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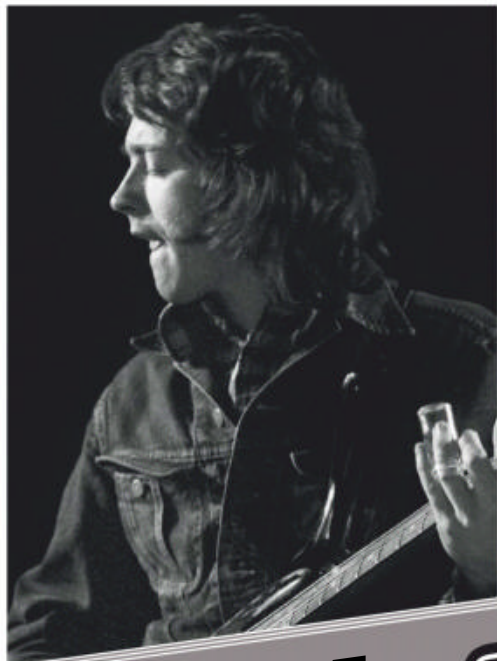
**GUITAR & BASS**

TRANSCRIPTIONS

**WEEZER**  
"THE END OF THE GAME"

**THE DOORS**  
"LIGHT MY FIRE"

# GUITAR WORLD



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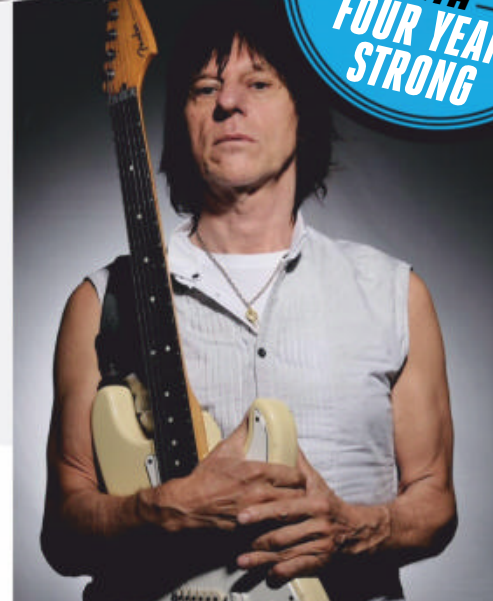
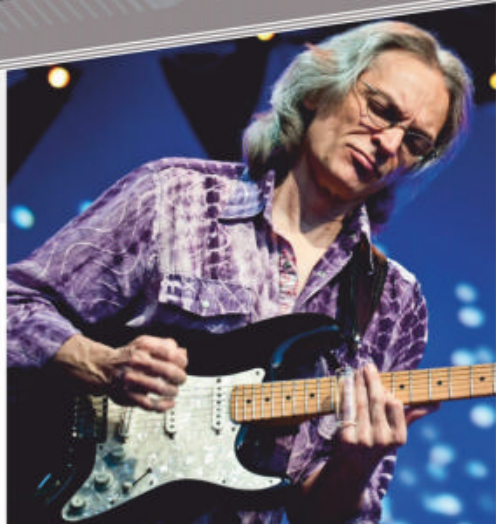
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# SLIDE

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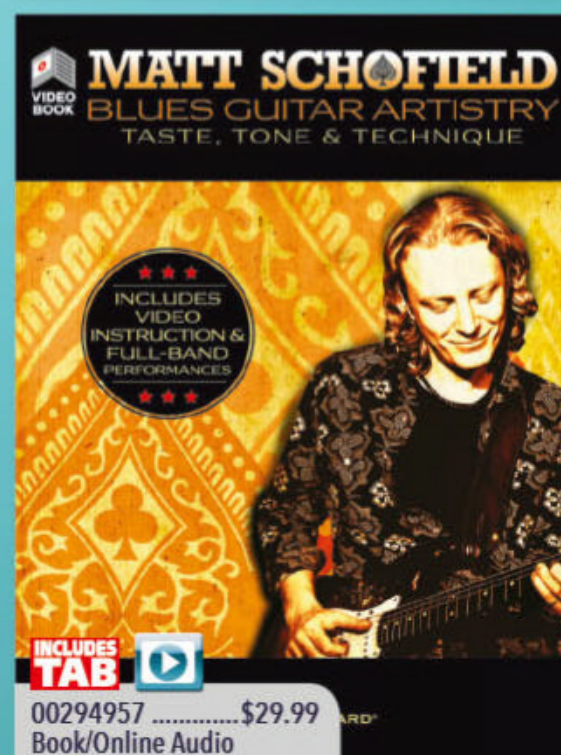
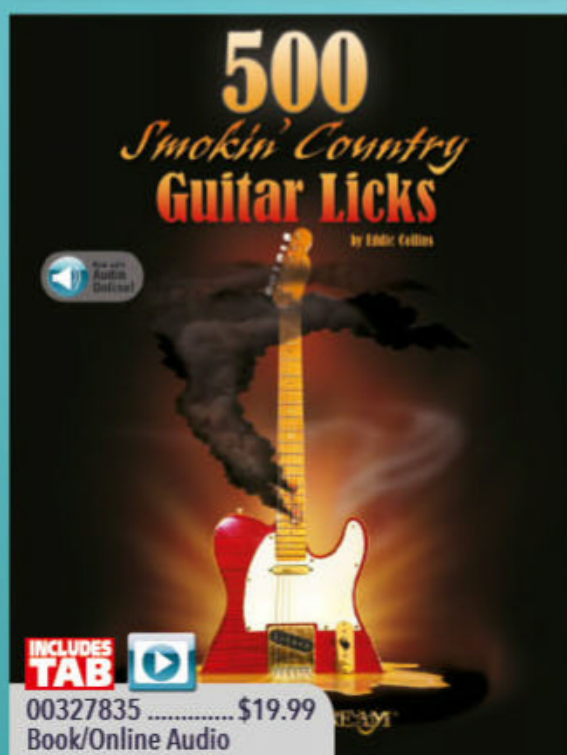
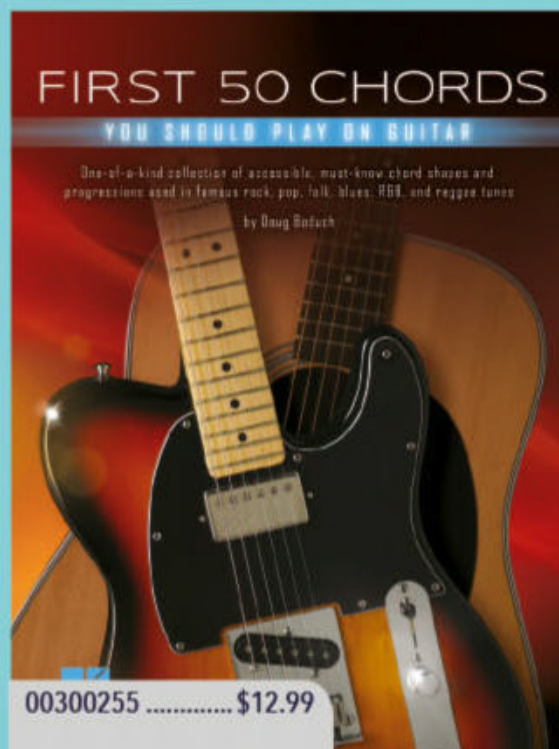
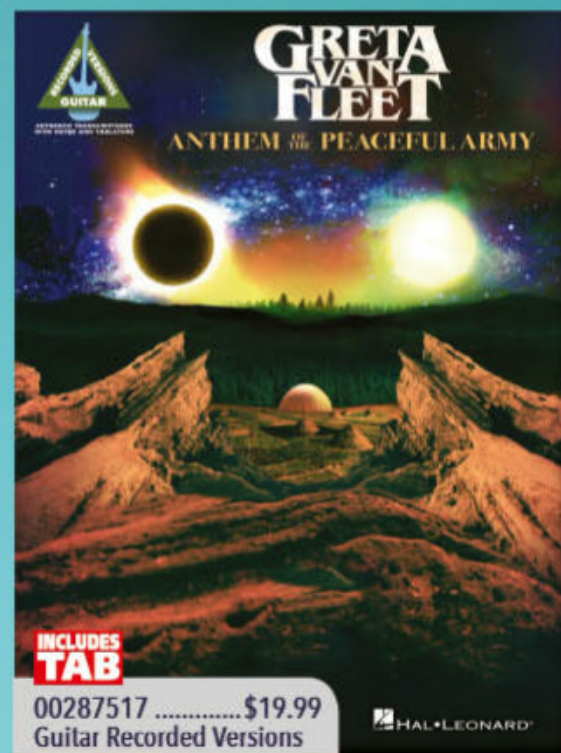
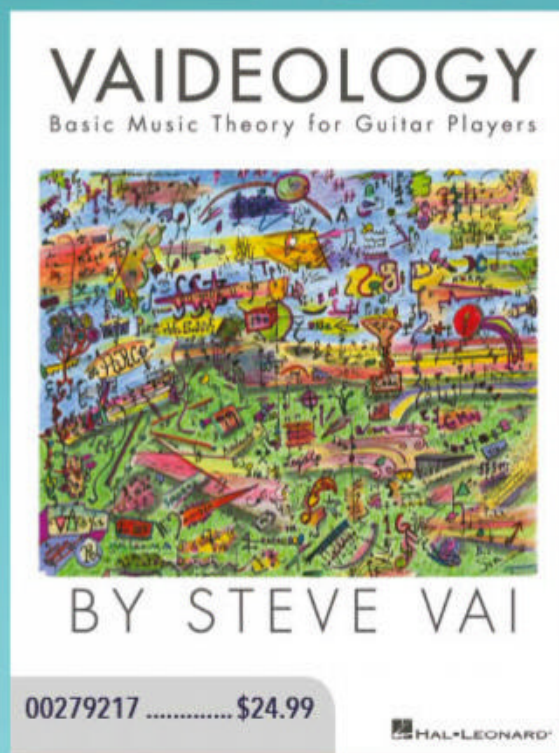
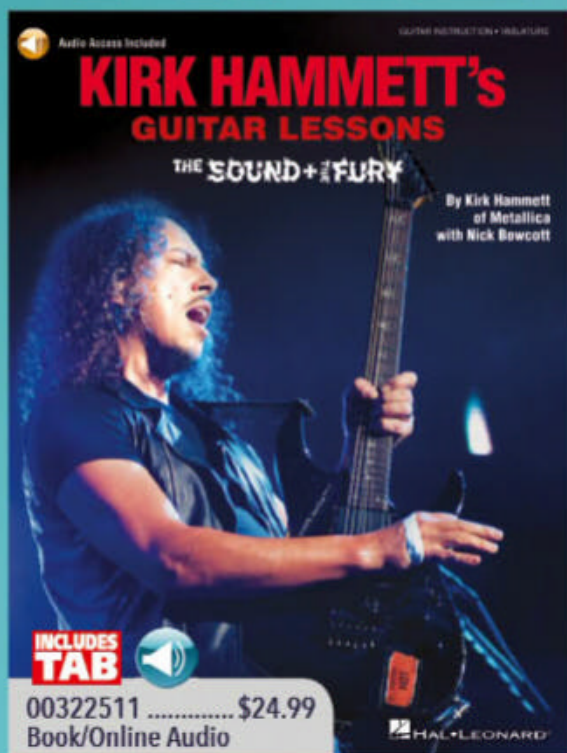
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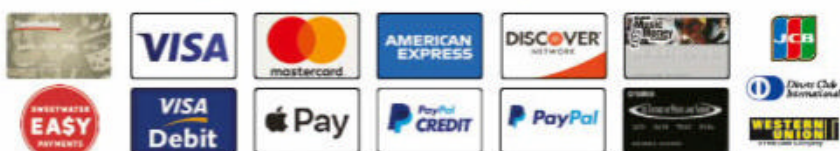
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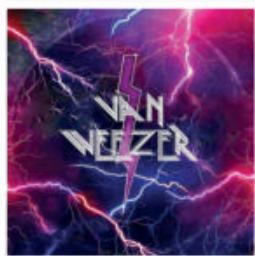


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# WOODSHED

VOL. 41 | NO. 9 | SEPTEMBER 2020

## STATUS REPORT

I JUST WANT to thank everyone for sticking with us during these *temporary* days of 112 pages (down from 124), four gear reviews (down from five) and two transcribed songs (down from three). As I said in my July Woodshed column, it's all tied to what I like to call "the lockdown." While I haven't received any Sounding Board emails from readers asking what a lockdown has to do with running only four gear reviews, a few people on GW's Facebook were somewhat confused. Basically, GW is owned by Future, a company that publishes a lot of magazines around the world. Outside of subscriptions, where are most magazines sold? At newsstands! Has anyone been to a newsstand since early March? I know I haven't! (Come to think of it, I haven't been anywhere...) This is bound to take a toll on the magazines Future produces. That said, because of the *temporary* reduction in the number of transcribed songs per issue, senior music editor Jimmy Brown and I have been trying to add bonus lessons to keep your fingers and brains occupied — including the Peter Green lesson in the July issue, the Mark Knopfler lesson in the August issue and the — you guessed it — pretty damn sizable slide-guitar lesson in this issue.

Why slide? Besides the fact that it's been ages since we've done a slide issue (I've been here since the July 2011 issue with Randy Rhoads on the cover, and I don't recall us getting all slide-crazy during those 9.5 years), I've always thought of slide as something everyone secretly wants to master but keeps putting off till next Thursday — or maybe the following Wednesday. It's time to stop putting it off! This is a great time to break out the slide and get a primer on the habits of players as stylistically diverse as Rory Gallagher, Bonnie Raitt and George Harrison.

On another note, I want to thank the readers who end their Sounding Board letters with comments like, "Keep up the great work!" I can't respond to every letter, but please know that I deeply appreciate it; you really make it feel like we're all part of a crazy extended family. Please be aware that, no matter what, GW will continue to do what we do best: write about what we all have in common.



— **Damian Fanelli**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

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GUITAR WORLD (ISSN 1045-6295) is published 13 times a year, monthly plus Holiday issue following December issue, by Future US, INC., 11 West 42nd Street, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10036. Phone: 212.378.0400. Fax: 917.281.4704. Web Site: [www.futureplc.com](http://www.futureplc.com). Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Newsstand distribution is handled by CMG. Subscriptions: One-year basic rate (12 issues) US: \$17.95. Canada: US\$42.95. Foreign: US\$42.95. Canadian and foreign orders must be prepaid. Canadian price includes postage and GST #R128220688. PMA #40612608. Subscriptions do not include newsstand specials. POSTMASTER: Send change of address to Guitar World, P.O. Box 2024, Langhorne, PA 19047-9957. Ride-along enclosure in the following edition(s): None. Standard enclosure: None. Returns: Pitney Bowes, P.O. Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2, Canada. Entire contents copyright 2020, Future PLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited. Future PLC is not affiliated with the companies or products covered in Guitar World. Reproduction on the Internet of the articles and pictures in this magazine is illegal without the prior written consent of Guitar World. Products named in the pages of Guitar World are trademarks of their respective companies. PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. SUBSCRIBER CUSTOMER SERVICE: Guitar World Magazine Customer Care, P.O. Box 2024, Langhorne, PA 19047-9957. Phone: 1-800-456-6441. Email [contact@myfavoritemagazines.com](mailto:contact@myfavoritemagazines.com). BACK ISSUES: [www.myfavoritemagazines.com](http://www.myfavoritemagazines.com) REPRINTS: Future PLC, 11 West 42nd Street, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10036. Phone: 212.378.0414



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# SOUNDING BOARD

Got something you want to say? **EMAIL US AT: GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com**



## Bowled Over by Phil Collen's Advice

I enjoyed the 100 tips from the pros [June 2020]. I'm kinda surprised nobody said to really work on the note values — wholes, halves, quarters, triplets and 16th — with a metronome. Work on the feel of fluid triplets or whatever you're geekin' on. And hey, Phil Collen, get some fiber in your diet. It's a solid "no" to a guitar in the bathroom! Gross!

— Steve LaCombe



## Does Anyone Else Whine on Dines?

As subscribers, we should be able to choose which cover we receive when there are multiple covers. I know for the June issue there was a Joe Satriani cover, and I received the Jared Dines one. I

love the mag but in no way want to support that clown. He's a perfect example of the toxic YouTube guitar community and I'm not sure why he's featured on the cover, especially when loads of other guitarists who have a positive influence have not been. If you're going to feature someone from YouTube, at least have it be someone who isn't insufferable and most of your audience hates.

— Adam K.



## He Owes It All to Layla

I'm an active-duty U.S. Marine stationed overseas. What's helped me get through these past two years while on the other side of the earth was my guitar, Layla [pictured above]. All guitarists long to be on stage to hear the masses shout their name. If you could help put me out there to be heard, I'd greatly appreciate it.

— Sean Bigger

## Vintage Guitar Mag Memories

I remember the first time I got a guitar magazine was when I was in jail in 1986. I forget what title it had. I think it had Wolf Marshall in it. I was singing the lead guitar parts in the middle of the night.

— Ken Jackson

[Editor's note: I've been meaning to ask everyone: What's the first issue of Guitar World that you ever owned? Mine was May 1985, with Brian Setzer on the cover.]

## More Batio Love

I just want to voice my opinion and let you know that I think you

guys should do a cover story on Michael Angelo Batio. The man is a serious shredder, and I would love to see him on the cover. I've always believed he is one of the most talented and knowledgeable guitarists to ever exist, and he definitely deserves the spotlight! Thank you for taking the time to read this. I hope to see this come into fruition.

— Eric P.



## Esquire (in the) Magazine

Here's a photo of me from 1958 or '59. Our house was always filled with music. My sister chose to study the piano, my brother went for the marimba, and me, the guitar. For my first electric I scored a Fender Esquire, a gift from my parents. As you know, the Esquire had the same body and neck as the Telecaster, but only one pickup, not the two.

— Lorenzo Lago

## Let's Put a Rush on Rush!

As a loyal reader since 1983, I totally agree with the Sounding Board letter from Jon Edwards [June 2020]: an in-depth lesson on a classic Rush epic like "2112," "Cygnus X-1" or "Hemispheres" would be much appreciated — plus a cover story. Let's also give some love to that other classic

Canadian band, Triumph. An in-depth lesson on the Who's "Won't Get Fooled Again" would also be amazing.

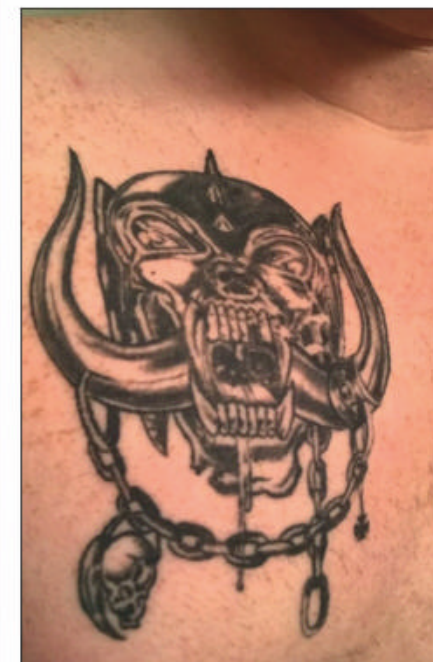
— Donald Taylor



## In Heavy Rotation

I designed and built this guitar with four of the most famous pickups — P90, Strat, Tele and a HB — in a rotating assembly. The three-way switch enables me to choose from 12 different tonal options.

— Peter Endes



## Ink Spot

Love your mag! This is my ink chest piece that needs no introduction! (It was done by the talented Jenna Bartello.)

— Jess Volina



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## READER ART

OF THE MONTH

If you've created a drawing, painting or sketch of your favorite guitarist and would like to see it in an upcoming issue of *Guitar World*, email **GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com** with a scan of the image!

Also, please let us know if you'd like us to share it on Instagram!



BILLY GIBBONS BY SHAWN WAGNER



JIMMY PAGE BY DAVID WELLS

## DEFENDERS of the Faith



### Angelic Creature

**AGE:** Mystery

**HOMETOWN:** Traverse City, MI

**GUITARS:** ESP LTD Custom, Washburn LTD Ovation Balladeer

**SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING:** "Bon Voyage Planet Earth," "Serial Killer Culture" and "United We Stand" — all original tracks on Soundcloud.com

**GEAR I MOST WANT:** Mesa Boogie Lone-star, Gibson Les Paul Custom, Boss pedals

### Thomas Jacobs

**AGE:** 52

**HOMETOWN:** Elizabethtown, KY

**GUITARS:** Epiphone Les Paul Custom, Jackson RR3 and Kelly KEXMG, Ibanez S Dragon Eye, Dean Explosion 255 V

**SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING:** Iron Maiden "Where Eagles Dare," Joe Bonamassa "Just Got Paid"

**GEAR I WANT MOST:** Epiphone James Jared "Old Glory" Les Paul Custom, Marshall JCM 800 half stack



### Jacob Lundin

**AGE:** 19

**HOMETOWN:** Hayden, ID

**GUITARS:** Fender Special Edition '50s Stratocaster, Yamaha FGX700SC, Fender Starcaster

**SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING:** Stevie Ray Vaughan "The Things (That) I Used to Do," ZZ Top "Blue Jean Blues," Jimi Hendrix "Voodoo Chile Blues"

**GEAR I WANT MOST:** Fender Blues Junior IV, Gibson Les Paul '60s Reissue



**Are you a Defender of the Faith?** Send a photo, along with your answers to the questions above, to **GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com**. And pray!



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[left] Andy Powell and his Royale Warrior before a Wishbone Ash show last October; [right] two views of Powell's Case Guitars JTL Thinline

## Eight Arms to Hold You

PERENNIAL BRITISH PROG-ROCK HEROES WISHBONE ASH RETURN TO THE SOMEWHAT UNSTABLE MUSICAL LANDSCAPE OF 2020 WITH *COAT OF ARMS*, THEIR FIRST NEW ALBUM OF STUDIO MATERIAL IN SIX YEARS. GUITARIST ANDY POWELL GIVES GW THE LOWDOWN ON HIS BAND'S 23RD OFFERING

By Jeff Kitts



IT'S ALMOST DIFFICULT to fathom. Wishbone Ash, the British rock group not just active but extremely prolific for all of its 50 years in existence, has never been interviewed for this magazine. "Yes, you're right," says only remaining original member Andy Powell on a call from his home in Connecticut. "We've been working solidly for all these decades, and almost studiously avoiding the press. So it's interesting to come out now and be doing a bunch of interviews."

*Guitar World* and Powell are engaging in conversation for the first time to talk about the seasoned band's most recent studio album, titled *Coat of Arms*. Wishbone Ash's lack of reliance on media exposure throughout all these years, particularly with the U.S. music press, speaks to the group's fervent following and long-established efforts to reach their fans via social media. "We were one of the first bands who really understood the idea of social media and the internet, and once we

established ourselves there, we realized that we could communicate directly with our community," Powell tells us. "We already had a loyal following, and social media has allowed everyone all around the world to be linked together. But you can also get a lot of traction with an album by having some good PR. You don't want to necessarily preach to the choir all the time — it's good to break out every so often, and our new album, *Coat of Arms*, has helped us do that."





*Coat of Arms* is the 23rd studio album from Wishbone Ash, a group celebrated for its unique blending of prog rock, folk, Southern rock and classical music, with harmonious twin lead guitars always at the forefront of its sound. “I think a lot of it comes from the approach we have to playing solos and lead parts when we’re onstage — you are commanded to listen to them,” Powell says. “It’s that Seventies approach of ‘Look mom, I’m playing guitar right now.’” Whether it’s the highly pleasing album opener “We Stand As One,” the nearly eight-minute title track or the ethereal “Floreana,” *Coat of Arms* is brimming with all of the hallmarks that have been synonymous with Wishbone Ash for over half a century.

The members of Wishbone Ash, including Powell, co-guitarist Mark Abrahams, bassist Bob Skeat and drummer Joe Crabbtree, hope to resume their tour of the U.S. in September and the U.K. in October, though it’s anyone’s guess if the world will be ready for concerts by then. For the time being, Powell and his cohorts will continue spending their days at home like the rest of us. “I used to get very antsy after about 10 days or two weeks of being off the road,” says the 70-year-old guitarist and singer. “But I have a good home life, and I do have recreational things that I’m able to enjoy. My family’s all grown up now so I don’t have three kids taking all the energy out of me like I used to. [Laughs] I think you’re just constantly adjusting, and that’s life for everybody.”

**Coat of Arms is the band’s 23rd studio album since the release of the self-titled debut in 1970. Between all of the studio albums, live records, compilations and tours, Wishbone Ash hasn’t had much downtime in the last 50 years. In fact, the six years between the previous studio album, *Blue Horizon*, and *Coat of Arms*, is one of the longest breaks on record for the group.**

Ironically, during that period, a lot of work was being done in other fields. I wrote a book [*Eyes Wide Open: True Tales of a Wishbone Ash Warrior*, 2015], which was one of the hardest things I’ve ever done. We were also gigging constantly. Then there was the box set [the 30-disc *Vintage Years 1970–1991*], which was a three-year production. Plus we had all these compilations and live albums and smaller box sets that were being produced around the world, so a lot of the time you’re at home in your office, you’re working on all the licensing and deals that go along with those releases.

**How did you and co-guitarist Mark Abrahams, who joined the group in the spring of 2017, work together on writing the guitar parts for *Coat of Arms*?**

Mark and I cut ourselves off from everything

and got into a room. He hit me with a bunch of riffs, I hit him with a bunch of riffs and the odd lyric here and there. We also talked about where we wanted to go with this album and what we wanted it to be. Mark is a student of the band’s catalog, so he would say things to me like, “It would be great if we had a song that perhaps referenced back to the *New England* phase that you guys went through in the mid-Seventies.”

**How did it work in the studio? Did you record mainly the parts you wrote and vice versa?**

That does go on, but I’m more interested in how a song is going to turn out or how the band sounds. For example, going way back, I composed the opening chords to a song called “Warrior” [from the group’s 1972 album *Argus*], but I said, “Hey, Ted [Turner, former Wishbone Ash guitarist], why don’t you play this part because I want to play lead over it.” And that’s the great thing about having two lead guitar players — it gives you that vast palette of possibilities.

**As technology has changed over the years, has your gear changed?**

In some ways, not at all — but in some ways, totally. We didn’t have digital tuners back in the day, so having those now makes a huge difference. Also, when footpedals and effects came in, I went right from using a basic overdrive and a chorus pedal to using racks of digital equipment behind me and switching devices, and now I’m back to using just a few effects under the foot onstage.

And even though we still use vintage Fender amps in the studio, we’ve also fully embraced profiling amp technology. It gets you where you want to be really quickly and keeps you from killing the music by spending hours trying to get the definitive guitar sound.

**Such complex digital technology actually allows for a simpler and more streamlined recording process.**

Exactly. We went through that bloated phase in the late Seventies where we would take a week in a studio just to get a kick drum sound or get a guitar sound just right. We’ve become much more efficient at making music these days, and we recorded this album live in the studio, just like we would have in 1971.

**Tell me about the guitars you used on *Coat of Arms*.**

It was a mix. Vintage ’52 Telecaster, 1970 Duesenberg, Stratocasters, my original 1967 Flying V. Music Man is a company that I love, and I used those on a couple of lead guitar solos. I also have a few guitars made by Jon Case out of England, and I used those pretty extensively. I’m still a guitar nut — I love guitars.



## WHAT'S ON MY PLAYLIST



### MÁTÉ BODOR OF ALESTORM

1

**“Kissing the Shadows”**  
*Children of Bodom*

Alexi Laiho’s playing is still something I draw ideas from; he inspires me a lot in terms of using more pentatonic ideas.

2

**“Reminiscent”**  
*Shrezers*

Very technical and modern playing mixed with excellent songwriting, melodic vocals and sax solos. They have a sax solo in almost every song — it’s sick!

3

**“Titan”**

*Jason Richardson*

The solo section of “Titan” has taken shred guitar to a new level for me — and I thought I’d heard it all. I’m considering learning the solo, but I have to gather all my strength...

4

**“Who Bit the Moon”**  
*David Maxim Micic*

It’s not about shred or displaying insane skills; it’s well thought out and the flow is unmatched. He’s the only instrumental guitarist I can never get bored of.

5

**“Earth Scar”**  
*Decapitated*

Apart from all the amazing lead players I’ve mentioned so far, the tightness in rhythm playing, riff technique and the general tone of Vogg [Wacław Kiełtyka] from Decapitated is just mad. The solo section of this song is a perfect example.

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Gina Gleason plays **THE AMERICAN ULTRA JAZZMASTER®** in Mocha Burst.



[right] George Lynch in action; [facing page] the *Dirty Shirley* album cover — "I'm wondering which one I am — the guy or the girl? [Laughs]"



# The Dirt on Dirty Shirley

GEORGE LYNCH DISCUSSES THE FATE OF HIS CLASSIC-ERA GUITARS, HIS NEVER-ENDING LED ZEP LOVE AND *DIRTY SHIRLEY*, HIS NEW ALBUM (AND PROJECT) WITH CROATIAN-BORN SINGER DINO JELUSIC

By Mark McStea

► **GEORGE LYNCH FIRST** came to prominence with Dokken, whose debut album, 1981's *Breaking the Chains*, saw Lynch's name added to the pantheon of shred legends that came to prominence in the hair-metal era. Although Lynch and Don Dokken had their differences over the years, they're certainly on good terms now. Lynch Mob, in fact, planned on touring with Dokken in 2020, with Lynch joining Don for four songs each night. Still, Lynch Mob remains the "day job," with a new album due out this summer.

The always-prolific Lynch has recorded a number of collaborative albums over the years, the latest of which, *Dirty Shirley*, is a hook-up with Croatian-born singer Dino Jelusic of Animal Drive, whose powerful vocals are redolent at times of the best of Dio. The songs are uniformly strong, with more than a hint of classic rock in the mix. Of course, Lynch's love of the golden era of blues-rock is clearly on display.

## How'd you come to hook up with Dino?

It was the brainchild of the people at Fron-

tiers Records in Italy. They asked me if I'd like to write the music and manage the whole production. I had a slight misunderstanding about the project initially and thought it was an Italian-pop kind of thing. It seemed like an interesting challenge, so I began to write in that vein, but of course when the stuff came back from Dino, I was pleasantly surprised to hear what he actually did. I changed gears at that point, but we did leave a little bit of that stuff in there for the sake of variety. There's a real wide variety of styles on the record.





### Is this a one-off project?

You never know. I don't do projects with the expectation of it becoming part of a continuum, but I always hope it might be. It depends on the obvious things like the level of interest and critical and fan appreciation. There also has to be a creative reason as well, beyond the commercial considerations.

### Are you happy with the way the album turned out?

For the most part, but you're never completely happy. Considering it was done remotely, with all the members' contributions, I'm actually amazed at how seamlessly it hangs together. I'm a very self-critical person. For instance, on *Wicked Sensation*, the first Lynch Mob album [1990], we had a year-plus and a massive budget. We probably recorded that album three times. Nowadays, I'll probably write and record a song in one day, so effectively that's 12 days to record an album. That's the clearest comparison between then and now.

### The album cover is kinda weird. What's going on there?

[Laughs] I wish I had a good answer for you. I don't want to throw Dino under the bus [Laughs]. We had a couple of submissions, which neither one of us liked, then somebody threw that at us from the label and Dino liked it. I'm wondering which one I am — the guy or the girl? [Laughs]

### "Dirty Blues" has a real Led Zeppelin feel.

I couldn't name a guitar player that Jimmy Page hasn't influenced. I was in my teens when [1969's] *Led Zeppelin* came out. It was one of my early rock influences. My drummer friend and I would put that on the record player and go out to try to be that. Just to even look at what he's done on a production level as well. The sounds he got. It fascinates me.

### And "Cold" has a Page-plays-funk vibe.

Yeah, white people trying to play black music,

*"I'm at a juncture now where I think I need to bust through technically and apply and reinvent myself a little bit... I'm going to apply myself to that this year and stop resting on my laurels"*

I guess! What I love from that era is the sense of not knowing what the rules are, since there weren't really any rules back then. The jamming and improvisation. It seems like a sad loss.

### "Escalator to Purgatory" has quite a funk-styled groove as well.

Absolutely. I've listened to a lot of James Brown and Sly Stone, anything I can get my hands on in that vein. Fessing up here, there's probably a lot of Zeppelin's "Dancing Days" in that one.

### "Grand Master" has an Indian vibe; where does that influence come from?

I love the exotic scales and time signatures and trying to incorporate that as much as I can into my playing. That was done on a Hindustani 21-string guitar, and the hand drum is me just playing with my fingers on the body of the guitar. It's just free time, no click or anything. It's sloppy but it's real.

### What have you got that's brand new, gear-wise?

I'm such a gear-obsessive, it's just crazy. I've recently acquired a '61 Les Paul SG, which is all-original hardware and pickups. On the amp side I've just got a British Sixties Watkins Dominator, and I've been using a Range-master Treble Booster with that. I've also acquired an original Clyde McCoy wah pedal.

### It's notable when looking at your playing over the years that you've never been afraid to underplay. There's always plenty left in the tank.

One of my favorite solos in the world is "Cinnamon Girl" by Neil Young. It's just one note. There's so much to say without playing endless streams of notes. I try to explore all the parameters of guitar music and composition. I'm always aware of the value of subtlety and silence. Speed and angst have their place, but I think you should incorporate all the elements in an intelligent way.

### The question always crops up about when you're going to do an all-instrumental album of original material. Are you any nearer to it?

I've been thinking about it. I think it would need about a year and I would need to make it almost a worldwide experience. I like the idea of composing and recording each piece in a different place around the world. Maybe Joshua Tree, then Easter Island, then off to another location. I think it would be a fascinating story to see what the environment creates and then document the process and the gear, and use historically significant equipment. I have access, via friends, to some Hendrix and SRV and Joe Walsh gear and a lot of other classic equipment. It would be expensive and logistically challenging. Probably baby steps would be the way to go. Just record one, then have a think where to go next — maybe incorporate a recording project with a business trip to Japan or something.

