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Northern Italian & Ticino Region Folk Songs for Mandolin Book/CD Set

by Carlo Aonzo & ...



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Another Dominant: Fresh Material for the V7 Chord

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by Ted Eschliman

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The Augmented 11th. A new vocabulary for a new voice...

Last session we took a close look at the construction of what we consider the second most important scale pattern in jazz, eclipsed only by the **Major Scale**. We examined several ways of approaching the scale, calling it a **Mixolydian with a raised 4th**, or a **Lydian mode with a lowered 7th**. We also mentioned its relationship to the **Altered Scale** and the **Melodic Minor** (ascending). Hopefully all this theory didn't have you running for the hills; really the best way to get intimate with it is to absorb it through drilling, until it becomes subliminal. Learn it until you forget it...



G Augmented 11th Scale: G, A, B, C#, D, E, F G

Let's go the next step and apply it to real life. Theory means so much more when you see it in action, and the best way to introduce this new sound is through a familiar tune. We're going to take the A section of a signature Django Rheinhardt song, "Django's Castle."

Play the beginning through a few times:

120
Med Ballad

Django's Castle
(Manoir De Mes Reves)

Django Reinhardt

If you don't know the fingerings for an **A13**, don't worry about it; just play an **A7** with a **b9**, and don't sweat voicing the **13th**. We don't have the strings for all 7 voices, anyway. Here are a couple suggestions:

Don't worry about the specific mandolin voicings; right now we want to look at what the theoretical implications are in the tune for the whole ensemble, and extract material for melodic improvisation. Notice that the **A13(b)** has the following chord members:

A C# E G Bb (D implied) F#

If we reorder them horizontally by scale:

A Bb C# D E F# G A

Introducing Tritone Substitutions

Let's try a trick many jazzers keep up their sleeve for a sort of "outside" sound, called a **Tritone Substitution**. Instead of **A7**, we'll borrow some notes from the **Eb7** chord, altering the **D** to become **Db**, **B** to become **Bb** and of course **E** to be **Eb**, we get a familiar set of notes—an **Augmented 11th Scale** based on **Eb**:

Eb F G A Bb C Db Eb

This tritone substitution offers a terrific sound, and from a finger standpoint is easy to feel AND think. You're starting a scale that's very similar (except for the raised 4th and lowered 7th), only one fret up:



It also has some of the harmonically powerful notes you want to voice in an **A7** (dominant) chord, including the **A**, the **C#** (*enharmonic Db*), and the **G**. (The E vs Eb is yet another “color” variation.)

Half Step Trick

Remember this relationship; **the Tritone Sub of any dominant is only a half step above the tonic**. It even works out later in “**Django’s Castle**” with the brief modulation to the key of **D** in the 10th measure. The **G69** chord is set up by its dominant, **D13(b9)**. You take the tritone sub of the dominant (D) and find **Ab**, a half step above the **G** tonic. Play around on the **Ab Aug 11th Scale** to set up the new **tonic in D**!



More ‘V7 I’

This **Tritone Sub** trick is great for just about any ‘**V7 I**’ chord you encounter. Perhaps the most common example would be this familiar cadence:



Instead of playing the notes of the G7 chord (derived from the **C Major Scale**, or home key), try a **Tritone Sub** based on the **V7**, the **Db**, using its **Augmented 11th Scale**. For every **G7** chord you see in the song, use the **Db Aug 11th** notes listed below:



This may not go over all that well in a bluegrass jam, but it’s quite an intriguing approach to achieving a more modern sound in your jazz soloing. It gets you away from that bland vanilla diatonic character, and like we mentioned, it’s really only a fret away from the tonic or home key, anyway.



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