



Progressive Music and Beyond

A discussion with Ivan Bertolla

C.A.G.E.D Concept

Students ask me all the time on methods of remembering different chord shapes for the same chord. I have wanted to explain the CAGED concept for a while in this article but have never got around to it. So here it is finally! This is just using the principle of major chords. This way of thinking can be used on all chords whether its minor, sevenths, ninths etc. Figure 1 shows 5 shapes of C major on the guitar fretboard. Take note that the "E shape" is also referred to as "F shape" and the "A

shape" referred to as "B shape". They needed vowels after all to create that catchy word CAGED. So in this article we will just refer to them as E and A respectively.

I am unable to stress the importance of knowing the "geographies" of your guitar fretboard. You should know where every note and chord is played. Every position and every string and I will explain why.

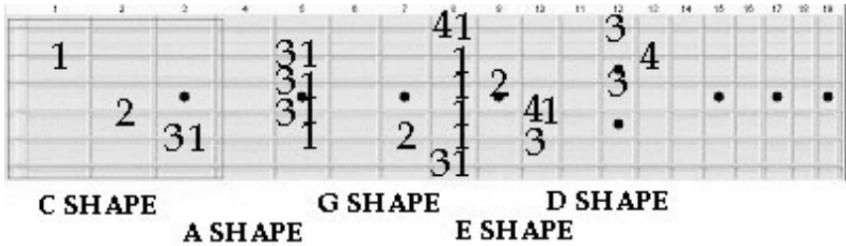
1/ Every genre of music has a different way of playing the same chord. i.e. funk music uses triads that involves a thinner sounds and fewer notes.. In metal the same triad should be played fuller and with more notes

2/ You don't want to be jumping around the guitar to play the only triad you know. Let's say you are soloing in the key of C major in 8th position and you quickly need to bounce back

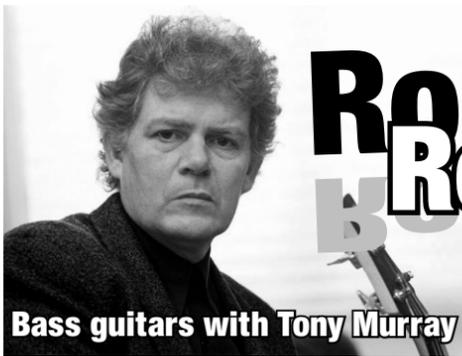
into a rhythm guitar line. What are you going to do? Play the C major shape in open position or 8th position? I think the answer is obvious yes?

3/ The root note of each chord shape is also the start of the major scale of the particular chord. So the CAGED theory is also a way to learn the positions of scales. Try them in Ionian mode

So in summary here are a few suggestions. The C and E shapes are good for acoustic type strumming songs. The A and E shapes are great for heavy distorted music, The D shape is great for funk type music on a clean electric guitar setting. Naturally they are useful in one way or another. Try and memorize the CAGED concept for each chord.



Ivan Bertolla is a Melbourne Based composer/producer/guitar instructor who has released his debut CD worldwide of Cinematic music "Beyond The Skies Eternity". He runs Mastermind Productions and Macleod Guitar School .. Website www.bertolla.com



Bass guitars with Tony Murray

Rocking the Foundation

EX. 1

F F⁷ B^{b7+} A⁷⁺ Dm F⁷ B^bm⁶ C⁷ Fm Fm⁷ Db⁹ Gm/C C⁷ D^{b7} C⁹

EX. 1

F F⁷ B^{b7+} A⁷⁺ Dm F⁷ B^bm⁶ C⁷ Fm Fm⁷ Db⁹ Gm/C C⁷ D^{b7} C⁹

Chapter 7: LARGE SCALE MELODIC CONSTRUCTION

A bass line, like all the components of music composition, benefits from knowing where it's going, and why, and how. In Chapter 4 of these articles we looked at the way rhythm can be used to give a phrase shape and impact. This time I want to concentrate on the construction of melody. We'll use as an example a modest eight-bar passage – the subject is so huge we'll have plenty to consider in even this short 'statement'.

Looking at the progression over all we see it is in F major, with occasional inflections from the minor scale, and that it ends on the dominant (C⁹) (and then it would be repeated). This practically guarantees that our bass line will start on the note F and end on C. But wait, why should it? Well, try *any* alternative to these notes and you'll see that the progression itself is weakened, or its character changes unpleasantly. For this sort of progression most of the chords will be in root position, especially at the beginning and end. (We've looked previously at chord progressions consisting entirely of inversions and dense chords – but that's not where we're at right now.)

Now, between the beginning F and the ending C we have a succession of moves to make. There are three main types of interval we can use to do this, being in order of importance: fifths, steps of the scale, and semitones (chromatic).

Note that the whole eight bars are divided into two four-bar phrases, both beginning on F and ending on C. Then we can divide the fours into two – this is not arithmetic, this is composition! – and get an overview of the situation, summarized as follows:

- F to A⁷ (2 bars)
- Dm to C⁷ (2 bars)
- F min to Db⁹ (2 bars)
- Gm/C to C⁹ (2 bars)

Now to distribute our interval options: we need to spread out the fifths because they convey the strongest sense of motion, and reserve a fifth for the end of each phrases, especially from C⁷ back to F. The other intervals can be chromatic or scale steps, preferably alternating to vary the texture. So our line starts with a chromatic descent to set the mood: F-E-Eb. Then a fifth to B^b, and semitone again to A⁷. Fifth to D, scale steps to C and B^b, and so on. The fifths are really the driving force in this type of progression, the scales and chromatics being more in the way

of decoration and colour. Within the semitonal movement, however, are different shades of meaning. The opening F-E-Eb, for example, is a different effect from the Db to C at the end, because the lines *originate from* and *lead to* different chords. Similarly the descending scale D-C-B^b in the third bar changes when it rises back to C in the fourth bar – the two C's are different entities in relation to their respective chords, and the motion between them is in opposite directions. Music is like a language in which the words (the notes of a melody) take their meaning from their context.

In essence we have a larger construction made up from smaller fragments each with its own internal logic. The result is, ideally, a well-shaped melody amounting to more than the sum of its parts – now try doing this for 32 bars, and more!

Tony Murray is a composer and songwriter with BA (Music Major), working in Melbourne. He is currently playing bass with Melbourne group *The Glory Boys*, whose new EP *More Requests*, including two songs written by Tony, was launched at the Corner Hotel, Richmond on 22 Sept 2004. He can be contacted at: tonymurray@pacific.net.au