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THE CLASH
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YEARS OF
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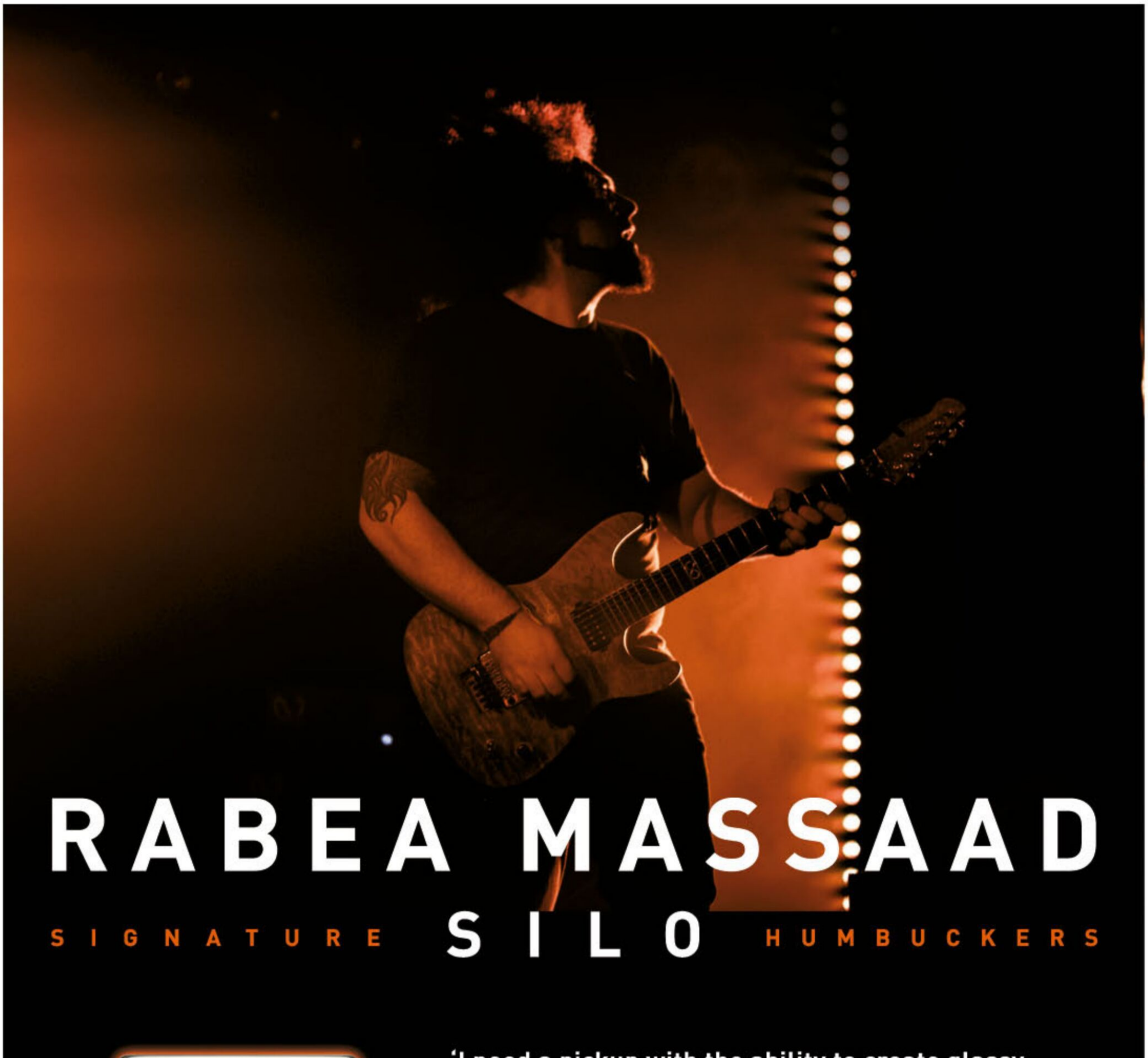

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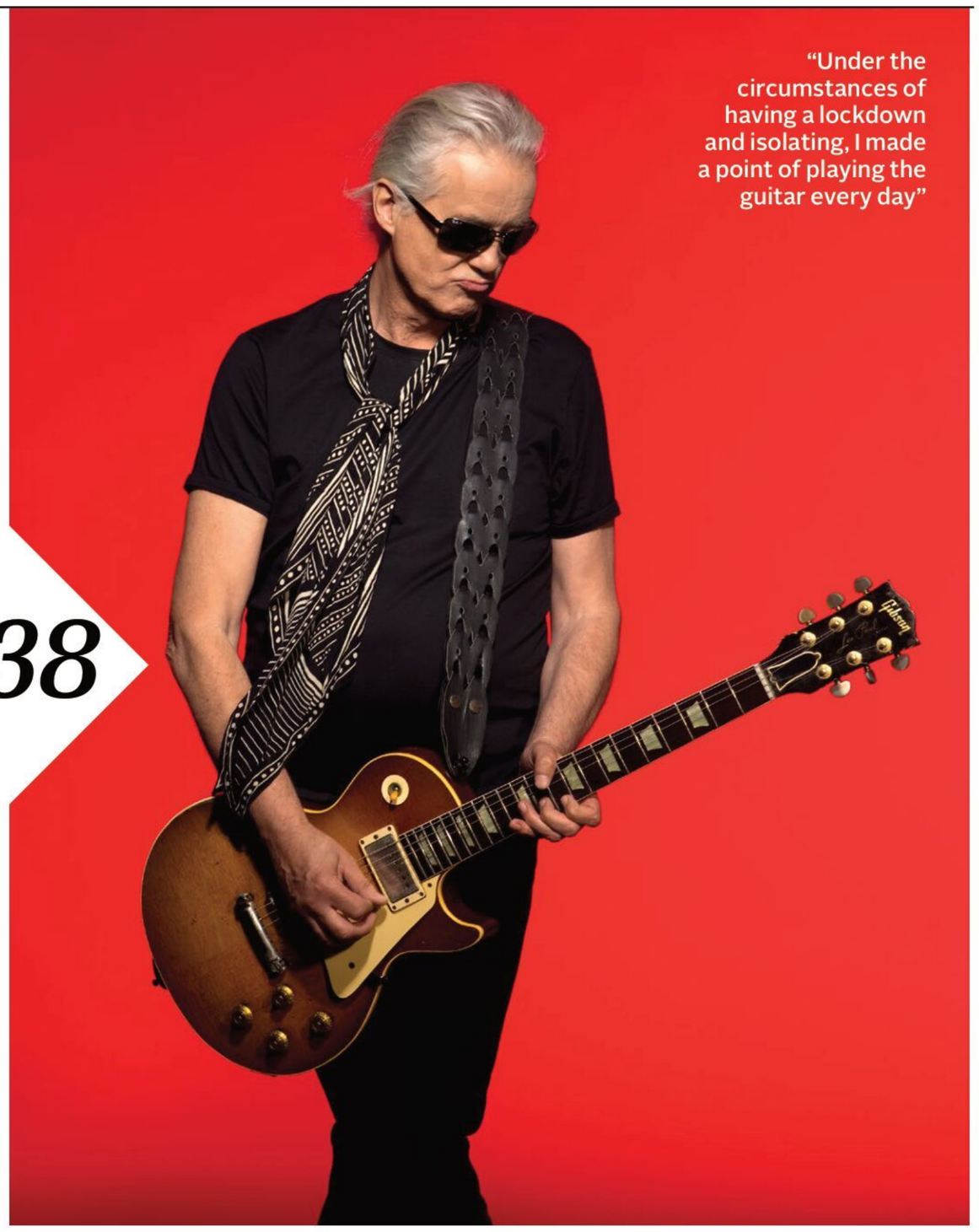

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WOODSHED

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WHY DO WE BUY *MORE* GUITARS?

WHY DO WE crave new guitars when we already have a SWAT team's worth of guitars in all different shapes, sizes and pickup configurations? I've come to realize that — unless you're super wealthy and buy guitars simply because you *can* — it all comes down to the concept of "potential." You see a new guitar — like last weekend when my brother sent me a link to the very Italian-sounding (but Nashville-based) Novo Guitars Rivolta Combinata XVII in Autunno Burst — and you think, "Holy crap, I need this!" But why? I'll tell you why! It's because, regardless of your age, you still imagine a situation sometime in the future — a "mythical show," as Jimmy Page says on page 48 — when a giant E chord from that *specific* guitar sends waves of beautiful, crushing sound out into the adoring audience as the stage rattles under your feet. You imagine the photos or videos someone might shoot that night; when you see them, you'll say, "Damn, that guitar sounds and looks amazing!" You imagine other guitarists lining up after the show to ply you with questions about that amazing guitar. Or you imagine you're recording with friends (or via GarageBand during a lonely lockdown), going from guitar to guitar as you search for just the right tone — when you suddenly remember *the new one*. Three seconds after plugging it in, you know it's gonna save the day. Even after I announce that I'm done buying guitars (and I actually *mean* it as I say it), I check out the new-gear releases at a NAMM Show, or I open a link from my brother, and... As Jimmy Page says, I hope we'll meet up one day at that mythical show!

This month's Woodshed photo: Ah, yes, my late-Nineties Fender Jimmie Vaughan Tex-Mex Stratocaster. In 2011, when I told Jimmie that I had one of his signature Strats, he said, "I'll tell you a secret — find another bridge pickup and put it in the middle. Try it. It does something. I can't explain it, but it's cool." I have to confess that I still haven't done this. It's hard enough to get me to change my strings...

DAMIAN FANELLI
Editor-in-Chief

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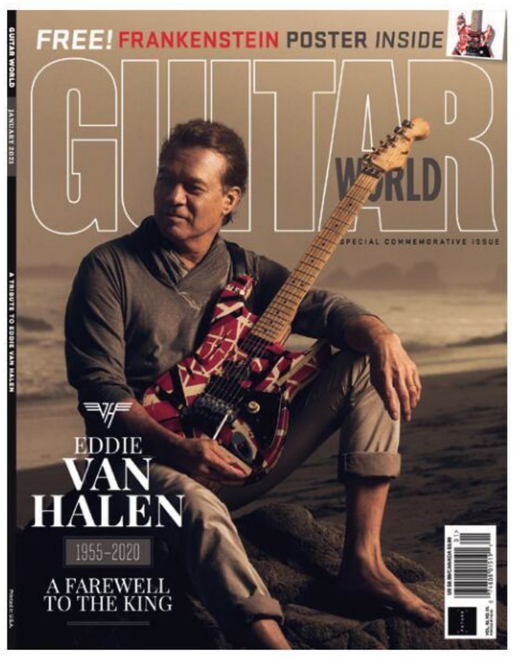

Comprehending a World Without Eddie

I want to thank *GW* for producing such a high-quality tribute to the G.O.A.T., EVH [January 2021]. I've purchased several magazines remembering EVH, and I'm proud to say as a longtime subscriber, none stacked up to *GW*.

I was particularly moved by the articles written by Chris Gill. Chris literally took us on his personal journey and with him up the canyon to 5150. I can't begin to tell you how thoughtful and articulate his writing about his experiences made me feel. As many of us are continuing to mourn the passing, this comprehensive review of EVH provides some lasting thoughts and created images that provided some relief as we comprehend a world without EVH. Chris reminded us that EVH was just not a musician, but a true innovator and inventor whose sphere of influence reached far beyond the music he crafted.

I really enjoyed the gear section from 2015, as many of us saw Van Halen for one final time that year. The deep dive again reminds us just how cool Ed was. From my point of view, the Mini Sunburst sure looks like a Peavey body with a Fender neck...

I feel very fortunate to have seen Van Halen 13 times starting at the Forum in L.A. in 1984. I take the only thing we all can take when we leave, memories.

— Robert DeVore

I wanted to reach out and say thank you from the depths of my soul for giving us (subscribers) a poster of Eddie Van Halen's "Frankenstein" guitar [included in the January issue]. While still trying to come to terms that Eddie will never be creating anymore rock masterpieces, having the articles to read — and now a poster of the guitar that changed guitar making as we know it — makes the process a little bit easier. Thanks again!

— Rich Thomas

So Eddie didn't invent tapping? Apple didn't invent the mouse either.

— Jeff Harris

I love you, *GW*, but I can't believe there isn't an interview with Jason Becker about EVH. There was so much history between them. Maybe next issue.

— Russ Gulick

Very cool EVH tribute issue... lots of cool articles, pics and stories. I was a little surprised there were no Van Halen song transcriptions — and a Joe Bonamassa story. Nothing wrong with the transcriptions or JB, but guess I was expecting the entire issue to be exclusively about VH (since it's a tribute issue to King Edward).

— Tim Halen

[Editor's note: The three Van Halen transcriptions we were hoping to include in the EVH/January 2021 issue weren't approved in time, but you'll find them at the back of the February issue — plus a new lesson dedicated to "Eruption"!]

Eddie's Axes Bring Down the Hall

I got permission eight months ago to bring my Frankenstrat to the Rock and Roll Hall of

Fame in Cleveland on my birthday (October 7) and take photos next to Eddie Van Halen's Frankenstrat (which was at the Met in New York City before Cleveland). Then, on October 6, my phone blows up from around the country. (Everyone who has ever known me is sending me condolence messages. I used to be a limo driver and I got a text from the chairman of thoracic surgery at the Cleveland Clinic, who remembered me after a three-hour ride to Detroit two years ago!) I got to the Rock Hall 24 hours after Eddie's passing; they remembered and let me in with three guitars (Original black and white, Frankenstrat and 5150). People who were at the exhibit went crazy; everyone had to get pics of my guitars next to Eddie's. Employees were coming in, wondering what was going on. Such a cool couple hours that was *fun* with Eddie — not sad.

— Paul Kroczynski

Thanks for Keeping Us Up to Date!

As an avid music lover and musician I look forward to receiving your magazine each month. I learn a lot about music theory and trends and I gain a lot of insight from the interviews. However, given that it's almost impossible to discover new music on commercial radio these days (and I don't subscribe to satellite radio or Spotify), the most important information I get from magazines such as yours is the album reviews you provide. Without this information I'd be totally in the dark as to the new music that's out there. Reading through the Holiday 2020 edition, I've already downloaded new music from AC/DC, John Petrucci, GA-20, Deep Purple and Steve Howe. Keep on rockin'!

— Ferengie

A Blackmore Blackout?

I was just reading "40 Guitarists Who Changed Our World Since 1980" [December 2020] and was disappointed that you didn't include Ritchie Blackmore (Yngwie was on the list and is one of many guitarists heavily inspired by Blackmore), Michael Schenker (he influenced the majority of hard rock guitarists who came up during the Eighties) and the godfather of heavy metal riffs, Tony Iommi, who pretty much invented metal. These guitarists are sadly missing from the list.

— Samuel Jylha

Punky Meadows' Guardian Angel?

I've been a subscriber for many years. I don't think I've ever seen an article about Angel guitarist Punky Meadows. They were actively touring until COVID. I saw them at Arcada in St. Charles, Illinois, with STARZ opening, and they were fantastic. How about a feature and a transcription of "Tower" while you're at it? As the first hair metal band, they are criminally overlooked.

— Brian Johnston

Correction

There was a tab error in the February 2021-issue Acoustic Journey column (page 84). In the first bar of **FIGURE 1**, the fourth tab number should be "1," not "4."

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OF THE MONTH

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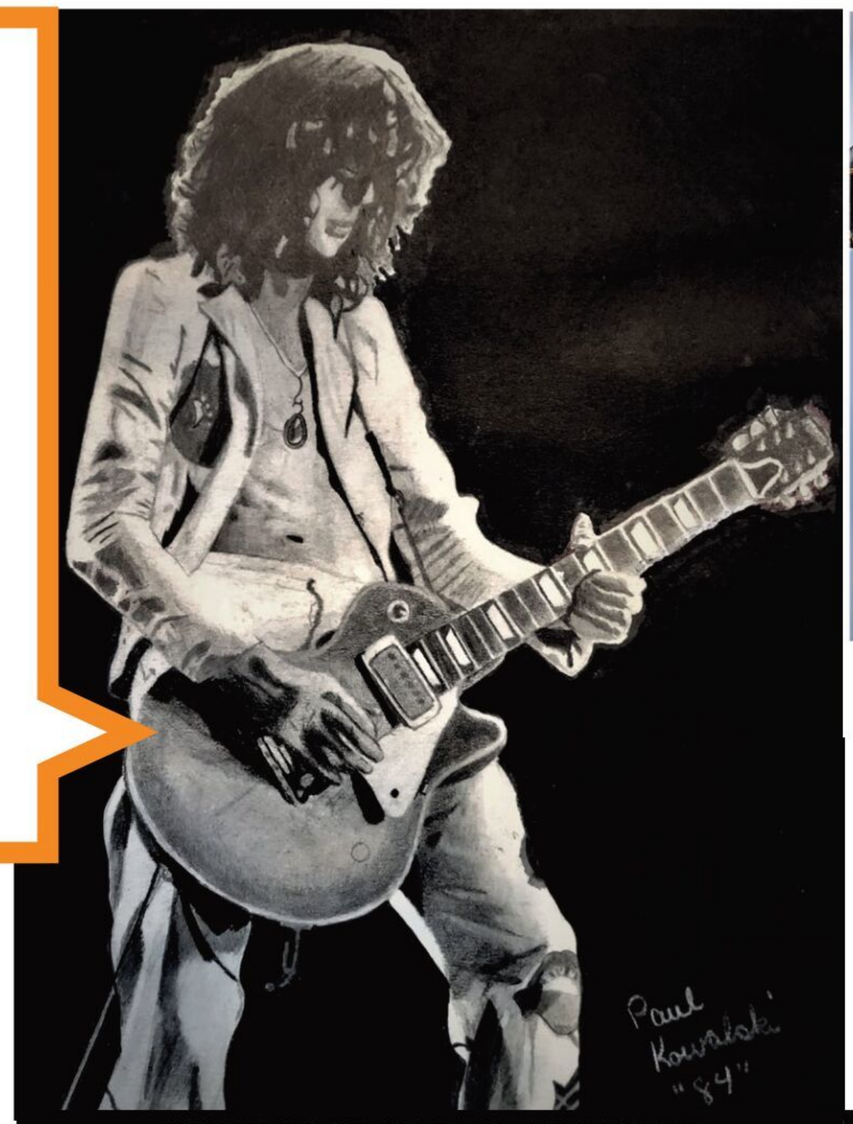

JIMMY PAGE BY PAUL KOWALSKI

"This is Tito from Tito and Big Rage, part of a project I've been creating called Rock Dogs"
— *Paul Combs*

TITO BY PAUL COMBS

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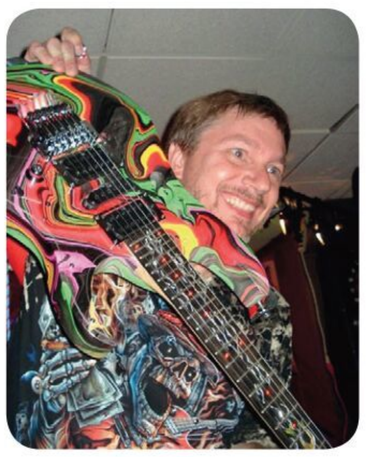

Michael Penze

AGE: 54
HOMETOWN: Smithville, MO
GUITARS: Ibanez JS140, JS1000, JEM "Bad Horsie," JEM 77FP, JEM 777, home-made light-up JEM, Ibanez EW20ASE
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Guns N' Roses "Sweet Child O' Mine," The Vapors "Turning Japanese," Black Sabbath "War Pigs," Steve Vai "Bad Horsie" and original music (Audio M.D.), available on Spotify
GEAR I MOST WANT: Ibanez JS20TH Silver Surfer, Ibanez JEM20TH

Connor Bowdoin

AGE: 20
HOMETOWN: Albuquerque, NM
GUITARS: Fender Mexican Stratocaster, Jackson 7-string, Ibanez S 370 DX, Epiphone Les Paul, J. Northrup Customs Telecaster, Yamaha Classical
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Dream Theater "Untethered Angel," "Scene Seven: I. The Dance of Eternity" and "Metropolis Pt. 1"; Haken "1985"
GEAR I MOST WANT: Strandberg Boden Prog 6, Ernie Ball Music Man Majesty

David Aichele

AGE: 60
HOMETOWN: Pine Junction, CO
GUITARS: '68 Gibson SG Junior, '69 Gibson SG Melody Maker, Yamaha FG-336SBii sunburst acoustic
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Selections from Black Sabbath's *Black Sabbath, Paranoid* and *Master of Reality*; Tom Petty's *Full Moon Fever*; Ramin Djawadi "For the Realm" (from *Game of Thrones*)
GEAR I MOST WANT: Steinberger GT-PRO Deluxe (Trans-Black, of course)

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Kenny Wayne Shepherd with his new signature Fender Strat in Faded Sonic Blue, "a custom color that was created around this guitar"

Sonic Blue Persuasion

LONGTIME STRAT ADDICT KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD UNVEILS HIS NEW SIGNATURE OFFERING FROM FENDER — AND A NEW LIVE DVD/ALBUM

By Richard Bienstock

KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD has served as one of the foremost modern practitioners of the blues, and also of the Fender Stratocaster, for going on 25 years. For most of that time, his primary Strat — the one heard on his 1997 breakthrough *Trouble Is...* and every album he's recorded since — has been a 1961 sunburst model. But now he has a new number one, having collaborated with Fender on his second signature model, which, like his approach to the blues, combines classic elements with forward-thinking and unique appointments. "It's a number of different ideas and different components and different perspectives that are all based on some of my favorite guitars," he says of the Kenny Wayne Shepherd Stratocaster. "The goal was to make not only a premium-looking instrument, but also something that would provide a premium experience for the end user."

And premium it is. The Kenny Wayne Shepherd Stratocaster starts with a classic Fender ash body and an early Sixties "C"-shape maple neck. "For years we've been trying to replicate the neck from my '61 — all the dimensions, where it joins the body, the overall feel," Shepherd says. "And this one comes the closest out of everything we've ever done." This familiar-feel neck is topped with a rosewood fingerboard that, unusual for a →

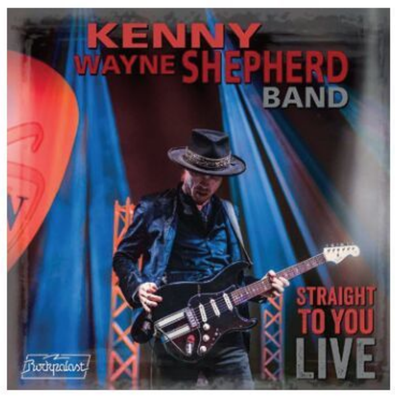
FENDER

The new Strat features a trio of custom-voiced Kenny Wayne Shepherd Single-Coil pickups that recall the tone of his '61 model

Strat, boasts white binding and pearloid block inlays.

Shepherd got the idea for these features after recalling a very-limited run of Strats from the mid Sixties that sported binding and blocks. "I've always wanted to see a premium Strat with that treatment," he says.

That's just the beginning of the personalized touches. There's also a chambered body for a more comfortable, lighter feel as well as added resonance, and a trio of custom-voiced Kenny Wayne Shepherd Single-Coil Strat pickups that recall the tone of the ones in his cherished '61 Strat, only hotter and with more range. "We boosted the mids just a little bit, and the pickups are a little more responsive, but also quieter, which was a big thing as well," he says.



"We boosted the mids just a little bit, and the pickups are a little more responsive, but also quieter, which was a big thing as well"

There's also one other new detail — that finish. The KWS Strat comes in a striking Transparent Faded Sonic Blue lacquer, which Shepherd says is a "custom color that was created around this guitar."

He continues, "In my mind I just kept seeing a light blue guitar, and then we took it a little step further and said, 'How can we add some real depth to it?' One of the best ways to do that is by revealing the grain that's underneath. So we came up with the idea to do a translucent finish that would show the character of the wood."

As for why he chose blue in the first place? "I mean, obviously, I play blues," Shepherd says with a laugh.

Indeed he does. And to hear the latest example of his blues playing, look no further than the Kenny Wayne Shepherd Band's new *Straight to You: Live*, a concert package released in various DVD/CD/Blu-Ray/vinyl configurations, as well as digitally.

The new collection, Shepherd says, has been a long time coming. "Our fans have been asking us to release a live video. So when touring came to an abrupt stop [*due to the COVID-19 pandemic*], it seemed like a good time. The fans may not be able to go to live concerts right now, but I wanted to offer them the next best thing."

Straight to You captures the KWS Band onstage in Leverkusen, Germany, at the Jazztage Festival, and the set spans Shepherd's full career, from early hits like "Blue on Black" to cuts from his most recent studio album, 2019's *The Traveler*. There's also fiery covers of Elmore James' "Talk to Me Baby," Joe Walsh's "Turn to Stone" and Jimi Hendrix's "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)."

"It was originally recorded for the *Rockpalast* television show, and it was a really great night," Shepherd recalls of the gig in questin. "We were nearing the end of a very successful European tour and the whole show was very special..."

He continues, "I hope people enjoy the songs as much as we're looking forward to performing them again. Because I can't wait to get back out there!"

WHAT'S ON MY PLAYLIST

CHRIS MIKE

1

"Drive Home,"
Steven Wilson

When I want to hear a guitar solo that brings tears to my eyes, this is the one I go for. I think it's one of Guthrie Govan's best moments so far.

2

"Hot for Teacher,"
Van Halen

I remember when my dad got me the VHS of *Live: Right Here, Right Now*. It was one of the reasons I took up the guitar. "Hot for Teacher" encapsulates almost everything Van Halen are known for. RIP, Mr. Eddie!

3

"Lady Fantasy,"
Camel

A masterpiece that drags us all along through the purest and passionate guitar playing by Andrew Latimer, one of the most underrated guitar players, in my humble opinion.

4

"Gravity,"
John Mayer

A great live performance from *Where the Light Is: Live in Los Angeles*. No one would disagree that John's ability to combine well-crafted songwriting with perfect guitar skills is out of this world.

5

"Redneck,"
Lamb of God

Heavy riffing at its best. Who says you have to tune your guitar low to be heavy? This raw and organic, almost unprocessed guitar sound stands out in all this polished ready-to-mix new-guitar-tone era.

CHRIS MIKE'S NEW ALBUM, *SOCIALHOLIC*, IS OUT NOW VIA CANDYRAT RECORDS.

LEFT: FENDER RIGHT: THOMAS CHALASTANIS

[*from left*] Alter Bridge's Brian Marshall, Myles Kennedy and Mark Tremonti on stage in Copenhagen, November 12, 2019

Alter Bridge

MARK TREMONTI TALKS *WALK THE SKY 2.0* AND "LAST RITES," A BRAND-NEW TRACK WITH A JERRY CANTRELL VIBE

By Amit Sharma

ALTER BRIDGE HAD only just started touring their sixth studio album, late 2019's *Walk the Sky*, when — much like everyone else — their plans were grounded to a halt. Instead of quietly biding their time, however, the hard rock quartet decided to give fans around the world a taste of "what could have been" in the form of *Walk the Sky* 2.0, an EP of energetic live offerings from their early 2020 U.S. tour, plus "Last Rites," a brand-new studio track.

We recently tracked down Mark Tremonti to find out a bit more.

How did you go about choosing the takes heard on the new EP?
Our sound engineer and tour manager had them on file. As a band we didn't listen to them; that would have been the most tedious thing in the world! [*Laughs*] We trusted the people around us to find the performances that capture what we do live best. Our team knows exactly what our vibe is, so two versions of each song were chosen.

"Usually the other guitarist in whatever band I'm in is the more effects-driven player. I'm more straight to the tonal point"

—MARK TREMONTI

"Last Rites" has quite a thrash metal vibe in places.
Yeah! That one came out of riffs we had sitting around. They were on deck for the last record but never quite happened. We put it all together with Myles [Kennedy] singing from home over lockdown. I feel like there's a little bit of a Jerry Cantrell vibe on those pre-bends. He's the best when it comes to that stuff and one of the greatest rock songwriters of our generation, so that might have seeped in subliminally.

Would we be right in guessing we're mainly hearing your PRS signature gear?
Sure, you're hearing the MT15 — and we actually have an MT100 in development — plus a little from my Cornford RK100 and Rev F Dual Rectifier. I like to go direct so I tend not to put much in my chain. Usually the other guitarist in whatever band I'm in is the more effects-driven player. I'm more straight to the tonal point.

There's no solo as such, but it sounds like there's a pitch-shifted lead track buried in the mix from the first chorus onwards.
I think it was POG. Our producer is a bit of a mad genius when it comes to pedals. He loves to use the Microsynth a lot too, it's one of our favorites in the studio. It could have been that — or my T-Rex Octavius, which I brought in one day. So yeah, it could have been any of those four pedals! [*Laughs*]

GONZALES PHOTO/PETER TROEST/PYMCA-AVALON/UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP VIA GETTY

Khruangbin

EXACTLY WHAT KIND OF MUSIC DOES THIS ON-THE-RISE HOUSTON TRIO PLAY? GUITARIST MARK SPEER TAKES YOU UNDER THE WIG!

By Richard Bienstock

"A LOT OF folks just assume I'm a rock dude because I play guitar," says Khruangbin's Mark Speer. "But that's not really where I come from."

Indeed it's not. In fact, since debuting in 2014 with the hazy, exotica-tinged instrumental, "A Calf Born in Winter," his band — which includes bassist Laura Lee and drummer Donald "DJ" Johnson — has made a name for itself as one of the foremost purveyors of, well... what style of music does Khruangbin play, exactly? Over the course of two full-length albums and a handful of EPs, the band has explored everything from Thai funk to Middle Eastern disco and myriad other regional styles, and infused these sounds with splashes of psychedelia, dub, roots and more.

As for Speer's distinctive guitar approach, he says, "I was always into tones that I didn't hear so much in Western music. Like, the reason I got a chorus pedal isn't because I was into the Smiths. It was because I wanted my guitar to sound like a dual course instrument, like a saz. I wanted to be able to emulate a rubab or a shamisen or kalimba or a djembe. Those tones, to me, are really awesome."

In the past, Khruangbin's music has been predominantly instrumental. But for the new *Mordechai* the exploratory trio moved beyond even that border. "We haven't been singing because I don't really like to sing. And I hate writing lyrics," Speer says with a laugh. "But for this one we wanted to challenge ourselves."

The result is a deeper, perhaps more expressive version of Khruangbin, with all three members sharing vocals on the album's 10 tracks, which range from the chilled acid-funk opener "First Class" to the cool French pop/Middle Eastern soul workout "Connassais de Face" and the Haitian/Tex-Mex mashup "Pelota."

Throughout, the band also incorporates sounds from Pakistan, West Africa, East Asia and beyond. But it's all informed by Khruangbin's connection to their hometown of Houston — as well as, more specifically, an old barn in nearby Burton, Texas, where they record all their albums. "We open up the doors, and you can hear the birds, you can hear the bugs, you can feel the wind," Speer says. "It's crucial to the vibe."

As is their hometown. "Houston is the most diverse city in America," Speer says. "It's the big gumbo of the people and the culture here that makes Houston feel like it does and this band sound like we do."

A multiple-exposure pic of Khruangbin's Mark Speer and Laura Lee in Sao Paulo, Brazil, November 15, 2019

MAURICIO SANTANA/GETTY IMAGES

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** 2001 Fender Stratocaster with DiMarzio Cruiser pickups
- **AMP** Fender '68 Custom Deluxe Reverb reissue
- **EFFECTS** MXR M148 Micro Chorus, DigiTech Whammy (5th Gen.), Dunlop GCB95 Cry Baby wah, Boss PH-3 Phase Shifter, Boss DS-1 Distortion, MXR Dyna Comp Mini compressor, Electro-Harmonix Holy Grail Reverb, Strymon El Capistan dTape Echo, Chase Bliss Audio Warped Vinyl analog vibrato/chorus

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PHOENIX

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Hooks in You

IN HIS JUST-PUBLISHED FIRST BOOK, IRON MAIDEN STALWART ADRIAN SMITH SHARES A BOATLOAD OF BIG-FISH STORIES

By John Katic

IRON MAIDEN GUITAR maestro Adrian Smith recently published his first book, *Monsters of River & Rock: My Life as Iron Maiden's Compulsive Angler*. As its full title suggests, the eye-catching tome is dedicated to the guitarist's number-one *off-stage* pastime, fishing. But there's a bit more to it.

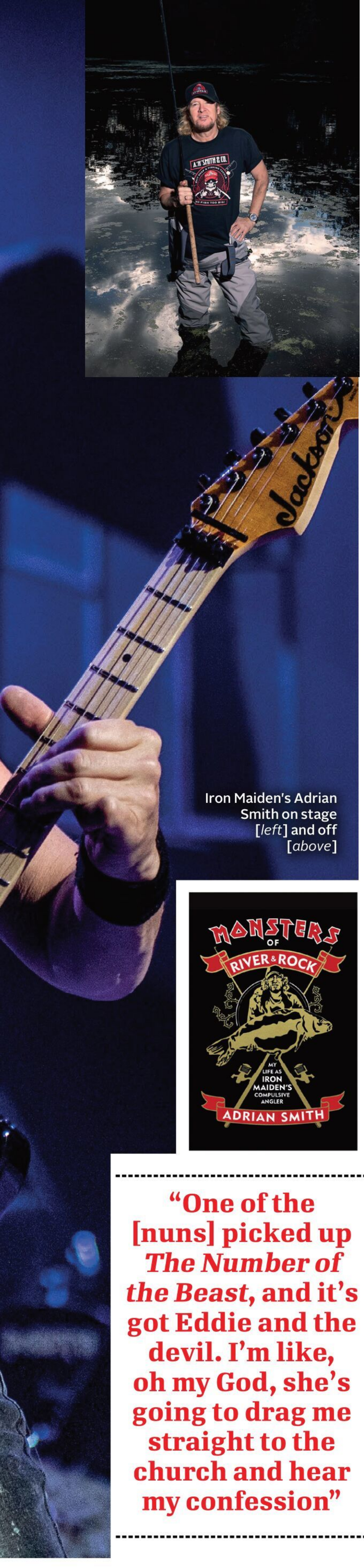
"[*Monsters of River & Rock*] started off as a 100-percent fishing book," Smith tells *Guitar World*. "As I went on, I found there were parallels with my two passions of fishing and music; I was combining them more. I'd say the books is probably 70 percent fishing and 30 percent stories from the road, the studio and personal stuff. I don't think at this point I'd do an autobiography on purely music."

How did the idea for the book come about?
I was sitting with friends one evening, just talking stories, and somebody said I should write books. That was the seed of it, really. So I did a couple of test chapters. I'd already written a few things I was going to send to fishing magazines, but I never did. I took them out and sent a few test chapters to some publishers and got some feedback from [the publisher]. That was it — I started off writing.

Do you feel anxiety over presenting your written work? We know you as Adrian Smith the musician. Writing a book is, I'd imagine, a completely different window into the world of Adrian Smith.
It's very easy to write. I enjoy the process of looking back over my life and reflecting on the changes I've seen. There's some quite personal stuff in there about the highs and lows of being in a successful band and touring, especially in the Eighties when it was kind of crazy with drugs and alcohol and stuff like that. Just wild times. But it took me back to fishing — when things got a bit rough. I was able to take a bit of time off. For example, after the *Powerslave* tour, which was almost 13 months of straight touring, we were all kind of fried. I remember sitting in a hotel room in L.A. after that just being zonked out, and my girlfriend, now my wife, suggested we take a trip to Canada. That forms the basis of one of the chapters in the book. It is sort of restoring to me going out in the wilderness to just sit in a boat in the middle of a lake with no man-made sounds and just cast out a fly. It just did me the world of good. That led me to thinking about how fishing is a great balance for the crazy times you have sometimes in a successful band.

You write about fishing as a youngster, then getting away from it when you got a little older and

JOHN MCMURTRIE



Iron Maiden's Adrian Smith on stage [*left*] and off [*above*]

"One of the [nuns] picked up *The Number of the Beast*, and it's got Eddie and the devil. I'm like, oh my God, she's going to drag me straight to the church and hear my confession"

getting heavily into the guitar. Fishing is obviously quite different from touring. Was it hard for you — when you rediscovered fishing — to let yourself relax?

I think the difference is if you go on holiday and you're sitting on a beach. I've never liked that. I'd like to be doing something. I use a line from a famous Scottish comedian, Billy Connolly. He said fishing is like meditation, but with a punchline. In other words, you can get totally absorbed in the process of fishing. You get all your stuff ready and go out and find a nice, quiet spot. Then you get the excitement of maybe contacting something big and wild on your line as well. So it is that excitement. It definitely balances you out.

You often hear the joke that they call it fishing and not catching. Do you enjoy the days when you're out there in your chest waders in some cold stream trying to catch a trout but come up empty? Is that still enjoyable or are you more about the thrill of the catch?

It's all about being out there. It's nice to catch a fish, and that is the point of the exercise. But it's the journey you go on and the places you visit. I've been lucky enough to fish all over the world, not always successfully, but sometimes you can just enjoy being out. I could walk for miles along a river without fishing just looking at the pools, looking under the bushes and just looking for fish. I just love being out there. The moving water just does something to me. It's good for the soul.

In Neil Peart's book he would speak of mapping his riding and sight-seeing out around the band's tour itinerary. When you look at a tour itinerary do you think I'm going to be here, here and here, I could sneak away and go two hours east on this day and hit this river or on this off day I could hit Lake So-and-So that might be on your fishing bucket list for lack of a better term?

Absolutely. You have to. Let's face it, we've been touring for a long, long time. These days it is slightly less at about three months a year. But even so, you have to have a balance. Otherwise, it's just two hours of fun on stage and 22 hours of killing time. So, yeah, it's great. You know, some of the guys play golf. I mean, I remember when we toured with Judas Priest back in the Eighties and Glenn [Tipton] and KK [Downing] used to go off and play golf on days off, which we thought was strange. They used to turn up backstage in their golf gear before they went on. Then the next time you would see them they would be in their leathers and stuff. They had it worked out and you have to have the balance between work and play.

There's a chapter in the book called "Sturgeon and Falling Over in Vancouver." I was in Vancouver sometime around maybe 2015, something like that. We played the show and I remember it because I actually fell on my ass on stage in the middle of a song called "Fear of the Dark." We were doing this big instrumental bit and the lights were blazing. There were 15,000, 20,000 people out there and the other guys still used guitar leads. I was wireless these days and have been for years. But Dave Murray went behind me and his roadie forgot to let out the lead on his guitar and it was stretched taut behind me. I moved backwards without looking and down I went. That is a very, very peculiar feeling falling over in that situation. So, I just got that in the book. Then the next day I decided I wanted to check out the frozen river at a place called Chilliwack. So I hired a car, went up there, hired a guide and just went out sturgeon fishing. We caught two sturgeon topping 100 lbs. That was a great weekend. I do look at itineraries and maybe think about cramming in a bit of fishing.

Iron Maiden has been brilliant in the marketing of the band from really even before you were doing albums with the band, with Eddie. Maybe it helped afford you a little anonymity. Do you get recognized much when you're fishing? I mean, obviously when you're outside of a venue or in a hotel people might be swarming around looking for autographs. Do you find yourself tucked away somewhere at a lake and have people kind of come up? Or can you get away with a ball cap and some polarized glasses?

It does happen, but usually people of my generation that aren't crazy teenagers. So they might come up and say, how's it going or that they may have seen you at the Hammersmith Odeon in 1985 or something. They are very cool about it. One time I was in Ireland, I was actually fishing with my dad, in the west of Ireland on a river called the Rogue River. We were trout fishing and some kids from the local village recognized me. I saw that they were following me, but they were very shy. Then I was fishing. I looked up and I could see them on a bridge, and they were waving an album that they wanted me to sign. I said why didn't they come down. And I came out of the river and I was signing their album. It was *The Number of the Beast*. As I was doing that, these two Irish nuns came along the river and they came over to see what all the fuss was about. I will never forget, one of them picked up *The Number of the Beast* and it's got Eddie and the devil. I'm like, oh, my God, she's going to drag me straight to the church and hear my confession. But she just laughed and went on her way.

You've had a signature-model guitar with Jackson for years. Would you ever consider doing any signature fishing gear?

I've got some ideas about stuff unique to me that I'd like to do. I haven't been approached by anyone yet. I could certainly think of a few ideas over the years that I've come up with out of necessity for my own fishing. Maybe I could give something back there and help some other people with some items of gear. That'll be fun.

Monsters of River & Rock: My Life as Iron Maiden's Compulsive Angler (BMG Books, 2020) is available now.

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Nervosa guitarist Prika Amaral (with her Kramer Nite-V) performs in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, October 4, 2019

MAURO PIMENTEL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Nervosa

HOW BRAZILIAN GUITARIST PRIKA AMARAL REBUILT HER THRIVING THRASH-METAL JUGGERNAUT FROM THE GROUND UP AND JUMPED HEAD FIRST INTO *PERPETUAL CHAOS*

By Gregory Adams

DESPITE THE DAMNED worldview poking through Nervosa's new *Perpetual Chaos*, founding guitarist Prika Amaral is at least finding herself in good company as the world burns around her. But while this fourth full-length builds off the savage thrash dynamics the outfit have been delivering since forming in 2010, a major lineup shift at the start of 2020 forced the Sao Paolo, Brazil-based Amaral to rebuild the band from the ground up.

"I started to make a list of my favorite musicians when the other girls left the band; Eleni [Nota, drums], Diva [Satanica, vocals] and Mia [Wallace, bass] were at the top," the guitarist reveals, adding how she'd first run into Satanica in Spain when the vocalist's Bloodhunter project opened for Nervosa. Wallace had previously held a high-profile spot as the bassist for Abbath, while Amaral discovered Nota's whip-cracking drum style through social media. After the foursome hit a rehearsal room and worked out the furiously thrashed and face-melting "Venomous," Amaral knew she'd found the right foils.

"We made this song together before they joined the band; this was the test!" the guitarist says with a laugh. "We decided to make it the first song of the album; it's one of the fastest and most aggressive songs [from the sessions]. It was perfect."