### What do you feel you're working on in your own playing?

I'm at a juncture right now where I think I need to bust through technically and apply and reinvent myself a little bit. I've talked to a friend of mine who I'm going to sit down with and take some tutoring. I'm going to apply myself to that this year and stop resting on my laurels. My one big thing is that I don't know theory. I don't think I'm going to actually work on that so much, but I'd like to be better at playing over changes. Maybe dive into a little bit of bebop. I'd also like to work on slide, get a little more proficient and work on some tunings.

### You always boasted a lot of really cool, distinctive guitars. Do you still have all your old gear?

Yeah, most of them. There's been a few that have been lifted over the years. My ESP "REH" guitar that I used in those videos, my tech left it at a music store called Music Works where we used to rehearse — at Redondo Beach. My "graffiti" guitar just disappeared out from under me. Turns out one of my band members had sold that. I've had quite a few techs that have lifted many guitars over the years, some of which I did subsequently get back. There's a special place in hell for gear thieves.

### Given the changing nature of the music business, how do you make a living from rock in 2020?

Be diversified. Do everything. Be an engineer, be a composer, play every instrument you can, get endorsements, learn how to make a website, be social-media savvy and keep your eye on everything.



# ? INQUIRER

## ERIC GALES

THE MAN WHO JOE BONAMASSA CALLS "THE BEST GUITARIST IN BLUES-ROCK RIGHT NOW" TALKS INSPIRATION, REBIRTH AND MEETING STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN

### ■ Got my first real six-string...

My first guitar was a Hagström. I must have been 4 when I started playing it. I can't even remember which model, but it was this Strat-style thing that was lying around the house for the family. Everyone would pick it up and have fun with it. My dream guitar was just a Strat of any kind. That was a big aspiration for me, and it finally happened around the age of 13. My brother Eugene had one, so I could play his, but getting to have my own was pretty cool.

### ■ Well, it's floodin' down in Texas...

Stevie Ray Vaughan would have been one of the biggest influences in me wanting that Strat, for sure. I was lucky enough to see him and meet him when I was 15... We ended up hanging out for a little bit. "He was doing tracks for the [Vaughan Brothers'] *Family Style* album and I was cutting demos for my first record. So we sat down, talked and even played together on a couple of acoustics. That's how we met, and it was very, very cool... An experience I'll never forget!

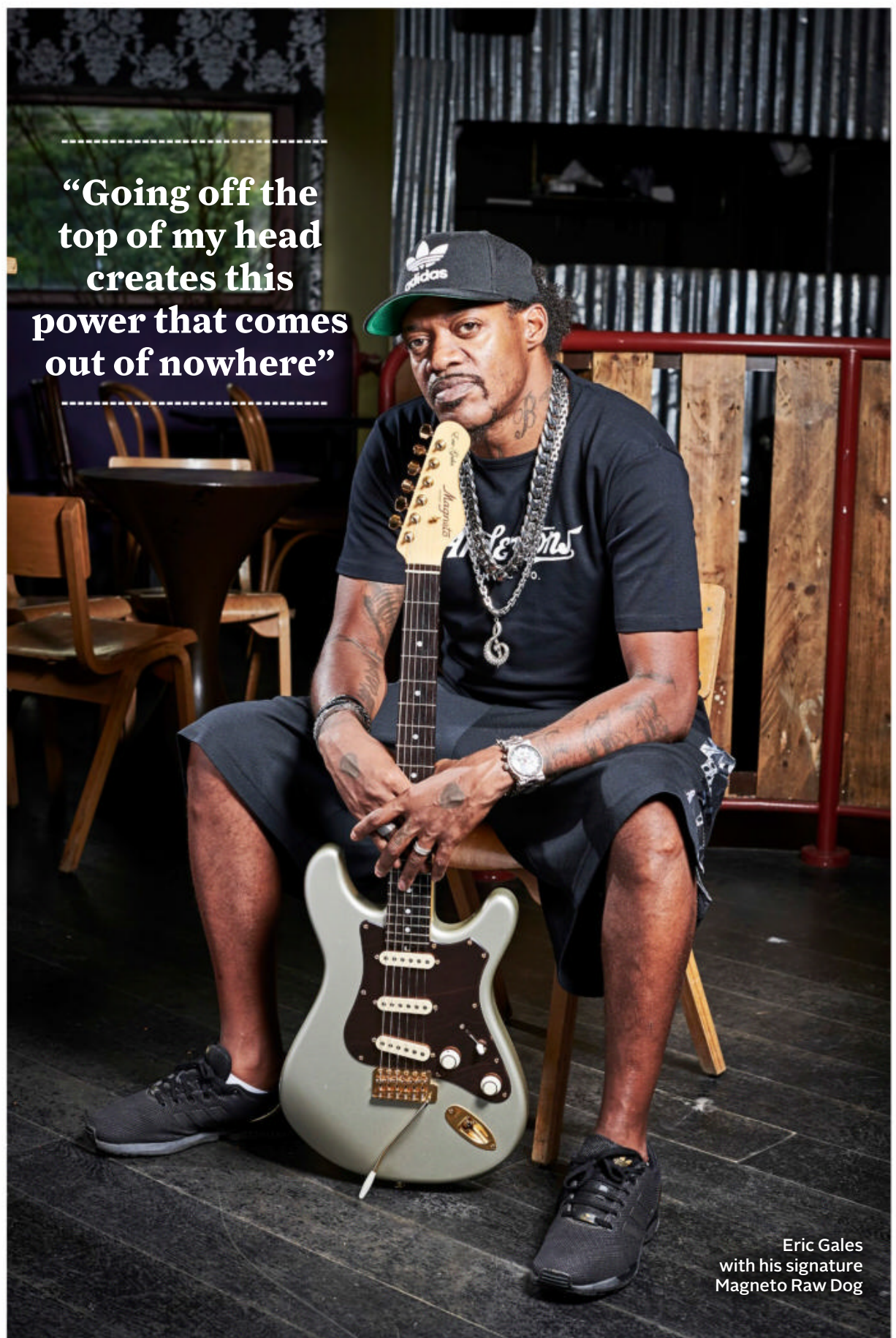
### ■ Got my mojo workin'...

I love what I do. The hardest thing about it is all the traveling and the easiest thing is the playing. This might sound strange, but I honestly can't think of any weaknesses I have as far as playing guitar. I can't really think of any strengths, either! I just try to be the best me I can be and stay comfortable in my own skin. If there's one thing I'm good at, it would be thinking quick on my feet. Spontaneity is a strong point for me. Going off the top of my head creates this instantaneous power that comes out of nowhere, and I rarely find myself disappointed! All I need to play a good set is Red Bull. Does Red Bull make me play faster? I don't know, but there's just something in my head that says I have to have one on stage for some reason.

### ■ Tired of wasting all my precious time...

Things have happened gradually for me, so I feel like life is my biggest breakthrough. I managed to finally get clean; I'm working on four years now. That was the biggest breakthrough in many ways. My toughest time as a musician was when I was in prison, for reasons which are fairly self-explanatory... I didn't have

"Going off the top of my head creates this power that comes out of nowhere"



Eric Gales  
with his signature  
Magneto Raw Dog

a guitar for a long time, but eventually the warden got to know who I was, and made me start a prison band that ended up playing all over the place. It was cool at times, but in my head all I was thinking about was touring the world.

### ■ There goes my hero...

One of my biggest influences is Eric Johnson. First meeting him and getting to ask questions was one of the biggest days of my life. *Venus Isle* was a life-changing album for me, and his tone has always been great through the years. To be honest, everything about him has something I admire and want to absorb from. He's someone I have tried to pattern myself from, though of course I try to add my own twists. There's nothing wrong with being obviously inspired by your heroes,

but the objective is to show how it can inspire you to be yourself. Does it come from the tone, the person playing or the genres you like listening to? Find as much of that inspiration as you can: it's key to developing and makes the practicing not feel like homework.

### ■ 'Cause I gotta have faith...

Going to church was something my mom and dad were into, so we had been exposed to all this gospel and blues growing up. From the first time I picked up that guitar, I just took to it and kept pursuing it. I never felt content with what I knew. It's natural for it to happen when you grow up in a family that's heavily involved in music. My first record was a big deal for me at age 15 – and even now, I'm learning every day. —Amit Sharma





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Photo: Max Taylor-Grant

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**Touring advice for that time when, you know, we all start touring again...**

# Spider Bites, Busted Axles and Personal Space

**TOURING TIPS FROM FOUR YEAR STRONG GUITARIST/VOCALIST DAN O'CONNOR**

**By Adam Kovac**

► **THE ROAD IS** a magical place in the imaginations of aspiring rock stars. Piling into a van with your friends, spending your days traveling to new cities and your nights playing in front of adoring crowds, all fueled by nothing more than cheap beer, cheaper food and whatever illicit substances you can scrounge together? Who needs frat parties when you can live that life while getting paid literally dozens of dollars every single night?

Of course, that's just fantasy. Touring is a complicated business, where creature comforts can be few and far between, finances are tight and every great show can be canceled out by a night playing to just the bartender. All that while trying to keep your rig in working condition can drive a guitarist insane.

Four Year Strong guitarist/vocalist Dan O'Connor knows all about that life. For the past almost two decades, his band has crisscrossed the U.S. and the rest of the world. Somewhat miraculously, the band has managed to mostly avoid beating the daylight out of each other. But that doesn't mean there haven't been challenges; one tour saw their merch guy get bit by a brown recluse spider while sitting on a toilet. The band and their crew boarded the bus, drove through the night to the next stop and ended up spending most of the day in a Las Vegas hospital.

Venomous wildlife aside, O'Connor says most of his band's bad fortunes have come at the expense of their vehicles and the people hired to pilot them.

"There was a tour we were on, I think it must have been Taste of Chaos in 2008, and we just had a lot of issues with our vehicle," he recalls. "At that time we were on a bus and the driver we had did a lot of silly things and ended up breaking off an axle of our trailer, which belonged to us. One time he drove under a bridge that was too low and crashed



all the air conditioners off the roof. We had to fire him."

Aside from making sure you have a AAA membership and a driver with common sense, O'Connor advises young guitarists heading out for their first jaunt in a van to be conscious of van etiquette: every band member should have personal space to call their own and, above all, you must practice proper hygiene. Remember: just because your riffs are filthy, doesn't mean you have to be.

"The most important thing to feeling comfortable in the van is to make sure you get a shower in before a long drive. There's nothing worse than playing a show, being sweaty and then getting in the van and having to drive eight hours... Even if you do change

your clothes and don't shower, you just don't feel clean."

That advice should keep bandmates happy. But remember: take care of your gear and it will take care of you. O'Connor advises all touring guitarists to invest in proper road cases, do your best to keep moisture away from your gear before a long drive, make room in the van for spares of the most essential stuff, and make sure you leave a good impression on your future fans by doing your homework.







**O'Connor advises young guitarists heading out for their first jaunt in a van to be conscious of van etiquette. Every band member should have personal space to call their own and, above all, you must practice proper hygiene. Remember: Just because your riffs are filthy doesn't mean you have to be.**

"You don't have to have the most expensive gear to get the best tone, but make sure you take the time with your bandmates to make sure, as a whole, you don't sound super shrilly. It's not just, 'Let's go and play as loud as possible.' You have a tone that's good for a live show," he says. "Then go out and play as many shows as you can."

*Four Year Strong's new album, Brain Pain, is out now.*

"I find I often switch fingerings, but it's really just a throwback to when I had to relearn things out of necessity," says Death Valley High's Reyka Osburn, seen here with an Ibanez Artist



## 5 Questions with Death Valley High's Reyka Osburn

**▶ SAN FRANCISCO'S DEATH** Valley High recently unleashed "Raise Hell," the first of a planned series of singles to drop throughout 2020. Describing their music as "aggressive, skronk-disco light fantastic, like *Saturday Night Fever* on Thorazine," singer/guitarist Reyka Osburn isn't really doing justice to the fact that, basically, DVH are a great rock 'n' roll band.

### Why focus on releasing singles?

Instead of going into a studio and doing 10 songs, we're going to be recording two songs at a time. My biggest concern is that you spend a year making a record and people maybe check in on you when you release it, but then, that's that. In these days of short attention spans, you need to have some kind of event happen regularly to draw people in.

### Your choice of gear is most definitely unconventional.

I play an Ibanez Artist. Maybe one day Ibanez might make me a signature model since no one else uses them! I've made some changes, adding Sperzel tuners and EMG pickups. I plug into a Seventies Marshall 50-watt JMP head and run that into a Vox 2x12 and a Marshall JCM 900 2x12 cab. I have Celestion Greenbacks in both cabs.

### You often fret chords with unusual fingerings. How did that come about?

A long time ago I almost cut my third finger off before a gig. I had a ton of stitches and this ridiculous bulbous thing at the end of my finger, so I had to figure out how to carry on playing until it healed. I find I often switch fingerings, but it's really just a throwback to when I had to relearn things out of necessity.

### Why did you decide to add guitarist Sean Bivins to the band?

It's hard for a guitar player to be a great front-man and really work the audience. I still play on a number of songs live, but from an audience's perspective we can make a much more exciting show if I concentrate on singing and fronting the band. Recording-wise, I'm always going to play on our records, but we have no egos about who plays what, and Sean has some great ideas. It's whatever serves the song best ultimately.

### What do you think Death Valley High are bringing that's unique?

I think my voice is different from the norm in the style in which we play. I refuse to do things that you would expect or predict. Whenever I start to sing, I can only do it my way, I can't do all the clichés. I have to be me.

— Mark McStea





Intronaut's Sacha Dunable [left] and Dave Timnick; Dunable sports a Dunable Asteroid and Timnick holds a Dunable Yeti; [below] Intronaut's new album, *Fluid Existential Inversions*, was recorded with Dunable guitars and pedals; [facing page] Dunable on stage with Intronaut



# Mythical Creatures

MEET INTRONAUT GUITARIST SACHA DUNABLE, THE MAN BEHIND DUNABLE GUITARS, MAKERS OF THE YETI, THE CYCLOPS AND OTHER OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD AXES

By Adam Kovac

**▶ PART OF THE** rock star dream is landing that hallowed endorsement deal, where your level of fame can no longer be denied and some big-name or boutique shop comes begging to custom-build your ideal axe. Sacha Dunable is now living that dream... kinda.

Dunable has achieved undeniable success as the guitarist and singer of prog-metal weirdos Intronaut, putting out a string of albums to a rabid cult of fans and scoring coveted touring spots with bands of the caliber of Mastodon. And he does have that hard-working luthier hard at work.

The bad news is that he's pulling double duty; he is that hard-working luthier con-

structing the guitars of his dreams. Since 2011 he's been cranking out quality instruments at (somewhat) reasonable prices. Dunable Guitars now offers four different six-string models, three basses, six-pickup models, distortion, fuzz and delay pedals and the single-channel, 85-watt Ultramega amp head.

On the phone, Dunable sounds somewhat exhausted and slightly worse for the wear. He's had a long but fun few days showing off his wares to the hordes of gear fanatics at the Winter NAMM Show. While he's earned a break, there's no rest for the wicked: Intronaut is about to launch their sixth record, *Fluid Existential Inversions* [released in Feb-

ruary via Metal Blade]. All this while Dunable Guitars is busier than ever; this year will be the first time they're sold in Guitar Center.

It's a long way from Dunable Guitars' humble origins in a rented garage. The founder had spent years learning the ins and outs of guitars in repair shops, eventually graduating to teching for metal bands on the road. He slowly put together a collection of tools and soon followed in the footsteps of Amazon, Google and Microsoft, maxing out a credit card and settling into a carport within which he would begin to build his empire.

"I started building more and more guitars for people and word caught on that way. he



***“[For] this new album, I used a Dunable amp, Dunable guitars, even some Dunable pedals. I like stuff from other companies, too. We use Mesa amps or whatever — but guitar-wise it’s all Dunable”***



says. “By 2014 I had to quit all my other jobs to build guitars full time.”

Many musicians require second jobs to keep the rent paid, but Dunable has found that there’s a nice synergy between his onstage and offstage careers. Dunable guitars have found their ways into the hands of players like Ozzy Osbourne sideman Blasko and High on Fire bassist Jeff Matz. His products have even shared the stage with Lady Gaga, courtesy of touring guitarist Tim Stewart. “Intronaut had been out on the road playing with a ton of cool bands in 2005, so it sort of happened naturally that my buddies in these other bands would see me with a guitar and go, ‘What the hell is that thing?’ ‘Oh, I made it.’ ‘I want one, too!’” Dunable says. “It just really spread pretty naturally from there.”

Not that celebrity endorsements are necessarily needed to make Dunable gear appealing. Take the guitars: Aside from the Asteroid model, which boasts a beautiful Flying V

shape, the other three models vaguely hint at classic shapes filtered through a twisted imagination. Squint hard at a Cyclops (heh) and the single-pickup base model might look something like a Les Paul Jr. Get a case of beer in you and you might mistake the R2 for an Explorer. The Yeti resembles something like the bastard child of an SG and a Tele Deluxe.

“Design-wise I’m a huge fan of Seventies and Eighties solidbody guitars. Anything from Fender to Guild to weird lawsuit stuff. But I also want to make something really comfortable and ergonomic. So we kinda tweak things and make sure everything’s going to be nice and balanced, basically going about making guitars I’d want to play personally. I don’t want to just be making clones; I want to be making guitars that are our own design.”

Base models are sold as-is, but Dunable’s website also offers numerous customization options: each guitar can be ordered with customizable body, neck and fingerboard woods, custom inlays, different pickup configurations, bridges and finishes. “There’s definitely a lot of different design elements I’ve drawn inspiration from,” he says. “I’ve never really given much thought to what I’m going for, I kind of just go with what I want to do in the

***“A guitar in that scale length [25.5] just sounds better. It’s more resonant. The woods we choose, there’s nothing too out of the ordinary, but choosing the right mahogany or maple or swamp ash affects the playability, tone and feel of the guitar, which is what inspires you to pick it up and riff out”***

moment. To me it’s about looking good, being super comfortable and just sounding good.”

One thing that isn’t customizable is the scale: all guitars are 25.5 inch scale. “A guitar in that scale length just sounds better. It’s more resonant. The woods we choose, there’s nothing too out of the ordinary, but choosing the right mahogany or maple or swamp ash affects the playability, tone and feel of the guitar, which is what inspires you to pick it up and riff out.”

Many players have been finding that inspiration with Dunable; he says the company sold 300 units last year; not bad numbers for a small boutique shop where many of the components are handmade. “We make our own pickups, we do our own paints, it’s mostly done right here in California,” Dunable says.

Which brings us to the price. Base-model guitars range from \$1,850 to \$2,150, customizations even more. That kind of money isn’t something to sneeze at for most casual players, but it falls within “reasonable” for avid collectors or dedicated woodshedders. Dunable says his philosophy on price is a result of his own history of *Wayne’s World* moments, staring at the high-end gear through a guitar store window, muttering, “It will be mine.” “I could never afford a nice guitar or a new guitar,” he says. “I always bought used lower-end Gibsons like Les Paul Studios or Mexican Fenders. I didn’t want to price these things so that they’re out of reach for most people. I want people to play them and for them to be accessible to most. I wanted to give something that has a lot of value for the quality of the instrument you’re getting.”

He vouches for his gear in the most important way: *Fluid Existential Inversions* has all the hallmarks of great modern prog-metal, with dexterous high-gain riffs colliding with moody, atmospheric sections. Almost all those sounds were made with gear designed and built by the band’s leader. “[For] this new album, I used a Dunable amp, Dunable guitars, even some Dunable pedals. I like stuff from other companies, too. We use Mesa amps or whatever — but guitar-wise it’s all Dunable.”

Building guitars and putting them to use on albums, then touring the world with some of the world’s best metal bands sounds like a guitar nut’s dream, but it’s a lot to balance. Dunable is realistic about the possibility of having it all: he won’t be hitting the road in a van overloaded with bandmates and gear for half a year in the near future. Dunable Guitars’ success means Dunable the man has to pace himself, lest the quality of his music, his instruments and his state of mind suffer. “Intronaut hasn’t really been active the last couple of years, which has been great and allowed me to focus on this business. But now going back into this cycle of having an album, we’re just trying to be reasonable about our expectations on what kind of time we can commit. We’re trying to find that balance of doing more fly-dates and weekends. I don’t know if I can ever do six one-month long tours in a year ever again. It keeps the touring and performing aspect done. We all won’t get burned out on it and it won’t burn me out on balancing getting work done while being out doing that stuff.”

Visit [dunableguitars.com](http://dunableguitars.com) for more info.



Built to Spill's  
Doug Martsch [left]  
and Steve Gere  
perform in Madrid  
November 21, 2015



# Built to Spill

FRONTMAN DOUG MARTSCH REFLECTS ON *KEEP IT LIKE A SECRET* AT 20

By Mike Huguenor

▶ **ONE OF THE** last great guitar rock records of the Nineties opens with a humble D chord. For a second it hangs there unaccompanied, almost offhanded in its simplicity. Then a voice enters, and cryptically states: “The plan keeps coming up again.” The following measure, on the three, the song explodes. *Keep It Like a Secret*, Built to Spill’s 1999 album, was their second for a major label. Despite producing zero singles, 20 years later it remains one of indie rock’s defining guitar albums, a record stuffed to bursting with riffs, arpeggios and solos, each catchier than the last, all of them cascading into each other.

“It’s ambitious, and I like that about it. But that’s also the thing I don’t like,” says Doug Martsch, Built to Spill’s singer, guitarist and sole constant member. Famously self-critical, Martsch says the album’s kaleidoscopic guitar work wasn’t necessarily intentional, but the result of his own insecurity about his playing.

---

***“There’s this balance in music where things need to be conventional, be pleasant to the brain and kind of make sense, but also be challenging. That’s just what you’re constantly trying to figure out: what things are cool, and crucial, and what parts take the listener out of the song”***

---

“I added a lot of things more to cover up myself than to make it big sounding,” Martsch explains to us from a Seattle green room. “Now it’s been really fun playing these songs live and not even thinking about all that stuff, kind of interpreting them differently. To me, all those layers are not that essential or important.”

Twenty years later, Martsch aims for something like the heart of the song when playing *Keep It Like a Secret* live, piecing together a melodic throughline from beneath all the swirling layers of fretwork. It may not reproduce the sheer density of *Keep It Like a Secret*, but it’s all in service of the song.

“There’s this balance in music where things need to be conventional, be pleasant to the brain and kind of make sense, but also be challenging,” Martsch says. “That’s just what you’re constantly trying to figure out: what things are cool, and crucial, and what parts take the listener out of the song.”



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[left] Gary Lucas and his Fender Strat take a breather in Temple Park in Bristol, England; [right] Lucas with his trusty 1942 Gibson J-45

# “A Guitar is Like a Mini Orchestra”

FROM JEFF BUCKLEY TO GODS AND MONSTERS AND BEYOND, CAPTAIN BEEFHEART ALUM GARY LUCAS CELEBRATES HIS DIVERSE CAREER ON AN IMPRESSIVE NEW COMPILATION

By Joshua M. Miller

**▶ OVER THE PAST** four decades, Gary Lucas has seemingly dabbled in just about every style of music out there. That long list includes psychedelic rock, world music (including Thirties Chinese pop, Hungarian folk and blues raga), film music, classical, electronica, jazz, blues and avant-garde. The common thread to it all is his guitar playing. Thanks to his fearless attitude and agility, Lucas shapeshifts like a chameleon in tune with whatever soundscape he finds himself in.

“A guitar is kind of like a mini orchestra at your fingertips,” Lucas tells us. “You can really get a full, complex orchestral effect without these pedals — just through open tunings and fingerpicking, for instance. I use a lot of open tunings and a very active finger-picking right

hand to get... sometimes... several voices all at once.

“It’s like an extension of my nervous system, the guitar. I try to play what I feel at the moment and transmit it, just through my touch. And there’s something about the bending of strings that definitely emulates the human voice and a wailing kind of ecstatic or painful blues experience. That, to me, is like a foundational element of music, and the guitar is a perfect instrument to do that.”

By using open tunings, Lucas can “re-voice chords,” which frees him from the “prison of the standard tuning and six strings.”

“It allows for new chord voices to emerge, and it’s a good tool for writing new work because a lot of the harmonies that emerge just in improvising in an open tuning may

not occur to you in standard tuning,” he says. “Maybe it’s because there’s a certain kind of drone. I’m big on drones. The drone is integral to early country blues. You also hear it in Indian raga and Celtic music. A lot of different kinds of world music have those kinds of droning tonal centers and sound.”

Lucas has enjoyed playing guitar since he was nine years old. His favorite model is the Strat, since that’s the first electric guitar he owned [It was a bar mitzvah gift]. He enjoys the “contour of the body, the overall futuristic look of it, and the pickups.” He says Telecasters are a close second as they’re a “great work-horse guitar.” As far as acoustics, Gibson is his favorite, especially when it comes to the blues. He’s taken his 1942 Gibson J-45 around the world many times.





“I’ve tried other acoustics, but nothing satisfies like an old Gibson,” he continues. “I’m not really a guitar collector, per se. I don’t really have the space and there’s something obscene about warehousing instruments just for the sake of it. Guitars are meant to be played — frequently.”

Lucas’ legacy as guitarist, songwriter and recording artist is celebrated on *The Essential Gary Lucas*, a two-disc collection that features 36 released and previously unreleased favorites from the past 40 years. It includes songs from his days in Captain Beefheart, his jazz-rock band Gods & Monsters and an assortment of collaborations and solo efforts. Featured collaborations include Jeff Buckley, Alan Vega, David Johansen, Jerry Harrison, Billy Ficca, Feifei Yang, Elli Medeiros and producer Adrian Sherwood.

“I like all kinds of music and I think there’s a purity in collaboration,” he says. “When you’re in a good collaboration, it’s a give-and-take that can elevate the ideas that are transmitted back and forth into a work that’s greater than the sum of the parts.”

“‘Grace’ is a good example. I had the music and I attempted — before I ever even met Jeff [Buckley] — to put a lyric and a melody on it. And I don’t think it was very good. It kind of sucked, in my opinion. And then when I met Jeff, I gave him that music, and what he did elevated the whole thing and just transformed it. The sparks that fly in a good collaboration!”

The new collection features an early demo of this very track. Lucas worked with Buckley not just in Gods & Monsters but also as a duo, and Lucas appears on Buckley’s 1994 album, *Grace*. “He was a great collaborator. Maybe the greatest young musician I ever worked with,” Lucas says. “He could play anything if he set his mind to it.”



***“I knew that all the guitarists who played with Beefheart, going back to Ry Cooder when he was a teenager, were marked as outstanding players, and I wanted to be in that exclusive club”***

Working with as many different people as possible has helped keep things fresh for Lucas, who enjoys others’ perspectives. “Music is the great leveler. It goes beyond borders and it’s an unstoppable force. You can’t really stop it at any border. It just is transmitted and travels all over in the world. It’s a very powerful medium — when it’s done right, anyway.

“I like to investigate and play all sorts of different music. And the guitar would get boring to just do one thing only. I have a restless curiosity about investigating other areas of music and seeing the world through these collaborations. I’ve traveled and played in 40 different countries, at least, over my career. It’s very broadening.”

The collection features a solo performance of Janacek’s “On an Overgrown Path No. 15 Allegro” at the U.N. He’s grateful for any chance to make an impact with his music.

“There’s something addictive about performing and sharing music with people in any size venue,” Lucas says. “I feel I am giving of myself everything I possess of real value, and

it gratifies me to hear people say, ‘I was in a shitty mood tonight and then I saw that you were playing, so I came out to see you and now I feel great, thank you!’ It kind of makes the whole thing worthwhile.”

## The Beefheart Influence

FOR MANY, THE final two Captain Beefheart albums [1980’s *Doc at the Radar Station* and 1982’s *Ice Cream for Crow*] were the first time they heard the guitar playing of Gary Lucas. He credits the band, which was fronted by Don Van Vliet, for providing inspiration to be an unconventional artist. It’s why he included a few revisited renditions of Beefheart songs on the new collection.

“It reinforced me as an avant guitarist who was doing magical kind of guitar playing right through mastering his music,” Lucas says. “I don’t think a conventional guitarist would ever attempt to play such pieces or co-play such pieces. You had to really know how to do it in order to do it. You couldn’t just go pick up a guitar to achieve those kinds of things. They were rigorously worked out every month and rehearsed by me. Arranged and rehearsed for guitar — and it would take at least a month.

“[Don] was kind of always looking to extend the guitarist technique in the band to be able to voice stuff that would be impossible for most people to even conceive of as a player of guitar,” he adds. “I knew that all the guitarists who played with Beefheart, going back to Ry Cooder when he was a teenager, were marked as outstanding players, and I wanted to be in that exclusive club.”

Since Beefheart material was written on piano and Van Vliet used all 10 fingers, Lucas had the challenge of approximating the composition on guitar. “Evening Bell” exemplifies this. Lucas included a version of him playing with the Metropole Orchestra as part of a Beefheart tribute concert on the collection.

“I was able to do that through really mastering a finger-picking technique, that I kind of devised myself,” he says. “I just basically cut my nails as short as possible and toughened the flesh on the pads of my right hand finger. And so that’s a lot of my characteristic sound and I’ve carried that into my own music. Although I wouldn’t say I ever once tried to emulate Beefheart’s sound in my music.”

Another example, “Flavor Bud Living,” is deceptively simple sounding yet very complex. It was a challenge to relearn it for the live performance included in the collection. “It’s a bitch to play,” Lucas says. “It actually took me a very long time. I had to kind of relearn my technique and I got shooting pains in my arm, muscular pain, rehearsing it and trying to get the sound right in the run up to recording it and then playing it live. But it’s a beautiful piece.”



*We know how it goes: You've always said to yourself, "One of these days, I'll take up slide guitar and become the envy of my neighbors, friends and random strangers!" Well, friends, that day is today! Now read on...*

# SLIDE RULES!



HOW TO PLAY LIKE RORY, DEREK, BONNIE, JEFF, RY, GEORGE AND MORE

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SEVEN QUESTIONS WITH SLIDE MASTER SONNY LANDRETH

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GW'S GUIDE TO SOME OF THE BEST SLIDE RECORDINGS EVER MADE

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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE MAJOR TYPES OF SLIDES

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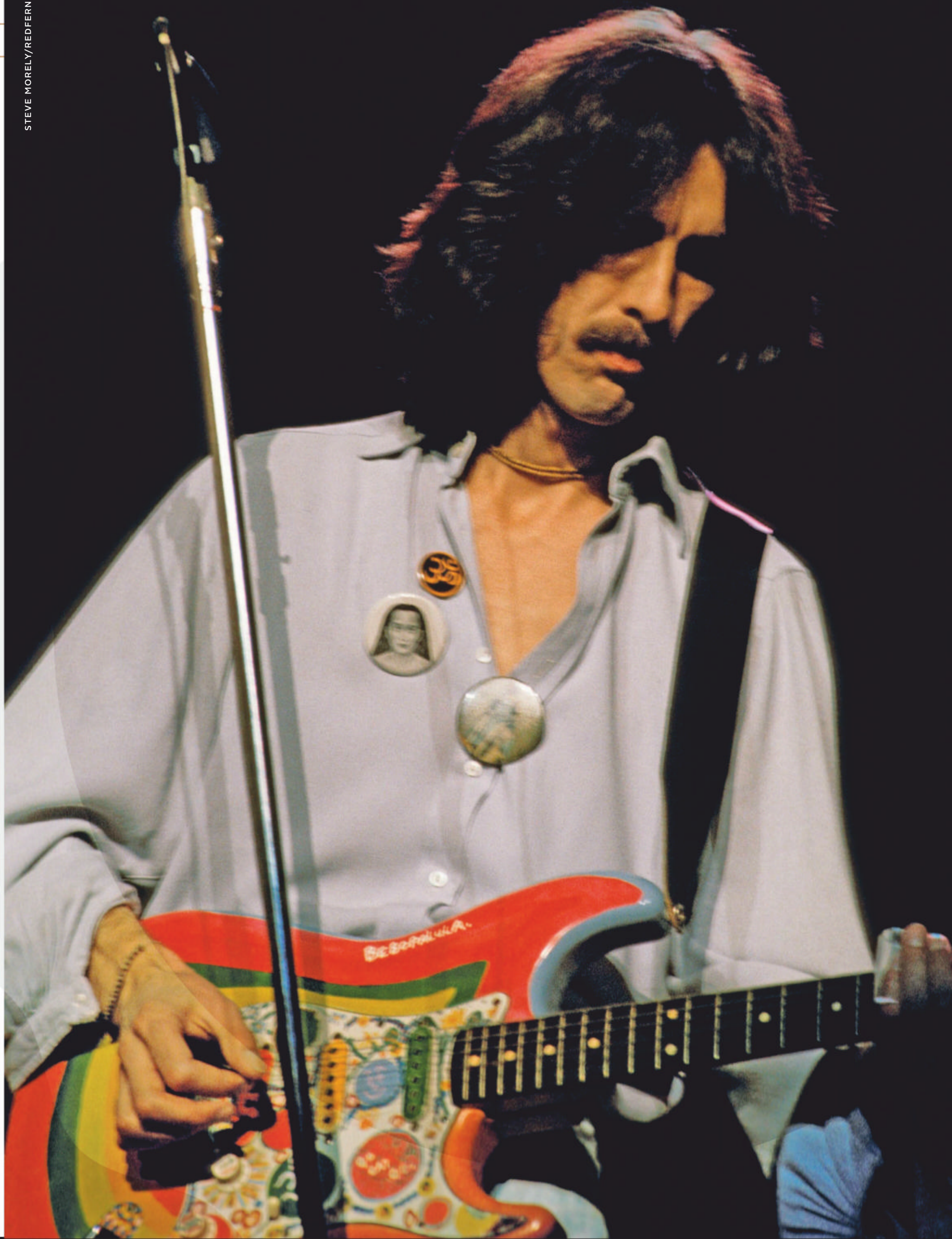


Rory Gallagher  
— armed with a  
Strat and a glass  
slide — performs  
in Rotterdam,  
Netherlands,  
in 1974





STEVE MORELY/REDFERNS





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OF THIS LESSON, GO TO  
GUITARWORLD.COM/  
SEPTEMBER2020

# SLIPPERY LICKS

**LEARN HOW TO PLAY  
SOULFUL BLUES-ROCK  
SLIDE GUITAR IN THE  
STYLES OF SOME OF  
THE WORLD'S GREATEST  
PRACTITIONERS, PAST AND  
PRESENT, INCLUDING RORY  
GALLAGHER, RY COODER,  
BONNIE RAITT, GEORGE  
HARRISON, DEREK TRUCKS,  
DUANE ALLMAN, SONNY  
LANDRETH AND JEFF BECK**

by **PHIL CAPONE**

George Harrison plays slide on his *Magical Mystery Tour*-era "Rocky" Strat during his 1974 *Dark Horse* tour; Harrison played in standard tuning and wore his slide on his 4th finger

WHETHER YOU LOVE the sound of slide but don't know where to begin, or you want to take your playing to the next level, this lesson is for you, as we're analyzing the playing styles of eight celebrated exponents of the art, from the Sixties onward: George Harrison, Ry Cooder, Bonnie Raitt, Sonny Landreth, Rory Gallagher, Jeff Beck and Derek Trucks. Mind you, this is a look at modern blues-rock slide, so it doesn't feature early, legendary pioneers like Robert Johnson or Elmore James, who obviously influenced them all.

