



musical self-help

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by David C. Gross

This issue I would like to talk about searching out alternate study materials. These include books, play-along tapes, and videos that are independently manufactured, and are usually sold in the classified section of most music publications because advertising costs are so high—not having a big budget doesn't necessarily mean an inferior product, and in some cases you can find items that really hit the mark!

Barry Sahagian has a number of books and accompanying cassettes that illustrate a variety of styles. *Funky Bass Licks*, *Blues Bass Licks*, *Doubletime Funk*, *Fusion Bass Solos*, *Bass Duets*, *Bass Chords*, *Technical Studies*, *Essential Bass Theory* and *Advanced Bass Design* are some of the fine titles Barry offers. Write for his Bass catalog to Jayne Publications, P.O. Box 175, Malden MA 02148.

For those of you interested in alternate tunings à la Michael Manring, L.A. Barry has written *Alternate Tunings for Bass*. This book gives you a number of tunings with fretboard grids, musical illustrations and a cassette of the music in the book. Spirit-Muse Publishing P.O. Box A3914, Chicago IL 60690-3914.

Classical Arrangements for Bass by Jimmy Barnes transcribes Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and some of Barnes' originals in tab and music notation and also includes a cassette. Hands Down Music, 1722 W. Walnut, Roswell NM 88201.

A M I Three-Finger Rest Stroke for Electric Bass by Frank Higgins is a technical treatise on right-hand technique. If you are now using two fingers to pluck the bass, this book will help you facilitate the use of a third finger. I highly recommend this book. FMH Press, P.O. Box 1171, Columbia, MD 21044.

Twenty Three Bass Lessons at Home by Dan Pliskow is an excellent primer for any bassist looking to enter the world of jazz. All the basics are covered in this well thought out book. His book *Jazz Bass Lines* covers a number of standards and includes parts for a

pianist to play along with. My only suggestion would be to include a discography of where to listen to these tunes. Dan Pliskow, 4025 Normandy Dr., Royal Oak, MI 48073.

EADG 4 by John Falstrom is a bass theory method that is very helpful in gaining scalar and chordal insights into the bass guitar. The book is set up in 4 sections beginning with scales and eventually taking you into a myriad of useful patterns that all bassists will find both musical and challenging. John Falstrom, P.O. Box 31, Glenwood IL 60425.

The Be Boppers Method Book for All Bass Instruments by Wendell Harrison gives you an in-depth look at what goes into a bebop line. This is not necessarily a bassline book, but anyone learning to solo would be advised to check this one out, it's well thought out. Chords, patterns and arpeggios abound! One of the best play-along cassette tapes is available too. Rebirth Inc. 81 Chandler, Detroit MI 48202.

Bass Lines in Minutes by Kris Berg is a nonsense method for creating bass lines. This book is well written and very helpful to beginners. Houston Publishing Inc., 224 S. Lebanon St., Lebanon IN 46052.

Mark Morton has put out a series of 5 books that were designed for string bass but are equally worthwhile for the electric player. *Dr. Morton's Miraculous Scale Fingerings*, *Miraculous Arpeggio Fingerings*, *Torturous Exercises*, *Double Bass Technique: Concept and Ideas*, and *Primer Scale Fingerings* all offer in-depth studies of scales, arpeggios, bowing techniques, and cover 1-, 2- and 3-octave fingerings. Basso Profundo Publications, 415 E. Weber Rd., Columbus, OH 43202-1468.

Charles Colin Publishers is a small outfit out of New York that has been publishing some of the finest books for all instruments. *Develop Sight Reading* by Gaston Dufresne for all bass clef instruments includes etudes in all keys and rhythms; *Improvisational Patterns: The Bebop Era Vol 1-3* for bass clef by

David Baker will help you to play in a bebop style; *Rhythms* by Bugs Bower for bass guides you through 26 different rhythmic figures; *Contemporary Etudes* by Allan Colin is of a more atonal nature which will help in both your reading and hearing of outside intervals; *Contemporary Jazz/Rock Rhythms* and *Advanced Jazz/Rock Rhythms* by David Chesky are great reading exercises. Charles Colin, 315 W. 53rd St. New York, NY 10019.

Patterns for Jazz by Oliver Nelson, although written in treble clef, has a wealth of melodic ideas that can help spur any improviser into creating interesting solos. It will also help you in reading treble clef, a welcome addition. *Unforgettable Standards* and *Freddie Hubbard* are two brand new play-alongs that feature more tunes from the jazz repertoire for you to learn and play with. Remember, these tunes are to be memorized so you will have material with "standard changes" ingrained in your memory! Jamey Aebersold, P.O. Box 1244B, New Albany, IN 47150.

Five books that recently crossed my desk from CPP/Belwin can be used by beginners and intermediates alike. *The Bass Line Book* by Arn Evans is a workbook dealing primarily with walking bass lines. This book is good for anyone who wants to improve their ability in writing, playing, and improvising bass lines. *Big Band Bass* by John Clayton Jr. gives you the essentials in chart reading, swing styles, and soloing. *Bebop Bass*, compiled by Harold Miller, is a collection of bass lines and solos by Paul Chambers, Ray Brown, Oscar Pettiford and others. *Bass Extremes* by Victor Wooten/Steve Bailey and John Patitucci's *Ultimate Play-Along Vol. 1* are book/CD (or cassette) packages that are worth looking at and are reviewed in the book section herein. CPP Media, 15800 N.W. 48th Ave. Miami FL 33014.

Melodic Foundation Studies for the Double Bass by Thomas B. Gayle is a great beginners book illustrating major and relative minor

scales in etude form. This is a good text to help you learn how to read music. Good for electric players too! Liben Music Publishers, 1191 Eversole Rd. Cincinnati, OH 45230.