Across its 13 tracks, *Perpetual Chaos* has Amaral mixing precision riffery with raw and bloodied, off-the-cuff leads. "Time to Fight" is a manically downpicked, proto-thrash anthem for society's underdogs; "Guided by Evil" begins with ooze-dripping, slow-mo gloom before erupting into militaristic black metal blasts and a brief but volcanic, vibrato-heavy solo from Amaral.

"It's a short solo, but it has a lot of feeling," she says. "I prefer short solos; they're better to play live. I'm the only guitarist in the band, so if I put a long solo in there, it's a bit boring. You're missing the rhythm guitar in the back. But working with Mia, she's playing with a guitar pick, so we're trying to create [bass lines that feel like] a second guitar."

While Amaral customizes guitars as a hobby, she relied on her Kramer Nite-V to get her through *Perpetual Chaos*. Tone-wise, the gruesome, skin-corroding rhythms Amaral grinds into on the title cut were cranked out of a custom tube head from Brazilian amp maker Pedrone, and the one-of-a-kind Nervodriver overdrive pedal co-engineered by Pedrone and Brazilian pedal maker Ed's Mod Shop. The song itself, which Amaral admits was fit with a Sepultura-like groove, was handcrafted to get metal crowds bouncing — at least when it becomes safe for Nervosa to tour again.

"Everyone can sing, jump and headbang while listening to this song," Amaral says, before adding, "We're not sure if this will happen because of COVID, but we have many festivals confirmed. We'll see what we can do."

New Music, Anyone?

THIS MONTH: SOME "DEVILISHLY GOOD STUFF" FROM WOLFGANG VAN HALEN, PLINI, WHEN RIVERS MEET AND MORE

By Amit Sharma

Mammoth WVH's Wolfgang Van Halen [*left*] and Australia's Plini — one of Steve Vai's recent faves

Plini "Papelillo"

THERE WAS A sense of class to Plini's *Handmade Cities* debut that earned him a place as one of the most promising guitarists of the modern age. So much so that Steve Vai described the music as "one of the finest, forward-thinking, melodic, rhythmically and harmonically deep instrumental guitar records" he'd ever heard. This second single from the Australian virtuoso's followup album, *Impulse Voices*, takes those concepts even further, twisting new flavors of earthy fusion and progressive metal into his whirlwind of finesse. Few players have ever been able to channel Jeff Beck and Allan Holdsworth the way Plini does here.

Mammoth WVH "Distance"

WE SIMPLY CAN'T get enough of that first single released by Wolfgang Van Halen, the first piece of music released in loving memory of his father. Let's face it, as a fully fledged member of Van Halen for their final album and tour, this was always going to be good — but it's the quality and sentiment of the song that truly touched hearts in the weeks after Eddie's passing. Then, of course, there's the video — documenting the eternal bond between father and son as Wolfgang grows from a newborn on his father's lap by the piano to headlining arenas on Van Halen's final tour.

Tribulation "Leviathans"

THIS LEAD SINGLE from the Swedish heavy metal band's fifth album, *Where the Gloom Becomes Sound*, has a majestic and hypnotic quality to it – infinitely more melodic than the extreme noise they started out playing. Instead, there's an Eighties goth-rock and psychedelic feel to this track — with more of an atmospheric take on darkness, particularly during the neoclassical breakdown that sounds like a Yngwie Malmsteen lick played at half-speed. Devilishly good stuff.

When Rivers Meet "Did I Break the Law"

THE NEW SINGLE from this U.K. husband-and-wife duo may very well be of interest to fans of Lynyrd Skynyrd, Fleetwood Mac and ZZ Top, as well as more contemporary rock like Larkin Poe and the White Stripes. Whiskey-lunged singer Grace Bond also plays the resonator, mandolin and fiddle, while her partner Aaron was responsible for the guitar, bass and drums heard on last year's *We Fly Free* debut. If you're after a rootsy and swampy take on the blues, look no further.

Nilüfer Yanya "Crash"

NILÜFER COULD EASILY become one of the biggest names in pop over the next few years. Her *Miss Universe* debut in 2019 felt expansive in how it drew from influences far and wide, and the same could be said for her latest EP, *Feeling Lucky?* — on which this single can be found. The marriage of dirgey, fuzzed-out guitars and bass synths against her wonderfully unique voice is definitely something to marvel at.

MAMMOTH WVH: TRAVIS SHINN PLINI: CHAD DAO

BEN HARPER

GUITAR WORLD

MARCH 2021

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WHY THIS MULTIFACETED ARTIST KNEW IT WAS TIME TO LET HIS LAP STEEL SHINE

BY JOSHUA M. MILLER

BEN HARPER IS constantly looking for inspiration. The singer-songwriter/guitarist keeps an ever-watchful eye on his internal sonic clock for guidance on what direction to go next. That desire to dabble wherever his muse takes him has led to a variety of projects. He's doing everything from recording with his longtime backing band, the Innocent Criminals, and teaming up with music greats such as Blind Boys of Alabama, Charlie Musselwhite and Mavis Staples to collaborating with supergroup Fistful of Mercy (also featuring Dhani Harrison and Joseph Arthur) — and his mother, Ellen.

Ben Harper in the studio with a Richard Wilson Style 3 Weissenborn guitar

MATHIEU BITTON

While the three-time Grammy winner has accomplished quite a bit as a performing musician, he remains committed to pushing the musical envelope. Recently, his internal clock told him it was time to record his first instrumental album, the 15-song *Winter Is for Lovers*, which came out in October. That's not to say his prowess on guitar — specifically slide and lap steel — has been lost on fans or himself. Rather, he wanted his guitar to be the focal point this time.

"I've been taking aim on this record for a long time," Harper says. "There's always a number of directions I can go in, but this one was raising its hand the highest. There was a certain point a year and a half ago where it was the only thing I was working on. And that's usually a signal that when I end up focusing on a specific sound, it ends up taking over and leading the charge."

He attributes his specially crafted Monteleone lap steel for providing the impetus for the project. In 2017, John Monteleone gave Harper the guitar, which was dubbed the "Radio City Special Deluxe," during a visit to his guitar shop. It was the first lap steel model that Monteleone had created.

"The making and construction of that instrument kicked it into high gear, for sure, because [it] was everything I had dreamt, and more," Harper says.

Fulfilling his vision for the album came with unique challenges, most notably not being able to hide behind his voice. Instead, he had to adjust to the "physics of just being stripped bare, under really fine-quality microphones, without a voice or drum set to hide behind.

"Having that much focus on every single note and overtone, for one song, it's one thing. For two or three songs, it's one thing," he says. "But for an entire album, I had never been down that road."

In addition, he had to be realistic about how the songs would sound, which includes coming to terms with the fact that the sonics might not always be pristine.

"I'm a perfectionist, but I also like to let things be honest and raw. Not that perfection isn't honest and raw, but you don't want to sanitize it. So I had to find that balance between keeping it clean but keeping it rough," Harper says. "Every once in a while, the string finds its way to muting out sooner than you'd want, or a harmonic rings out louder than you had expected in that moment. And just letting it be a living, breathing sonic organism compared to actually trying to conform it into being a sonic robot was important to me because not everything needed to be quantized and aligned. And there's no click track. There's no roadmap. It's really just me sitting down with my instrument.

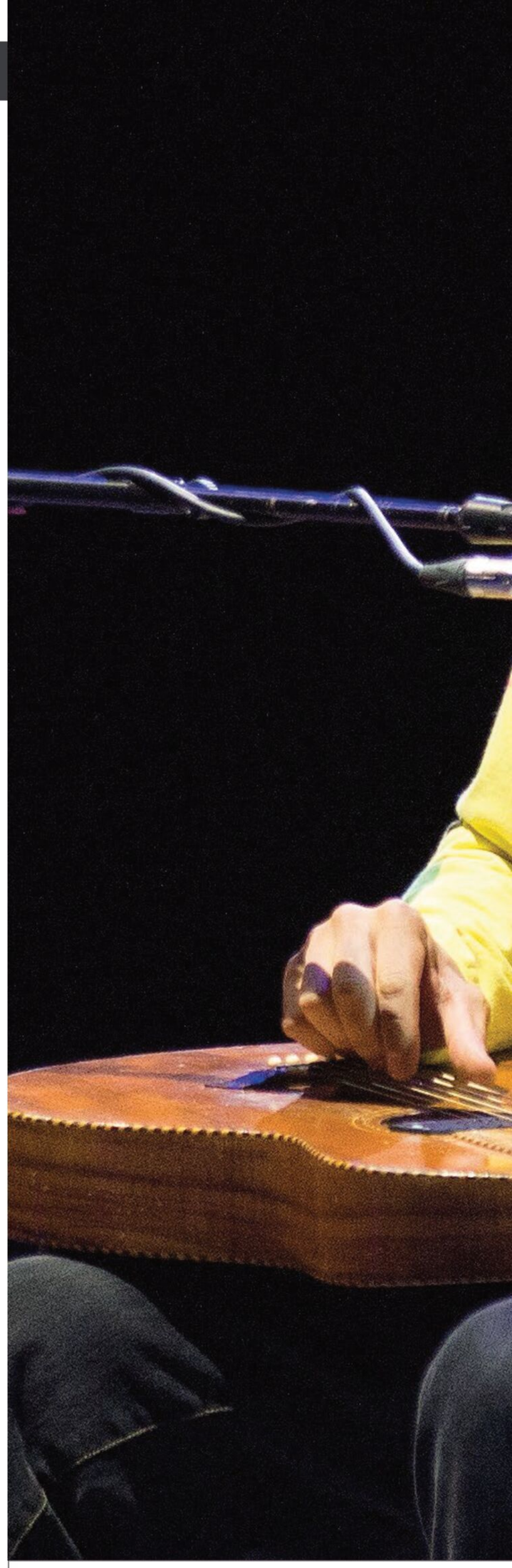
"If I had been playing solo guitar for the last 27 years, then this would be something that was routine to me. But while I do solo work in my sets every so often, that's different than doing it for a lifetime. And there's a responsibility that comes with being that stripped down. It leaves you with no choice but to be fully exposed."

LAP STEEL INFLUENCE

As he focused solely on guitar for *Winter Is for Lovers*, Harper found freedom to move unopposed between his many influences, showcasing his wealth of musical knowledge. Flamenco, classical, Hawaiian and blues are some of the textures that can be heard on the set, which journeys around the globe with titles such as "Joshua Tree" and "Istanbul."

"I'm hoping that 10 years from now someone will come along and say, 'Oh, that's its own style. That's its own sound.' It's influenced by, but it's none of the above, kind of thing," he says. "That's the dream... Hopefully, it's unconventional enough to define itself, but we'll see. We're all just lazy, though, aren't we? Because we all want to say, 'Well, it's connected to this, or connected to that, or connected to the other.' But none of us are ever brave enough to say, 'Hey, this is its own voice.' But I've just loved the journey. My guitar is my horn. My guitar, that's my axe, and there's a certain amount of devotion that comes with a lifetime commitment to the instrument, and I hope you can hear that in the melodies in a way that isn't connected to anyone but me."

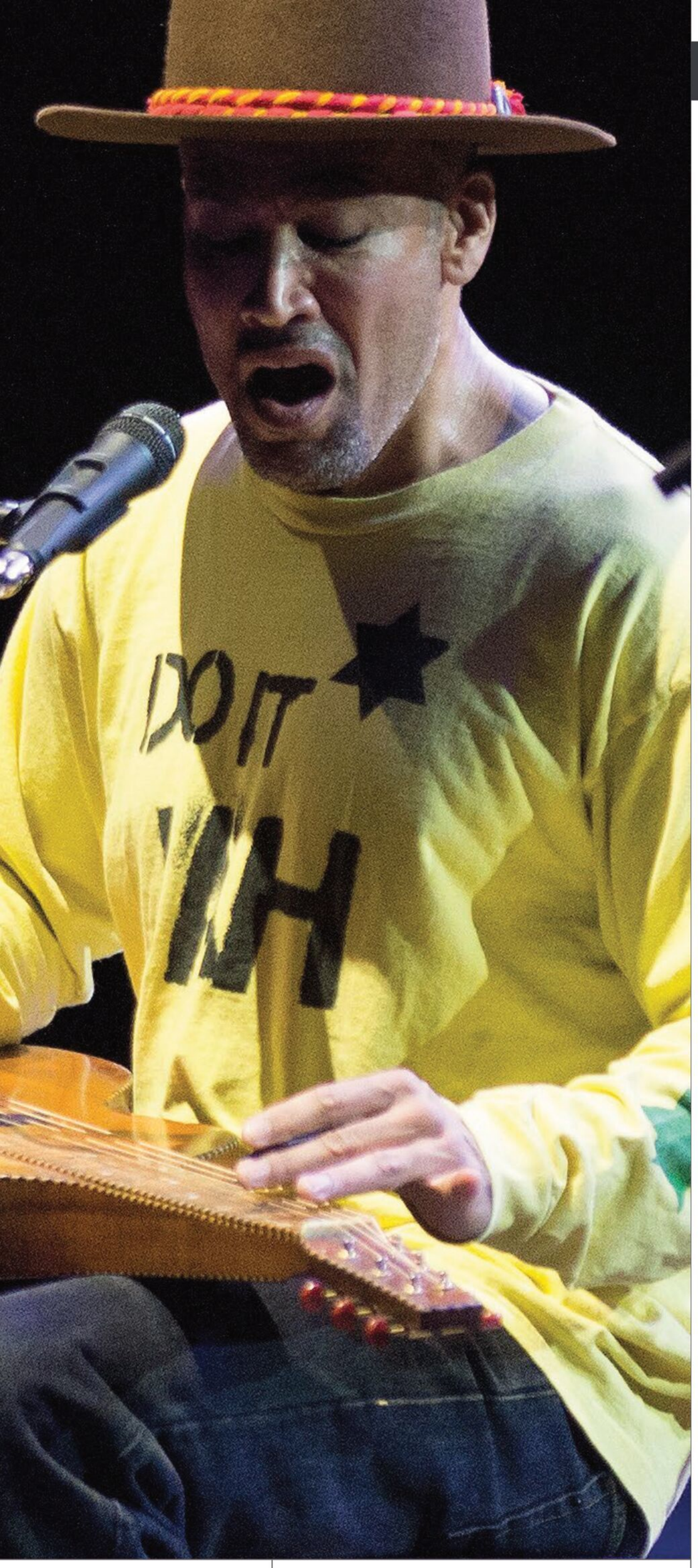
Since he was a kid in the 909 "Inland Empire" area code of southern California, Harper has written music with that unrelenting curiosity. In addition to his mother's diverse record collection, he found inspiration anytime he'd step foot in the Claremont Folk Music Center, which his family owns. In 1958, Harper's grandparents, Charles and Dorothy Chase, opened the instrument shop and expanded it over the years to foster music education in the community. His mother Ellen later took over as manager of the store and, recently, Harper bought the store to ensure it stayed in the family. For many years, Harper's grandmother —



"JOHN LEE HOOKER ... [TOLD ME], 'MAKE SURE YOU KEEP DOING THAT, BECAUSE THAT'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT.' I WAS LIKE, 'OKAY, RIGHT ON, MR. HOOKER'"

Harper (with his Richard Wilson) performs in Marbella, Spain, July 28, 2019

JORGE GUERRERO/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



who he calls the "musical matriarch" of the family — helped dictate the daily soundtrack heard in the store.

"There'd be debates between the employees, which were all family, and my mom, and myself as a youth, and my grandfather," Harper says. "We'd all challenge, we tried to get my grandmother to play different music, and she would, but she truly ruled over the record player in that music store. And it was our good fortune, my mom's and mine, that she had impeccable taste." That repertoire included blues, folk, Hawaiian-based music and other forms of roots music. Harper recalls hearing Reverend Gary Davis, Mississippi John Hurt, Blind Willie Johnson and Robert Johnson for the first time in the store.

"My grandmother was committed to American music before it had an A on the end," Harper says. "Before blues, folk, roots and outlaw country was Americana, it was just American roots music. And my grandmother was committed to it. She was committed to playing it and she was committed to being a fan of it. So, Grandma Dot, Dorothy Chase, would play it."

The store also hosted a diverse selection of traveling musicians, which gave Harper a chance to examine their playing from only feet away and — in some cases — meet the artists and help string their guitars. Doc Watson, John Fahey, Ry Cooder, Leonard Cohen, Taj Mahal, David Lindley and Jackson Browne are just some of the names that set foot in the shops. Pedal steel players, such as the late Chris Darrow of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, especially piqued young Ben's interest.

"Pedal steel players, in the middle of their route, when they're headed out Route 66 from LA to Chicago, would stop in my family's music store, pull their semis as close as they could get and walk the rest of the way, come in and play a pedal steel," he says. "[I thought,] 'Wow, that's special. And I don't even play pedal steel.' It's the sound, the textures, that hit me early."

So much so that he eventually decided to get his own — sort of. His grandfather offered his Weissenborn lap steel, but with a catch — he had to buy it or work it off. His family couldn't afford to just give away instruments. So, back in the late Eighties, the teenaged Harper slowly worked off the $500 needed to obtain the guitar.

"If you wanted an instrument from the family, you had to either buy it or work it off," Harper says. "I remember working it off in my family's music store for my first Weissenborn, which I still have."

Harper has since obtained other guitar brands, including a signature lap steel made by Billy Asher, an aluminum lap steel by an Italian company called Noah — and his Monteleone. He's found each guitar has its own personality and a "subtlety of tone." Some have subtle differences on the top end and low end. Certain songs require a specific lap steel.

"It's fascinating what the different tone bars will give you — the different radius on the different tone bars," he says. "At a certain point, the subtle differences are glaring. And that was one thing about this record — the subtle shifts. If I didn't come back and sit in the same chair position with my instrument the next time I played, it would sound different. So there was an exactness and precision that went into just the sonics, never mind the playing, but the sonics as well as the playing. So that was a trip, just having to really focus.

"And then the different steel. I've got lap steel bars that are made of glass, I've got them made of ceramic, I've got them made of steel-coated brass. And the different brass are different in density because they have a different zinc content. So the different weights of the bars played a role in the tone and texture. Finding all of that, finding the final absolute sound we wanted to set sail with. There was a lot that went into it."

He attributes Taj Mahal and Darrow for helping with this learning curve. He fondly recalls Darrow teaching him how to play his song "Whipping Boy" on lap steel. Harper eventually covered the song for his debut album, 1994's *Welcome to the Cruel World*.

"Getting to sit down with Chris Darrow and have him teach me note for note, that has played a bigger role in where I am today than anything," Harper says. "Having him teach you one of his songs, that's pretty much as good as it gets. From the perspective of someone who is learning, and up and coming, and trying to commit themselves to an instrument, the fact that he heard something in me that deemed worthy to teach me that song was a special moment."

Learning to play lap steel is an ongoing life venture, he says.

"I admit it, because it still informs me in such different ways," he says. "I want to go to one of those steel guitar summits. I want to go sit and watch some unorthodox steel guitar music. There's a summit in North Carolina

Harper with his Radio City Special Deluxe, the first lap steel ever built by John Monteleone

JACOB BOLL

with all steel guitar the entire weekend.

"I got advice early on from John Lee Hooker," he continues. "John Lee Hooker had a connection with my guitar playing and said, 'Do more of that. Just focus on your guitar — and your guitar playing.' He was an early supporter of my guitar playing and said, 'Make sure you keep doing that, because that's something different.' I was like, 'Okay, right on, Mr. Hooker.'"

LIFE'S JOURNEY

After reading David Foster Wallace's 1996 novel, *Infinite Jest*, which combined a series of short stories to create a bigger narrative, Harper realized he could have a similar narrative structure with the ideas he was coming up with.

"*Infinite Jest*, as far as structure, played a major role in how I ended up being able to weave and tie this record together and transform it into one single piece of music, the way David Foster Wallace did," Harper says. "The fact that I was working on that record at the same time as I was reading that book made it clear that it was time to take a more brave outlook at how I was bringing this record to life. Had I not been reading the book, I think it would've been a different record."

Harper decided to name the songs on the album after geographic locations because "most of them were written on the road." For example, "London" was influenced by British guitar players, such as Richard Thompson, Nick Drake, John Martyn and Jimmy Page. Meanwhile, "Paris" was inspired by the blissful feeling of a walk in a park in the French city, buoyed by Harper's meditative slide guitar.

"Being a traveling musician around the world you've got to pick up on the resonance and the frequencies of the places you go," Harper says. "I just love the fact that it's come to pass as I was able to live it and explore and [use my] experience in making a record like this."

One reason the album works, Harper says, is his recording engineer Sheldon Gomberg. While it might have been tempting to simply hit record, Gomberg kept him focused.

"I needed Sheldon because I was just doing numerous takes, and we were really fishing for the magic take," he says. "And Sheldon would keep me, and prevent me, from getting in my own way in that department so that I didn't go overboard in making it too clean. He provided me a platform in which to keep it raw. He kept reminding me, 'It's okay. It's okay that it has the immediacy of it being raw and in someone's living room.'... I was glad that I was able to leave that to Sheldon. I was just able to focus on playing and enjoy. I had a lot of joy in this record. Every moment of recording this record felt great."

Harper doesn't know yet where he'll go with his next album but wouldn't be surprised if he made another instrumental album at some point.

"I'm curious where I go from here as far as instrumental recordings. I love doing it, and it's been a growing and learning experience for me," he says. "So, it could be just the embarkment point, or this record could be that journey and I move away from it. But I'm going to be curious to see what calls out creatively in the future for instrumental records and recording with just the guitar. I hope it's the beginning of something." GW

GOOD TO GO

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PAGE TURNER

HOT ON THE HEELS OF HIS AMAZING NEW BOOK,

JIMMY PAGE

DISCUSSES HIS EVOLUTION AS A GUITARIST, HIS LEGENDARY GEAR, THE CREATIVE PROCESS THAT WENT INTO THE HOLY TRINITY OF LED ZEPPELIN SONGS — "WHOLE LOTTA LOVE," "KASHMIR" AND "STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN" — AND THE TIME HE PLAYED AT "FULL ACCELERATION" WITH THE ROLLING STONES

WRITTEN BY

CHRIS BIRD

Jimmy Page performs with Led Zeppelin at New York's Madison Square Garden in June 1977

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A young Jimmy Page at home in Epsom with his first guitar, a circa-1958 Höfner President

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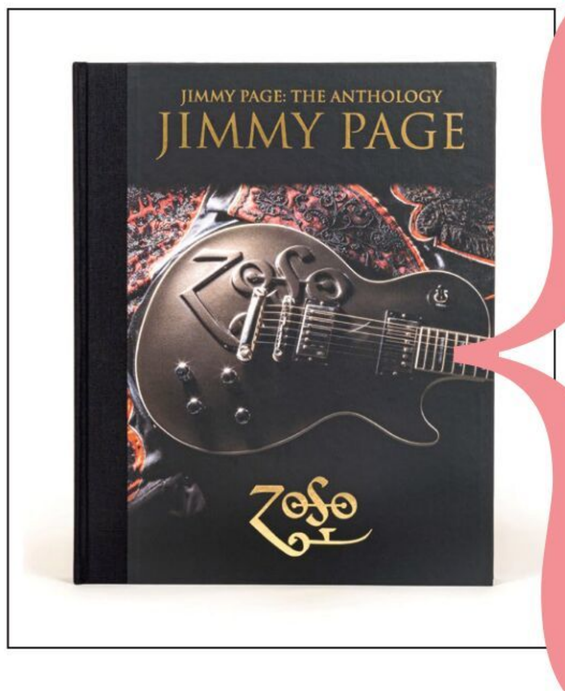


IT IS AN EXTRAORDINARY STORY, and as Jimmy Page puts it, quietly but firmly, only he is qualified to tell it. He has a new book from Genesis Publications, titled simply *Jimmy Page: The Anthology*. It is what he calls "an autobiography with photographs," and a "companion volume" to 2010's *Jimmy Page by Jimmy Page*. The focus is on his music and guitars, his artistry and evolution as a player. But there is also the sense, as he explains it, that Page is setting the record straight, in answer to the many unauthorized biographies of himself and his band, Led Zeppelin.

"There's so much mythology about me," Page says. "In all those other books, because people don't have all of the information — they make things up. So at least with my book I could be really authoritative, because I was the one who knew what happened. So, let's do it. Let's start telling the stories as they really are."

Speaking to us from his home in London, where he has remained since the outset of the global pandemic, Page is in a relaxed mood, happy to talk about every aspect of his life's work: the groundbreaking music he made, first with the Yardbirds and then with Led Zeppelin; and the tools of his trade, iconic guitars such as the Black Beauty (more on that later), and the amps and effects with which he explored new sounds.

Born January 9, 1944, in Heston, Middlesex, England, James Patrick Page began playing guitar at age 12. Inspired by pioneering rock 'n' roll guitarists including Scotty Moore and James Burton, he performed in various groups while attending art school before establishing himself as a session player and producer, working on a number of hit records for major artists, among them the Who, the Kinks, Van Morrison and the Rolling Stones.

In 1966, Page joined the Yardbirds, one of the leading bands of the British blues-rock explosion — originally as bassist, and later as lead guitarist alongside his friend Jeff Beck. Following Beck's departure, Page continued with the Yardbirds until 1968, when, after two members of the band exited, he put a new lineup together with singer Robert Plant, drummer John Bonham and bassist John Paul Jones. Initially billed as the New Yardbirds, the band was subsequently renamed Led Zeppelin.

With Page as architect-in-chief, a series of classic albums, beginning in 1969, defined Led Zeppelin as the dominant hard rock band of the Seventies, with the guitarist's mastery of blues and folk combining with heavy riffs to achieve a perfect balance, what he called "light and shade." The fourth album — officially untitled, but known variously as "Led Zeppelin IV" or "Four Symbols" — was arguably the band's masterpiece, featuring that most sacred of all rock anthems, "Stairway to Heaven." On stage, the band's prowess, in which improvisation was the hallmark of marathon shows, made them the biggest-grossing live act in the world.

Led Zeppelin's reign ended with the death of John Bonham on September 25, 1980. In the wake of this tragedy, Page made a soundtrack album for *Death Wish II* and formed a supergroup, the Firm, with ex-Free/Bad Company singer Paul Rodgers.

In 1985, there was the first Zeppelin reunion, for Live Aid, with Page, Plant and Jones backed by two drummers, Phil Collins and Tony Thompson. In 1988 there was *Outrider*, Page's only solo album to date. And in the Nineties, another short-lived supergroup, Coverdale/Page, with Whitesnake leader David Coverdale, before Page and Plant reunited, not using the Led Zeppelin name, but performing mostly Zeppelin music on the live album *No Quarter*. The duo then made an album of new songs, *Walking Into Clarksdale*, released in 1998, which still stands as Page's last album of original material. At the turn of the millennium, Page dug back into his past once again by performing Zeppelin classics with the Black Crowes.

It was on December 10, 2007, that Page, Plant, Jones and drummer Jason Bonham, the son of John Bonham, performed as Led Zeppelin for a one-off show at the 02 Arena in London. Twenty million people applied for tickets for what was a momentous show, but with Plant unwilling to commit to a full-scale reunion tour, this proved to be Zeppelin's last stand.

In all the years since, Page has busied himself curating the Zeppelin catalog — a body of work shaped by his genius as a guitarist, writer, arranger and producer. What he reveals in *Jimmy Page: The Anthology* are the secrets of his art, the inner-workings of Led Zeppelin, how he chose and modified the guitars with which he created the band's definitive songs. In this interview, he addresses all of that and more.

***Jimmy Page: The Anthology* is a beautiful book — and so full of detail.**

Yes, it was an interesting thing to do, to put in all the information that you couldn't put into the first book. *Anthology* gave me

Jimmy Page: The Anthology by Jimmy Page is published by Genesis Publications. Order from **jimmypageanthology.com**

the opportunity to do the detail behind the detail of everything pertaining to my career, whether it was the guitars or the costumes or whatever. To be able to get close up, personal and even invasive — so you could see the mechanism of things like the string bender, the circuitry, or the fine detail of the costumes. And, of course, there are a lot of stories behind the guitars.

One guitar in particular — your 1960 Gibson Les Paul Black Beauty Custom — has an amazing story.

The first time I played it, I had such a connection with it. I thought, "This is it. After all this searching and going through guitar shops, this is the one." I got it before I went to art college, so when I started doing studio work as a session player, that's the electric that's used on pretty much all of that work.

You also played it during Led Zeppelin's famous concert at London's Royal Albert Hall in January 1970.

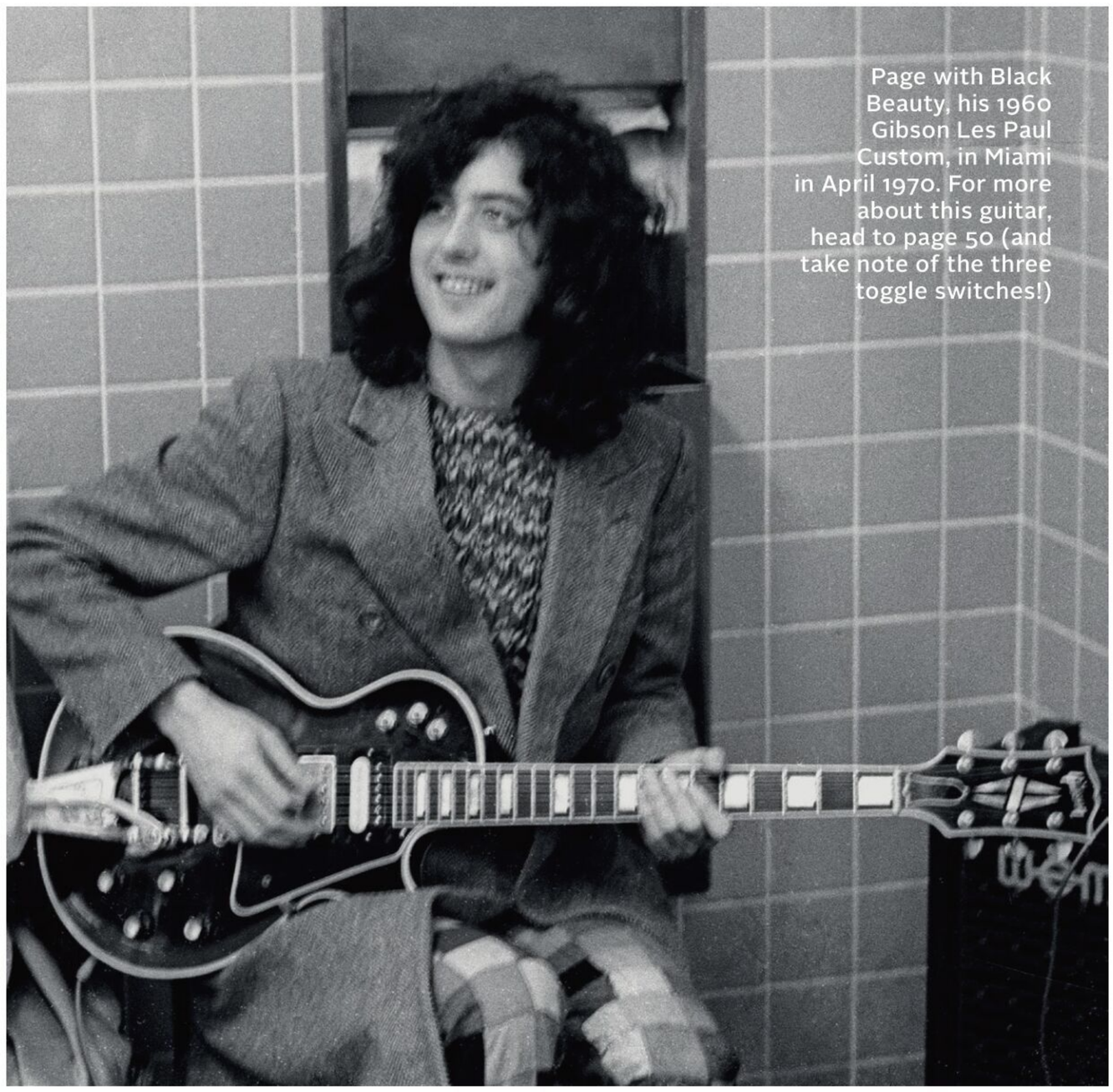
Yes, at the tail end of it when we did some Eddie Cochran stuff. And after the Albert Hall, I thought I'd take it to the States with me on one of the tours and we'd just do all this rock 'n' roll stuff at the end, the Eddie Cochran stuff with the Bigsby. So the story is that I take it over there, we're in Minneapolis going to Montreal, and we arrive in Montreal but the guitar doesn't. It disappears in Minneapolis. I realized it was lost or stolen.

And then?

Gibson, under the circumstances of me having played all the studio work on a Gibson Black Beauty, they made a clone of that, a version of it. That was pretty cool. And I had some extra sort of routing in it, because on the original, where you have the up [position on the selector switch] it is the neck [pickup]. The middle [position] isn't the neck and the bridge, it's actually the bridge and the middle pickup. And then the down position is the bridge. So at no point could you get what you'd get on a Standard, which was the neck and bridge pickup together, so I worked out a way of doing that, and I had that built into that particular model, because I thought, well, crikey, you want to do that, you want any combination that you can get. So that was what I had, a Gibson Black Beauty [replica].

And you played the replica during Zeppelin's 2007 show at the O2.

Yes, that's the guitar that I played at the O2 when we did "For Your Life" (from *Presence*). I thought that would be really cool, that thick sound, because it sounded really good. And then after the O2 [in 2015], my guitar that was stolen turns up. It gets found. Isn't that interesting? And unless you get the story, you just see a Black Beauty and think, oh that's the same one he had before. But there's a whole story about how it gets lost and I didn't expect it ever to be back in my hands ever again. I thought it was gone. [*Editor's note: For the whole story, check out Brad Tolinski's "Black Beauty Rides Again" on page 50.*]



Page with Black Beauty, his 1960 Gibson Les Paul Custom, in Miami in April 1970. For more about this guitar, head to page 50 (and take note of the three toggle switches!)

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Are you aware of what happened to it during that time?

I think it was stolen from the airport and was stuck under somebody's bed, somebody who was in some sort of punk band or something, and nobody wanted to rat on him. I think he died, and once he died things became a bit more apparent as to what had happened, and we got it back.

It's an incredible story.

Well, these things don't reappear, do they? It is a great story insofar as I'm still paying tribute to it, if you like, the one that was lost, even though Gibson made an edition of it. And yeah, then the first one turned up afterwards, and it was amazing, fantastic.

On the subject of replicas, last year Fender released Custom Shop and production-line recreations of your famed Telecaster. Can you tell us a bit about your original instrument?

Jeff Beck gave me a Telecaster, one that he played in the Yardbirds for a while, but I was still doing sessions, and he gave me that as a gift. And once I went into the Yardbirds I was playing that Telecaster. Bit by bit I started to customize it. I put some mirrors on it. I wanted to really make the guitar my own. People had started painting guitars at that point and I thought, well, I'd like to paint mine and really consecrate it, so that guitar is absolutely my own. So I went about painting it [with the dragon artwork] — all that art school training didn't finally go to waste! [*Laughs*] This was a guitar I was using in the Yardbirds, so when Jeff left I had the one with the mirrors and then I painted it. And that painted guitar goes through from the Yardbirds through *Led Zeppelin*.

At some point the finish on that

Telecaster was damaged, wasn't it?
Well, somebody mucked up the painting on it. I needed to repaint it, let's put it that way. Somebody had sort of vandalized it in my absence. So [restoring] it was always something I wanted to do. I had to take it back to the natural wood.

And the guitar was renovated for the *Play It Loud* exhibition at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2019.
What happened was that the people from the Met came to my house and they had a blueprint floorplan of how they wanted to do the exhibits and they explained that they wanted the original instruments, and I thought here's the time to actually [restore] it, because that guitar was going from the Yardbirds to *Led Zeppelin*, for God's sake. So this is the time to do it. So I got in touch with Fender. I got a graphic artist to help me map it out so that I could paint by numbers and then build it up. So that was the way I approached it.

Then, of course, along came Fender's reissues.
Then the idea was I'd like to do a run of it, and Fender said they were really interested in doing it. Other people were saying, "you don't have to do it with Fender," but I thought, no, if it's going to be honest it has to be a Fender thing. They're going to measure it up and get that neck, which is a really unusual neck, all manner of different things about it that needed attention paid to it.

You were right to go back to Fender, because their Custom Shop is so good at this.
Oh gosh, yeah. I worked with a guy there called Paul Waller, and he was a dream to work with, such a cool guy. I saw the machinist stamp out the plates that go over the screws that hold the neck to the body of the Telecaster and the Strat. Jesus Christ, it was an amazing place. In a factory, I didn't think that spirit existed anymore, but it jolly well does at Fender. The spirit in there — it's like they know what they're making is something that is going to be really loved by somebody. Not only that, it's going to be like their buddy, if you like. And not only that, that combination of the instrument and the musician — that can make people happy. So they've got the right attitude. It's a really noble thing that they're doing, as opposed to something like making a car part in a factory. It was a great experience.

Les Paul "Number One" and "Number Two" are your famous sunburst Standards. What are the differences between them in terms of setup and how they feel to you?
The first one has quite a shallow neck, and that's how it was when I had it. I've often wondered if it had been re-finished when I had it, by Joe Walsh, who sold it to me — whether he had re-finished it. He had more than one Les Paul at the time and he'd obviously decided to let this one go. But this was the neck that was on it. On the other one, they all played differently, they weren't consistent on the Fifties ones. There's a definite difference in the feel and the tension between the two of them. I'm not so sure whether the neck is quite so shallow on the Number Two, but it's not one of those big clunky ones. Tonally it's different as well. That's the one I started to experiment on, so that I could do all various combinations, [coil-tapping] with the push-pull switch.

I gather you used two 12-strings, the Fender Electric XII and the Vox Phantom XII, on "Stairway to Heaven."
That's right. The Vox one, I had that in the Yardbirds, so a lot of the stuff in the Yardbirds — "Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor" and all those things — were done on that. And then I got the Fender a little later. I think I got that when I came back from America the first time I visited. So basically I had two electric 12-strings, and on "Stairway," I wanted to use both, so I'd have one [panned] left and one right. There is a slight difference, obviously, in the sound of them, so that bit in the fanfare that leads into the solo with all the 12s, that's tracking both the Vox and the Fender. There's a photograph in the book that shows the setup: the two 12-strings and the six-string solo.

And when it came to performing the song live, you turned to the Gibson EDS-1275 doubleneck.
Yes. I thought, what's the guitar, how to do this on stage? And it was just obvious that the only way to do this, with the sort of fragile guitar of the opening style and the more racy sort of pickups for the solo — the doubleneck is the only way I'm going to do it. When I recorded the song I wasn't thinking about how I was going to do it live. So in actual fact, the song demanded the guitar. There was no other way to do it. When you think about it, it was the only way to actually replicate that song, apart from jumping from one guitar to another on stage!

Was that approach repeated on later Zeppelin songs?
I certainly didn't think how I was going to do "Achilles Last Stand" live. [*Laughs*] I was just doing it — I was laying on everything I could think of that would work within the context of whatever the composition was.

Did you miss having the acoustic guitar when performing "Stairway to Heaven"?
Yeah, sort of, but it was okay doing it with the neck pickup on the six-string neck [of the doubleneck]. That was about as good as it was going to get, really. I didn't really miss it. I was just able to take it in another direction in a live situation.

In the live performances of that song, it's not a different arrangement, but a different feel, a different vibe.
Yeah. The textures are going to be different, so the attitude's going to be different. And another thing about the doubleneck: It's after the fourth album that that arrives, so when you get to the next album after that, *Houses of the Holy*, there's what was originally called the "Overture," but it becomes "The Song Remains the Same" and then "The Rain Song." I did those because I figured I would be able to do those on the doubleneck. So I was actually thinking of the

"THE FIRST TWO SONGS I HAD FOR *LED ZEPPELIN II* WERE 'WHOLE LOTTA LOVE' AND 'WHAT IS AND WHAT SHOULD NEVER BE.' *LED ZEPPELIN II* IS ALMOST LIKE TURNING A COIN, ISN'T IT? ONE SIDE TO THE OTHER AS FAR AS TEXTURES AND MOODS"

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The Paramounts perform at a boarding school dance in the late Fifties; Page [*center*] is playing his Futurama/Grazioso

doubleneck and being able to have those two numbers the way they appear on the album. I was thinking about how to really be able to use it, rather than just maybe for one or two songs. So it became an active part of the overall show.

Double-tracking was a huge part of the Zeppelin sound and very influential. When did you first start doing it?

On the first album. Don't hold me to it, but I think you'll find on "Good Times Bad Times" there's double-tracking on the riff. I'd done double-tracking before as a studio musician, but it was difficult to do it so much with the Yardbirds because Mickie Most was the producer and we were under his umbrella, really.

The first Zeppelin album feels less produced, more in the room, so the double-tracking is less obvious. But by the time you get to 1971 and *Zeppelin IV*, the production is massive. What do you feel was different then in the production sound?

I was acquainted with John Paul Jones' playing as a session player, but John Bonham, with his approach to the drums and the dazzling technique that he had, the overall sound of his drums was unlike anybody that I'd heard before. It was so musical, because he knew how to tune his drums. So I knew instinctively what I wanted to do with Led Zeppelin that was unlike anybody else. I wanted to have the full stereo picture, the placing of the instruments.

And guitar-wise?

The first album was totally based around the Telecaster. And that's what it was — just a Supro [Coronado 1690T] amp, [a Sola Sound Tone Bender] overdrive, an Echoplex [EP-3 tape delay] and a Vox wah-wah. So it's really very minimal and it's not going through different amps, just this one amplifier. So it really goes to show with all the tones just how much there was that you could get out of one guitar. And that's basically what it was that I had. I wasn't using the Black Beauty or anything like that. And as it went on, the second album was clearly going to be all about the Les Paul guitar. But again, it's a large stereo picture of everything that's going on, whether it's panning things or positioning or whatever, or where things come in or go out, what's tracked and what isn't tracked.

Things were moving very fast for you and the band at that time.

The first album was done in a very short time. The second album was done while we were on the road in America, although we were coming backwards and forwards to England, so it's got all the energy of touring.