One thing all of the eight players whose styles will be covered in this lesson have in common is their preference for using a glass slide, which is *de rigueur* for playing electric slide guitar, whereas a metal slide generally sounds best on acoustic. There are, of course, exceptions: George Thorogood uses a roughly textured copper slide, fashioned from a piece of plumber's pipe, which gives him his signature raspy tone. A slide can also be worn on various fingers, each of which presents technical advantages and disadvantages, so experiment to find out which finger works best for you. Also, slides are made in varying sizes, thicknesses and weights, so try out different ones to see which feels most comfortable and works best for the way you play. Additionally, various materials are available, in addition to glass, such as brass, chrome steel, copper and ceramic, so investigate those options too (Be sure to check out our sidebar on page 50).



**FIG. 1** Duane AllmanOpen E tuning (low to high: E, B, E, G<sup>♯</sup>, B, E)

♩ = 95

1 **TAB** 4/4

N.C.(E) (A) (D) (G)

let ring—

10/12 12 (12)<sup>\*</sup> 12 11\10 10/11 12<sup>\*</sup> 0 3/5 5 (5)<sup>\*</sup> 0 3 3\2 2/3 0

3 (E) (A) (G) (A)

let ring—

10/12 12 (12)<sup>\*</sup> 12 11\10 10/11 12<sup>\*</sup> 0 3/5 5 (5)<sup>\*</sup> 0 3 0 3 5

5 (E) (A) (D) (G)

let ring—

10/12 12 (12)<sup>\*</sup> 12 11\10 10/11 12<sup>\*</sup> 0 3/5 5 (5)<sup>\*</sup> 0 3 3\2 2/3 0

7 (E) (A) (E)

let ring—

10/12 12 (12)<sup>\*</sup> 12 11\10 10/11 12<sup>\*</sup> 0 3/5 5 (5)<sup>\*</sup> 0 3 2 0 3 0

9 E7<sup>♯</sup>9

10/12 (12)<sup>\*</sup> (12) 11\10 10/11 12 (12) 3 0

11

10/12 10/11 (11)/12 12\10 12 12\10 12 (10) 12 12\10/12 (12)\3 0

13

10/12 12 11\10 10/11 12 12 10/12 (12) 9/8 7 0 0 0 5/8 8 5/8 (8) 5/8 (8) 0

Duane Allman in the studio with a Gibson Les Paul — and one hell of a guitar strap!

MICHAEL OCHS  
ARCHIVE/  
GETTY IMAGES

**FIGURE 1: DUANE ALLMAN**

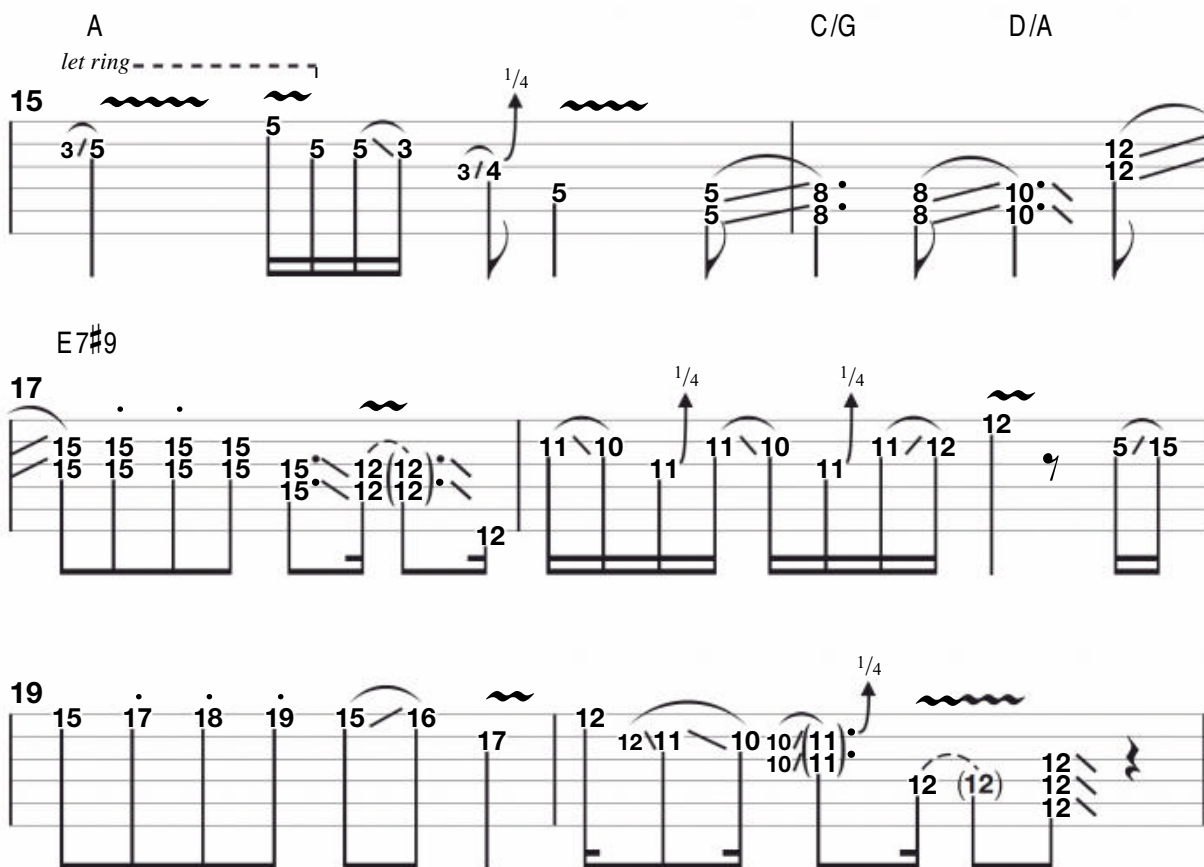
**LEGEND HAS IT THAT**, following an arm injury in 1968, Allman picked up a bottle of Coricidin pills he'd been given to ease the pain and instantly started using it as a slide and jamming along to a Taj Mahal album. Duane played in open E tuning and wore his slide on his 3rd finger.

In this example, we've included a riff section and a solo section. Playing riffs in open position requires a technique adjustment on the lower strings. Instead of laying your slide flat across the strings, angle it so that only the tip makes contact with the string you're playing. If you're playing on the 1st, 2nd or 3rd strings, there's no need to lay the slide across all six strings; simply reposition it so that you only cover the strings you're playing on.

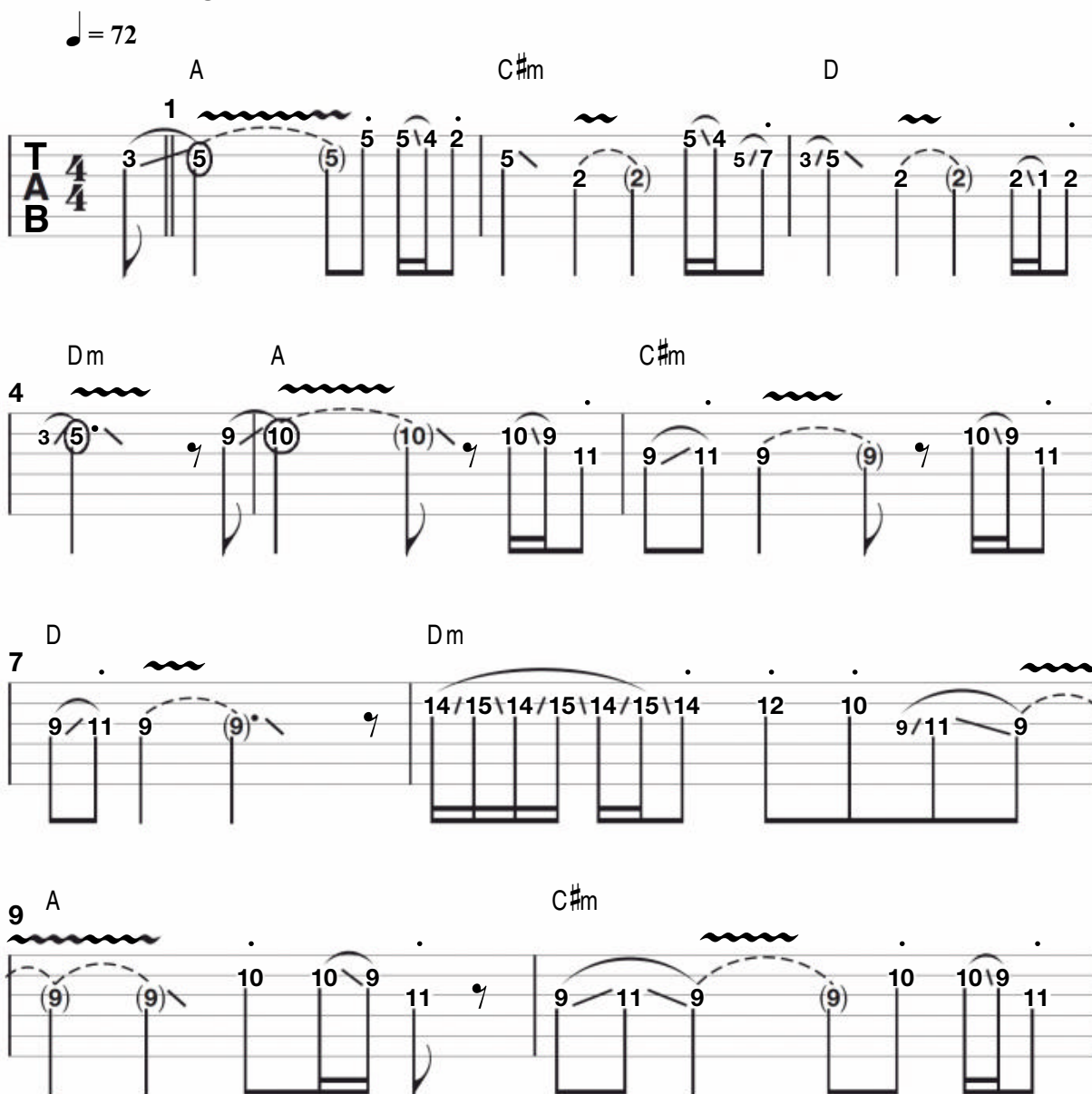


## TECHNIQUE FOCUS 1: SLIDE ESSENTIALS

The first thing to consider is positioning: where you'd normally fret a note — behind the fretwire — is *not* where you want your slide to glide to. Always position the slide *directly above* the fret, to avoid sounding flat (you may need to raise your action and/or use heavier strings to facilitate this). Next, lay your idle 1st finger on the strings behind the slide, to dampen unwanted overtones. Finally, always use pick-hand string damping (or “string guarding,” as Sonny Landreth calls it) and some palm muting on the lower strings that aren't being played at the moment. Pick-hand damping is easier to do when playing fingerstyle because you can simply rest the fingers that aren't picking on the strings that aren't in play. If you're playing with a pick, you'll need to develop a “hybrid damping” technique, whereby you place your 2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers on the high strings to keep them muted when not used. If you're playing a lick across the strings, aim to mute the previous string while simultaneously picking the next, unless, of course, you want the notes to ring, or “bleed,” together.



**FIG. 2** George Harrison  
Standard tuning



## FIGURE 2: GEORGE HARRISON

**AFTER THE BEATLES** broke up, Harrison's slide technique literally soared. His instantly recognizable style was characterized by impeccable intonation, a fresh melodic approach and eschewal of blues clichés, and a very creative and tasteful use of overdubbed harmony slide parts. Harrison played in standard tuning and wore his slide on his 4th finger.

Playing in standard tuning requires very careful string damping, since, unlike in an open tuning, any notes inadvertently sounded on neighboring strings can in many cases sound “off key.” Because of his usage of standard tuning, Harrison's style was much more monophonic and linear (playing along a single string) than that of a typical blues slide player. Harrison loved to overdub harmony slide parts too, so we've included some in this example. You'll hear both parts in the backing track, and they're panned hard left and right in the stereo mix, which will conveniently enable you to isolate each part, by using your audio player's balance control, and play the missing part yourself.



D Gtr. 1 & Gtr. 2 Dm

11

A C#m

13

Gtr. 1 & Gtr. 2 Dm

15

**FIG. 3** Ry Cooder

Open D tuning (low to high: D, A, D, F#, A, D)

w/slide 1 A5 B5 A5 A5 B5 A5

4 G5 A5 B5 D5 A5

7 G5 F D 1. 2.

Bm w/o slide let ring Asus4 Gmaj7(no3)

11

p p i m (fingerpick w/thumb and index and middle fingers)



## NAIL THE TONE!

The worst thing you can do when playing slide is overcook the overdrive. Too much distortion will amplify every overtone, and your playing will lose clarity, so aim for “crunch” rather than full-blown distortion.

Bonnie Raitt swears by an MXR Dyna Comp compressor (“the secret to my sound”), which allows her to sustain notes without piling on gain. If you’re serious about slide guitar, a compressor deserves a place on your pedalboard. Keep in mind that overdrive does provide some compression.

## FIGURE 3: RY COODER

A TRUE LEGEND of slide guitar and the man credited with turning Keith Richards on to open G tuning, Cooder himself plays in many different tunings. He has been known to use drop-D, open D, open G and open E. When playing electric, Ry uses a glass slide, worn on his 4th finger.

Dark and evocative Cajun-flavored vibes are the order of the day here. For best tonal results, use a deep tremolo effect, timed to eighth-note triplets relative to the tempo. We’ve included a fretted chord section here to illustrate how Cooder effortlessly



Ricky Fataar  
(Stig O'Hara from  
the Rutles!) [left]  
and Bonnie Raitt  
perform in the UK  
in June 2013  
CLASSIC ROCK/  
FUTURE



switches between fingers and slide; you'll need to wear the slide on your 4th finger to pull this off. If you find this awkward, you could momentarily remove the slide, as there's ample time to quickly redeploy it before the closing phrase.

## FIGURE 4: BONNIE RAITT

**B.B. KING ONCE** said that he thought Raitt was the “best damn slide player working today,” and her emotive, melodic style is testament to this. Raitt wears her slide on her 2nd finger, which enables her to switch conveniently between rhythm and slide playing. She plays mainly in open A tuning and will sometimes employ a capo to transpose everything to a higher key.

Wearing her slide on her 2nd finger enables Raitt to “work around it” and play a variety of fretted riffs with her 1st, 3rd and 4th fingers. The first eight bars of this example illustrate this convenient and highly effective technical approach, so make sure you follow the instructions in the tabs carefully. The second eight

14 F#5 Esus2 D

let ring

1. F#7#5 F#7 2. F#m D

17 w/slide let ring

FIG. 4 Bonnie Raitt

Open A tuning (low to high: E, A, E, A, C#, E)

Shuffle ♩ = 120

A D

w/slide 1 1/4 w/o slide

T A B 4 4

12 10 10/11 12 10 10/12 12 12 8 9 5 5 5 5 5 5

3

4 w/slide A w/o slide

3/5 5 3 3/5 (5) 0 3 3/2 0 0 3 4 0 0 2 0 0 0

3

7 D F#m

5 5 5 3 3/5 3/5 3/5 3/5 3 5 5 3 0 3/5 5 0

3

E F#m D

10 7 6 5 5/7 (7) 0 5 8 5 3 3/5 3/5 5 (5) 10

3

13 F#m E F#m

12 11 10 12 10 12 7 5 7 5/7 5/7 7 17 17 16 17 17 17

3



It's not easy to find radical new ways to play slide, but Sonny Landreth figured out that what was going on behind the slide was just as important as the stuff in front of it.

MARCO VAN ROOIJEN



bars (9-16) feature a solo section demonstrating how to play over minor chords while tuned to a major chord. (Chris Rea similarly tuned to E major and would often solo over minor progressions.)

## FIGURE 5: SONNY LANDRETH

IT'S NOT EASY to find radical new ways to play slide guitar, but Sonny Landreth figured out that what was going on *behind* the slide was just as important as the stuff in front of it. Landreth plays in open E tuning and wears his slide on his 4th finger, which enables him to use the bottleneck and simultaneously fret notes behind it. You'll need to follow suit for this example, as there are some fretted notes added behind the slide, as indicated in the tab by the "1" (for 1st finger) next to the relevant note. Landreth frequently uses two fingers simultaneously behind the slide, but we've opted to keep it simple here, since this is a rather tricky technique to perform. Once you've gotten the

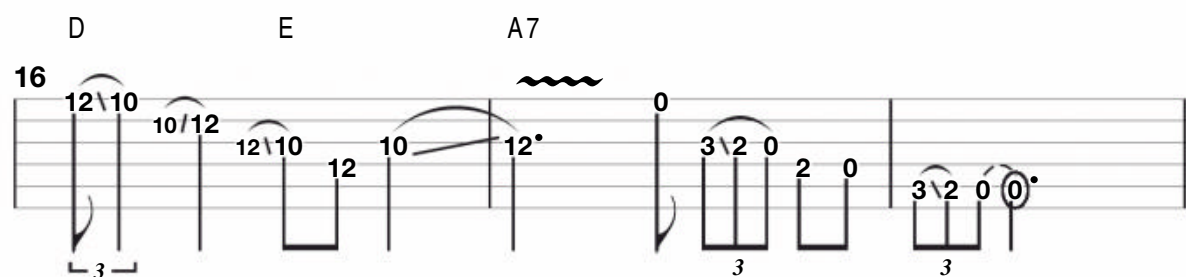
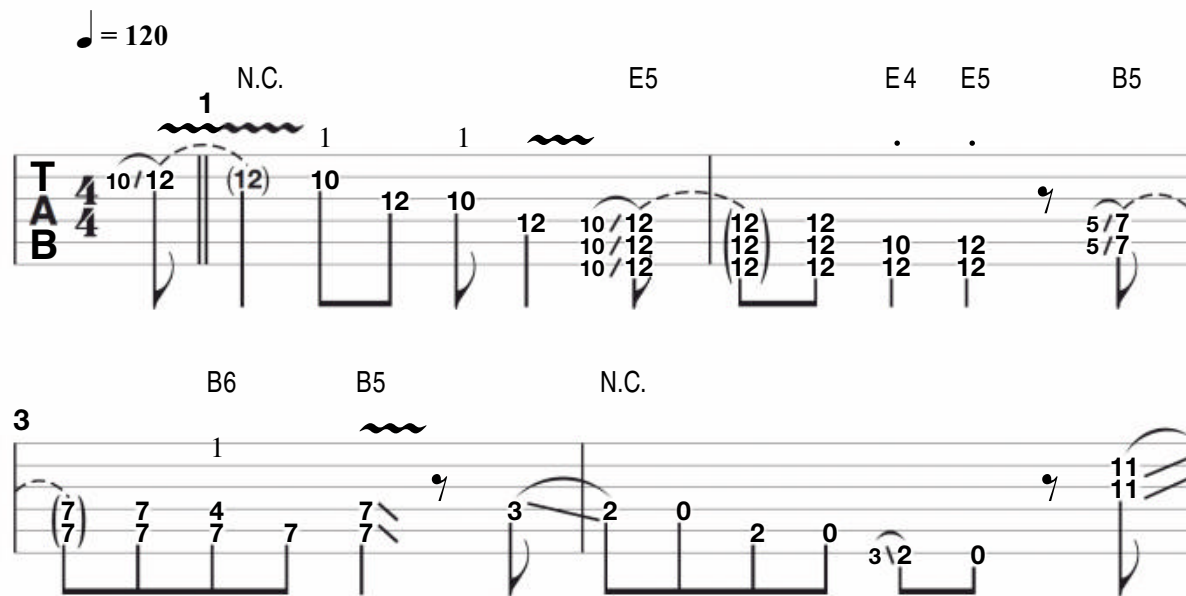


FIG. 5 Sonny Landreth

Open E tuning (low to high: E, B, E, G#, B, E)





5 E Eadd9 E5 E4 E5 E4 B5

1 1

7 B6 G5 F#5 E5 G5 E5

1 1

9 N.C. E5 E7 E5 D5 E5

1 1

11 N.C. N.C. F#5 E5 E

1 1

17 N.C. E Esus2 E

1 1

19 N.C. G5 E5

1

**FIG. 6** Rory Gallagher

Open G tuning (low to high: D, G, D, G, B, D)

Shuffle ♩ = 145

N.C.(G7)

1

TAB 4/4

12 17 17 17 (17) 0 12 10 0 10 12 12 12 (12) 0

3



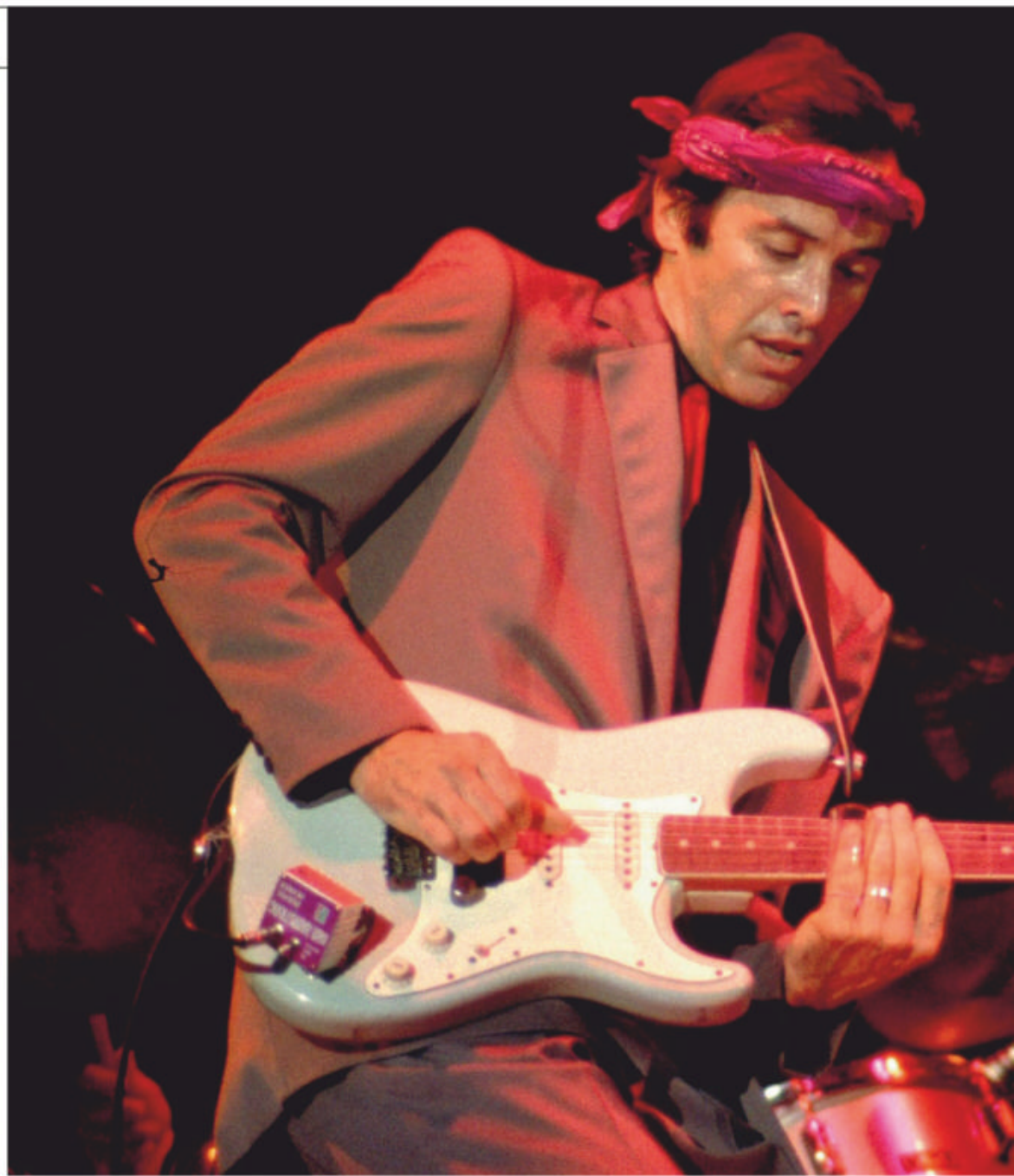
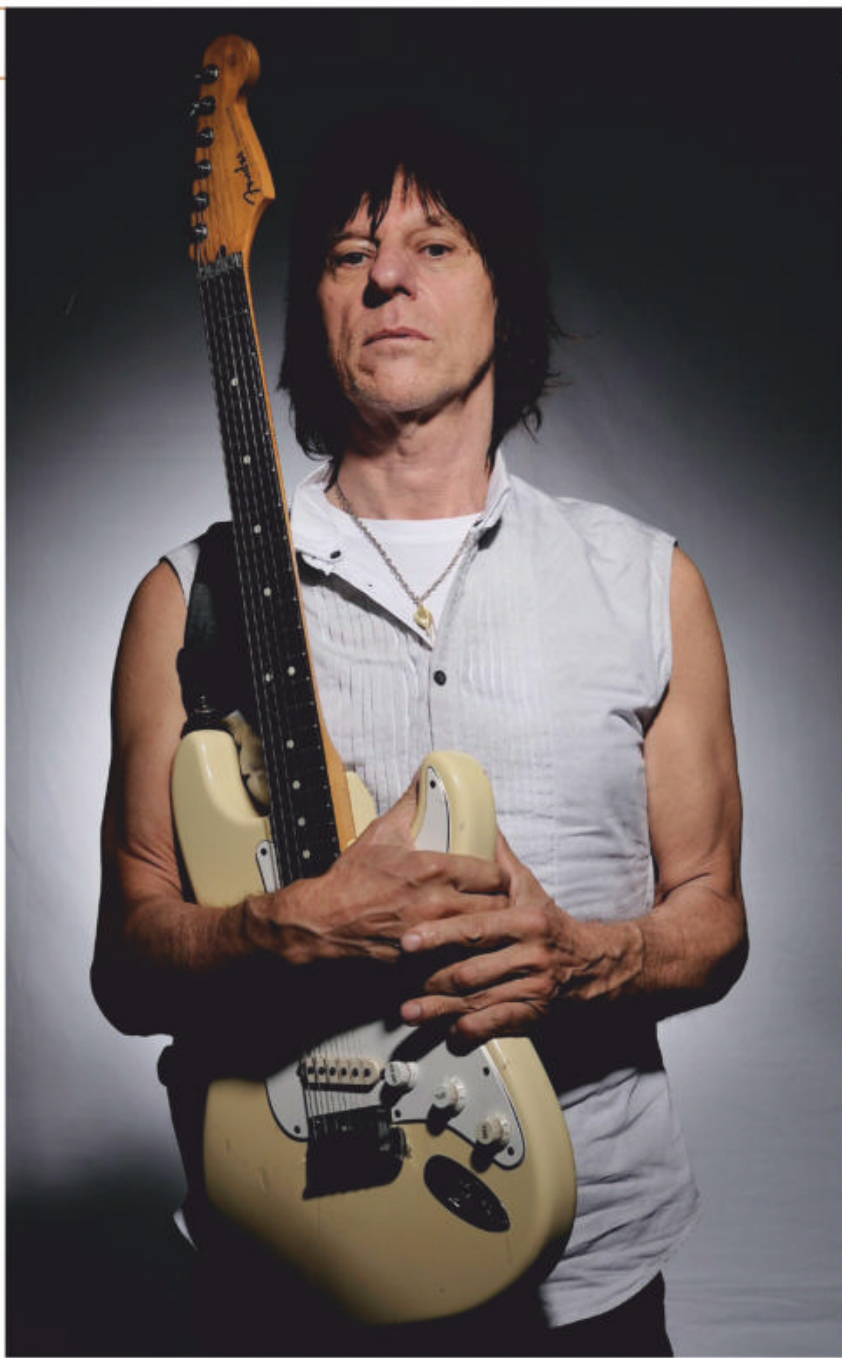
## TECHNIQUE FOCUS 2: IS YOUR METAL TOO HEAVY?

If you want to play slide on a guitar set up with fairly light string gauges and/or low action, a lightweight slide generally provides better results, touch and feel. While the tone of a hefty brass or glass slide is great, the reduced tension and stiffness of thinner strings provide less resistance to stop the weight and inertia of a massive slide (metal is heavier than glass) from clunking against the frets. You might also lose some of the desired nuances with the heavy slide and light string setup. If you favor a guitar set up for an easy touch (as many players do), try using a fairly thin and lightweight glass slide, or even one made from shatterproof acrylic (Pyrex or Plexiglass), with an internal circumference that fits on your finger comfortably.

Also, if you're struggling with super-low action, take a sheet of paper or paperboard, fold it over a couple of times and wedge it under the strings in front of the nut (between the nut and 1st fret), which will raise your guitar's action considerably, approaching that of a steel or resonator guitar. Legend has it that Lynyrd Skynyrd guitarist Gary Rossington, when he recorded his slide parts for "Free Bird," used the metal shaft of a screwdriver or whammy bar from a Fender Strat for this purpose, similarly wedging it under the strings of his Gibson SG. Something much softer, like a wooden pencil, will achieve the same result without potentially denting your fretboard.

The only downside to doing this wedge trick is that you can't utilize the open strings and may need to check your tuning on one or more of them, which may go more sharp than the others, but it offers you a quick, convenient way to achieve a clear, buzz-free tone for an occasional slide solo.





3

10/12 12 12 (12) 12 10 12 10/12 10/12 12 (12) 10

5

12 12 12 10 12 10/12 12 12 10 12 10/12 12 12 10 12 (12) 0

7

2/3 2/3 0 (0) 0 2/3 0 2/3 2/3 0 (0) 0 2/3 0 2/3 2/3 0 (0) 3/12 3/12

10

12 12 12 (12) 12 17 17 17 (17) 17 17/20 (20) 17/15 15 10/12 12 10

3

let ring

hang of the technique, try playing some of your own musical ideas using more than a single digit behind the slide.

## FIGURE 6: RORY GALLAGHER

**WHEN ASKED WHAT** it felt like to be the greatest guitar player in the world, Jimi Hendrix reputedly retorted, “ask Rory Gallagher.” Rory preferred open G tuning and wore his slide on his 3rd finger. Wide vibrato and fast, fiery licks are signatures of the guitarist’s celebrated style. One of the hallmarks of Gallagher’s playing was his use of a wide vibrato, shaking the notes vigorously to keep them ringing and singing. Remember that, unlike a regular finger vibrato, which is attained by repeatedly bending and releasing a string, slide vibrato is achieved by wiggling the slide to the left and to the right, toward the nut and bridge. The key is to move equally above and below the target note, about one fret in either direction. Notice in bar 1 the use of the open 1st string to facilitate quick position shifts.



