



Mandolin Chord Melody System

Aaron Weinstein

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If you've heard jazz guitarists like Joe Pass play chord melody, you may think that the style requires an encyclopedic knowledge of music theory, musical super-powers, or making a deal with the devil. But fear not! This book will show you how to create your own satisfying chord melody arrangements on the mandolin...and will do so in a practical, applicable, non stroke-inducing way. Aaron Weinstein has many musical accomplishments. I am very proud to have played a small part with some of them. When he was only 12 he made his first recordings and asked me to play mandolin on them. I was knocked out to encounter someone that young that was conversant in both old-time or contest fiddling and Joe Venuti style jazz. Not long after that Aaron became interested in the mandolin and chords and he came by every so often to play and discuss voicings, improvisation and the like. I showed him some of the Jethro Burns chord melody arrangements that Jethro showed me. I've been teaching those for decades in hopes of one day playing them smoothly myself! Fast forward a few more years and Aaron has a Berklee degree, traveled the world playing hot violin music and is hobnobbing with the greatest NYC jazz stars. And oh yeah, one other thing: he took the art of chord-melody mandolin style to an entirely new level! The rich harmonies of the standard jazz and show tune repertoire, the swinging bass lines and connecting chords and independent voice movements (doing more than one thing at a time) are all present in Aaron's style, thanks to his great ear, open mind and gift at locating things on the fretboard. And now Aaron has documented, explained and shared his discoveries and approach with all of us in this book. Thank you Aaron! This is truly a step-by-step method that you will enjoy. You'll find yourself saying 'oh, of course!' as the author gets you playing and understanding things that sound very detailed and complex. The first section I would call the mandolinistic stuff: the how-to on getting things moving and connected on the fretboard. This part is laid out in a very logical manner with clear explanations and fun activities. After working through these etudes you will know the fretboard better and be a better mandolin playing musician regardless of what style of music is your favorite. As I looked this part over I recalled the parable about 'give someone a fish and he will have a meal. Teach him to fish and he'll eat the rest of his life..' The second part puts your new-found chops to work playing some great solo chord melody tunes Weinstein style. Again the author walks us gently into the material by providing two versions of each piece, the basic structure followed by a more developed version. In the history of mandolin playing there have been many examples of techniques, arrangements and music that might be thought of as 'chord-melody' style. Consider works by Raffaele Calace, or 'Duo' style from the early twentieth century American stylists and then again as modernized by Evan Marshall in the current era. Bach on the mandolin, as played by virtuosi such as Caterina Lichtenberg, Mike Marshall, Carlo Aonzo, Chris Thile and others also illustrates harmony and melody simultaneously. And of course Jethro Burns did so much in the way of bringing jazz and standards to life with chord-melody mandolin that it is often referred to as 'Jethro Style'. The book you have in your hand presents a unique and accessible route to these types of techniques and sounds. Bravo, Aaron! And thank you, my friend. Don Stiernberg

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