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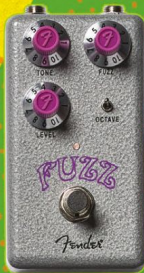
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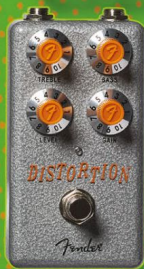




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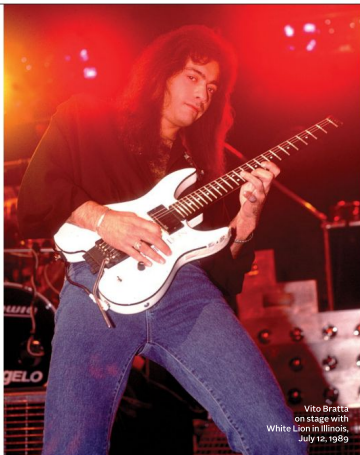
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Vito Bratta
on stage with
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WHAT IS LIFE? FUZZ!

AS YOU CAN (hopefully?) tell by the cover, this issue is an ode to the Eighties – i.e. the guitarists, gear and other stuff that made it unlike any other decade before or since. But I'm not gonna talk about the Eighties in this column (BTW, that's me in the Eighties... over to the right). After all, what more is there to say? Brad Tolinski's feature on page 28 sets the tone nicely – plus I do enough Eighties chattering on pages 44, 47, 48, 51 and 53.

Instead, I'm gonna talk about the previous decade! For the past nine-ish years (except 2020 and '21), one of my bands has performed a charity show at an old theater in NYC. Each year, we play a Beatles album plus some other Beatle-y stuff to fill out the set. This June – because it was canceled in 2020 – we're doing 1970's *Let It Be*, plus a set of tunes by the solo Beatles, most of which are from the Seventies.

In terms of effects and trademark sounds, I'm about 90 percent covered by my handy five-effects-in-one Nu-X Cerberus (delay, reverb, phaser/chorus/trem, drive and distortion) and my rotary-speaker simulator, also by Nu-X – and I can (decently) fake Harrison's slide solos with my two B-bender Teles. I just need a touch of wah for "Across the Universe" and some vintage-style fuzz for Harrison's "What Is Life." Luckily, I have two or three wah pedals lying around (Who doesn't?) – but I'm missing the vintage fuzz, which is weird considering the kind of music I typically play. Enter the super-affordable (\$60-ish in these days of ridiculous inflation!), super-satisfying EHFX Satisfaction Fuzz. It's got that razor-sharp Maestro FZ-1 sound that's just right for classic fuzz sounds ("What Is Life" was recorded in 1970), and it definitely cuts through everything else that's happening in that super-busy song.

Now... grab your Aqua Net, your fanny pack, your Tube Screamer and your Rockman XI00, and enjoy this issue's trip down memory lane! We'll be bringing you right back to mid 2022 with the next issue – in a big way.



DAMIAN FANELLI
Editor-in-Chief

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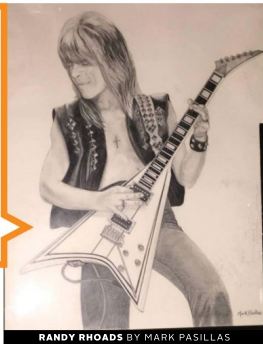
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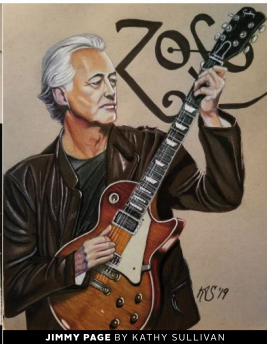
READER ART

OF THE MONTH

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



RANDY RHOADS BY MARK PASILLAS



JIMMY PAGE BY KATHY SULLIVAN

DEFENDERS of the Faith



Jack Malone

AGE: 14

LOCATION: Mooresville, NC

GUITARS: Epiphone Les Paul, Squier Bullet Stratocaster, Epiphone PR-200 acoustic with Gibson neck

SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: The Black Keys "Lonely Boy," Pearl Jam "Dance of the Clairvoyants," Foo Fighters "Rope"

GEAR I WANT MOST: Gibson Les Paul, PRS Custom 24



Steve Cavanaugh

AGE: 55

LOCATION: Chicago, IL

GUITARS: Gibson SG Junior, Melody Maker
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: All of Black Sabbath's *Paranoid*, Schenker and Trower leads and originals

GEAR I WANT MOST: Collings 290 DC S Doghair and Germino Masonette 25 head



Daniel Mlecsenkov

AGE: 34

LOCATION: Halásztelek, Hungary

GUITARS: Fender American Special Stratocaster, Brian May BMG Special, Fender CD-140SCE, Custom Craftsman by MT

SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Mostly originals (Fisherman Winters), Iron Maiden "Wasted Years," Queen "Bijou," Bikini "Ki visz haza"

GEAR I WANT MOST: Kramer SM-1 in Vintage White



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We Are the Fire

HOW HALESTORM'S LZZY HALE AND JOE HOTTINGER STORMED BACK FROM THE DEAD

By Jon Wiederhorn

▶ THEY'VE ALWAYS LOOKED confident and comfortable onstage, but no one would call Lzzy Hale or any of her Halestorm bandmates ego-fueled rock stars. They're pretty much the opposite — ever-friendly, self-deprecating, in awe of their heroes, and quick to praise others, even their opening bands.

"We're really excited because we're taking out this young band from Mexico called the Warning, and I'm looking forward to seeing them every night and being inspired by them," Hale says with tangible enthusiasm even before bringing up Halestorm's new album, *Back from the Dead*. "There are three sisters in the band. They totally shred and they're all under 21. We're like, 'Okay, we gotta step it up 'cause we're not the young guns anymore. The kids are alright!'"

And so are Halestorm. It just took a little while. During the Covid lockdown, Hale, guitarist Joe Hottinger and their bandmates weren't alright at all. Having spent the last 25 years honing her craft and finding her legs on the road, Hale became most comfortable traveling the world, meeting fans and rocking the stage with a vengeance. Being stuck at home for so long without an audience to entertain was unnerving and deflating.

"Throughout our career, we had always had a mission, something to aspire to," she says. "And when there was no touring and no seeing other people or rising to a different level it felt like there was no forward momentum. Suddenly we were just... still."

"After a while, we went, 'Are we ever



Halestorm's Joe Hottinger and Lzzy Hale onstage in the U.K.

going to play again?" adds Hottinger, who joined Halestorm in 2003 and is on all five of their albums. "We literally had the conversation: Do I even like music anymore? It sounds insane now, but we hadn't played for nine months and it was like going through withdrawal. My drug of choice is a rock show, and at that point

we were dry for 10 months, which was making us crazy."

Hale, who suffered panic attacks in high school, went from anxious to depressed. She struggled to find purpose, barely touched her guitar and spent day after day on the couch. "I had a bit of an identity crisis," she says. "The band has always →

been an extension of myself, and I always had this armor on, which protected the normal me and allowed me to become the person, this rock performer I always wanted to be. Suddenly, I'm looking at myself and saying, 'You're no longer the onstage Lizzy Hale. Now you're Elizabeth Hale who has been in her pajamas for three days doing nothing.'

Gradually, frustration mounted into low-key panic attacks. After a few miserable weeks, Hale decided to try to cope with her declining mental health the same way she did in high school: Get off the couch, write some songs and dream of rocking the planet. Halestorm had a handful of demos they had worked on before the pandemic. Hale and Hottinger gave them a quick workout, but they didn't compliment the angsty, agitated zeitgeist of 2020. So they started over. They grabbed their Gibsons, plugged in and soon wrote the title track, "Back from the Dead." Fueled by a crunchy, blues-inflected main riff and propelled by a sing-along chorus, the song was the blasting powder that stirred Halestorm from their inertia.

"After we played it, I said to the guys, 'This is exactly right. This song perfectly captures this moment!'" Hale says. "We were very much in the here and now, writing for ourselves because we had to stay sane. There were no crowds. It was exactly what we needed."

The rest of the album followed along the same lines. Most of the songs were angry, melodic, cathartic and colored with



Hale with her brand-new signature Gibson Explorerbird in Cardinal Red

experimentation. Instead of tracking the drums and guitars before recording vocals, Halestorm recorded lead vocals along with the scratch tracks and then built the rest of the song around Hale's voice.

"I love guitar, but I'm a singer, too," she says. "So it was cool to make all the guitar parts work with the vocals instead of the other way around."