Jeff Beck [left] in 2009 — and Ry Cooder on February 7, 1983; Cooder and his band were opening for Eric Clapton at the Cow Palace in San Francisco that night

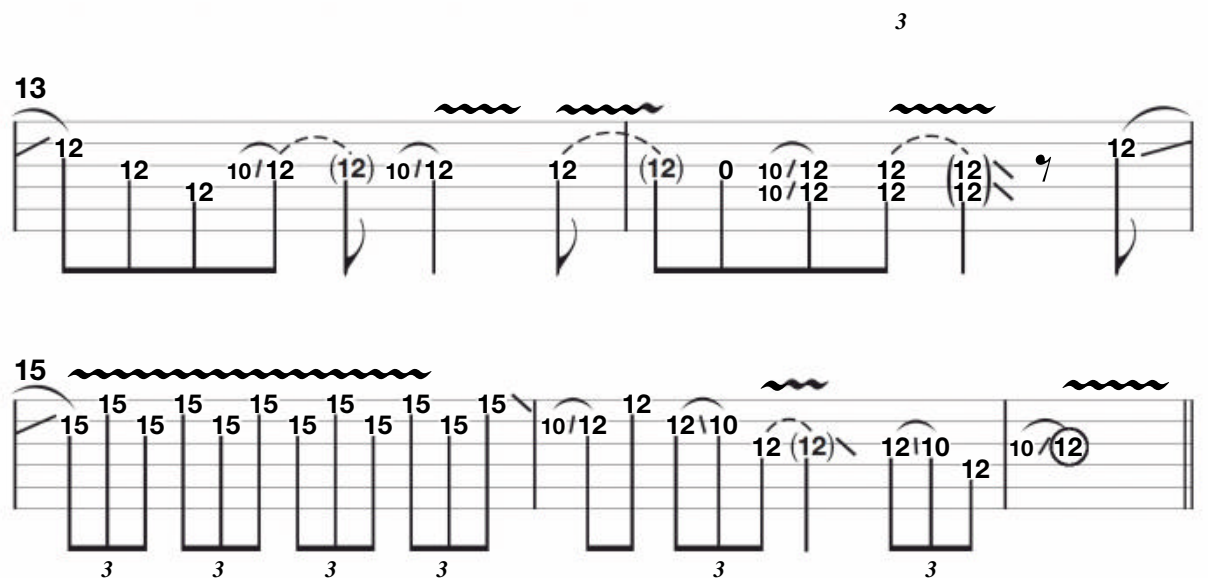
BECK: JOBY SESSIONS/FUTURE  
COODER: CLAYTON CALL/REDFERNS



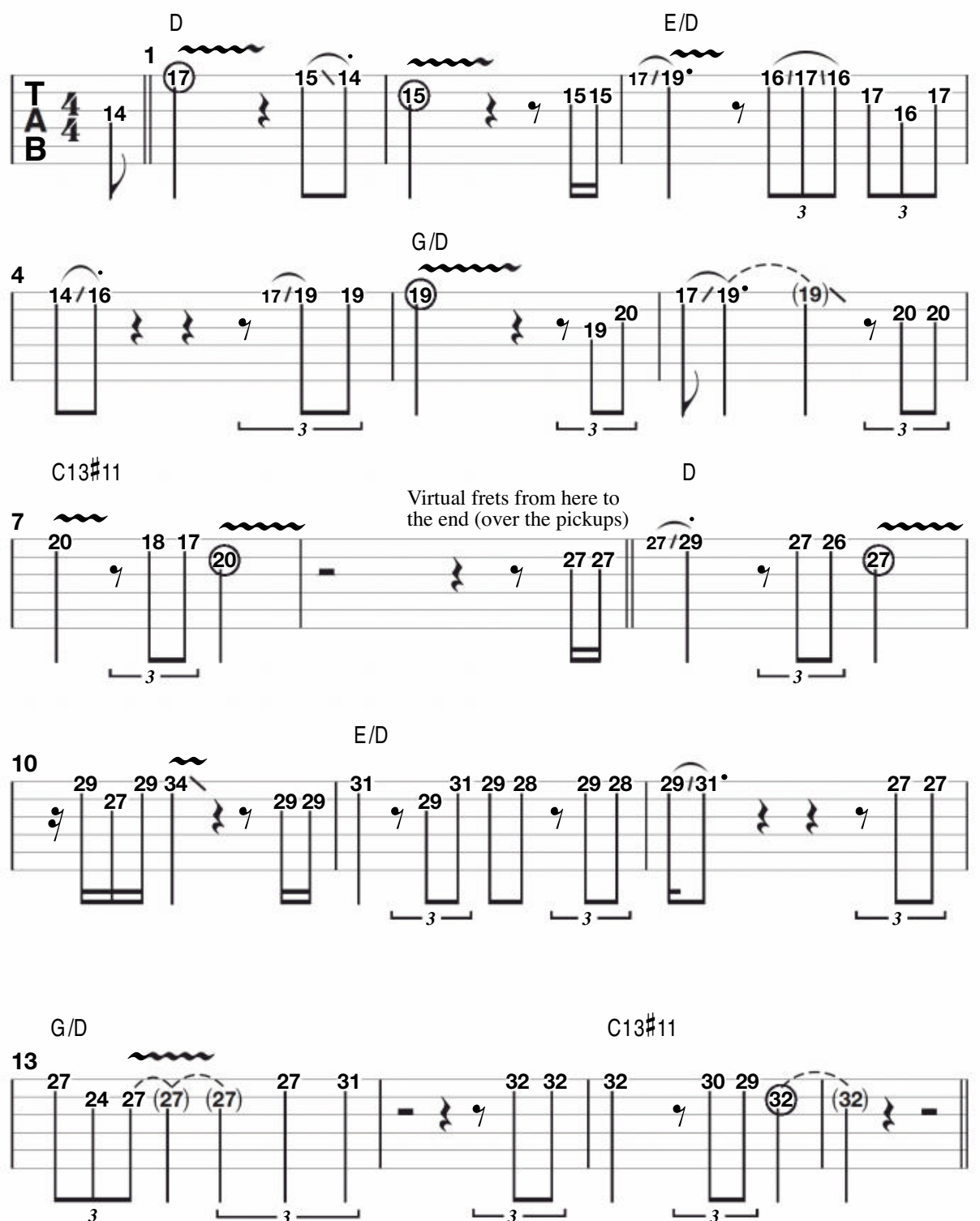
## FIGURE 7: JEFF BECK

**LIKE LANDRETH, BECK** is a slide innovator. He plays in standard tuning and wears his slide on his fret hand's 2nd finger. But he will also sometimes hold the slide like a pen in his pick hand, tapping it onto the strings to create very high-pitched notes past the end of the fretboard. This unusual technique requires extreme accuracy, as the notes are very close together in this area.

The first eight bars of this example illustrate Beck's "regular" (conventional) slide technique. In the second section (bars 9-16), you'll need to hold the slide in your pick hand with the aforementioned pen-like grip. Mute the strings by laying your fret hand across them and sound the notes by tapping the slide onto the string on the virtual frets indicated. Tip: You can check your pitch by sounding the note an octave lower on the same string, which would be exactly 12 frets lower.



**FIG. 7** Jeff Beck  
Standard tuning







## FIGURE 8: DEREK TRUCKS

TRUCKS HAS BECOME one of the most respected of all slide players. Like Duane Allman, who was one of his biggest musical influences (not to mention his uncle Butch Trucks' bandmate in the original incarnation of the Allman Brothers Band), Derek plays in open E tuning and wears his slide on his 3rd finger. Many regard him as the player who keeps the blues-rock spirit of Allman alive and who has built upon it brilliantly. But the highly talented and creative guitarist has done more than just that, by assimilating into his distinctive, original style an impressively diverse array of musical influences, such as jazz and Indian sitar music. Derek's slide style may be imaginatively described as "the Mississippi Delta meets the Ganges Delta."

Trucks' 1997 debut album, *The Derek Trucks Band*, caused jaws to drop to the floor. Here was an unknown young guitarist playing jazz standards by Miles Davis, John Coltrane and Wayne Shorter, all on slide and in open E tuning! Several distinguishing elements of Trucks' celebrated slide style are demonstrated in this featured musical example, namely:

- a lack of standard blues licks,
- a more linear approach (playing up and down strings instead of across them in a fixed position),
- the way vibrato (when used) is only applied to the end of a note, which requires initial pitch centering to be spot on
- a sitar-like use of trills (bars 3, 8, 12 and 13).

Guitar World Senior Music Editor Jimmy Brown contributed to this feature. **GW**

FIG. 8 Derek Trucks

Open E tuning (low to high: E, B, E, G $\sharp$ , B, E)

Swing Feel

Am9

1

T 4/4  
A 4/4  
B 4/4

4

B $\flat$ m9

8

Am9

11

13

B $\flat$ m9





# RUNNIN' WILD

## 7 QUESTIONS WITH SONNY LANDRETH

**S**onny Landreth is the king of the swampy Southern zydeco slide guitar style that has been dubbed “slydeco.” The troubadour from Breaux Bridge, Louisiana, has musically sparred on record and on stage with legends including Mark Knopfler, Warren Haynes, John Mayall, Derek Trucks and Eric Clapton, the latter rating him as “one of the most advanced musicians on the planet.” Landreth’s new album, *Blacktop Run* [Provogue/Mascot], is another magical display of his roots-rock artistry, not only as an electric and acoustic guitarist — four of the tracks are instrumentals — but also as a compelling singer, songwriter and storyteller.

**For a lot of people, you first came to their attention when you started playing in John Hiatt’s band in 1987. Was that gig a big step up for you at the time?**

Oh yeah. The band I had, we were like tons of other bands, playing in bars. And when I got the gig with John, I brought my band

with us and we became his backing band, the Goners. We just had a real chemistry. We all knew it. He was out promoting *Bring the Family*, which was an incredible album recorded with Ry Cooder, Jim Keltner and Nick Lowe. So we went from playing in just regular bars to more of a world stage, as it were. It was the first time that we went to Europe and spent seven or eight weeks touring in a different country every day. It was a big deal.

**It always sounds like you’re playing with a ton of gain. Is it hard to keep everything under control?**

The notion that you’re riding a wild animal and it could go either way makes it more exciting. It’s more about the complexity of overtones and adding a powerful feel.

**Have you ever played slide in just standard tuning?**

I used to do it all the time. I got lazy many {continued on page 48}



**SLIDE GUITAR HAS GRACED ALL KINDS OF MUSICAL GENRES. HERE’S GW’S PICK OF SOME OF THE BEST SLIDE RECORDINGS EVER MADE.**

**N**ot content with the status quo, industrious young guitar players have endeavored over the decades to make things more difficult for themselves. Some have tried playing the guitar behind their back, over their head, with their teeth, with their friends’ teeth, etc. And then there was the inventive guitarist who, many decades ago, decided to slip a bottle over his finger and slide it along his guitar’s strings to produce a magical sound. (He probably first emptied the bottle himself, if you know what I mean). While playing the guitar with your teeth is, was and always shall be a novelty, slide guitar — and slide guitarists — is and are here to stay. They actually started digging in their heels long before Robert Johnson made his haunting Delta blues recordings in Texas in the 1930s. Since Johnson’s time, players — including the likes of George Thorogood, Derek Trucks, Keb’ Mo’, Jerry Douglas and Roy Rogers — have built entire careers around slide guitar and its many stylistic varieties.

Below, we present a handful of tracks that represent essential listening in the world of slide guitar. Please note that we’re sticking with regular ol’ guitar — no lap steel, sacred steel, pedal steel, etc. These songs are presented in no particular order.

**THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND, “STATESBORO BLUES” (DUANE ALLMAN)**

A generation of blues-influenced rockers toyed with slide guitar for several years, slowly bringing it into mainstream music (Check out Jeff Beck’s performance on “Evil Hearted You” by the Yardbirds), but no one dragged it into the modern era quite like Duane Allman. He used the slide to imitate the sound of a blues harp — not to mention mesmerize countless concert goers who were knocked out by his dexterity and intensity. Perhaps his quintessential {continued on page 48}

GREG MILES



## RUNNIN' WILD

continued from page 47

years ago and didn't want to carry guitars around tuned to different chords. Standard offers a lot of options. It's what you do with what you have that makes you sound unique. Often, I would drop the top E string down a tone but keep the rest in standard, then you've got four notes in a G chord. That's a quick fix. I do prefer open tuning because there is so much you can do with those open strings, and I'm constantly fingerpicking in between the notes that you hear — almost indiscernible so that it becomes more of a feel thing than an audible note. That's a big part of my sound.

### What do you use for a slide?

Recently I've started using one of the first ones that I ever made again, cut from a motorcycle handlebar. A buddy of mine's family had a motorcycle shop in Louisiana. I thought it would be heavy, slick and I'd have a lifetime's supply. It's funny how things come back around. We do an acoustic set to open the night and I've found that my reso guitar spoke more with that metal slide. When I cut it, way back, I had no idea what I was doing and I made it longer than I needed, but with the extra weight on the end you get a bigger vibrato. On electric I still prefer glass.

### You started out on trumpet. Do you think your guitar phrasing was influenced by that natural breathing space?

Exactly — it really helped me. I had no idea at the time but looking back I realized what had taken place. I had to learn to play and fit in with my breathing. That pause, no matter how brief, gives a completely different feeling and lends itself much more to melodicism.

### There's some phenomenal YouTube footage of you and Derek Trucks playing a slide guitar duel on your song "Congo Square" at the Crossroads Festival. Was that a special moment?

It was a real spur-of-the-moment thing. Derek and I are close friends, so it was a real natural thing. The first time I heard Derek, he was a little kid. My bass player Dave Ranson and I saw him on TV and we both said, "Wow! That's the real deal."

### Have you met Ry Cooder?

He was a big influence. We met once. It was not the best of circumstances. But we have mutual friends. It's cool.

—David Sinclair and Mark McStea

## SLIDE TRACKED

continued from page 47

slide performance is the Allmans' *At Fillmore East* version of Blind Willie McTell's "Statesboro Blues." It features the sort of playing that gives people chills.

### SONNY LANDRETH, "ÜBERESSO"

This Louisiana-based slide master started appearing on music fans' radars in earnest when he joined John Hiatt's band in 1987 — and then again after the release of the 2007 *Crossroads Blues Festival* DVD. It features several performances by Landreth, including the uber-exciting instrumental, "Überesso." Landreth's unique slide technique lets him fret notes and play chords and chord fragments behind the slide. He plays with the slide on his little finger, so his other fingers have more room to fret.

### STEVE MILLER BAND, "THE JOKER" (STEVE MILLER)

Although not primarily known as a slide player, Steve Miller put the slide to fun and creative use on this 1973 hit single, playing a hummable, tasteful slide solo for the masses (and imitating a whistle a few times in the process). Although it's no "Überesso," it shows that slide guitar has been invited to the chart-success party, especially in the early Seventies, much like our next selection ...



### GEORGE HARRISON, "GIVE ME LOVE (GIVE ME PEACE ON EARTH)"

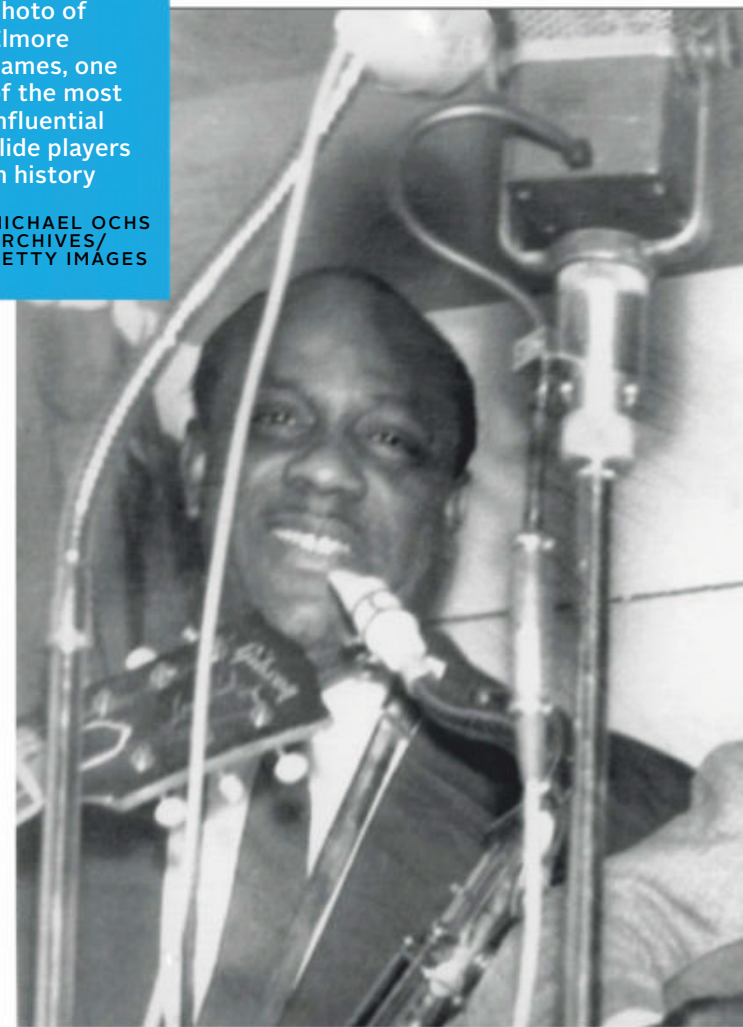
You'll read it in other roundups of great slide guitar songs — comments like, "Although he wasn't a virtuoso like these other players..." Yeah, whatever. OK, he wasn't Jeff Beck, Steve Howe or Ritchie Blackmore, but George Harrison, who, as a member of the Beatles, influenced millions of humans to play guitar, suddenly started playing slide guitar in 1969, inventing an entirely new "guitar persona" for himself. What he came up with was a distinctive, non-blues-based style that incorporated hints of Indian music, some pointers he picked up while learning sitar and other Beatles-esque odds and ends. While "My Sweet Lord" and Badfinger's "Day After Day" (featuring Harrison on slide) are better known, 1973's "Give Me Love" perfectly displays his new-found style.

### FOGHAT, "SLOW RIDE" (ROD PRICE)

Staying in the Seventies for a moment, let us consider Foghat's "Slow Ride," another slide-based song that topped the charts.

An undated photo of Elmore James, one of the most influential slide players in history

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES



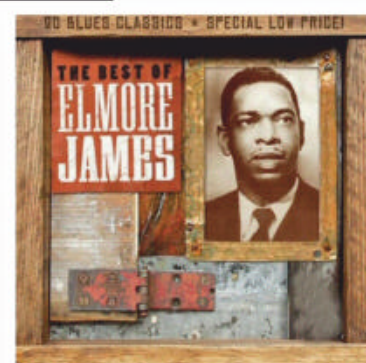
Perhaps the polar slide opposite of George Harrison, the heavily blues-influenced Rod "The Bottle" Price (Yes, they called him "The Bottle") let it all hang out in his solo near the fadeout of Foghat's signature track. Be sure to also check out Foghat's "Drivin' Wheel" and "Stone Blue."

### LED ZEPPELIN, "IN MY TIME OF DYING" (JIMMY PAGE)

This recording (the most popular version of a song Josh White recorded in the mid Forties), features Page sliding away in open A (E / A / E / A / C# / E). Although Page also played slide on "When the Levee Breaks," "Traveling Riverside Blues" and "What Is and What Should Never Be," his distinctive slide style is all over the powerful and dark "In My Time of Dying."

### ELMORE JAMES, "DUST MY BROOM"

We've mentioned a few "blues influenced" players, which is basically another way of saying "players who were influenced by Elmore James." James — who was actually dubbed the "King of the Slide Guitar" — is best known for his 1951 version of "Dust My Broom (I Believe My Time Ain't Long)." The song's opening riff is one of the best-known and most influential slide guitar parts ever (just ask Fleetwood Mac's Jeremy Spencer).







Yes, it sounds a lot like what Robert Johnson played on “I Believe I’ll Dust My Broom” several years earlier, but James played his riff on an electric guitar, pretty much claiming it for himself in the process and sending chills down a different set of spines.

#### JOHNNY WINTER, “HIGHWAY 61 REVISITED”

The lanky Texan (and former Brit) simply burns it up in his legendary cover of Bob Dylan’s “Highway 61 Revisited” from *Second Winter*, his second album. Be sure to investigate the acoustic “Dallas” from Winter’s self-titled 1969 album. If you can convincingly play these two songs, it’s time to hang up your T-square and/or apron and look for session work!

#### DEREK TRUCKS BAND, “SAHIB TERI BANDI/MAKI MADNI” (DEREK TRUCKS)

The list takes an exotic turn with this middle-eastern-flavored track by Derek Trucks. With his deep Allman Brothers Band lineage, we know Trucks (and Warren Haynes, of course) can tackle roots rock, extended blues jams and more, but this 10-minute instrumental track from his 2006 album, *Songlines*, steps way out of those boundaries and truly shows what Trucks is capable of. He makes the guitar sound like an exotic instrument from a distant land and time.

#### RORY GALLAGHER, “WANT AD BLUES/WANTED BLUES”

Let us not forget the late, great Rory Gallagher, and his version of John Lee Hooker’s “Wanted Blues.” It’s hard to believe this master of the Stratocaster was also a ridiculously accomplished traditional blues slide player.

### For more essential listening, check out the albums below!

#### ROBERT JOHNSON

##### THE COMPLETE RECORDINGS

Johnson’s mesmerising blues slide is documented by this compilation of his 1936-to-1937 sessions. **Song:** “Crossroads”

#### SONNY LANDRETH

##### FROM THE REACH

This eloquent electric slide player’s classy licks inspired many fretted players. **Song:** “The Milky Way Home”

#### BONNIE RAITT

##### NICK OF TIME

We’ve always appreciated the way Raitt can insert a spine-tingling slide solo into a radio-friendly pop masterpiece or two. **Song:** “This Thing Called Love”

#### BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON

##### DARK WAS THE NIGHT

Otherworldly and haunting, Blind Willie Johnson’s slide sound was also seminal, as this compilation attests. **Song:** “Dark Was the Night”

#### EARL HOOKER

##### SIMPLY THE BEST

Flamboyant, surprisingly off-beat and deeply groovy, Hooker’s a hugely underrated electric slide man. Check him out! **Song:** “You Got to Lose”

#### ZZ TOP

##### RID GRANDE MUD

“Just Got Paid” from ZZ Top’s 1972 album showcases Billy Gibbons at his greasy, finger-lickin’ best on slide. **Song:** “Just Got Paid”

#### BEN HARPER

##### WELCOME TO THE CRUEL WORLD

Raw yet poised, modern yet rootsy, this slide-slathered debut is a crossover classic. **Song:** “Welcome to the Cruel World”

#### TAMPA RED

##### THE GUITAR WIZARD

There’s plenty of barrelhouse swagger in Tampa Red’s 1928 to 1934 resonator workouts. **Song:** “Big Fat Mama”

#### LEO KOTTKE

##### 6- AND 12-STRING GUITAR

Astonishingly spirited, virtuosic acoustic slide from ’69 — on a 12-string, too! You’re in for a treat. **Song:** “Vaseline Machine Gun”

#### DAVID LINDLEY

##### EL RAYO-X

Slide polymath Lindley has played with Ry Cooder and Bob Dylan and is a master of both pedal- and lap steel. **Song:** “Mercury Blues”

#### JOHN BUTLER TRIO

##### THREE

Rootsy, street-savvy and funky, Butler rebooted the slide genre with this 2001 album. **Song:** “Betterman”

#### SON HOUSE

##### THE ORIGINAL DELTA BLUES

There’s a wiry, off-kilter groove in Son House’s slide style that hints at where Jimmy Page got it from. **Song:** “Death Letter”

#### RY COODER

##### PARIS, TEXAS

As desolate as a mid-night highway, this 1984 soundtrack is possibly Cooder’s finest hour. **Song:** “Paris, Texas”



#### KELLY JOE PHELPS

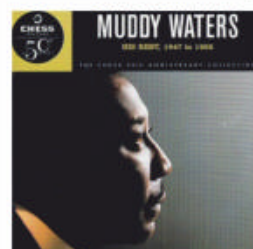
##### SHINE EYED MR. ZEN

Phelps has a gift for finding mysterious depths in acoustic slide that defy simple categorization. **Song:** “House Carpenter”

#### MUDDY WATERS

##### HIS BEST 1947 TO 1955

The genuine article — no one has bettered Muddy for raw, Alpha-male mojo on slide. Mandatory listening. **Song:** “Train Fare Home”



#### RORY GALLAGHER

##### DEUCE

Rory’s slide playing on “Crest of a Wave” from 1971’s *Deuce* is wild and free as an Atlantic breaker. Unmissable. **Song:** “Crest of a Wave”

#### DEREK TRUCKS BAND

##### ALREADY FREE

He flies higher than anyone else in electric slide. The term virtuoso doesn’t seem like overstatement. **Song:** “Down in the Flood”

#### THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND

##### SEVEN TURNS

Lists like this are quick to jump back to the Duane Allman era, but let’s not forget Warren Haynes’ massive contributions to the band’s late-era image, muscle and sound — and to slide guitar in general. **Song:** “Loaded Dice” (which Haynes co-wrote with Dickey Betts)

#### MARTIN HARLEY

##### GROW YOUR OWN

Martin Harley puts his soulful troubadour style to fine use on this after-hours beauty of an album. **Song:** “One for the Road”

— Damian Fanelli and Guitar World staff





# SLIDES RULE

THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS THE "BEST" TYPE OF SLIDE TO USE. IT REALLY IS UP TO YOU — A COMBINATION OF GUITAR, SETUP, WHICH FINGER YOU USE, SIZE AND WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR. BUT HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE MAJOR TYPES OF SLIDES TO GET YOU STARTED...

**W**alk into any music store (or visit the website of any major gear retailer), and you'll see highly affordable Pyrex glass slides in a variety of sizes along with thin, chromed metal slides. There's nothing wrong with these, but they can be very light and not always a good fit for your finger. That's where most of us start, though; in these cases, expect to pay around \$10 to \$15.

The "pill bottle," based on the Coricidin cold-cure bottle favored by Duane Allman, among others, will always have its place, and there are many different types out there. Our pictured "pill bottle" [1] is from Dunlop's huge slide range; the "Blues Bottle" series (\$14.11 to \$21.78) comes in different sizes and weights, and they're typically a good ring-/little-finger (pinky) fit.

Then there's also the Dunlop Derek Trucks signature slide (\$21.78). On stage they can get pretty sweaty and slippery; this writer can attest to them flying off his little finger! Diamond Bottle-necks, based in the UK, ([diamondbottle-necks.com](http://diamondbottle-necks.com)) has Pill Bottle glass slides (\$14.95), which, we're told, are actually medical sample bottles into which they drill a "breather" hole in the base, which is designed to solve that sweat problem. It's our preferred choice for pinky use. Remember that glass, whatever type, is brittle, and can break if

dropped on a hard floor, but thicker glass-wall slides seem to enhance the "liquidity" of your tone. Again, Diamond Bottle-necks' lead crystal "Ultimate" range [2] is superb at \$34.

Brass is another popular material that typically adds weight and mass for a little more sustain with a fuller tonality, but is relatively soft and will get marked and pitted [3], which can add a little more "grit" to your sound. Expect to pay from around \$15, or a bit more for a convex-shaped slide. Stainless steel is harder and seems to impart a little more of that liquid "pedal steel" tonality. Dunlop's stainless-steel slides [4] reflect this at \$37.64; expect to pay more for flared-side slides, which can add a lot of comfort for more serious slide duties. Clay or porcelain ceramic slides also certainly have their fans: Keb' Mo' and Joe Perry have signature Dunlop ceramic slides at \$29.72.

Made in the UK, the Wolfram "Martin Simpson" signature slide [5], made from a "high-density nickel tungsten carbide metal matrix" is the heaviest we've ever encountered, and this mass not only makes it easier to evoke a smooth, sustaining tone, but it's virtually impossible to mark because of its hardness. The downside to this weight, however, is that it's harder to control — especially if used on your little finger. It's also boutique-effect-pedal-priced at £319.99 (almost \$400), but when was the best ever cheap? Astonishingly good.

If you play lap-style with high action, a tone bar is recommended. The basic bullet type, such as the Ernie Ball tone bar [6] (around \$18), has way more mass than a typical heavy brass slide, and it results in a really smooth, liquid tone. It's a completely different technique, of course, but for lap-steel, it's superb; there are various shaped tone bars, too, which for many players are preferable (Shubb's range is well respected, approx \$35). Glass "Crystal Tone-Bars" (\$38 from Diamond Bottle-necks) are lighter but very evocative-sounding on acoustics, resonators and Weissenborn-style guitars.

So if you're learning slide guitar, be prepared to amass quite a collection of pen-knives, bottle-necks, socket wrenches... They all add their own feel to your tone. **GW**

Words: **DAVE BURRLUCK** Photos: **NEIL GODWIN**



# PUT A PAUSE IN YOUR DAY

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Testament  
[from left]:  
Gene Hoglan,  
Steve DiGiorgio,  
Alex Skolnick,  
Chuck Billy  
and Eric Peterson





GUITAR

WORLD

# LORDS OF CREATION

PAGE 53

SEPT 2020

## TESTAMENT

bring the metal to the masses with *Titans of Creation*, the 13th chapter in their canon of symphonic savagery. *Guitar World* checks in with guitarists

ERIC PETERSON  
and ALEX SKOLNICK

and gets a glimpse inside the making of the legendary group's latest thrashterpiece.

BY JEFF KITTS

PHOTO BY STEPHANIE CABRAL







**2020 STARTED OFF WELL ENOUGH, BUT IT UNRAVELED SEEMINGLY** overnight — by early spring, we found ourselves crushed under the weight of unprecedented distress and uncertainty, trapped in a world fraught with as much disease as dis-ease. By the time April came limping into view, there wasn't much anyone could put their faith into — that is, unless you're a fan of classic American thrash metal. When Testament unleashed its 13th studio album, *Titans of Creation*, on April 3, it gave Gen-X metalheads a reason to rejoice — a reason to celebrate during a time of great discomfort. It also served as a bludgeoning reminder that Testament is still at the top of its game 33 years after the release of its debut album, *The Legacy*.

And that's really what the metal community has come to expect from Testament through all these years — that the thrash veterans from Berkeley, California, will be there when they need it most, no matter what. Since first emerging from the Bay Area in the mid-Eighties, Testament have been through an abundance of turmoil and disruption, including a dizzying number of lineup changes and singer Chuck Billy's bout with cancer in 2001 — yet here in 2020, the band sounds better than ever.

"Our dark times were definitely dark," says guitarist Eric Peterson, "but through ruin comes creation. Somehow we've always been able to keep it going."

*Titans of Creation* is the sound of a band in peak form. Songs like the album opener "Children of the Next Level," "Night of the Witch" and "Code of Hammurabi," one of two tracks written by lead guitarist Alex Skolnick, showcase the immense talents of each member of Testament. Peterson's riffage is relentless and inspired, Skolnick's soloing is majestic and soaring, Gene Hoglan's drumming is everything you'd expect from the legendary skinsman, Billy's vocals have a refreshingly classic quality and bassist Steve DiGiorgio takes

advantage of a few moments in the spotlight to remind everyone why he has been considered one of the best in the business since his turn-of-the-Nineties days with Sadus, Autopsy and Death.

Skolnick attributes the high level of quality achieved on *Titans of Creation* to the fact that the band took its time putting the album's pieces together. "The previous record [2016's *Brotherhood of the Snake*] I feel was a very rushed process," says the guitarist. "With that record, it was like we were in the middle of touring, then all of a sudden there was a sense that we were really behind in terms of making a new record. Like all of a sudden, it was crunch time. This time, we talked about it while we were on tour and said, let's not have that happen again — let's at least discuss a rough game plan for the record. We made sure that we had more time together to play and for all of us to make suggestions, because on the last record Eric became more of the decision-maker and there just wasn't enough time for everyone else to weigh in."

As *Titans of Creation* was making its way into the hands and hearts of clamoring, quarantined Testament fans all over the world,

**"THERE WAS A PERIOD OF TIME WHERE THERE WAS THIS HOSTILITY TOWARD ME BECAUSE OF WHAT I WAS DOING OUTSIDE OF TESTAMENT"**

**— ALEX SKOLNICK**

*Guitar World* caught up with Skolnick and Peterson to discuss the making of the record and look back at some of the pivotal moments in the group's stormy yet successful 33-year history.

**In the 33 years since Testament released its debut album, *The Legacy*, the band's sound has undergone some fairly dramatic changes in tone and style, creating a distinct difference between, so to speak, old Testament and new Testament. When you look back at the group's evolution, where would you say that shift began to take place?**

**ERIC PETERSON** I would say it was after our fifth record, *The Ritual* [1992]. We did five records in five years, and I think by our fourth album, *Souls of Black*, there was some good stuff on there, but it wasn't groundbreaking like the first three. And a lot of our fans were starting to turn their backs on us because music was changing, we were changing, grunge had come in and just sideswiped metal and alternative was getting big. With *The Ritual*, I think we were trying to be more heavy metal as opposed to thrash, and I wasn't that happy going in that direction. Songs like "Electric Crown" and "Return to Serenity" are great songs, but we couldn't get any stronger than that — it just felt like our feet were in the mud. Around that time in the early Nineties you had albums like Sepultura's *Arise* and Pantera's *Vulgar Display of Power*, and I was like, "That's where I want to be," but it didn't happen with *The Ritual*. After Alex left in 1992, we came out with *Low* [1994], and that was more like it — that was like a new beginning for us. We brought in James Murphy on guitar for that record, and it was great to have someone who could play like Alex but who also loved that kind of music — the truth is, Alex was never really into the heavier stuff like that; things like Cannibal Corpse and Death and other bands like that at the time. He just needed to get out and





Alex Skolnick with his ESP Lemon Burst Alex Skolnick model — “[It’s] pretty much my go-to instrument when I record with Testament”

do his own thing. So it was around that time that we took on this new sound, and that went from *Low* into *Demonic* [1997] into *The Gathering* [1999]. By the time *The Gathering* came around we had already been through a bunch of lineup changes and we had gotten stronger because of it. The years leading up to that had been so weird with all the changes in the band and changes in the music scene, and by the time we did *The Gathering* we had built

ourselves back up again and people were getting excited about our music again.

**Eric, you’ve been the musical leader of this band since the very beginning. What would you say was perhaps the darkest period for Testament?**

**PETERSON** It was probably around the time of *The Ritual*. I remember Atlantic Records telling us that we had only sold around 250,000

records that year — which would be amazing now [Laughs] — and we were down about that. We lost our management around that time, Alex told us that this was going to be his last tour with Testament, and Lou [drummer Louie Clemente] left — so everything was kind of falling apart around then, but we were still hopeful. So we changed some things around, changed how we did business and formed our own record company and things like that — and just when it seemed that we had gotten a hold of things again, that was when Chuck got sick [In 2001, lead singer Chuck Billy was diagnosed with a cancerous condition known as germ cell seminoma].

But even after all that, we kept it going, and we got heavy again, and I think that was the start of the new Testament. We developed a more modern sound and had more of a black and death metal influence, even though we were still very much a thrash band. We just weren’t trying to be politically correct with our lyrics and all that — I mean, come on, we put out a record called *Demonic*. [Laughs]

By that point, we had gone through a couple of different guitar players, a lot of drummers, we were having problems with our original bass player [Greg Christian] — and we weren’t really sure what we were going to do. So we ended up doing a record called *First Strike Still Deadly* [2001], which contained re-recorded versions of some of our older songs. When I go back and listen to *The Legacy* or *The New Order* [1988], I’m not blown away by the production, but the songs sound modern when we play them today — they sound great, and that was what we were going for with *First Strike Still Deadly*.

