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EX. 19

Displaced whole-tone scale



EX. 20

Chromatic scale



EX. 21

Displaced chromatic scale



## WORDS TO GIG BY

"If you want to be a successful guitarist," advises Noy as we switch the amps to Standby and wrap up the interview, "don't play my licks [*laughs*]. Get some hot clothes and long hair and then maybe you'll land a pop gig. One thing I will say is that no matter what you choose to do, it's very good to learn the roots. If you want to play like Pat Metheny or Holdsworth, go back much further and study bebop. Hendrix? Go back to Buddy Guy, Muddy Waters, and B.B. King. Once you get to the roots of what you're interested in and find out where it all comes from, you can put it all together, and start doing whatever the hell you want. That's when you start to sound like yourself. Then, it's like being a painter. You can throw any color you want at that canvas. It's wide open." ■

## NOY'S TOYS

If Oz Noy's weathered '89 Fender Stratocaster is his paintbrush, then the large matrix of stompboxes at his feet is his palette. Each pedal generates a unique timbre that Noy can mix, match, and mutate to color riffs, solos, themes, loops, and chord progressions. Currently, the first pedal in his chain is an Xotic RoboTalk (far right). Next comes a pedalboard governed by a seven-button True Bypass strip built by Tom Peck of Pedal-Racks (A.K.A. Pedalboards.com). "That strip allows me to take up to seven pedals out of my signal path when they're not in use," says Noy. "I'm a freak about that maintaining a pure signal. If I'm going through even just one pedal that's not true-bypass, I can hear the loss of signal."

Clockwise from top left, this pedalboard features a Dunlop TS-1 Tremolo Stereo Pan, a Foxx Tone Machine octave-fuzz, an A/B box built by New York amp tech Ziv Nagari that switches Noy's signal to an off-board Boss TU-2 tuner pedal (top), a Blackstone Appliances Mosfet Overdrive, a Boss DS-1 Distortion (modified by Robert Keeley), an Ibanez TS-808 Tube Screamer, a Fulltone Octafuzz ("By turning my guitar volume partway down, this pedal gets that cool lo-fi drained-battery sound I use on 'I Can't Make You Love Me' and other songs"), and a Pro Co Rat distortion. Mounted on the other pedalboard are a Hughes & Kettner Rotosphere and a pair of Line 6 DL4 delay modelers with corresponding off-board Line 6 expression pedals (far left). The boards are wired with George L's cables and powered by Voodoo Lab Pedal Power II Plus (left) and Pedal Power AC (right) power supplies.

"My main amp right now is my blackface '67 Fender Bandmaster, which Ziv re-built, re-voiced, and modded by adding a tube rectifier," says Noy. "My pedals are set up for stereo, but I've been playing in mono lately because I'm too lazy to cart two amps around Manhattan. When I need to go stereo I also bring out a '65 bandmaster with the same Ziv mods. When I do studio work for other artists, I bring one Bandmaster, a '73 50-watt Marshall—which Ziv restored and modded to have sweeter mids and highs than typical Marshalls of that era—and a Line 6 Pod, which often saves the day. My Strat is pretty ordinary, really, except that I installed DiMarzio Virtual Vintage pickups and extra-fat frets. As far as the finish goes, there's nothing on that body but some tung oil that I put on years ago after stripping the original paint and finish off the guitar, which I did because I was concerned it was so thick that it might be dulling the tone. I use D'Addario strings gauged .011-.048." —JG



## THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF OZ

Jazz-Rock Wunderkind **OZ NOY** Shares His Full-Spectrum Soloing Strategies

BY JUDE GORD

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OZ NOY IS A QUICK STUDY. HE FIRST PICKED UP the guitar at age ten, and three years later, when most guitarists his age were still dialing in the finer syncopations of "Smoke on the Water," the Israeli adolescent was already a working musician, gigging with jazz, rock, and blues artists and doing regular sessions. By age 18 he had already played on huge Israeli pop records, and at 24 he was the house guitarist on his country's most popular television show. And he wasn't satisfied. Not content with the whole "big fish in a small pond" thing, Noy did what any brave, young, and adventurous musician in his situation would—he made the leap to the toughest musical proving ground in the world, New York City.

Soon after his arrival in the Big Apple in 1996, word spread around town about the Israeli guitarist who could play angular jazz lines à la John Scofield, wrangle fierce blues tones out of a Stratocaster with Stevie Ray Vaughan-like conviction, funk out as if Nile Rodgers was his big brother, thumb an ES-175 as legitimately as many an uptown jazzbo, and, with the elaborate network

of stompbboxes at his feet, radiate a rainbow of guitar timbres so modern and edgy they'd probably stop the Radiohead boys in their tracks if they were in earshot. Before long, Noy landed high-profile sideman work with Gavin DeGraw, Richard Bona, Chris Botti, Harry Belafonte, Wendy Starland, Phoebe Snow, Toni Braxton, and others.

But Noy still had more to prove. He needed to make a musical statement—a contribution to the lexicon of modern electric guitar that would document his psychedelic, multi-timbral take on jazz and rock—and did so with two surprising Magna Carta releases: 2003's *Oz Live*, a live disc capturing the greasy funk/fusion magic of his weekly gig at the Bitter End (a steady he holds to this day) and last year's *Hal*, the guitarist's stunning studio debut. Backed by powerhouse rhythm players (bassists Will Lee and James Genus, and drummers Anton Fig and Keith Carlock) and featuring a guest appearance by Mike Stern, *Hal*—with its bombastic backbeats, backwards loops, intentional record "skips," fuzzed-out title track, and harmonically irreverent rendition



Oz Noy's 2005 studio debut, *Hal*. Look for a new album from the versatile Strat master this autumn.

