

# Robservations

monthly newsletter from **indyguitar**



*Allan Holdsworth*



April 28, 2017

I dreaded this day for many years and now it is here. My hero and inspiration for over 30 years is gone. My only consolation is the fact that his music still lives in digital form and there's enough material in one solo to last me a lifetime of study. I met Allan Holdsworth more than once and he was very humble and modest and bashful.

I gave him one of my bands T-shirts and he acted like he was embarrassed to get a gift. This man plays like no other guitarist and it might take somebody at a certain level to know it. He changes directions motive and rhythmic figure more often than any string player I've ever heard more like horn players such as John Coltrane or Ornette Coleman. It is not just his solo work that fascinates me, his harmonic movements and rhythmic variation are superior to anyone I've heard and I understand he died broke, his friends and fans even kicked in and paid for his funeral. There are no words to say how much knowledge went with this mans dying. I will forever more be thankful that he lived and recorded this wonderful music. He first got me with this solo on "In the Dead of Night" by UK. This issue is dedicated to his life and memory, may he rest in peace.

Rob

## 9 tone Messian

Super Augmented

Graphic Tablature

On one string

Digital Tablature

One of Holdsworth's favorite colors was the 9 tone scale catalogued by Oliver Messian and Nicolas Slonimsky. It is a whole tone form with a pass tone connecting every other whole step. It is an augmented dominant sound and Allan used this in many fingerings. Arguably a dominant 7 #11 sound.

### 9 tone Messian


Super Augmented

**Graphic Tablature**

**On one string**

**Digital Tablature**

The digital tablature shows the following fret numbers for the strings from top to bottom: 6 7 9, 5 6 8, 4 5 7, 3 4 6, 3 4 6, 2 3 5.



Another fingering

### 9 tone Messian


Super Augmented

Graphic Tablature

On one string

Digital Tablature

Digital Tablature numbers (from top to bottom line):  
Line 1: 2 4 5  
Line 2: 3 5 6 3 5 6  
Line 3: 4 6 7 3 5 6  
Line 4: 5 7 8  
Line 5: 6 8 9

  
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Another fingering


### B<sup>b</sup>Maj7

5th  
Root  
M7th  
3rd

3rd      7      M7 | Root      7      5th

7 = SAS Semitone analysis system (half steps)

6  
3  
7  
5



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Allan loved chords that had 1/2 steps in them.

**E11**

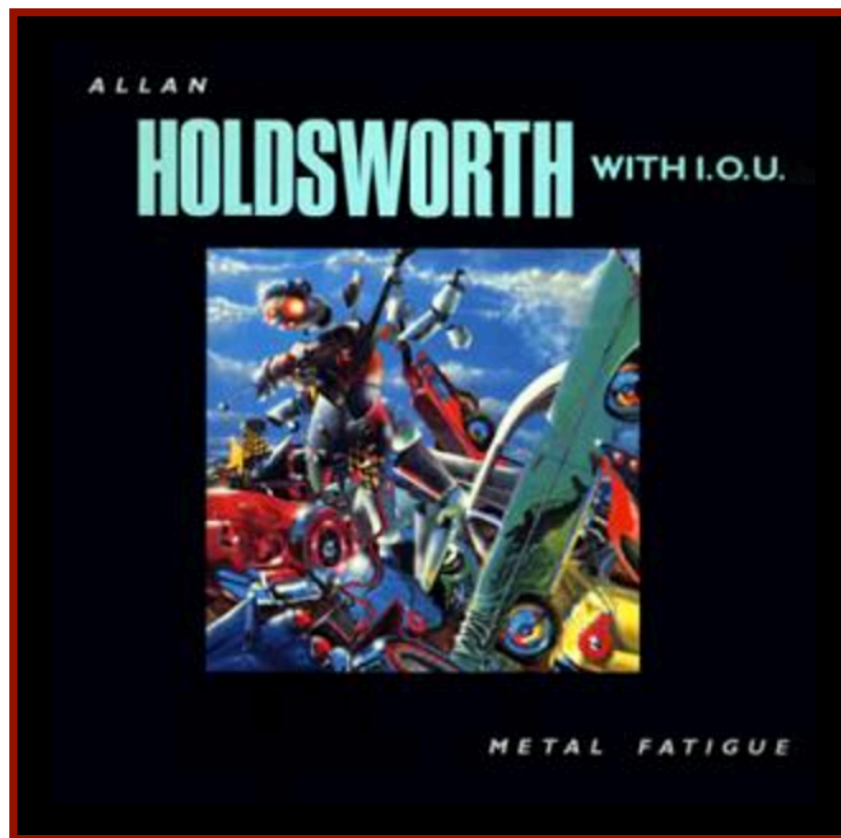
7 = SAS Semitone analysis system (half steps)

6  
3  
7  
5

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Allan also loved chords that had huge intervals in them. This one has a Perfect fifth with a Major 7th above that and an augmented fifth above that.

## Essential Listening



**Don't forget.**

As well as live lessons I also teach Skype and e-mail lessons. These include audio files, video files, PDFs with both types of tablature and manuscript. Topics include blues licks, CAGED, modes, chord scales, progressions, melodic (jazz) minor, harmonic minor, symmetrical forms and two to four chord progressions to go with each. I also teach theory for guitarists and how to read rhythm. Lessons go from \$9.95 and I accept Paypal and Visa and Master Card and debits. Satisfaction Guaranteed with phone support.

Rob Swaynie  
2525 W. 79th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46268  
(317) 291-9495  
[www.indyguitar.com](http://www.indyguitar.com)  
[rob@indyguitar.com](mailto:rob@indyguitar.com)