***Titans of Creation* is the band’s 12th studio album of new material. When did the record first begin to take shape?**

**PETERSON** It always happens that we’ll be touring and touring, and Chuck — being the business-





minded person that he is — will bring it up, like “We have to get a record out.” And he’ll usually tell the press and the label that we’re gonna have a new album out in a few months, which just isn’t realistic at all, and then I have to be the one to tell everyone that, no, it’s not going to happen. [Laughs]

With that being said, I’ll try to get in there and find something, some kind of riff or whatever, just to get it started... And then once the new album gets started and everybody likes a couple of songs,

“A LOT OF FANS WERE STARTING TO TURN THEIR BACKS ON US BECAUSE MUSIC WAS CHANGING, WE WERE CHANGING, GRUNGE HAD JUST COME IN AND JUST SIDE-SWIPE METAL”

— ERIC PETERSON

things will just start to pop out after that. Some of the better songs came to us last this time round. Once you get over that hump, like five songs in, some really clever stuff starts coming out. One of those was “Night of the Witch.” That song is different for us; it’s modern, but it’s got this almost Slayer, “Captor of Sin” kind of vibe with all this crazy riffing.

**ALEX SKOLNICK** There are so many steps to the process, and it always takes longer than you think it will. One reason is because of

the touring. As a band, it’s just very hard to focus on an album when you have a show to do that night. Regardless of how many people bought tickets to the show for that evening — whether it’s a few thousand at one of our own shows or tens of thousands at some kind of festival we’re playing — they’re all expecting something, and you have to be up to standard. If your focus is on coming up with a new part for a song, then it won’t be on the performance that people are expecting. There’s a certain concentration that’s required for putting on a good performance.

So things for this record started happening while we were out on tour, and I had some ideas that I would develop and send over, and Eric would have some ideas that he would send over. This was around 2018. By early 2019, we were meeting up, and Eric was meeting up with Gene and going over stuff — basically just doing the preliminary get-togethers. By the summer of last year we were actually finally recording.





[left] Eric Peterson with his Dean Old Skull V — “[For this album] I used both the American and Korean versions of my signature Dean Old Skull”

**PETERSON** Everything was recorded at Trident Studios in Martinez, California, with [studio owner/producer] Juan Urteaga. We flew Gene out and we did the drums there, we did the bass there, the vocals, Alex flew out and did his guitars there. What I did was, I have a setup at my house where I just DI’d everything and went through my live Kemper tone—after recording with those guys I would come home and watch TV for a little bit, then I would get inspired around 11 or 12 at night and record part of a song. I would add that to Google Drive, and then just send things to Juan that way.

**What were your initial thoughts when you first started hearing what you guys were working on?**

**SKOLNICK** To be honest, you never know where a record is going to end up when you first start working on it. But I knew early on that it was going to sound like a Testament record. And because we had more time to play together and work out ideas on this record,

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DOWN  
ABOUT  
THAT”

— ERIC  
PETERSON

I ended up with two full songs: “Symptoms” and “Code of Hammurabi.” Both of those were songs that I demoed from start to finish.

With “Code of Hammurabi,” I wrote the main riffs of that on my bass. A long time ago, with a song called “Souls of Black,” the same thing happened, and that ended up having a bass intro too. Plus now we have this monster bass player in Steve DiGiorgio, so why not give him a little bass intro to play and some bass breaks in the songs. So a lot of “Code of Hammurabi” was written on bass, but then what I’ll do is I’ll switch to guitar and I’ll find a sound that I think will work for Testament. And if I’m recording at home, it’s just so much more practical to use a plug-in or a modeler — so I’ll either use my Kemper Profiler, which is the same thing we’ll use live, or I’ll use one of the patches that I like with AmpliTube by IK Multimedia. Sometimes I’ll do a blend of the two.

Chuck and I wrote the lyrics for “Code of Hammurabi” together, and “Symptoms” was something that Eric and I worked on together in terms of the lyrical concept.

**“Symptoms” is a song about depression and other mental health issues. What served as the inspiration for that?**

**SKOLNICK** We lost so many people to depression recently. Anthony Bourdain, Chris Cornell, Chester Bennington, Jill Janus from Huntress... I lost a cousin as well as a neighbor of mine who was a very successful young writer. Just so many people you would never expect that to happen to. People who seem to have it all — like they’re the last people you would ever expect to be victims of depression. So that was part of the inspiration... it was also inspired by people we knew who were in relationships with people that had disorders.

**With everyone living in different locations and sometimes working on other projects, it must be increasingly more difficult to get**

**everyone together these days to write and record an album.**

**PETERSON** Chuck likes to press the envelope in terms of trying to get everybody out here to jam, but thinking about it like that just gives me anxiety. Like, we’re not going to be able to write a record in five days when we’re all together. All the good ideas will start coming around the fifth day, which will be when everyone has to leave for the airport.

It’s cool because I can usually make a rough mix of something and then WhatsApp it to everyone. I’ll usually send things to Steve first to see what he thinks, and most of the time he’ll say, “It’s killer!” Then I’ll send it to Chuck and he’ll be like, “I don’t like it.” [Laughs] He’s a tough cookie — he hates everything. But the truth is that that’s really just what’s in my brain after all these years of working with him, because as soon as I send him something and think he’s gonna hate it, he loves it.

Some of our most famous songs are the ones that Chuck said he hated. “Return to Serenity,” “Dark Roots of Earth,” “True Believer”... just a lot of songs where he initially said, “I don’t hear anything there.”

**Do you make changes until he approves, or does he eventually come around?**

**PETERSON** I just don’t argue with him, and then I write something else that he does like, then bring back the other song that he didn’t like and sneak it in there I guess. Because here’s the thing: for everything else in my life that I may be a fuck-up with, I know how to do *this*. I’m super picky, so if I like it, then it’s got to be good.

I let him get mad and do the yelling — I don’t ever get mad at him. I just try to make it work. And he recognizes that. I’ve heard him say things like, “I don’t know how Eric puts up with my shit.” But he’s more on the business end of things, so it evens out.

**It’s been unavoidable lately, but do you find the technological**



## The First Guitar I Fell in Love With

**SKOLNICK** Maybe my first Les Paul, which was a Les Paul Standard. I always regretted getting rid of it. I sold it to a guy I had been in ninth grade with, and he went through a period where he pretty much lost everything — his wife, his job, etc. — and all he had left was that guitar. He even asked me if I wanted it back at one point. I told him to keep it because he would probably appreciate it more than I would. But I'm not even sure that's the best answer to the question, because I always wrestled with that guitar. I always wanted a different guitar while I had it.

I think a better example would be my '76 blond Gibson L-5, which is just a beauty. That was the guitar where I said, if I'm going to let myself have this, then I need to be able to play jazz on a professional level. I was just starting to expand into jazz guitar, and I decided that I needed a real jazz guitar. I don't have any illusions that I'm going to change the world of jazz guitar, but I have to at least be able to play as good as a working jazz guitarist — otherwise, it's got to go back. I spent a number of years just focusing on that, and I still have the guitar.

I found it at Blue Note Music, which was a store in Berkeley, California. It was behind the counter and kept away from all the other instruments because it was a real prime guitar. And it was definitely the most I'd ever spent on an

aspect of writing and recording at home enjoyable?

**SKOLNICK** I think so, and partially it's out of necessity. It's pretty much a job requirement at this point. But it can also be fun, especially if you make it fun. And you're always going to get stuck at some point along the way: you should be on Input 1 when you're on Input 2, and you can't figure it out and need to find someone to help, or the whole thing crashes. But this happens even in professional studios. So it definitely helps to have friends you can call to troubleshoot it when something like that happens, or at least have a good tech support number. And there's so much help available online too — you can just Google a problem when it happens.

Recording at home is definitely more of a solitary activity, which I don't mind at all because I am a bit introverted and like being in solitude — you can have a nice evening at home with these gadgets and create some sounds that you like. I've learned to enjoy that process.

**Does having instant access to all these sounds keep you from wanting to find new guitars and amps?**

**SKOLNICK** Maybe, but I'm still a junkie when it comes to new equipment. Especially when I'm doing something outside of Testament, like a one-guitar situation. There I'll use more pedals, because I love pedals; they're so much fun. I certainly don't need more guitars, but it seems like every year I'll find a guitar that I need. A few months ago I found this old Gibson ES-347 — just a beautiful guitar, like a variation of a 335. Certainly not a cheap guitar, and it's like one of those instruments that just plays itself. I saw it, thought about it, and decided I had to have it. *[Laughs]* And that seems to happen every year or so. Then there's the equipment I get from manufacturers. My signature guitar is

made by ESP. For hollowbodies I love to play Godin. In the studio for my last Alex Skolnick Trio album I had a couple of acoustic songs, and Taylor had sent me a great guitar that got me really excited about acoustics again. So I really haven't lost any of my enthusiasm for gear.

And I tend to make a deal with myself when it comes to new gear: if I get something new, I have to use it. If it just sits around and I don't touch it, then I make myself get rid of it.

**When I first called you for this interview, Alex, you had to call me back because you were in the middle of a session — what were you working on?**

**SKOLNICK** I'm always up to something. Right now I'm recording with a piano player, believe it or not. His name is Randy Klein, and it's his project — it's kind of a piano-guitar duo. He did an album of duets and he also has a record label called Jazz Heads. He's around 70 and is just a very nice piano player — not one of these crazily technical piano players. Just nice compositions and really nice playing to listen to. I was on one of his duo records a few years ago, and he reached out about revisiting some of those songs and doing some new songs. We're also looking at doing some live performances at some point.

So that's where I was when you called. If you had called me last week, who knows where I would have been. *[Laughs]*

**You need musical variety in your life.**

**SKOLNICK** I think that's an understatement. *[Laughs]* I feel like I never fit into any one scene, even though the most visible and longest-lasting project I've been involved with has been Testament. It's what I am most identified with, but I have a whole world outside of that. And a lot of the people who know me from other projects might know that

I'm also in Testament, but they don't even know what Testament sounds like. But I do think that I've been able to find a strange niche and a balance of all these different projects, and I'm certainly not done yet. There's some music forthcoming that may surprise some people.

**Testament fans must be more accepting of your side projects now than in the past.**

**SKOLNICK** That's exactly right. Especially in the Nineties when I was kind of keeping a low profile. I had a few short-lived bands that I would bounce in and out of. There was a period of time, once the internet started taking off and everyone was getting connected online, where I could tell that there was just this... hostility... toward me because of what I was doing outside of Testament. I never let it affect me though. These days, however, there's much more support out there for what I am doing with my career.

**What was your gear setup on the new album?**

**PETERSON** I always use my black Les Paul with 81/85 EMGs, and I used both the American and Korean versions of my signature Dean Old Skull guitar. For solos I used this new Dean [USA Patents Pending ML Classic Black], which is a replica of a guitar they put out in the Seventies. Strings are also very important to me. I'm with D'Addario, but I ended up going back to Ernie Ball. .010-.052 seems to work really well, even considering the downtuning.

When Andy Sneap was mixing the record, I was like, "Dude, the guitars are kinda... I don't want to say generic... but kinda safe." So I told him I want to use EVH, because I love the EVH guitar tone, and I have a 50-watt that I'm really digging right now. And he said, "I'm gonna put it through the new [5150III 100-watt head] Stealth." The way to





Skolnick [left] and Peterson perform in the U.K. — “Regardless of how many people bought tickets to the show that night ... they’re expecting something, and you have to be up to standard”

explain it is that it’s got this kind of saturated feel, but with a nice midrange. Almost like a Seventies, hard-rock midrange where it cuts through, but it’s got this nice warmth. The EVH amps are just awesome, I love ’em.

For effects, the only thing I would turn on once in a while was my MXR Micro Chorus — there’s no Chorus that competes with that. It’s like Frank Marino’s Chorus tone or Zakk Wylde’s — the Micro Chorus is just the shit. Randy Rhoads too — all those cats used the Micro Chorus. And my Vox Wah. I used a Theremin on this record too, which was something different for me. It’s on the end of “Night of the Witch” — I was trying to get some creepy sounds for the fade-out. When Chuck first got

the mix and heard it, he was like, “What is that at the end? I don’t fucking like that.” He said it wasn’t creepy and was just real mad about the whole thing, and then he said he didn’t like the mix anymore. I think he was just having a bad day because everything just stayed the way it was. [Laughs]

#### What was the inspiration for using the Theremin?

**PETERSON** It was Joe Bonamassa, and a song of his called “The Ballad of John Henry.” It’s one of his tuned-down, darker songs. He also did that song with his other band, Black Country Communion, and I actually like that version better. It’s a more hard rock version. So I really dug the Theremin, and I

ended up buying one about five years ago, and I’ve just been having fun with it; it’s kind of like the go-to thing when my daughter has a sleepover and all the girls want to try it out.

#### Alex, what was your main guitar on the new album?

**SKOLNICK** My Lemon Burst ESP Alex Skolnick model is pretty much my go-to instrument when I record with Testament. I haven’t changed my string type in a long time. I’ve been with D’Addario for many years and they’ve always worked well for me. When they came out with the NYXL line, that was exciting. I thought that that was a big development, and I can really feel the difference in those strings. So I’m still using those, gauges .011–.049.

My first electric guitar when I was in high school was a Les Paul. But as I got more into technical playing and listening to players like Yngwie Malmsteen, who mainly plays a Strat, or Randy Rhoads with his Jackson, I started getting more into different guitars. The Les Paul just didn’t have a place in my life at that time. But as I got older and became more of an all-around player, I rediscovered the Les Paul. When I hooked up with ESP, which was maybe a few years after the *Formation of Damnation* album came out in 2008, I had been getting back into classic guitars, and they offered to make me an instrument that would be pretty much whatever I wanted. I wanted the tone of a classic Les Paul, but with more playability — something that would allow for more technical playing like an Ibanez or Jackson. And maybe my signature model doesn’t play *that* easily, but it’s not like a log either. Plus it’s not some rare, vintage instrument that I have to worry about. We’re not in a position where we can buy a seat for the instrument on a plane or fly a private jet. **GW**

instrument. It was owned by a legendary Bay Area jazz guitarist named Calvin Keys. Wes Montgomery, who is one of my favorite guitar players, had one that looked just like it when he was still alive. He’s pictured with it on the cover of his album *Full House* [1962], which was recorded live in Berkeley. But getting that L-5 for me meant that, okay, I’m really serious about this and I’m going to take a number of years and just study hardcore — it inspired me to open up this whole new chapter in my life.

**PETERSON** It probably was my first Les Paul, a Black Beauty Custom. I think it was African mahogany, so as it aged, it felt lighter and played better. I had that guitar for a long time, but I think when times got tough I knew it was worth something so I had to sell it. I wish I still had that guitar.

The second one was when I got my signature Old Skull. I wanted something like a Michael Schenker V, and I actually think Dean made a mistake with the one they gave me because it ended up being a little bit better than what I expected. I still have that guitar, and it’s beat the hell up, but it still plays great and has a really fast action.

But my ultimate favorite guitar would have to be a 1964 Gibson SJN Country Western guitar — it looks just like a Hummingbird guitar. It’s almost like an electric guitar — you can do solos on it, and it sounds great. I have a friend who worked at Guitar Center, and he would come across some really interesting guitars sometimes when people would bring them in to trade or sell, and he called me up one day and said, “Dude, you’ve got to get down here right away... this just came in.”





Guns N' Roses'  
Gilby Clarke [left] and  
Axl Rose share the  
stage in Rotterdam,  
Holland, in 1992





WHY HAVEN'T *THE SPAGHETTI INCIDENT?* AND *LIVE ERA '87 - '93* CONNECTED WITH GN'R FANS LIKE APPETITE? GW CHECKS IN WITH GUITARIST **GILBY CLARKE**, VOCALIST **ROBERTA FREEMAN**, ENGINEER **JIM MITCHELL**, HANOI ROCKS' **MICHAEL MONROE** AND THE DAMNED'S **BRIAN JAMES**. BY MATT WAKE.

**T**HERE WAS A piece of tape on the rehearsal studio floor where, in the past, Izzy Stradlin's amp would have been. "And on the piece of tape," Gilby Clarke says now, "and I'll never forget this, it said, 'Do you have what it takes to fill this spot?'"

Clarke had what it took. He'd walked in that fall 1991 day with a Les Paul and Marshall half-stack to audition for Guns N'

Roses' rhythm guitar spot, which Stradlin vacated following a tour leg supporting the Hollywood hard-rockers' *Use Your Illusion* albums. Clarke's three-year tenure with the band would include GN'R's most legendary tour and two un-legendary Guns N' Roses albums, *The Spaghetti Incident?* and *Live Era '87 - '93*.

For such a huge band, these albums, particularly the latter, are close to being forgotten. Lost in the shuffle amid savagely brilliant debut *Appetite for Destruction*, controversial GN'R *Lies*, sprawling *Use*

*Your Illusion* and mythologized/maximalist *Chinese Democracy*.

Still, *Era* is an underrated concert album that remains the band's only official classic-era live disc. It displays why GN'R was powerful enough to (partially) reunite in 2016 and play stadiums and arenas across the world — something they're still doing, more than 25 years after their heyday. Punk-covers effort *Spaghetti* contains some feisty gems. It's admirable that Guns followed up the grandiose *Illusion* twin-towers by returning to their street-band roots.



June 23, 1992: Slash and Gilby Clarke perform in Rotterdam, Holland



*Spaghetti Incident?* and *Live Era* were both released November 23, six years apart, *Spaghetti* in 1993 and *Era* in 1999. As far as GN'R goes, that period's typically remembered for the band splintering to where singer Axl Rose was the lone classic-era member. Rose's relationship then with snake-haired guitar-hero Slash was acrimonious at best. As far as albums go, neither *Spaghetti* or *Era* are *Appetite*-essential. But the Guns N' Roses story isn't complete without them.

Even amid the daring hard rock, stadiums and drama that was early Nineties GN'R, their new guitarist wasn't on a leash. "I was never once told what to play and not to play. Ever," Clarke says, calling from his San Fernando Valley home studio. "But I could always tell if it didn't work. Slash would just look over like, 'What the hell was that?' [Laughs] You could tell if it caught his attention in a good way or in a bad way."

Clarke's GN'R audition took place at Third Encore Studios in North Hollywood. Slash had called him around midnight to come in the next afternoon. The first time Clarke — as a member of GN'R — heard Rose sing with the band was onstage at

Clarke's first show with them, December 5, 1991, in Worcester.

Clarke played guitar on 16 of the 22 tracks eventually culled for *Live Era*. (This makes it even more dubious that he and Sorum are credited as "additional musicians." Clarke says, "It wasn't that funny at the time, but now it's kind of funny.") Clarke-era highlights on *Era* include razor-wire tangle on "Nightrain," an explosive "It's So Easy," tribal-metallic "You Could Me Mine" and legitimately epic "Estranged."

After getting the gig, Clarke hit the ground running. The Cleveland native was asked to learn GN'R's entire catalog, 50 tracks, in two weeks. His *Illusion* tour guitars included a late-Seventies black Les Paul Deluxe with full-sized Seymour Duncan humbuckers, '91 Les Paul Classic with "burnt" finish; and a couple of Telecasters, including a red Tele with a humbucker in the bridge. "The middle position between the humbucking and single coil was kind of magical," he says. "On 'Sweet Child O' Mine' during the verses and all that, that's always the middle, songs like 'Don't Cry.'"

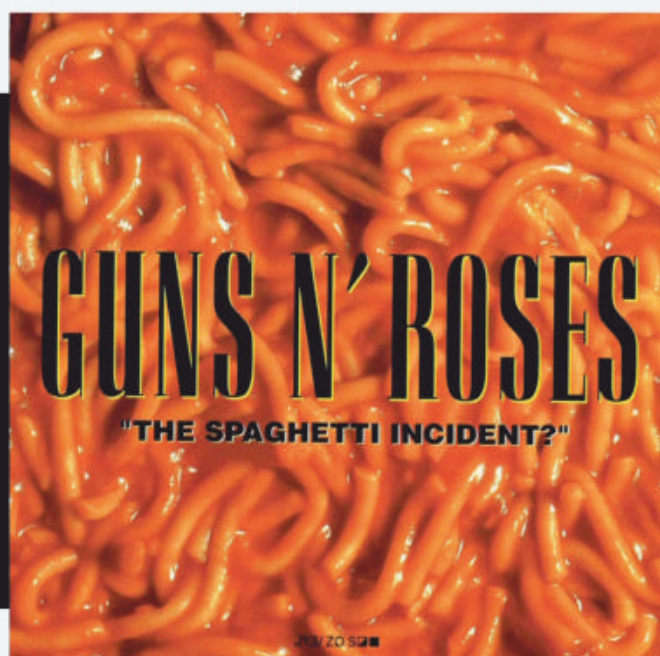
Slash's live guitars for *Era* recordings included 1984, 1987 and 1992 Gibson Les

Paul Standards, '87 goldtop, '75 Gibson EDS-1275 doubleneck, B.C. Rich Mockingbird and Guild Crossroads double-neck. According to slashparadise.com, his amps during this era included Marshall JCM2555 Silver Jubilee heads with EL34 tubes and Marshall 1960BV 4x12 cabinets.

Clarke started his GN'R run using 50-watt Marshall JCM800s. About a year in, that changed. "At times Slash and I would hit a chord and I couldn't really tell who hit it," Clarke says with a chuckle. "So, I switched over to Vox AC30s." On the road, Clarke was listening to albums by Bash & Pop, Mazzy Star and Stradlin's solo debut, *Ju Ju Hounds*. He's the first to give his GN'R predecessor credit. "I loved what Izzy and Slash did, especially on *Appetite*. They played off of each other. It was like an Aerosmith thing, and Aerosmith are just a louder version of the Stones. I tried to take what Izzy started and just add to that. I don't play with as much gain as Slash has, but I play with more gain than Izzy does."

Of Stradlin-period recordings on *Era*, a stomping "You're Crazy" and *Some Girls*-ish "Used to Love Her" standout. Clarke says he only listened to the album once when it was released. "At that time, it was





"IT WAS OBVIOUSLY AXL AND SLASH'S BAND. THERE'S NO QUESTION ABOUT THAT. BUT IT STILL FELT LIKE A *BAND* — LIKE SLASH WOULD ASK ME QUESTIONS, 'WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS?' AND HE LISTENED. SAME THING WITH AXL. I KNEW MY PLACE IN THE BAND AND HOW LONG I'D BEEN IN IT COMPARED TO EVERYBODY ELSE, BUT IT REALLY FELT LIKE IT WAS YOURS" —GILBY CLARKE

a little Guns N' Roses overdose for me. But I definitely have my memories of playing those shows. Songs like 'Patience' were always great to play. I loved that song the first time I ever heard it on MTV or whatever, and Axl always sang it well." He was also fond of "Welcome to the Jungle," and there's a hot, '92 Buenos Aires version on *Era*, "because as soon as the riff started no matter where you were the audiences just went nuts."

There were makeshift dressing rooms beneath the expansive *Illusion* tour stage. This is where backing vocalists Roberta Freeman and Traci Amos would sit, drink, play cards and hang. They sang on only about 12 or so songs and GN'R played around 20 each night. Since the band operated *sans* setlist, the singers didn't know exactly when they'd be needed. "All of a sudden we'd hear the intro to 'Paradise City' and have to run up onstage to get to the mic on time," Freeman tells us. "I would pick the longest songs that we weren't singing on to go to the bathroom, because in these big arenas the bathrooms are golf cart rides away."

Freeman and Amos added to GN'R's wallop, particularly on Southern-rock-gone-Sunset-Strip anthem "Paradise City." They gave wah-wah dominatrix dervish "Pretty Tied Up" extra pepper.

Freeman wasn't a stranger to loudness. She'd grown up on rock 'n' roll like David Bowie and just got off tour with Cinderella. Cinderella drummer Fred Coury recommended Freeman to Slash, who'd mentioned Rose wanted backing singers for GN'R. (He wanted an all-female horn section too, which birthed the 976 Horns.) Freeman notes Cinderella singer/guitarist Tom Keifer and Rose "have similar voices when they went into their falsettos." Still, Guns N' Roses was a different animal, she

says. "With Cinderella we rehearsed a million times. With Guns you never knew what to expect."

When Freeman was hired, Slash asked her to do vocal arrangements for the tour. "I had the artistic freedom to arrange whatever I wanted for the live shows, and I enjoyed that a lot," she says. "I basically went with what just felt natural." Her favorite singers include Aretha Franklin, Chaka Khan and Stevie Wonder. When it comes to the ultimate use of backing vocals by a rock band, "I think of the Stones, hands down," Freeman says.

Freeman liked singing GN'R's gospel-metal "Knockin' on Heaven's Door" cover best. Freeman and Amos helped sanctify choruses. Freeman was also given a feature. "Close to the end of the tour, Axl told me he looked forward to my solo every night," she says. "Heaven's Door" also contains *Era*'s most notorious moment, when Rose implores the band mid-song to "Gimme some reggae!"

The air was electric, even for recording engineer Jim Mitchell, who'd worked on the *Illusion* albums and recorded much of what became *Era*. "It was a huge rush when those guys would take the stage," Mitchell says in his Boston accent. "They were playing with reckless abandon, and you can really hear it on that *Live Era* album."

GN'R rarely soundchecked. As a stand-in, a makeshift band including guitar tech Adam Day would help Mitchell out, by checking their song called "Crackpipe." Six performances from a '92 Tokyo Dome show, including a vamped-up "Move to the City," are an exception, as Guns soundchecked before the show, also filmed for home video, "so they did some camera blocking," Mitchell says.

In Tokyo, Mitchell was stationed inside a truck that was parked behind the stage. "Back then the stage volume was insanely loud," he says. "Under Matt's drum riser he had like four 18-inch subs, so when he hit the kick drum it would literally lift you off the drum stool."

Volume complicated recording Rose's vocals, particularly since the singer ran from one end of the stage to the other "without ever missing a note," Mitchell says. "If it was a softer part where he wasn't pushing a lot of air and he'd run past Slash's rig, you'd get this roar of Slash's amp blazing into his vocal mix. That was a tricky thing to balance."

Mitchell recorded to 2-inch analog tape. GN'R had him at a '92 Las Vegas show, which yielded four *Era* cuts, to engineer a performance of their Rod-Stewart-in-Spandex hit "Yesterdays" for the American Music Awards. "It was like, 'While we're here we're going to record the whole show,'" Mitchell says.

Slash's playing on "Era," heard through the side-right channel, ranges from gutter-funk ("Mr. Brownstone," London '91) and sinister gashing ("It's So Easy," Paris '93), to space-cowboy runs ("Patience," Mexico '93) and bulbous melodies ("November Rain," Tokyo '92). "I thought Slash evolved a lot from the time *Appetite* came out to when the *Illusion* tour started," Clarke says. "He had a guitar in his hotel room and was always playing and practicing. Look, there was a lot of partying going on during the live shows and stuff and we definitely were guys enjoying what was there. But one thing about the band was everybody took the music very seriously. Nobody wanted to let each other down."

As an intro to "November Rain" on *Era*, Rose plays a snippet of Black Sabbath's "It's Alright," just vocals and piano. It's a small,



**"AT TIMES SLASH AND I WOULD HIT  
A CHORD AND I COULDN'T REALLY  
TELL WHO HIT IT. SO I SWITCHED  
OVER TO VOX AC30s"  
—GILBY CLARKE**



soulful moment on a big stage. It's also probably the first time many young Guns N' Roses fans heard that Sabbath obscenity.

*The Spaghetti Incident?* was definitely the first time mainstream fans heard songs by punk bands like Fear and UK Subs. Basically this was GN'R's version of Metallica's *Garage Days Re-Revisited*. Guns recorded much of *Spaghetti* during *Illusion* sessions, and Mitchell recalls most of the former being tracked at the Record Plant on Sycamore Street in Hollywood. "It wasn't like, 'Oh we're set up, let's blow off some steam and do some punk covers,'" Mitchell says. "We specially set up, and they had these songs they wanted to do."

Dead Boys cover "Ain't It Fun" contains one of Mitchell's all-time favorite Rose vocals. The GN'R frontman sang it as a duet with Michael Monroe. The former Hanoi Rocks frontman was in town to play harmonica and sax on *Illusion* boogie "Bad Obsession." After Rose mentioned he'd never heard Dead Boys' music, Monroe taped a cassette for him. After hearing dark intense track "Ain't It Fun," Rose wanted to cut it with GN'R and invited Monroe to guest. Monroe was close friends with Dead Boys frontman Stiv Bators, who died in 1990. Monroe didn't want money for the session. All he asked for was "In memory of Stiv Bators" in the credits, which GN'R honored, "and spell my name right," he says with a laugh. Rose was the first member of Guns Monroe had met, when Rose happened to be in New York and walk by a video shoot for 1989 Monroe solo track "Dead, Jail or Rock 'N' Roll."

Bators had a studio ritual of lighting candles. Monroe asked Rose if they could do the same and Rose obliged. "We sang it face-to-face live, and there was a magical vibe, almost eerie" says Monroe, calling from his home in Finland. "Stiv's spirit was definitely present." In the mix, Monroe's vocals are panned left and Rose's are

panned right. It's a mesmerizing track. After singing, Monroe went to the back of the studio to wind down a little. The lounge was stocked with pinball machines and as Monroe sat down, the machines suddenly lit up and clanged. Monroe said to Rose, "Maybe Stiv just got his wings, like in *It's a Wonderful Life*?"

After the 1985 breakup of Hanoi Rocks, a group that influenced many Hollywood bands, including GN'R (while never having a big hit in the U.S.), Monroe moved to London. When Bators would tour, Monroe took care of his cat, Ziggy. Eventually Monroe moved into the flat too. Later, former New York Dolls guitarist Johnny Thunders moved in with them. "There was never a dull moment," Monroe says. "Stiv and Johnny really helped me through that time Hanoi Rocks was breaking up. They were special people. And two of the most unsung heroes that really had what rock 'n' roll was all about to me — no compromise, never sold their soul." Other *Spaghetti* apexes include a hellacious "Human Being" that surpasses the New York Dolls prototype, and sidwinding Sex Pistols cover "Black Leather."

With Stradlin out, Slash asked Clarke to do a session with GN'R producer Mike Clink adding Clarke's rhythm guitar to *Spaghetti*. Clarke had just one day to do overdubs. Without rough mixes in advance, he had to figure out his parts and knock them out on the fly. Before digging in, for reference he asked to hear what Stradlin tracked. "We put it up, and Izzy really didn't play on any of that stuff," Clarke says. "Some of the stuff he wasn't there for, and even if there was something, you could hear in his playing he wasn't into it."

That day, Clarke played a Seventies Les Paul (its back adorned with stickers from his previous bands, Candy and Kill for

Thrills) and custom guitar by British luthier Tony Zemaitis, whose striking designs were made famous by Rolling Stone Ronnie Wood. Before crafting Clarke's guitar, Zemaitis traced his hand so the instrument would fit perfectly. "I always say my Zemaitis was like the best Les Paul ever made. That guitar just rang and rang." For *Spaghetti* overdubs, Clarke stood in the control room with Clink and a long cable ran out to his '62 Fender Deluxe amp in the tracking room. Clink was integral to shaping GN'R's sound, but rarely does inter-

**April 20, 1992:**  
[from left] GN'R's  
Duff McKagan, Slash,  
Axl Rose and Gilby  
Clarke perform at  
the Freddie Mercury  
Tribute Concert at  
Wembley Stadium  
in London





views, so his mojo's somewhat mysterious. "The thing about Mike is honesty," Clarke says. "With Guns N' Roses' success at that time a lot of people could be intimidated. Mike was not intimidated. Every person in the band respected Mike's opinion, so if he thought it was a good take or you could do better you trusted that."

*Spaghetti's* opening track, a take on the 1958 Skyliners doowop ballad "Since I Don't Have You," was cut on the road. "Axl had played it like as an intro to one of the shows or something like that," Clarke says.

"He was into the song and wanted us to learn it and record it." Because GN'R's gear was shipped from gig to gig, "we literally showed up at a studio in Boston on rental amps, rental guitars, rental everything." Clarke got the idea to lay down acoustic guitar for "Since I Don't Have You," with one of Slash's most tastefully elegant solos. "I just remember my fingers being really sore," Clarke says. "And a little bloody too by the time we were finished with it."

*Spaghetti's* most accessible rocker is a hot version of Nazareth riff-fest "Hair

of the Dog." During a kick-and-cowbell intro Rose asks, "Give me a little bit of volume on this," before soulfully shredding his throat. "Way before I was ever in the band, I always thought they reminded me of Nazareth," Clarke says. As Slash says in a circa-'93 MTV interview, GN'R's original covers concept had veered off-script: "It wasn't a punk record so much anymore, it was a Guns N' Roses compilation of songs we were into and bands we were into when we were coming up." *Spaghetti's* liner notes included this message to fans: "Do yourself



Roberta Freeman performs in North Hollywood in September 2017

"ALL OF A SUDDEN WE'D HEAR THE INTRO TO 'PARADISE CITY' AND HAVE TO RUN UP ONSTAGE TO GET TO THE MIC ON TIME. I'D PICK THE LONGEST SONGS THAT WE WEREN'T SINGING ON TO GO TO THE BATHROOM, BECAUSE IN THESE BIG ARENAS THE BATHROOMS ARE GOLF CART RIDES AWAY"  
—ROBERTA FREEMAN



a favor and go find the originals." But the LP's most curious song isn't listed — a version of "Look at Your Game, Girl," a hippie-folk tune by convicted cult leader and psychopath Charles Manson, which was included as a hidden track.

Brian James learned GN'R had cut a version of "New Rose," the Damned's whirlwind 1977 single, by reading an interview with Slash. James was the horror-tinged British band's original guitarist and penned the song, creating "New Rose" on a Sixties Gibson SG. Around that time, he was listening to a lot of MC5, Ramones and Stooges, whose "Raw Power" is covered on *Spaghetti*. James is fond of GN'R's "New Rose," with McKagan singing lead, for a couple of reasons. "I was pretty broke, to be honest," James says, "and it was at a time when I wanted to leave England and move to France, and having that money from Guns doing (the song) was really useful. Apart from that, they'd done a good version. It's straight-ahead, it's tough. The way the song should be. I'd heard other versions and they just didn't measure up."