"It was actually a bit of a relief for me," Hottinger says. "We already knew where all the melodies and harmonies were, so it was easier to figure out where to add candy or the different twinkly bits on top."

Not everything on *Back from the Dead* is fierce and defiant. In addition to the inescapable hooks that mollify even the heaviest songs, Halestorm tweak the emotions with the acoustic, classic rock lines, aching strings and harmonized vocals of "Terrible Things," a ballad about hope in the face of desperation. Then there's the staccato main riff of "My Redemption" and the electronic clatter and motorcycle guitars of "Bombshell." But the most unexpected moment is "Raise Your Horns," in which Halestorm turn what could have been a storming headbanger into a stirring piano ballad.

"We were totally happy making up the rules and surprising ourselves because there was no one else to do it for," Hale says. "Everybody was just on 11, pushing ourselves and playing these parts as if the world was never going to get back to any semblance of normalcy. We felt so helpless in real life, and this gave us a bit of control over the moment, which we needed because everything else was so fucking out of whack. And it really turned out to be the silver lining of a really terrible time."



INTRODUCING



Black Map
Melodoria (Minus Head)

SOUND San Francisco's Black Map are a power trio with a sound redolent of Eagles U2 cut through with a hint of shoegaze and a hefty dose of post-hardcore riff 'n' groove. Former dreg guitarist Mark Engles' heavily processed, delay-rich tone paints technicolor sonic soundscapes with a unique melodic sensibility and emotional depth.

KEY TRACK "Super Deluxe"



Baabes
Baabes (Riot Records)

SOUND Boston garage/punk-band Baabes' first album mixes classic Stooges-fueled punk rock with elements of New York Dolls sleaze to deliver a visceral, effervescent, heart-pumping record overflowing with killer hooks aligned to wryly amusing lyrics. Frankie Sinn's minimalist, riff-centric guitar assault delivers equal parts Wayne Kramer and James Williamson.

KEY TRACK "Too Cool for Pants"



Blue Violet
Late Night Calls (Me & My Records)

SOUND U.K.-based husband-and-wife duo Sam and Sarah Gotley, working under the banner Blue Violet, conjure a set of atmospheric, haunting, multi-textured songs that defy easy categorization. With deep, resonant baritone guitars and sweeping, expansive vocals,

the album plays out like the soundtrack to a lost David Lynch movie.

KEY TRACK "White Beaches"

Get your very own Hitmaker! (Hits not included)

...AND OTHER NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

FENDER RECENTLY HONORED funk guitar legend Nile Rodgers with a new signature guitar, the Hitmaker Stratocaster. Rodgers' ultra-bright, clean and propulsive guitar work — a great deal of it played on a white Strat with the neck of a 1959 model and the body of a '60 — has powered innumerable hits, from Madonna's "Like a Virgin" to Daft Punk's "Get Lucky" three decades later (and let's not forget *Family Style* by Jimmie and Stevie Ray Vaughan).

The new Hitmaker Strat is a faithful recreation of that beloved anchor of Rodgers' arsenal, and it's the first production-line Rodgers signature Strat (an ultra-limited edition Custom Shop recreation of the Hitmaker was introduced in 2014). Finished in Olympic White, the Hitmaker Strat is built with a slimmed-down, more aggressively contoured 1960 Strat alder body and a '59 Strat-profile, one-piece maple neck with a 9.5-inch radius fingerboard sporting 21 medium jumbo frets. Its trio of custom single coils are voiced specifically to replicate the quack and bell-like chime of Rodgers' original guitar.

"I've heard people say the Hitmaker is a \$2 billion guitar," Rodgers said in a statement. "When playing it, I've been a part of making some of the biggest-selling records of all time: David Bowie, Chic, Diana Ross, Daft Punk, Madonna and so many others. All I know is that it's been my constant companion for almost 50 years. I can't stop myself from playing it for hours each and every day."

The guitar sells for \$2,599, a deal that includes a custom vintage-style case that sports a "Hitmaker"-embroidered interior, plus there's a

certificate of authenticity. — Jackson Maxwell

THE SECRET IS OUT

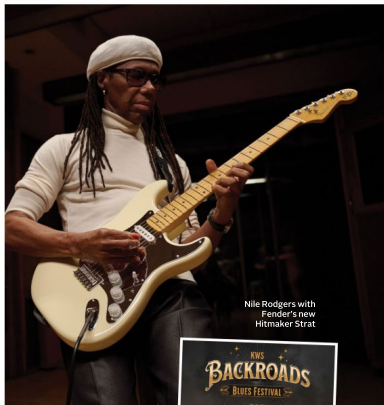
KIM THAYIL, HIS Soundgarden bandmate and Pearl Jam drummer Matt Cameron and Nirvana's Krist Novoselic have formed a new supergroup, 3rd Secret. The band also features Bubba DuPre, guitarist for D.C. hardcore vets Void and Cameron side-project Hater, plus vocalists Jennifer Johnson and Jillian Raye, who also feature in Novoselic's *Giants in the Trees*.

3rd Secret announced the band and surprise-released their self-titled debut album simultaneously in April. It was recorded and mixed by legendary grunge producer Jack Endino, and it's available to hear on streaming services now. The record certainly delivers on the promise of its lineup, with sinewy, off-kilter riffs and the odd frenzied solo from Thayil. But there's an altogether folkier acoustic thread running through the album, too, which nods to landmark grunge recordings such as Alice in Chains' *Jar of Flies* and Nirvana's *MTV Unplugged*.

The new supergroup have launched a charmingly old-school website, 3rdsecret.com, where you can keep up to date with their future activities. — Michael Astley-Brown

OZZY TEAMS WITH IOMMI, E.C. & BECK

GET READY FOR a new studio album from the John Mayall of metal, Ozzy Osbourne. The Prince of Darkness broke the news on Instagram in early April, saying, "I'm so happy to let everyone know that I finished my new album this week and delivered



Nile Rodgers with Fender's new Hitmaker Strat

it to my label, Epic Records." Best of all, the album, Osbourne's first since the Andrew Watt-produced *Ordinary Man* in 2020, will feature who's who of six-string legends, including Ozzy's former Black Sabbath bandmate, Tony Iommi, who wrote a track for the album. Other big names include Jeff Beck, Eric Clapton and, of course, Zakk Wylde.

"[The album] definitely sounds slamming," Wylde told MusicRadar last October. "The same goes for all the guys — what Tony Iommi played, and then Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck. It's all killer for sure. On those tracks, I'm playing rhythm guitar for my heroes... It's crazy! It sounds awesome and I'm beyond honored to be doing it." Watch this space for more information. — Damian Fanelli

BLUES HITS THE ROAD

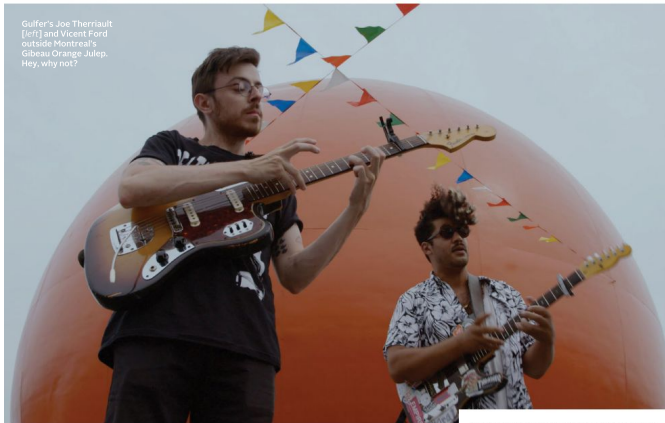
KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD has announced the Backroads Blues Festival, a "traditional touring blues festival" for which he's recruited



few blues guitar titans Buddy Guy and Christine "Kingfish" Ingram. The six-date tour — which has been envisaged as an annual event — will see the trio visit Rhode Island, New York, Massachusetts and Virginia in August.

Of the event, Shepherd said, "These days, nobody mounts a traditional touring blues festival. I conceptualized one that will give people a chance to see the best of the best all in one place. We are extremely excited that Buddy Guy will be with us for each show. He is, after all, the living king of the blues. Also worthy of great respect is Christine 'Kingfish' Ingram, who is revitalizing the blues in a potent and powerful way. We're featuring three successive generations of blues artists, underscoring the resonance of the genre." — Matt Owen

Gulfer's Joe Therriault [left] and Vincent Ford outside Montreal's Gibeau Orange Julep. Hey, why not?