That energy was evident in the big rock numbers such as "Whole Lotta Love" and "Heartbreaker," but the second album also had subtler songs such as "Thank You" and "Ramble On."

The first two songs I had for *Led Zeppelin II* were "Whole Lotta Love" and "What Is and What Should Never Be." *Led Zeppelin II* is almost like turning a coin, isn't it? One side to the other as far as textures and moods.

And then with *Led Zeppelin III* you had "Immigrant Song," a powerful statement of intent, and "Since I've Been Loving You," this huge blues ballad, but also acoustic tracks such as "That's the Way" and "Tangerine."

People were saying, "Oh, Led Zeppelin's gone acoustic." Well, what happened to your ears on the first album and the second album? Ha ha. It's just variations on a theme, really. There were so many ideas put into the first album, but they were able to grow and be developed. With the third album, we had a break from touring and it gave us a chance to work on more of the acoustic stuff.

What are your memories of making that album?

Right at the early stages of rehearsing, when I think it was just John Bonham and myself, I had "Immigrant Song," "Out on the Tiles" and also "Friends." If you say straight away you've got "Friends" and "Immigrant Song," already it's got the yin and yang. And there's all this other stuff that's going to go in. We'd already played "Since I've Been Loving You" before; that was written just before the third album. So we knew we had that as well. There were all these textures coming up, and I was keen to do "Gallows Pole" because I thought it was quite curious the way that song had started off in England and gone all the way around the States and come back, so then we were going to do it and send it back to the States again as a folk song.

There was a clear progression with each successive album.
Certainly within the written context of what was being presented to people to hear, everything was going to be moving forward. So when it went to the point of the more acoustic style of the third album, you can imagine our record company getting that in and going, "Where's the 'Whole Lotta Love'?" If anyone had said that to me I'd have said, "Oh that, that's on the second album — this is the third album." You know how it is with A&R men going, "Oh, you've got to have a single." We had singles in America and other places, but I wanted to stay clear of that market and keep it as an albums thing. Right in the early stages I demanded — after having done all the Mickie Most stuff — that we didn't want to be a band that was known for singles. It was albums that we were going to be known for. And clearly I wanted to make each album different from the one before.

By focusing purely on albums, you were going against the grain, against conventional wisdom in the music business. Was that difficult for you?
No, it was not, because when the first deal was done it was established right there and then. It was a good thing. That way we didn't have people who didn't know what we were doing in the first place — it was probably going above their heads or whatever — trying to get something for the radio. "Oh, can you record something for the radio?" All bands have heard that sort of nonsense, but fortunately we circumnavigated it by just sticking to what we knew was going to be the right way to do it, to make the music develop properly.

It's evident that you had a clear vision for Led Zeppelin right from the start.
Yes, I did. I really knew what it was that I wanted to do. If you think about it, on the third album there's "Tangerine," but I wrote "Tangerine" back in the Yardbirds. So I'd waited an amount of time. I didn't stick it on the first album or the second. I waited until it would fit in with the right texture of everything else. It fits great in the third album. So, yeah, I had a bit of a plan. [*Laughs*] And not just for that one number, of course!

If you were back at the time of the third album, how would you describe it?
I didn't really do interviews in those days, to be honest with you, but I would have just explained what it was in the context of the second album having the energy of touring, and this being the other side. Things like "That's the Way" are bloody brilliant, you know? There's just so much good stuff on it, and every number we recorded was always different, it always had its own character. If anything started to sound like something that we'd done before, we'd just stop doing it. We wouldn't be doing recordings that sounded like we'd recorded it before, like a secondary version of something else, like "Whole Lotta Love Mark Two." We didn't do that. So yeah, I would have brought people's attention to "Since I've Been Loving You," no doubt about it, because nobody had actually approached blues up to that point like that. Everybody was playing blues, but nobody had gone that sort of extra mile.

There was a heavy influence of blues on the first album — in "You Shook Me" and "Dazed and Confused," which turned into an epic piece in live performance.
Well, "Dazed and Confused" was basically a vehicle for improvisation. There are various versions of "Dazed and Confused" out there, but what can be told right across the board wherever you hear it, there's a couple of verses and then there's improvisation — from Robert, as well.

So you played it just going wherever the mood took you?
Yes, there are whole areas of things that just come out on the night and then they don't get repeated again. It's quite extraordinary, and it keeps getting longer and longer and longer. But there's a hell of a lot to say in that, because it wasn't just jamming on one chord, it was going through all manner of movements like a classical piece.

How did you set up improvisational moments?
You go into it then you take off and try to come up with whatever you come up with along the way. But there's a way of coming out of it, so then there would be musical signatures so that the band knew we were coming to the end of that piece and... Watch what's coming next! So there were signposts, but in between you could go straight or you could go over the mountains, as far as the improvisation goes. And the improvisation was pretty fresh every night. There were character bits that stayed, for sure, but there was a lot of stuff that got played one night and never got revisited again ever.

"NOBODY HAD ACTUALLY APPROACHED BLUES UP TO THAT POINT LIKE ['SINCE I'VE BEEN LOVING YOU']. EVERYBODY WAS PLAYING BLUES, BUT NOBODY HAD GONE THAT SORT OF EXTRA MILE"

"Dazed and Confused" was just one of many epic tracks in the Zeppelin catalog — alongside "Stairway to Heaven," "Kashmir," "Achilles Last Stand"...
It was part of the overall thing from the first album. Part of it goes back to what I said about singles. With "Whole Lotta Love," that was clearly going to be the track that everybody was going to go to, because that riff was so fresh and it still is. If somebody plays that riff it brings a smile to people's faces. It's a really positive thing. But I knew with "Whole Lotta Love" that there weren't going to be any edits. I insisted that

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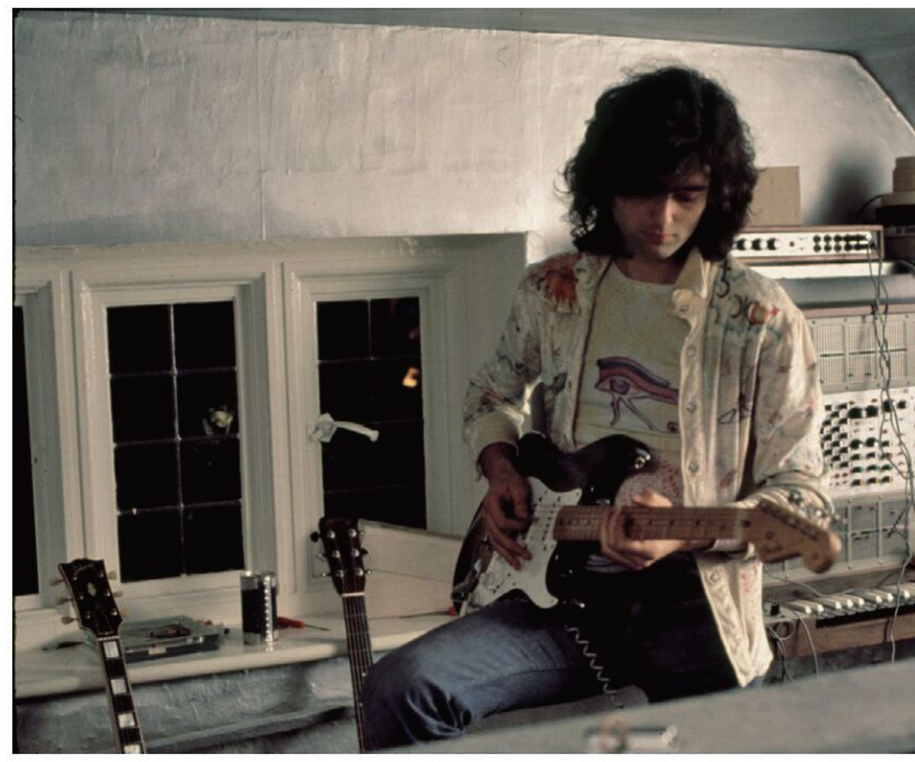


[*above*] Page with a Fender Strat in his home studio in East Sussex; [*left, from left*] Page's Harmony Sovereign, Gibson Les Paul Custom (Black Beauty), Danelectro 3021, original Fender "Dragon" Telecaster, Gibson Les Paul Standard "Number One," Gibson EDS-1275 doubleneck; goldtop 1991 Gibson Les Paul with TransPerformance self-tuning system

they kept the middle section in it, which, of course, they didn't like, but they had to do it. So I thought, well, if you just keep making the numbers longer and longer... [*Laughs*] They're not going to make them singles!

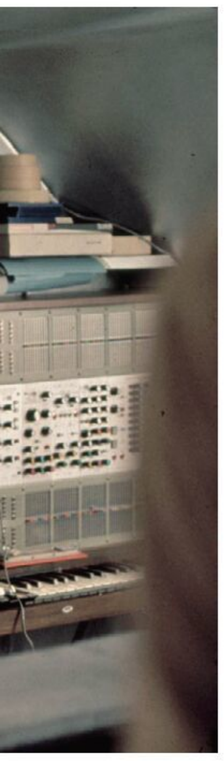
I did think that in a mischievous way. But there was another reason to make them longer and longer — there was more to say in them. Then again, it could be argued the other way. "Good Times Bad Times" is really short, as far as minutes and seconds, but there's just so much that goes on in that. It is what it is. Sometimes you have shorter statements. Sometimes you need longer to get across what you're doing.

Let's talk about effects. The phaser sounds on *Physical Graffiti*, for example "In My Time of Dying" and "The Rover," have me thinking of Van Halen, like you influenced Van Halen. How did you dial in those tones?

A lot of the phasing that was done in the early stages is done with tape machines. So you've got two tape machines running, and then with one you alter the speed so you get the phasing. Basically what it is, in those days, is an analog effect. And then there was Eventide Clockworks, who came up with phasers, flangers and the Digital Delay Line. I had a really good connection with Eventide, because they were getting the stuff for me out of the factory more or less, so I got them really early on. I got the harmonizer really early as well, and I managed to use that with John Bonham. I had a Mark II Harmonizer with the keyboard, and I used that on "Bonzo's Montreux" [the drummer's showpiece track, first released after Bonham's death on 1982's *Coda*]. It made his drums sound like steel drums, and he loved it, he thought it was great. I did have a basic unit, a foot pedal unit, and on/off one, but I still preferred all those old analog ones as opposed to rack-mounted things. I had a pedalboard that grew and grew, and I was using that at the O2, for example, and that's a Pete Cornish 'board, where he mounted all the stuff that I wanted, which is my old foot pedals into on/off stomp boxes or whatever you call them, into it. I preferred to be able to do it like that; it's something very tactile, and I preferred that to something that's just going to come back like a metronome. No, I prefer to be able to fool around with things, you know? Shape the things on stage. So that's the same with the Theremin and the Echoplex [EP-3 tape delay]. I could just really have a real good time with those things.

If we can talk about amplification, at what point did you then move on to Marshall?

Here's how it goes. You need to take notes or you're going to get lost [*Laughs*]. Basically what happens is, the amplifier on the first [Led Zeppelin] album is the Supro [Coronado 1690T], but I got that way back, when I was art school, with Neil Christian and the Crusaders. That had quite a journey to it. It fits great with the Telecaster, but with the Gibson [Les Paul] it was a really overdriven sound, right? And when I started doing studio work, I realized that was a bit too radi-



cal for them at the time. So I got what everyone else was getting, so that psychologically it looked right, which was a Burns amplifier, which I had during the studio days. But when [bassist] Paul Samwell-Smith left [the Yardbirds], he left his equipment behind — the [Vox] amplifier heads. I know them as Super Beatles. The way I heard it about those amplifiers was the Beatles had them because they couldn't hear their instruments over all the screaming, so they wanted louder amplifiers, and Vox duly obliged.

That's the Yardbirds and *Led Zeppelin* covered. What were you using during the sessions for *Led Zeppelin II*?

I was using the Super Beatle amps with the [Rickenbacker] Transonic cabinets. So that's exactly what's on "Whole Lotta Love." So the first album's got the Supro; the second album, as I said, I wanted to change the whole sound character, so that's what I was using. I was using what was really meaty, and what I was using on stage, what I'd arrived at once I had the Les Paul Standard. So, by the time we get to 1969, we've got so much work ahead of us, and the road manager is getting really, really nervous about the amplifier going down and not getting a replacement, so they're saying, well, everybody else has got Marshalls, so I went to Hiwatt [Custom 100s] before I went to the Marshalls. But then I did go to Marshall because what they'd said was absolutely true — if it broke down somewhere you'd be able to find a shop that would have one. Once I'd done the second album, yeah, the Marshall is being used by the end of those tracks [recorded] in New York. I've got those during that '69 tour. And I would say it has to be Marshalls by then. So maybe "Heartbreaker" was done on a Marshall. And that's how it stayed, with the Marshall cabinet all the way through. Although I did take little side ventures off that, but mainly that [Marshall] was the main kit.

Was that also the main kit for live or just studio?

Both. For example, *Presence* was done on the Marshall. I guess I had two cabinets at the top, the head and the Les Paul. So that's it. That's a real classic setup, really, the Marshall and the Les Paul. Certainly on "Achilles Last Stand," I was trying to get all the tonal aspects of the Les Paul and the Marshalls. That wasn't everybody's kit, to have a Supro amplifier with the Telecaster, insomuch as I knew I could get a lot out of it. I did the same with that setup on *Presence*.

When did you discover the B-bender?

The B-bender came as a result of listening to the Byrds, an album called *Untitled* [1970], and another, *Sweetheart of the Rodeo* [1968]. I really liked Roger McGuinn. His guitar parts were fantastic on those albums. Then I started listening to what was going on around those; I could hear this amazing lead playing [by guitarist Clarence White] that was zipping around in the background, and I thought, "Oh my God, how is he doing that?" I was trying to work it out. It was really tricky to be able to do that so fluently. Then I met Albert Lee one night when he was playing with Eric Clapton, and when I spoke to him about those Byrds records he said, "Oh, it's a string-bender." Albert had one, he showed it to me, and said, "This is how it's done!" I couldn't see the mechanism inside it, but it worked on the strap lock so that if you pushed the guitar down and you put the mechanism into play it would take the string up a tone. So then I went about trying to get one. I think he may have given me the contact number for Gene Parsons [the multi-instrumentalist and former Byrds drummer who created the original string-bender for Clarence White].

The Danelectro you used on "Kashmir" has such an individual sound. When did you first start using it?

Selmers was the big showcase shop, and I don't know how they got away with it, but they sold every brand of guitar in there — Gibsons, Gretsches, Fenders. I don't know how they did it, but they did. Suddenly the Danelectro guitar appeared in there, and [John] Entwistle had got the bass with horns on it, and this salesman was saying they had this guitar, it was only £45 or something, and all the other guitars were getting into the hundreds. I said, let's have a go on it, and it sounded pretty great. Because, of course, it's hollow bodied, put together with plywood. It sounded phenomenal, and I could afford it, so I thought, "I'll have this as a sort of second guitar." I did start to use it a little bit on sessions and there's a photograph of me in one of these big sessions with loads of guitars and I've taken that thing along. I was using it not so much on sessions, because I was using the Les Paul, but yeah, in the Yardbirds I was using it, and putting it into [altered] tunings, and it stayed with me all the way through the Yardbirds straight into Led Zeppelin. It was the backup guitar, because I was only going out there with two guitars, really; in '68, '69 I had just the Telecaster and the Danelectro, until I got the Gibson. So if I broke a string, I'd quickly get it into standard tuning from the DADGAD it was in and then go off. On the bootlegs I can't tell the difference, I can't tell the swap-over, which is quite interesting. But it was there, it was a true and trusted friend, it was there all the way through. I started to write things on it like "Kashmir" because I was used to playing it in the DADGAD tuning, so "Kashmir" came out on that guitar, and "In My Time of Dying." They're both on [*Physical Graffiti*]. So clearly I was using it in [altered] tunings.

Aside from the tunings, would you say you played the Danelectro differently?

Yeah, the feel of it is different. But I found it a very user-friendly guitar and I thought the Danelectros were quite consistent. We were talking about Les Pauls being very different, certainly in those Fifties ones; '58, '59 — they really are. Of course, it's all in how they're built, before they became more scientific about it in the approach. I found them to be relatively consistent, the Danelectros, which is always useful.

You've talked a lot about the Yardbirds. When you think back to when you joined that band, you were stepping into some big shoes there, following Clapton and Beck. Were you intimidated by their reputations?

It wasn't that so much. Well, yes it was. But when I joined the Yardbirds on bass — coming in for Paul Samwell-Smith — that was serious boots to fill, because I was pretty much in awe of his bass playing. I didn't know anybody else who could play like that. You'd hear these really fast pulsing bass riffs and go, what the hell was that? The energy of those records with Eric, like *Five Live Yardbirds*, you want to check out what Paul Samwell-Smith was doing. And all of a sudden I was trying to emulate it. [*Laughs*]

And when did you switch to guitar?

Well, I didn't actually play with Eric in the Yardbirds. The only time I did that was on the ARMS tour at the Albert Hall in the Eighties, with Jeff and Eric. But Jeff and I were playing in the Yardbirds together. When Chris Dreja was taking over the bass, Jeff and I were doing twin leads and harmonies and all of that. It was pretty interesting, and we had some great stuff going.

"Happenings Ten Years Times Ago" is probably one of the best things to hear of that, or "Beck's Bolero." And when Jeff left, bit by bit I got more used to doing it all, and I knew the numbers, so I sort of just took over all of the guitar parts.

Before joining the Yardbirds, you worked as a producer for other artists. Did you ever consider doing that again?
During the Seventies, I started to get offers coming in, but whatever I had, whether it was the writing or the playing, or the production, I wanted to keep that in Led Zeppelin. And that's what it was. So the only deviation from that was my playing with Roy Harper on *Stormcock* [Harper's 1971 album]. He and I were playing the two acoustics, and that was really cool. I really admired Roy's work and still do. He's absolutely amazing. I saw him the last time he played at the Palladium in London and it was absolutely extraordinary. It was spine-chilling — the stuff he was coming up with, the new material he'd written. But that was the only area really where I stepped out of Led Zeppelin, because if I wasn't on the road I was writing for the next album. I was living it and I didn't want to not live it. I didn't want to deviate from it or be producing someone else's album or anything like that. No, any ideas that I had, writing or whatever it was, they would all go to Led Zeppelin.

There is another exception — the song "Scarlet" that you recorded with the Rolling Stones in the early Seventies, and which was released in 2020 on the reissue of *Goats Head Soup*.
Yeah, which was a bit of a surprise for you all, wasn't it?

It was. What do you remember about recording that track?
Ronnie Wood had a house called the Wick in Richmond. Pete Townshend lives there now. But it had a studio in the basement when Ronnie was there, a proper full studio, with a playing room and control room where you're looking through the window into the playing area. I was asked over there by Ronnie, who said there was going to be a session with Keith [Richards]. So Keith ran through this song with Ric Grech on bass and a guy called Bruce Rowland on drums, who I'd never come across before, but the bass parts and the drumming on that song are just terrific. Keith routined the song to me, and I just came up with a guitar part as I would if I was playing with my own band. Keith was playing the main riff and I was coming up with things to complement it. I was playing around what he was doing. So that was done in one evening, and then they were going to carry on with it the following day at Island Studio, Island number 2, and I said, "Well, I'll come along and put the solos on it." I got there quite early on in the evening, had a couple of passes at the solo, and that was it. Mick [Jagger] was doing his stuff the day after that, so I left after I did my bit. It was fun, but I never thought it would come out. I was knocked out that they put it out, because even though it was done back in the Seventies, everyone's going full steam on it. Keith's playing great, he always did, and I'm happy with the guitar playing on it. I thought that was cool, so it's nice to have that rather than a Led Zeppelin thing, you know? It's unusual to hear me playing at full acceleration, if you like, outside of Led Zeppelin.

Are you working on any new music at the moment?
Under the circumstances of having a lockdown and isolating, I made a point of playing the guitar every day. Whereas before the lockdown, it had gotten to the point where I was always complaining that I didn't have enough time to play the guitar because there was all this other stuff that was going on. It's surprising how many things there are, even with Led Zeppelin, so I was not finding enough time to play the guitar as much as I would like. It was there, but not being played. I thought, that's not going to be the case. I'm now going to play it. I don't want to make it sound like I'd locked the guitars away. That wasn't the case. But there were so many things that kept getting in the way of playing — or playing the way that you need to if you're exploring the instrument still.

People would love to hear more music from you, and they'd love to think that there's something on the way.
Yeah. You mean actually being seen to play?

Yes.
That was the idea before we locked down. But — but — there'll be a time when we'll be able to play, so the thing to do is to think how you'd do it if you did do it, and have some surprises up your sleeve, you know?

I think I'm speaking for the whole guitar world in saying we'd love to hear more from you!
I did think about it. But I thought, I'd better do some serious practicing first, [*Laughs*] because it's been a long time since the O2. I hope we'll meet up one day, when I'm doing this mythical show one day!

In the meantime, we have this new book. For Zeppelin fans, and for guitar players especially, it's a revelation.
I'm pleased you've enjoyed the book, being a guitar nerd like myself. It's a fascinating read, isn't it? Some of those photographs I set up myself, like the doublenecks where they're standing to attention. The guys I worked with on this, they've done a number of books for Fender, guitar books, and for one of the shots I stood the Les Paul on its side. I said, "Have you ever done a shot like this?" And they said no. I said, "You've got to be kidding? All the guitar shots you've done? Well, you better fasten your seat belts, then — because you're going to have a lot of unusual shots in this one."

This was clearly a labor of love for you.
Yeah, we had a great time doing this. And you'll know that if you're a guitarist, you're looking at all the details, looking down the neck and up here and down there and over the back. And I wanted to have that — what you actually see. It's all about the guitarist's perspective. GW

"I'D BETTER DO SOME SERIOUS PRACTICING FIRST, [*LAUGHS*] BECAUSE IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE THE O2. I HOPE WE'LL MEET UP ONE DAY, WHEN I'M DOING THIS MYTHICAL SHOW ONE DAY!"

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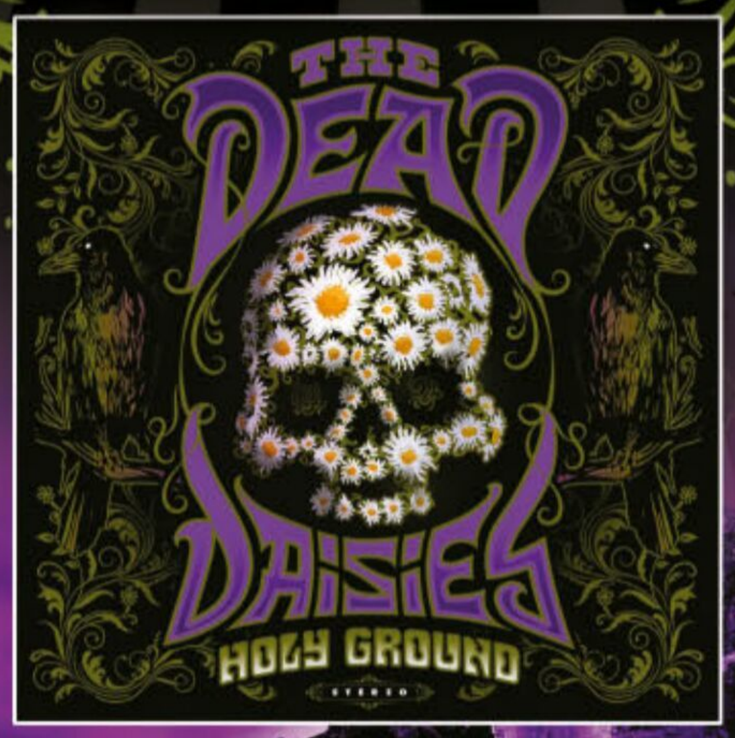

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BLACK BEAUTY RIDES AGAIN

ONE FATEFUL DAY IN 1970,

JIMMY PAGE

HAD HIS 1960 LES PAUL CUSTOM BLACK BEAUTY STOLEN FROM HIM AT A MINNEAPOLIS AIRPORT. IT TOOK NEARLY 50 YEARS, BUT THE GUITAR FINALLY MADE ITS WAY BACK TO ITS LEGENDARY AND RIGHTFUL OWNER. HERE'S THE INCREDIBLE STORY.

WRITTEN BY

BRAD TOLINSKI

PHOTOGRAPHED BY

WILLIE'S AMERICAN GUITARS

Jimmy Page's 1960 Gibson Les Paul Custom, aka "Black Beauty," photographed at Willie's American Guitars in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 2015

GRETSCH
GUITARS
Gibson
SUPRO
SUPRO
Plugged Hole

IN APRIL OF 1970, FRESH OFF THE triumph of their first two albums, Led Zeppelin were touring North America for an astounding fifth time in two years. The quartet was determined to become the biggest band in the world, and there was every indication that they were well on their way. Their live shows had become the stuff of legend, breaking attendance records, and on this particular one-month jaunt, they would gross a total of more than $1,200,000 — roughly $8 million in today's money.

But their experience on tour was not without its glitches. And a major one was the U.S. South and its still ultra-conservative mores.

"It was my dream to play Memphis," Jimmy Page told *Guitar World* back in 2008. "I grew up loving the music that came out of [there] and Nashville. But it turned out to be really depressing. We arrived in Memphis and were given the keys to the city [because] the mayor was astonished at how quickly 'this Led Zeppelin fellow' had sold out the local arena. It occurred to him, whoever this 'guy' was, he must be important.

"We got the keys in the afternoon, but I guess they didn't like the looks of us. Shortly after, we were threatened and had to get the hell out of town as soon as we were done with the show. I was really mad because there were all these places I wanted to go — Sun Studios, where Elvis Presley had recorded, and so on. They didn't like the long hair at all, man. It was seriously redneck back then."

"Then we played Nashville the following night. We were in the dressing room, getting ready to go out and do an encore, and this guy walked in and he said to us — 'If you guys go back out there, I'm gonna bust your heads.' And he wasn't kidding. We were part of a subculture [they] didn't want the kids to know about — hippies with long hair."

But Page and the band's unnerving adventures in the South were a mere bump in the road compared to what happened a couple of weeks later, far to the north. Toward the end of the group's month-long American trek, they traveled from Minneapolis to Montreal, Canada. Crossing the border was often a hassle for rock and roll groups, as Canadian customs officials often spent extra time going through their equipment, searching for contraband.

To avoid the bother, Led Zeppelin often chose venues close to the border so their Canadian fans could see them in the States. But this time they decided to bite the bullet and fly to Montreal. Everything went surprisingly well until Page noticed that something was missing: his prized black 1960 Gibson Les Paul Custom — a deeply personal favorite he had used since his early days as a top British session musician.

"We went over the border, but my 'Black Beauty' didn't turn up at the other end," Page recalls in his new book, *Jimmy Page: The Anthology*. "There were so many points in the journey where it could've gone missing — at the original airport, at customs, at the airport in Canada — but all I knew was that it wasn't there, and in those days, nobody could trace it. We played the concert in Montreal and there was still no news on the guitar. It had evaporated."

After he was certain it had been stolen, Page did the only thing he could think of, which was to take out a "missing guitar" advertisement in *Rolling Stone* that ran in every issue for the next year. Unfortunately, the only response he received was silence, and thus began one of music history's biggest mystery stories — a perplexing whodunnit that most thought would never be solved.

IN THE BEGINNING

TO APPRECIATE THE guitar's significance to Page, we have to travel back to England in the late Fifties. During that time, Page played in several exciting London rock and blues bands, like Red E. Lewis and the Redcaps and Neil Christian and the Crusaders, while experimenting with different guitars and sounds.

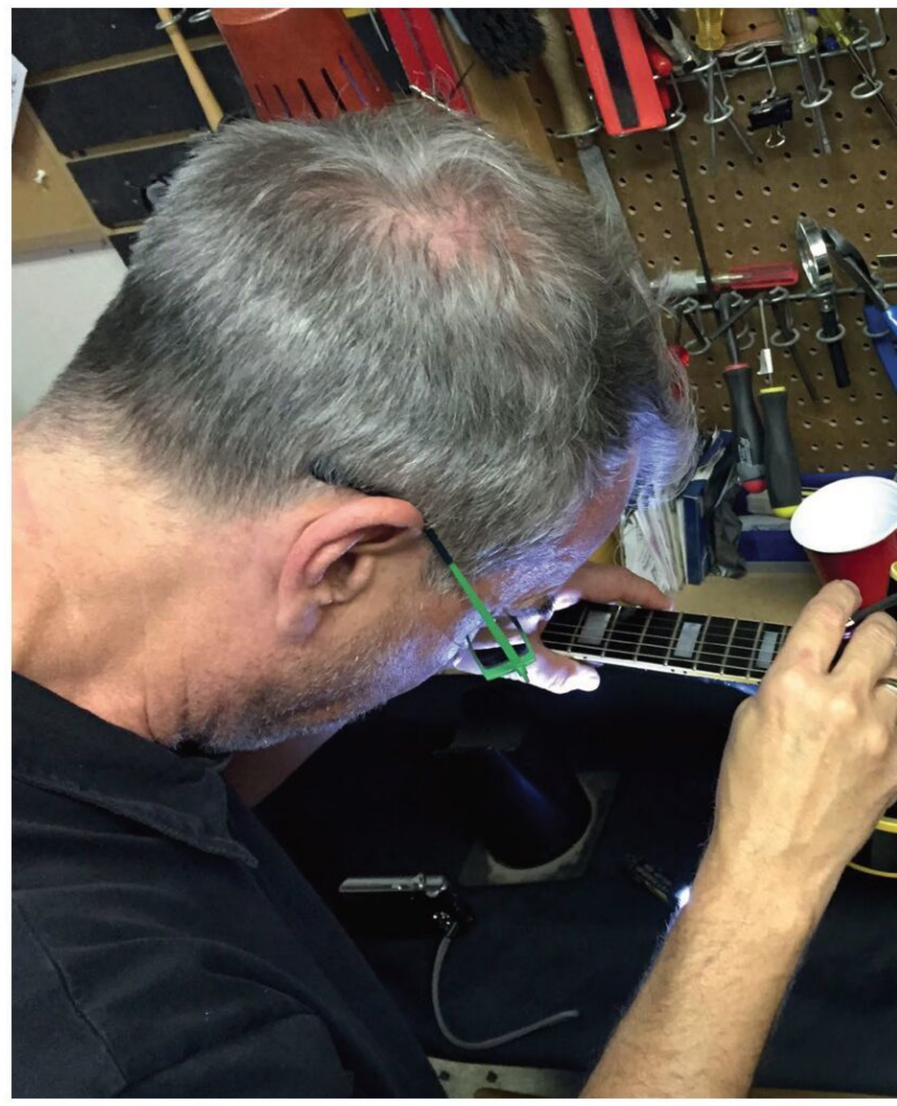
After cutting his teeth on two serviceable instruments, a 1958 Hofner President and a Czechoslovakian-made 1959 Grazioso Futurama, Page moved on to a pro-level sunburst Fender Stratocaster. The Strat was a fine guitar, but the young Page wasn't quite ready to settle down with one instrument.

Enamored with the fingerpicking style of country superstar Chet Atkins and rockabilly guitarist Cliff Gallup's use of the Bigsby tremolo, Page acquired a 1960 Gretsch Chet Atkins 6120 model featuring a beautiful and highly figured, flamed maple top and a Bigsby.

"I was keen to be able to play [like Atkins]," Page said. "And Paul Bigsby was an extraordinary innovator, and there's a totally different mechanism on his tremolo

[*facing page, from left*] Paul Claesgens (better known as "Bleem") and Nate Westgor with Black Beauty [*foreground*] at Willie's American Guitars in St. Paul, Minnesota; [*above*] this detail shot clearly shows evidence of Jimmy Page's toggle-switch modifications; Page's three toggle switches can be seen in the photo on page 42

FACING PAGE: WILLIE'S AMERICAN GUITARS ABOVE: DAVID HEINSCH



arm compared to the one on a Stratocaster. The combination... was enough for me to go up to London, play [a Gretsch 6120] in the shop and trade in the Fender Stratocaster." It seemed like Page had found his ideal guitar, but several months later he was walking down Charing Cross Road in London and decided to stop by Lew Davis, a small music shop that doubled as an informal gathering spot for local musicians. There he saw something that literally stopped him in his tracks, made his palms sweat and his heart beat a little faster.

"There was this guitar hanging on the wall looking so bloody sexy," Page said of the new (1960) tuxedo-black, three-pickup Les Paul Custom with flashy gold hardware and a Bigsby tremolo. "It was saying, 'Come on then. Come on, stop looking and ask them if you can play me.' I played it unplugged for quite a while. Then when I plugged it in it was like a dream, and I knew this was it. It sounded extraordinary. I knew it was coming home with me."

Page wasn't sure how he was going to pay for the deluxe instrument, but something came up that eliminated those money worries enough so that he could have his dream guitar. While playing at the Marquee, a small club in the heart of the music industry in London's West End, he was headhunted to work as a session guitarist for the Columbia Graphophone Company and Decca Records.

His first session for Decca was the recording "Diamonds," by Jet Harris and Tony Meehan, which went to Number One on the U.K. singles chart in early 1963, and soon Page became one the most in-demand studio guitarists in England.

Legendary producer Shel Talmy was particularly impressed by Page's command of rock and blues, and he asked him to play on the Kinks' 1964 debut album and the Who's landmark first single, "I Can't Explain." But that was just the tip of the iceberg. Jimmy and his Les Paul Custom can be heard on literally hundreds of tracks from that era, including Shirley Bassey's dramatic "Goldfinger" and Them's intense garage rock version of the blues classic, "Baby, Please Don't Go." So busy was he that it's estimated that his guitar can be heard on 60 percent of the tracks recorded in Britain in the early Sixties.

With its three humbucking pickups, the black Les Paul afforded Page wide tonal flexibility, making the instrument perfect for just about anything he was called on to play. It was with this guitar that Page built his reputation and became one of the most respected players in England. One can only imagine the professional and emotional value he placed on the instrument.

Perhaps one indication of the guitar's significance to him is that when he eventually moved on to playing in the Yardbirds and Led Zeppelin, he almost never took it on the road with him, unwilling to take any risks with the instrument. In fact, the fateful 1970 North American tour was the first time he dared travel with it for an extensive period of time.

"I was using my sunburst Les Paul Standard I bought from Joe Walsh in 1969," Page told *Guitar World*, but I sort of plucked up the courage to take the Custom guitar on tour with us, because when we did the Royal Albert Hall show [captured in its entirety on 2003's *Led Zeppelin* DVD], I'd used it to play those Eddie Cochran numbers and it was a real good backup guitar to have. It really sounded terrific. It was a leap of faith to take the guitar on the road... and look what happened."

THE HEIST

WHAT DID HAPPEN? That was the million-dollar question. For the next 20 years Page and his associates searched in vain for any sign of the instrument, with no luck. Then, one day in the early Nineties, there was an indication that the real guitar may have finally surfaced.

Nate Westgor, the owner of Willie's American Guitars, a well-regarded St. Paul, Minnesota, vintage guitar shop, had a curious encounter. "A guy I had never seen before walked in the store with a 1960 Les Paul Custom and said, 'I have Jimmy Page's stolen guitar,'" remembers Westgor. "To be honest, I didn't believe him. There was

[*above*] Nate Westgor examines the guitar with a black light in August 2015, the night they ID'd Black Beauty; "The mahogany on the back had actually sunk a bit," says Westgor, recalling a moment that still gives him chills

LEFT/RIGHT: WILLIE'S AMERICAN GUITARS CENTER: DAVID HEINSCH

ACCORDING TO THE CUSTOMER, WHOSE NAME HAS BEEN LOST OVER TIME, HE OBTAINED THE LES PAUL FROM THE WIDOW OF AN AIRPORT EMPLOYEE WHO'D STOLEN IT IN 1970 WHEN ZEP CAME THROUGH TOWN, AND THEN KEPT IT UNDER HIS BED UNTIL HE DIED

no internet back then, so there was no easy way to check out his claim. And all those ads Jimmy ran in *Rolling Stone* years ago weren't readily available, so we didn't have the serial number or frame of reference. I was skeptical, but it was a nice guitar, so I offered to consign it while I promised to dig around. When I asked him how he got the guitar, his story was just weird enough to make me think there might be something to it."

According to the customer, whose name has been lost over time, he obtained the Les Paul from the widow of a Minneapolis airport employee who'd stolen the guitar in 1970 when Zeppelin came through town, and then kept it under his bed until he died.

"He bought the guitar for $5,000 from the woman, and he just wanted his money back and to get [it] back to Jimmy," Westgor says.

The store owner's first call was to one of Page's confidants, producer and guitar collector Perry Margouleff.

Margouleff was on the East Coast at the time and asked Peter Alenov, a respected St. Paul-based guitar dealer who sold instruments to the likes of Keith Richards and Eric Clapton, if he would check out the guitar on his behalf. This is where the story should have ended happily for Jimmy. But it didn't, as his beloved guitar again went missing — for another two decades.

THE TOGGLE SWITCHEROO

FEW PHOTOS OF Page with his Les Paul Custom existed, so only a handful of people knew that it had been modified. A typical three-pickup Custom comes with a single three-way toggle switch that allows players to activate their pickups in this fashion — neck pickup only; neck and middle pickup; bridge pickup only. Jimmy, however, added two additional toggle switches so he could activate any combination of pickups, change their phase relation or turn them off completely .

When Perry asked Alenov to inspect the instrument, he didn't tell him about the extra switches. "Pete really knew his stuff and I trusted him implicitly," Margouleff told *Guitar World*, "but I didn't describe the instrument in any detail. I didn't want to color his observations."

"He called me up and he said, 'I'm looking at this guitar. It's a black 1960 Les Paul Custom... it's totally stock. It's got a Bigsby, foil cap knobs...' and so on...

"I said, 'Thanks a lot. You can go home now, we're done.' I didn't need to hear anything else because I knew the guitar was supposed to have three toggle switches on it. If the guitar had been refinished in the Seventies or something, that repair work would have had time to sink in, and Pete was a very sharp guitar guy, he would have spotted it. He would have said, 'Hey, I see some evidence of some repair work on this guitar.' He certainly would've noticed the extra toggle switches, but he didn't say anything like that.

"After he inspected the guitar I spoke with Nate, the store owner, and said, 'That's not the guitar, but thank you for checking, I'll see you later.' So, he sold it to a kid who was working in his music store for $5,000."

FALSE ALARM?

IT TURNED OUT, however, that Margouleff and Alenov were mistaken. As Margouleff would learn 20 years later, the guitar was indeed the real deal, but it had been spectacularly refinished to mask the fact that it had been stolen. All traces of the three switches had been expertly obliterated, fooling even a top expert like Alenov.

The "kid" that ended up with the guitar was a young punk rocker named Paul "Bleem" Claesgens. He fell in love with the Custom, just as Page did years before. "I looked at the guitar every day when I walked in," says Claesgens, who plays in the Minneapolis band Brass Elephant. "I'd pull it off the wall, play it and go, 'My God, why don't I own this?' It was a great guitar — and it was in a store loaded with great guitars. I was just pining for it. One day a credit card came in the mail, and I said, 'Hey boss, guess what? I'm buying this guitar.' And he said, 'Oh yeah, go for it, man.' I actually ended up owning it longer than Jimmy did!

"I recorded tunes with it. I dragged it all over the Midwest in various bands and even used it to defend myself from flying beer bottles! It's kind of amazing that Jimmy Page's lost guitar sat on stages around Minneapolis and nobody knew."

At some point, Claesgens replaced the guitar's distinctive Bigsby tremolo with a stop tailpiece, which obscured the instrument's identity even further. But in 2014, he had a mishap with the guitar that set into motion a series of events that would send the guitar back to its original owner.

One evening, Claesgens was "showing off" when his friends dared him to perform a risky stage move straight from his personal rock and roll glory days.

"I took the guitar and whipped it around my shoulder like a hula hoop so it would come back around, which was something I used to do all the time at shows — a total rock star move," he laughs. "But this time it just flew off, and boom — I looked down and it was broken. The headstock just snapped."

After a quick assessment of the damage, he brought the guitar back to Willie's American Guitars, where much of this story began. That evening, owner Nate Westgor put the broken instrument on his workbench and, remembering the guitar's earlier history, just for the hell of it, decided to re-examine it closely. Thanks to the inter-

"[THE REPLICA] IS THE GUITAR I PLAYED AT THE O2 WHEN WE DID 'FOR YOUR LIFE' ... AND THEN AFTER THE O2, MY GUITAR THAT WAS STOLEN TURNS UP. IT GETS FOUND!"

Page with Gibson's Black Beauty replica — just a few years before the real thing had been found and returned to him

LEFT: ROSS HALFIN RIGHT:WILLIE'S AMERICAN GUITARS

net, Westgor now knew about the additional toggles Page had installed on his guitar in the Sixties. He carefully scanned — with a black light — the area where the switches would've been, and he was stunned by what he saw.

"The mahogany on the back had actually sunk a bit," says Westgor, recalling a moment he admits still gives him chills. "The back holes were bigger, but you could only catch it if you turned the guitar at just the right angle in the light. I looked at it for, like, 20 minutes, but I knew in my heart it probably was really Jimmy's guitar after all. I gave it back to Bleem [Claesgens] and told him what I suspected, and I just figured he'd need some time to digest that. Then I got back in touch with Perry Margouleff, and he said, "How are we going to figure this out?"

BLACK BEAUTY RIDES AGAIN

MARGOULEFF WAS INTRIGUED with Westgor's discovery, but he was still not convinced it was Jimmy's guitar. He called Page directly and said, "Look, they said you can see evidence where the switches were, but I can't guarantee it means anything. It could still be a counterfeit. The only way we could really ensure that the guitar is for real is if we could match up the grain patterns in the mother-of-pearl inlays with a photograph."

But the problem was, every existing photo Margouleff had of the instrument was shot with a flash, so the image of the inlays lacked detail. Then Page had a brilliant idea: He went through his archives and found a 60-second film clip from Led Zeppelin's performance at the Royal Albert Hall in 1970, where the camera man zoomed in on his left hand, making it possible to see the inlay at the 12th fret of Black Beauty with great clarity. Fortunately, the inlay had a readily identifiable dark stripe — and bingo!