Why haven't *Spaghetti* and *Era* connected with fans like *Appetite* or even cult-fave *Chinese Democracy*? At the time *Era* was released, it seemed like an afterthought. "I feel like it was one of those things," Mitchell says, "that didn't get the full weight of the machinery behind it, meaning the label promoting it and getting it in the front of the stores and at radio stations and TV." Plus, Axl's rebooted GN'R and Slash had gone their separate ways, so

it's likely neither was psyched to promote it. *Era* was certified gold, a coup now but at the height of CD sales not so much. *Spaghetti* reached Number 4 and went platinum, but during an alt-rock goldrush, GN'R didn't quite resonate like before.

Still, those involved with *Spaghetti Incident* and *Live Era* have fond memories. Mitchell, who now does lots of NFL TV work, marvels at Slash and Day's teamwork to replicate studio tones onstage for *Era*. "It's seamless stuff but makes a huge difference," Mitchell says. Although GN'R wasn't on Freeman's personal playlist before touring with them, she says the band "turned me into a believer." Monroe, who just released a solo LP, *One Man Gang*, will never forget how GN'R made it a point to mention Hanoi Rocks in interviews, "unlike some other bands who tried to copy Hanoi, but were more into posing

and missed the whole punky attitude and the street-gang vibe." In 2017, James went to see GN'R's London show. The band performed "New Rose." James says, "Duff in particular, his heart's really in the song, and that really shows." This year, Clarke will release a solo album, *The Gospel Truth*, featuring backing vocals from Freeman, who also appears on Weezer's 2019 Black Album. After GN'R, Clarke worked with the likes of Heart, MC5, Nancy Sinatra and Slash's Snakepit. He's done just fine. Still there's something he misses about the days captured on *Spaghetti* and *Era*.

"It was obviously Axl and Slash's band, there's no question about that," Clarke protests. "But it still felt like a band — like Slash would ask me questions, 'What do you think about this?' and he listened. Same thing with Axl. I knew my place in the band and how long I'd been in it compared to everybody else... but it really felt like it was yours." **GW**



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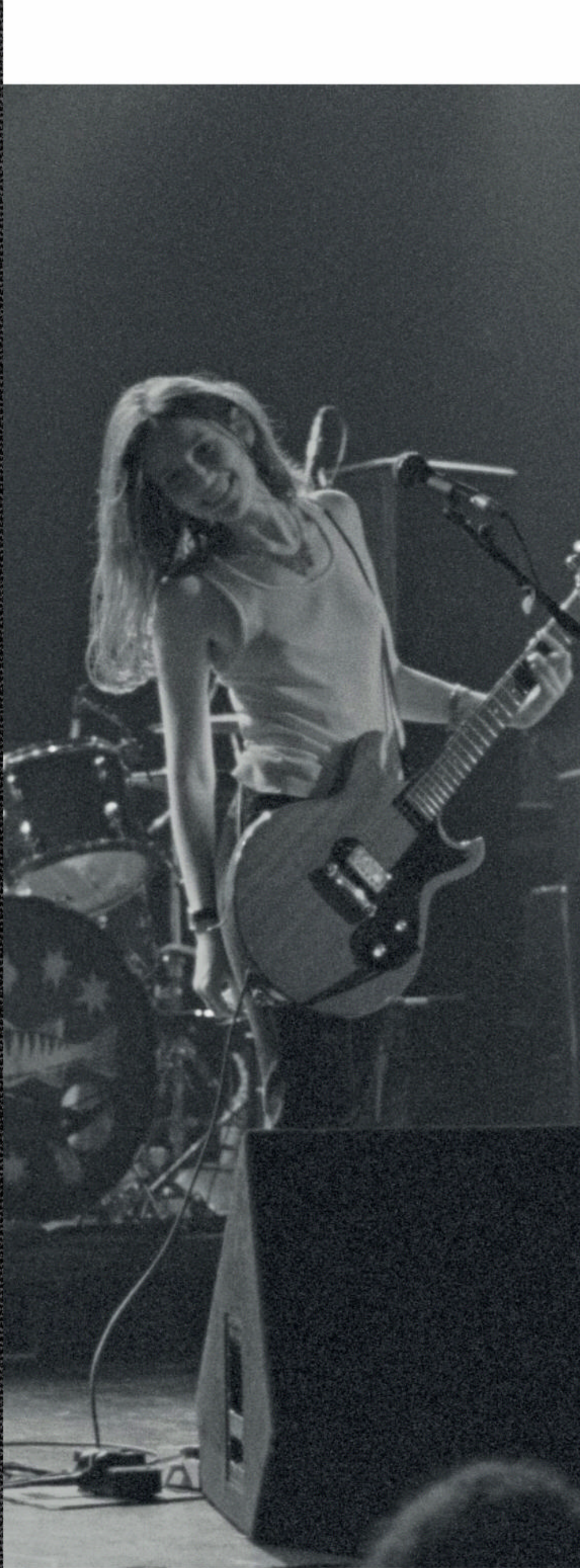


***KEEPIN' IT***

***COPACETIC***

Veruca Salt's **Louise Post**  
and Local H's **Scott Lucas**  
— veterans of the Nineties  
alternative-rock signing spree —  
discuss life after major labels

BY JOE BOSSO





Veruca Salt's Nina  
Gordon [*left*] and  
Louise Post perform  
in Minneapolis  
May 21, 1995

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## LOCAL H'S BIG HIT DURING THE SUMMER OF 1996 WAS

"Bound for the Floor," otherwise known as "the copacetic song" for its sing-along chorus ("And you just don't get it / you keep it copacetic / and you learn to accept it / you know it's so pathetic") and a gnashing guitar sound that fit in nicely with playlists leaning heavily on Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, Alice in Chains and other *au courant* grunge/alt-rockers. The band's 1995 debut album, *Ham Fisted*, failed to elicit much attention, but with "Bound for the Floor" receiving constant radio and MTV play, they saw their second disc, *As Good As Dead*, reach gold status. And now the pressure was on. As Lucas recalls, "All of a sudden, we were faced with this new set of expectations, all focused around one thing: Can we do it again?"

After the first grunge-rock signing spree tore through Seattle in the early Nineties, record labels invaded Chicago, waving big contracts and snapping up alternative acts such as the Smashing Pumpkins, Urge Overkill and Liz Phair. "It was an exciting time," says guitarist-singer Louise Post, whose band Veruca Salt was wined and dined by scores of A&R reps before they ultimately signed with Geffen. "Things were happening so quickly. You have your first hit, and just as fast you're placed in this pressure cooker. Your song is on the radio, but you don't even have a moment to soak it in because everybody's running around going, 'Oh, God, the house is on fire!'"

Veruca Salt first hit the charts in 1994 with the track "Seether," released on the Chicago-based indie label Minty Fresh. Almost immediately, the band became alternative-press darlings, but when the group signed with Geffen, which took over marketing and distribution of their debut album, *American Thighs*, the backlash started. "The indie scene kind of turned on us," Post says. "People who weren't experiencing success on a national or international level just didn't want to accept us." By the time the band convened with producer Bob Rock to record their 1997 album, *Eight Arms to Hold You*, tensions within the group, particularly between Post and co-front person Nina Gordon, reached a boiling point.

"The whole thing unraveled very quickly," Post says. "Our song 'Volcano Girls' did well, but everything else was insane. Our label was frustrated with our management, people

couldn't agree on anything, and we just sort of imploded by the unreal expectations that were placed on us." A year after the release of *Eight Arms to Hold You*, Gordon and drummer Jim Shapiro split the band, and Post soon left to pursue a solo career.

In Local H's case, they found themselves releasing a critical follow-up, the 1998 album *Pack Up the Cats*, during a time when PolyGram, the parent company of their label (Island) was merging with Universal. "It was one of those best-of-times / worst-of-times scenarios," Lucas recalls. "So many of the people who believed in us at the label were losing their jobs, so we got caught in the gears of this changing corporate structure." As a result, the album's lead single, "All the Kids Are Right," stalled at Number 20 on *Billboard's* Modern Rock chart, and no other tracks from the record were released. "It was really frustrating," says Lucas, "because everybody thought this was going to be the album to go platinum." Throughout the next decade and a half, Post recruited new members for reconstituted versions of Veruca Salt, but it wasn't until 2015 that the original lineup that included Gordon, Shapiro and bassist Steve Lack reunited for a pair of indie releases, the EP *MMXIV* and an album, *Ghost Notes*. As for Lucas, he maintained the outfit Local H after the departure of original drummer Joe Daniels with sticksman Brian St. Clair, issuing a couple of EPs and albums on Palm Pictures (run by Island

Post — with a Gibson SG — performs with Veruca Salt March 4, 2017, at the El Rey Theatre in Los Angeles

Records founder Chris Blackwell) before going the indie route himself. With new drummer Ryan Harding, his most recent Local H album, 2015's *Hey, Killer*, was released on G&P Records.

"A lot of people think that being off a major label is the end of your career, but it doesn't have to be that way," Lucas says. "The trick is not to get caught up in the wheels of the major-label machine. I've seen a lot of bands and a lot of friends get chewed up and spit out, and I said early on, 'That's not in the cards for me. I was OK before we got a deal, and I'm going to be OK if the deal goes away.' When you get down to it, what's the alternative?"

SCOTT DUDELSON/GETTY IMAGES





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WE MADE BECAUSE  
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UNDERNEATH THE  
WEIGHT OF IT ALL”**  
— LOUISE POST

”

**Let's go back to the Chicago music scene in the early Nineties. Was it a tight-knit community?**

**SCOTT LUCAS** It was, but it took me a while to be a part of it. I was still living in Zion, which is a pretty small town outside of Chicago. I would go to shows in the city all the time, and I wanted to be part of the scene — Veruca Salt and Liz Phair and Urge Overkill. I wanted to be in a bar talking to other musicians about music. I didn't want to be in this fucking bar where I lived — talking about football.

**LOUISE POST** It was a nice, tight scene. We'd see Urge Overkill play, and we marveled at how smooth they sounded. Nina and I were always struggling with our guitar sound and vocal harmonies. We hung out with the Urge guys, and then there was this whole posse of bands that hung out together — Local H, Loud Lucy, Triple

Fast Action, Fig Dish. We used to bowl together, we dated each other — it was a cool thing.

**When Nirvana hit it big, did you notice Chicago bands were taking the idea of getting signed more seriously?**

**LUCAS** I don't know. Chicago was a very indie-centric town. You had bands recording with Steve Albini and that kind of thing. For me, distorted guitars and screaming always went hand in hand with what I liked and what I saw in town. Nobody was trying to do things like Nirvana, but I think it's fair to say that suddenly the idea of getting signed didn't seem crazy.

**POST** We were just inspired by the music. I know that Nirvana played a huge part in us coming into the world. And if Kurt's spirit lives on in anyone, it's Scott Lucas. But we were really in

our own thing. There were so many cool bands in Chicago — the Smashing Pumpkins, of course.

**Did you remember when you noticed the scene changing — more label reps coming to town?**

**LUCAS** It seemed to flip almost overnight.

**POST** We experienced the feeding frenzy probably more than anybody else. I do remember coming home one night and there were 17 messages on my phone machine from label people. It just exploded.

**LUCAS** Every major label wanted a Nirvana. Whether or not we were a Nirvana rip-off or not, they wanted a Nirvana rip-off. Everybody had to have one. It was like an accessory: “I got one, too.” Before long, everybody had a fucking deal: the Smoking Popes, Triple Fast Action, Fig Dish, Menthol. Everybody was getting signed,



but not everybody was going to have a hit.

**POST** We went to LA and visited all the labels. We did the dinners with everybody. Jimmy Iovine wine and dined us. And in New York we went to lunch with David Geffen. He picked us up in his limo and said, “I don’t get your music — no offense — but my label really likes you and they want to sign you.”

**Labels were throwing around crazy money.**

**POST** They were. We did an interview with *Entertainment Weekly* and they quoted some crazy, inaccurate number that Geffen had signed us for. I was pretty mad about that. We got a good deal, but it wasn’t the amount that people thought.

**LUCAS** I was a little naïve about money and the business at first, but that naivete prepared me for what was to come later on. I got into this because of my love of music, and I assumed everybody at the labels felt the same way. I didn’t realize that money was the main factor for a lot of people.

**Unlike some bands, Scott, you didn’t get a huge advance. Do you think that put you in a better position — that you weren’t a liability?**

**LUCAS** Hard to say. We didn’t want a big advance because we wanted the tour support. We thought, “Let’s just stay out of everybody’s hair so we can do what we want.” It’s hard to say if that was the right approach. If you’re small potatoes, you can get dropped easily because it’s like, “Who the fuck are these guys?” But if you get a huge advance, you’re immediately a liability, and if you don’t have a hit the label will want to cut its losses. Is there a right approach? I don’t know.

**Louise, you guys went gold with *American Thighs*, and Scott, Local H went gold with *As Good As Dead*. Was the feeling within the bands like, “We’re on the way!”?**

**POST** Most definitely, except that we expected even more.

**LUCAS** Our attitude was always the same: we just wanted to be able to make another record. We never had a moment to sit back and say, “We’ve got it made.” That was never my mindset. We toured around an awful lot and we built an audience.

**After you had hits, how much pressure did you feel to have a bigger hit as a follow-up?**

**POST** We felt it. There was so much controversy with every decision we made because the stakes were high. We needed to recoup. We needed to justify the amount of money Geffen was sinking into videos and albums and tours. It was too much pressure, and frankly, we just kind of cracked underneath the weight of it all.

**LUCAS** I didn’t feel pressure in that way; I felt free to do what I wanted to do. I had an idea

to do more of a concept album with *Pack Up the Cats*. There was never a feeling that this record wasn’t going to be big. Everybody at the label thought it was to be huge. Our only problem was picking the single — everybody had a favorite song. We went with the first one, “All the Kids Are Right,” but nobody could figure out the second single, and that’s when things started to fall apart.

**POST** There was no lack of enthusiasm from the label for *Eight Arms to Hold You*. “Volcano Girls” did well, but then there was the question about following it up. We hired high-powered managers, and we just let them make the decisions. Nina and I wanted to be the songwriters, and we just didn’t want to deal with the business stuff. So management forced their decisions down the throats of the radio department, and when the next single didn’t do so well we got a reputation for being problematic.

**When your follow-up releases weren’t big hits, how hard was it for you on a personal level?**

**POST** Well, it was shocking because our ascent was so fast; it was hard to process what was happening when we were breaking up. There was a sense of forward momentum and then it felt sort of like we were in a car crash.

**LUCAS** It was difficult when things started to stall, but I never internalized it as any kind of failure on my part. I just thought, “If my best isn’t good enough, there’s nothing else I could have fucking done.” *Pack Up the Cats* was a great record, and it was the best I could do. So I thought, “I guess maybe I don’t belong here.” Maybe I wasn’t cut out to be a major-label guy after all.

**POST** At the same time, things really were changing in the record business; the model that we knew changed, with Napster and everything else. What we knew as the norm was totally different.

**Scott, you never pulled the plug on Local H, but Louise, Veruca Salt broke up for a while.**

**LUCAS** Quitting never occurred to me. I appreciated being on a major label, but very quickly I said, “Time to move on.” I knew it would be a lot of work, and that we would be doing a lot more of the work, but fuck it, you know? For a brief time we went to Palm Pictures, which was kind of like Island Jr., and we could record with Jack Douglas. After that, you realize your overhead is getting lower and lower, and you’ve got to make adjustments. You tighten the belt — smaller crew, a van instead of a bus... And then not have any crew at all. But you can do it. It’s not impossible.

**POST** My situation was very different. I had a very high-profile breakup with a boyfriend, and then the situation with Nina happened. For me, it was like a one-two punch that just

Local H’s Scott Lucas performs in Oslo, Norway, January 30, 2017; he’s playing a Seventies Ibanez 2352

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**EVERY MAJOR LABEL  
WANTED A NIRVANA.  
WHETHER OR NOT  
WE WERE A NIRVANA  
RIP-OFF OR NOT,  
THEY WANTED A  
NIRVANA RIP-OFF.  
EVERYBODY HAD TO  
HAVE ONE. IT WAS  
LIKE AN ACCESSORY:  
‘I GOT ONE, TOO’ ...  
EVERYBODY WAS  
GETTING SIGNED,  
BUT NOT EVERYBODY  
WAS GOING TO HAVE  
A HIT”**  
— SCOTT LUCAS

leveled me. It took me a long time to come back together and be healthy, happy and whole again — and want to make art again. It was really like a car crash for me.

**LUCAS** You just have to tell yourself, “I’m not going to become a casualty.” I started to see that people weren’t coming to see the band for “Bound for the Floor”; audiences were coming to hear all of our songs. And being on my own made me better at what I do. I learned how to make stuff interesting for the fans. I did my own marketing. You can do this stuff if you just get off your ass. To me, the casu-





PYMCA/AVALON/UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP VIA GETTY IMAGES

alties — the people who lost their record deals and broke up — maybe they were in it for the wrong reasons.

**Scott, you've had a couple of different drummers in Local H since you left the majors. Louise, however, it took you and Nina some time to get back together and reunite the band.**

**POST** We did have a rift of astronomical proportions. Getting back together was like performing surgery, there was a lot of healing that had to take place. We went back in and we dissected and discussed what went wrong — who was responsible for what, all that. We

shined a light on the past in a very honest way and talked about all of our experiences. That was the only way we could get back together and go forward.

**What are your expectations for the future? You're both maintaining your bands without the machinery of major labels. Does the thought that you might not hit the charts like you did in the Nineties worry you?**

**POST** You can't think about it. The weight of our getting back together was so great, so we have to lift that weight, and the only way to do that was to say, "We're doing this for our-

selves." We couldn't think about having hits or anything like that. We had to just do it for the love of the band and the music.

**LUCAS** I'm fine for whatever comes because I feel like I've already succeeded. A while ago I was listening to The Loop before it went off the air — they played classic rock. One day I heard Tom Petty, and then they played "Bound for the Floor," and then they played a song by Boston. I was like, "Fuck, this is great." They put us in that kind of company? Amazing. I always wanted our records to be timeless, and to be sandwiched between those two artists, that just brought it all home for me. **GW**



**S2**

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# SOUND CHECK



*the gear  
in review*



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**EASTMAN**  
SB55DC/v

**78**  
**NEW EQ**

**79**  
**DANELECTRO**  
3699 Fuzz

**80**  
**JHS PEDALS**  
Paul Gilbert PG-14



## The Prince of Tone

**FENDER '64 CUSTOM PRINCETON REVERB**

By Chris Gill

**▶ ASK A GUITARIST** to name the ultimate small amp, and a majority will likely choose the Fender Princeton. Partly thanks to session players like Tommy Tedesco and Steve Lukather, the Princeton is known as the most recorded amp in the world, but the amp has also appeared on stage and in the studio with rockers

like Pete Townshend, Mike Campbell and St. Vincent, country pickers Clarence White, Marty Stuart and Kenny Vaughan and even jazz guitarists like Bill Frisell. Hundreds of well-known stars may have made the Fender Princeton amp an icon, but its success and longevity lie with the millions of unknown players like



you and I who have made it a reliable staple for practice, recording and club gigs.

While the Princeton evolved over the years from the primitive “Woodie” version Leo Fender developed during the late Forties through the Princeton Recording Amp produced until 2009, the most coveted version remains the legendary blackface Princeton Reverb with the AA764 circuit produced from 1964-67. With the introduction of the Fender ’64 Custom Princeton Reverb, Fender has resurrected this beloved model in all of its former glory. The new Fender ’64 Custom Princeton Reverb is designed for players with a discriminating ear who desire classic Princeton Reverb tone and performance but don’t want to spend \$3,000 or more for an original vintage model that’s more than likely missing original parts.

**FEATURES** True to the original, the ’64 Custom Princeton Reverb is a single-channel, 12-watt all-tube amp with reverb and tremolo. The power amp is driven by a pair of 6V6 tubes, while the preamp is driven by 1 1/2 12AX7 tubes (the extra gain stage is part of the reason why many players prefer the Princeton Reverb over the regular Princeton) with the other half split to the phase inverter. The third 12AX7 is split between reverb recovery and tremolo, a 12AT7 drives the long-spring reverb tank and the rectifier is a 5AR4/GZ34 tube. There’s also a pair of inputs (normal and -6dB), volume, treble, bass, reverb, speed and intensity knobs on the front panel and a power switch, 1/4-inch internal and external speaker jacks and jack for the included two-button reverb/tremolo on/off footswitch on the rear panel.

Several high-end details make this model truly custom. The amp is hand-wired at Fender’s Corona, California factory; the cabinet is constructed of solid pine (just like the original), which enhances resonance and reduces weight; and the speaker is 10-inch Jensen alnico P10R, which is actually an improvement over the harsher-sounding ceramic magnet speakers equipped with the original blackface Princeton Reverb. Components were carefully selected to match the specs of the originals and include Fender Vintage Blue tone capacitors and Groove Tubes. The vinyl covering has period-correct extra-heavy texture, and even the silver grill cloth is lightly aged to match the warmer gray color of a well-kept original in its current state. A heavy-duty cover is also included with the amp.

**PERFORMANCE** While the hand-wired construction, period-correct cosmetics and high-quality components are all welcome



**CHEAT SHEET**

**STREET PRICE:** \$2,299.99  
**MANUFACTURER:** Fender, fender.com

- A 12-watt single-channel amp with two 6V6 power tubes, three 12AX7s, one 12AT7 and a 5AR4 rectifier.
- The amp features a tube-driven long-spring reverb tank for lush reverb effects and bias-modulating tremolo for dynamic, responsive tremolo.
- Period-correct details include a hand-wired circuit board, solid pine cabinet and extra-heavy textured vinyl covering.
- The Jensen P10R alnico 10-inch speaker provides warmer tone and smoother treble than the ceramic speakers equipped with the original model.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE:** Fender’s ’64 Custom Princeton Reverb delivers the timeless tone, features and performance that have made the blackface Princeton Reverb a coveted classic, but at a much more reasonable price than a vintage model.





# Classic Cool

**EASTMAN SB55DC/V**

By Paul Riario

**EASTMAN MIGHT NOT** be as “on your radar” as other well-known instrument manufacturers, but as players in the loop seeking timeless models are well aware, the company has been making some of the finest handcrafted guitars for almost two decades. What’s significant is the company’s deep-rooted expertise in building world-class violins using centuries-old German luthiery methods, and some of that artistry at work is outwardly evident by Eastman’s superb ageing and good old-fashioned hand-varnishing that has trickled down to their Antique Varnish Series of electrics. At the 2020 Winter NAMM Show, Eastman unveiled two new models in that series with the SB55/v-SB and SB55DC/v. They’re not merely replicas, but rather graceful interpretations of stripped-down classic designs with impeccable custom-shop craftsmanship and dynamic tone that make them undeniably captivating. I was immediately drawn to Eastman’s SB55DC/v, one of my favorite double cutaway guitars I’ve come across that screams raw power.

**FEATURES** One of the most striking aspects of the SB55DC/v is how much it feels like an orchestral instrument in your hands — most notably, a violin. Eastman’s six-step hand-applied varnish technique and mild ageing that concludes with a French polish originates from their custom violin shop, so it feels delicately plush against your skin, and it’s exactly this attention to detail that elevates it from an ordinary off-the-line guitar. Suffice to say, the see-thru antique vintage red varnish looks exquisite, and the custom tortoise Bakelite pickguard adds authentic vibe. From there, everything else selected is pure custom shop treatment, with a cap-less one-piece okoume mahogany solid body and one-piece set okoume mahogany neck, ebony fretboard with 22 Jescar frets, Faber

compensated bridge, and Faber tuners with vintage-style oval knobs. The guitar comes equipped with a Lollar “50’s Spec” DogEar P90 in the bridge, and a CTS 500K volume and No-Load tone pot that bypasses itself when dimed, and acts as a standard tone pot when set below 10.

**PERFORMANCE** I do try not to judge a book by its cover, but the SB55DC/v is everything I thought it would be for its alluring throwback appeal and so much more, once I played it. Its okoume mahogany body is pleasingly lightweight, and as expected, rings like a bell with lavish volume when strummed acoustically. You get an immediate sense that its fit and finish is flawlessly executed and inextricably connected, where wire and wood all work together for an exceptional playing experience. Eastman’s choice of premium Faber hardware maintains unwavering intonation and tuning stability, while the guitar’s low action setup is a judicious compromise for allowing ample degrees of bouncy elasticity in both the lower and higher registers. Comfortably slim and grippy is the best way to describe the vintage-style carve of its neck, which has a softly rounded C-profile with a slight V running down its center, and the gorgeously dark ebony fretboard with medium/jumbo frets makes bluesy-bending sinfully easy. Call me biased, but I’m a fan of Lollar pickups, so the electronic superstar here is the sole Lollar “50’s Spec” DogEar P90 that kicks the guitar up a notch in brilliance. Sure, it’s clichéd, but the pickup nails all the requisite clang and wide-open sound necessary for raucous rock and blues, and alternatively, sparkly smoothness for lilting country or buoyant jazz. For its bare simplicity as an all-in-one guitar, the SB55DC/v proves less is certainly more.

## CHEAT SHEET



**STREET PRICE:** \$1,490

**MANUFACTURER:** Eastman, [eastmanguitars.com](http://eastmanguitars.com)

- The guitar’s single Lollar “50’s Spec” DogEar P-90 is an articulate low-output bridge pickup that produces a lively attack with no hard edges and a real top-end shimmer.
- The compensated Faber “wraparound” bridge and Faber tuners feature a softly-aged antique nickel finish for a played-in look while offering spot-on intonation and tuning stability.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE:**  
The Eastman SB55DC/v is a stunning example of a premium spec’d Junior model that exceeds all expectations in vintage mojo and robust tone.







## PRS Guitars

### SE P20 AND P20E TONARE PARLOR ACOUSTICS

The SE P20 and P20E are PRS's first-ever parlor acoustics. As new additions to the SE acoustic lineup, the models are available in several colors and offered with and without electronics. The SE P20 and P20E feature PRS's hybrid "X"/Classical bracing, which allows the top to freely vibrate and project with bold, balanced tone. The guitars boast all-mahogany construction and three satin finishes with herringbone rosettes and accents. Their smaller size makes playing for hours effortless and comfortable. Other features include an ebony fretboard and bridge, bone nut and saddle, PRS trademark bird inlays and headstock design and a high-quality gig bag. The SE P20E comes with a Fishman GT1 electronics system with an undersaddle pickup and soundhole-mounted preamp with easy-to-access volume and tone controls

**STREET PRICE:** SE P20, \$499; SE P20E, \$579  
[prsguitars.com](http://prsguitars.com)

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## Morley

### 20/20 PEDALS: WAH BOOST, WAH LOCK, LEAD WAH AND VOLUME PLUS

The 20/20 Wah Boost, 20/20 Wah Lock, 20/20 Lead Wah and 20/20 Volume Plus pedals are four additions to Morley's 20/20 pedal series. The 20/20 pedals are pedalboard-friendly, measuring at 6.85" L x 4.5" W x 2.75" H, and have the same throw, sweep and feel as Morley's classic pedals. The 20/20 Wah Boost is a switchless wah with a 20dB Boost, midrange focus and wide frequency sweep, and comes in an industrial silver finish. The 20/20 Wah Lock features three Wah modes (Wah, WHOA and Wah Lock so you can use it as a tone filter) and comes in a Halloween Orange finish. The 20/20 Lead Wah is a switchless wah with a wider frequency sweep, low-end boost, an internal trimpot to customize your wah's loudness, and comes in a Shred Red finish. The 20/20 Volume Plus is an optical volume with an added Minimum Volume feature so you can use it as a rhythm and lead pedal, and comes in a Gator Green finish.

**STREET PRICE:** Volume Plus, \$129; Lead Wah, \$149; Wah Boost, \$159; Wah Lock, \$169  
[morleyproducts.com](http://morleyproducts.com)





## Vox

### CAMBRIDGE 50 MODELING AMPLIFIER

The Vox Cambridge 50 is a modern modeling guitar amp powered by Nutube technology; it comes equipped with a custom Vox-voiced Celestion 12-inch speaker to provide crisp, powerful and responsive guitar tones. The Vox Cambridge 50 uses Virtual Element Technology (VET) for modeling and Nutube power in the preamp section to deliver realistic and stage-ready sounds with the same distinctive distortion and response of a tube amp. The amp features 11 amp models, 8 built-in effects, built-in tuner, AUX input, USB audio interface and headphone/line output with cabinet simulator. The preset mode instantly recalls stage-ready sounds, and the manual mode allows users to dial in settings on the face of the amp just like a conventional amp. A LINE model is also provided to support acoustic-electric guitars and keyboards, further expanding its versatility.

**STREET PRICE:** \$299.99

[voxamps.com](http://voxamps.com)



## Buzz Bin

### Danelectro 3699 Fuzz

FUZZ IS A funny thing. It can all at once be sonically glorious for its raw complexity, and pugnaciously chaotic in spitting out crackly harmonics and buzzy overtones. It's a wild card of an effect for sure, which is why so many guitarists consider it their secret weapon when used wisely.

Back in the Seventies, Danelectro owner Steve Ridinger created such an effect with the legendary Foxx Tone Machine, literally an overstuffed fuzz box with faux-fur housing and a switchable octave effect that made it truly original. For many fuzz connoisseurs, its distinctly dense character and jagged upper-octave effect made it an "Excalibur" of sorts for fuzzes.

Now, Ridinger has gloriously resurrected this famed fuzz as the Danelectro 3699 Fuzz. Gone is the carpet-covering for a pedalboard-friendly die-cast metal chassis, along with some clever tweaks and updates that make this remarkable reissue a textbook example that every fuzz enthusiast should have in their collection.

The 3699 Fuzz arrives as a small brick of a pedal in a distressed red finish with aged knobs for Volume, Tone, and Fuzz, a Stock and Mid Boost mini-toggle, plus an on/off footswitch with a large orange indicator light. What's new is the octave effect has its own dedicated on/off footswitch with red LED, and its pitch-shifted jump is far more harmonically rich. The pedal features the same analog circuitry found in the original, with vintage NOS transistors selected for their responsive properties to achieve a spectrum of modern to sweet fuzzed-out clipping. The pedal is true bypass and is powered only via DC 9-volt power supply.

While I never owned a Foxx Tone Machine, my best friend had an original Foxx Fuzz & Wa & Volume, which essentially had the same onboard circuit as the Tone Machine. When you combined its wah along with fuzz and octave together, man, it was Hendrix-in-a-box. I can say the same here for the 3699 Fuzz; just add a wah pedal, kick on the octave and the pedal's range of fuzzy stabs and near ring-modulation in the upper octave sound massive.

Overall, the 3699 is a thick-sounding fuzz with more headroom, and warmer in its "Stock" toggle position, where the mids are sweetly squashed, resulting in a broad, full-blown blanketed fuzz. Switching to "Mid Boost" brings into focus the gnarlier edges of its hard-clipping. I tend to dig this setting for the overall clarity and punch, and obviously, where you finesse your guitar's volume changes its grind. Anecdotally, 3-6-9-9 spells "Foxx" on a telephone keypad and was the company's last four digits in its phone number.

— Paul Riario

**STREET PRICE:** \$199

**MANUFACTURER:** Danelectro, [danelectro.com](http://danelectro.com)







# Spice of Life

JHS PEDALS PAUL GILBERT PG-14

By Chris Gill

**OVERDRIVE AND DISTORTION** pedals are the guitar world's equivalent of seasonings and spices in the culinary realm. Some of these effects are like salt or pepper (such as clean boosts and Tube Screamer-style pedals, respectively) that players will want to use often or always, but others can be like the bolder flavors that you may not want to use all the time, but when they're needed nothing is better. The JHS Paul Gilbert PG-14 falls more toward the latter category and to me is the sonic equivalent of Japanese shichimi togarashi — a complex blend of flavors that makes its presence known yet perfectly complements a wide variety of foundations to make them even more tasty.

**FEATURES** The JHS PG-14 provides six control knobs arranged in two rows of three, with four hot pink knobs at the left and center for volume, tone, mid and mid frequency and two black knobs on the right for drive and push. The volume, drive and tone controls are self-explanatory, providing control of output level, overdrive and overall warmth or brightness. The pair of controls for the mid EQ section is a more uncommon semi-parametric configuration, with the mid knob controlling the gain of the mid frequency setting, which provides a sweepable peak range from 400Hz to 7.5kHz. The push knob controls the gain of a preamp placed in front of the circuit's FET amplifier, providing a broader range of overdrive and distortion textures and enabling the pedal to operate similar to a second high-gain amp placed in front of your amp. Durable 1/4-inch input and output jacks, true-bypass switching, a brilliant blue LED and 9VDC center negative power jack (no battery operation option) complete the pedal's features.

**PERFORMANCE** While the controls of the JHS PG-14 are pretty easy to understand, this is not a dumbed-down “set everything to 11 and go” distortion box. Getting the best tones requires a good amount of tweaking and careful listening, but the rewards are well worth the extra effort. Because the pedal is capable of delivering generous amounts of gain, it generally sounds best with an amp dialed in to a clean or just slightly overdriven tone (the latter was my preference). The settings of the push and drive controls can also affect the overall tone, with higher settings (12 o'clock and above) on the push control making the bass bigger but also looser. By design, the effect's treble frequencies are tamed so the tone never gets too thin or piercing, which also consistently keeps the midrange fat and prominent no matter where the mid knobs are set.

Thanks to the overall richness and body of the pedal's inherent tone, the PG-14 sounds best for lead/solo applications where gui-



tarists want single notes to blast through the mix. The pedal is also great for players who want the sound and feel of a fully cranked amp at more manageable volume levels. It works equally well with humbucking or single-coil and passive or active pickups, and it can even be used to fatten up the sound of single-coil pickups for pseudo-humbucking tones. The drive control delivers responsive dynamics up to about the 3 o'clock setting with just a hint of compression. Just like a dash of shichimi togarashi, the Paul Gilbert PG-14 can make a guitar's tone more spicy, rich and crunchy when paired with a wide variety of guitars and amps, and when dialed in just right, the tone can be downright mouthwatering.

## CHEAT SHEET



### STREET PRICE:

\$199

### MANUFACTURER:

JHS Pedals,  
jhs pedals.info

● The push knob adjusts the gain of a preamp placed before the FET amplifier circuit, allowing the pedal to operate like a true amp in a box.