Gulfer

HOW THESE MONTREAL INDIE ROCKERS TAP INTO AN INVENTIVE APPROACH TO SONGWRITING

By Jim Beaugez

▶ MONTREAL QUARTET GULFER create a swirl of indie-rock energy through liberal doses of math-rock rhythms, emo intensity, shoegaze textures and pop melodic sensibilities — plus an unexpected heaping of two-hand tapping executed by guitarists Vincent Ford and Joe Therriault.

That said, the duo's dexterous tapping excursions aren't window dressing, shredder showmanship or throwback irony. They're the core of Gulfer's entire sound and the engine for delivering their mind-bending melodies, as heard on the recent singles "Greetings" and "Barely," released in July by Topshelf Records.

"Tapping is really easy to play [*when it's*] the same notes over and over again, and I think people think of tapping as that," Therriault says. "What we like is some kind of melodic component. If you can get a chord progression in there, then you feel like it's moving."

Founding guitarist Ford, whose jazz background informs the band's use of unconventional chord shapes, began to experiment with tapping and songwriting

after getting into bands like Tera Melos. "Nobody was doing that kind of thing around me," he says, although "some were doing it in a Steve Vai-type of way, which is cool but was not my cup of tea at all," he adds.

At early Gulfer shows, Therriault recalls watching from the crowd and being amazed by how Ford could sing while tapping with both hands. When he joined up, Ford showed him the fundamentals and the pair became the band's driving musical force. In addition to quality guitar technique, their secret sauce for keeping the dynamic interplay lively lies in their use of compression and other stompboxes that color their songs with distortion,

The duo's dexterous tapping excursions aren't window dressing, shredder showmanship or throwback irony. They're the core of Gulfer's entire sound

reverb and delay.

"Compression helps with tapping," Therriault says, "because naturally, the volume you're going to get from strumming versus the volume you're going to get from hitting one note at a time is totally different. For tapping you want your volume to be louder, but if we're playing a quiet part, I'll turn the compressor off so we can reign in that volume and then hit back later. If we were to have the compressor on all the time, you're not going to get those dynamics."

Adds Ford, "You need to be precise, tap hard enough, and don't let notes resonate that shouldn't resonate. Those are all things I did for an excessive period of time."

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** '62 Reissue Fender Jaguar (Therriault); G&L ASAT Classic (Ford)
- **AMPS** Fender Deluxe Reverb (Therriault); Fender Hot Rod Deluxe (Ford)



Momma's
Etta Friedman (left)
and Allegra Weingarten

5 FIVE QUESTIONS MOMMA SAYS...

GETTING TO KNOW MOMMA'S ALLEGRA WEINGARTEN
AND ETTA FRIEDMAN

BROOKLYN-BASED INDIE rockers Momma just released *Household Name*, their third — and clearly most accomplished — album. The tunes — including lead-off singles “Medicine,” “Rockstar” and “Speeding 72” — just can’t help but recall the golden age of Nineties alt-rock, helped along by Allegra Weingarten and Etta Friedman’s angular guitars and “I’m just sittin’ here watching MTV on a Sunday afternoon in 1994” vocals. But the duo inject more than enough of their own personalities to give Momma a unique sonic signature. All things considered, the effect is nothing short of addictive.

Q: *Household Name* is quite a progression from 2020’s *Two of Me*, isn’t it?

FETTA FRIEDMAN: We had a lot of time, and that made such a difference. The last album was very concept-based; this time the songs aren’t linked to each other in any way, which was a lot easier to do.

ALLEGRA WEINGARTEN: We’ve never really done anything that sounds this polished, and a lot of credit for that has to go to our bass player, Aron Kobayashi Ritch, who produced the album.

Q: You interweave your guitar lines so that the sum is always much bigger than the individual parts. How much planning goes into it?

WEINGARTEN: We’re really good at sensing what each other is looking for. Neither of us had a really fleshed-out, developed style when we started playing together when we were 16, so it just happened naturally.

Q: The Nineties influence on your music gets mentioned pretty often. How did you get into those bands?

WEINGARTEN: My dad was a music journalist, so he’d always be getting sent CDs. Our garage was like a music library, and I’d spend hours in there when I was 13.

FRIEDMAN: My favorite bands ever were the Breeders and the Pixies, but I found Joan Jett at a pretty young age, and she really had a big influence on me.

Q: Did listening to these bands lead you directly to the guitar?

WEINGARTEN: I guess so. I started when I was 13, playing acoustic. Getting my first electric in high school really turned things around, along with the influence of Pavement, Smashing Pumpkins and Nirvana.

FRIEDMAN: Both of my brothers are pretty musical — and I was always inspired by what they were doing. I got my first acoustic when I was 12 and was definitely very inspired by Joan Jett at that point.

Q: What are your main guitars and amps?

WEINGARTEN: Live, I play a Gibson SG. For the record there were a lot of cool guitars and amps in the studio that we used. We don’t actually have any amps — we’ve been using the backline of the bands we play with.

FRIEDMAN: I use a Fender Duo-Sonic with a humbucker and a singlecoil. Everybody makes fun of it, but I think it’s a really cool guitar. We’re going to have to get our own amps soon. Maybe Fender can give us a sponsorship deal! — Mark McStea



WHAT'S ON MY PLAYLIST



SARA NORREGAARD OF KONVENT

1

“Si-XIV”
Dvne

I really love how the guitar varies and how the tempo changes throughout the song. It goes from this really deep to this very emotional guitar — and back again. Their latest album, *Eternen Enka*, is amazing. It’s really been a big inspiration.

2

“Walk with Me in Hell”
Lamb of God

This is a no-brainer. The riffs are so amazing throughout the song. This is a song where there’s no time to sit down. The guitar just runs 100 percent, and I feel like headbanging every time it comes on.

3

“Marrow”
Yob

My early days with the doom genre were all about this song. When I hear the guitar, it always gets me so emotional. It’s an almost 19-minute-long song and the guitar is just so beautiful. It’s one of those songs you really wish you had written.

4

“No Hope in Sight”
Paradise Lost

I’d love to go on a tour with this band. Kind of little guitar solos everywhere in this song. I feel like the guitar has this very raw and no-bullshit sound. Perfect!

5

“The Killchain”
Bolt Thrower

I mean, come on! Who doesn’t love the main riff in this song? It’s a very monotonous guitar, but somehow it just works. I’ve always admired Bolt Thrower for their catchy riffs — and with very few elements. It’s a shame they don’t make music anymore.

KONVENT’S NEW ALBUM: *CALL DOWN THE SUN*, IS OUT NOW VIA NAPALM RECORDS.

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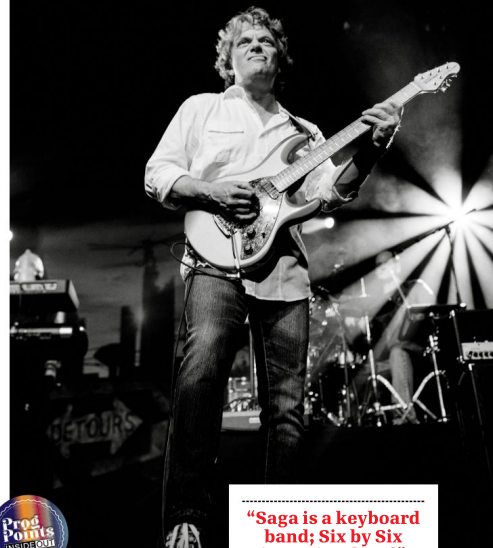
Six by Six

"I'VE BEEN DREAMING ABOUT THIS FOR YEARS" — LONGTIME SAGA GUITARIST IAN CRICHTON LETS HIS INNER SHREDDER OFF THE LEASH WITH HIS NEW POWER TRIO

By Gregory Adams

▶ IAN CRICHTON EXPLAINS that he "got a lot of mojo back" while recording the self-titled debut from Six by Six, the longtime Saga guitarist's new collaborative project with keyboardist/bassist Robert Berry and Saxon drummer Nigel Glockier. Fans of the Canadian prog veteran can hear the proof in his effervescent playing, whether surging through melodic, shred-heavy runs in tandem with gospel choirs ("Save the Night") or running roughshod on his whammy bar through a series of choice leads. You could argue Crichton's gleefully aggressive approach was a natural reaction to Saga's last album, 2017's *Symmetry*, which was a crystalline, acoustic reimagining of various hits from their five-decade career. Then again, Crichton suggests it's been a lifelong quest to get as in-the-red as he is on *Six by Six*.

