


LESSON #41: JOHN PAUL JONES STYLE

The great, unsung hero of the mighty Led Zeppelin was John Paul Jones, the man who received the least attention for often doing the most work. Besides being one of rock's most influential bass players, Jones is also a keyboardist, producer, and master arranger who plays a host of other versatile instruments. He spent most of the '60s as a session player and arranger, and his string arrangements can be heard on famous tracks such as "She's a Rainbow" by the Rolling Stones and "Sunshine Superman" by Donovan. Much of Led Zeppelin's groove in the early days can be attributed to Jones' and drummer John Bonham's appreciation for Motown and James Brown. When performing live with Led Zeppelin, Jones would split his time between playing incredibly complex bass lines and playing the keyboards with bass pedals—a move that undoubtedly inspired future keyboard/bass players like Geddy Lee.

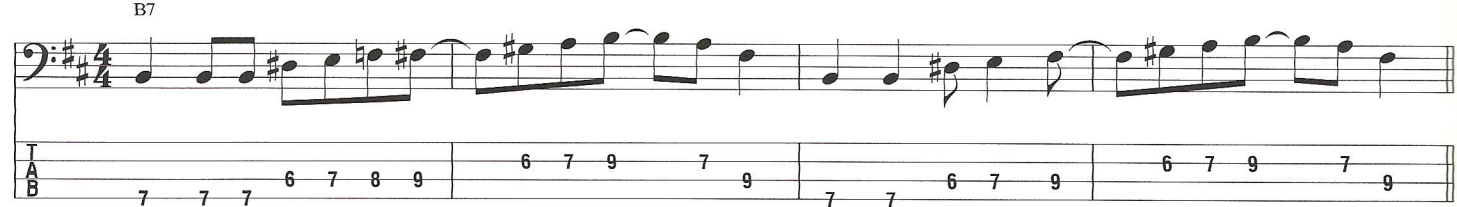
Jones generally favored the Fender Jazz bass for most of his time in Led Zeppelin, eventually switching to Alembic basses. He is a master of improvisation who didn't relegate himself to duplicating the recorded bass lines in concert, and it's been said that some of the great bass lines on the Zeppelin albums were done in one take.

This first example is inspired by the chorus section of "Communication Breakdown." Oftentimes, Jones doubles the guitar riff and plays simple root notes throughout the verses, but when the chorus hits, he takes off running. Check out this fast walking line that alternates between arpeggios with passing tones and pentatonic riffs.

EXAMPLE 1

 **Fast**

B7



John Paul Jones was adept at coming up with great melodic bass hooks that breathe life into mellow verses. This passage is similar to the verses in "Ramble On."

EXAMPLE 2

 **Moderately**

B E B E



This next example is a classic metal-style Zeppelin riff that the guitar and bass might play together.

EXAMPLE 3

 **Moderately slow**
N.C.

