

KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

All kinds of keyboard instruments have been used in progressive rock, from the traditional acoustic piano, to organs, digital synths, and even the accordion. A handful of these instruments helped define the classic progressive rock sound in the late '60s and '70s. Though these instruments faded from use a bit in the 1980s due to the digital synthesizer revolution, they returned in the '90s, and are in use now more than ever. Several of these instruments help give the music that special "prog" sound, and many newer bands have either obtained the traditional vintage instruments, or use samples of them. Some of the most commonly used keyboard instruments are described in this chapter, along with examples in the styles of famous prog tunes that feature them. In creating your own prog-style keyboard parts, if you can't get your hands on one of these vintage instruments, many of the sounds are available in software packages and plug-ins containing sounds true to the originals.

Piano

This instrument needs little introduction. The piano existed long before progressive rock (and rock 'n' roll music in general) and is a staple in both classical and jazz. In progressive rock of the '70s, the instrument was often used in classical-type solos in performances by Rick Wakeman (Yes) and Keith Emerson (ELP), among many others. The piano can be used to "comp" chord progressions, play melodies and bass lines, and serve as a percussion instrument. Due to its percussive quality, the only real limitation is that it cannot sustain pitches—they eventually die away. Yet one of the most unique areas of piano sonorities is revealed when it is used as a kind of percussion instrument, playing accented, staccato notes in the low register. Few other instruments can capture this same quality, and it is great for playing percussive *ostinatos* (repeated short, rhythmic patterns). The following example demonstrates this pianistic quality, which has been used by progressive rock groups such as ELP, helping turn the instrument into something rhythmic and aggressive.

Throughout this book, you will hear many examples utilizing piano, an instrument featured on dozens of the accompanying CD tracks.

Hammond Organ

Though often used in jazz and other pop music, especially that from the '70s, the Hammond organ represents one of the most distinctive sounds in progressive rock.

Today in the early twenty-first century, the organ may sound a bit dated with respect to mainstream music, but in prog, the Hammond sound has endured, and may eventually reach the timeless status of the piano (some consider that it already has). The instrument offers several performance capabilities akin to those of acoustic string and wind instruments, possibilities the piano does not offer. These specialties include the use

INCLUDES:

- **Harmony**
- **Counterpoint**
- **Rhythmic and Metrical Devices**
- **Keyboard Instruments Background**
- **Formal Design Concepts**

From the classic sounds of the 70s to modern progressive stylings, this book and CD pack provides you with the theory and technique to play and compose in a multitude of progressive rock styles. You'll learn how soloing techniques, form, rhythmic and metrical devices, harmony, and counterpoint all come together to make this style of rock the unique and exciting genre it is. Also included is an introduction to classic and contemporary keyboard instruments and sounds, and how they can be used in different combinations to produce authentic-sounding keyboard parts. The accompanying CD features many of the examples covered in the book, as well as six complete progressive rock songs recorded by a real band.

THE HAL LEONARD KEYBOARD STYLE SERIES

provides focused lessons that contain valuable how-to insight, essential playing tips, and beneficial information for all players. Comprehensive treatment is given to each subject, complete with a companion CD. See your local music dealer for other great books in this series.

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