"To tell you the truth, I've been dreaming about this for years," he says of now working in a guitar-forward power trio. "In the very early days of Saga — like the first three records — people were going, 'where's the guitar; [because] I was in amongst the keyboards playing a third harmony. When we got to 'On the Loose,'



"Saga is a keyboard band; Six by Six is a guitar band"

— IAN CRICHTON

[*Saga's* highest-charting Billboard single, off 1981's *Worlds Apart*] there was a lot of guitar happening, [but] it took [some] screaming and shouting to get up there. Still, Saga is a keyboard band; [*Six by Six*] is a guitar band."

That *Six by Six* begins with a song called "Yearning to Fly" is fairly fitting, Crichton rising to the occasion on the chunky rocker with an uproarious swell of trills and clouds-bursting vibrato. That intense expressiveness is no Icarus-like folly, though, with Crichton's style ultimately complementing the tune's compact, prog-pop arrangement. He elaborates: "I like to play quick, but I really like things that make you feel: notes, melody and attitude. That's what I try to get across with my soloing."

Primarily recorded at Berry's Soundtek Studios in San Jose, album epics like "Reason to Feel Calm" and "Battle of a Lifetime" expertly bend and sway through ethereal synth-scaping, hard-edged waltzes and trem bar-finessed leads. Still, Crichton notes that he adopted a looser, off-the-cuff guitar aesthetic that differs from the "super precise" Saga catalog.

"I didn't pay so much attention on this record to being clean, or worry about a string rattling," he says. "There's some noise in there, but it all adds to the ambience — that's where the mojo comes in, when you're not worried about anything."

+ AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** Ernie Ball Music Man Silhouette Special, 1964 Fender Strat, nylon- and steel-string Takamine acoustics
- **AMP** 180-watt Diezel Herbert, Roland JC-120, 100-watt Soldano rack mount

Vio-lence

ON THEIR BLAZING NEW EP, PHIL DEMMEL & CO. CAPTURE THE AGGRESSIVE SPIRIT OF THE ICONIC THRASHERS' EARLIEST RELEASES

By Jon Wiederhorn

▶ WHEN INFLUENTIAL Bay Area thrash band Vio-lence fell apart in 1993, co-founder Phil Demmel soldiered on for a few years with the ill-fated Torque. Then, in 2003 he joined ex-Vio-lence guitarist Robb Flynn in Machine Head. In January 2018, toward the end of his tenure with Machine Head, Demmel took part in an all-star benefit show for Vio-lence vocalist Sean Killian, who was suffering from stage four liver cirrhosis and needed a transplant.

"He looked sickly, man," Demmel says, recalling the day he saw Killian at his worst. "I didn't know if I was ever gonna see him again."

That's why Demmel was so surprised when Killian called him in early 2019 to play a Vio-lence reunion show in Oakland. "I thought, 'There's no way you're talking about getting back onstage with the band. You're way too sick,'" Demmel says. "But sure enough, that's what he meant. It turned out he had the liver transplant and was doing great."

The resurrection concert went so well that Vio-lence scheduled more dates and made plans to work on a new release. At first, Demmel tried to rework songs he wrote for the band in 2001 that never got released. But that wasn't happening.

"They sounded like 2001 Vio-lence," he says. "Back then, everyone was tuning way down and getting all caught up in this groove-metal thing. So I started fresh. I wanted to capture the aggressive sound of



Phil Demmel — and his ubiquitous Jackson — onstage in Hollywood in 2016

the first Vio-lence record, which I wrote when I was in high school."

The resulting five-song EP, *Let the World Burn*, is a fiery amalgam of old-school Vio-lence thrash with more mature, cohesive arrangements. To cement the lineup, Vio-lence recruited ex-Fear Factory bassist Christian Olde Wolbers and guitarist Bobby Gustafson, who played with Overkill from 1982 to 1990, and whose tight, rapid downpicking and legato leads compliment Demmel's rapid runs.

"Vio-lence opened for Overkill in 1989 and [our drummer] Perry [Strickland] stayed in touch with Bobby. So when we needed a guitarist, he recommended Bobby, who's a monster player with awesome hands."

Even though *Let the World Burn* is

"I wanted to do five really good songs that were like rapid punches to the face and then get out and leave listeners wanting more"

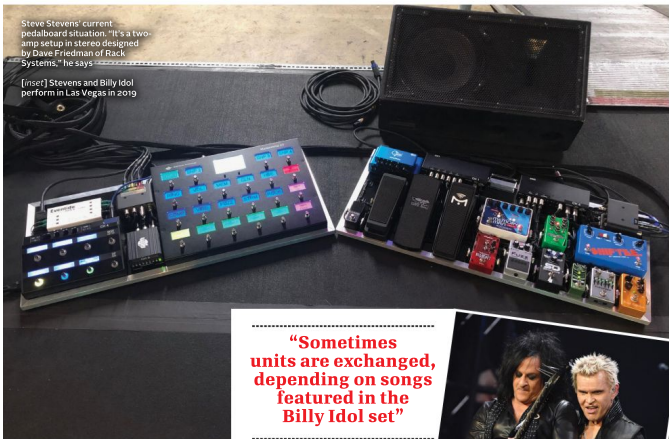
— PHIL DEMMEL

only 25 minutes long, it was created with as much determination and hostility as Vio-lence injected into their first two full albums. Despite having plenty of time to work during the coronavirus lockdown, Demmel only worked on the five songs for the EP.

"So many bands make these 70-minute-long records that are almost impossible to sit through," he says. "I wanted to do five really good songs that were like rapid punches to the face and then get out and leave listeners wanting more."

Steve Stevens' current pedalboard situation. "It's a two-amp setup in stereo designed by Dave Friedman of Rack Systems," he says.

[inset] Stevens and Billy Idol perform in Las Vegas in 2019



"Sometimes units are exchanged, depending on songs featured in the Billy Idol set"

MY PEDALBOARD STEVE STEVENS

WHAT THE LONGTIME BILLY IDOL GUITARIST SEES WHEN HE LOOKS DOWN

By Joe Bosso

▶ "HERE'S MY CURRENT touring pedalboard," says Billy Idol's righthand man, guitarist Steve Stevens. "It's a two-amp setup in stereo designed by Dave Friedman of Rack Systems. At left, the Line 6 HX effects unit is routed through the amps' send-and-receive. All programs are switched via the RJM Mastermind. With this system, everything is buffered, and when effects aren't selected they're completely out of the signal chain."

"On the right is my assortment of pedals. Sometimes units are exchanged, depending on songs featured in the Billy Idol set. The most important factor is the fact that the system is super quiet. We found that running long cables back to a rack created noise issues, so that's why everything is now at my feet. The Strymon Ojai is a power supply, as is the Eventide on the Line 6 unit."

■ IF I HAD TO CHOOSE ONLY ONE PEDAL FOR A FULL SHOW:

"If I had to choose a desert island pedal, it'd be the J. Rockett Rockaway Archer. It gives me the gain I need to play through just about any amp, and it allows me to craft my desired tone via the graphic EQ."

Steve's pedalboard [from left]:

1. TC Electronic PolyTune 2 Tuner
2. Dunlop wah
3. Ernie Ball volume pedal
4. Mission Engineering Expression Pedal
5. DigiTech Whammy Ricochet
6. EHX Memory Man Deluxe
7. Boss Fuzz
8. SoloDallas Storm
9. Pigtronix Synth
10. Pigtronix noise gate
11. J. Rockett Rockaway Archer [right]
12. Unique Vibe Shiftee
13. Suhr Koji compressor



Wanna see someone's pedalboard? Let us know! Write to GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com.

? INQUIRER

YNGWIE MALMSTEEN

THE SHRED KING TALKS REGRETS, FIRST GIGS
AND WHY HE NEVER HAS A BAD SHOW

Yngwie Malmsteen
in the U.K. in 2019

Q: How'd you first get into the guitar?

I come from a very musical family; my mother was a jazz singer [who also] sang in the choir, and my father was a guitar player. My older siblings were musicians too, playing classical violin and piano. I was given my first guitar, a cheap, shitty acoustic, on my 5th birthday but didn't start playing it until I was 7 when I saw Jimi Hendrix smashing his guitar on TV. I thought it was cool and so I wanted to do that too!

Q: What was your first "real" guitar?