"I had a photograph of the guitar that Nate sent me, and the inlay perfectly matched Jimmy's guitar from the film clip," Margouleff says. "I said, 'Well, fuck, that's it.' There's no chance that two guitars would have that same stripe in the mother-of-pearl in the same spot. It would never happen. When I first met Jimmy over 20 years ago, we went out to lunch and he said to me, 'I'd like you to find my Les Paul Custom for me,'" says Perry, shaking his head. "It was almost as if he knew I would find it eventually."

Even though the guitar was a stolen instrument, Margouleff and Page agreed that Claesgens deserved to be compensated. But how much? The $5,000 he paid for it seemed too little. The duo came up with a novel solution. They found another completely clean, vintage 1960 Les Paul Custom with a Bigsby, worth approximately $70,000 in today's market, and made a swap. While Claesgens was sad to see his companion go, he was satisfied with the arrangement.

CELEBRATION DAY

MARGOULEFF CARRIED THE missing guitar by hand to England and finally presented it to Page at his home in London. They sat and had a cup of tea while Perry talked about the entire adventure, and then, after about 20 minutes, Jimmy got up and said, "Okay, I can't bear it anymore. I have to see it." The legend then had a Vox AC-30 that he had owned ever since his early days in the Yardbirds brought to his house, plugged in the guitar and played it for a while with a smile that refused to leave his face. After having another cup of tea, Perry suggested he call Westgor and thank him personally.

"It was 10:30 in the morning, and I was running late for a dentist appointment when the phone rang," Westgor says. "It was Perry Margouleff, who said, 'I'm here with someone who is very happy. Here, let me put him on.' I said, 'Oh, Jimmy I'm thrilled to hear from you.' Suddenly, my voice sounded like I was 15 years old.

"I told Jimmy that Bleem and I were so glad to be able to return the guitar to its rightful owner, and that I was still a little nervous that the guitar might not be his. But he reassured me that when he got his hand around the neck, he knew [it] right away. ... Then he said something I'll never forget: 'It's going to be with me [from now on]. It will not leave my side."

PLAY IT LOUD!

BUT THERE'S ANOTHER mystery surrounding the Black Beauty. If Page recovered the guitar in 2015, why did it take four or five years for him to reveal it? According to Margouleff, the guitar was so important to Jimmy, he simply wanted a special way to reintroduce it to fans and the world. "There'll be a real reason to bring this out into the world," Jimmy told him enigmatically, "and that's when people should know about it."

"I TOLD JIMMY ... I WAS STILL A LITTLE NERVOUS THE GUITAR MIGHT NOT BE HIS. BUT HE REASSURED ME THAT WHEN HE GOT HIS HAND AROUND THE NECK, HE KNEW [IT] RIGHT AWAY. ... THEN HE SAID SOMETHING I'LL NEVER FORGET: 'IT'S GOING TO BE WITH ME [FROM NOW ON]. IT WILL NOT LEAVE MY SIDE."

Page was right. That opportunity came in April 2019, when the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City held an incredible exhibition starring the most legendary instruments in rock and roll history, *Play It Loud*. In addition to guitars owned by Chuck Berry, Keith Richards, Stevie Ray Vaughan and Eddie Van Halen, a large portion of the exhibit was devoted to Page's iconic instruments, amps, effects and stage wear. And smack in the middle, to the astonishment of his fans, was the long-lost Custom.

Like the obelisk on the cover of Led Zeppelin's *Presence*, the guitar seemed to have appeared out of nowhere. Eventually some information about its odyssey began trickling out from Minneapolis, and Page revealed more in *Jimmy Page: The Anthology*. Now, thanks to Page, Margouleff, Westgor and Claesgens, we've finally been able to present the most comprehensive account to date. GW

GW LESSON

JIMMY'S JAMS

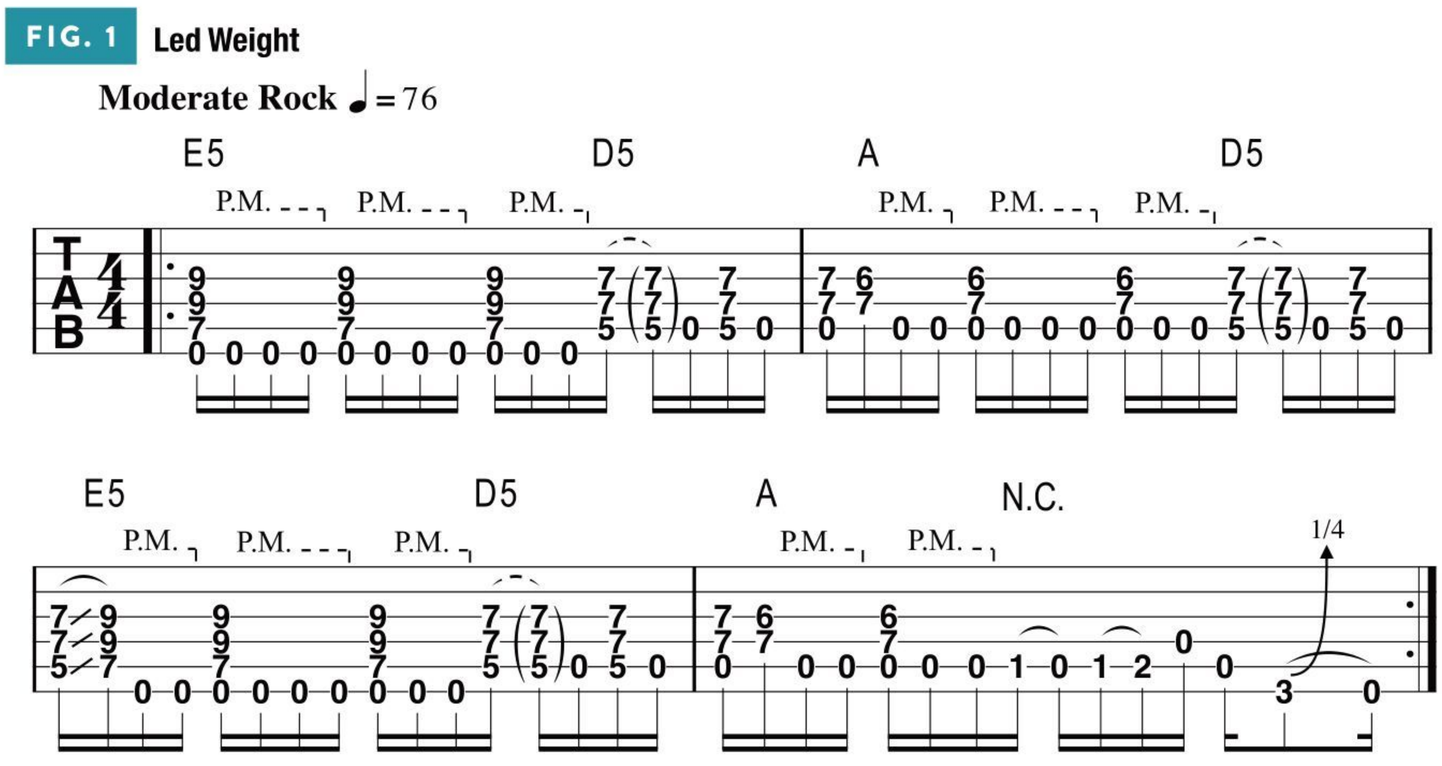
A QUICK LOOK AT JIMMY PAGE'S BLUES-INFLUENCED LEAD STYLE RIGHT AROUND THE TIME OF *LED ZEPPELIN II*

by **RICHARD BARRETT**
photo by **ROSS HALFIN**

BEFORE GOING ON to world domination with Led Zeppelin, Jimmy Page was a go-to session guitarist during the mid Sixties, playing on records by artists as diverse as Marianne Faithfull, Petula Clark and Van Morrison. By the time he joined the Yardbirds alongside Jeff Beck in 1966, he was a well-known face on the music scene, eventually recruiting the future Zeppelin supergroup lineup after the band disintegrated around him.

Page is associated with a variety of guitar tones, particularly when recording, but his best-known live rig is surely the '59 Gibson Les Paul/Marshall 1959 SLP stack combination, which would fuel Zeppelin's fat-sounding, colossally loud stage setup.

FIG. 1 **Led Weight**



FOR AUDIO FOR THIS LESSON, VISIT GUITARWORLD.COM/MARCH2021

Still, don't be discouraged if you don't own either of these — most solid-body humbucker-equipped guitars will suffice for a basic ballpark tone to work with; and, if you own a digital modeling amp, there'll almost certainly be a suitable model.

In this lesson, we'll look at Page's blues-influenced lead style around the time of *Led Zeppelin II*. His influences are diverse, but Otis Rush, Hubert Sumlin, Buddy Guy and B.B. King figure highly when it comes to his lead playing. If you've exhausted Led Zep's back catalog, you'll certainly learn a bit about Page by checking out these players too.

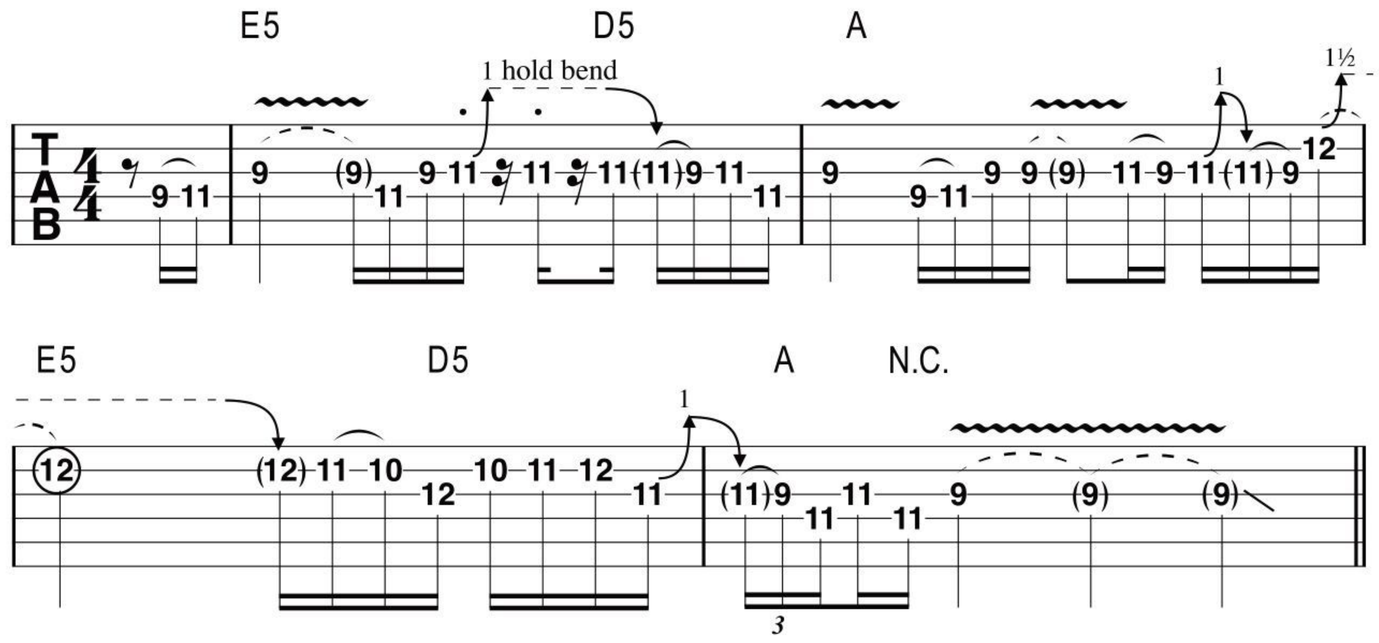
FIGURE 1: LED WEIGHT

IT'S ONLY RIGHT that we should start with a Page-style heavy rock riff, and this chugging, palm-muted example in the key of E may prove tricky to nail at first, as you get used to switching between the muted and ringing strings. To achieve the desired articulations and accents, strum the chords with upstrokes and use consecutive downstrokes for the palm-muted open low E and A notes to create a "pumping" sound. The best way to get to grips with this is to practice slowly at first, gradually increasing the tempo as you build up the required stamina to go the distance. Strive for economy of motion, with the goal of getting the maximum sonic impact with the least amount of movement and energy expended.

FIGURE 2: MAJOR PENTATONIC LICK

SWITCHING TO THE middle pickup selection, this melodic lead example, which is played over the previous rhythm figure in E, demonstrates the kind of cheerful-sounding major pentatonic licks Page is so fond of playing. We start out using notes from the E major pentatonic scale

FIG. 2 Major Pentatonic Lick



IF YOU'VE EXHAUSTED LED ZEP'S BACK CATALOG, YOU'LL LEARN A BIT ABOUT PAGE BY CHECKING OUT OTIS RUSH, HUBERT SUMLIN AND B.B. KING

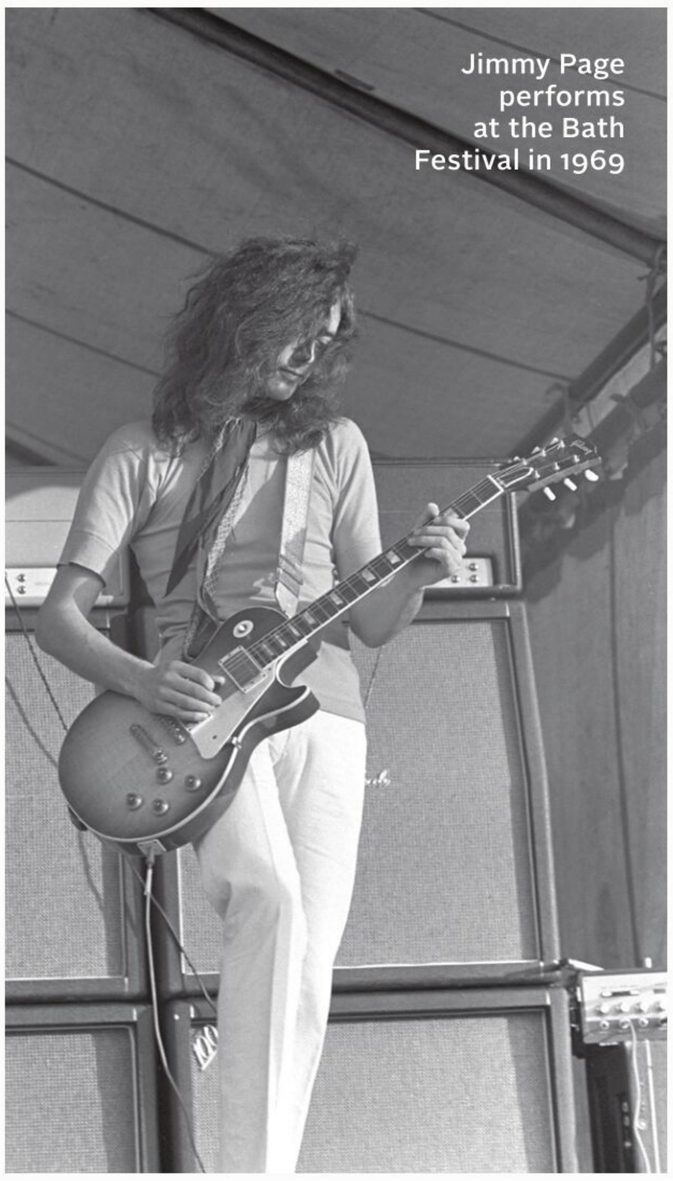
(E, F♯, G♯, B ,C♯), but at the end of bar 2, we step out of its happy confines by playing a wide, bluesy one-and-one-half-step "overbend" from the 5th, B up to the ♭7, D, followed by notes from the parallel E blues scale (E, G, A, B♭, B, D) in bar 3. Pay attention to the phrasing details, such as the rhythmic values, use of rests and staccato (short, clipped) notes, which are indicated by the small black dots appearing over certain tab numbers.

FIGURE 3: COMPLEX RHYTHMS

MORE E MAJOR pentatonic ideas here, this time with a big two-octave run that incorporates the use of position shifts that have you seamlessly moving up and across the fretboard diagonally, from 7th position up to 12th, leading up to a high lick based on the E minor pentatonic scale (E, G, A, B, D). Page loves to mix parallel major and minor pentatonics like this. Another Page soloing trait demonstrated here is the use of the Fifties, Chuck Berry-style rock 'n' roll-style idea at the end, with two-note lead chords. The rhythms throughout this example are fairly complex and syncopated, featuring accents on 16th-note upbeats and some fast triplets. If you find yourself struggling with the rhythms, take it one section at a time and practice each grouping on its own before piecing everything together.

FIGURE 4: MIXING MAJOR AND MINOR PENTATONICS

SWITCHING TO THE bridge pickup, we take a similar approach here, this time using legato finger slides to smoothly work our way up across the fretboard through E major pentatonic in bars 1 and 2. From bar 3 we're including some E minor pentatonic notes (the 15th-fret D and G) with a major pentatonic note (14th-fret C♯), resulting in



Jimmy Page performs at the Bath Festival in 1969

a mixed shade of musical colors, which is a signature sound of Page's style, as well as that of many other blues-rock greats, such as Eric Clapton. Also noteworthy here is the biting two-note dyad at the end of bar 3 going into bar 4, which is bent up slightly for added "sass."

FIGURE 5: REPEATING PHRASES

TO BUILD INTENSITY in his solos, Page will often repeat a short, rapid-fire major or minor pentatonic lick, which some refer to as a "smear lick," and this example demonstrates how the guitarist will often employ this type of phrasing. The opening line in bar 1 is a cool, repeating line based on E major pentatonic that will work great in many blues-rock tunes in E. Notice how, in bar 2, we're taking the same basic "box" shape and shifting it up three frets, from 9th position to 12th, in order to access notes from the parallel E minor pentatonic scale, using the same kind of phrasing approaches, with the ring-finger bends and pull-offs to the index-finger-barred double-stops on the top two strings. Same with the rapid-fire 16th-note triplets in bar 3, which are easier to play than they sound like they would be. Just practice them slowly until you get the feel, then ramp up the speed. GW

FIG. 3 Complex Rhythms

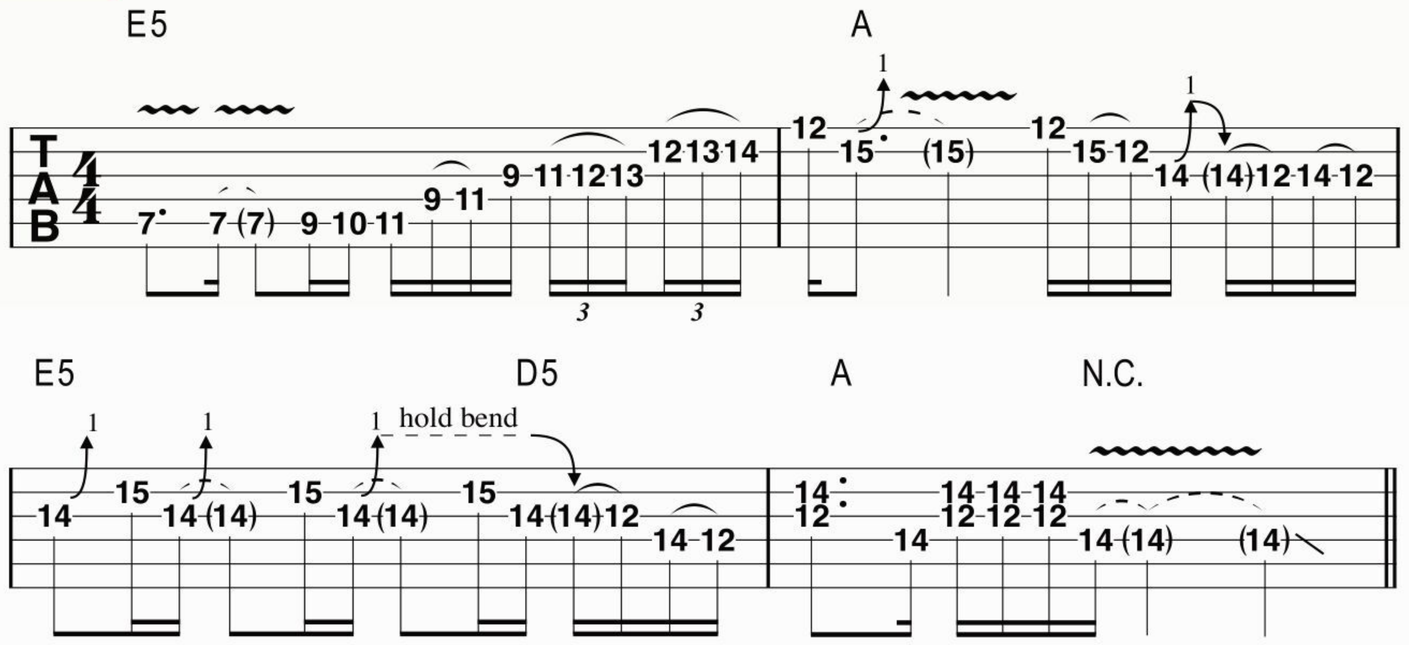
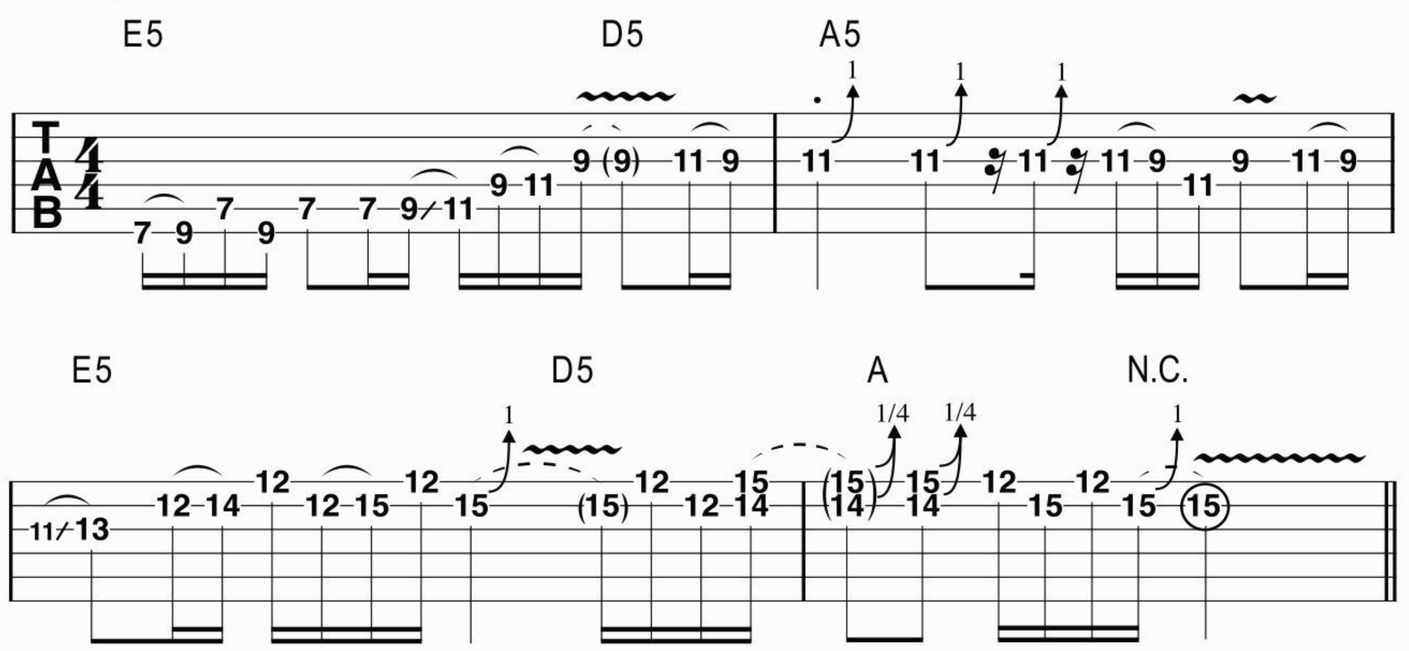
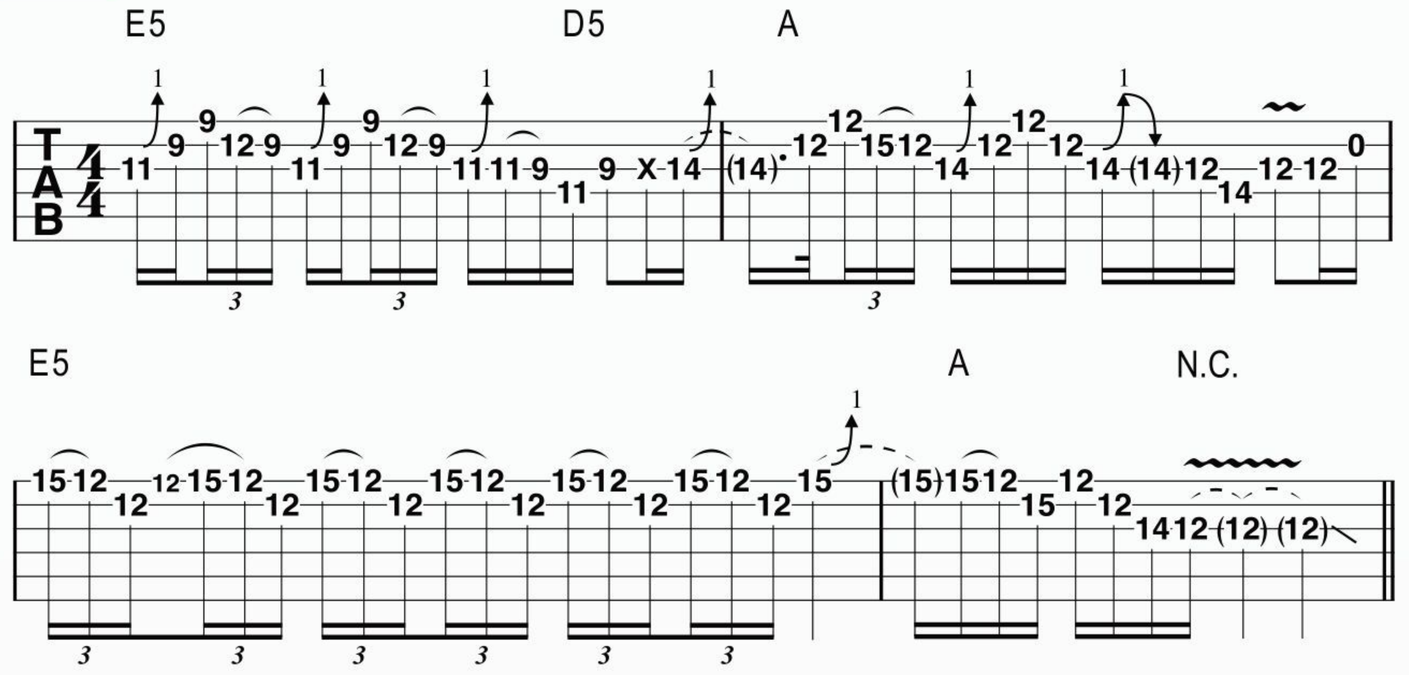


FIG. 4 Mixing Parallel Major and Minor Pentatonics



TO BUILD INTENSITY, PAGE WILL OFTEN REPEAT A SHORT, RAPID-FIRE MAJOR- OR MINOR-PENTATONIC LICK, WHICH SOME REFER TO AS A "SMEAR LICK"

FIG. 5 Repeating Phrases



CHRIS WALTER/WIREIMAGE

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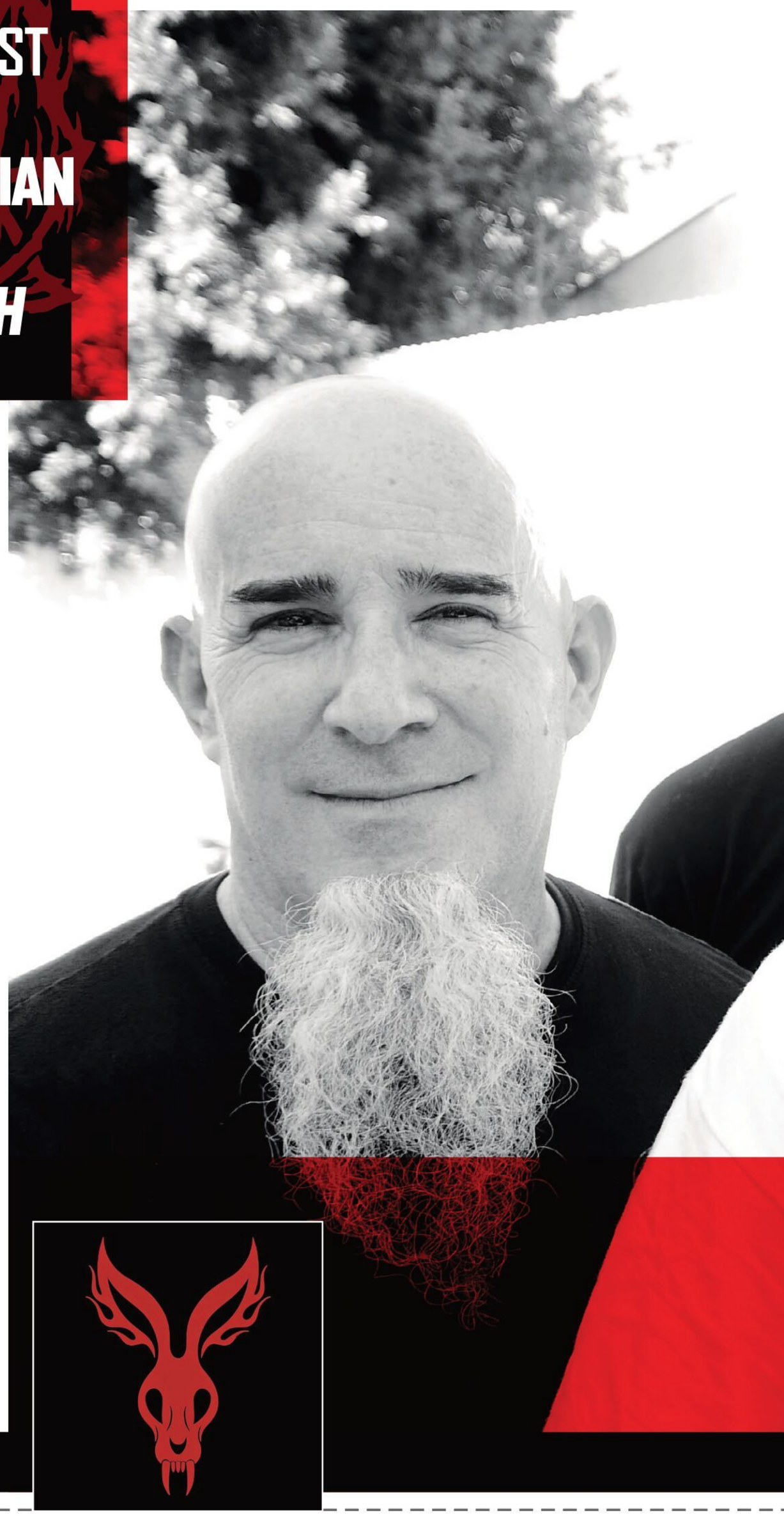
WELCOME

FOUNDING MR. BUNGLE GUITARIST **TREY SPRUANCE** — AND DELIGHTED NEWCOMER **SCOTT IAN** — REMINISCE, RE-EVALUATE & REIGNITE ***THE RAGING WRATH***

BY **GREGORY ADAMS** PHOTO BY **BUZZ OSBORNE**

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE "THANKS" LIST on Mr. Bungle's first demo tape, *The Raging Wrath of the Easter Bunny*, the Humboldt County, California, teenagers offer their fans, herein described as "demented geeks & skankers," an all-caps message outlining their mission statement: "AIM TO CONFUSE!" This was all the way back 1986, and damned if they aren't sticking to their word close to 35 years later.

When the group first announced they were getting back together in 2019, following a nearly 20-year hiatus, a much larger faction of loyalists was likely salivating at what kind of bizarre musical experiments the famously genre-splicing act would be getting up to next. Across three surprisingly major label-released albums, Mr. Bungle cross-pollinated violently shredded death metal with cocktail jazz, ska, doo-wop, exotica, surf, klezmer, funk and every other genre tag under the sun, often within the same number.



[*from left*] Scott Ian, Dave Lombardo, Mike Patton, Trey Spruance and Trevor Dunn

GUITAR WORLD

TO THE BUNGLE

MARCH 2021

More than a few eyebrows must have been raised, then, when it was revealed that founding guitarist Trey Spruance, bassist Trevor Dunn and frontman Mike Patton were getting the band back together to re-record the brutal yet comparatively straight-forward thrash sounds of that first cassette, naming the update *The Raging Wrath of the Easter Bunny Demo*. Add to that, the trio beefed up their current roster with two especially high-profile first-wave thrash figures — former Slayer drummer Dave Lombardo and Anthrax rhythm guitarist Scott Ian. In some ways, it's made for Mr. Bungle's weirdest gambit yet.

While the members of Mr. Bungle have gone on to perform in countless eclectic projects over the past few decades — Patton most famously with alt-metal favorites Faith No More and more recently with hardcore supergroup Dead Cross; Spruance with his avant garde collective, Secret Chiefs 3 — at the heart of it, they're metal lifers. Spruance and Dunn met in a high school music theory class in the mid Eighties. They bonded when Dunn brought in a copy of Anthrax's *Fistful of Metal*, and Spruance ended up soloing over "Panic" for the rest of the class. The pair would merge their two bands — Spruance's power metal-flavored Torcher and Dunn's thrash-geared Fiend with Patton — to become Mr. Bungle.

Few musicians get to reform their teenage band, let alone with the same ferocity Mr. Bungle has brought to their latest *Raging Wrath*. This isn't a mid-life crisis, but rather a vital, vivisecting return that Spruance says gives Bungle's earliest material "a fair shake." For years, the recordings have only been available via the hiss of a 10th-generation cassette ripped onto YouTube. Engineered by Husky Höskulds and self-produced by the band, the new recordings deliver big-studio sheen without sacrificing the savagery. "Anarchy Up Your Anus" has been brought back amongst the living with Anthrax-grade gang vocals and determinedly chugging guitar rhythms. Armed with a recently acquired Schecter Evil Twin, Spruance dive-bombs his way through the three truly trem-bar-abusing lead sections on the frenetic "Raping Your Mind," all the while backed by the punishing, down-picked precision of Ian, the possessor of one of metal's most storied wrists.

"If you were to ask me which two people were most influential on [thrash] music in the first place, as far as guitar playing and drumming goes, it's Dave and Scott," Spruance tells *Guitar World*, noting how bringing the thrash icons into the fold further pushed Bungle's founders toward reclaiming the primordial roots of their *Raging Wrath*. "We wanted to stay true to that spirit, because here they are. Fuck, let's do this right!"

While staying reasonably faithful to the original tape, *The Raging Wrath of the Easter Bunny Demo* does tweak a few things for the modern age. "Hypocrites," for instance, drops its original ska-style back section in favor of a nuclear-charged revamp of Ian's crossover side project S.O.D.'s far right-satirizing "Speak English or Die" — though Bungle add a souped-up bottle-slide solo and rework the lyrics as "Speak Spanish or Die," as a fuck-you to a certain administration's family-separating immigration policies. The new album also adds hardcore slam "Erascist" and "Methematics," tracks written in the Eighties but never properly catalogued, and an era-appropriate blitz through Corrosion of Conformity's "Loss for Words."

Though the pandemic has put touring plans on hold indefinitely, Mr. Bungle did manage to sneak in a few reunion dates on both coasts at the beginning of 2020. But after years of composing and performing nuanced, experimental drones and Arabic music explorations with Secret Chiefs 3, Spruance was sweating at the thought of barreling into an all-thrash setlist.

"I'd never stood there and played a full concert of speed metal," Spruance says, "I mean... maybe the first two or three Mr. Bungle shows when I was 15, yeah, I did that, [but this year's shows] posed a lot of challenges for me as an instrumentalist. Fuck, it was scary as hell! Daunting, you know? But as soon as we started playing, it was like, 'This is way more fun than I usually have'."

Having now spit-shined the demo for a new generation of thrash fans, Spruance and Ian were happy to discuss how, despite arriving 35 years after the fact, *The Raging Wrath of the Easter Bunny* became one of the freshest and fiercest metal albums of 2020.

Though you've all stayed in touch through various projects over the past

STEVE EICHNER/WIREIMAGE

FEW MUSICIANS GET TO REFORM THEIR TEENAGE BAND, LET ALONE WITH THE SAME FEROCITY MR. BUNGLE HAS BROUGHT TO THEIR LATEST **RAGING WRATH!**

Trey Spruance performs with Mr. Bungle at New York City's Marquee Club in April 1992

two decades, this is Mr. Bungle's first album in 21 years. Did the Dead Cross/Secret Chiefs 3 tour in 2017 play a part in getting this reunion off the ground?

TREY SPRUANCE: Sort of. All of us had been working together before that. I think I had Patton singing on a Secret Chiefs thing in 2011, and I'd played with him in Mondo Cane around 2009. That Dead Cross/Secret Chiefs tour was important, though, because Trevor showed up when we played in Brooklyn. That was when he floated this idea, with Patton, myself and Lombardo standing there: Hey, imagine if this group right here went back and did our early thrash metal demo. As far as reunions go, what about going back to the absolute beginning? That music never really got a fair shake. It was just an eye-popping moment. What a perfect idea.

Scott, how did you get involved?

SCOTT IAN: I had texted Mike last summer, congratulating him on this video that I had seen of him and this French composer [Jean-Claude Vannier]. I thought the track was really cool, really dark and interesting. He wrote back and said, "Thanks... Your ears must've been burning because we've been talking about you the last couple of days." I was like, "Who's been talking about me?" He said, "Do you remember *The Raging Wrath of the Easter Bunny* demo?" and told me they'd been talking about doing some shows and making the record. They wanted to do it with me and Dave, and Dave's already in. I was like, "Fucking awesome! I'm in!"

Had you come across the tape back in the mid Eighties, whether through tape trading or word of mouth?

IAN: I'd definitely had a copy of that at some point — if not in '86, certainly by '87. I did trade tapes a lot with people on the West Coast, and with people in Europe. That's how I found out about most metal, because there were no magazines yet. If you'd go to record stores in Greenwich Village in the early Eighties, you'd be lucky if you found a copy of *Kerrang*. But generally it was through tape trading. That's how I found out about Merciful Fate, on a cassette copy of a copy of a copy. It was the same with this tape. Someone I'd known in the Bay Area that I would trade with sent me a fifth- or sixth-generation cassette. I remember hearing it and going, "alright, this is fucking crazy. It sounds nuts." It's kinda hard to make out anything, but I was already into really noisy stuff. I had already done noisy stuff in '84 with this thing called the Crab Society North, which was a precursor to S.O.D. I thought the Mr. Bungle tape was brutal, and I could tell these guys had a really good sense of humor based on what I was hearing — and the name of the band [a reference to a Pee-wee Herman skit]. It was right up my alley. And then, of course, when I found out the new singer of Faith No More was the guy from that fucking crazy tape? And the first Bungle record comes out in '91 and it's like, "holy shit, this is those guys?"

SPRUANCE: He has it backwards from where the fans are coming from now. They're hearing the thrash metal stuff and going, "Wait... this is Mr. Bungle?"

Trey, what can you recall about the earliest days of Bungle? You were all teenagers at the time, and this was the merging of two earlier metal projects, Fiend and Torcher. What was it like getting those first songs together as Mr. Bungle?

SPRUANCE: My playing was speeding up a lot. My previous band [Torcher] was more of a power metal band, kind of like Merciful Fate — arrangement-heavy, but not proggy. It was still very metal. Mike and Trevor were coming out of this speed-core thrash band, a cover band playing Slayer, Anthrax and Metallica songs. I was really inspired by having seen Fiend, seeing the speed picking and all that stuff. I was just starting to get into [Slayer's] *Show No Mercy* and early thrash, but I'd never played it.

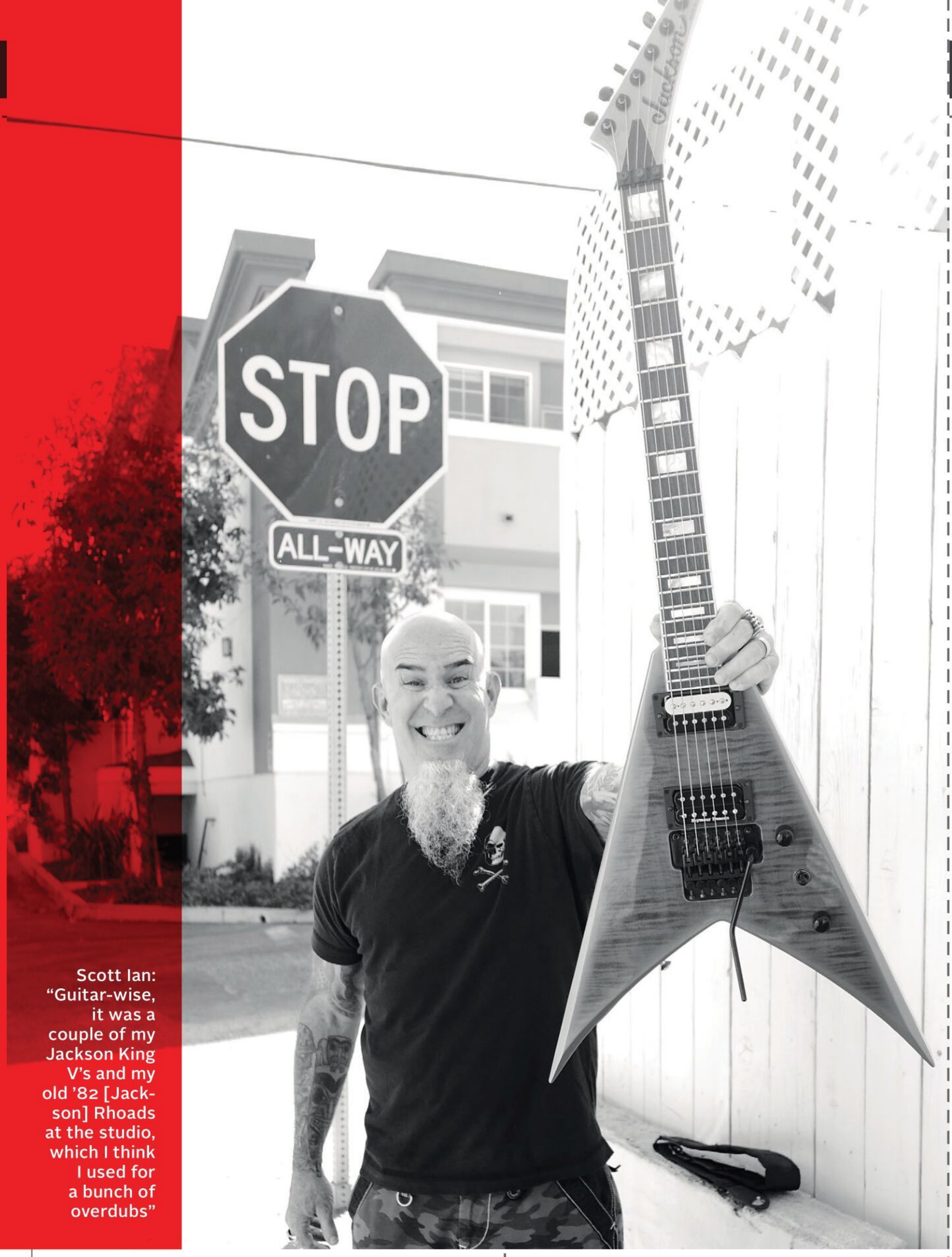
Mike and Trevor had such an intense energy to their friendship. I got caught up in it. "Let's go crazier and crazier, and push [the music] as far as we can possibly go." My juvenile attempt at being a Van Halen-type guitar player got weirder through them. Trevor and I started studying music, and we started incorporating all this atonality into it. We just threw everything into the metal pot and tried to go as fast as we could.

