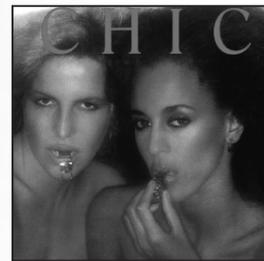# Chapter 5
Everybody Dance

Artist: Chic
Album: *Chic*
Written By: Nile Rodgers/Bernard Edwards
Chart Positions: #9 UK Chart, #38 US Hot 100 Chart, #12 US R&B Chart

'Everybody Dance' was one of the earliest songs written by Bernard and Nile, and was briefly envisioned to be part of the 'Manhattan Symphony', a disco medley that Nile toyed with after witnessing the success that Walter Murphy had with 'A Fifth Of Beethoven'. The song was recorded at the Hit Factory and Electric Lady studios with the help of DJ Robert Drake – Nile traded session playing for studio time in order to get a demo recorded. Soon after, Drake began playing the track at the nightclub he worked at, The Night Owl. It quickly became extremely popular on the dance floor and was a clear indication to Bernard and Nile that disco was where they should be focusing their efforts.

It was also while watching the crowd reaction to 'Everybody Dance' at the Night Owl that Nile noticed that many of the crowd had the same appearance: much of the clientele was made up of business people, who came directly to the club from work. Their sophisticated image was certainly appealing, and this, combined with Nile's fascination with the glamour of Roxy Music set the wheels in motion for the stylish and sophisticated look of Chic.

'Everybody Dance' was released in March 1978, and was Chic's second single, following on from the hugely successful 'Dance Dance Dance (Yowsah Yowsah Yowsah)'. While it didn't quite hit the peaks that its predecessor had, it was nevertheless a huge hit, reaching number 9 in the UK charts, and number 12 in the US R&B Charts.

Song Lyrics

The lyrics to this song are classic Chic – the power of music and dancing were popular themes during the early disco movement, and Chic certainly embraced these themes in this song, as well as many others.

Everybody dance,
Clap your hands, clap your hands (4x)

Music never lets you down
Puts a smile on your face
Any time, any place
Dancing helps relieve the pain
Soothes your mind
Makes you happy again
Listen to those dancin' feet
Close your eyes and let go
But it don't mean a thing
If it ain't got that swing

Everybody dance,
Clap your hands, clap your hands (4x)

Spinning all around the floor
Just like Rogers and Astaire
Hoof all night without a care
Strutting to our favourite tune
The good times always ends too soon
Everybody's dancin'

Let your feet have some fun
Come on, everybody, get on your feet
Clap your hands
Everybody's screamin'

Everybody dance,
Clap your hands, clap your hands (4x)

(Instrumental)

Everybody dance,
Clap your hands, clap your hands (4x)

(Instrumental)

Everybody dance,
Clap your hands, clap your hands (Repeat to Fade)

Bass Guitar

'Everybody Dance' is one of Bernard's most important and recognisable grooves and is truly a tour de force performance. Rumoured to have been recorded in just one take, the line features his unusual picking style, which can be heard clearly in the Intro to the song – try playing that groove with traditional fingerstyle technique! See page 13 for more on Bernard's unusual right hand technique. Bernard used his Fender Precision bass on this track.

Intro

The Intro features Bernard's main groove to the song and is played using his picking technique – because of the fast disco tempo (130bpm), this is really the only way of playing the line unless you either use a plectrum, or double thumb it as current Chic bassist Jerry Barnes does. The line is based around a 'disco-octave' figure that is embellished with a hammer-on from the b7 (Bb) to the octave (C). Ghost notes are crucial to the groove here. Check out Bernard's great chromatic descending run at the end of the second bar. For the third bar he just plays root notes for the jazz-influenced chords. Notice how he creates a chromatic line by playing the F6 chord in first inversion – F6/A. In the fourth bar of the line he plays a simple fill using the root and octave of the Bb/Ab chord. Each time this bar comes around Bernard plays something slightly different, usually using chord tones, but you should also check out his chromatic fill in the twelfth bar – this mirrors the ascending bass figure he plays in the third bar of the sequence.

Bernard moves into a simpler groove, still based on the same chord sequence, in bars 17 – 24. This is the same line as used in the Chorus, and sets up the first reading of the Chorus nicely. The following transcription is of the entire Intro section leading up to the first Chorus.