My older brother played guitar, but when I was becoming better than him, he went out and bought an early Seventies Strat copy — but because he was never home, I'd play his guitar instead. I had that guitar from then on, and when my next birthday came around, my mother bought the guitar off my brother so I could keep it. Later, when I was around 12, I got my first Strat.

Q: What was the first song you learned?

A piece of Swedish folk music from the 17th century. It was a very baroque-style melody in A harmonic minor.

Q: Tell us about your first gig.

I was about eight. I had an electric guitar with a little amp, and although it wasn't a good one, it made a lot of noise. It was at my school in the cafeteria, which had a sort of a stage. I had asked one of my school friends to play drums, but he said he didn't know how to, so I showed him how — so we could play the gig, which we did. I was on stage doing my shit, throwing my guitar around and being crazy onstage. I'm an extremist in everything I do. More is more in everything.

Q: Have you ever had a terrible show?

I've always had the ability to bounce back from almost anything. I have what they call "tennis memory," so if something starts going wrong, whether it's my fault or not, I'll just turn around and go, "Well, fuckin' watch this!" and will do something outrageous in order to make everything better. For the last 30 years or more, I've never allowed myself a bad show. It's always in my hands, so if I allow myself to let it slip and go out of control, it's my fault and I will go off stage feeling shitty.

Q: What's your favorite piece of gear?

It's my "Duck" [1972 Fender

Stratocaster]. I don't play it as much anymore, but there's something special about it. But I love them all; I love all my Marshalls — and I love my smoke machines too. You can't do a show without those!

Q: What's your proudest moment?

It's my latest album, *Parabellum*. It was made in a very different way than I have done in a while. For the last 15 years, I'd go on the road then go into the studio and continue that cycle, but with Covid, it stopped all of that. So I was in the studio constantly for one year. I must have written something like 100 songs, 80 or 90 pieces, and for me those songs on the album were the *crème de la crème*.

Q: Any advice for eager newbies?

I'd ask them first what they're trying to achieve. If it's to be famous or successful, there are numerous ways of getting there. But if their goal is to be a full musician, whether that be a composer or an artist, then there's no shortcut. There's a lot of dedication and hard work required. And for me there will always be a lot of people hating on you too.

"I love all my Marshalls — and I love my smoke machines too. You can't do a show without those!"

Q: What's more important — speed or emotion?

I'm sure there are examples of empty fast notes. Those examples do exist. But if you listen to the way I play, and you hear a fast slur or a fast run, a fast arpeggio or whatever I'm playing, if you slowed that down, it would have full harmonic value along with passion and expression. And just listen to my vibrato — that's all I have to say. Nothing more needs to be said. You can't tell me that has no emotion. You must be tone deaf.

Q: Finally, do you have any regrets?

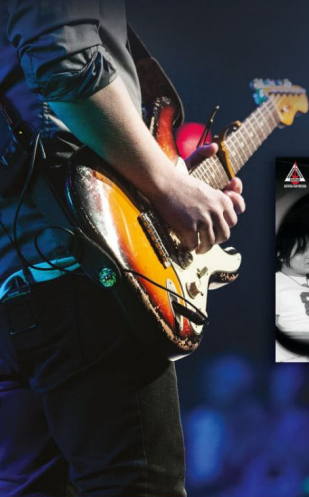
There are a lot of things I do regret, but ultimately [one's] life decisions have to work and act as a lesson. If from that lesson it led to a decision, which led to somewhere good, then it was a good thing to do and vice versa, and I've done my share of both. With the wealth of experience and wisdom I've gained from living the life I've lived, it is what it is, because at the time, I did the right thing — even when I may not have! — Joe Matera



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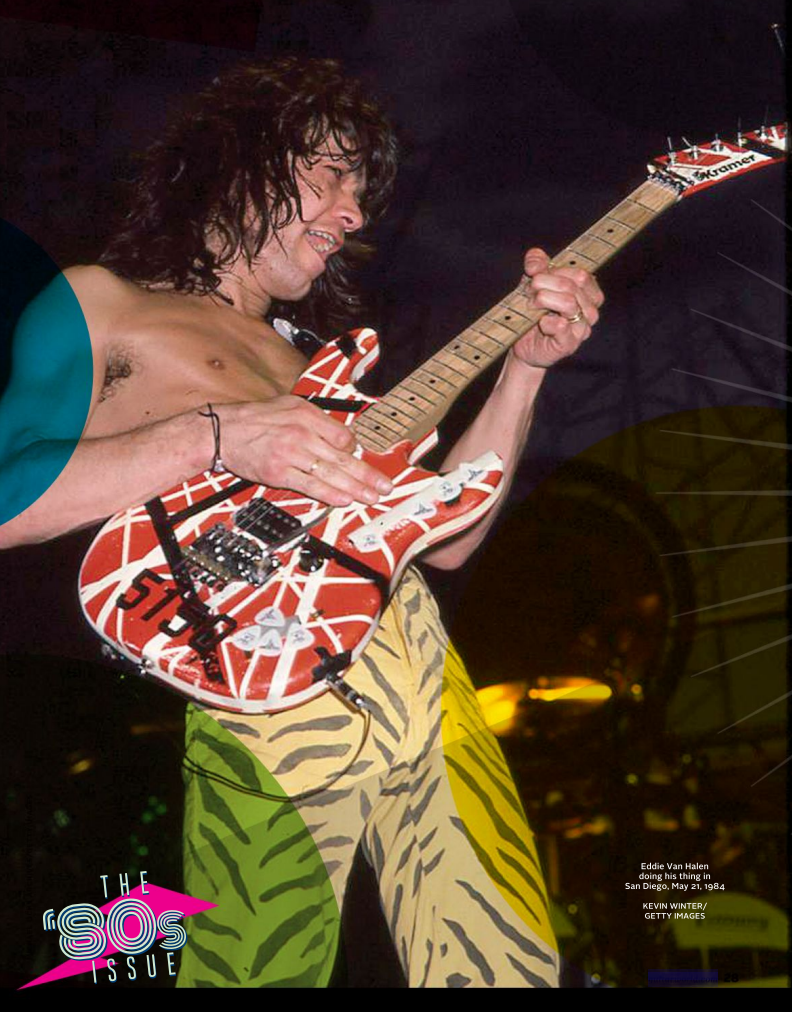
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THE
80s
ISSUE

Eddie Van Halen
doing his thing in
San Diego, May 21, 1984

KEVIN WINTER/
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LOUD, FAST AND OUT OF CONTROL, PART 1

THE WILD

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THE '80S

AND ALL THE BLAZING SIX-STRING GUNSLINGERS WHO MADE IT SPECIAL

WRITTEN BY

BRAD TOLINSKI

BIGGER, BRIGHTER AND MORE COLORFUL THAN A

finalist on *RuPaul's Drag Race*, the Eighties were not about subtlety. Fashion was dominated by gigantic shoulder pads, big hair, neon clothes and the mini-est of skirts. The theaters were glutted with high-concept blockbusters like *Lethal Weapon*, *The Terminator*, *Die Hard* and *Escape from New York*, and TV was fueled by extravagant, over-the-top prime-time soap operas like *Dynasty* and *Dallas*.

And most significantly, on August 1, 1981, MTV, the 24-hour music cable channel, was launched, creating a billion-dollar musical space race to see who could create the most jaw-dropping, attention-grabbing video.

What was a guitarist to do?

Whether consciously or subconsciously, many metal, rock, blues, jazz — and even acoustic — guitarists embraced the spirit of the times by developing flashy new techniques played on exotic-looking guitars through rigs that looked more like a NASA space station than the antique stomp boxes used by Jimi Hendrix or Jimmy Page.

As the great guitar virtuoso Steve Vai explained in *Nöthin' But a Good Time*, Tom Beaujour and Richard Bienstock's excellent oral history of Eighties metal, "When the Eighties came along, the shift was more towards the rock star thing. Entertainment. But at the same time there was a desire to play the shit out of [the guitar]. We loved playing instruments."

While some of the excesses of the decade were more than a little embarrassing in retrospect — silver spandex pants and a pink Dinky SuperStrat played through a Tom Scholz Rockman, anyone? — much of the musicianship still holds up and remains impressively solid. And lucky for us, *Guitar World*, which printed its first issue in July 1980, was around to witness just about all of it.

THE BIG BANG THEORY

IT'S A STORY that's been told many times, but the Eighties guitar renaissance officially started two years earlier in 1978, when Van Halen's self-titled debut album was released. The record sounded unlike anything heard before, largely due to Eddie Van Halen's remarkable playing and tone. While the opening track "Running" with the Devil" offered a taste of his larger-than-life sound, it was the second track that started a revolution.

