROBABLY STUMBLE ON A TOUGH PATTERN IN AN OTHERWISE EASY SONG THAT ONE OF YOUR BANDMATES INTRODUCES TO YOU AT REHEARSAL. THEN YOU HAVE TO MAKE EVERYBODY WAIT WHILE YOU SHED SOME WOOD TO GET THE LICK DOWN (HUMILIATING ISN'T IT?).

SO WOULDN'T IT BE COOL TO BE ABLE TO EXPRESS YOURSELF FREELY WITHOUT STUMBLING ON TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES WHILE PLAYING, LET ALONE IMPROVISING? WOULDN'T IT BE COOL NOT TO HAVE A WEAK RING FINGER? WOULDN'T IT BE COOL NOT TO HAVE ANY WEAK LINKS (REMEMBER THE CHAIN IS ONLY AS STRONG AS ITS WEAKEST LINK)? WELL HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO GET A LOT CLOSER TO THAT LEAN MEAN PLAYING MACHINE WHO DOESN'T FLOUNDER WHEN THE REST OF THE BAND SWIMS INTO DEEPER WATERS. MOST MISTAKES HAPPEN WHEN WE STEP OUT OF OUR COMFORT ZONE. ADMIT IT, YOU HAVE CERTAIN TEMPOS, CERTAIN KEYS, CERTAIN LICKS AND SO FORTH THAT FEEL MORE NATURAL AND HENCE MORE ENJOYABLE TO PLAY THAN OTHERS. USUALLY WHEN YOU GET OUT OF THE BOUNDARIES OF YOUR COZY LITTLE COMFORT ZONE, YOUR PLAYING STARTS TO SOUND MORE INSECURE AND MECHANICAL. THE IDEA BEHIND THE EXERCISES IN THIS BOOK IS TO REHEARSE JUST ABOUT EVERY POSSIBLE FINGERING AND/OR PICKING PATTERN. SO WHEN YOU RUN INTO NEW RIFFS OR LICKS, THE CHANCES ARE HIGH THAT YOU'VE ALREADY PRACTICED ALL THE LITTLE BITS THAT MAKE UP THAT RIFF OR LICK.

AS THE TITLE SUGGESTS, THIS BOOK CAN BE USED TO PERFECT THE COORDINATION SKILLS OF ANY INSTRUMENTALIST PLAYING A STRINGED INSTRUMENT, BE IT A CELLO, VIOLIN, 8-STRING GUITAR OR A BASIC 4-STRING BASS. THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS THAT THE MORE STRINGS THE INSTRUMENT HAS, THE MORE PATTERNS YOU CAN JAM INTO ANY GIVEN POSITION. FOR EXAMPLE, TAKE ONE OF THE FOUR STRING PATTERNS (FROM PART FOUR OF THE BOOK) AND PLAY IT ON A 4-STRING BASS. AS YOU SEE, YOU CAN PLAY IT ONLY ONCE BEFORE YOU HAVE TO SHIFT YOUR POSITION ONE FRET HIGHER. BUT IF YOU PLAY THE SAME PATTERN ON A 7-STRING GUITAR, YOU CAN FIT FOUR OF THOSE PATTERNS INTO

ANY GIVEN POSITION (FIRST STRINGS B-E-A-D, SECOND E-A-D-G, THIRD A-D-G-B AND FOURTH D-G-B-E) BEFORE SHIFTING ONE FRET HIGHER. OWING TO THE FACT THAT INSTEAD OF MELODY WE'RE CONCENTRATING ON COORDINATION HERE, ALL THE EXERCISES HAVE BEEN WRITTEN IN TABULATURE SO THAT TUNING IS NOT AN ISSUE. EVEN THOUGH THE BOOK ISN'T MEANT FOR ANY PARTICULAR INSTRUMENT, EVERY EXAMPLE HAS BEEN WRITTEN FOR SIX-STRING GUITAR. THIS IS BECAUSE I BELIEVE MOST OF YOU WHO ARE READING THIS HAVE A SIX-STRINGER AS YOUR WEAPON OF CHOICE.

THE FIRST PART OF THE BOOK INTRODUCES TWENTY-FOUR DIFFERENT FINGERINGS, WHICH ARE, IN FACT, EVERY POSSIBLE ORDER IN WHICH YOU CAN MOVE THE FOUR FINGERS OF YOUR LEFT HAND WITHOUT USING ANY OF THEM TWICE. ALL THE PATTERNS IN THIS BOOK ARE MEANT TO BE PLAYED FROM THE LOWEST FRET TO THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE ONE WHERE IT ISN'T TOO AWKWARD TO FIT YOUR FINGERS ON SUCCESSIVE FRETS, AND THEN COME BACK DOWN. I'M SAYING THIS HERE BECAUSE IN ORDER TO SAVE SPACE, I WROTE ONLY THE BEGINNING OF EACH EXERCISE ONTO THE PAGES.

THE SECOND PART INTRODUCES TWO-STRING PATTERNS WHICH WERE INSPIRED BY STICKING EXERCISES DRUMMERS USE TO HONE THEIR TECHNICAL SKILLS (MORE ABOUT THIS ON PAGE 10). THE PICKING HAND STARTS TO GET MORE INVOLVED AND THE FINGERINGS OF THE FIRST PART ARE TAKEN TO A NEW LEVEL.

THE THIRD AND FOURTH PARTS OF THE BOOK TAKE THE TWENTY-FOUR BASIC PATTERNS EVEN FURTHER BY DIVIDING THEM BETWEEN THREE AND FOUR STRINGS. AND I GUESS IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT THE PICKING PATTERNS IN THESE TWO PARTS ARE DIFFICULT.

YOU SHOULD PLAY EACH PATTERN AT A COMFORTABLE TEMPO FOR AT LEAST FIFTEEN CONSECUTIVE MINUTES, BUT TO REALLY NAIL A PATTERN YOU SHOULD SPEND NOT LESS THAN NINETY CONSECUTIVE MINUTES WITH IT.

AT THE END OF THE BOOK YOU WILL FIND DIFFERENT SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO RHYTHMICALLY AND MELODICALLY ALTER THE PATTERNS, BUT I STRONGLY SUGGEST THAT YOU WORK YOUR WAY THROUGH THE BOOK AS IT IS WRITTEN BEFORE YOU START PLAYING AROUND WITH THE PATTERNS. THIS BOOK CONTAINS ONE-THOUSAND-FIVE-HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-FOUR RUDIMENTARY PATTERNS. IF YOU PRACTICE FOUR TIMES A WEEK LIKE CLOCKWORK AND PRACTICE ONE PATTERN PER DAY, IT'LL TAKE YOU 7.42 YEARS TO GET THROUGH THE BASIC PATTERNS ALONE. BUT BELIEVE ME, YOU'LL BE THANKFUL AT THE END THAT YOU TOOK THE TIME. AND THAT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING...

-HEIKKI MALMBERG

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