● A semiparametric EQ circuit allows users to adjust the midrange peak between 400Hz to 7.5kHz as well as the midrange gain.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

The JHS Paul Gilbert PG-14 is ideal for players who want expressive, dynamic lead tones and the sound and feel of a fully cranked amp at lower volumes while being flexible enough to dial in their own individual tones that sound like nobody else.





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# SIX ON ONE TO FOUR

## Expanding major hexatonic soloing ideas over a I - IV progression

**LAST MONTH, WE** explored a variety of approaches to building soloing ideas from major hexatonic scale patterns. *Hexatonic* means *six-tone*, so hexatonic scales are devised of six scale degrees. Similar to the more commonly used major and minor pentatonic scales, which are five-tone scales, a hexatonic scale can be formed by adding one note to either of them.

To review, the major pentatonic scale is intervallically spelled 1, 2, 3, 5, 6. Major hexatonic adds the 4th scale degree, resulting in 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Major hexatonic may also be thought of as the seven-tone major scale (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) minus the 7th.

In the previous column, we explored the positions of the E major hexatonic scale (E, F#, G#, A, B, C#) as played over chord progressions in the key of E. This month, let's move up a 4th to the key of A and examine A major hexatonic, spelled A, B, C#, D, E, F#.

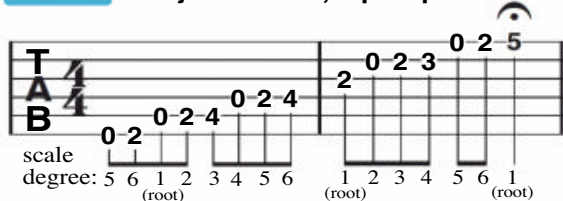
**FIGURE 1** illustrates A major hexatonic played in 1st position. Starting on the open low E string, we have the E and F#, followed by the open A string, then B, C#, D, E and F#. When soloing, it's advantageous to be able to include open strings, and with this scale we can use every open string except the G.

**FIGURE 2** shows A major hexatonic played in 4th/5th position. In **FIGURE 3**, we move up to the next available position, 6th/7th. Continue this process until you have explored the scale patterns up the length of the fretboard.

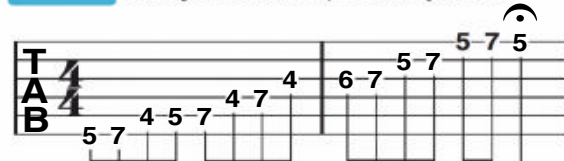
Founding Allman Brothers Band guitarist Dickey Betts based two of his most famous compositions, “Blue Sky” and Jessica,” on the major hexatonic scale, the former being in the key of E and the latter in the key of A. In fact, the scale has become so associated with him that it has earned the moniker *the Dickey Betts scale*. Dickey’s fellow guitarist in the ABB, Duane Allman, also relied on the hexatonic scale for many of his most celebrated solos (such as the ones he played in “Blue Sky” and “Dreams”).

Eric Clapton, Allman's bandmate on the Derek and the Dominos album *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs*, also relies often on this scale, and a perfect example can be

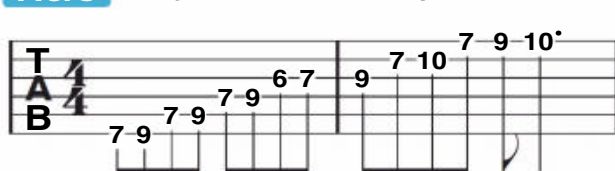
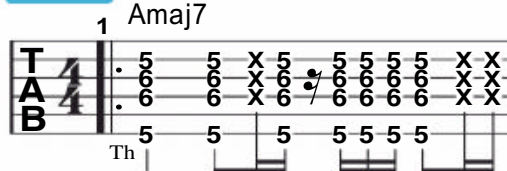
**FIG. 1** A major hexatonic, "open" position



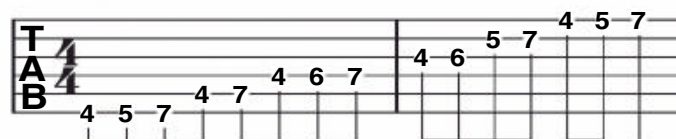
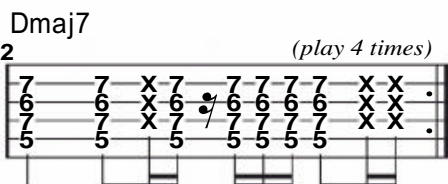
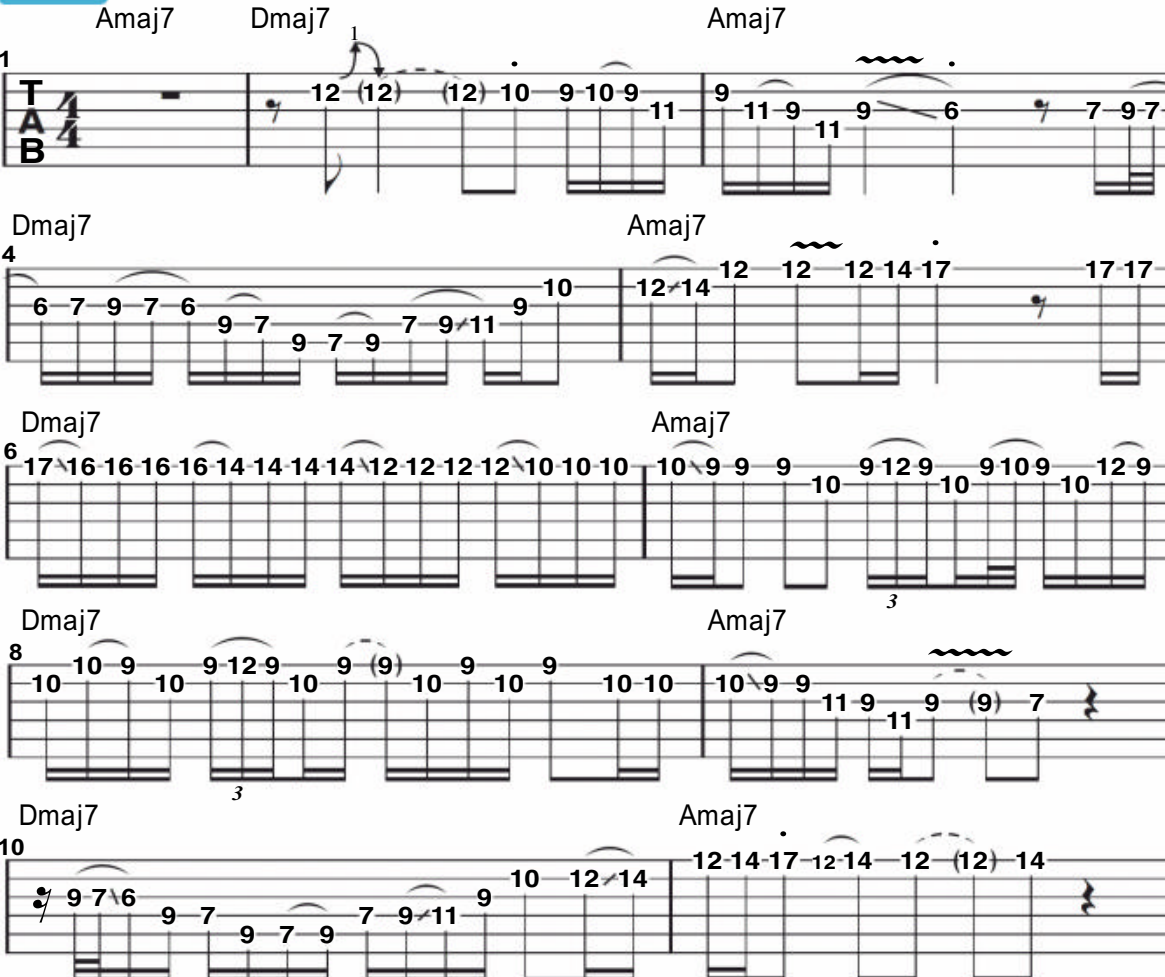
**FIG. 2** A major hexatonic, 4th/5th position



**FIG. 3** A major hexatonic, 6th/7th position

**FIG. 4**

**FIG. 5** E major hexatonic (over A)

**FIG. 6**

found in “Why Does Love Have to Be So Sad?” **FIGURE 4** offers a rhythm part similarly based on that song’s Amaj7 - Dmaj7 chord vamp.

A great twist on the standard major hexatonic scale is to use an altered set of intervals: in **FIGURE 5**, the notes G<sup>#</sup>, A, B, C<sup>#</sup>,

E and F# are played over A, which sounds E major hexatonic over an A tonal center.

**FIGURE 6** offers an 11-bar solo based on A major hexatonic over the Amaj7-Dmaj7 progression. Play through the solo slowly while taking notice of the way each scale degree relates to the underlying chord tones.

**Guitar World Associate Editor Andy Aledort is recognized worldwide for his vast contributions to guitar instruction, via his many best-selling instructional DVDs, transcription books and online lessons.**



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## TAPPED OUT

Two-finger tapping variations, and how to play the solo from “Get Up”

FOR THOSE OF you that have been following my columns, you know that one of my favorite techniques for soloing is *two-finger tapping*, for which I use two pick-hand fingers to hammer-on and pull-off notes instead of the more conventional one-finger approach. A good, instructive example of this technique in action can be found in the solo I play in the song “Get Up,” from the latest Whitesnake album, *Flesh and Blood*, which I’d like to break down for you today.

The solo is played over an F#5 power chord and much of it based on the F# minor pentatonic scale (F#, A, B, C#, E) played in 14th position (see **FIGURE 1**). Also, the feel here is a fast rock shuffle groove, for which each pair of eighth notes is “swung,” or played like the first and third notes of an eighth-note triplet.

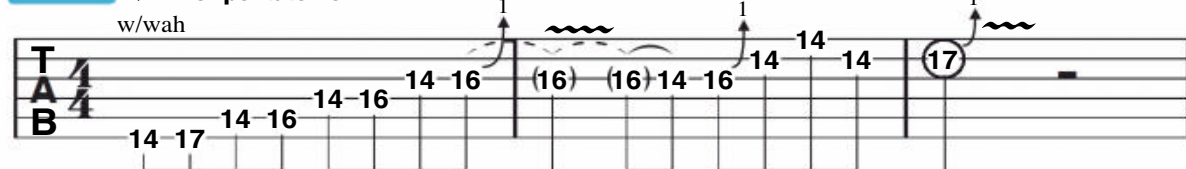
**FIGURE 2** illustrates the first four bars. I begin with an oblique bend, which refers to two or more strings played together while only one is bent. While holding a high E note (B string, 17th fret), I bend the B note below it (G string, 16th fret) up a whole step to C# and add vibrato. The subsequent phrase is built from a series of descending 6ths, played on non-adjacent strings and based on the F# Dorian mode (F#, G#, A, B, C#, D#, E). I use *hybrid picking* to perform this lick, picking the lower note in each 6th with a downstroke and plucking the higher note with my bare middle finger.

This is followed by **FIGURE 3**, in which I basically return to F# minor pentatonic, although I add a twist here by incorporating the major third, A#, sounded with a hammer-on, throughout the phrase.

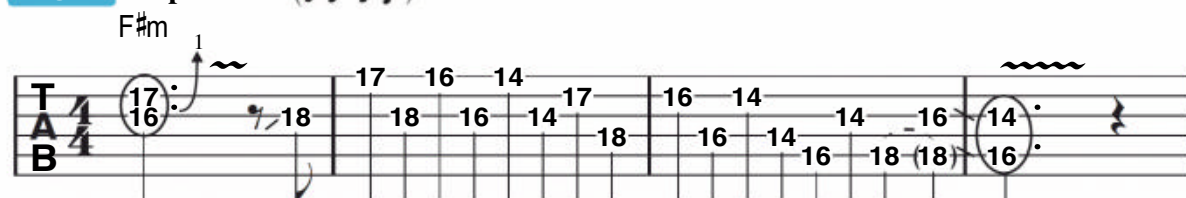
At the culmination of this phrase, I bring in two-finger tapping, as shown in **FIGURE 4**. Following a long slide, or *glissando*, up to F# on the 1st string’s 14th fret, I use my pick hand’s 1st finger to tap a high B note on beat 1 of the first complete bar, followed by a 3rd-finger tap on C#, two frets higher. I then release the taps to sound A, at the 17th fret, which I fret conventionally with my fret hand’s 3rd finger, followed by a repeat tap on B, which is then released to F#, fretted conventionally with my fret hand’s 1st finger. I then move this idea sequentially down

Tune down one whole step (low to high: D, G, C, F, A, D).  
All music sounds one whole step lower than written.

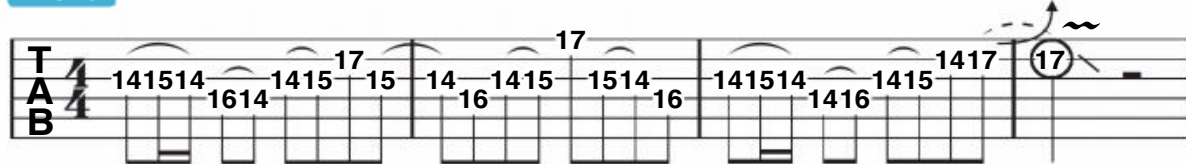
**FIG. 1** F# minor pentatonic



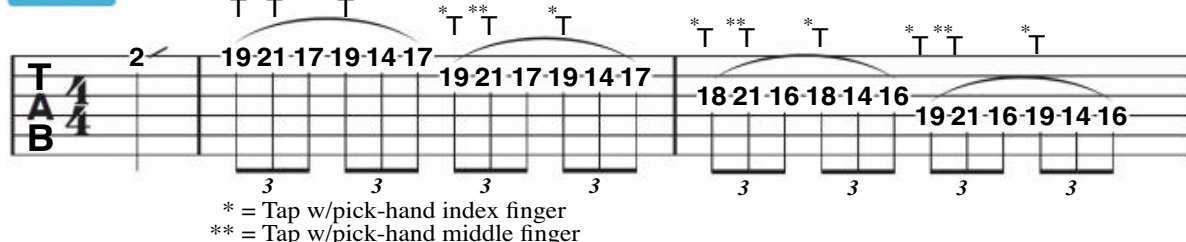
**FIG. 2** Triplet Feel (♩-♩-♩)



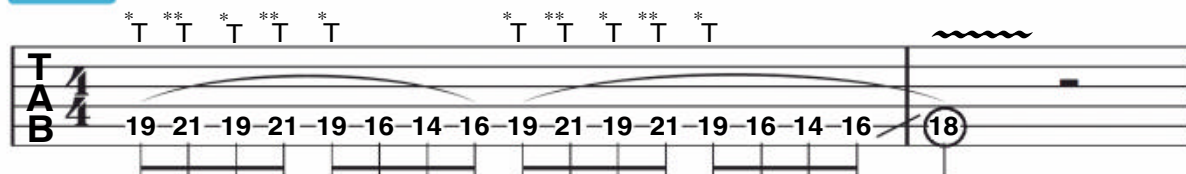
**FIG. 3**



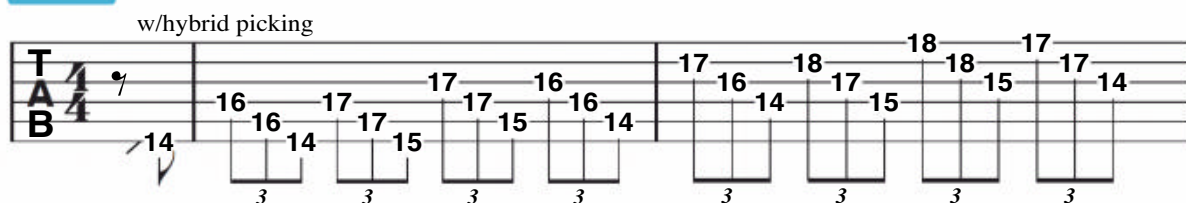
**FIG. 4**



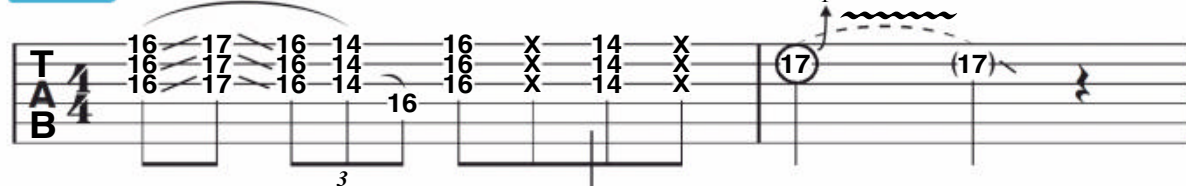
**FIG. 5**



**FIG. 6**



**FIG. 7**



across the adjacent strings while staying diatonic to F# minor pentatonic. The phrase ends with **FIGURE 5**, which is built from repeated multiple taps.

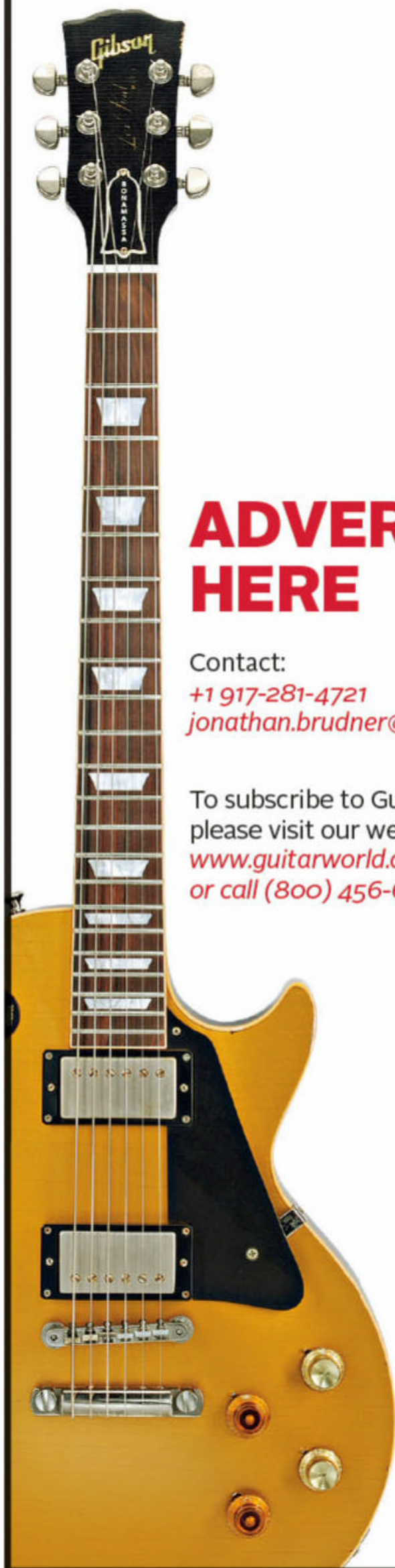
**FIGURE 6** throws a monkey wrench into the works with unexpected chromatic, reverse-arpeggiated power chords, again

performed with hybrid picking. The lowest note of each shape is sounded with the pick while the higher notes are fingerpicked with the middle and ring fingers. The solo then wraps up with some Chuck Berry/Stevie Ray Vaughan-style sliding barres across the top three strings, as shown in **FIGURE 7**.

Joel Hoekstra plays for Whitesnake, the Trans-Siberian Orchestra, Cher and his own side project, Joel Hoekstra's 13. Whitesnake's latest album is 2019's *Flesh & Blood*. Find out more at [joelhoekstra.com](http://joelhoekstra.com).



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# ACOUSTIC JOURNEY

by Molly Tuttle



For video of this lesson, go to [GuitarWorld.com/September2020](http://GuitarWorld.com/September2020)

## ALTERNATE PATHS

### More on clawhammer guitar, and how to play "Take the Journey"

LET'S CONTINUE OUR exploration of the technique and style of *clawhammer guitar* with a look at the song "Take the Journey," from my latest album, *When You're Ready*. I wrote this song with my friend Sarah Siskind, and as we were writing it, the song developed an "old-time"-y sound with a driving, modal feel that I felt would work well with the alternate tuning I use for clawhammer guitar, which is (low to high) D, G, D, G, C, D.

As we discussed in the last column, clawhammer guitar technique finds its origins in clawhammer banjo, and for both instruments the pick-hand is held in a "claw"-type shape, and the nails of the index and middle fingers are used to pick the higher strings while the thumb plucks the lower strings and sometimes one of the higher strings.

**FIGURE 1** represents the entire first section of "Take the Journey." The clawhammer technique I use here is a bit more complex than the typical "bum-ditty" pattern I demonstrated previously. The general idea with this guitar part is that it replicates the vocal melody as the song progresses. As shown in **FIGURE 2**, I begin with a G7 chord, sounded by adding my fret hand's index finger at the 2nd fret on the 2nd string and my middle finger at the 3rd fret on the 1st string, followed by an immediate hammer-on on that string to the 5th fret with the pinkie. In bar 2, I use my pick-hand thumb to sound one of the melody notes. On beats 2 and 3, the index finger strikes the notes on the downbeats while the thumb is used on the upbeat of beat 3 to sound the open 2nd string. In clawhammer parlance, this technique is known as *dropped thumb*.

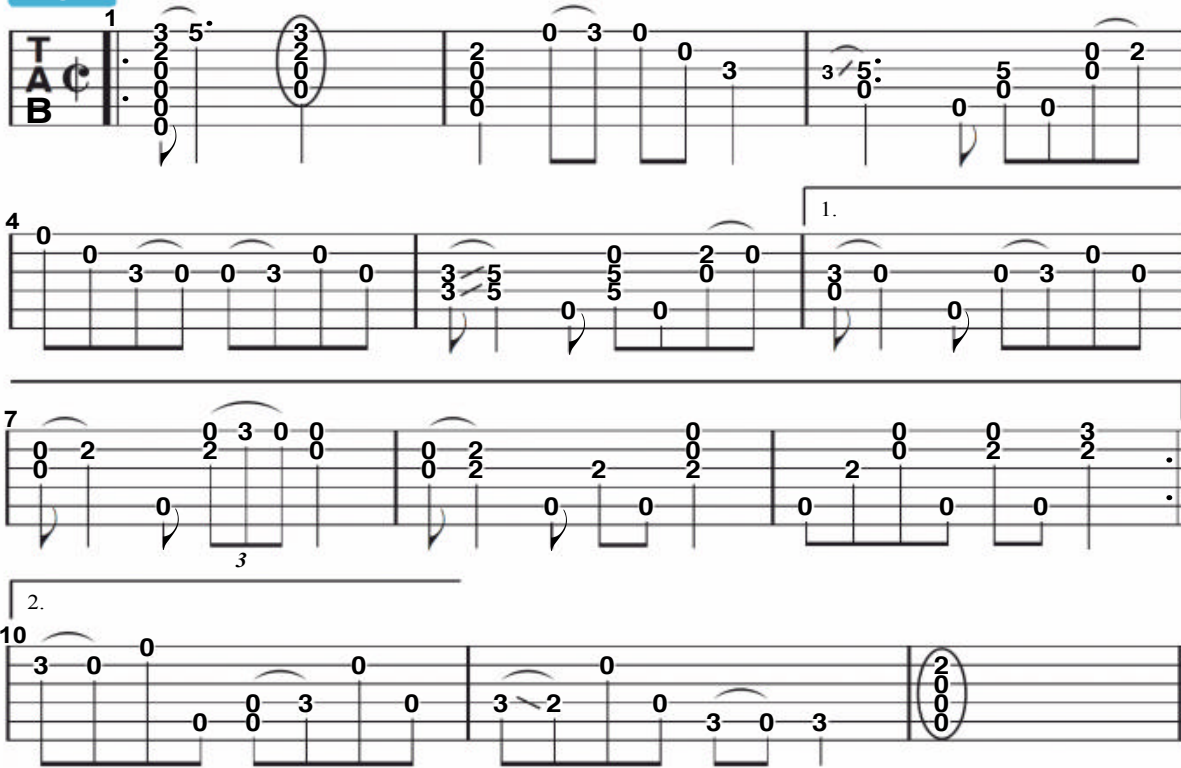
The melody line in bars 5 and 6, shown in **FIGURE 3**, is similar to that of bars 3 and 4, after which I move back to the higher strings to replicate the next part of the melody, shown in **FIGURE 4**.

**FIGURE 5** illustrates the last part of the initial melody, shown here without the eighth-note triplet articulation.

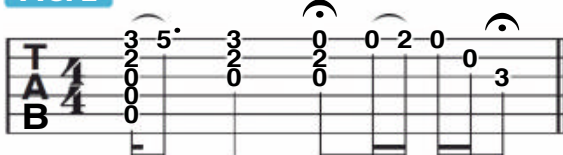
**FIGURE 6** details the two-note chord in bar 8 for **FIGURE 1**, with both the 3rd and 2nd strings fretted at the 2nd fret, sounding what is essentially the V (five) chord,

Open Gsus4 tuning (low to high: D, G, D, G, C, D).

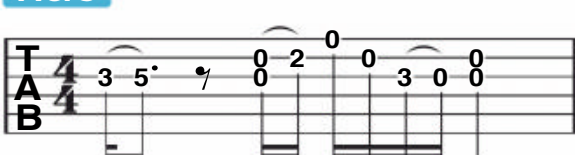
**FIG. 1**



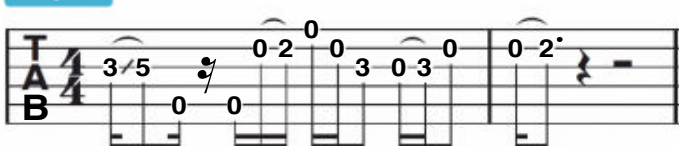
**FIG. 2**



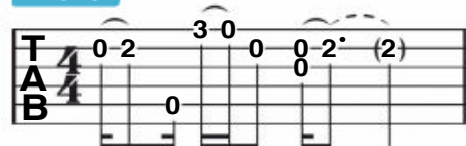
**FIG. 3**



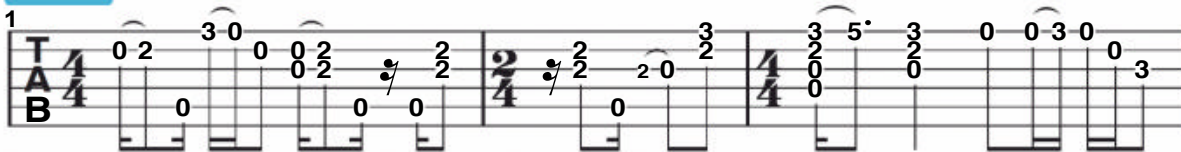
**FIG. 4**



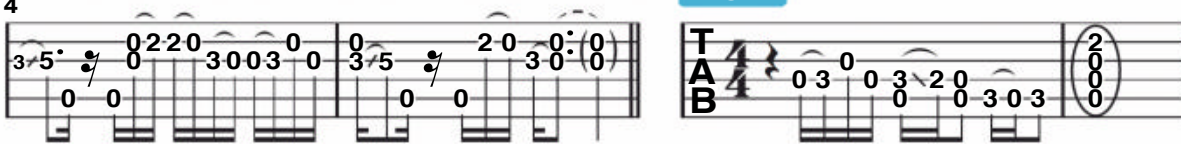
**FIG. 5**



**FIG. 6**



**FIG. 7**



D, within the melodic pattern. Of equal importance here is the subtle use of upbeat accents on the open 5th string throughout the entire pattern. Adding these upbeat bass notes helps propel the rhythm and push the song along.

The 1st ending is four bars long, making for a five-bar initial melodic pattern, which is common occurrence in Appalachian folk music, and then the form repeats the first

five bars and then moves to the 2nd ending, which is devised from a lower melodic line, as shown in **FIGURE 7**.

The goal is to become comfortable with clawhammer technique overall, so that the subtle changes necessary to suit the melody will not feel overwhelming or disruptive to the rhythmic and technical flow. Take each part slowly at first and then gradually ramp up the tempo.

**Molly Tuttle is a supremely talented and diverse multi-instrumentalist and singer-songwriter who is well-versed in the languages of bluegrass, acoustic folk, pop and Americana. Her debut album, 2019's *When You're Ready*, is available through [mollytuttlemusic.com](http://mollytuttlemusic.com) and elsewhere.**



# PERFORMANCE NOTES

...HOW TO PLAY THIS MONTH'S SONGS...



## "THE END OF THE GAME"

Weezer

**RIVERS CUOMO PROUDLY** wears his Eddie Van Halen guitar influence on his musical sleeve with this fun, well-crafted song, which one could say features the best of both rock worlds — EVH's flashy, melodic lead playing and interestingly angular rhythm parts, and Cuomo's own knack for writing generally simpler but super catchy riffs and hooky vocal accompaniments. The result is a broadly appealing blend of exciting rock guitar flair and heart-warming pop songcraft.

The song opens with a triumphant-sounding arpeggio tapping extravaganza, which Cuomo performs entirely on the B string, using legato double pull-offs from the tapping finger to the 5th fret then the open string, which serve as continuously rearticulated pedal tones and common tones throughout the four-bar passage, as the tapping finger moves up and down the string to play a high melody based on the E major scale (E, F#, G#, A, B, C#, D#).

The tapping may be performed with the pick hand's middle finger, while clasping the pick conventionally between your thumb and index finger,

or with the index finger, as Van Halen himself has famously done in many of his songs.

For those who are new to fretboard tapping, here are some pointers: Firmly set the fingertip down on the string, to get a good amount of volume on the initial melody note, then flick it downward as you release it to create a strong pull-off to the fretted E note, which you will then likewise flick downward as you pull-off to the open string. (Use your fret hand's index, middle or ring finger.)

This technique is not difficult to execute, but it takes practice to master the coordination required for the quick sequence of movements. Start out slowly at first and be mindful of both maintaining the continuous 16th-note triplet rhythm and following the lyrical melody on top. Also, when tapping, use pick-hand palm muting to dampen the idle lower strings and prevent them from ringing. This continuous close point of contact will also help stabilize the movement of the tapping finger and ensure consistently accurate taps.

— JIMMY BROWN



## "LIGHT MY FIRE"

The Doors

**THIS EARLY DOORS** classic features one of guitarist Robby Keiger's most celebrated and well-crafted single-note solos, transcribed in all its glory here.

Keiger begins his solo in bar 36 with a lyrical melodic theme, which he plays in 5th position and masterfully develops and recalls later in the solo (in bars 80-93). The guitarist relies mostly on the A Dorian mode here (A, B, C, D, E, F#, G), which, harmonically speaking, perfectly matches, or "agrees with," the repeating Am7 - Bm7 chord vamp played by organist Ray Manzarek. As the solo unfolds, the guitarist ventures outside the "safe" confines of A Dorian and introduces some "outside" notes, such as the major 3rd, C# (G string, 6th fret), which would ordinarily clash with the minor tonality but works effectively as a briefly dissonant chromatic passing tone between the minor 3rd, C, and the 4th, D (see bars 45-47), along with the b5 "blue note," Eb (G string, 8th fret).

Beginning in bar 51, the guitarist effectively changes things up by switching to sliding 4ths double-stops based on the less noodly-sounding A minor pen-

tatonic scale (A, C, D, E, G) and played on the top two strings. Also notice how Keiger makes use of an interesting variety of rhythms and articulations (staccato versus legato).

In bars 56 and 57, Keiger momentarily switches the modal color by using notes from the parallel A Aeolian mode, or A natural minor scale (A, B, C, D, E, F, G), which, with its minor, or "flatted," 6th, F, sounds decidedly darker than A Dorian. The F note also clashes with the F# in the accompanying Bm7 chord (B, D, F#, A).

The guitarist goes to the "dark side" again with A Aeolian in bars 64-70, this time 12 frets and one octave higher than before, which also provides a refreshingly interesting change of register from most of the other parts of the solo, which are played predominantly in 5th or 1st-2nd positions. Also noteworthy is the way Keiger, as Manzarek had done in his solo, effectively builds his improvisational journey to a dramatic climax in bars 94-106 by using a long string on rhythmically tense quarter-note triplets.

— JIMMY BROWN



# NOTATION GUIDE

“tablature clef”  
time signature  
whole note (held for four beats)  
N.C.(E)  
\*string

half notes (held for two beats each)  
D A

\*String 1 is the thinnest string; 6 is the thickest.

Numbers on the lines indicate frets (0 = open string).

quarter notes (held for one beat each)  
E  
let ring

half notes (held for two beats each)  
C G/B

count: “1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and”

dotted half note (held for three beats)  
A

quarter rest

eight rest eighth note 16th notes 16th rest

count: “1 2 3 4” “1 and 2 ee anduh 3 ee anduh 4 and”

dotted quarter note  
(repeat previous chord)

half rest

count: “1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and uh 1 2 3 4”

dotted quarter note \*tied rhythms hammer-on legato slide pull-off tie

count: “1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and 1 ee and 2 ee and 3 4”

\*Don't rearticulate notes in parentheses



# NOTATION GUIDE

bend and release in time (whole-step bend)      vibrato      grace-note bend      grace-note slide

count: "1 and 2 and 3 4"      "1 2 3 and 4 and"

Detailed description: This block shows four musical examples on a five-line staff. 1. 'bend and release in time (whole-step bend)': Notes at frets 7, (7), (7), and 5. An arrow labeled 'full' points from the first (7) to the second (7). 2. 'vibrato': A single note at fret 7 with a wavy line above it. 3. 'grace-note bend': A grace note at fret 15 followed by a note at fret 15. An arrow labeled 'full' points from the grace note to the main note. 4. 'grace-note slide': A grace note at fret 14 followed by a note at fret 15, then a note at fret 12, then a note at fret 15, and finally a note at fret 15. An arrow labeled 'full' points from the first 15 to the last 15.

\*pre-bend and release (also known as "reverse bend")

count: "1 2 3 4"      \*Bend string before picking.

