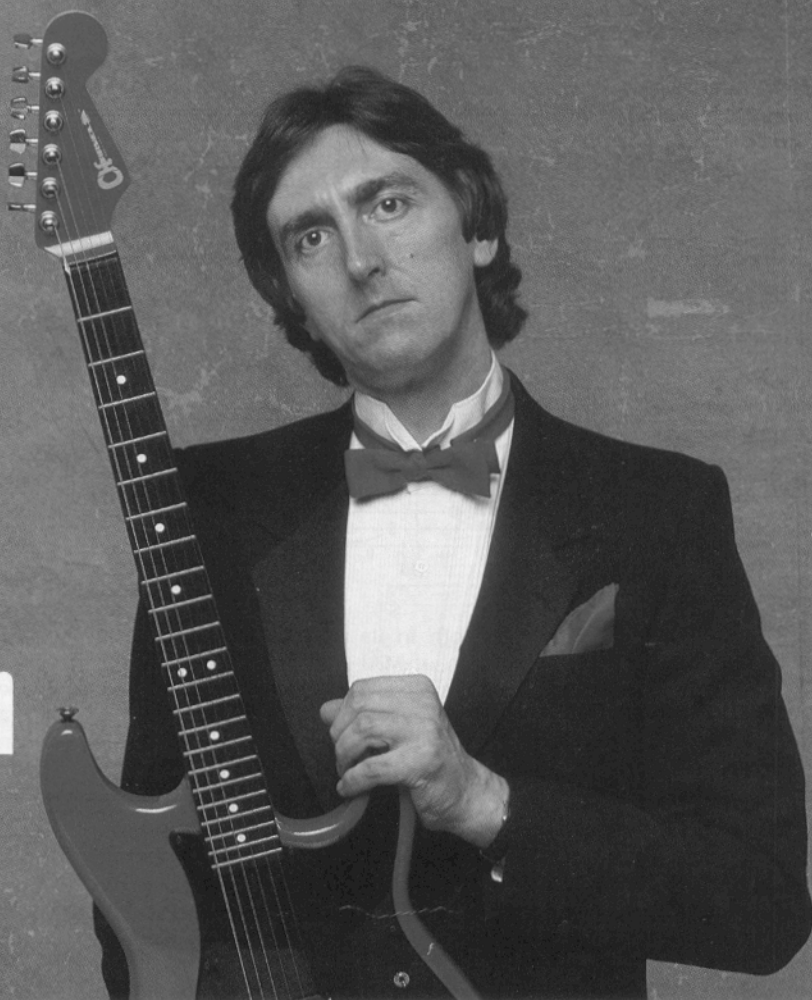


allan holdsworth

by Wolf Marshall

IGNOBLE PRIZE FOR OUT OF LEFT FIELD



Allan Holdsworth has been inspiring and astonishing guitarists and listeners alike since his debut over a decade ago. The name conjures up an image of an olympian stretch, fingers which seem to defy the physics of the fretboard. Indeed, the superlative "Holdsworthian" has been used to describe a number of techniques and approaches attributed to Allan's visionary stylings. Amid a hectic schedule of tour dates and appearances to promote his new LP, *Atavachron*, and the SYNTHAXE© synthesizer controller, Allan met with me to discuss many of his innovative musical perspectives.

Holdsworth is a master of line form permutation. In his style, myriad concepts of melodic invention and variation co-exist to color and define his unique improvisational approach. He has a penchant for unusual and often angular melody lines with unexpected and unpredictable ranges and resolutions. Early in his background, Allan explored mathematically ordered tone rows and scales in an effort to achieve truly uncommon material for improvising. Two of these appear here.

M U S I C A L A P P R E C I A T I O N

Ex. 1 Double Scale

C E G C F# A# C# = six-note scale

Allan explained this concept as the combining of two triad components with different roots (ex: C major and F# major) to form a third scale having characteristics of both. By examining the combination of C + F# (six note scale), one can see that, besides C and F#, the C# diminished chord (C# E G A#) is also created as a sum of both and, thus, could act as a binding or unifying ingredient.

Ex. 2 *Partial Scale

F G A# B C#

*Note: D and E omitted to form partial scale. Samples of chords that can fit with this type of scale: G7b5(+5), Ab m(maj7), Bbmaj7(b5+5).