Looking back on the original recordings, what strikes you the most about your playing?

SPRUANCE: As far as the riffs go, I remembered all of them, but I was struck by how coherent the arranging is. You have riffs that are inverting and going through different key signatures and tempos. You have all these key changes. It was very interesting to hear that we were incorporating music composition stuff — which I think I'm going to trace that back to Merciful Fate, at the end of the day. That's what got us interested in the epic nature of evolving song cycles.

On that point of evolving, how did you want to go about reinterpreting these songs some 35 years later?

SPRUANCE: We were really trying to capture the spirit of the originals. To now have Dave and Scott in the band, that's the fantasy band. I was saying this the other day, but if you were to ask me which two people were most influential on that music [thrash] in the first place, as far as guitar



Scott Ian: "Guitar-wise, it was a couple of my Jackson King V's and my old '82 [Jackson] Rhoads at the studio, which I think I used for a bunch of overdubs"

playing and drumming goes, it's Dave and Scott. We wanted to stay true to that spirit, because here they are! Fuck, let's do this right!

Scott, in terms of your role within this lineup, was it easy to just slide into the project?

IAN: They couldn't have made me more comfortable. My initial thing was that I didn't know how the hell I was going to learn it all. When Mike asked me if I wanted to be a part of it, I said, "You know I'll never be able to find that tape." I've got a 20x20 storage unit, and it's buried in there somewhere with a lot of my Eighties stuff. He said, "No worries, just go on YouTube." Then I went on YouTube and was like, "I can't make out a fuckin' thing" [*Laughs*]. At some point, Trey chimed in and said, "Don't worry, I'm going to make demos." That made my life easier. I just wanted to do right by the material, you know? I'm such a Mr. Bungle fan. The fact that I got asked to be a part of Mr. Bungle is insane. I'm now officially a part of the canon. I think it's a win-win for everybody!

Trey, in terms of gear, did you want to recreate the tones accurately or play with a more modern tone?

SPRUANCE: I still have the G&L F100 that I used when I tracked the original demo, but it's not in good playing condition at all. Also, in the ensuing 35 years my emphasis has been less and less on guitar, and more and more on other instruments, as well as on arranging, composition, and production. I've never really been much of a gear nut, but when we were seriously saying we were going to do this, I did have to be like, "Oh my god, I have to have a playable instrument." So I bought a Schecter Evil Twin. I'd worked with a Floyd Rose before, but I never had it set up correctly. As soon as I had this guitar, it was like, "Oh, okay, I'll actually be able to do this stuff." When I tried to play it on the G&L, or any of my other guitars, it was just such a horrible chore. The Schecter is just a lean machine made for doing this shit.

I was confident as far as amp tones go. I've been playing through friends' amps all over the world for decades. I have a friend in L.A. who has a 5150, so that's what I tracked with. But then I also bought this Amptweaker TightMetal pedal just to be safe, because we were also going to be playing in three or four different venues, with different amps. I just wanted to make sure I had a default tone I could go back to. I ended up using that thing on the tour, but I don't think I used it on the record.

How did that Schecter come in handy in terms of the three separate solo sections on "Raping Your Mind"? The second and third sections in particular are full of screaming dives.

SPRUANCE: There are dives all over the demo too, but of course the guitar went out of tune immediately. So, yes, it came in handy because I didn't have to retune the Schecter. Also, with the Sustainiac system — before I was doing chirp harmonics, really working to make these random harmonics happen. With that Sustainaic in the first position, all this magic stuff just happens. You're not sure you have total control over it, though. The blend between having control and having no fucking idea what's going on? I love that about the Schecter.

Scott, what was your setup through all of this? Was it comparable to your Anthrax rig, or were you experimenting with how you wanted to color the record?

IAN: I've been recording with half of the same setup since the Eighties. I still use one of my best-sounding JCM800's from back in the day, with one of those original 4x12 cabinets with the 80-watt Celestions, and a TC Electronic Booster distortion in the front of it. That's been my rhythm rig since *Fistful of Metal*. It's on everything I did in the Eighties, S.O.D. included. Things changed in the Nineties at some point, but then on [2011's] *Worship Music* and [2016's] *For All Kings*, that Marshall rig came back into the picture. I'd combine it, running that half-stack along with an EVH half-stack. That modern bottom end that I get off of the EVH takes the Marshall tone to another place. I don't bring the Marshall out on tour, because I worry

BUZZ OSBORNE

too much that something will happen to those heads. Those get to stay at home. But any time I'm in the studio, it's the Marshall half-stack and the EVH half-stack. And the EVH, on this record it's the newer EL34, the 100-watt head. The combination of the two fuckin' tears my head off. Guitar-wise, it was a couple of my Jackson King V's, and my old '82 Rhoads at the studio, which I think I used for a bunch of overdubs.

There's obviously a lot of love and care put into recreating the spirit of the *Raging Wrath of the Easter Bunny* demo, but there are also some key differences. The track order is different, and some arrangements did get overhauled. Trey, can you get into revamping "Hypocrites," where you pulled out a ska section and a tribute to the Peter Gunn theme, and put in its place a cover of S.O.D.'s "Speak English or Die," albeit as "Speak Spanish or Die"?

SPRUANCE: It was a perfect segue! There's this stupid "La Cucaracha" thing we do, which we had done as ska originally, but we segued it into more as a metal thing into "Speak Spanish or Die." It just seemed like this segue was too golden to [pass up], so we just forgot about the rest of that stupid song. [*Laughs*]

Scott, I'm wondering if you can speak to that decision to flip the song to "Speak Spanish or Die." Over the years, the S.O.D. song, while tongue-in-cheek, has been seen by some as polarizing, or at least misunderstood.

IAN: I didn't ever see it as being a polarizing tune. If you thought it was polarizing, you're wrong. That's always been my attitude. Yeah, it was written as a joke back when we wrote it, and anyone who took it in a different way, that's their problem. They either don't know us, or they're racist. Anyone who took it serious and thought that was our actual message obviously has their own racist issues to deal with. I believe it was Mike that came back with the idea for "Speak Spanish or Die." I thought it was great, because all of us in this band have our issues with this administration's immigration policies. I thought it would be a really great way to poke a stick at the monster by saying "Speak Spanish or Die."

This is an expanded version of the original tape, which also adds a Corrosion of Conformity cover and a few originals that had been written around the same time. Since "Eracist," "Glutton for Punishment" and "Methematics" hadn't made the original tape, were there existing reference recordings to work off of?

SPRUANCE: We had tapes. Throughout the history of Mr. Bungle, we've had what we call a "graveyard of riffs." There are volumes and volumes in the graveyard, which are usually on cassette. "Methematics" was called "Mathematics" in the beginning, but it didn't have lyrics. "Glutton for Punishment" wasn't really finished by the time we were recording the demo. And the demo was long enough! Patton had written the riffs that became "Eracist." I don't think there's any trace of those anywhere, but I totally remembered how to play them. They're etched into my brain, for some reason. I regretted that we had never used them. [More recently] I recorded those riffs, added drums, and gave it back to Patton. "You remember this shit?" He was like, "Yeah... not really, but fuck, that's cool!"

"Eracist" is a unique to the record, with its chunkier, New York Hardcore groove.

SPRUANCE: That's all about the Cro-Mags and Agnostic Front — pure Cro-Mags riffing. It's slightly different than what we were going with at the time.

There's some particularly ripping scalework throughout your "Glutton for Punishment" solo, but it also has this uniquely twisted section of stilted hammer-ons and minor-key voicings. Was this faithful to how you'd envisioned it in the Eighties, or could this be somewhat informed by the eastern scale explorations of Secret Chiefs 3?

SPRUANCE: Yeah, we never got the song down enough to think about solos back in the day, so I had no mid-Eighties teenage psychology to work with. Most of the riffs behind those solos scream "Phrygian," and yeah, I've got about 600 variants of that sound in my soul from Secret Chiefs 3. Most of those are closer to the way the rest of the world outside Euro-America hears what we call Phrygian, which is more like a morph between what we call Phrygian and Dorian, with the second and sixth degrees being mediated microtonally between major and minor intervals. This opens up all kinds of nuances in phrasing that we just don't do in western music. But there are parts of the world, like Azerbaijan and Georgia, where you have some western-intoned instruments — like accordions, garmons and bayans — sitting alongside instruments that are doing the traditional Dastgāh and maqam tonalities. In these cases, on the notes in question, the musicians often make a trill that somewhat blurs the western equal-intonation notes, which are out of tune in this context, in order to smooth out the dissonance. The coolest thing is that these evasions themselves have their own character, their own aesthetic nuances, and that has helped some musical traditions come to accept and incorporate the clash, or overlap, thanks to some creative solutions and suavity on the parts of musicians.

Anyways, on "Glutton for Punishment," here I was with Phrygian-sounding changes and a Western-intoned instrument in my hands. It had been a long time since that had happened to me! So I just did what seemed natural for the tune. I guess that means I approached the limitations of my instrument much the way an Azeri garmon player would do it. They're not just trills, but are more like what we have come to call ornamentation in Renaissance music — just little turnarounds that help you mark your phrases with some degree of clarity.

How gradual was Mr. Bungle's shift away from metal? Your next demo, *Bowl of Chiley*, moved deeper into ska.

SPRUANCE: It's right there on the tape [*The Raging Wrath of the Easter Bunny*]. There were already elements of ska and funk in the song that we didn't re-record ["Evil Satan"]. Here's the thing: Trevor and I were music nerds, even then. We met in a music theory class at our high school. The spirit of Mr. Bungle was always about expanding our horizons. We enjoyed the idea of establishing ourselves in this metal scene and then turning the corner sharply. I'm going to point to Fishbone coming to our town as helping us with that. No band really came to our area in Northern California. The fact that they showed up, seemingly from another dimension, propelled us. It kicked us in the ass.

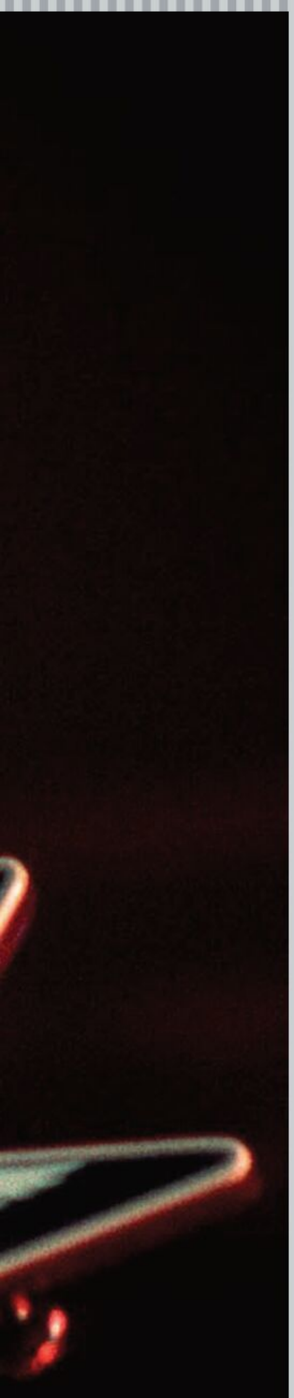
Having worked on the band's oldest material through the last year, is there temptation to create new Bungle music with this current lineup?

SPRUANCE: I feel like this lineup can do anything. If you look at where the band stopped and went into a hiatus [following 1999's *California* LP], it's such a completely different process as far as putting on a live show and instrumentation goes. But when it comes to the writing? That's not that different. So who the hells knows? I've heard people say we're not going to do anything, but I don't know, man. When there's a war to fight, you pick up your weapons and go. There might be a war that we have to fight with this thing. We'll see. GW

Kansas guitarist Richard Williams (with his Dean Cadillac) performs in Chicago in October 1980

KANSAS

CARRY ON!



PAUL NATKIN/GETTY IMAGES

CO-FOUNDING GUITARIST RICHARD WILLIAMS TALKS KANSAS: THE HIGHLIGHTS, THE HITS, THE CLASSIC GUITAR SOLOS AND THE NEW ALBUM, *THE ABSENCE OF PRESENCE*

BY JOE BOSSO, PHOTO BY PAUL NATKIN

MENTION THE BAND KANSAS TO THE average listener, and he or she will instantly name two classic rock staples: "Carry On Wayward Son" and "Dust in the Wind." "Oh, sure, those are the big ones," says guitarist Richard Williams, who co-founded the progressive rock outfit back in 1970. "I could let it get to me and go, 'Hey, we've got a whole body of work,' but that would be a waste of time. Those are the songs that brought us to the table. Without 'Wayward Son' and "Dust in the Wind,' we wouldn't be around today."

Williams recalls how in 1976, with the band deep in debt to their record label and facing an uncertain future after their first three albums (*Kansas*, *Song for America* and *Masque*) stiffed, they approached the recording of their fourth album, *Leftoverture*, with a sense of impending doom. "It was a pretty dark time. We were bleeding money pretty seriously," he says. "We were signed to Kirshner Records, and our benefactor, Don Kirshner, could have easily said, 'Guys, it's been fun, but you need to find another record company.' We needed a hit, and thank goodness we came up with 'Carry

On Wayward Son.' It saved us so we could go on. And then we had 'Dust in the Wind.' Those songs exploded and our worlds changed forever."

Kansas were in a unique position in the mid Seventies. Not only did they represent the last trace of progressive rock on AM playlists that were suddenly ruled by disco, but they were also one of the very few purveyors of American prog, period. "Not to sound pompous, but we pretty much gave birth to American prog bands," Williams says. "What's amazing is, we did it pretty sneakily. We were playing bars in Topeka, doing all the hits of the day — Motown, the British Invasion, all that — but we really wanted to do our own material. So we'd slip in one of our own tunes and tell the crowd that we were playing the B-side of 'Smoke on the Water.' We'd stretch songs out and go crazy, and the people loved it. It became our thing."

Of the seven current members of Kansas, only Williams and drummer Phil Ehart remain from the original crew. Singer Steve Walsh, who ended his on-and-off association with the band in 2014, has been replaced by two co-lead vocalists, Billy Greer and Ronnie Platt, who double on bass and keyboards, respectively. Williams' longtime guitar foil Kerry Livgren, who also served as Kansas' chief songwriter, split in 2000, and in his place is New Jersey picker Zak Rizvi. "It feels like a different band sometimes because we've got a bunch of newer faces," Williams says, "but at the same time, it feels like the original band because we've got seven guys who really love to perform and create. Back in the day, we let money and business get in the way. This bunch of guys just wants to make music."

The band has a new album out, 2020's *The Absence of Presence*, and all told, it sounds like quintessential Kansas: there's muscular, epic prog rockers like "Throwing Mountains" and the eight-minute-plus title track, symphonic power ballads such as "Jets Overhead" and "Memories Down the Line," and there's even a "how-over-the-top-can-we-go?" instrumental in the form of "Propulsion 1."

"We're kind of always in a state of having to prove ourselves," Williams says. "We had to do it on our last album, [2016's] *The Prelude Implicit*, because it was our first new music in 16 years, and I think this time we had to prove that we still mean it." He lets out a laugh, then adds, "I imagine on the next one, we'll have to do the same thing. That's OK — I'm used to it."

Before the band got started, who were the guitar players that you were really listening to and emulating?

I was copying anybody who was there. The Yardbirds were pretty big to me. My introduction to blues wasn't through the Americans; I dug the British guys. John Mayall and the Bluesbreakers, Eric Clapton — Clapton's first solo album was like Guitar 101 to me. Instead of this twangy rhythmic instrument, suddenly here's this ballsy guitar with a guttural saxophone lead voice. Suddenly, I was hearing blues in a different way. Of course, I also loved Jimmy Page and Jeff Beck — those guys made a big impression on me. That stuff really formed the basis of my sound and style.

Growing up in Topeka, was it easy for you to get good guitars living where you were?

Oh, yeah. I had Marshall amps and Les Pauls. I had a Gibson ES-335, which I still have to this day. Everything that you could buy in Los Angeles you could buy in Topeka. When I was 15, I had a charge account at the local music store. If I wanted something, I'd charge it and make weekly payments on it. This was a pretty cool time. When the Beatles were on Ed Sullivan's show, Topeka exploded, just like every other town in the country. Everybody had to be in a band. There was a garage band on every block.

Kansas played covers in clubs for a few years. Do you remember when you first heard prog from England and when it started to influence the band?

It took a while. For a time it seemed as if only the two coasts were hearing the prog stuff. Gradually the stations in Kansas started playing it — I guess somebody's ears were tuned to it. We'd be like, "Wow, have you heard this band called ELP?" Or "Have you heard Genesis' *Selling England by the Pound*?" It was very exciting to find all these new, creative ways of addressing rock 'n' roll. I don't even know if "rock 'n' roll" was the correct term for that music.

Even so, it didn't seem as if American bands were jumping on the prog bandwagon. You guys were outliers.

Some bands were resistant to chance, but we embraced it. I mean, we played Mitch Ryder & the Detroit Wheels-type stuff; we cut out teeth on rock 'n' roll. But we were looking to be different. I remember playing cover songs during our club days. You'd get to a part and be like, "Man, this song sucks. I hate the middle part." So we started thinking that we could do some sort of interlude at the beginning, or maybe we could play the song at half-time. We did anything to change it up and put some balls to the music. In hindsight, we were doing something very important: We were learning how to be us.

Did it seem as if playing throughout your home state was a dead end? Did the band consider relocating to one of the two coasts to get noticed?

Well, what happened was, we made a demo tape, and that's what we sent out to the coasts. One of them wound up on Don Kirshner's desk. The people at Don's company loved it — they really dug the violin — and they sent a guy named Wally Gold to check us out. We put together a show and did that old free-beer trick: "Come to the show and the drinks are free." So Wally showed up and the place was packed; everybody was drunk and partying. So Wally called Don and said, "Man, there's something going on here. People are crawling through the windows to get in the place." That sealed the deal. Next thing you know, we signed a deal with Don Kirshner and were making records.

"THE VERSION OF ['CARRY ON WAYWARD SON'] YOU HEAR ON THE RECORD IS PROBABLY THE FIRST TIME WE EVER PLAYED IT CORRECTLY"

***Leftoverture* [1976] and *Point of Know Return* [1977] hit one after the other. After being hitless for several years, that must have felt remarkable.**

I'm still here today doing this because of that explosion. We didn't really know how

Kansas perform in New York in 1978: [*from left*] Richard Williams, Robby Steinhardt, Phil Ehart, Kerry Livgren and Dave Hope

MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES

huge it was at the time. We were just blue-collar guys from the Midwest. I remember arriving at Madison Square Garden in a limo with our manager, and he was going, "Madison Square Garden! This is so big!" We were like, "Yeah, yeah, whatever." We'd been on the road for so long, so to us this was just a natural progression of more and more shows. Today I realize how big it was, but back then we didn't really see it.

How much of "Carry On Wayward Son" had Kerry written before the band got to dive into it? Also, how long did it take to work out that intricate guitar and keyboard solo section?

That was the last song we did for the album, on the final day or recording. Kerry came in and said he had a new song. We learned the structure of it and got to it. The version you hear on the record is probably the first time we ever played it correctly. The solo thing didn't take long. My approach to guitar is just wing it. I didn't really have a planned solo. I just responded to what everybody else was doing and threw stuff out there. I was kind of like, "I'll just play stuff. Let me know if it sounds right."

The acoustic guitar figure of "Dust in the Wind" is so recognizable. I understand that Kerry wrote it as a fingerpicking exercise.

Yeah, Kerry didn't write the song to write a song; he wrote this chord pattern to teach himself fingerstyle guitar. His wife thought it was a song, and he was like, "No, this isn't Kansas. The band would never play this." But he brought it in and we thought it was really nice. The figure was there; it didn't have the middle section or the violin solo. But it came together fast. I remember when we were listening back to it, somebody said, "That's the next single." Kerry didn't think so, but the rest of us knew. And sure enough — boom. The track exploded on the radio.

The way you approached the solo section of "Wayward Son" — is that still the way you compose leads in the studio? I'm thinking of the title track of the new album, which has a similar solo structure.

It's sort of the same. What happens is, somebody lays something down and everybody else plays off of it. It's very collaborative, but not as instant as it was back in the day. Somebody else's solo will dictate what you're going to do, and you take inspiration from what they've done to go somewhere else. It's always fun to do it that way. I'll lay down the foundation, and then Zak will play something; Tom will do a smoking keyboard part. Sometimes we redo our parts based on what somebody does.

Kansas' David Ragsdale [*left*] and Zak Rizvi perform May 27, 2017, in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

LISA LAKE/GETTY IMAGES

ZAK RIZVI

HOW A JERSEY BOY JOINS KANSAS

WANT TO HOOK up with your favorite band? Zak Rizvi has some sage advice for you: write them a letter. The New Jersey-based guitarist, a longtime fan of Kansas, decided one day to put pen to paper and pitch his services to the band.

"It was one of those crazy things you do when you're excited and over-caffeinated," he says with a laugh. "I got hold of Phil Ehart's contact information and basically wrote him a note saying, 'Hi, I'm so and so from New Jersey. You don't know me, but I love your band. I play guitar and keyboards, and I'd like to send you some songs.' It was totally unsolicited and out of the blue."

Rizvi admits he expected nothing to come from it, but a short time later he got a call from Ehart, offering the musician a chance to work with the band and their producer, Jeff Glixsman, in the studio. "I did some editing and production work for them, and over time I developed a really great relationship with them," Rizvi says. In 2015, when Kansas were due to start *The Prelude Implicit*, he was formally asked to join the group as co-guitarist. "I said yes immediately!" he enthuses. "It was one of those moments you always dream about."

The guitarist is candid about his pre-Kansas resume. "It wasn't much of a resume at all," he says. "I was a Jersey club guy — I played every bar and dive up and down the state. I was in a ton of bands, but nothing anybody heard of. I ran my own studio and worked with a bunch of people, but it was all very behind the scenes. Fortunately, the guys in Kansas didn't care about my credentials. They recognized that I could play and that I really wanted to contribute to them in a meaningful way."

Because he had spent considerable time working with Kansas in the studio, Rizvi was spared the experience of having to audition. "If I went in cold and had to play with the band, that would have been intimidating," he says. "Luckily, they already knew my playing skills when they asked me to join. The whole thing happened very naturally."

Of his guitar relationship with Richard Williams, Rizvi happily reports that the two go together like peas and carrots. "Richard is so chilled out. The way we approach parts is very casual. We pretty much say, 'What do you want to play?' We just divvy parts up. I grew up listening to the band, so I know Richard's style really well. When I write something for the band, I kind of suggest parts to them — they can pick out what they want or not. But Richard is super easy. He'll play something I wrote, or he'll come up with something on his own that's much better."

As for how he pairs his guitar sound with Williams, Rizvi notes that it, too, came about easily. "When I joined the band, Richard was still playing PRS guitars and I played my Strat," he says. "Now he's pretty much gone back to Les Pauls, so we have a classic Les Paul-Strat thing going on. We never discussed it, but it turned out to be a really good combination." — *Joe Bosso*

The riff in the song "Throwing Mountains" sounds as tough and mean as early grunge. Did any of that stuff ever make an impression on you?

Not really at first. I could appreciate the honesty of grunge. It's like, I loved the Beatles for their polish, but I loved the Rolling Stones for their rawness. You listen to Bob Dylan — his recordings are very elementary, but they're honest. For rock, it's always best if it's not perfect. You need an edge to it. I think that's one thing about Kansas that's always been cool — we have that aggression. So you mention grunge and that song, sure, I'll take that. It reminds me of how punk obliterated disco back in the day. Let's get back to being raw.

How are you enjoying playing live with Zak Rizvi?

Oh, I'm loving it. Zak has a deep love and knowledge of the band. He's a tremendous engineer and guitarist — just brilliant musically. He's a real scholar of music. Playing with him and having him in the band is great. There isn't much he can't play. I mean, he played trombone in a symphony. I have a blast working with him.

What was it like working with Steve Morse during his time in the band?

What an interesting guy! When he came in, he had just won every guitar award imaginable; they had to invent awards to give him. I'll be honest: I was a little intimidated at first, but I was pleased to find out that he's the least-intimidating man around. He's fascinated by everything. We would be on tour, and we would see some crappy band playing at a Holiday Inn or wherever. We would be like, "Let's go. This band sucks." But Steve would say, "Did you see what that guitar player just did with his on/off switch?" The guitarist wasn't even that good, but Steve was learning from him anyway.

For a while you played PRS guitars, but I understand you've moved back to Les Pauls now.

I still play PRS guitars occasionally, but I got my hands on a Les Paul that blew me away. It's one of the Lee Roy Parnell signature models — a reissue of the '57 goldtop — and it's fabulous. It's got a support in the back of the headstock, so if it falls over it won't break, and the heel has a cutaway so you can get up the neck a lot easier. I run that through a Fractal Axe-FX III and I'm good to go. I used to have to spend hours getting tones. Now I can just dial in the sound, and boom — let's play. GW

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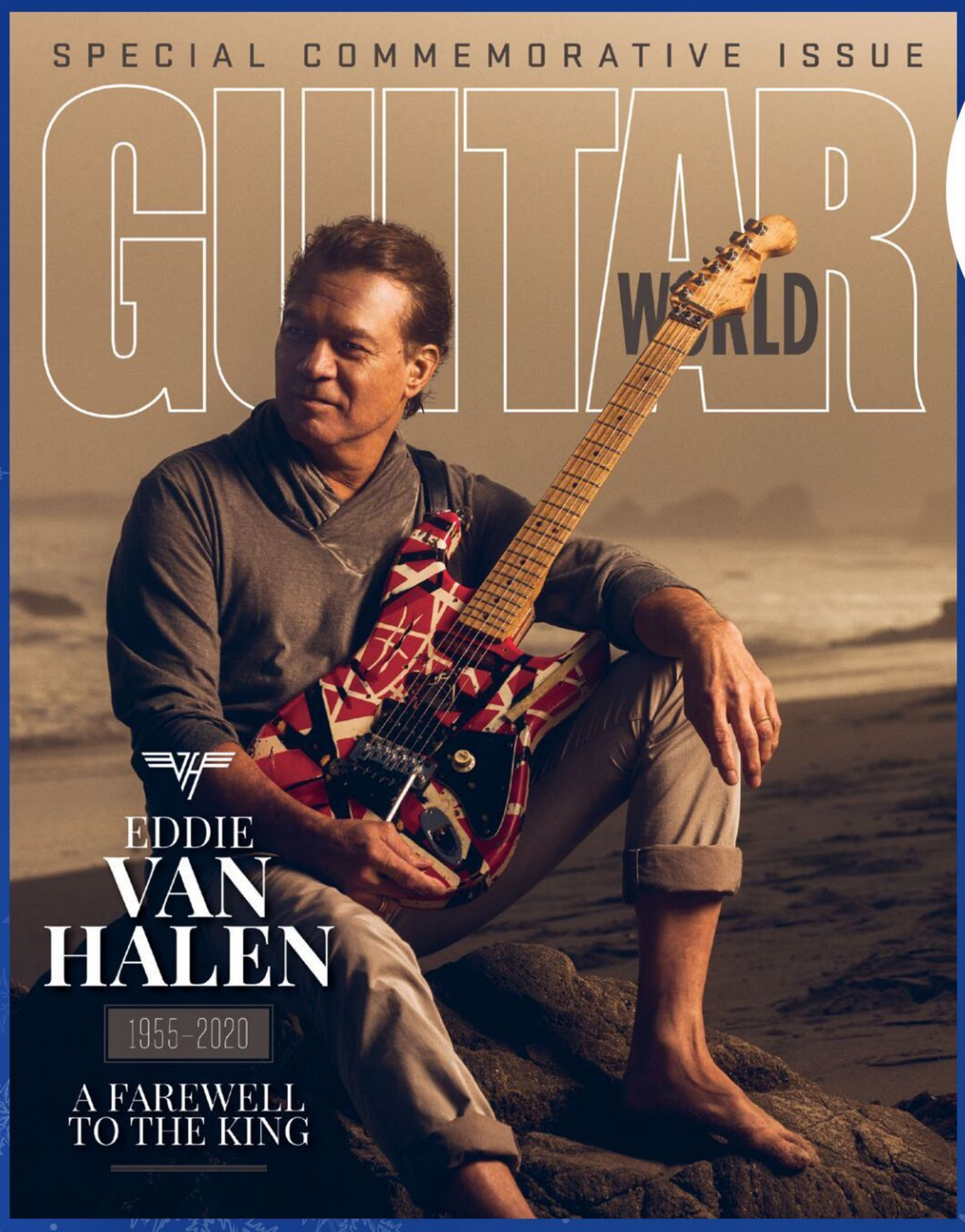

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Build Your Tone

SOUND CHECK

the gear in review

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GUITAR WORLD GOLD AWARD PERFORMANCE

Beauty of a Beast

EPIPHONE JOE BONAMASSA BLACK BEAUTY LES PAUL CUSTOM

By Chris Gill

ANYONE WHO HAS seen Joe Bonamassa's massive vintage guitar collection has probably assumed that the dude is hell bent on hoarding every single damn cool guitar from the Fifties and Sixties. While sometimes that I wish that he'd leave things alone just for a little while so the rest of us could have a chance, lately I've been willing to give him a pass thanks to the annual limited-edition signature models he's produced in partnership with Epiphone, particularly the models they've offered since 2016. These models are based on cool and unusual gems from Joe's collection, including his 1963 Polymist Gold Firebird I, 1958 Korina Flying V, Gibson Custom Shop black ES-355 and 1960 Les Paul Standard.

Bonamassa's 2020 limited-edition Epiphone model — his eighth for the company — is based on a very sweet 1958 Les Paul Custom "Black Beauty" with three PAF humbuckers. This new model is a very appealing alternative for guitarists who love vintage values as it offers comparable tone and playability for a price that's less than the cost of an original set of replacement tuners.

FEATURES The Epiphone Joe Bonamassa Black Beauty Les Paul Custom is true to the original 1958 model in astonishingly fine detail, with the only major exceptions being the Epiphone logo on the headstock and the slightly different "open book" headstock shape. The body features solid all-mahogany construction with no weight relief and with the top and back surrounded by 7-ply black and white binding with an amber "aged" patina.

The glued-in set neck is mahogany as well and features a 24.72-inch scale, 12-inch radius, 22 medium jumbo frets, pearloid block inlays and vintage-correct long tenon. Epiphone even duplicated the shallow C profile of the neck on Joe's original, which has a "just right" balance between a "baseball bat" 1958 neck and slinky slim 1960 neck.

The "epsilon logo" Epiphone Historic tuners are not a nod to the guitar's current pedigree, but rather an unusual detail of Joe's Black Beauty, which has stock Kolb tuners with distinctive-shaped buttons as found on Epiphone's upper echelon archtop models during the day. Details like the GraphTech NuBone nut, LockTone Tune-O-Matic bridge and stop bar tailpiece, CTS pots, Orange Drop capacitors and Switchcraft output jack are actually upgrades of their vintage counterparts.

This Black Beauty's secret weapons, and the keys to its authentic vintage tones, are its Epiphone ProBucker 2 (neck and middle) and ProBucker 3 (bridge) humbuckers, which feature bases and covers made from the same 18 percent nickel-silver alloy, the same size and shape bobbins and sand-cast Alnico II magnets as original PAFs. The pickups are vacuum wax potted to prevent microphonic squeals at high volume.

PERFORMANCE The big question for most players considering a triple-humbucker guitar with a three-position pickup selector switch is its wiring. In this instance, the Bonamassa Black Beauty provides bridge/bridge-middle out-of-phase/neck settings with a tone and volume control for the bridge/middle pickups and a second set of tone and volume controls for the neck pickup only. This provides a highly useful range of bridge and neck Les Paul Custom tones, including a gorgeous "woman" tone on the neck pickup with the tone rolled back, and gloriously snarky, honking fat Strat-like "in between" tones in the middle setting. With resistances measuring 8.27k ohms (bridge), 4.05k ohms (bridge-middle) and 7.81k ohms (neck), the pickups hit the sweet spot for a slightly hot PAF (or one with new spec magnets that haven't faded yet).

Although the overall weight is certainly not light, it tips the scales on the medium side of the Les Paul spectrum, with our example weighing just under 10 pounds. The all-mahogany construction delivers deliciously fat midrange and tenacious attack with more body and depth than that of a Les Paul Standard with a maple top. From the mirror-like shine of the Ebony Gloss finish to the smoothly polished and crowned fretwork, the Bonamassa Black Beauty's construction and attention to detail rival that of guitars costing four to five times as much.

So let's continue to let Joe hoard all the best vintage guitars. As long as Epiphone is making tribute models like this that come so damn close to real the thing I'm fine not having to spend five or six figures to enjoy timeless tones and immaculate playability.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE:
$799
MANUFACTURER:
Epiphone, Epiphone.com

- ProBucker 2 and 3 humbucking pickups are made with several identical details to original PAF pickups to provide authentic vintage tones.
- The "epsilon logo" tuners are based on the unusual stock Kolb tuners found on Joe's original Black Beauty Les Paul.
- The wiring provides bridge, bridge-middle out-of-phase and neck pickup settings with individual tone and volume controls for the bridge-middle and neck pickups.
- The neck has a very comfortable shallow C profile that provides ample mass for tone and a slim feel for fast playability.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE**
  The Epiphone Joe Bonamassa Black Beauty Les Paul Custom isn't the next best thing to an original late-Fifties Les Paul Custom — it's even better thanks to its outrageously affordable price, stellar tones and immaculate playability.

GUITAR WORLD PLATINUM AWARD EXCELLENCE

Beyond Bass

BOSS OC-5 OCTAVE

By Paul Riario

CONSIDERING THAT THE Boss OC-2 Octave — with its straightforward sub-octave pitch-shifting — has been the perennial "thickening agent" for so many guitarists and bassists since its introduction in 1982, it's somewhat surprising that this glittery espresso-colored stompbox doesn't get more of the love and recognition it deserves. No matter, because Boss followed up much later with the OC-3 Super Octave, which introduced polyphonic octave effects, turning this bottom-end box into a broader innovation. Well, this time around, I believe many players will take notice of Boss's brand-new OC-5 Octave, which expands upon those legendary predecessors with improved tracking performance and a wider range of polyphonic capability, all while still preserving the classic sound of the original OC-2 pedal.

FEATURES Housed in Boss's familiar pedal enclosure, the OC-5 features dedicated controls for Direct Level (direct signal volume), +1 OCT level (one octave above volume), -1 OCT level (one octave below volume) and -2OCT/RANGE (operation is tied to mode switch; more on that below). It's curious that the OC-5 isn't a Waza Craft pedal, because having the mini toggle Mode Selector that switches between Vintage and Poly modes surely makes it appear as such. Selecting Vintage mode engages the classic monophonic bass sound of the OC-2, where the -2OCT/RANGE knob adjusts the two octaves below volume, and unlike the original OC-2, you now have the option to blend in an octave up with the (+1 OCT) control. In Poly mode, the -2OCT/RANGE knob variably adjusts the frequency bandwidth from low to high and limits the octave effect to the lower strings, allowing for octave bass lines to sit harmoniously within normal chording. You can also dial the -2OCT/RANGE knob to the LOWEST setting where only the low octave registers the bottom note in a chord. In addition, the OC-5 features a Guitar/Bass switch optimized for either instrument, a high-quality buffered bypass, input and output jacks along with a Direct Out (dry signal) jack and 9V battery or 9V DC operation.

PERFORMANCE As always, Boss not only improves but exceeds expectations with this new iteration of their classic pedal. Gone is the very slight sluggishness of the OC-2 in favor of the OC-5's stellar tracking and near latency-free performance that flat-out feels great for accurate playing. The OC-5 is also better at subduing the momentary artefacts that could sporadically bounce to an upper harmonic octave or something else entirely, and emerge only if you hold a couple notes together — one after another — for the musical glitch to pop up. But I'm one of those players that finds this musically endearing. Set to Vintage mode, the OC-5 can play a vital role for adding a subterranean layer of bottom end or bellowing growl to basslines, and guitarists will find it an indispensable tool for providing massive rumble to power chords. In Poly mode, the OC-5's stacked octave bass tones cleanly isolate the low root notes to accompany your chording for extra density, and the upper octave control is good for adding warbly chime to the upper registers or a hint of 12-string shimmer. Blending all three octave voices in Poly mode can fetch super-plump organ textures and synth-like impressions as well. In most cases I find them useless, but the OC-5 could benefit from an included illustration of sample settings for guitarists new to the pedal, but this is a minor fuss for me. It's also a matter of application, but I encourage you to play around with the Bass/Guitar switch. I found the OC-5 sounds incredibly organic in its bass emulation when set to "Bass" if you're playing guitar, but the difference is immediately audible when set back to "Guitar" in how the low- and high-end frequencies become more focused for clarity. All together, and for its simple versatility, the OC-5 is an essential pedal for any player willing to take their tone deeper.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $129.99
MANUFACTURER: Boss, boss.info

- The inclusion of a +1 OCT control provides an octave-up effect in both Vintage and Poly modes to blend in with the lower sub-octaves or simulate 12-string sparkle.
- In Poly mode, the OC-5's variable Range control contains the effect to the lower registers for octave basslines to sit alongside chords, or even isolate the sub-octave effect to the lowest note in a chord.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE** For meaty heft, the Boss OC-5 digs deep in offering the classic bass-emulation of their original OC-2 along with perfected tracking and enriched polyphonic capability.

PRS Guitars

LIMITED EDITION POWDER BLUE SE PARLOR ACOUSTICS

The PRS Guitars Limited Edition SE parlor acoustic in Powder Blue maintains all the original appointments of the PRS SE P20E acoustic with the addition of a striking blue solid-mahogany top paired with natural mahogany back and sides. Fewer than 1,000 of these guitars will be available worldwide. PRS introduced its first-ever Parlor acoustic guitars in 2020 — the PRS P20 and P20E, which feature PRS hybrid "X"/Classical bracing that allows the top to freely vibrate, allowing these smaller-sized acoustics to project with a bold, even tone. Other high-quality features include ebony fretboard and bridge, bone nut and saddle, as well as PRS trademark bird inlays and headstock design. The Limited Edition PRS SE P20E Powder Blue also comes standard with a Fishman GT1 pickups system and a high-quality gig bag.

STREET PRICE: $579

prsguitars.com

Fender

BRAD PAISLEY SIGNATURE ESQUIRE

The Brad Paisley Signature Esquire is Fender's latest signature guitar for the country music superstar. The guitar features a lightweight Paulownia body with a Spruce top and back, finished in a stunning black sparkle and given Fender's RoadWorn treatment. The maple neck with 9.5" radius fingerboard improves playability over previous Esquires and features a classic V-shaped profile. Other features include a vintage bridge with American Professional compensated "bullet" brass barrel saddles, a custom-wound '64 Tele bridge pickup and a Seymour Duncan Brad Paisley Signature "Secret Agent" neck pickup hidden under the custom black and silver paisley pattern pickguard, which gives players tone options never before heard in an Esquire.

STREET PRICE: $1,399.99

fender.com

New EQ

WHAT'S NEW AND COOL

We're all about color and style in memorable gear — here are ones that pop!

Kyser

NEON COLLECTION QUICK-CHANGE CAPOS

Kyser has added Neon to its broad assortment of famous Quick-Change acoustic guitar capos. The Neon Collection signifies a shift by Kyser toward seasonal, small-batch offerings designed to pique the interest of collectors and brand enthusiasts, cater to a broader range of players and personalities, and tap into the recent demand for retro-inspired shades and accessories. Available in four vibrant new colors — Pink, Green, Orange and Yellow — the Quick-Change capos feature the recognizable Kyser handle and signature one-handed functionality, a standard-tension black spring, protective black boot and black Kyser stamp. All Neon Collection capos are covered by Kyser's signature lifetime warranty.

STREET PRICE: $24.99
kysermusical.com

Buzz Bin

Vidami Video Looper Pedal

GUITAR WORLD GOLD AWARD PERFORMANCE

2020 IS OFFICIALLY a bust, thanks to the pandemic, but the silver lining of being shuttered indoors is that many of us have taken up new hobbies or simply making a fresh start with stuff we've never had time for — like that guitar hanging on the wall. Certainly, "How to" and "Lesson" videos must be blowing up on YouTube among players looking for some much-needed self-improvement. However, being a guitarist requires two hands on deck, so learning anything online will eventually cause you to remove at least one hand from your instrument to repeatedly rewind and pause a video, which is frustrating if you're trying to nail a lick or a phrase, or even hone in on a riff or a song. Enter the Vidami Video Looper Pedal to smartly place that video playback control at your feet.