One of the most complete and interesting books on harmony (a must for any bass player) is *Basic Harmony* by Werner Pöhlert. Werner has a unique approach that is consistent with a bass player's needs. A knowledge of keyboards is helpful, but there are charts for electric bass as well. I highly recommend this book! Werner Pöhlert, Volkserstr. 40, 64625 Bensheim, Germany.

One of the best books I have received is *How to Master Music* by William L. Fowler. Bill Fowler wrote the "How to" columns for *Downbeat Magazine* from 1973-1985 and this is a compilation of those articles. The book is divided into two sections, Melody and Harmony, which can be bought separately or in leather bound edition. There are accompanying CD's to illustrate the articles as well. The articles range from altering arpeggios, recognizing intervals, 8-note scales, turn-arounds, and many other essentials too numerous to mention. I can heartily recommend this book as an indispensable

reference text to keep right on your music stand. Fowler Music, 808 S. Alkire St., Lakewood CO 80228.

In the video department, Jamey Aebersold has made his first video, *Jazz: Anyone Can Improvise For All Instruments*. This tape demonstrates basic scales, chords and patterns, memorizing songs, and the blues. For my money, it's one of the best videos on the subject. See Jamey Aebersold in the book section.

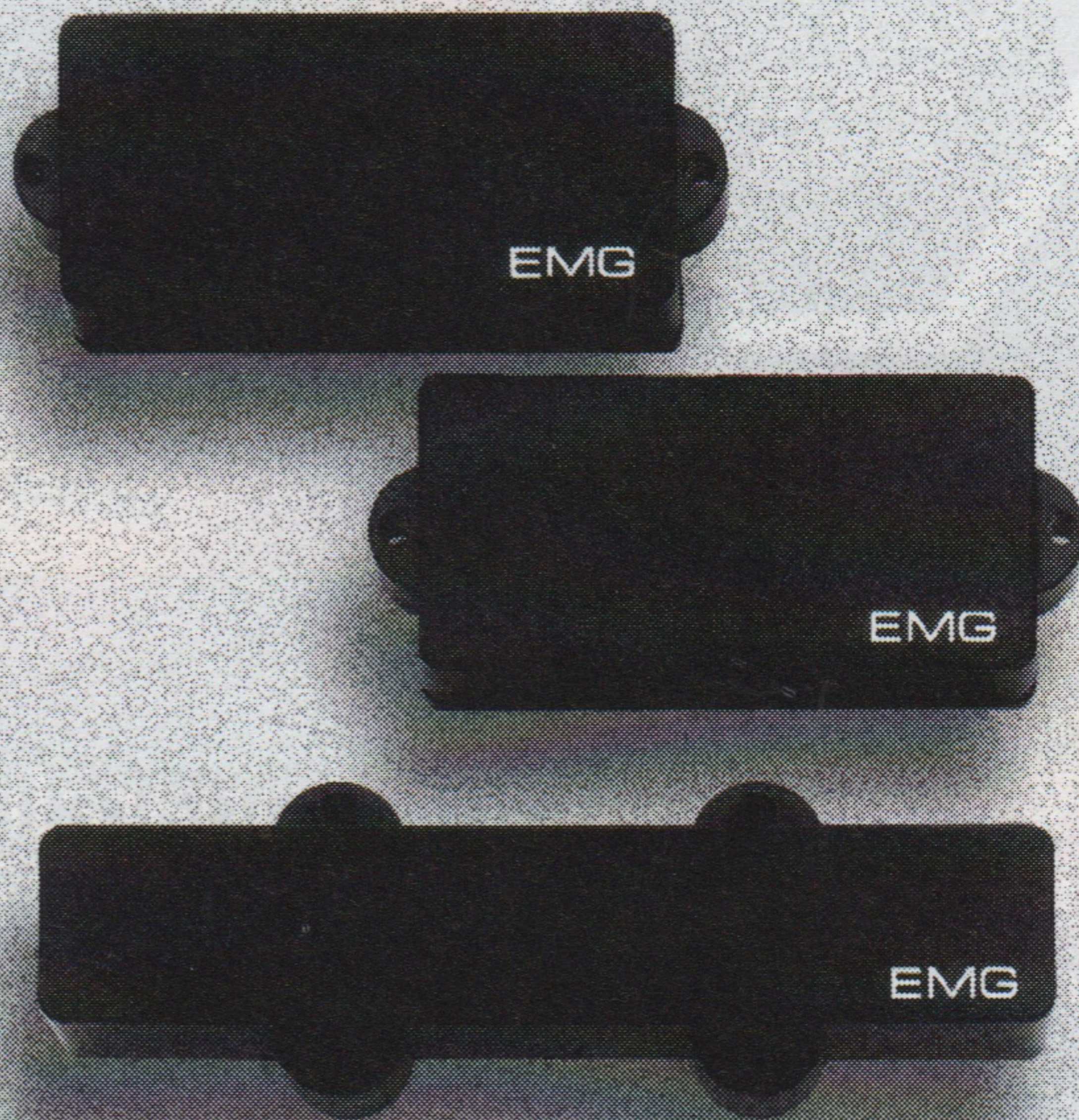
For those of you with computers, both Macs and PC's, there's a program that fits in well with this column. It's called *Band in a Box*. This program allows you to 1) play songs that are listed in the directory; 2) change styles (blues, jazz, funk feel); 3) write your own song; and 4) store all the information for future use. You need a computer and a synthesizer to utilize this program. The program features drums, guitars, basses, keyboards, melodies, and any of these can be muted so you can play along with it in a music minus one concept. The program is very well thought out and easy to use and is fun to jam along with. PG Music, 111-266 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14222.

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