In a mere 1:42, the solo instrumental "Eruption" permanently changed the way

electric guitarists looked at the instrument. As the title suggests, the track was an explosion of musical ideas — sounds and techniques that paved the road for guitarists for decades to come.

First, there was the timbre of his iconic striped homemade guitar itself. Ed's sound was big, round and majestic when needed, but it could also ring out with sharp clarity during quicker passages. But what caused the real ruckus was the song's ultra-speedy licks and Eddie's use of two-handed tapping, wherein the guitarist engages fingers from both hands at once on the fretboard, in order to play intervals and passages that would be impossible using only the fretting hand.

"The first time I heard Eddie, I thought, 'That's exactly what I want to be doing,'" guitar superstar Joe Satriani told journalist Greg Prato in *Shredders! The Oral History of Speed Guitar (and More)*. "I was so happy when the world accepted Van Halen's sound as a new paradigm."

After the first Van Halen album, the musical universe shifted. Being a guitar hero was suddenly more fashionable than it had been since the heyday of Jimi Hendrix and Eric Clapton in the Sixties. But the bar had been raised, and the stakes were greater. If you were going to compete with Edward, you'd better be fast as hell, look cool, have a trove of new ideas and guitar nobody had ever seen.

SWEEPING THE ROCK WORLD

THE FIRST REAL challenger to Van Halen's throne was the fierce Swedish guitar sensation Lars Johan Yngve Lannerbäck, more commonly known as Yngwie Malmsteen. Influenced by the work of 18th-century violinist Niccolò Paganini, Yngwie introduced classical scales





"Notes actually do mean something," said the Edge, shown here in March 1985. "They have power... you don't just throw them around"

PAUL NATKIN/
GETTY IMAGES

and arpeggios to the rock world and pioneered the use of sweep picking, a technique in which the guitarist plays single notes on consecutive strings with a sweeping motion of the pick, to produce a lightning-fast series of notes.

The 6' 4" Swede, who often dressed like a flamboyant heavy metal Beethoven, preferred to play a traditional Fender Stratocaster, but he radically altered it by scaling the fretboard, a modification that scoops out some of the wood between the frets and facilitated Malmsteen's blinding speed and distinctive vibrato.

In Malmsteen's neo-classical wake, a steady stream of virtuosos followed, many with their own techniques and signature instruments built to their specifications by up-and-coming guitar companies. Vai and Satriani, two phenoms from New York, had colorful guitars crafted for them by Ibanez, both featuring custom pickups made by Larry DiMarzio. Randy Rhoads from Ozzy Osbourne's band played an angular, offset Flying V handcrafted by luthier Grover Jackson, while Dokken guitarist George Lynch had ESP

because no matter what new band came out, everybody waited for the solo," recalls Bratta, whose guitar break on the song "Wait" was an Eighties highlight. "'Let me see who the guitar player is.' It was just one after another. Reb... Nuno... this one... that one... whoever!"

THIS NOTE'S FOR YOU

THIS NEW SENSE of discovery and exploration wasn't limited to metal. A serious group of young iconoclasts playing in various punk and new wave bands were also interested in taking the guitar in new directions.

Perhaps the most important of these was a musician named David Evans, better known as the Edge, who played in the Irish band, U2. Distinguished by his chiming timbres, echoing notes, sparse voicings and extensive use of effects, the Edge took the opposite approach of his heavy metal brethren. Instead of dazzling listeners with speed and dexterity, he took a minimalist approach, making each of his well-placed notes sound gigantic, like they were performed in the Grand Can-

THEIR GUITARS WERE PERSONALIZED SUPERSONIC WEAPONS CREATED WITH ONE THING IN MIND: TO MAKE THEIR OWNERS THE G.O.A.T.

build him an instrument with a "Kamikaze" graphic.

Their guitars were personalized supersonic weapons created with one thing in mind: to make their owners the G.O.A.T. Not since the heyday of bebop jazz in the Fifties had so many fast and inventive musicians invaded the pop music market. Most of these flashy young guns played in "hair metal" bands, a hard rock subgenre known for its colorful clothes, androgynous style, crunchy riffs, pop choruses and astounding guitar solos. New phenoms like Paul Gilbert (Racer X, Mr. Big), Nuno Bettencourt (Extreme), Vernon Reid (Living Colour), Vito Bratta (White Lion), Reb Beach (Winger), Lita Ford and Greg Howe seemed to pop up every other week with a new batch of impossible licks performed at preposterous speeds.

"It was a really strange time period,

yon. U2 albums like *Boy* (1980), *October* (1981) and *War* (1982), featuring hits like "I Will Follow," "Gloria" and "New Year's Day," made the Edge one of the most celebrated and imitated guitarists of the era, especially by those who little or no interest in hard rock.

"Notes actually *do* mean something," the Edge insisted. "They have power. I think of notes as being expensive. You don't just throw them around. I find the ones that do the best job and that's what I use. I suppose I'm a minimalist instinctively. I don't like to be inefficient if I can get away with it. Like on the end of 'With or Without You.' My instinct was to go with something very simple. Everyone else said, 'Nah, you can't do that.' I won the argument, and I still think it's sort of brave, because the end of 'With or Without You' could have been so much bigger,

so much more of a climax, but there's this power to it which I think is even more potent because it's held back... ultimately, I'm interested in music. I'm a musician. I'm not a gunslinger. That's the difference between what I do and what a lot of guitar heroes do."

The Edge, however, was just the tip of the new wave spear. Robert Smith of the Cure, Andy Summers of the Police, Elliott Easton of the Cars, Johnny Marr of the Smiths and James Honeyman-Scott of the Pretenders were just a small sample of idiosyncratic players that offered guitarists a different pathway by focusing on exotic chord voicings, otherworldly textures and solos that were concise and memorable instead of fast.

BLUES POWER

IT WOULD BE natural to think that blues, jazz and folk music would've been immune to the outrageous musical and fashion trends of "The Big Eighties," but you would be wrong. In keeping with the times, dozens of roots-oriented musicians embraced the excesses of the era with a surprising amount of glee 'n' style.

Two young blues guitarists from Texas, Stevie Ray Vaughan and Eric Johnson, were particularly happy to demonstrate they could shred just as fast as any poodle-haired sissy from Los Angeles, which they did on anthems like Vaughan's "Pride and Joy" or Johnson's "Cliffs of Dover." But even more shocking was their willingness to compete with those sissies on MTV. Johnson with his boy-band good looks, and Vaughan with his elaborate Mardi Gras-meets-Hendrix stage clothes, had no problem fitting in with Ratt and Culture Club, and many guitarists were grateful they did.

"What blew me away about Stevie Ray's playing was that you could hear his conviction in every note," Metallica's Kirk Hammett said. "He was a huge teacher for me. To this day, I'm chasing a tone like his."

The jazz world also had its share of representation in the Eighties. If you asked Van Halen who made him sweat, he would point to the uncanny British jazz musician Allan Holdsworth. Known for his esoteric use of complex chord progressions and intricate and unpredictable improvised solos over shifting tonal centers, Holdsworth had a major impact on Van Halen and other progressive rockers like Satriani, John Petrucci, Fredrik Thordendal and Guthrie Govan.

With albums like *Road Games* (1983) and *Metal Fatigue* (1985), Holdsworth rewrote the rules of jazz and rock. "Allan had a big impact on all of the guitarists you've probably heard," said Ty Tabor of King's X. "A huge impact. Nobody was speaking his name on the street, but everybody that everybody was listening to was listening to him. I know he totally changed my life."

SPORTING A WOODY

AND YES, EIGHTIES shred fever even spread to the acoustic world, where a Martin-playing musician named Michael Hedges turned the folk world on its ear with two albums recorded for Windham Hill, *Breakfast in the Field* (1981) and *Aerial Boundaries* (1984). Written almost exclusively in alternate tunings, Hedges introduced future generations to highly visual playing techniques like slap harmonics (created by slapping the string over a harmonic node), use of right-hand hammer-ons (particularly on bass notes), use of the left hand for melodic or rhythmic hammer-ons and pull-offs, percussive, syncopated slapping on the guitar body, as well as dozens of unusual strumming patterns. In addition to his Martin D-28, Hedges played a dramatic-looking harp guitar, a guitar-based string instrument adorned with additional sympathetic strings that looked great on stage and added atmospheric Indian-inspired drones to any given compositions.