Detailed description: This block shows two musical examples on a five-line staff. 1. '\*pre-bend and release (also known as "reverse bend")': Notes at frets 15, 8, (8), and 8. An arrow labeled 'full' points from the first 15 to the first 8. 2. '\*Bend string before picking.': Notes at frets 8, (8), and 8. An arrow labeled 'full' points from the first 8 to the first (8).

\*natural harmonics      \*pinch harmonic (note fretted)

N.H.      P.H.

\*Lightly touch string directly over fret, then pick      \*Harmonic sounded with picking hand

Detailed description: This block shows two musical examples on a five-line staff. 1. '\*natural harmonics': Notes at frets 12, 12, 12, and 12. A circled 7/7 is shown above the staff. 2. '\*pinch harmonic (note fretted)': A note at fret 5. A wavy line labeled 'P.H.' is shown above the staff.

palm muting (picking hand)      fret-hand muting

E5      G5

P.M.      \*

\*Loosen grip on strings so that they no longer touch the fretboard.

Detailed description: This block shows two musical examples on a five-line staff. 1. 'palm muting (picking hand)': Notes at frets 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, and 0. A circled 2/0 is shown above the staff. 2. 'fret-hand muting': Notes at frets 5, 5, 3, 5, 3, and 5. A circled 5/3 is shown above the staff. A wavy line labeled 'G5' is shown above the staff.

staccato (short) notes      trill (quick succession of hammer-ons and pull-offs)

Detailed description: This block shows two musical examples on a five-line staff. 1. 'staccato (short) notes': Notes at frets 7, 7, 7, and 7. 2. 'trill (quick succession of hammer-ons and pull-offs)': Notes at frets 7 and 9. A wavy line labeled 'tr' is shown above the staff.

tremolo picking      sweep picking (also known as "raking")

\* = downstroke      V = upstroke

Detailed description: This block shows two musical examples on a five-line staff. 1. 'tremolo picking': Notes at frets 0, 2, 3, 5, and 7. 2. 'sweep picking (also known as "raking")': Notes at frets 10, 9, 8, 7, 7, 8, 9, and 10. A circled 3 is shown above the staff. A wavy line labeled 'sweep' is shown above the staff.



## “THE END OF THE GAME”

# Weezer

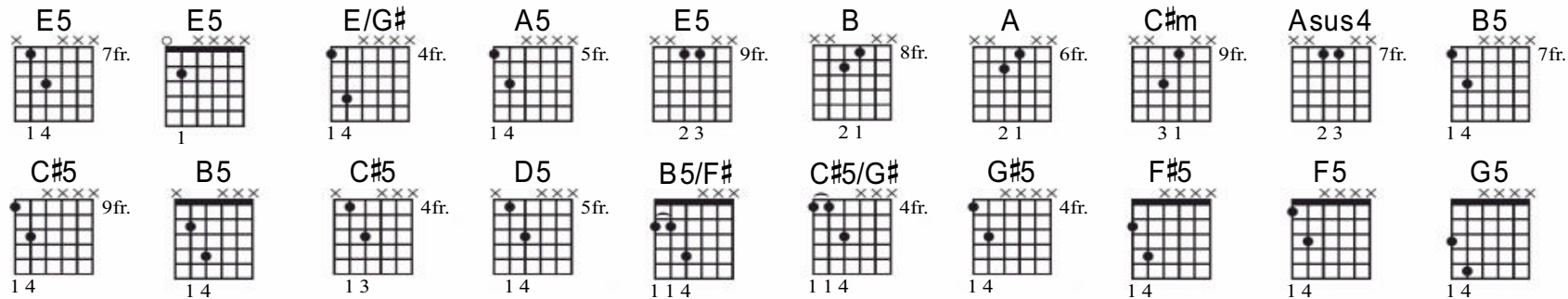
*As heard on* **VAN WEEZER**

*Words and Music by* **RIVERS CUOMO and TIMOTHY PAGNOTTA** • *Transcribed by* **JEFF PERRIN**

**All guitars are tuned down one half step (low to high: E $\flat$ , A $\flat$ , D $\flat$ , G $\flat$ , B $\flat$ , E $\flat$ ).**

**Bass tuning (low to high): E<sub>b</sub>, A<sub>b</sub>, D<sub>b</sub>, G<sub>b</sub>.**

*All music sounds in the key of Eb, one half step lower than written.*



## **A** Intro (0:00)

**Moderately** ♩ = 119

N.C.(E)

(Esus4)

(E5)

(E6)

(E5)

(Esus4)

Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)

*Riff A*

*\*Composite: Multiple overdubbed guitars arr. for one part.*

(E)

(Esus4)

(E)

(Esus2)

(E)

(Esus2)

*end Riff A*

[illegible]

## “THE END OF THE GAME”

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E5 E/G# A5 E5 E/G# A5

Gtr. 3 plays Riff A (see bar 1)

5 Gtrs. 1 and 2 (elec. w/dist.)

Bass

**B** (0:17)

E5 B A C#m B E5 B A Asus4 A

Gtr. 3

Gtrs. 1 and 2  
Rhy. Fill 1

N.H.

w/bar

pitch: D G F# B

E5 B A C#m B E5 B A Asus4 A N.C.

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass

**C** 1st Verse (0:33)

1. Hey Suzy where you been today

I'm looking for you every way

E5 B5 A5

C#5 A5

E5 B5 A5

C#5 A5

Rhy. Fig. 1

Bass Fig. 1

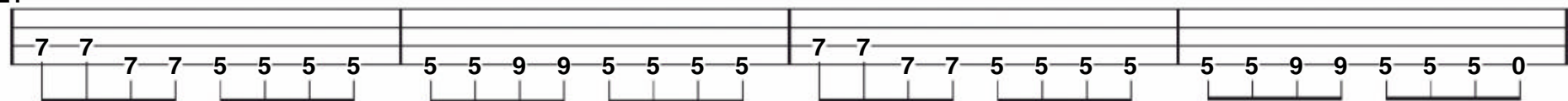


No sign of you when I wake up I'm on an island with no sun

E5 B5 A5 C#5 A5 E5 B5 A5 C#5 A5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 twice (see bar 17)

21 Bass



# **D** 1st Pre-chorus (0:49)

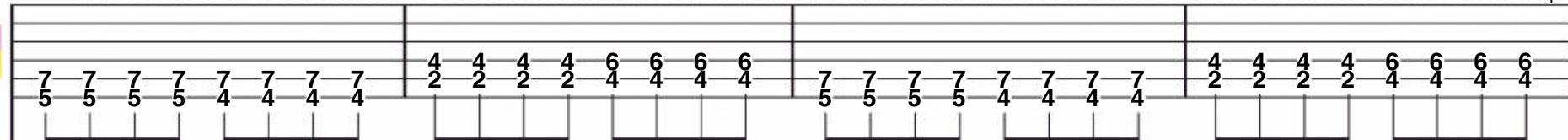
I feel like I've known you my whole life You got me cryin' like when Aslan died

A5 E/G# B5 C#5 A5 E/G# B5 C#5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

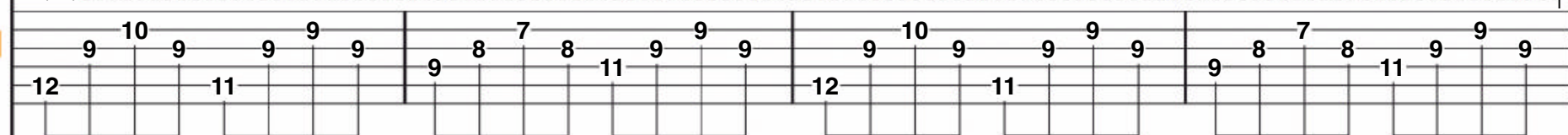
Rhy. Fig. 2

25 P.M.



Gtr. 4 (elec. w/dist.)

P.M.



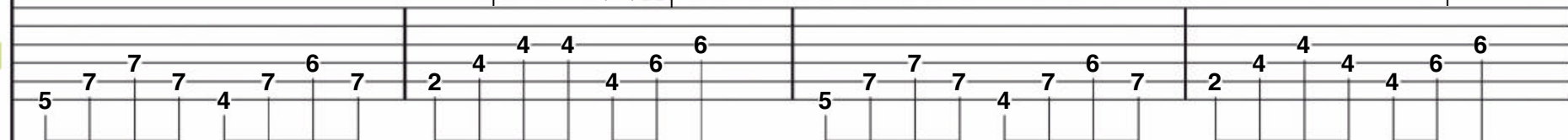
Gtr. 3

Rhy. Fig. 2a

P.M.

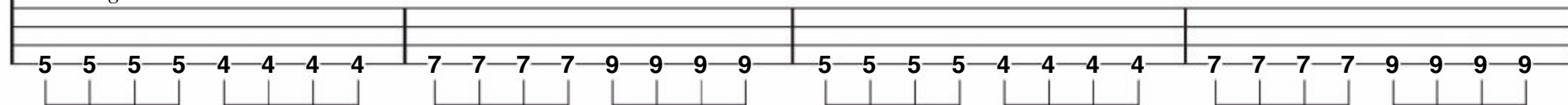
P.M.

P.M.



Bass

Bass Fig. 2



Now

you're

gone

The

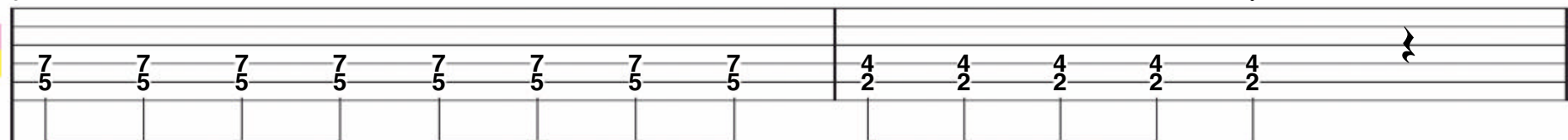
D5

B5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

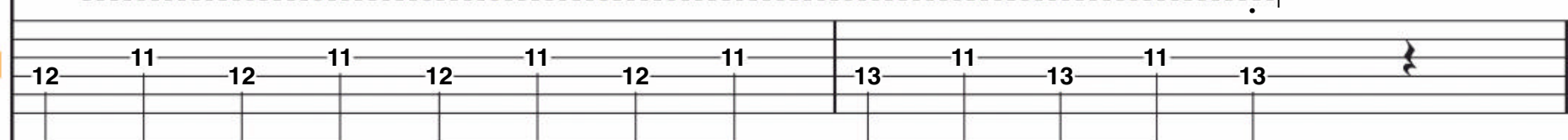
light P.M.

29



Gtr. 4

P.M.



Bass





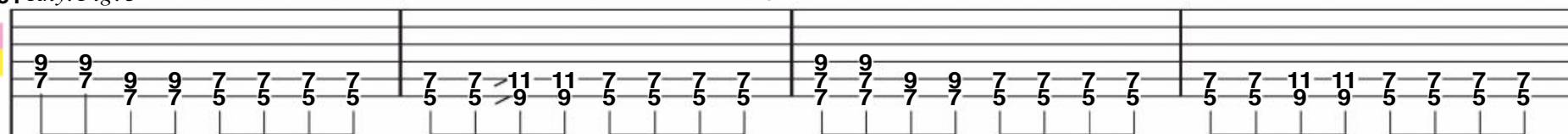
**E** 1st and 2nd Choruses (1:01, 1:48)

melody can't find you I'm incomplete without you I  
 E5 B5 A5 C#5 A5 E5/B B5 A5 C#5 A5

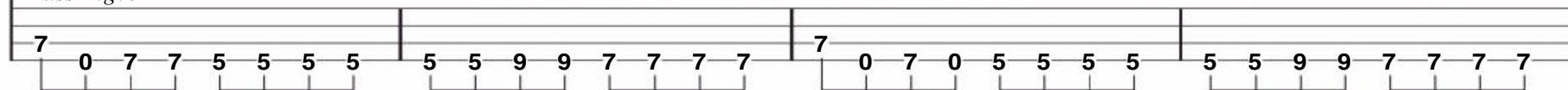
Gtrs. 1 and 2

Gtr. 3 plays Fill 1 on 2nd chorus  
 (see below bar 43)

31 Rhy. Fig. 3



Bass  
 Bass Fig. 3



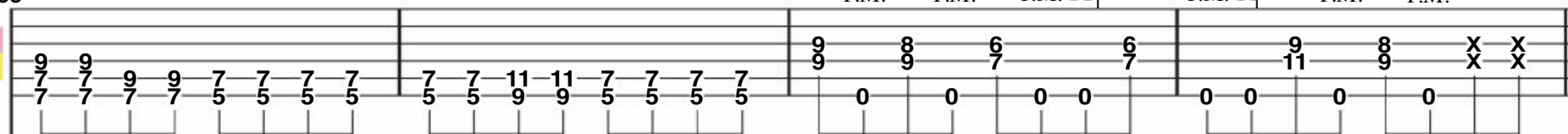
2nd time, skip ahead to **H** (bar 54)

guess we've reached the end of the game Ooh Hit me  
 E5/B B5 A5 C#5 A5 E5 B A C#m B

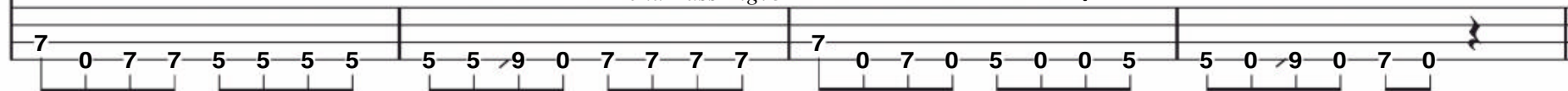
Gtrs. 1 and 2 substitute Rhy. Fill 1,  
 2nd chorus (see bar 9)

P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

35



end Bass Fig. 3



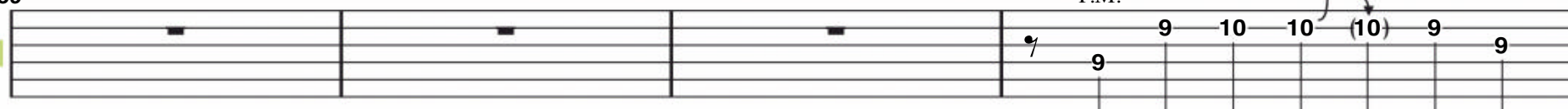
**F** 2nd Verse (1:17)

2. I know that you would crank this song Air-guitaring with your headphones on

E5 B5 A5 C#5 A5 E5 B5 A5 C#5 A5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 four times (see bar 17)

39 Gtr. 3



Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 four times (see bar 17)

pitch: A

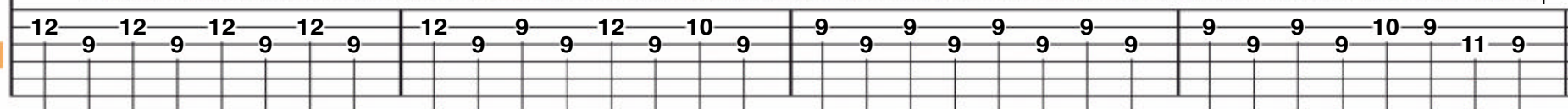
We dig the same type of melodies The ones that get you next to me

E5 B5 A5 C#5 A5 E5 B5 A5 C#5 A5

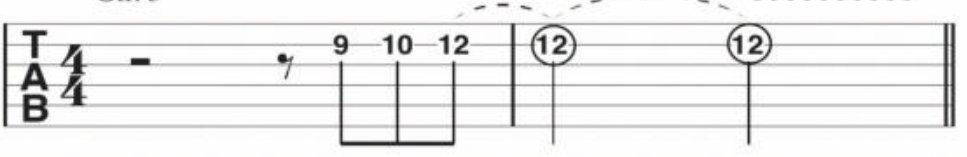
43 Gtr. 3



Gtr. 4  
 P.M.



Fill 1 (1:50)  
 Gtr. 3





**G** 2nd Pre-chorus (1:33)

I was Mick and you were Marianne

(Marianne)

You would harmonize when I

felt

bad

(I felt

A5 E/G# B5 C#5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 twice (see bar 25)

Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 2a twice (see bar 25)

Gtr. 4

47 P.M. --- P.M. --- P.M. --- P.M. --- P.M. ---

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 twice (see bar 25)

Go back to **E** 2nd Chorus (bar 31)

But now you're gone

The

bad)

D5

B5

51 Gtr. 5 (elec. w/dist.)

Gtr. 4

pitch: D# E

Gtr. 3

let ring

Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M. ---

Bass

**H** (2:04)

E5

B

A

Ooh

C#m

B

54 Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fill. 1 (see bar 9)

Gtr. 4

(pick scrape)

Bass







want is to be wanted by you

E5 B5/F# C#5/G# A5

62

Gtr. 5

Gtr. 4  
P.M.

Gtrs. 1 and 2  
P.M.

**J** (2:24)

**Na**  
N.C. (E)  
Gtr. 5

**na**  
(Esus4)

**na**  
(E5)

**na**  
(E6)

**na**  
(E5)

**na**  
(Esus4)

64

9 0 5 9 0 5 9 0 5 10 0 5 10 0 5 10 0 5 12 0 5 12 0 5 14 0 5 14 0 5 14 0 5 12 0 5 12 0 5 12 0 5 10 0 5 10 0 5

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

E5  
Gtrs. 1 and 2

2  
0

7  
4

7  
5

Bass  
>

16

4

5

(5) (5)

na (E) Gtr. 4 plays fdbk. (pitch G#)

na (Esus4)

na (E)

na (Esus2)

But the

66

T 9 0 5 9 0 5 9 0 5 10 0 5 10 0 5 10 0 5 9 0 5 9 0 5 T 7 0 5 7 0 5 7 0 5 9 0 5

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

E5

E/G#

A5

2 0 7 4 7 5

12 (12) 0 4 5 5 5 5







**“LIGHT MY FIRE”**  
**The Doors**

*As heard on* **THE DOORS**

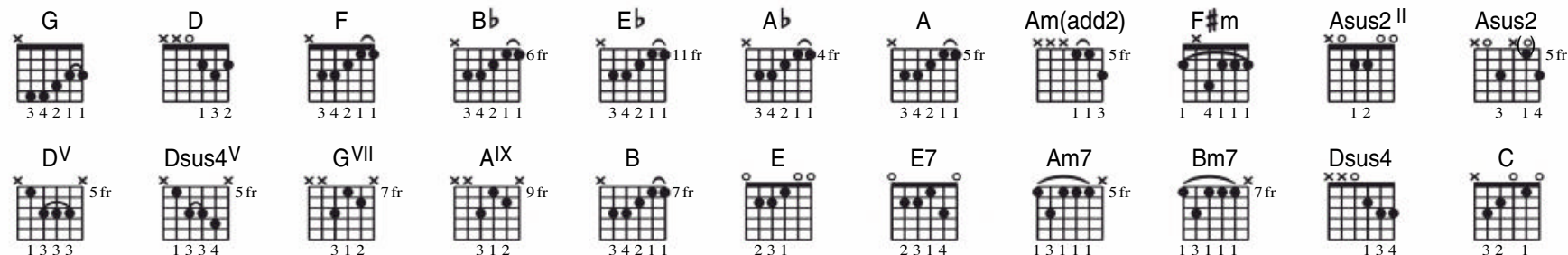
*Words and Music by* JOHN DENSMORE, ROBBY KRIEGER, RAY MANZAREK *and* JIM MORRISON • *Transcribed by* ANDY ALEDORT

**NOTE: Tape speed was slowed down during the mastering process, thus lowering the pitch of the recording almost one half step.**

**To play along, tune guitar down almost one half step (low to high: E<sup>b</sup> A<sup>b</sup> D<sup>b</sup> G<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>, tuned slightly sharp).**

**Bass tuning (low to high): E $\flat$  A $\flat$  D $\flat$  G $\flat$ , tuned slightly sharp.**

*All notes and chords sound almost one half step lower than written.*



**A Intro (0:00)**

**Moderately** ♩ = 127

Gtr. 2  
(organ arr. for gtr.) 1

G D F B $\flat$

12 12-14 12 15 13 12 14 12 14 15 14 13 13 15 13 15-12-13 12

Gtr. 1 (clean elec.)  
w/pick and fingers  
let ring throughout

3 3 4 5 3 4 2 3 2 0 2 1 1 2+7 6 7 6

Bass  
Bass Fig. 1

3 2 5 5 4 2 1 0 3 1 0 3

## 1. You

[illegible]

*Bass Fig. 4* (1:06)  
(Am7) (Bm7)

The diagram shows a musical staff with six notes: 5, 8, 7, 7, 10, and 9. Above the staff, there are two treble clefs and a 4/4 time signature. The first treble clef has a flat sign above it, and the second treble clef has a sharp sign above it. The notes are connected by horizontal lines, indicating they are part of a single melodic line.

*Bass Fig. 5* (5:15)  
(Am7) (Bm7)

A musical staff for bass guitar. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 5:15. The staff contains a sequence of notes: 5, 8, 7, 7, 10, 9. There are brackets under the first three notes (5, 8, 7) and the last three notes (7, 10, 9), each labeled with the number 3, indicating triplets. Above the staff, the chords (Am7) and (Bm7) are indicated.



**B** 1st, 2nd and 3rd Verses (0:10, 0:38, 5:43)

(1.) know that it would be untrue  
(2., 3.) time to hesitate is through

You know that I would be a liar  
No time to wallow in the mire

Am(add2)

F#m

Asus2<sup>II</sup>

F#m

Gtr. 1 play repeats simile

6

Bass Bass Fig. 2 (repeat previous two measures)

if I was to say to you  
Try now we can only lose

and our girl we couldn't get much higher  
love become a funeral pyre

Asus2

F#m

Asus2<sup>II</sup>

F#m

10

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 twice (see meas. 6)

**C** 1st, 2nd and 3rd Choruses (0:25, 0:53, 5:58)

Come on baby light my fire

Come on baby light my fire

G

A

D<sup>V</sup>

Dsus4<sup>V</sup> D<sup>V</sup>

G<sup>VII</sup>

A<sup>IX</sup>

D<sup>V</sup>

B

14

Bass

(3rd time) skip ahead to **G** 1.

go back to verse **B**

Try to set the night on

fire

2. The

18

Bass Fig. 3 (repeat previous measure)

**D** Organ Solo (1:06)

2. fire Yeah

Am7

Bm7

Am7

Bm7

Am7

Bm7

21

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 (see meas. 19)

Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 until meas. 98 (see previous page)

Am7

Bm7

Am7

Bm7

Am7

Bm7

Am7

Bm7

Am7

Bm7

26

(play 15 times simile)



(3:07)

31 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

**E** Guitar Solo (3:19)

36 Am7 (w/light dist.) Bm7 w/pick Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

40 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

44 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

47 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

50 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

54 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

*let ring*

58 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

62 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7



66 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

70 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

74 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

77 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

81 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

85 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

89 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

93 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

97 Am7 Bm7 Am7 Bm7

full full full full full full full full

Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 nine times (see first page)

The image displays a guitar tablature for the song "Light My Fire". It consists of nine staves of music, each with a measure number (66, 70, 74, 77, 81, 85, 89, 93, 97) and a key signature (Am7, Bm7). The tablature includes various fret numbers (e.g., 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21) and musical notations such as slurs, ties, and accidentals. A pink highlight is present on the left side of each staff. A note at the bottom indicates that the bass player should play Bass Fig. 5 nine times, as shown on the first page.



100

Am7 full 8 8 8 8 (8) 5

Bm7 full 7 7 7 7 (7) 5 7

103

Am7 5 7 5 7 5 7 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 8 7 5 8 7 5 8 7 5 0

Bm7 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 8 7 5 8 7 5 8 7 5 0

# **F** Intro Reprise (5:33)

Gtr. 2 G 107

D F Bb

12 12 14 12 15 13 12 14 12 14 15 13 13 15 13 15 12 13 12

Gtr. 1 *let ring throughout*

3 3 0 2 3 1 1 6 6 8

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see meas. 1)

go back to verse **B**

## 3. The

109

Eb Ab A

13 15-17-15 13 17-15-13 12 15 13 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14

12 11 12 5 4 4 5 6 (6) 5 6 5 7 6 (5 6 7) (5 6 7) 5

# **G** (6:08)

# **H** 4th Verse (6:12)

fire yeah You know that it would be untrue You

E Am7 F#m

112

1 1 1 (1) 0 2 2 1 5 5 2 2 2 2

2 0 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

Bass Fig. 6

0 4 7 0 4 7 5 7 8 7 8 7 2 4 5 4 5 4



know that I would be a liar if I was to say to you

116 Am7 Gtr. 1 F#m7 Am7

Bass plays Bass Fig. 6 three times (see meas. 114)

I 4th Chorus (6:27)

girl we couldn't get much higher Come on baby light my fire

119 F#m Am7 F#m G A

Come on baby light my fire Try to set the night on fire

123 D Dsus4 D G A D F C

Try to set the night on fire

127 D Dsus4 D F C D

J Outro (6:51)

G D F Bb Eb Ab A

131 Gtr. 2 Gtr. 1 Bass





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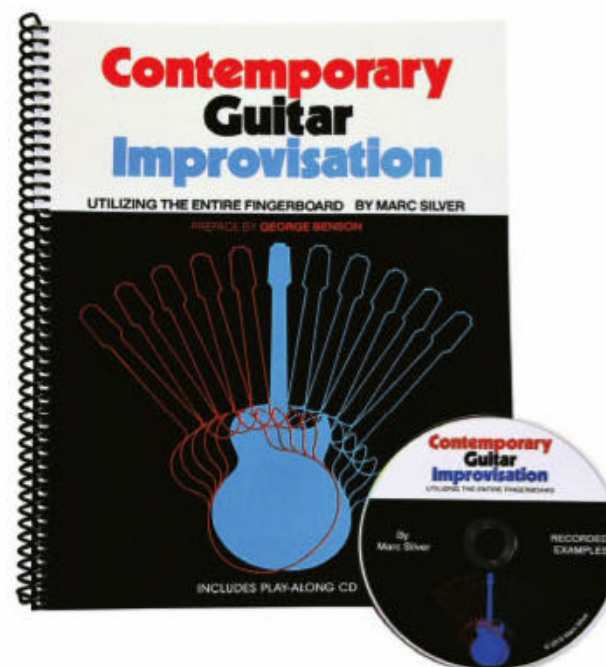
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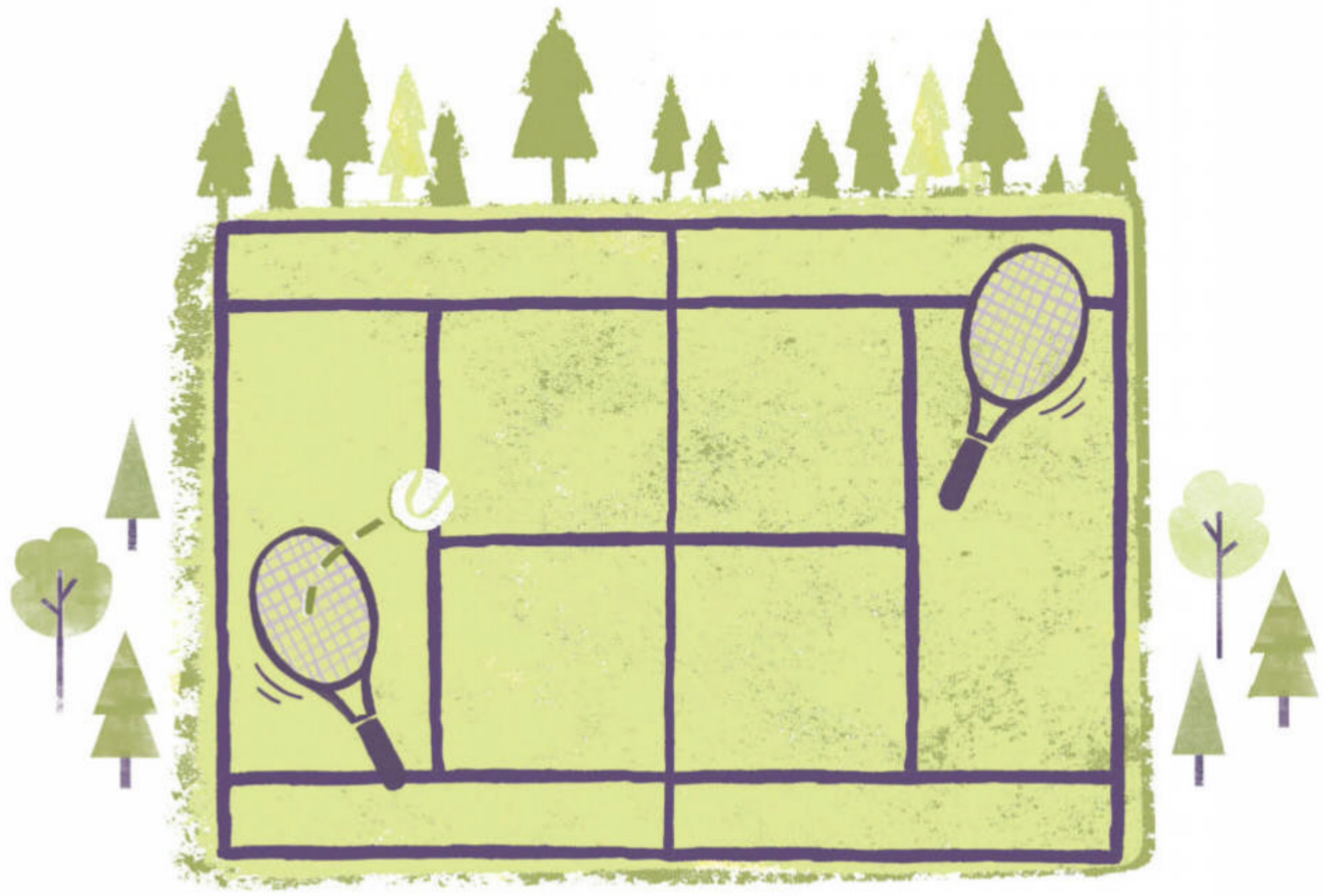
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# "OWNER OF A LONELY HEART"

YES | 90125, 1983 | GUITARIST: TREVOR RABIN | STORY BY CHRIS GILL



**THE UNION OF** four previous members of Yes (Jon Anderson, Chris Squire, Alan White and Tony Kaye), producer Trevor Horn (who also was a member of Yes) and up-and-coming South African solo artist Trevor Rabin proved to be a whole greater than the sum of its parts. This was confirmed by "Owner of a Lonely Heart," which became the band's first and only Number One hit in January 1984. While Rabin deserves the bulk of the credit for the song's composition, Anderson's vocals, Squire's Motown-inspired bridge and Horn's sample-heavy production tricks also contributed significantly to the song's appeal.

While sampled orchestra hits, funk horn blasts and breakbeats provided much of the song's ephemeral ear candy, "Owner of a Lonely Heart" is actually a very guitar-heavy song, with well more than a dozen individual guitar tracks, overdubs, layers and fills expertly laid down by Rabin in the studio playing prominent roles in various sections. That means there's too much ground to cover here, so I'm going to provide full details for Rabin's stunning solo and give "CliffsNotes" for the remainder.

Although the solo sounds like a guitar synth, it's actually a deft combination of a distorted lead tone doubled with a separate signal processed by a pitch transposer set a fifth above the original pitch. Rabin's main guitar was a 1962 Fender Stratocaster with rosewood fretboard, DiMarzio FS-1 pickup at the bridge and stock Fender pickups at the neck and middle (the Seymour Duncan Hot Rails/bridge, Bill Lawrence L250/middle and Seymour Duncan Hot Stack/neck configuration currently on that guitar first appeared later during the summer of 1984). Rabin split the Strat's signal (which was boosted by a Boss DS-1 Distortion placed before the splitter) to a pair of 100-watt Marshall 2203 half stacks with the 4x12 cabinets facing each other and placed about a foot apart, with separate dynamic mics on each cabinet. One head amplified the straight guitar tone, while the other was processed with an MXR Pitch Transposer with its mix control dialed fully wet (effect 100 percent of the mix). Compression and reverb were inserted into the signal via the mixing board.

Other key guitar tracks include the distorted intro riff (processed with the DS-1 and boosted treble/upper midrange, scooped lower midrange, compression and reverb on the board) that instantly switches



March 8, 1984:  
Trevor Rabin  
with his '62 Strat  
in Chicago

to a dry distorted tone with narrow midrange boosted around 2kHz on the mixer's EQ, a clean arpeggiated part played during the verses and immediately after the solo (played on the Strat's bridge/middle setting with an MXR Dyna Comp, Boss CE-2 Chorus and about 250ms delay set to a single repeat with 30 percent delay level) and a funky clean-tone two-note octave rhythm during the bridge, along with a clean Telecaster doubling the bass lines throughout the song.

Horn said in a 2019 video that Rabin played a Rickenbacker 12-string for the arpeggiated part during the verses, but with all due respect to Mr. Horn, that sound is clearly a Strat (it's almost identical to Andy Summers' tones recorded for the Police with a very similar Strat/Dyna Comp/modulation/Marshall rig). The 12-string was most likely used for the chime-like accent and atmospheric fills (heard immediately after "lonely heart" and doubled by keyboards) during the chorus.

## ORIGINAL GEAR

**GUITAR:** 1962 Fender Stratocaster with DiMarzio FS-1 bridge pickup (bridge pickup), Volume: 10, Middle Tone: 10, Neck Tone: 10

**AMPS:** Two late-Seventies Marshall 2203 JMP MKII 100-watt master volume heads (Presence: 4, Bass: 3, Middle: 7, Treble: 5, Master Volume: 8, Preamp Volume: 8, High Sensitivity input), two Marshall 1960 4x12 speaker cabinets with Celestion G12-65 speakers

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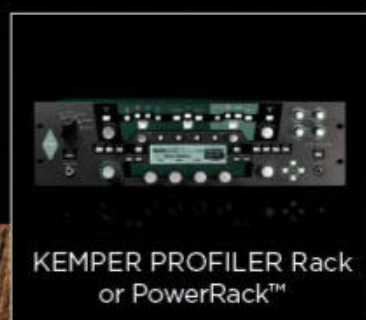




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