

## Music for James Bond - 007

### Exercise 1

A **Riff** is a short melodic / rhythmic phrase or motive, which repeats over and over again, to form the basis of a rock song or piece of jazz music.

*Answer the following questions when you hear the James Bond music:*

- (a) Listen carefully to the James Bond music. How many different riffs do you hear?
- (b) How many times do you hear the music of the introduction in the course of the whole piece?
- (c) How many melodies - rather than riffs - do you hear?
- (d) How does the music end?

### Exercise 2

**Chromatic** movement means that, in a succession of notes, the pitch of each note is positioned as close as possible to the next one. These small intervals are known as semitones and correspond to the movement on a keyboard from one key to the next one, regardless whether the closest is black or white. On a guitar this would be from one fret to its closest neighbour.

- (a) Start on the the note B and try to work out and play the chromatic riff of the James Bond music.
- (b) Now try to play the bass riff. Start on the note E. This riff is not chromatic. It is, however, rhythmically tricky. Practise it slowly at first, getting faster as you get more confident.
- (c) In pairs, try to coordinate playing both riffs at the same time. When this is well synchronized, try fitting this to the James Bond music.

### Exercise 3

A **pentatonic** scale is made up of 5 different notes.

*Here is the pentatonic scale in E minor.*



- (a) Using the notes of the pentatonic scale, invent your own riffs ( at least three) of similar length to the James Bond riffs you have already played. It should be possible for them to fit together with the chromatic riff and the bass riff as well as the rest of the James Bond music. Freely extend your possibilities by using the notes of the scale in a higher or lower octave, too.
- (b) Now create a melody - freer and longer than the 2 bar riffs you have already made up. This melody should also use the notes of the pentatonic scale. Don't forget, though, to build a structure into the melody. "Question - Answer1 - Question - Answer2" might be a typical model, if a more spontaneous structure does come to you quickly.

When you can play it fluently, try to coordinate the melody with the other riffs, so that it fits well with the James Bond music.

## Exercise 4

Here are the 6 most important riffs in the James Bond music:

The image displays six musical riffs in 4/4 time, arranged in three systems. The first system contains two staves: the top staff has a treble clef and a single note (G4) with a fermata, and the bottom staff has a bass clef with a continuous eighth-note bass line. The second system contains one staff with a bass clef and a continuous eighth-note bass line. The third system contains three staves: the top staff has a treble clef and a melody with triplets, the middle staff has a treble clef with a similar melody, and the bottom staff has a bass clef with a continuous eighth-note bass line. All riffs are marked with a '1' at the beginning, indicating the first measure.

(a) Complete your collection of riffs, by learning to play these riffs. (Don't forget that, when two notes are tied together, the second of these is the continuation of the first and therefore needs no new attack.)

(b) Working now in small groups make up your own version of the James Bond music. Use all the riffs and melodies you can, structuring the build-up in the music to make an impressive piece.

## Exercise 5

Write a scene for a James Bond film, which includes Bond and three other characters. It is important that you devise just ONE scene which concentrates on only one dramatic aspect (e.g. chase scene, romance, underwater, capture, etc.).

Each group should choose the best dramatic scene and structure the riffs and melodies to fit the chosen scene as background music. Nobody in the group needs to read or act out the text of the scene. This can be done by members of another group when the music is finally ready to perform.

Take care to consider the following points as you build up your background music:

- ◇ Tempo: Should the beat in the music be slow or fast?
- ◇ Meter: Is 4/4 time right for your scene or would it be better to transform your material into 3/4 time?
- ◇ Timbre/Instrumentation: Which sounds best fit the mood you want to create?
- ◇ Structure: When should new riffs be brought in? Or old ones phased out?  
Can the pentatonic melody be used to increase the atmosphere of the scene?  
Do you need contrasting episodes and/or moments of silence in the music?