The Lydian dominant scale

The Lydian dominant scale is a very common scale used in jazz and fusion music, and has a very unique, easy to recognize character, which characterizes a lot of fusion players, such as Allan Holdsworth and Frank Gambale.
The scale is actually a mode of the harmonic minor scale, and is a combination of the Lydian mode, and the Dominant mode:
Lydian mode is a major scale with a #4
Dominant mode is a major scale with a b7
So the **Lydian dominant scale/mode** is actually a major scale with both #4 and b7 which makes its structure: 1,2,3,#4,5,6,b7. For example, in the key of C the scale would be : C,D,E,F#,G,A,Bb

The sound

First example is an audio example of a short improvisation I did using C Lydian dominant and Eb Lydian dominant scales
example 1

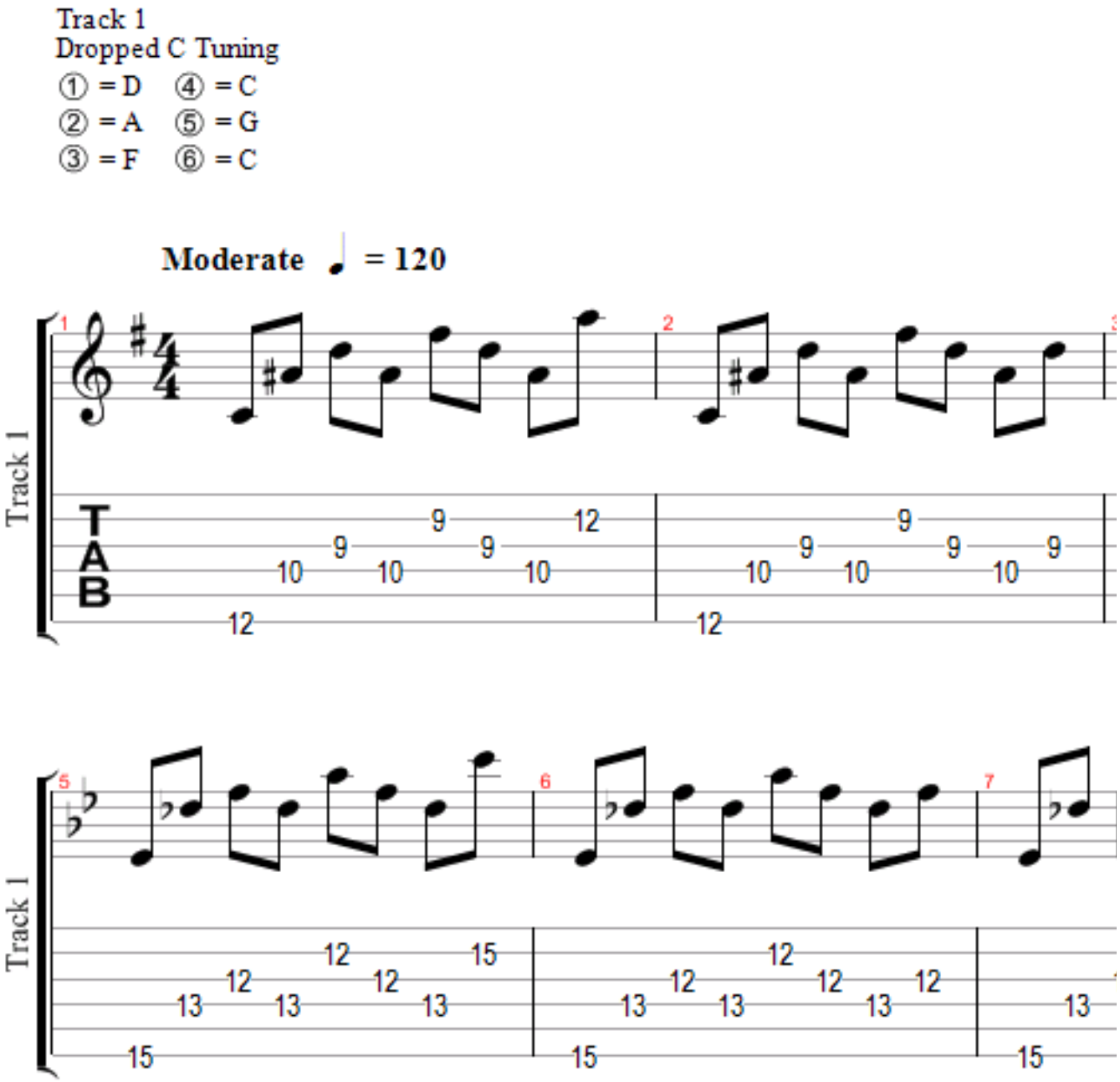
You can immediately recognize its dark and mysterious sound that is heard a lot in fusion. However, it is also used a lot in different contexts in many musical genres: from bebop and classical jazz to flamenco, modal jazz and progressive rock/metal.