The Vidami is an innovative video-looping foot-controller that allows for complete hands-free control of videos on YouTube and other supported online platforms where you're able to loop sections, slow down the playback speed, rewind, fast-forward, pause and play via five dedicated footswitches from this ruggedly built pedal. The Vidami connects to your computer's USB port with its attached 6-foot USB cable. From there, all you need to do is register the device and download and install the Vidami extension for Chrome or Safari browsers and you're ready to go. That's it.

I admittedly was skeptical of the Vidami at first, but it's so ridiculously easy to install and use that it's one of those products that blew me away because it works exactly as intended. The Vidami's loop function is as easy as clicking the Loop footswitch to where you want to start the loop in a video, then clicking it again where you want it to end, and it will continually play that loop section until you click it a third time to clear it. You can use the Speed footswitch to cycle through five playback speeds (100, 75, 50, 35 and 20 percent) for learning at your own pace. Press the Forward footswitch to jump forward five seconds at a time (or hold it down to scroll forward) and press Play/Pause to stop. You can also hit the Back footswitch to jump back five seconds incrementally, and holding it down returns you to the beginning of the video. After setting it up, I dug into a particularly difficult instructional video on YouTube that I've been struggling with, just to give it a whirl. Simply clicking the footswitches and watching the video you're working on immediately play and pause, slow down and loop sections by tapping your feet literally made me shout, "Wow, this actually works!" Now, I know that sounds silly, but for me, it makes the Vidami a knockout product as a useful hands-free learning tool, because if you ever had the slightest urge to learn how to play that impossible solo, the Vidami is your best shot at accomplishing that and so much more. — *Paul Riario*

STREET PRICE: $149.99
MANUFACTURER: Vidami, vidami.com

SOUNDCHECK

Engineer in a Box

DRYBELL UNIT67

By Chris Gill

THE KEY TO getting great live guitar tone is by following a similar approach to what an engineer does in the recording studio: using a high-pass filter to cut excess bass, adjusting key EQ frequencies and applying high-quality transparent compression to tighten up the overall sound and bring it forward in the mix. By combining a Rangemaster-style treble booster, versatile EQ section and compression based on the revered Urei/Universal Audio 1176 compressor/limiter, the DryBell Unit67 provides the sweetening functions of expensive studio processing gear in a compact, stage-worthy stomp box format.

FEATURES Because the DryBell Unit67's boost/range, EQ and compression sections are highly interactive, the pedal is considerably more versatile than using separate treble booster, EQ and compressor effects. The top control panel is simple and self-explanatory, featuring a large Boost knob, four mini pots for Range, Low, High and Sustain and two mini toggle switches for EQ on/off and High/Low input level. The Boost knob adjusts gain from -7 to +22.4dB; Range adjusts a midrange sweet spot between 1 to 2kHz; Low boosts or cuts low frequencies by -15.8 to +9.3dB; High boosts or cuts high frequencies by -13.2 to +7.2dB; and Sustain dials in the mix of dry and compressed signals. Bypass is buffered with a high-headroom, ultra-low noise circuit to consistently maintain signal quality. The pedal operates with a 9- to 18-volt DC power supply.

PERFORMANCE While the Unit67's effects on a guitar's tone are distinct and notable, they do not drastically alter your rig's personality but rather bring out its best attributes. The Boost control provides a clean boost function, but it subtly rolls off treble and bass at higher settings to avoid harsh overtones, producing rich overdrive devoid of nasty sizzle and clarity-killing woof. The Range and EQ controls sculpt and sweeten the tone while also maintaining a consistent balance across the guitar's entire note range. For example, as the midrange is boosted the sound does not become narrower but rather more present and lively, with a more assertive and prominent voice that still allows bass and treble notes to be heard clearly. The Sustain control consistently maintains the clarity of pick attack, providing dazzling transparent compression that can be dialed in for smooth, seemingly endless sustain or dynamic percussive effects where notes fade more quickly but remain tantalizingly fat. These are the kind of tones that used to require an investment in thousands of dollars of studio equipment plus years of know-how to dial in, all wrapped up in a compact, easy-to-use and sensibly priced pedal.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $289
MANUFACTURER: DryBell, drybell.com

- The Boost and Range controls provide sound similar to a classic Rangemaster Treble Booster with the added versatility of Low and High EQ shaping.
- Whether adjusted from fully dry to fully wet, the 1176-style compressor delivers transparent compression that maintains pick attack and articulation.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE:**
  The DryBell Unit67 delivers high-quality EQ, true 1176 compression and classic Rangemaster-style treble boost to deliver studio-quality refined tones for less than the cost of separate boutique treble booster and compression pedals.

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COLUMNS

STRING THEORY

by Jimmy Brown

For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/March2021

I GOT RHYTHM, PART 14

More "Kashmir"-like moves

LAST MONTH, WE analyzed the hypnotic, cyclical rhythmic pattern featured in the Led Zeppelin classic "Kashmir" and learned how to count it a couple of different ways. I then offered a few "spin-off" variations on it that I came up with, which posed a fun challenge to play, count and tap your foot to. I'd now like to show some additional, similarly-styled rhythmic patterns, which I think serve as effective vehicles for mastering 16th-note syncopations and grooves.

FIGURE 1 presents a helpful primer exercise, or drill, that surveys the four possible permutations of the three-note "da-da dat" motif, as applied to 16th notes in $\frac{4}{4}$ meter. To help us focus strictly on the rhythm here, we're playing just one chord, D5. As you can see, in bar 1, we begin squarely on beat 1 and then repeat the same motif on beats 2, 3 and 4, with no *metric displacement* happening yet. Regarding the pick hand, I advise using 16th-note "pendulum" strumming, maintaining a down-up-down-up motion across each beat, regardless of what you're playing.

Looking at bar 1, you'll see a staccato eighth note instead of a 16th note on each "and" ("&") count. This eliminates the need for a 16th rest on the "uh" count (written as "a"). Remember, it's always best to economize rhythmic notation, where allowable, and opt for a simpler rendering of a rhythm.

In bar 2, we shift the "da-da dat" motif ahead one 16th note and again play it four times. Likewise, in bar 3 we shift it ahead another 16th note, and another in bar 4. Again, notice the economical notation, with an eighth rest used in bar 3, along with some more staccato eighth notes, and a consolidated dotted eighth rest on the downbeat of bar 4, which takes the place of what would otherwise be three back-to-back 16th rests.

A fun and worthwhile "extra credit" exercise would be to play the bars in **FIGURE 1** in reverse order — 4, 3, 2, 1 — so that the "da-da dat" motif shifts *back* one 16th note in each bar. Or, just toggle back and forth between any two bars (1 and 4, 2 and 3, etc.).

Our next variation (see **FIGURE 2**) has you shifting the "da-da dat" motif ahead one 16th note *on every beat*, which is tricky to do and kind of a mind blower to keep track of the counting, as it will take you *five* bars to complete the cycle in $\frac{4}{4}$ meter, to the point where the motif begins on beat 1 again.

We actually did a similar thing back in I Got Rhythm, Part 10, where we alternate-picked steady 16th notes on the D string and hit the 12th-fret D note on every *fifth* pick stroke, starting on beat 1, with four open D notes played between each fretted high D. And, as I pointed out then, if we were to change the meter to $\frac{5}{4}$ here, to add a fifth beat, the five-beat pattern would only take one bar to cycle through.

Today's final example (see **FIGURE 3**) uses the backwards "Kashmir" progression and standard-tuned chord voicings from last month's lesson to create a twisted-sounding variation on Jimmy Page's seminal stomp riff that spans two bars of $\frac{5}{4}$ meter. Is it as catchy as the original? No, but it does offer an interesting and educational challenge to play and count.

FIG. 1 D5

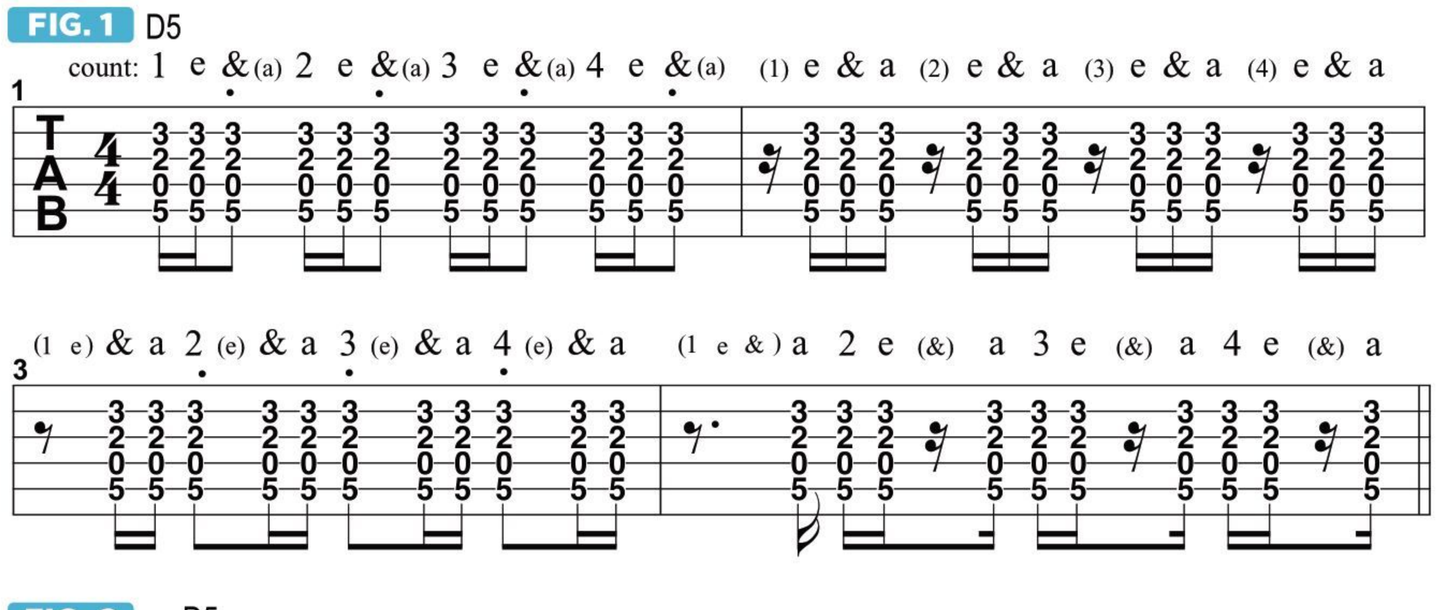


FIG. 2 D5

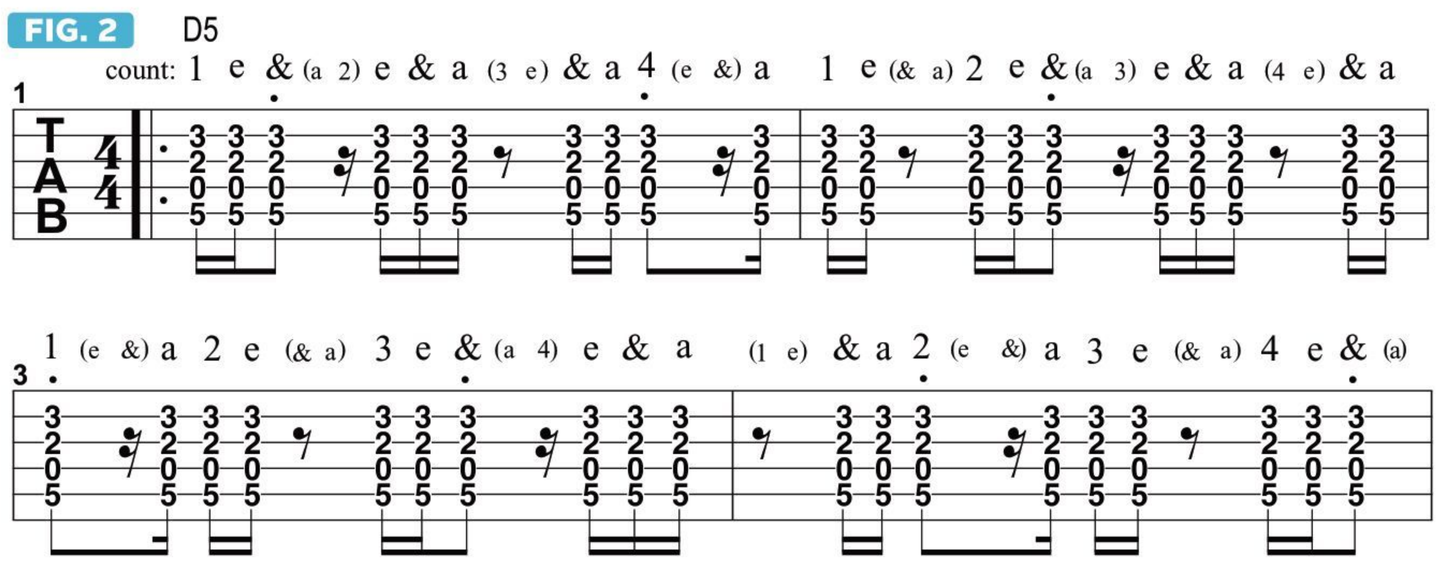
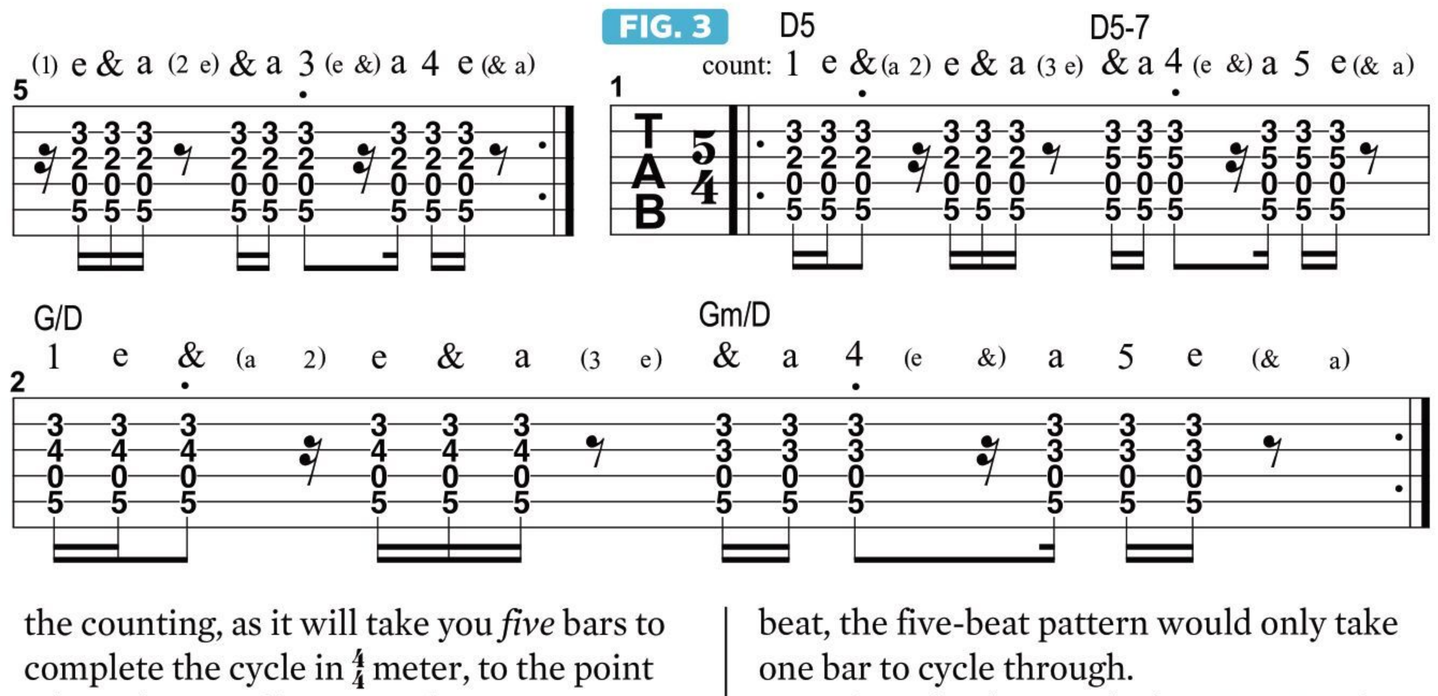


FIG. 3 D5 D5-7



Senior Music Editor "Downtown" Jimmy Brown is an experienced, working musician, performer and private teacher in the greater NYC area whose mission is to entertain, enlighten and inspire people with his guitar playing.

COLUMNS

IN DEEP

by Andy Aledort

For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/March2021

AROUND THE BENDS, PART 2

More expressive string bending techniques

LAST MONTH, I introduced the expressive approach of playing all the notes of the E minor pentatonic scale (E, G, A, B, D) on the B string only, utilizing bending techniques to scoop into a note from below or swoop down to it from above, in the latter case by using a pre-bend and release. I'd now like to offer more examples of this soulful way of playing melodic lines.

To review, when playing E minor pentatonic on the B string only, we can start with the open string, followed by D (3rd fret), E (5th fret), G (8th fret), A (10th fret), and then B, one octave higher, at the 12th fret. We can continue into the higher octave with D (15th fret), E (17th fret) and G (20th fret). This high G can be bent up a whole step to the next scale degree, A.

Adding vibrato to a bent note offers the player options for added expression, which are determined by the speed and width of the vibrato. I myself prefer a slow, wide vibrato, as it sounds the most "vocal-like" to me. Faster, tighter vibratos add more urgency and intensity to a given note.

FIGURE 1 begins with a fretted G note-followed by F♯, one fret lower, bent up a half step to G and shaken. I then develop an improvised melody on the B and G strings, and in bar 2 I apply bending to the G and A notes at the 8th and 10th frets, respectively. In bar 3, I shift down the B string to a lower position and apply half- and whole-step bends and vibratos in a similar manner.

Let's move up to the next higher note in E minor pentatonic, A: in bar 1 of **FIGURE 2**, I begin with whole-step bends from A to B with vibratos, and in bar 2 I bend up to A from G, two frets below, before rounding out the improvised melody. The idea is to sound a given pitch three different ways: without bending, bending up to it from a lower scale tone or chromatic note, and bending down to it via a pre-bend and release. In **FIGURE 3**, I demonstrate licks with half-step bends from G♯ up to A.

FIGURES 4 and **5** offer examples of bending up to or down to B, and **FIGURES 6-8** demonstrate similar approaches applied to the next higher note in the scale, D (15th fret).

FIG. 1

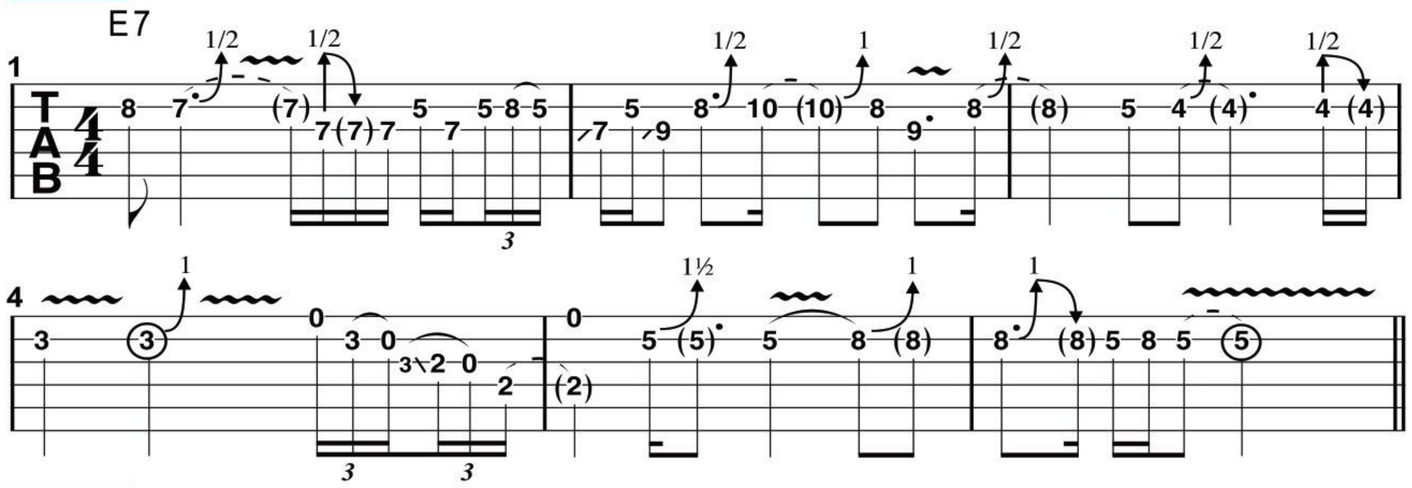


FIG. 2

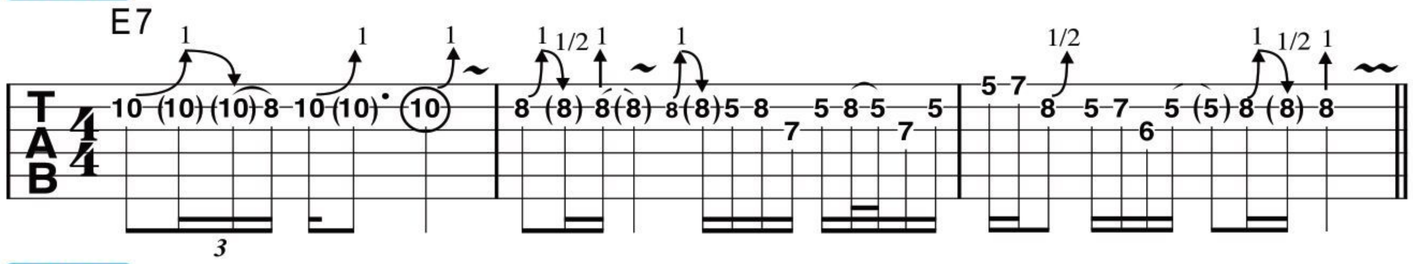


FIG. 3

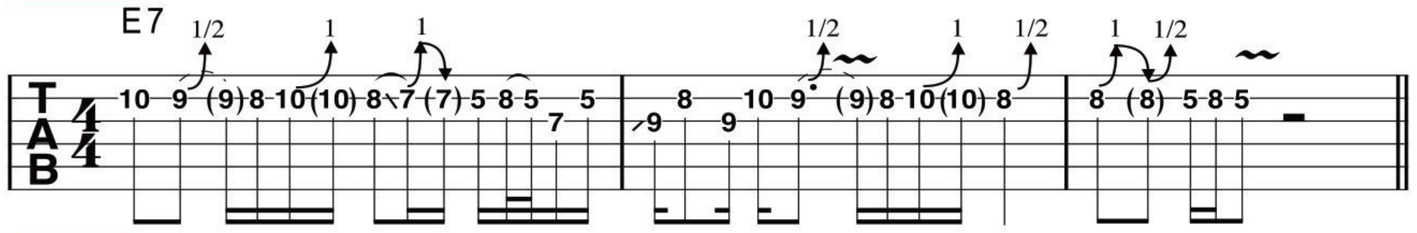


FIG. 4

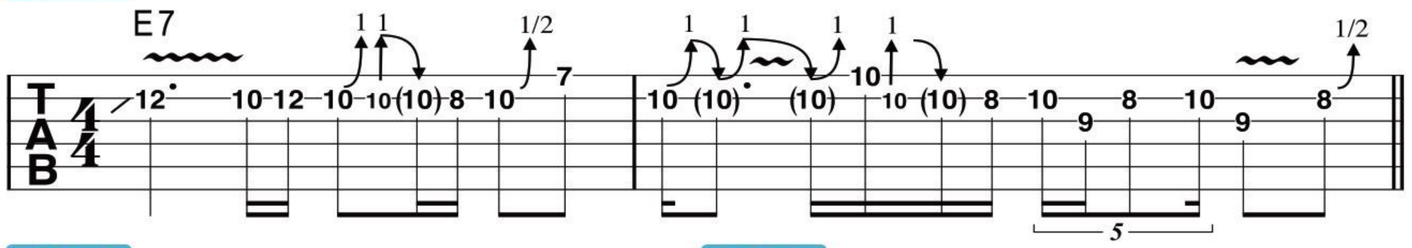


FIG. 5

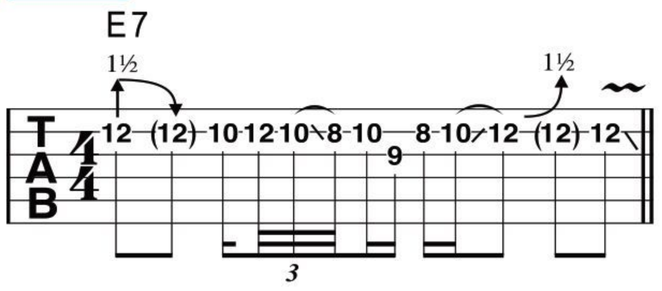


FIG. 6

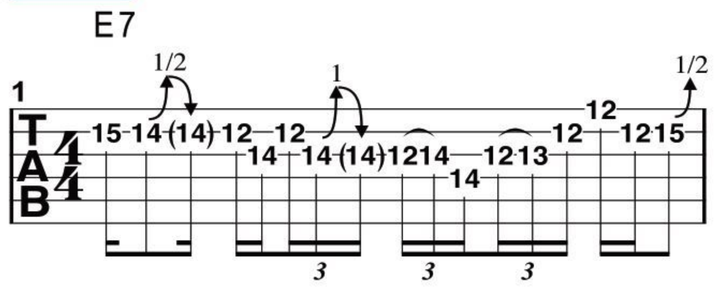


FIG. 7

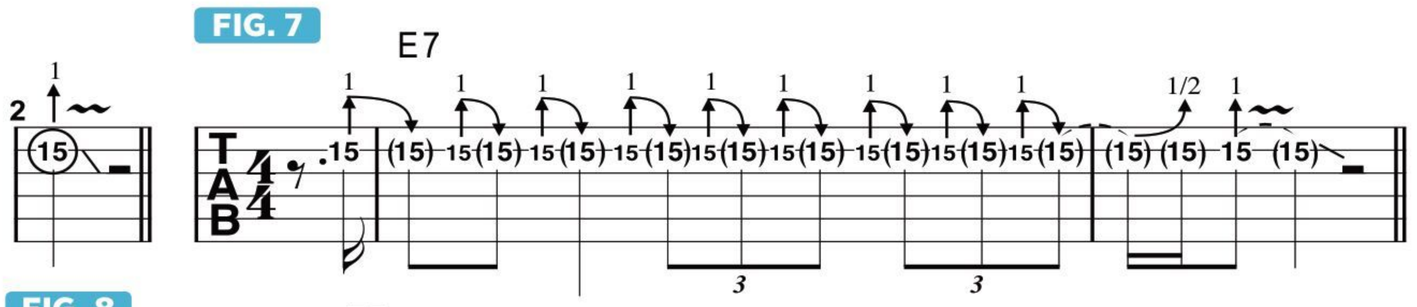
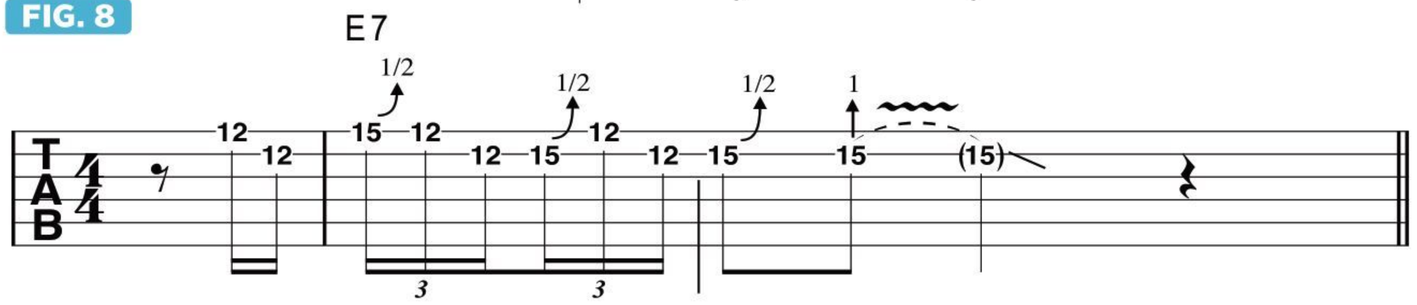


FIG. 8



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.**

MOORE POWER

by Vinnie Moore

For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/March2021

SCRATCHY RIFFING

Using fret-hand-muted strums, and how to play "Gainesville Station"

IN THIS COLUMN, I'd like to focus on the intro rhythm part from the song "Gainesville Station," from my latest record, *Soul Shifter*. Guitarist Steve Gaines from Lynyrd Skynyrd was a big inspiration for me when I was a kid, and I wrote this song as a tribute to his incredibly soulful playing style. Steve, as many of you know, was tragically killed in the band's plane crash in 1977. I took some of that mojo inspiration that I got from him and did my best to inject it into this song.

I refer to muted-string strums — muted with the fret hand — as "scratches," like the ones you hear at the very beginning of Jimi Hendrix's "Little Wing," or in the main riff in Joe Walsh's guitar part on The James Gang tune "Funk #49." Using scratches is a great device to help one keep time and create rhythmic syncopation within a rhythm part, and it can also be used to add a lot of *funk* and *attitude* to a riff.

FIGURE 1 illustrates how I kick off "Gainsville Station," beginning with two muted-string scratches on the last two 16th notes of the pickup bar that lead into a one-bar riff based on the G minor pentatonic scale (G, B♭, C, D, F). I keep my pick hand flowing in a continuous down-up-down-up 16th-note motion throughout and create syncopations by interspersing fretted single notes among muted-string strums on the D, G and B strings. Keep the wrist of your pick hand loose, so that the 16th-note rhythms have a nice, flowing "swing" to them.

FIGURE 2 presents the tune's full eight-bar intro. After playing the figure shown in the first example, I follow it in bar 2 with open-string pull-offs from the 3rd fret on the G string and then from the 3rd and 5th frets on the D string. The bar ends with low C and B♭ notes, each of which is played together with the open G string. **FIGURE 3** offers a detailed look at the sequence of pull-offs played in this specific bar.

Bar 3 of **FIGURE 2** offers a slight variation on bar 1, with a double-stop pull-off on beat 4, and bar 4 brings in a pinkie barre across the G and B strings at the 6th fret. These barred double-stops move down from the 6th fret to the 5th and 3rd. Bar 5 is essentially a reprise of bar 1, and bar 6 offers a slight twist on bar 2, with lower notes added on the bottom two strings. The eight-bar figure wraps up in bars 7 and 8, with multiple pull-offs to the open D and G strings and a quick double-stop hammer/pull figure that's performed by barring multiple fingers across the B and G strings.

FIGURE 4 offers an isolated look at bar 8.

This is the last of this run of columns for the time being. I hope you've enjoyed these lessons and have been able to incorporate some of my ideas into your own playing. Hopefully, we'll be able to resume touring soon, and I look forward to seeing you out on the road!

Swing 16ths Feel (=)

FIG. 1

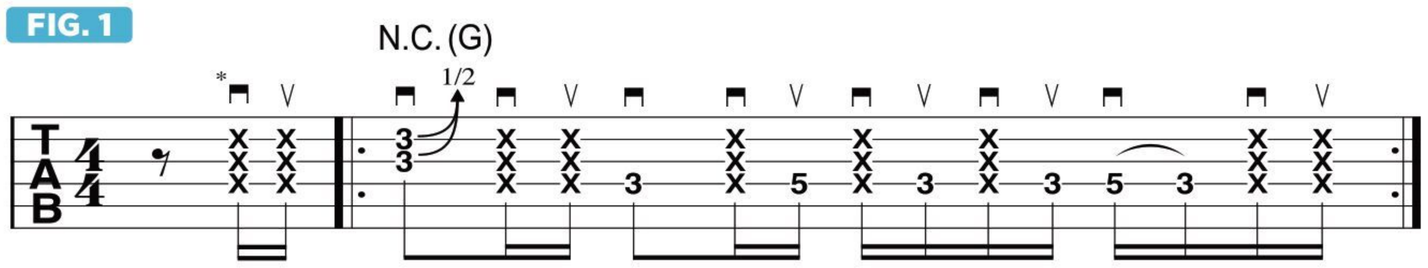


FIG. 2

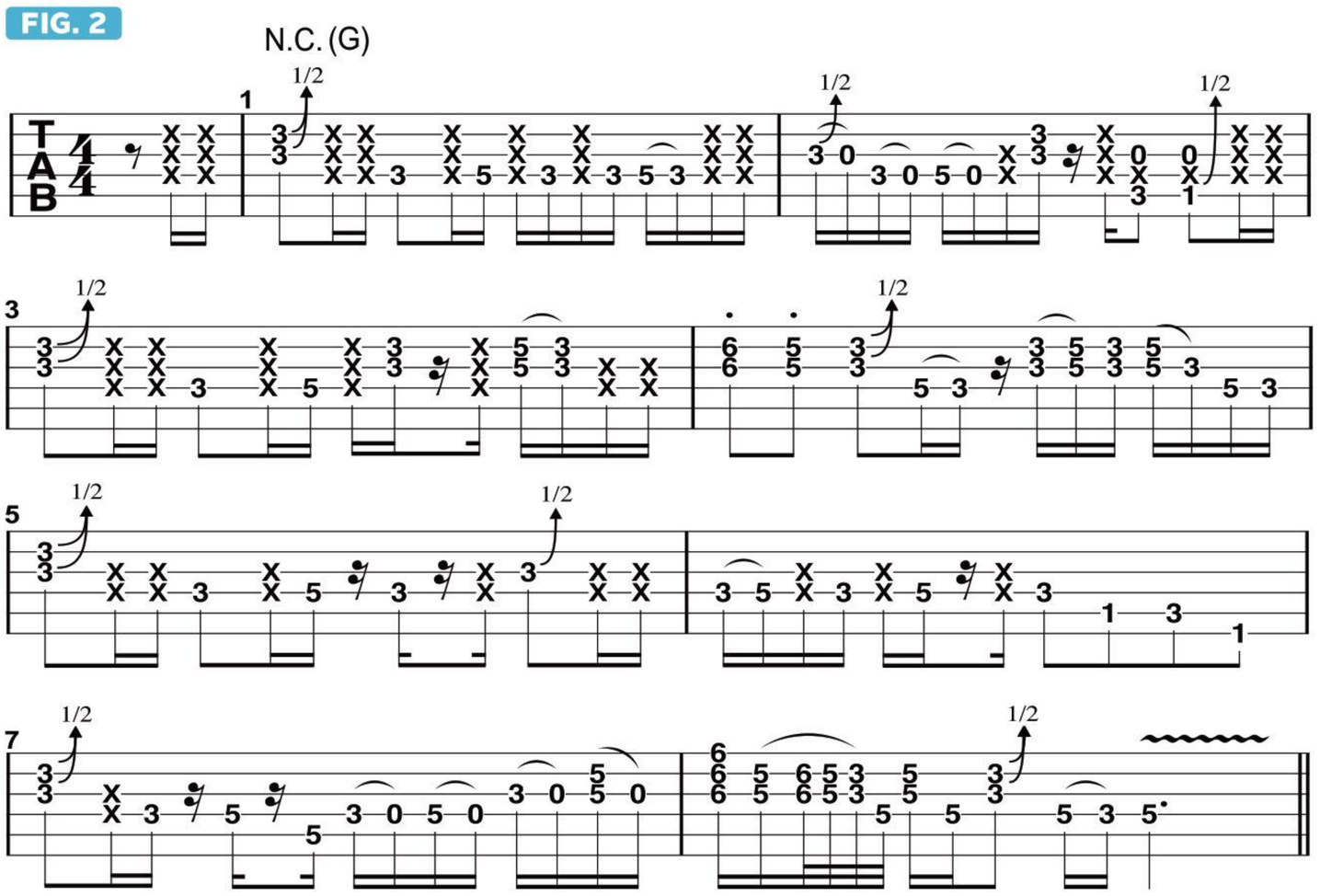


FIG. 3

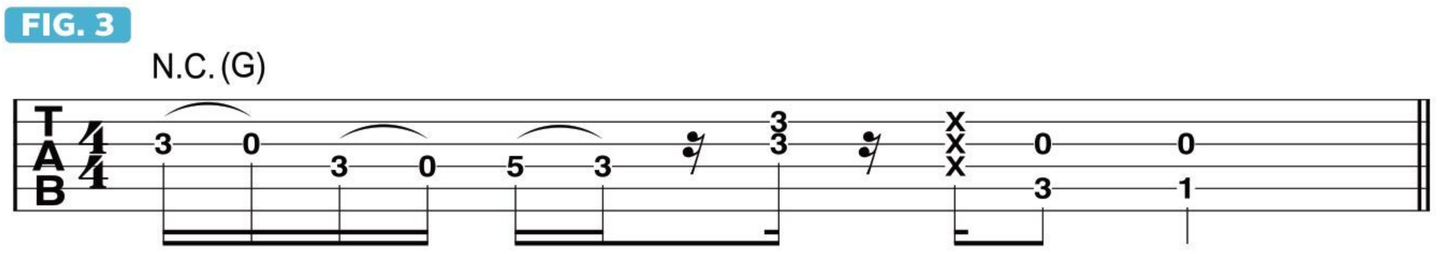
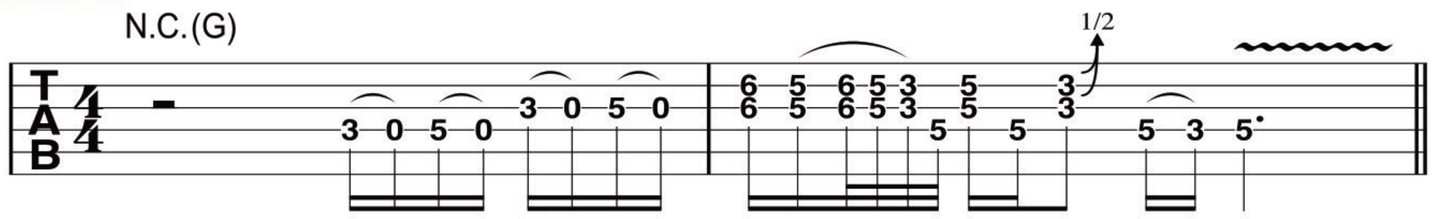


FIG. 4



Vinnie Moore is an American guitarist and has been a member of the British hard rock band UFO since 2003. He is one of the most influential and celebrated players to emerge from the Eighties virtuoso shred guitar era. Vinnie's latest album is 2019's *Soul Shifter*.

MARTIN HUCH

COLUMNS

ACOUSTIC JOURNEY

by Molly Tuttle

For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/March2021

DRAWING THE LINE

Traditional bluesgrass-style riffing, and how to play "Over the Line," part 2

LAST MONTH, I introduced the basic approach I use to play the song "Over the Line," a traditional bluegrass-style tune I cowrote with Steve Poltz that appears as the title track on an album by the band Jeff Scroggins and Colorado. Traditional bluegrass guitar playing is at the heart of my love of the guitar, as it has laid the foundation for my guitaristic studies both musically and technically. In this lesson, I'd like to offer some more riffs and licks that I like to play this song, which demonstrate some of my favorite bluegrass-style moves.

To review, I play this song with a capo at the 4th fret, and so any unfretted, "open" string is notated with a "0," and a note sounded one fret above the capo (at the actual 5th fret) is indicated with a "1," etc. With the capo at the 4th fret, a standard "open-position" C chord will sound an E chord at concert pitch. A nice thing about using a capo is that one can visualize and think of chords as being standard "open" or "1st-position" shapes, but their sounding pitches are, of course, higher. For those who are new to using a capo, you'll find that this is the easiest and most convenient way to refer to the chord names. In other words, if it *looks* like a C chord, you think of it and refer to it as C, with the understanding that it actually sounds in a higher key, in this case E.