ALL GOOD THINGS MUST COME TO AN END

BY THE TIME the Eighties came to close, music consumers — and guitarists — started to grow weary of all the innovation (not to mention the hair and the glam make-up). A groundswell of bands in the Northwest — with names like Nirvana, Soundgarden and Mudhoney — began to make waves by playing a more direct and emotional music that relied less on technical wizardry of hair metal or the atmospherics of new wave.

The rise of Guns N' Roses and Metallica at the tail end of the Eighties also signified a sea change. While both bands had great lead guitarists in Slash and Kirk Hammett, their sound and presentation were more "street" than "sweet."

But while the shred era was sailing into the sunset, it is worth noting, it received a dazzling sendoff. In May 1990, Steve Vai released *Passion and Warfare*, an over-the-top guitar instrumen-

Stevie Ray Vaughan backstage in Michigan in September 1984



tal album that could be viewed as a brilliant summation of everything the Eighties had to offer. From elaborate tapping passages to wild whammy bar dips and dives, to mountains of overdrives — including one section where Vai orchestrated more than 30 backwards guitars — *Passion and Warfare* was Vai's valiant attempt to create the last word in rock and roll virtuosity. And, in some ways he did, because soon after, Nirvana would release "Smells Like Teen Spirit," which brought the excesses of the Eighties crashing to a halt.

SO WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

WHILE IT IS easy to say grunge killed the guitar solo (as I just did), it isn't exactly true. In some ways, it was just the beginning of a school of technical guitar playing that continues to grow and expand.

In the Nineties, guitar daredevils like Dimebag Darrell, Buckethead, John Petrucci, Marty Friedman, Zakk Wylde and Tom Morello kept the spirit alive. And here in the 21st century, shred monsters like Tosin Abasi, Nita Strauss and Guthrie Govan continue to test the outer limits of fretboard wizardry. And let's not forget that Satriani, Gilbert, Vai and Johnson never really went away.

So even though we're celebrating the Eighties as a bygone era, its guitar innovations are still very much with us, and most likely will be for decades to come. Which, ironically, is something that can't be said about grunge. **EW**

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The Floyd Rose —
born and raised in the
Eighties (yes, to be exact)

ADAM GASSON/
FUTURE

THE
"80s
ISSUE



LOUD, FAST AND OUT OF CONTROL, PART 2

GAME- CHANGING

SHREDDERS, BLUESERS AND CHORUS KINGS/QUEENS WEREN'T THE

DECADE'S ONLY GUITAR HEROES. GEAR MAKERS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF NEW

GEAR OF THE '80S

TECH — AND WENT BERSERK (IN A GOOD WAY!). JOIN US AS WE REVISIT

THESE 20 ULTIMATE EXAMPLES OF GAME-CHANGING EIGHTIES GEAR

WRITTEN BY
ERIC KIRKLAND

ELECTRIC GUITAR TECHNOLOGY HARDLY

changed during the first 30 or so years. Les Paul and Leo Fender gave us solid body guitars, Jim Marshall accidentally created desirable amp distortion, a smattering of floor-based effects were created and a few bits of gear were borrowed from organ players — including wah pedals and Leslie speakers. But, for the most part, guitarists didn't have many choices in terms of essential gear — and even fewer technological options for unique expression.

And then it happened: The 1980s! It was a fortuitous convergence of events, a shade-your-eyes collision of technology and inspiration that transformed the guitar almost overnight.

Silicon Valley was chiefly changing the world, as a by-product of the military industrial complex. Their affordable miniaturization of complex electrical pathways placed high-powered integrated circuits into all manner of personal, electronic products, not to mention the recording and musical instrument industries — the dreams of engineers who grew up watching *Star Trek* and *The Outer Limits* finally became reality.

At the same time, inspired young musicians started transferring the blinding finger speed and deft coordination they'd honed on arcade machines and video game consoles to the guitar, resulting in a revolution of technique, innovation and intensity. The months and years that followed were a guitar renaissance in every sense of the word, and we're still riding the energy wave of that tech explosion. As a reminder of our technological roots, and to honor the visionary engineers of the time, *Guitar World's* old-schoolers racked their gray skulls to comprise a list of the decade's most impactful gear.

1. BOSS TU-12H TUNER (1982)

Electronic instrument tuners existed before the TU-12, but they were bulky and anything but affordable or practical. This was the first portable guitar tuner, actually the first portable tuner for any instrument, battery powered and highly accurate. It accepted a standard quarter-inch guitar plug or would register pitch with its built-in microphone. It was intentionally sized and shaped to fit into the accessory cavity of a guitar case (most guitar pedals still don't fit in there). Everybody had one of these, on touring rigs, tied down to pedalboards, on their music stand or sitting atop their amp. I

don't know how many of these were sold, but guitarists never again had an excuse to be out of tune.

2. EMG ACTIVE PICKUPS (1983)

EMG (Electro Magnetic Generator) wasn't the first to conceive of active pickups, but they were the first to house the battery-powered preamp and coils in one practically indestructible package. The advantages of a preamp included the potential for more output, quiet operation, clarity and a specifically tuned harmonic response. Their models 81/85 humbuckers and SA single coils became very popular with players who were pushing a signal through high levels of preamp gain. EMGs' uniquely energetic tone can be heard on many recordings by Zakk Wylde, David Gilmour, Metallica and Mark Knopfler, just to name a few...

3. IBANEZ TS-9 TUBE SCREAMER OVERDRIVE (1982)

If you see a slime-green box on a pedalboard, safe bet it's the ubiquitous Ibanez Tube Screamer overdrive. Designed by Roger Gresco in the late Seventies, this is the overdrive effect to which all others are compared. At its heart is the famous JRC (Japan Radio Company) 4558 Op-Amp (operational amplifier). It used diodes, in place of its fuzzy predecessor's transistors, to create tube-like, mid-range focused symmetrical distortion — very smooth, tubelike and natural. The original TS-808's rounder response was replaced in the early Eighties by the TS9 variant, offering an edgier, brighter tone that was better-suited to hard rock and metal. Numerous iterations followed, including who knows how many DIY



The Ibanez JEM 777 in Loch Ness Green...



...a vintage PRS Custom 24...



...and the Marshall JCM-800

THE DREAMS OF ENGINEERS WHO GREW UP WATCHING *STAR TREK* FINALLY BECAME REALITY

copies, but none have achieved the notoriety or praise of that original pair.

4. IBANEZ JEM 777 (1987)

When Steve Vai got the David Lee Roth gig in 1986, he was simultaneously being courted by numerous guitar companies. Everyone wanted to build the wildest ax swinger his dream guitar. As it turned out, only Ibanez was willing and able to take a chance on Steve's non-traditional ideas — and, oh, how that gamble paid off. His first design was the JEM 777, offered in three era-appropriate neon colors: Loch Ness Green, Desert Sun Yellow and Shocking Pink. Its most innovative feature was the recessed mounting and route behind the floating tremolo, known affectionately as the lion's claw. It allowed players to pull up on the bar, thereby skyrocketing the pitch, without the fine tuners impacting the body. Since then, most guitar manufacturers adopted the new method as the standard mounting style for locking tremolo systems.

5. MARSHALL JCM-800 (1981)

Before the Marshall JCM-800, the only way to get a cranked Marshall tone was

to... well... crank it! By adding a master volume, players could add moderate levels of preamp saturation without blowing their heads across the room. This idea of deriving more gain from the preamp had been around for a long time, most notably utilized by Mesa/Boogie, but the specific British tone and response of this iconic amp made it the workhorse of 1980s guitar slingers around the globe. It's important to mention here that Mike Soldano's 1987 creation of the super high gain SLO-100 amp kicked off the preamp gain wars that continue today.

6. DIGITAL RACK EFFECTS UNITS (1980-89)

There are simply too many important rack units to list, so we had to just choose a few of the most widely used on stage and recordings. TC Electronics' 2290 Delay set the bar for delay fidelity and accuracy. Eventide's H3000 used precise pitch shifting and harmonization to create the tones of Van Halen, Vai, Satch and anyone else who could afford the monster. Korg's SDD-3000 delay was the Edge's not-so-secret weapon on U2's most iconic tracks. The Lexicon PCM 41 was another top-shelf delay hailed by guitarists and stu-

dios for its superlative tone, accuracy and features. Yamaha's SPX90 was a more affordable multi-effect unit, most noted for its inimitable symphonic chorus setting. This section wouldn't be complete without also paying tribute to engineers Dave Smith and Chet Wood for developing MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface), making it possible for multiple sound processing units and settings to be programmed and switched simultaneously.