Lydian dominant chords

Example 2 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNv0GtrtOFg&feature=youtu.be

The Lydian dominant works on chords which has either b7, #11 (#4) , or both. In this example I am showing the chord progression I have used for the first example: the chords are C7#11 and E7#11, and I am also adding the 13 from time to time (notice that my guitar is tuned to drop C so in case you're on standard tuning move everything 2 frets down, and

the 6th string 4 frets down- it will actually be easier that way) :

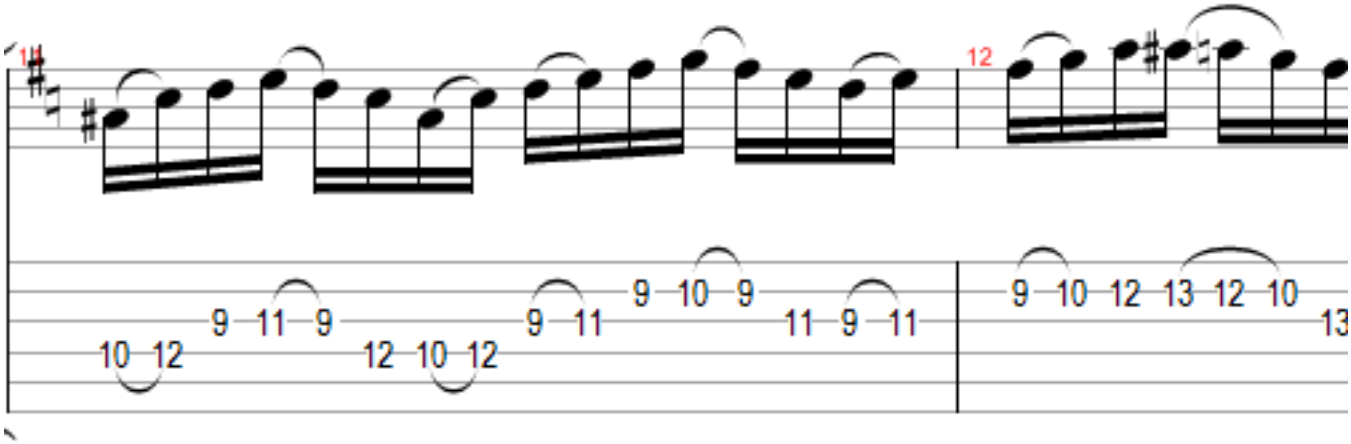


Lydian dominant licks

example 3 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLXoP45sLo8&feature=youtu.be

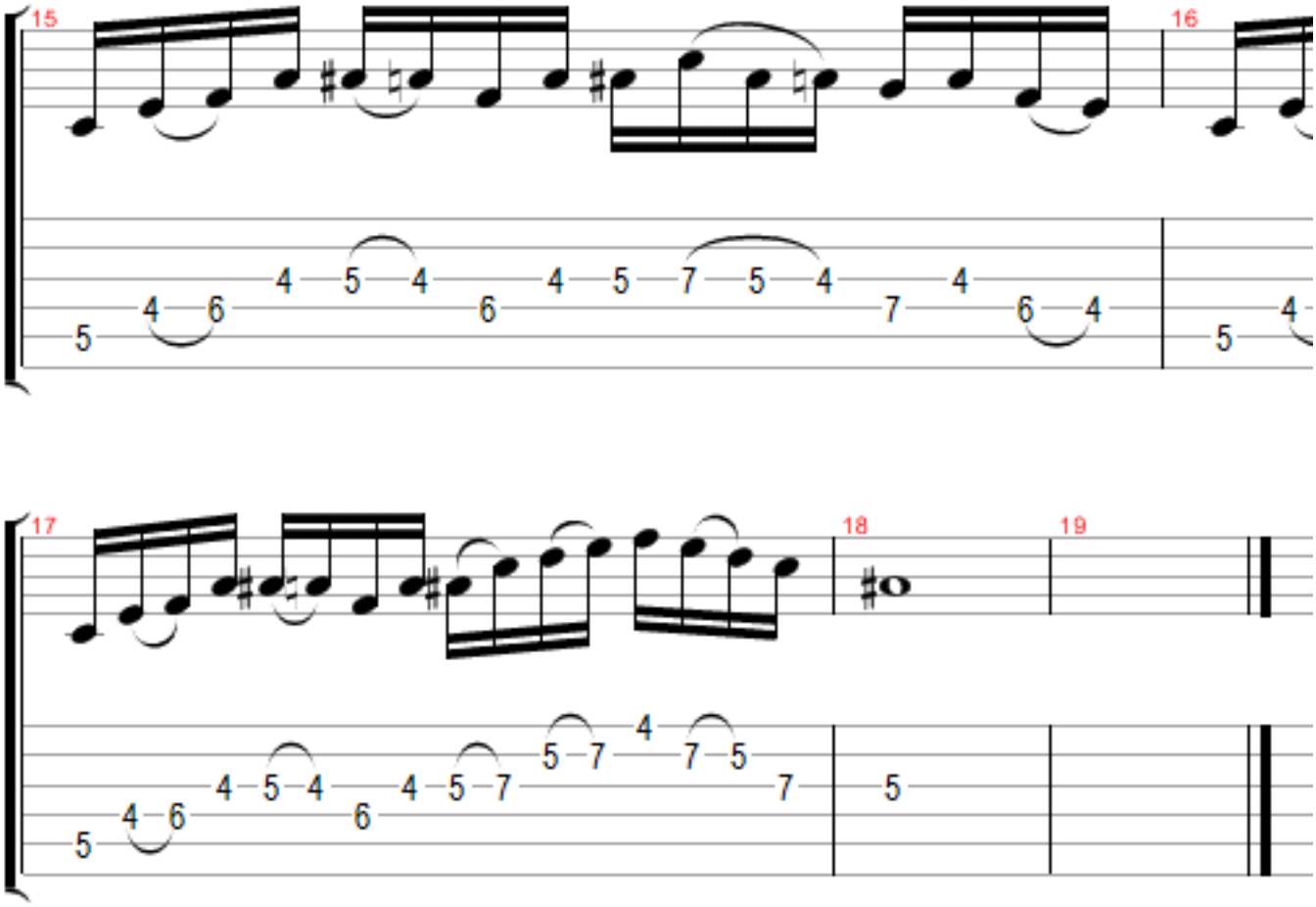
The next example is a C Lydian dominant scalar passage (looks like D in the tabs, but that's because I'm tuned a whole step lower) that immediately spices up the solo with some odd, dark fusion sound. It can also work great on regular major chord that function as Lydian in