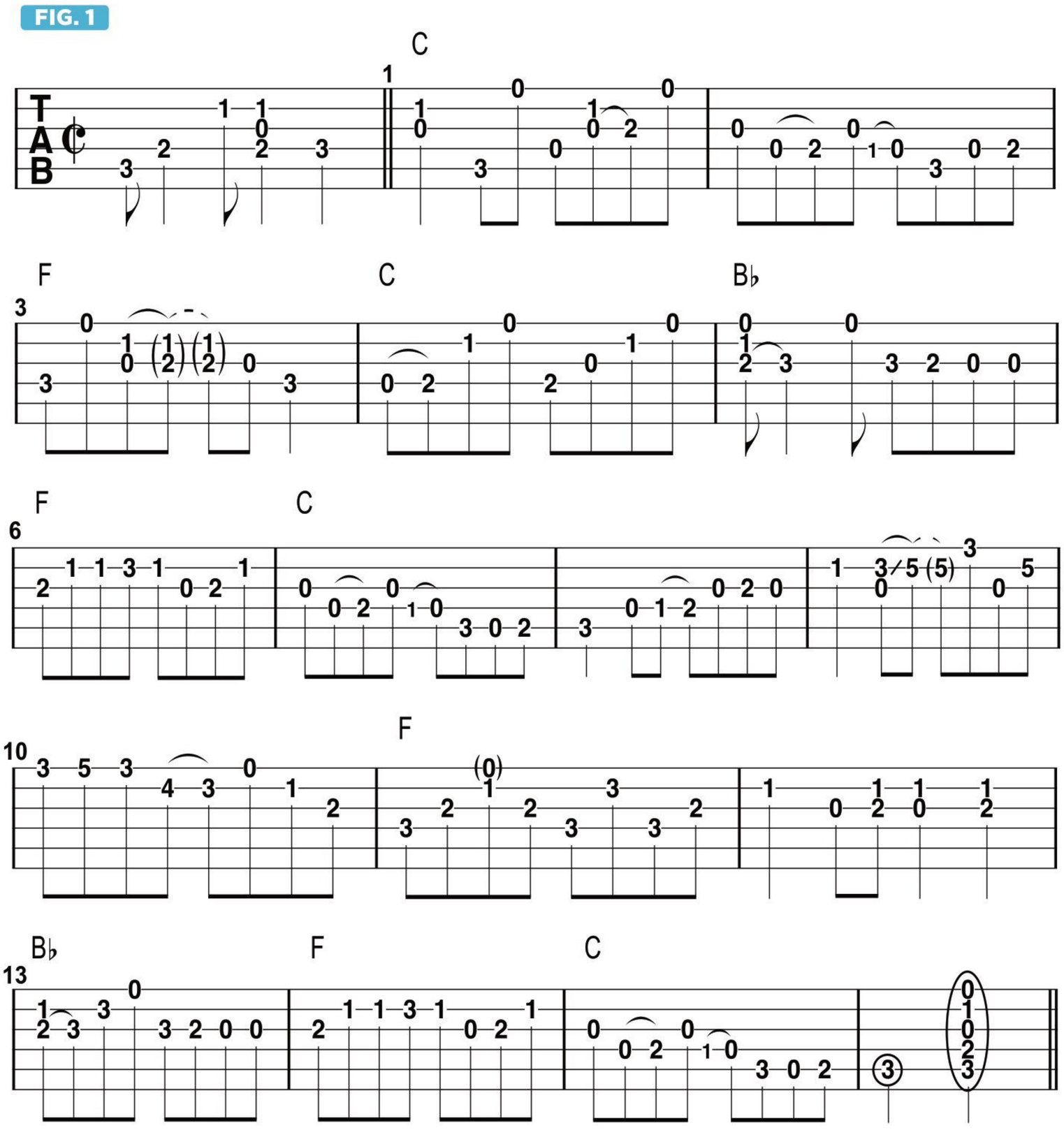
In my previous column, I detailed how to play the verse and solo sections of "Over the Line." In between these sections, I play a guitar solo, usually sticking close to the melody of the verse and occasionally breaking away from it a little bit, But at one point or another I always like to return to the melody during the solo.

FIGURE 1 demonstrates a typical approach I will take to playing a solo over the tune's chord changes. Notice how I utilize cross-picking and standard flatpicking techniques and weave bits of single-note melodies into the strumming of small, two-string chord forms, generally on the top three strings. Employing standard alternate picking technique for eighth notes — down, up, down, up — I use downstrokes on the downbeats and upstrokes on the upbeats.

Capo at 4th fret

All music sounds in the key of E, two whole steps higher than written.
All tablature positions and chord names are relative to the capo.

FIG. 1



Crosspicking technique also comes into play here and there, in order to help fill out the sound and strengthen the connection between the melody and chord progression as the line moves along. And I'd like to point out here that I don't mind allowing the open high E string to ring while playing over the B♭ chord. Notice also that I employ a few hammer-ons and pull-offs throughout, which serve to provide a smooth delivery and phrasing of the melodic lines as I move from one chord to the next.

Additionally, I slide up the fretboard into different chord inversions, as when playing over the C chord in bars 9 and 10. In bars 2, 7, 8 and 10, I add an E♭ note to the phrases, which is the minor 3rd of C, as the note adds a bluesy quality to the lines.

This is my final column for now. I sincerely hope you have enjoyed these lessons and that the techniques and their applications that I've presented and demonstrated have been useful to you. Stay safe, and hope to see you soon!

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 latest album, 2020's *...but i'd rather be with you,* is available now via Compass Records.

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

"PREACHIN' BLUES"

Larkin Poe

CO-GUITARISTS AND SISTERS Rebecca and Megan Lovell turn in a refreshingly raw and soulful performance with this popular 2017 cover of an old Son House blues classic. The song is in the key of D, for which Rebecca's drop-D-tuned electric guitar (low to high: D, A, D, G, B, E) provides the foundational low-string riffing, fulfilling the role of a bass line with added, swampy grit. Megan performs her featured melodic lead parts on a lap steel in Dobro-, or "high-bass"-style open G tuning (low to high: G, B, D, G, B, D), which puts her "home-key" position at the 7th fret, rather than the 12th fret and/or the open strings, as is more common with blues slide guitar. (This is comparable to the way Duane Allman used open E tuning for slide on "One Way Out" with the Allman Brothers Band, which is also in a different key than the tuning, in this case, the key of A, which based his slide hand at the 5th and 17th frets.)

As is customary for the lap steel, Megan performs her part fingerstyle, with a thumbpick and metal fingerpicks, which, with her overdriven amplified tone, lend a raspiness to her note attack. This part may, of course, be performed on a conventional guitar in the same tuning, using a hollow, finger-worn slide instead of an "overhand" solid slide bar. The essential sliding and pick-hand techniques are the same in either case, with both hands working together to mute any unplayed strings and create the short, punctuated staccato articulations (indicated by small black dots over certain tab numbers). Another key, make-or-break technique here is vibrato with the slide, which takes practice to cultivate and sound like you have the Delta in your blood, or soul. The most pleasing slide vibrato is achieved by wiggling the slide in both directions away from the "target" fret by an equal distance (about one fret), in a loose but quick warble.

—JIMMY BROWN

"SIMPLE MAN"

Lynyrd Skynyrd

ONE OF LYNYRD Skynyrd's most beloved and enduring songs, this Southern rock power ballad packs an emotional and dynamic punch, starting off softly, with guitarist Gary Rossington flatpicking gently flowing arpeggiated open C, G and Am7 chords, and building up to an explosive, power chord-driven chorus, climaxing with a searing melodic guitar solo, also courtesy of Rossington. The initial two-bar figure (labeled *Rhy. Fig. 1*) repeats for the remainder of the intro and 1st verse, with co-guitarist Allen Collins joining in in bar 5 and loosely doubling Rossington's 16th-note arpeggios while taking a sparser rhythmic approach and letting certain chord tones ring across the beats.

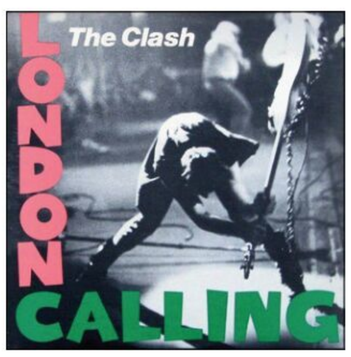
Regarding the flatpicking for both of these parts, a good approach is to pick the low root notes of each chord with downstrokes and up-pick the higher notes. But feel free to use whatever pick strokes feel most natural and flowing. When playing the heavy single-note riff that occurs between the 1st and 2nd verses (see *Riff A*, bars 17-20), use your fret-hand ring finger for the quick, two-fret slides, as opposed to the pinkie, which is notoriously unreliable for sliding, as well as for bending.

Rossington tightly double-tracked his guitar solo, beginning at section E (bar 40), splitting off into two-part harmony during the last two bars (48 and 49). Notice how the guitarist sticks primarily to notes from the A minor pentatonic scale (A, C, D, E, G) and uses legato finger slides and position shifts to cover an expansive area of the fretboard and stay pretty much on the top three, unwound strings. Particularly noteworthy here are Gary's precise string bending technique and wide, polished finger vibratos, which he uses to really make his leads come to life and sing. These technique are the mark of a master rock lead guitarist and should be cultivated as much as possible, as they can be used to add a lot of expression to one's melody playing.

—JIMMY BROWN

"LONDON CALLING"

The Clash



THIS ANGST-FUELED, PUNK rock classic is driven by stabbing guitar chords and a punchy, anthemic bass riff that set the stage for guitarist and vocalist Joe Strummer's bitter indictment of the ills of modern society. Strummer, co-guitarist Mick Jones and drummer Topper Headon kick things off by laying down a pounding, quarter-note-driven groove that has an eighth-note-triplet undercurrent — a *punk shuffle*, if you will.

One thing that greatly contributes to the song's haunting quality is the fact that its chord structure is based mostly on the dark-sounding E Phrygian mode (E, F, G, A, B, C, D)... that, and the abrasive harmonic dissonance created by the clashing Em and F chords in the song's intro. As you can see, the part labeled Gtr. 3 alternates between the two chords every other bar while Gtrs. 1 and 2 stay on Em. If you're playing the song without another guitarist, you may want to try substituting the Fadd♯11/E chord shape illustrated at the top of the transcription during bars 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12, which melds Em and F together on one instrument and captures the eerie essence of the dissonance.

Bassist Paul Simonon's growling, standout melody enters at the end of bar 4 and features long finger slides and nimbly flatpicked triplets. Notice how, as the guitars repeat their two-bar rhythm figures, with the clashing Em and F chords occurring in the even-numbered bars, Simonon holds a C note beneath them, which is the 5th of F. This use of an *inversion* adds to the harmonic ambiguity and feeling of unease.

Getting back to the guitar parts, be sure to use fret-hand muting to achieve the pronounced staccato articulations on the quarter-note chord strums during the intro and verse sections and the muted "scratch" strums during the choruses. The technique is actually quite simple to perform. Just loosen your grip on the strings momentarily, to stop the fretted notes from ringing.

—JIMMY BROWN

"PREACHIN' BLUES"

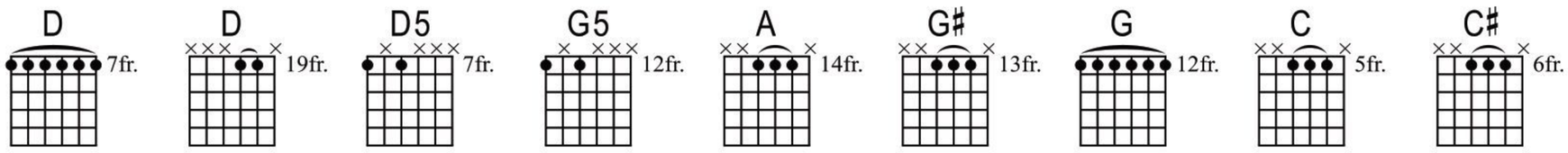
LARKIN POE

As heard on **PEACH**

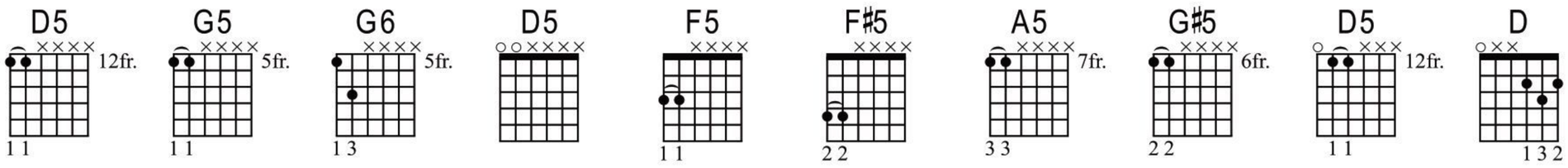
Words and music by **SON HOUSE** • *Transcribed by* **JEFF PERRIN**

Gtr. 1 chords (lap steel arr. for gtr. in Dobro-style open G tuning [low to high: G, B, D, G, B, D])

w/slide



Gtr. 2 chords (elec. in drop-D tuning [low to high: D, A, D, G, B, E])



A **Intro** (0:00)

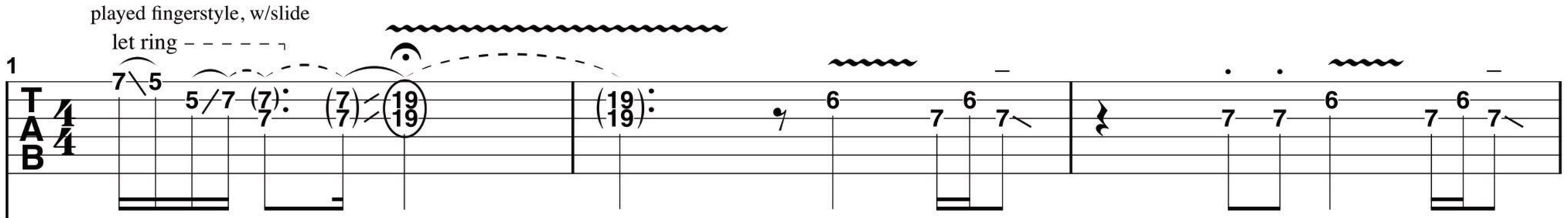
Moderately ♩ = 86 (♬ = ³♪³♪)

*N.C. (D)

Gtr. 1 (lap steel w/overdrive arr. for gtr. in Dobro-style open G tuning)

played fingerstyle, w/slide

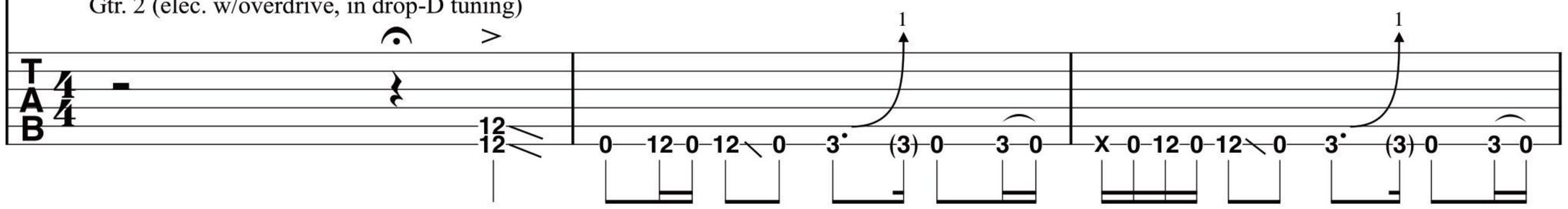
let ring



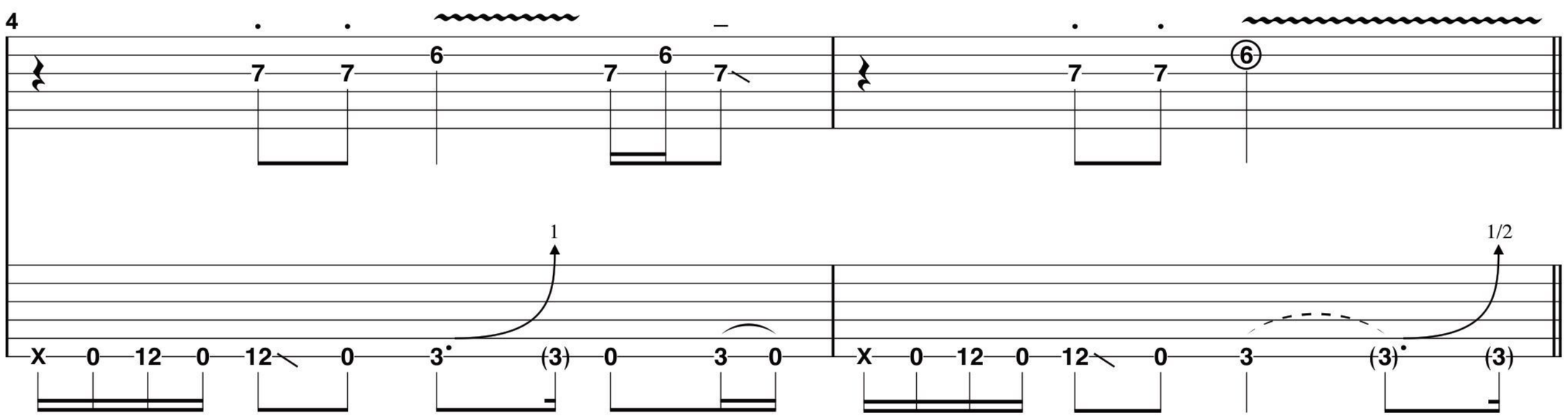
**Chord symbols reflect overall harmony.*

D5

Gtr. 2 (elec. w/overdrive, in drop-D tuning)



1. I'm gonna



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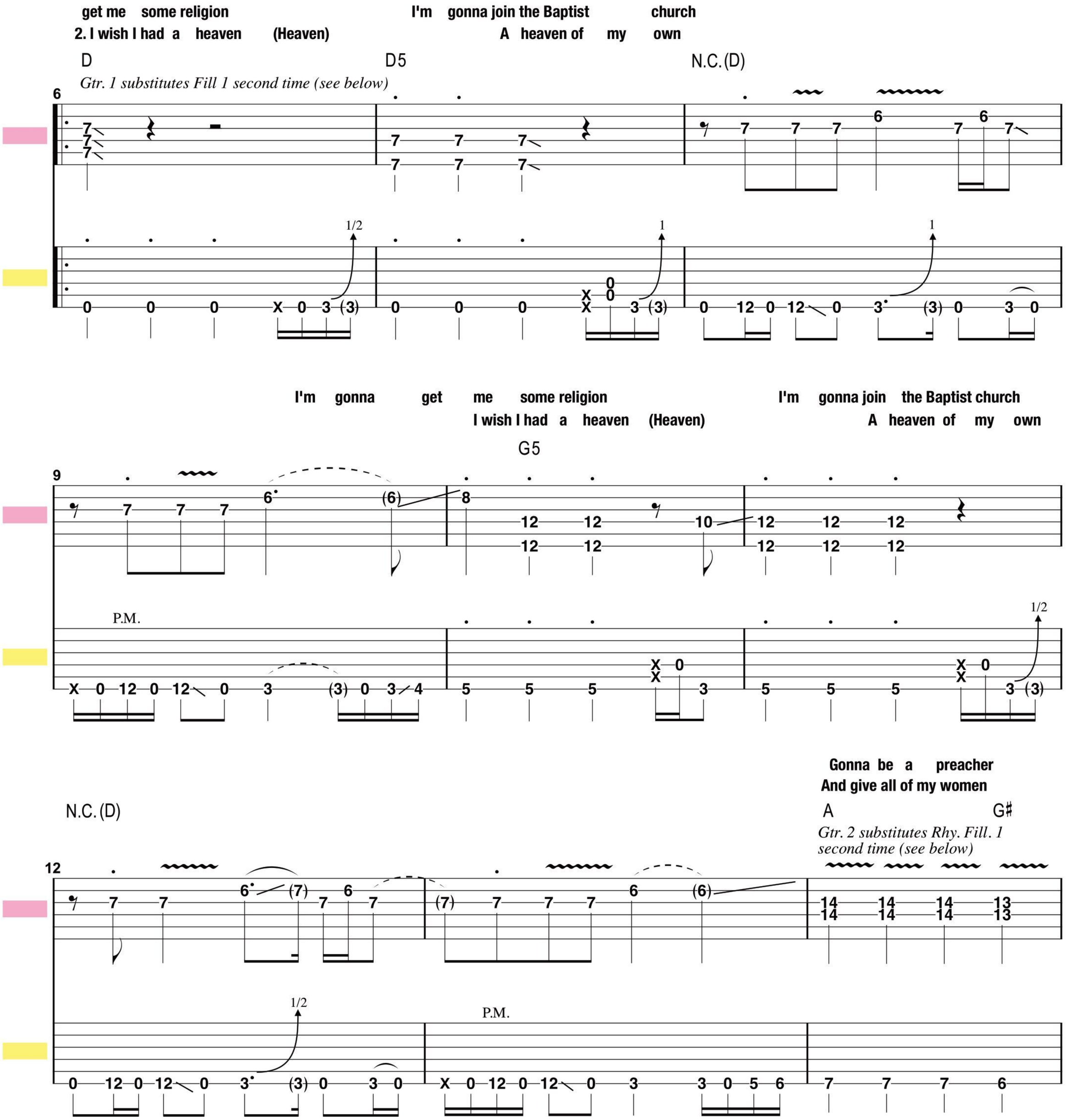
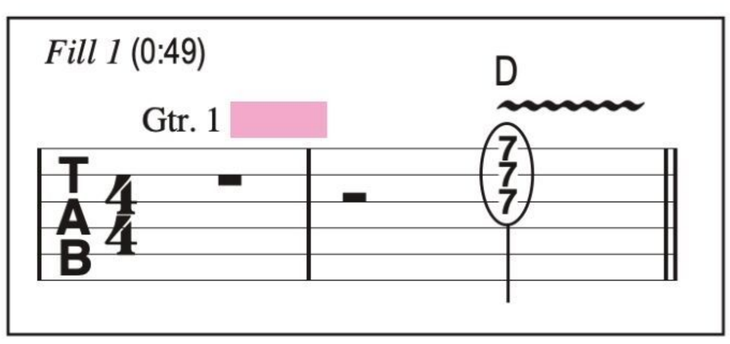
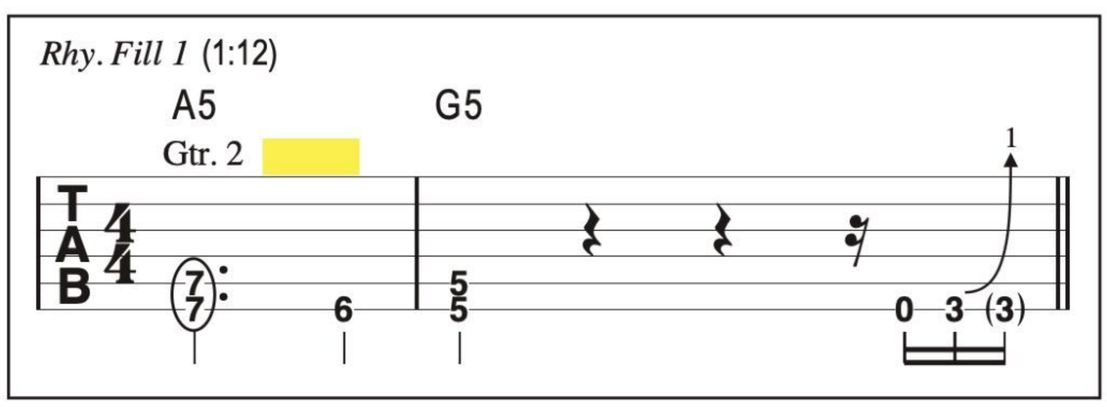
B **1st and 2nd Verses** (0:16, 0:49)



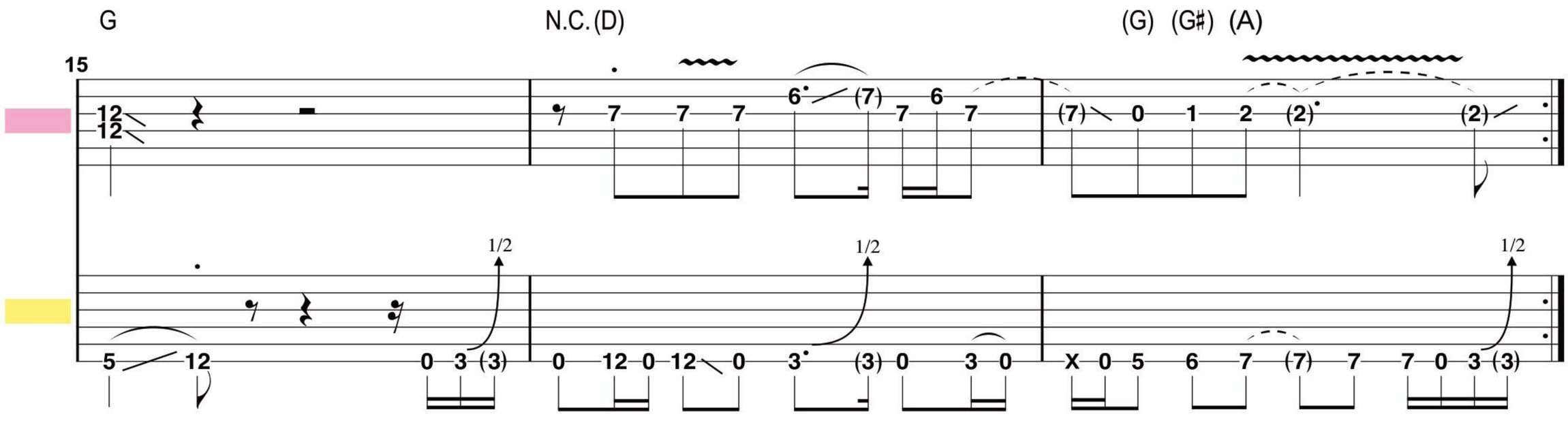
Fill 1 (0:49)



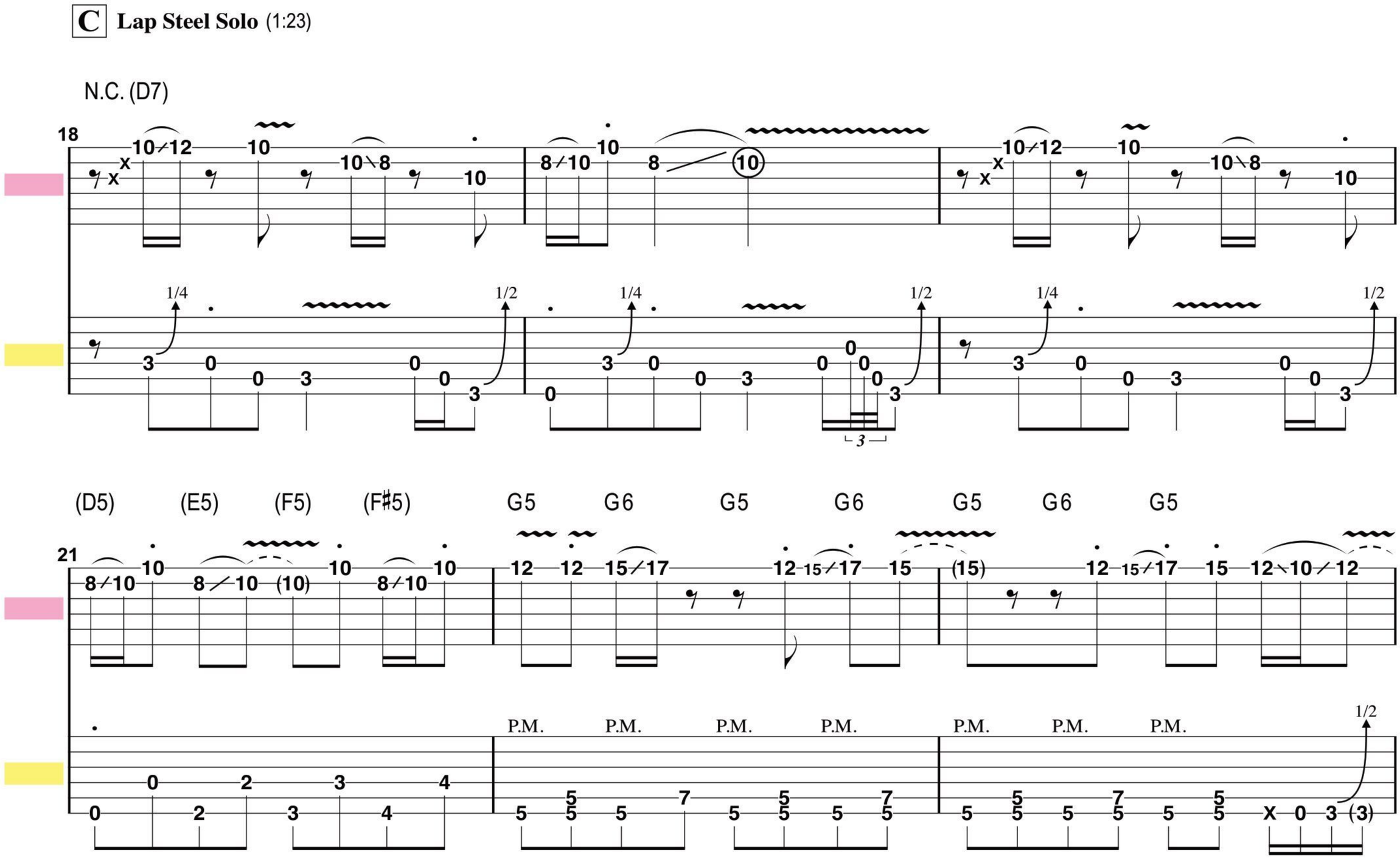
Rhy. Fill 1 (1:12)

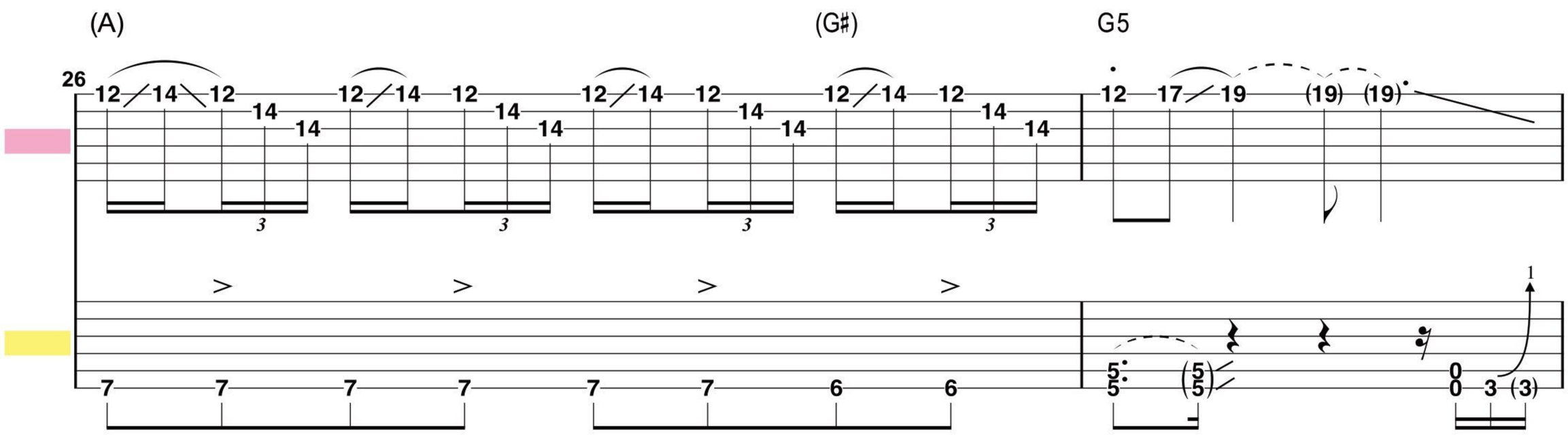


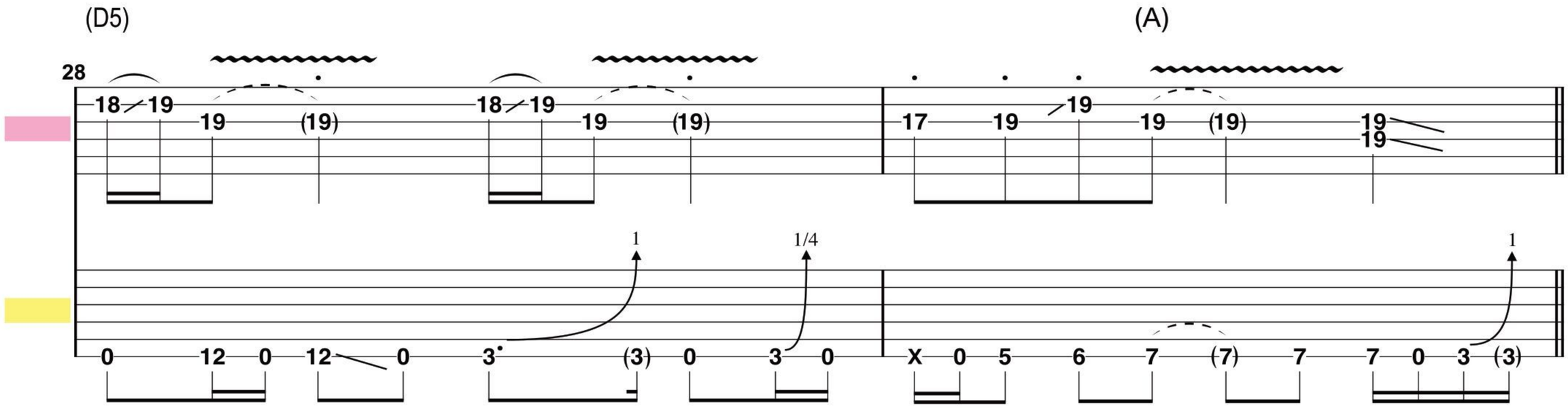
so I don't have to work
A long and happy home



C **Lap Steel Solo** (1:23)

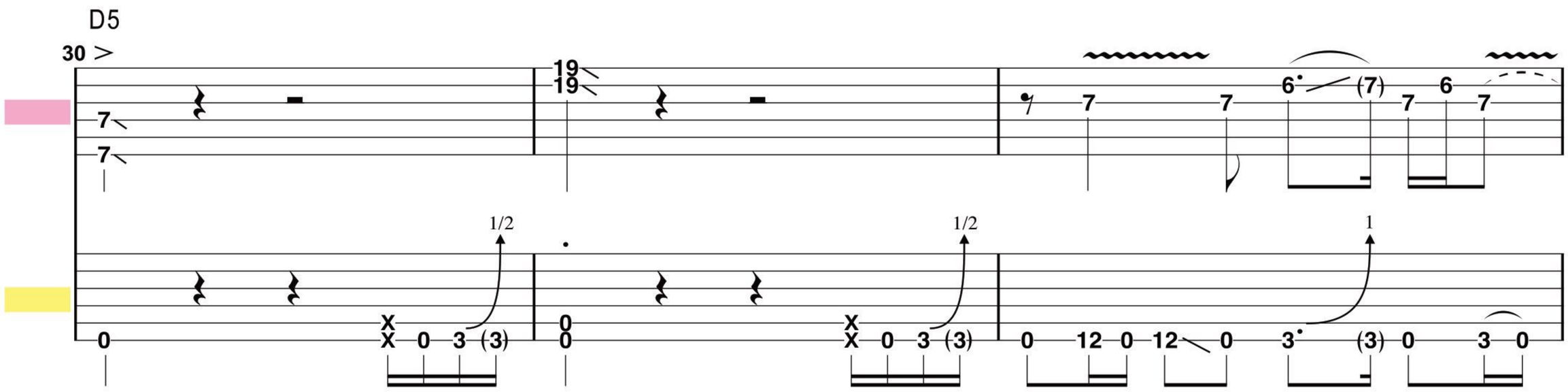




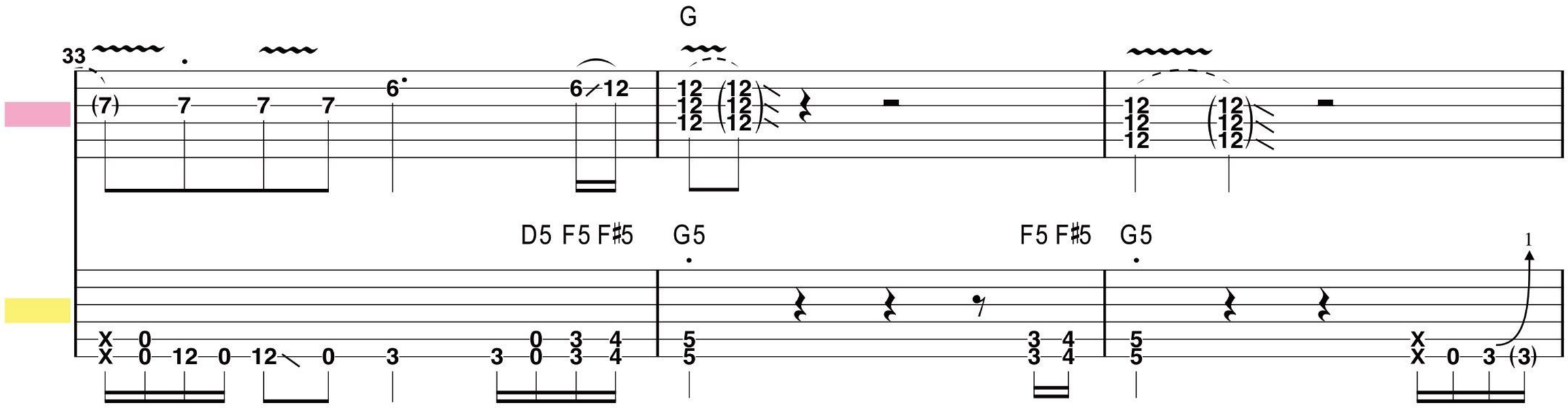


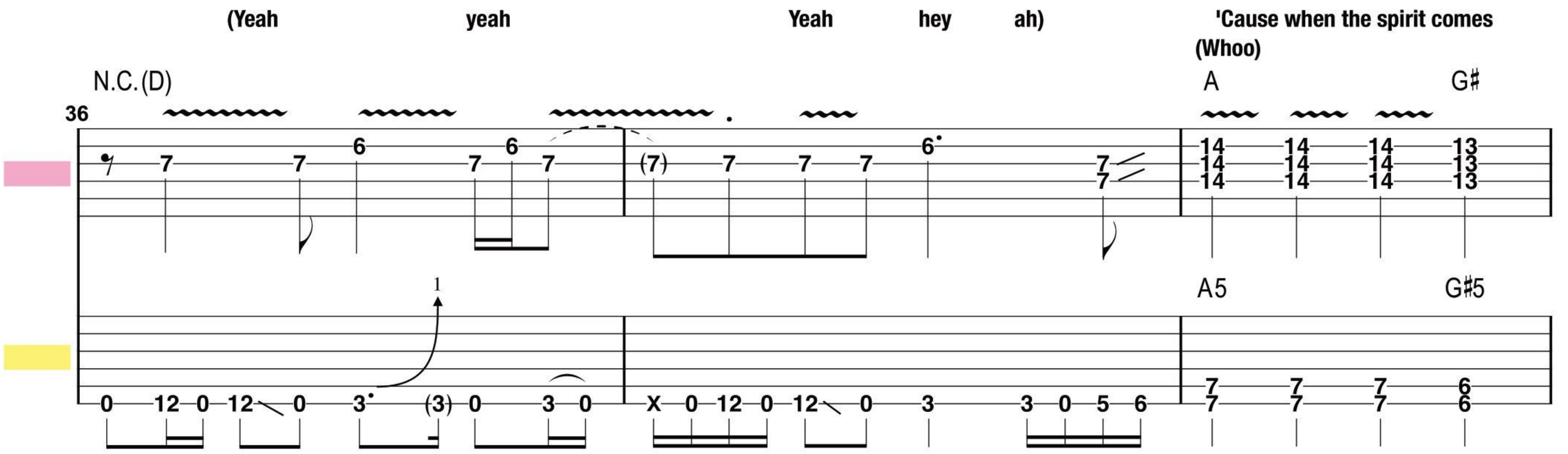
D **3rd Verse** (1:56)

I'm gonna preach these blues (These blues) I'm gonna pick my seat and sit down (Yeah yeah)



(Yeah hey ah) I'm gonna preach these blues (These blues) I'm gonna pick my seat and sit down
(Whoo whoo)





E **4th Verse** (2:30)

(Whoo whoo) I said farewell my church (Whoo)

N.C.(D) A G♯

48

May the good Lord bless you soul Bless your soul Bless your soul

G N.C.(D)

51

G5 D5 F5 D5 F5

Bless your soul Bless your soul

54

D5 F5 D5 F5

F **Outro** (3:09)

(grad. decrease tempo)

C C♯ D

56

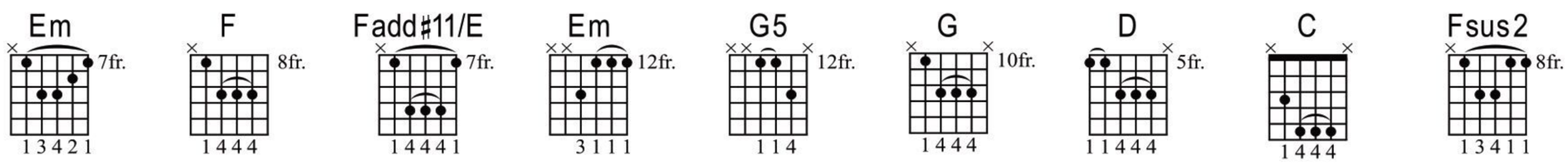
let ring

"LONDON CALLING"

The Clash

As heard on **LONDON CALLING**

Words and music by **JOE STRUMMER, MICK JONES, PAUL SIMONON** *and* **TOPPER HEADON** • *Transcribed by* **BRIAN EISENPRESSER**



A **Intro** (0:00)

Moderately Fast Rock Shuffle ♩ = 144 (♫ = ♩ ³ ♪)

Em

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

Rhy. Fig. 1 *end Rhy. Fig. 1*

"LONDON CALLING"
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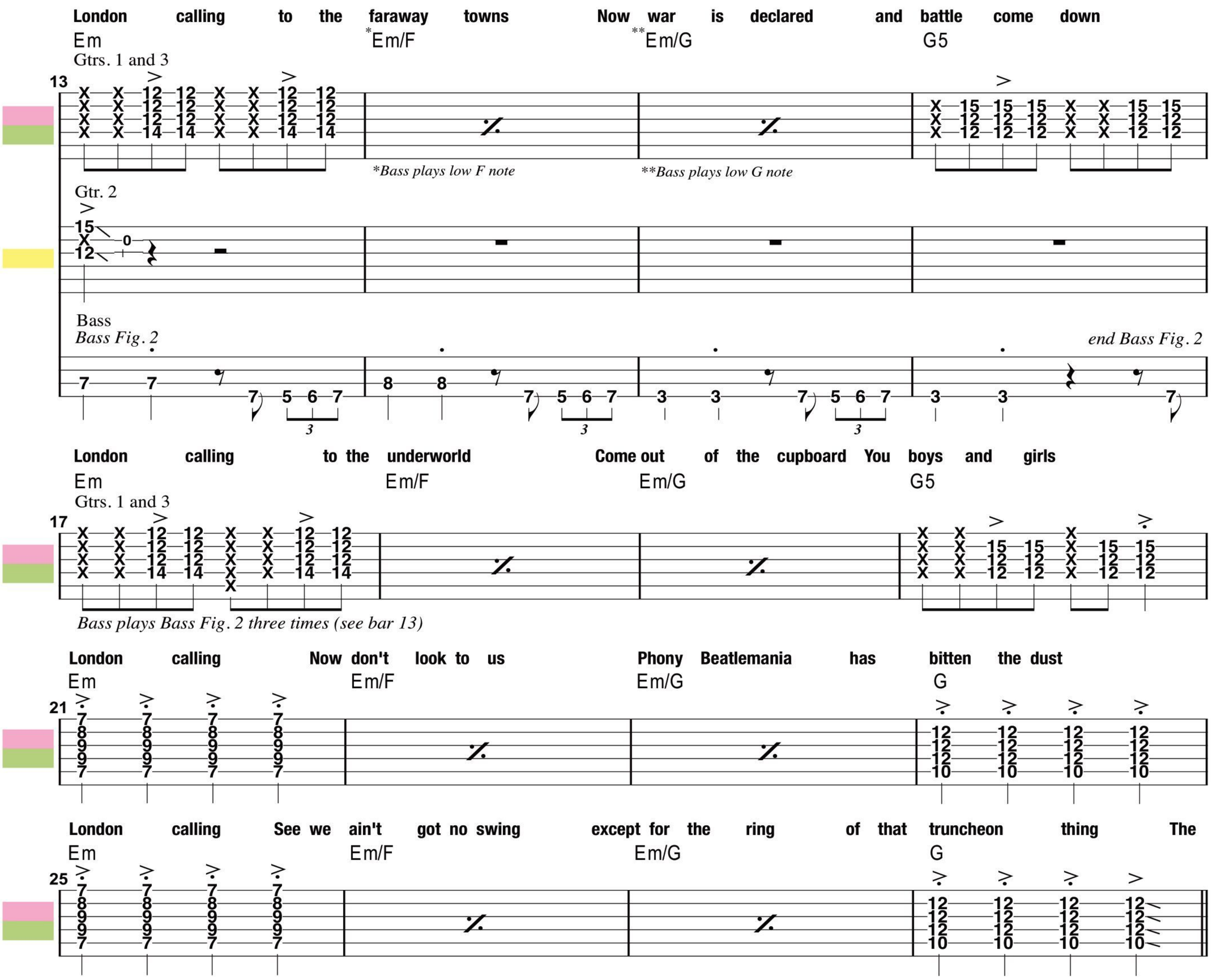
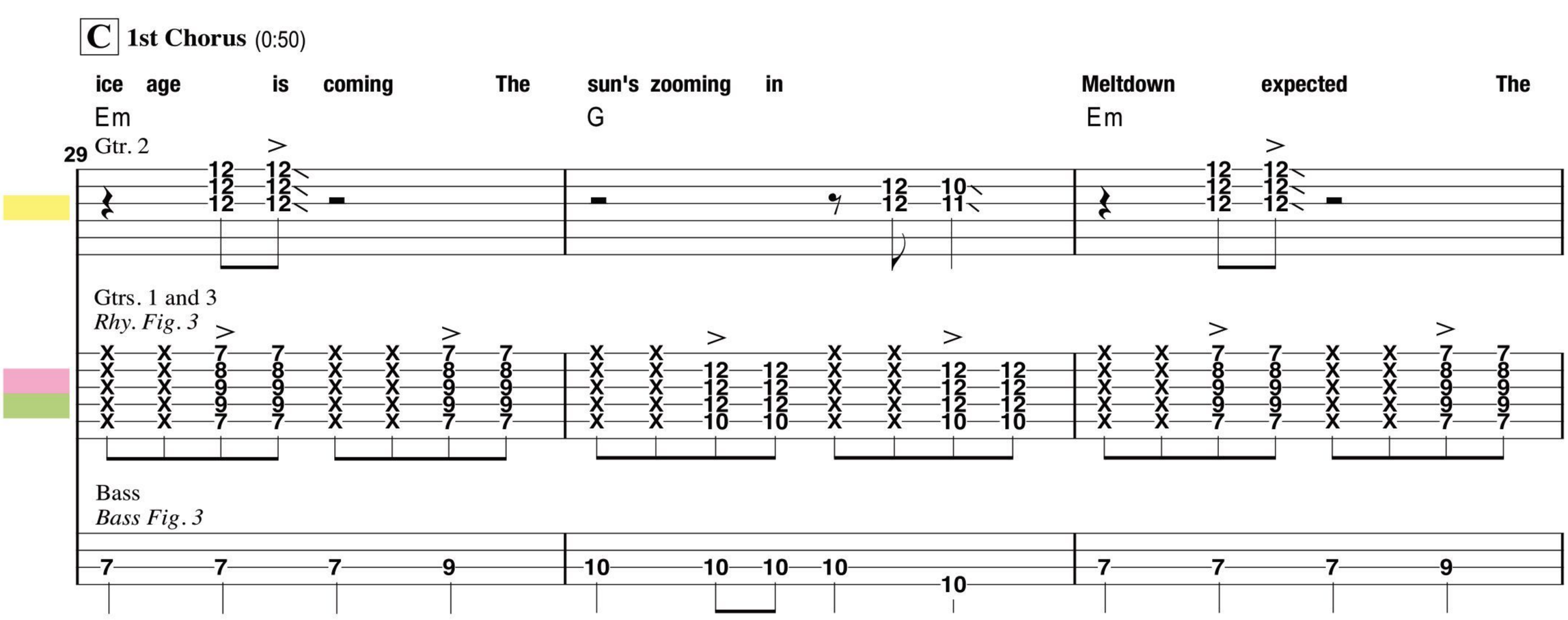
B **1st Verse** (0:21)



C **1st Chorus** (0:50)



wheat is growing thin Engines stop running but I have no fear 'cause

G Em G

32

end Rhy. Fig. 3

London is drowning and I live by the river

Em D

35

Slight P.H.

