



JOHN ABBOT

Oz Noy's “Schizophrenic” Solo

BY MIKE SWICKIS

THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES ARE all inspired by ideas in Oz Noy’s solo on “Schizophrenic,” the title track off his 2009 album. The goal here is to introduce ideas that dip into jazz territory while staying in a funk/rock context. Some of the licks will include the use of whole tone, diminished, chromatic, altered, and bebop scales, and we’ll also discuss devices such as octave displacement and motivic development.

The basis of the solo is a C tonality. Think C Mixolydian, C minor pentatonic, or even a C7#9 type of vibe. Most of the solo is over a C root, but it moves to a C7-F7 progression later on. **Ex. 1** is based on a C minor pentatonic with familiar passing tones inside the typical box, but the three-note motif sets up a slightly outside direction before resolving back to a bluesy lick in C. Each three-note motif moves from its starting note up two consecutive semitones. The first one begins on the ♭7, then the ♭3, natural 5, and finally the ♭7. It’s not a scale, but the clarity of the three-note motif holds the idea together.

Ex. 1

8va-----

T
A
B

10 8 8 9 10 9 10 8 11 11 8 11 10 8 10 8 10 8 8 (9) 8 6 5 (6) 8

Lessons

with a $C\sharp$ passing tone on the $F7$. Sticking with a motif based on four-note groups, **Ex. 6** stays in C Dorian ($C, D, E\flat, F, G, A, B\flat$) with the exception of passing tones on the second note and a major 3rd (E) at the beginning of the second bar. **Ex. 7** begins with a simple C major triad before going off into a C altered scale ($C, C\sharp, D\sharp, E, F\sharp, G\sharp, A\sharp$), which really builds the tension.

The next idea uses one of Oz's favorite devices—octave displacement—inspired by

Pat Martino. While octave displacement can be used with any scale, Oz goes with the chromatic scale in **Ex. 8**. Notice how the $F\sharp$ on the high E string is followed by notes two octaves lower, with the $F, E, E\flat$, and D on the low E string. It's still chromatic, but by jumping two octaves, a different effect is achieved. This happens again with the $G\sharp$ on the high E string, which moves to the descending pattern $G, G\flat, F$, and E on the low E string. The solo closes with a couple of

very fast whole-tone ideas in F , one of which is illustrated in **Ex. 9**. There are a couple of passing tones that embellish the beginning and end of the lick ($A\flat$ and $G\flat$ respectively) and there is a $B\flat$ on the *and* of two, but the sound is unmistakably whole-tone. Hopefully after hearing how Oz uses these concepts you can take your solos into some new creative areas. If you are really ambitious, try learning the entire solo, which is available at guitarplayer.com. ■

Ex. 6

Ex. 7

Ex. 8

Ex. 8

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