the current chord progression, as long as it doesn't have the maj7 or flat 11 in it:



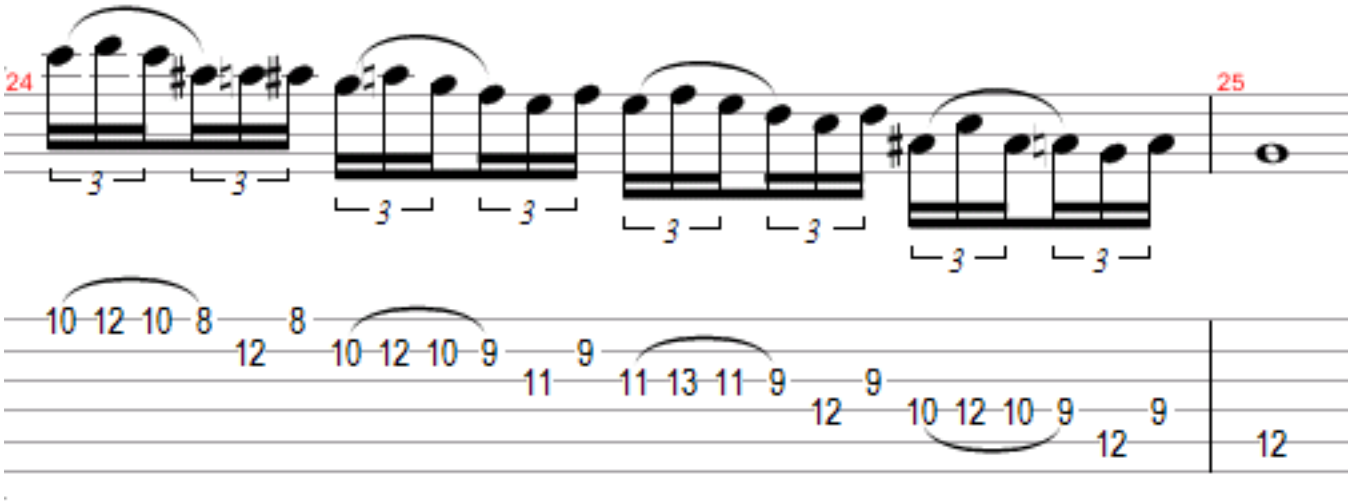
Notice that in the last beat I also used the b9 (C#) once, to give a taste of the dim. Scale sound. The Diminished scale has some similarities to the Lydian dominant (because the Lydian dominant also contains a tetra chord of Half step-Whole step-Half step, which doesn't exist in diatonic scales), so they might be combined in a lot of situations.

Example 4 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyWxaudICgs&feature=youtu.be



OK, next example (Example 4) is again a combination of alternate picking and legato, with a more pattern like sound that can work great with distortion. This type of licks is highly used by progressive rock and metal bands, and usually might be used as a bridge or a part of an instrumental section in the song.

Example 5 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADJhi9Kteyw&feature=youtu.be



Last example (Example 5) is a set of very easy to play (relatively) legato triplets which makes a simple sequence in the Lydian dominant scale. In the video example I played it in 2 scales: C and Eb, with the chords C7#11 and Eb7#11 respectively.

Hope this was useful; feel free to approach me if you have any questions or interest in additional information! And check out my new FB artist page for updates - https://www.facebook.com/agmonshai