

## Example Modulation via V7

OK guys, I know that some of you maybe be thinking “hmm, modulating using the V7 is a bit classical sounding” but in reality it don’t have to be.

Let’s have a little fun with a mock situation that you could be faced with when writing a song.

Picture this: You and your singer are sitting together writing a song. The lyrics and a melody worked out already. It’s a nice atmospheric ballad.

As the melody is being sung to you, you can here a backing track vibe in your head that is not unlike Satch’s ‘Crying’ and you’re thinking that this will make for a very nice setting to the tune. Your singer sings it in a key that is most comfortable. You noodle a few chords and figure that it’s in the key of A major. So together you mess with it until you arrive at a nice chord progression to complement the melody.

Note: To show the fingering of the chords I’ll write them 1st string [skinny E], then 2nd string [B] and so on. ‘O’ = open. ‘X’ = mute [don’t play it] and the number represents the fret.

Example: using an E chord. I’ll write it: - E [O,O,1,2,2,O] - a pretty familiar chord yes?

Back to the story:

So you are playing the chord progression as an arpeggio on your neck pick-up, clean with a nice gentle chorus effect and a pile of reverb. Each chord lasts for one bar. You are playing nice and slow on 1/16th notes so you can play the bass note of the 1st and 3rd beats of the bar.

This pretty little chord progression goes something like this:

In the key of A:

Amaj7 [9,9,9,11,O,X] | Dmaj7 [9,10,11,12,O,X] | Amaj7 [9,9,9,11,O,X] | Dmaj7 [9,10,11,12,O,X] |  
Bm add9 [7,7,7,11,X,7] | E11 [7,7,7,7,7,O] and repeat progression.

Cute or what!!!

So the writing is going pretty well. Your singer is gob-smacked ‘cos you’ve just plucked another killer progression out of nowhere, and then breezes off to the kitchen to make some coffee.

You’re sitting there thinking “this is all pretty nice but there’s a little something missing.”

And being a mindless shredder like me it dawns on you “I need a solo.”

But you want a contrast to the pretty major7 chords. You need to move it up a gear to get the song to climax.

You want a nice vibe to get stuck-in to.

You think back and recall an awesome idea you was messing with a few weeks ago and this is just what the song needs. It’ll fit great. A real master stroke. But it was in Em and the killer lick at the end uses open E and B strings because of the ‘natural harmonics’, so you simply cannot transpose it and recreate the same effect.

Ah ha.

Time to have your cake and eat it.

Modulate.

So you look at the chords your monster solo worked over.

Em [O,8,9,9,X,O] | Cmaj7 [O,8,9,9,X,8] | Em [O,8,9,9,X,O] | Cmaj7 [O,8,9,9,X,8] |  
Am add9 [O,O,9,10,O,X] | B7 add11 3rd inversion [O,O,8,9,O,X]  
Am add9 [O,O,9,10,O,X] | B add11 [O,O,8,9,X,7]

and repeat progression loads of times “cos it’s just so much fun to tear up over”

and it is after all your band right

so what you say goes!!

All you have to do is to build a little ‘bridge’ from the key of A to Em to get there and another from Em to A to get back to the song. You opt to modulate via a V7 chord because you was goofing around with it the other day and really liked the sound of it.

This means that you’ll be looking for the dominant 7 chords of Em and A to use as a springboard to get in to the solo and then back to the song.

After some experimentation you come up with:

The way to get in to the solo in Em:

Amaj7 [9,9,9,11,O,X] † Dmaj7 [9,10,11,12,O,X] †

<2 chords per bar> Bm add9 [7,7,7,11,X,7] - A 1st inversion [9,10,9,11,X9] †

<2 chords per bar> Dmaj7 [5,7,6,7,5,X] - B7 1st inversion [5,4,4,4,6,X] †

And to get back to the song in A:

<2 chords per bar> Em [X,8,9,9,7,X] - E7 3rd inversion [X,9,9,9,X,10]

<2 chords per bar> A [X,10,9,11,X,9] - E7 2nd inversion [X,9,7,9,X,7]

So you've now figured out the song and end up with:

Verse

Amaj7 † Dmaj7 † Amaj7 † Dmaj7 † Bm add9 † E11 † Amaj7 † Dmaj7 † Amaj7 † Dmaj7 † Bm add9 † E11 †

Bridge 1

Amaj7 † Dmaj7 † Bm add9 - A 1st inversion † Dmaj7 - B7 1st inversion †

Solo

Em † Cmaj7 † Em † Cmaj7 † Am add9 † B7 add11 3rd inversion † Am add9 † B add11 †

Em † Cmaj7 † Em † Cmaj7 † Am add9 † B7 add11 3rd inversion † Am add9 † B add11 †

Bridge 2

Em - E7 3rd inversion † A - E7 2nd inversion †

back to the verse

-----  
Obviously I've missed out the chorus etc etc

but the intention of this is to see a good reason for a modulation and how to make it happen in a modern setting using the V7 method so you can see it being applied

Back to the story.

So your singer hears it and is totally blown away and of course the solo is 'lady melting' stuff

Your singer also happens to be an ultra-fit babe, she gets totally melted down on your vibes and is so impressed that she wants to have your babies.

All the more reason to know about modulation!!!