GPTV

Watch Oz Noy now on GPTV! See concert clips from the guitarist's weekly gig at the Bitter End in New York City online at [GuitarPlayerTV.com](http://GuitarPlayerTV.com).



of the Thelonius Monk classic "Blue Monk"—is one of the most captivating instrumental guitar albums of the new millennium so far.

On a recent West Coast jaunt, Oz Noy stopped by *GP* headquarters to crank up a few amps, trade a few licks, and demonstrate several of his favorite approaches to improvisation, arranging, and over-the-top soloing.

### VAMP-IRE TACTICS

"A lot of my songs are based on simple vamps," says Noy. His claim is true, but, like saying the internal combustion engine is based on sparks, it doesn't convey the whole story. Noy's explosive improvisations are sparked by his unquenchable desire to hear radical textures, riffs, and rhythms over relatively simple and friendly grooves. And often, fuel for Noy's fire is a handful of volatile scales.

"If you're grooving on one chord you can

color it many different ways," says Noy. "And if you have some different approaches at your disposal, those colors can be extremely vivid. Scales offer some great ways to create different vibes over a one-chord vamp."

To illustrate his point, Oz has me strum a background groove—a funky mid-tempo rhythm-guitar vamp on the G7 chord in **EX. 1**. His lead starts where many guitarists' solos would—with lines improvised from the minor pentatonic scale fingering in **EX. 2**. He's playing the same five notes that most people taking a blues solo might, but his inflections—his vibrato, bends, attacks, slides, and general pocket—are what set him apart from the average blues/rock hack. There is a solid, articulate snarl to his pentatonic phrases that gives them that elusive vocal quality that is the mark of every great player. What's more impressive than that, though, is that Noy can deliver that same vocal sound using scales far more jazzy than

the blues scale.

"The next color you might hear me play over G7 is the whole-tone scale [**EX. 3**]," shares Noy. "Of course, the Mixolydian mode always works too [**EX. 4**]. I also like the 'half/whole' symmetrical diminished scale [**EX. 5**], which I think of as a diminished arpeggio—in this case, G#-B-D-F—with neighbor tones added a half-step below each note. Or, I'll use a G altered dominant scale [**EX. 6**], which, as you may know, is the same fingering as A♭ melodic minor. There's only one other color I'd throw at this vamp, and that's what I simply call the augmented scale [**EX. 7**]. It's constructed much like the half/whole scale in the sense that it's simply an arpeggio—this time a G augmented arpeggio spelled G-B-D#—with pitches added a half-step below each note.

"Between those scales, you can create many different sounds, and that alone can take you to new places. And when you start

**EX. 1**



**EX. 2**



**EX. 3**



**EX. 4**



**EX. 5**



**EX. 6**



**EX. 7**



**EX. 8**



B1 = bend note up a whole-note.

**EX. 9**



**EX. 10**

Greasy shuffle  
♩ = 112



## MASTER CLASS

experimenting with phrasing and rhythms, you'll open up a whole other universe. Plus, you can mix styles—rock, jazz, funk, blues, whatever—though I don't actually think about music in those terms. The concept of labeling styles is just so limiting."

## MELODIC DISPLACEMENT

"Another thing I do a lot in my solos is move stuff around in the middle of a lick," says Noy. "In other words, as long as you end on the right note, you're okay [laughs]. If you're in a musical situation where you want to sound a little more modern, you can do so by simply moving part of your phrase up or down a half-step. For example, take this Albert King-style blues lick [Ex. 9]. As it stands, it doesn't leave the G minor pentatonic scale box. But you could also play it

like this [Ex. 9], where the second half of the phrase—except for the last note—is shifted up a half-step. It feels like the same lick yet has a totally different sound. Here's another up-a-half-step blues approach you can try: Take a Stevie Ray Vaughan-inspired 12/8 blues lick [Ex. 10], and the second time you play it, repeat the first bar up a half-step in the second bar [Ex. 11]."

Ex. 11's phrase makes a perfect lead-in to C7, the IV chord in a G blues progression, as its last note, E $\sharp$ , is the 3 of C7. In fact, there are more extreme ways to use this whole melodic displacement approach, as Noy proves in Ex. 12. Here, he again implies the IV chord, C7, at the end of the line, but does so by shifting notes from bar 1 up a tritone (or three whole-steps), implying C $\sharp$ 7, before resolving again to E $\sharp$ . ("It's like

melodic tritone substitution," says Noy.)

For a more compositional application of this "shifted" approach, be sure to spin Noy's mutated version of "Blue Monk" (Hal). If the normally step-wise Monk theme seems to take radical twists and turns on this rendition, that's simply because Noy has shifted segments of it (along with the background harmony) up or down in pitch without changing the song's form or phrasing.

## RHYTHMIC DISPLACEMENT

"I also like to take rhythmic ideas and sort of 'cut and paste' them up and down the neck," says Noy, demonstrating the approach in Ex. 13. "Here, the rhythm repeats every bar. The notes are different, but the rhythm and melodic contour are the same. To keep things interesting, the next thing you can do

## EX. 9

Greasy shuffle

 $\text{♩} = 112$ 

## EX. 12

Greasy shuffle

 $\text{♩} = 112$ 

## EX. 13

Shuffle

 $\text{♩} = 112$ 