Gtr. 3

end Bass Fig. 3

D **2nd Verse** (1:06)

London calling to the imitation zone Forget it brother You can go it alone

Em F Em/G G

Gtr. 2

38

fdbk.

pitch: G

Gtr. 3

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 four times (see bar 13)

London calling to the zombies of death Quit holding out and draw another breath

Em F Em/G G

Gtr. 3

42

London calling and I don't wanna shout but while we were talking I saw you nodding out

Em Em/F Em/G G

Gtr. 1

46

Gtr. 3

Rhy. Fig. 4

London calling See we ain't got no highs except for that one with the yellowy eyes The

Em Em/F Em/G G

50

end Rhy. Fig. 4

E 2nd and 3rd Choruses (1:35, 2:20)

ice age is coming The sun's zooming in Engines stop running The

Em G Em

Gtrs. 1 and 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 simile (see bar 29)

Gtr. 5 plays Fill 1 on 3rd Chorus (see below)

Gtr. 2

54

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 simile (see bar 29)

wheat is growing thin A nuclear error but I have no fear 'cause

G Em G

57

Fill 1 (2:20)

*Gtr. 5 (w/dist.)

*backwards gtr. arr. for forwards gtr.

2nd time, skip ahead to H Outro (bar 79)

London is drowning and I I live by the river

Em D

60 Gtr. 4 (elec. w/dist.)

Gtr. 2

fdbk.

pitch: F♯

Gtrs. 1 and 3

F Interlude (1:51)

Oh

Em Em/F Em/G

Gtrs. 1 and 3 play Rhy. Fig. 1 twice (see bar 1)

rhythms produced by turning pickup selector switch off and on

63 Gtr. 4

fdbk.

pitch: E

Gtr. 2

fdbk.

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 13)

Ah ah ah ah ah ah oh Ah ah ah

G Em Em/F

66 fdbk.

N.H. fdbk.

pitches: D A

G Guitar Solo (2:05)

ah ah ah oh

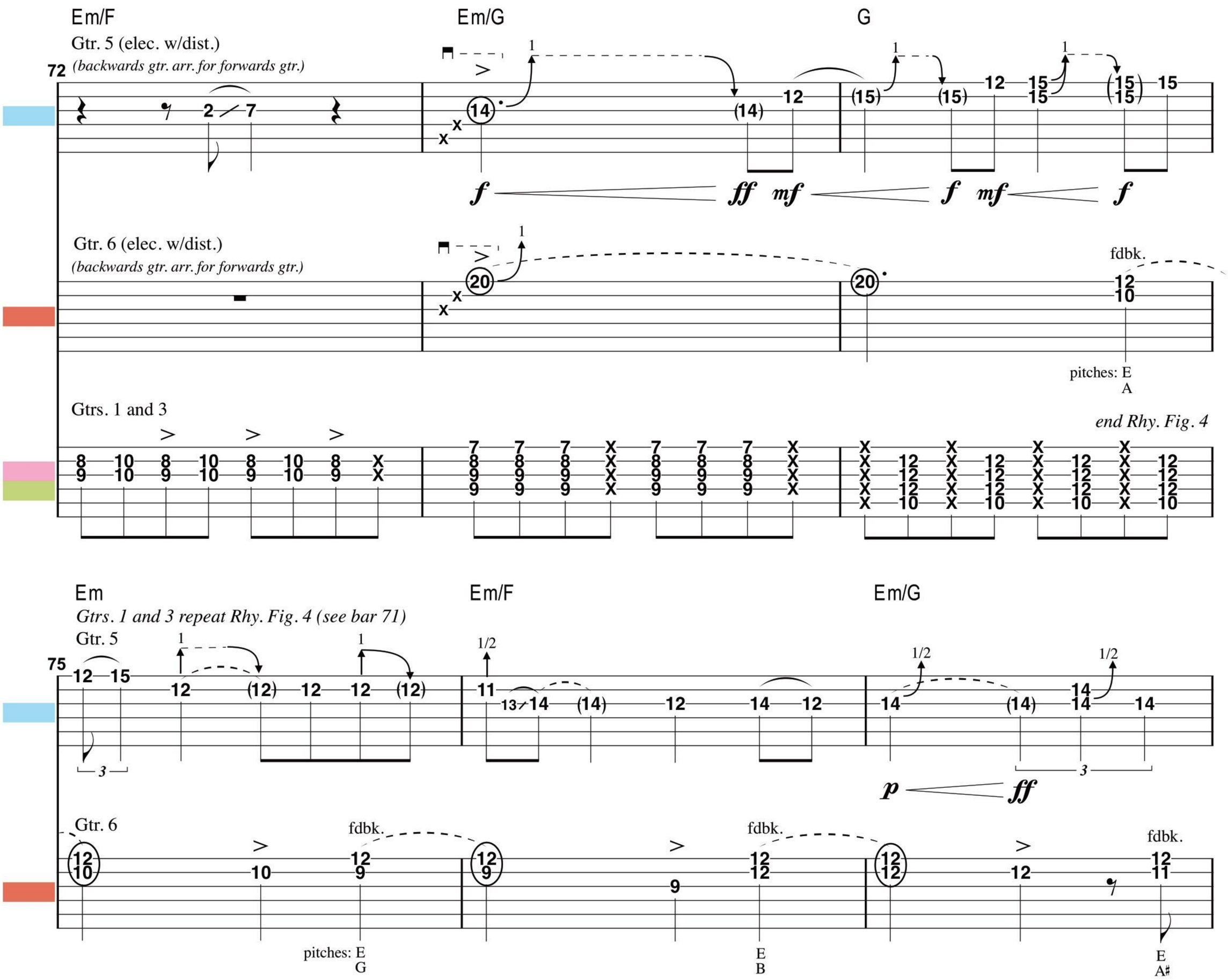
Em/G Em

Gtrs. 1 and 3

Rhy. Fig. 4

69 1/2

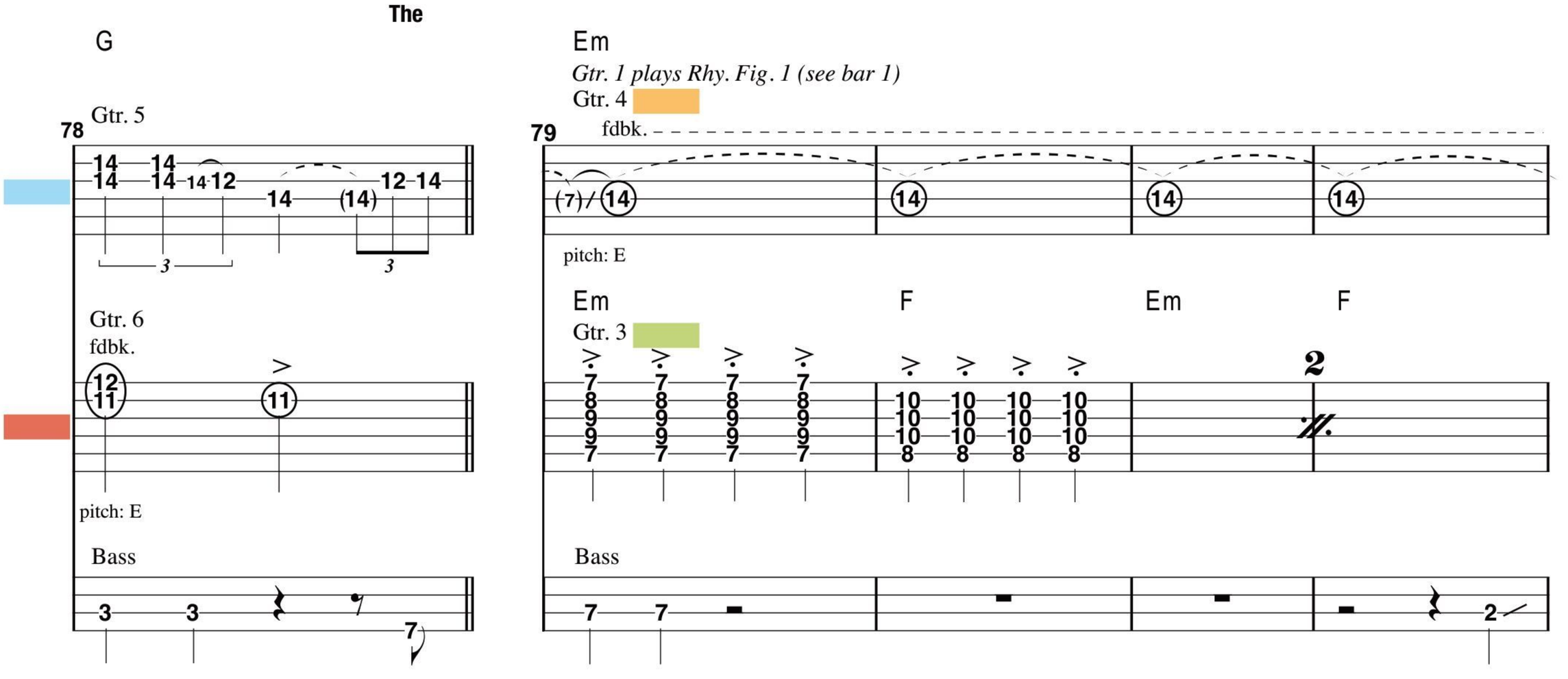
Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 twice (see bar 13)



Go back to E *3rd Chorus*

H **Outro** (2:36)

The



Now get this

Em F Em F

Gtr. 4

83 fdbk.

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 four times (see bar 9)

London calling Yes I was there too An' you know what they said Well some of it was true

Em F Em F

87 *Gtrs. 1 and 3 play Rhy. Fig. 1 simile three times (see bar 1)*

London calling at the top of the dial An' after all this won't you give me a smile

Em F Em F

91 Gtr. 4

Em C

Gtr. 2

London calling I

Em F Em F

95 microphonic fdbk.

rhythms produced by turning pickup selector switch off and on

pitch: F♯

Em Fsus2

never felt so much a' like *(w/echo repeats)*

Fade

Em

Gtr. 4

99 fdbk.

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass

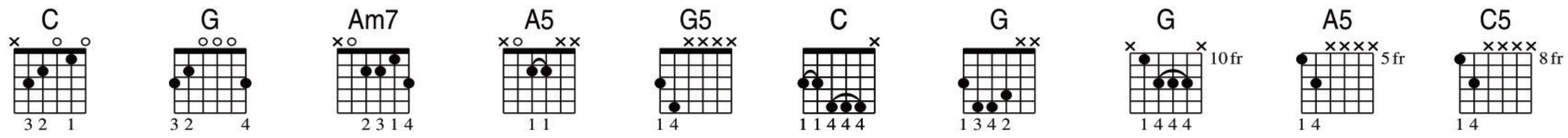
"SIMPLE MAN"

Lynyrd Skynyrd

As heard on **PRONOUNCED 'LĚH-'NÉRD 'SKIN-'NÉRD**

Words and music by **RONNIE VAN ZANT** *and* **GARY ROSSINGTON** • *Transcribed by* **HEMME LUTTJEBOER** *and* **MATT SCHARFGLASS**

All guitars are tuned down one half step (low to high: E♭ A♭ D♭ G♭ B♭ E♭).
Bass tuning (low to high): E♭ A♭ D♭ G♭.
All music sounds in the key of A♭ minor, one half step lower than written.



A Intro (0:00)

Moderately Slow ♩ = 60

C G Am7

Rhy. Fig. 1

Gtr. 1 (elec. w/dist.*) **1** *let ring throughout*

mp

**Roll back volume knob on gtr. to produce a clean tone.*

Bass

C G Am7 C G

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 three times (see bar 1)

3 Gtr. 2 (elec. w/slightly dirty tone and Univibe)

Rhy. Fig. 2

mp

Bass

1. My mama

Am7 C G Am7

6 *(repeat previous two bars)* **2**

B 1st Verse (0:33)

told me when I was young Come sit beside me my only

C G Am7 C G

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 six times (see bar 1)
Gtr. 2 (Univibe off) plays Rhy. Fig. 2 three times (see bar 5)

9 Bass

"SIMPLE MAN"
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son and listen closely to what I say And if you

12 Am7 C G Am7

do this it'll help you some sunny day Ah yeah

C G Am7 C G

15 Gtr. 2 (w/dist.) *Riff A*

Bass

2. Oh take your

Am7 C G Am7

end Riff A

18

C 2nd, 3rd and 4th Verses (1:21, 2:33, 4:30)

time don't live too fast Troubles will come and they will
(3.) lust for the rich man's gold All that you need is in your
(4.) worry you'll find yourself Follow your heart and nothin'

Bass C G Am7 C G

21 *Gtrs. 1 and 2* play Rhy. Figs. 1 and 2 three and one half times (see bars 1 and 5)*

**Gtr. 2 w/Univibe on 3rd Verse.*

pass Go find a woman yeah and you'll find love And don't for-
soul And you can do this oh babe if you try All that I
else And you can do this oh babe if you try All that I

Am7 C G Am7

24

D Chorus (1:53, 3:05, 5:01)

get son there is someone up above
want for you my son is to be satisfied
want for you my son is to be satisfied

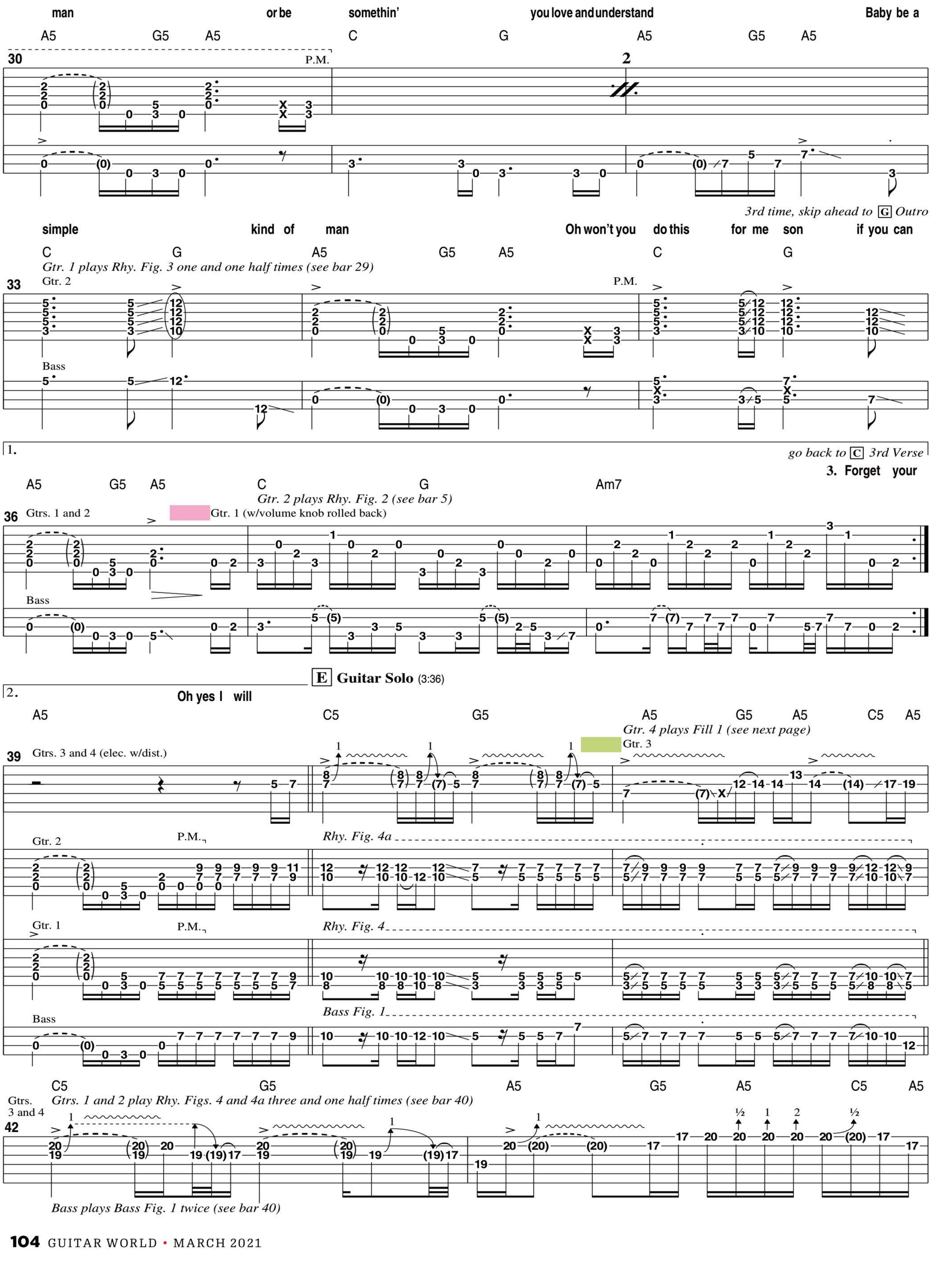
And be a simple kind of

C G A5 G5 A5 C G

27 Gtr. 1 Gtrs. 1 and 2 P.M. *Rhy. Fig. 3*

(roll up volume knob)

Bass


man or be somethin' you love and understand Baby be a
A5 G5 A5 C G A5 G5 A5
30
P.M.
2
3rd time, skip ahead to G Outro
simple kind of man Oh won't you do this for me son if you can
C G A5 G5 A5 C G
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 one and one half times (see bar 29)
33
Gtr. 2
P.M.
Bass
1.
go back to C 3rd Verse
3. Forget your
A5 G5 A5 C G Am7
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 5)
36
Gtrs. 1 and 2
Gtr. 1 (w/volume knob rolled back)
Bass
E Guitar Solo (3:36)
2.
Oh yes I will
A5 C5 G5 A5 G5 A5 C5 A5
Gtr. 4 plays Fill 1 (see next page)
39
Gtrs. 3 and 4 (elec. w/dist.)
Gtr. 3
Gtr. 2
P.M.
Rhy. Fig. 4a
Gtr. 1
P.M.
Rhy. Fig. 4
Bass
Bass Fig. 1
C5 G5 A5 G5 A5 C5 A5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Figs. 4 and 4a three and one half times (see bar 40)
Gtrs. 3 and 4
42
Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 40)

C5 G5 A5 G5 A5 C5 A5

44

C5 G5 A5 G5 A5 C5 A5 C5

Gtrs. 3 and 4

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fill 1 (see below)

46

Bass

C5 G5 A5 G5 A5 C5

Gtrs. 3 and 4

* 1

48

**Gtr. 3 plays top notes; Gtr. 4 plays bottom notes.*

Gtr. 2

Gtr. 1

Bass

F (4:14)

go back to C *4th Verse*

4. Boy don't you

C G Am7 C G Am7

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice (see bar 1)
Gtr. 2 plays Riff A (see bar 17)

50 Bass

G Outro (5:28)

play 3 times and fade

And baby be a simple man or be
somethin' you love and understand Baby be a
simple kind of man

A5 G5 (A5) C G A5 G5 A5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

54 P.M. P.M.

Bass

Fill 1 (3:40)
Gtr. 4 (elec. w/dist.)
A5

Rhy. Fill 1 (4:05)
G5 A5 G5 A5 C5 A5 C5
Gtr. 2
Gtr. 1

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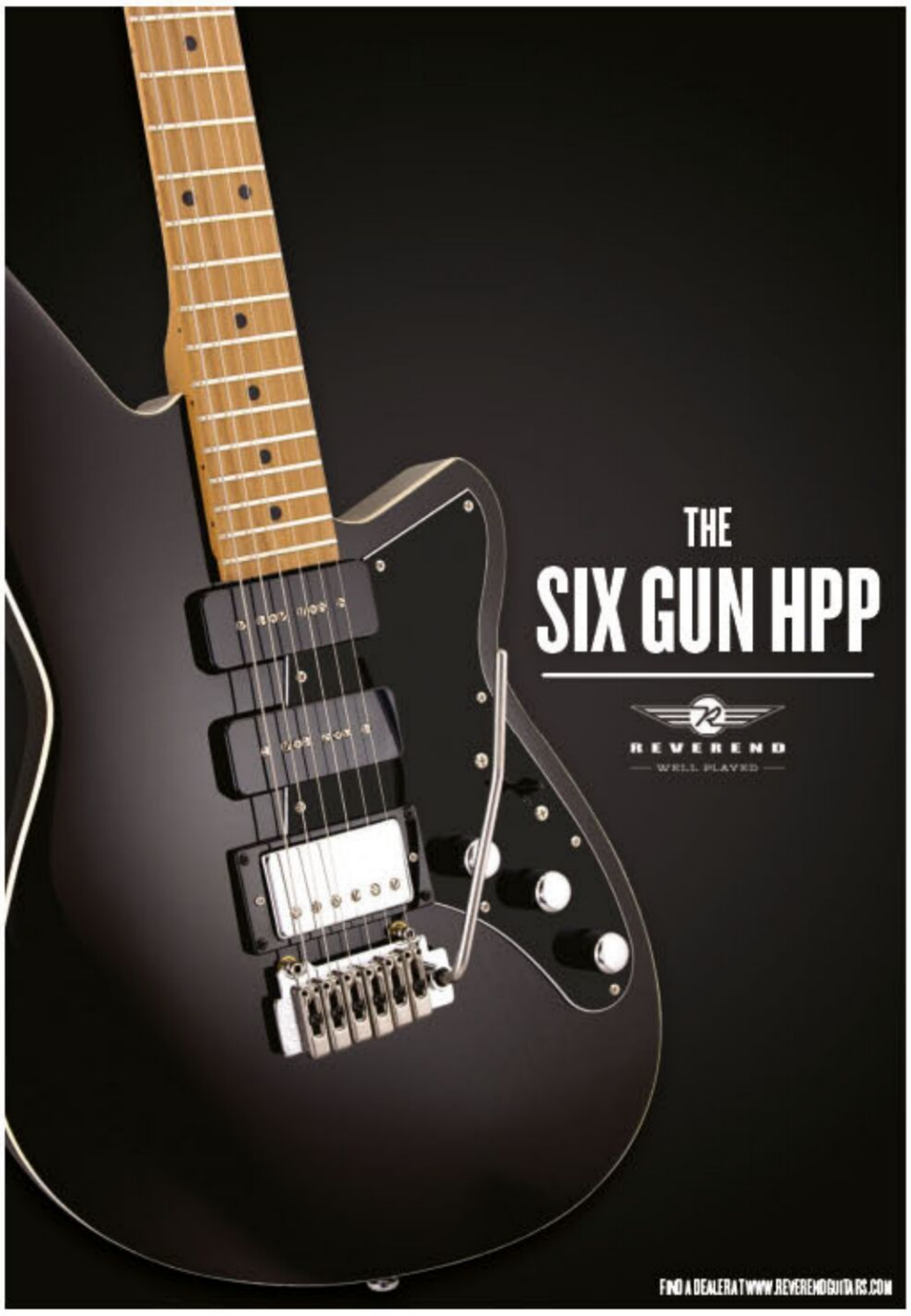

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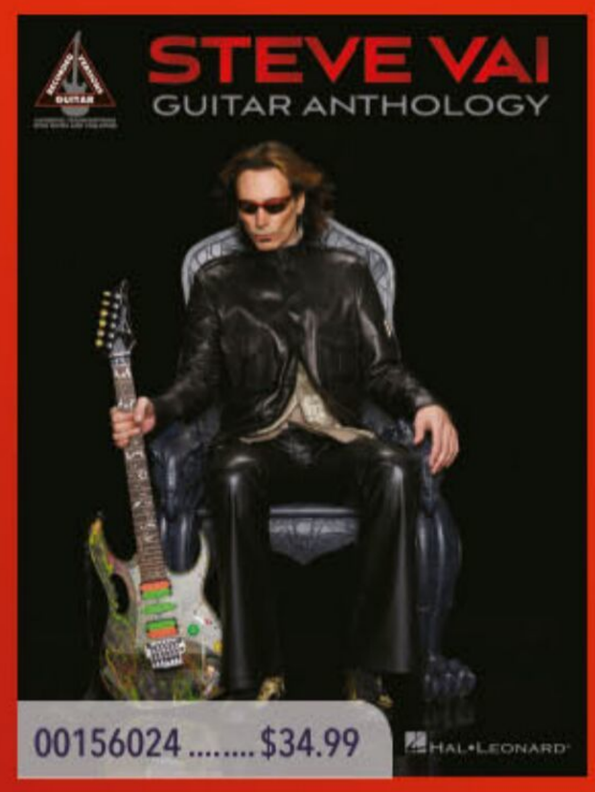

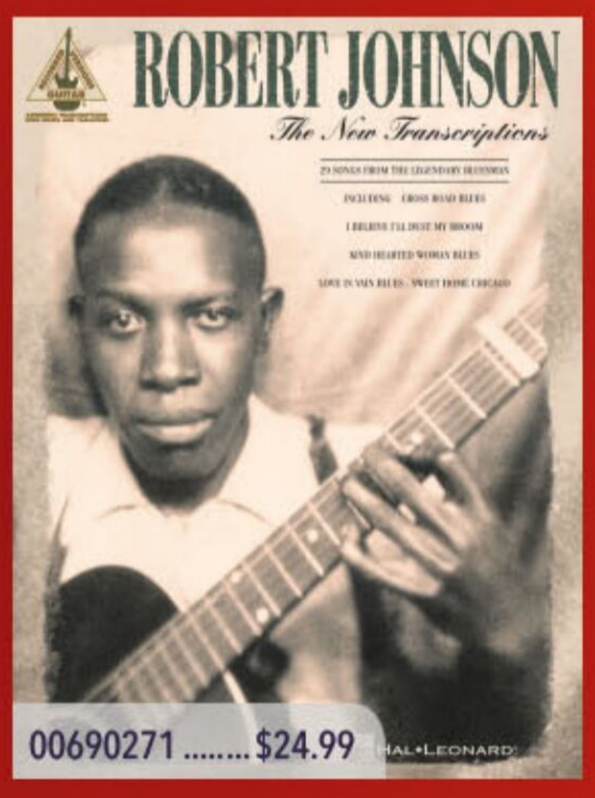

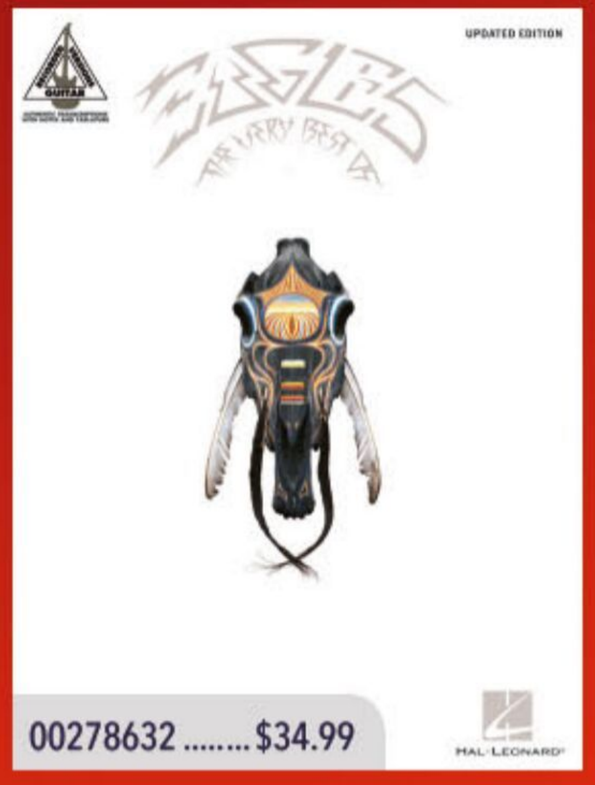

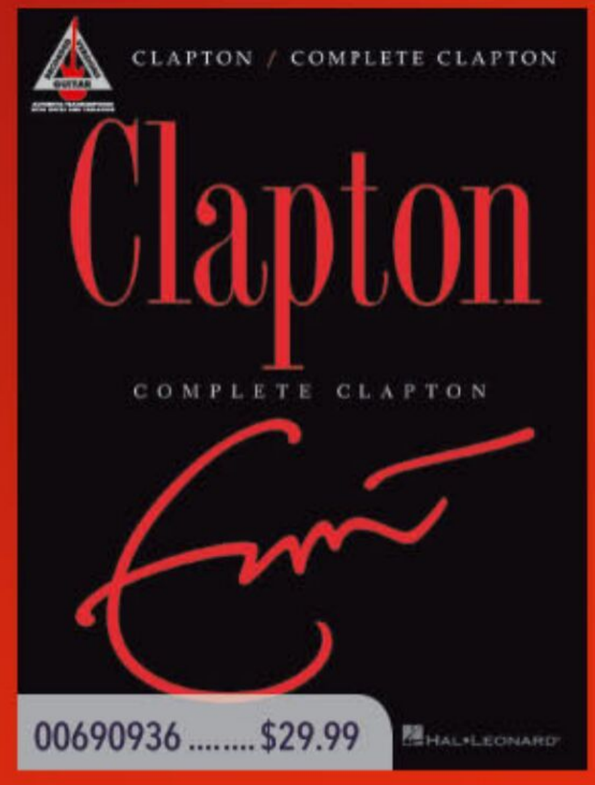

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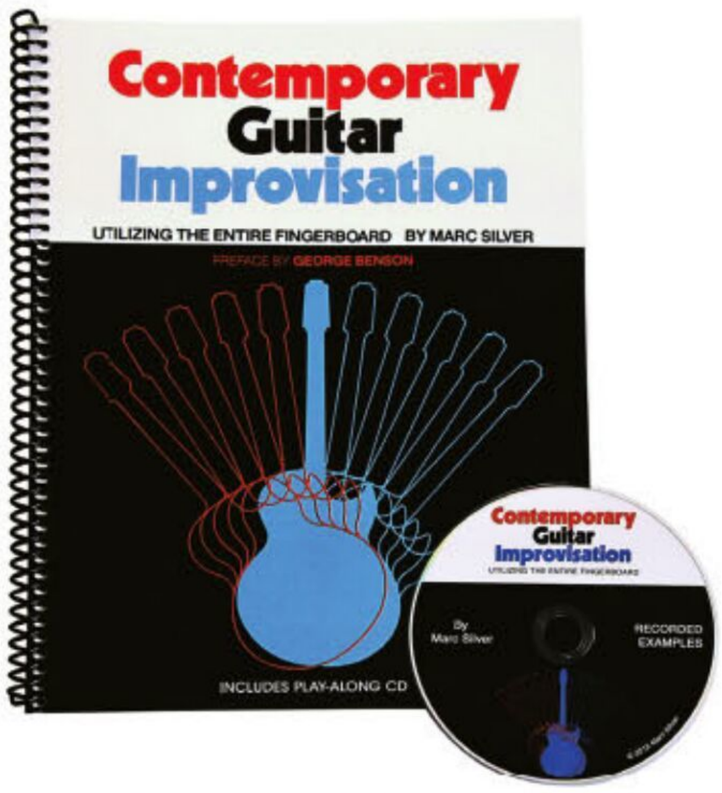

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"SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT"

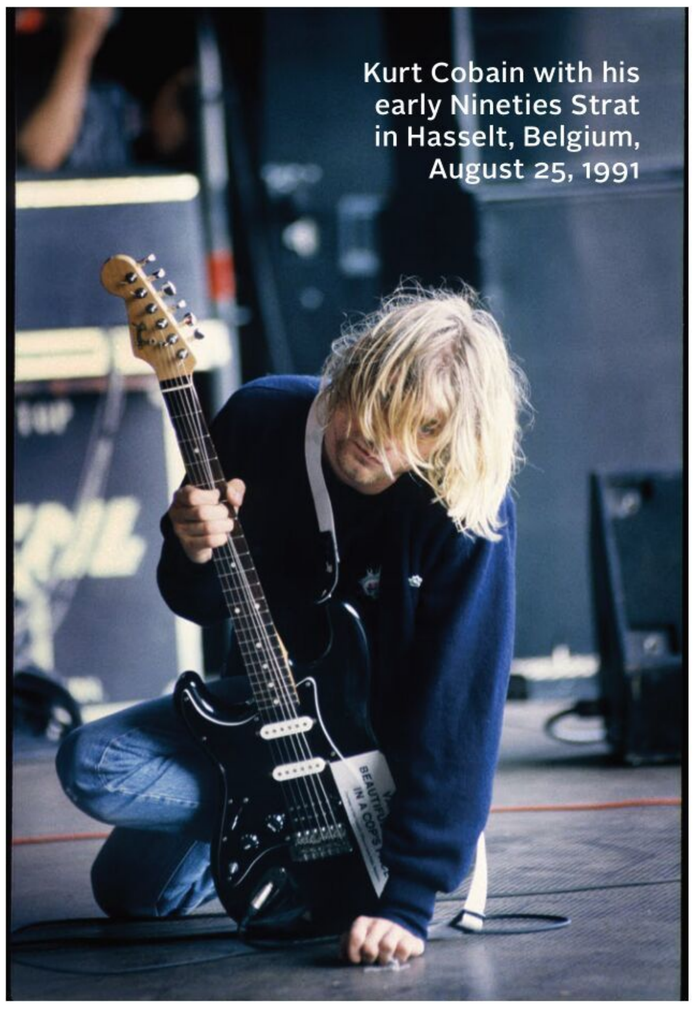
NIRVANA | *NEVERMIND*, 1991 | GUITARIST: KURT COBAIN | STORY BY CHRIS GILL

THE EFFECT THAT Nirvana's sophomore album *Nevermind* had upon popular music a few months after its release on September 24, 1991, cannot be overstated. By January 11, 1992, it knocked "the king of pop" Michael Jackson out of the #1 spot on the *Billboard 200* album chart while simultaneously hammering a final nail in the coffin for hair metal's reign as grunge began to dominate hard rock in the early Nineties. However, *Nevermind*'s influence reached well beyond the burgeoning Seattle grunge scene, ushering in mainstream acceptance of alternative rock and punk as well.

"Smells Like Teen Spirit," Nirvana's first single from *Nevermind*, succeeded largely because it brought together diverse elements — the raw power of punk, the heavily distorted guitar sonics of thrash and surprisingly sophisticated pop melodies — into a cohesive whole that resonated with a large audience of listeners. Kurt Cobain said that the song's arrangement was inspired by the contrasting "soft and quiet, then loud and hard" dynamics of the Pixies, and he effectively employed a palette of clean, chorused and distorted guitar tones to achieve that effect.

Judging from live performance videos shot directly before and after the *Nevermind* sessions, Cobain used a Fender Stratocaster with a Seymour Duncan JB humbucker installed at the bridge position to record the song. Before entering Sound City to record the album, Cobain put together a simple but effective rig consisting of a Mesa/Boogie Studio preamp, Crown Power Base 2 power amp and several Marshall 4x12 cabinets, which provided the volume output he wanted onstage. Instead of using the Mesa preamp's two channels, he preferred to play through the rhythm channel on a clean setting and use a Boss DS-1 Distortion pedal as his dirty channel. His only effect on the song was an Electro-Harmonix Small Clone chorus, played clean on the verses and in conjunction with the Boss distortion on the prechoruses and solo.

While the Studio preamp, Boss DS-1 and Small Clone provide the essence of Cobain's guitar tones on the song, several other production flourishes influence the finished recorded sound. Most importantly, the distorted rhythm guitar tracks were overdubbed, layered and panned for a wider sonic imprint, and mixing engineer Andy Wallace (who Cobain chose from a list of candidates because he worked with Slayer) sculpted the EQ on those guitar tracks with an upper midrange boost around 2.5-3kHz and a lower midrange cut from 1kHz-500Hz.


Kurt Cobain with his early Nineties Strat in Hasselt, Belgium, August 25, 1991

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- Squier Classic Vibe '70s Stratocaster HSS
- Randall RG80 1x12 combo
- Boss DS-1
- Electro-Harmonix Small Clone
- Seymour Duncan JB bridge humbucker

TONE TIP: *Since the Boss DS-1 provides the bulk of the distorted tone character, an amp with good clean tones and versatile EQ like the Randall provides a solid base.*

ORIGINAL GEAR

GUITAR: Early Nineties Japanese Fender Stratocaster with rosewood neck and Seymour Duncan JB bridge humbucker (bridge pickup), Volume: 10

AMPS: Mesa/Boogie Studio preamp (Rhythm channel, Volume: 6, Master: 5, Treble: 6, Bass: 3, Middle: 8, Reverb: 0, Rhythm Bright: On, EQ: In, 80: +3, 240: -2, 750: 0, 2200: +5, 6600: +3), Crown Power Base 2 power amp, Marshall 1960B 4x12 cabinet with Celestion G12T-75 speakers

EFFECTS: Boss DS-1 (Tone: 4, Level: 10, Distortion: 7), Electro-Harmonix Small Clone (Rate: 5, Depth switch: Up)

STRINGS/TUNING: Dean Markley Nickel Steel .010-.052/Standard

PICK: Jim Dunlop Tortex standard .60mm (orange)

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