7. BOSS SD-1 (1981)

This sunflower yellow box was and is a shredder's best friend, and perhaps second only in scope of use to the Tube Screamer. Inside, it was very similar to the Ibanez TS9, but utilized a slightly higher gain version of the JRC4558 chip. More importantly, it created its aggressive and harmonically distinct response with asymmetrical clipping (patented at the time by Boss), whereas the Tube Screamer was based on symmetrical clipping. This added gain and asymmetrical distortion was ideal for pulling out the most obnoxious squealing pinch harmonics. When paired with a Marshall JCM-800 or similar circuit, the combination was affectionately known as a Jersey Rig, referencing the numerous Garden State guitarists who favored this setup, including Zakk Wylde and Richie Sambora.

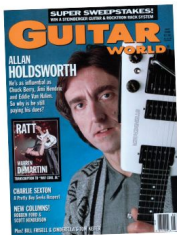
8. FLOYD ROSE DOUBLE LOCKING BRIDGE WITH FINE TUNERS (1982)

Floyd Rose's revolutionary, locking bridge system came to prominence when Kramer guitars and their most notable whammy magician, Eddie Van Halen, noticed it at a trade show. Once the strings locked at the nut, there was almost no amount of bending or bar acrobatics that could throw them out of tune. Soon thereafter, fine tuners were added to the design, so that minute adjustments were possible. It exists today in that same, essentially perfect form, and is licensed around the world for other companies' variations.

9. BOSS CE-2 (1979/80)

If someone is going to create a tone emblematic of the 1980s, it almost has to include chorus. The CE-2 was the first compact chorus pedal, borrowing heavily from its bulkier predecessor, the Boss

CE-1, and Roland's famous Jazz Chorus amplifiers. Its lush midrange affection brought the effect forward in the mix, making it particularly well suited to guitar-dominant tracks. Even though it was technically introduced in the last months of 1979, this was a sound that defined the era, and was utilized by players of all genres, including Prince and the Police's Andy Summers.



10. STEINBERGER HEADLESS GUITARS (1980)

Ned Steinberger was neither a musician, nor an instrument builder, when he decided to start crafting radical guitars from a proprietary composite material. These remarkably resonant and conspicuously headless instruments quickly found their way into the hands of the world's most accomplished players. First was the L2 bass, then the GL2 guitar and later, the maple-bodied GM series of guitars. Let's not forget to mention that his ingenious TransTrem bridge was the first to maintain all of the strings' intervallic relationship, so that multiple strings could be simultaneously raised or dropped and amazingly stay in-key.

11. SUPER STRATS (1980)

The Stratocaster was a platform begging for modification, because unlike the Les Paul, its bolt-on neck and hole-hiding pickguard made it easy for anyone to completely disassemble, alter-taste and quickly return to playing form. Guitar luthiers and fledgling companies like Charvel, Jackson, Dean and Kramer caught onto this trend in the early Eighties and started offering modernized

adaptations of the Stratocaster, typically with a single humbucker in the bridge position, a Floyd Rose bridge and a flatter-radius neck. These were the preferred weapons of most shredders and are still prized by the technically adept.

12. MESA/BOOGIE MK2 (1984)

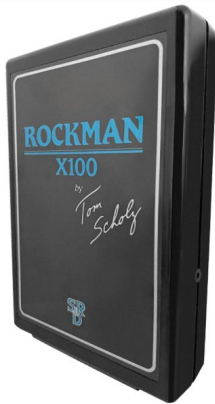
Mesa/Boogie is credited with scores of innovations through its 50-plus years, especially in terms of amp functionality, but we have to spotlight the Mark 2's particular importance as the first channel-switching amplifier. This was especially appropriate to the world of Eighties music, where sonically diverse songs regularly required a rig that could seamlessly switch between clean and over-driven tones. It really kicked off an endless competition among amp designers to include as many tones and features as possible in a single chassis. As a little Easter Egg for all of you metal-tech historians, the Mark 2 C++ did actually exist as a rarely performed high-gain modification.

13. CELESTION VINTAGE 30 (1986)

Celestion's low-wattage Greenback and Alnico speakers were favored in the Sixties and Seventies for their warm presence and sweet highs. But, their 15- to 30-watt ratings made them notably fragile dance partners for the 'this one goes to eleven' mindset of high-haired Eighties rockers. The Celestion Vintage 30 combined the tonal characteristics and early breakup of those revered vintage speakers with 60 watts of power handling, quickly becoming the world's most popular guitar speaker.

14. MTV (1981)

Until MTV, magazines and catalogs were the medium by which most players became aware of new gear. The advent of music videos gave us the first-ever, round-the-clock access to our own homes, to see artists actually performing with the guitars, amplifiers and other pieces of groundbreaking equipment. It was in many ways an advertisement for musical equipment and the celebration of a lifestyle. For those "who possessed the predisposition" it was even the catalyst that kicked off many careers in music. The current generation may have a hard time comprehending the impact of Music Television, but for the Eighties youth, it inspired beyond all comparison



and bound us through a socially shared experience.

15. INEXPENSIVE SOLID-STATE AMPLIFIERS (1981)

The realization of an inexpensive “first amplifier” was made possible by the advancement of solid-state circuits. Before digital modeling, they replicated the sound and feel of a tube amp, at only a fraction of the cost. Most of these were small, low-powered combos like Peavey’s Backstage Plus amps, Fender’s Squire series and Crate’s G series. These maintenance-free and capable practice partners were an affordable starting point for students — that actually created some pretty impressive sounds.

16. ROCKTRON HUSH PEDAL (1983)

Higher gain levels and longer signal chains often created a great deal of unwanted noise and feedback in 1980s rigs. This could be essentially eliminated in the studio, but posed a serious issue in live performance. Rocktron’s invention of the HUSH pedal circuit was invaluable for taming this noise-belching beast. Multiple iterations followed, as did other company’s solutions, ultimately making it possible for players to enjoy even the



[from left] The Rockman X100 headphone amplifier, a Boss SD-1 Super OverDrive and a well-worn Ibanez TS-9 Tube Screamer overdrive

[facing page] Allan Holdsworth and his Steinberger GL2 on our May 1989 cover

THE ROCKMAN X100 HEADPHONE AMP — IT WAS LIKE PLAYING THROUGH A TINY PERSONAL STUDIO

most extreme gain settings and complex effect runs with practically zero noise.

17. ADA MP-1 (1987)

When guitarists started building rack systems, the goal was to gain more functionality without compromising tone. ADA’s MP-1 was one of the first tube-based rack preamps that was digitally controlled on the front panel or through MIDI impulses. It even featured on-board chorus. It was easy to dial in just about any tone from the 1980s, including the crystalline solid-state clean sounds that were so prevalent on recordings of the time.

18. ROCKMAN X100 (1984)

It’s impossible to talk about Eighties guitar tones and tech without a whole chapter devoted to all of the groundbreaking products offered by Research and Development Inc. This is the company created by Boston’s (the band, not the city) multi-talented keyboardist, guitarist and engineer, Tom Scholz. Unfortunately, we don’t have the space to feature all of the gear, but the one piece that truly changed how guitarists practiced, wrote and recorded music was the Rockman X100 headphone amplifier. It was like playing through a tiny personal studio, with multiple settings for gain levels, echo and chorus. Aside from Boston, the unit was famously used for several of Def Leppard’s *Hysteria* tracks and also by

numerous other guitarists.

18. TASCAM PORTASTUDIO 244 (1982)

This little gem truly altered the way guitarists, and musicians in general, created music. It was finally possible for anyone to record themselves and master down four tracks to a cassette, all with one device in their home, hotel room, etc. Many similar products followed, but this is the one that really started the personal recording boom and is responsible for countless band demos and early albums.

20. PAUL REED SMITH CUSTOM 24 (1985)

Paul Reed Smith’s contributions to the world of guitar design are numerous and notable, but we most often overlook how his appreciation for the finest figured woods changed our perception and expectation of guitars as works of visual art. When PRS debuted the Custom 24 in 1985, we were introduced to the idea of grading the look of a guitar’s top wood on a 1-10 scale. Ever since, instrument manufacturers have competed to offer the most outrageously figured woods and depth-defying finishes. And, although I’m sure Paul never intended this by-product, a large segment of modern guitar collectors now select their acquisitions based on the instrument’s appearance alone, rather than functional aspects of tone and playability. [GW](#)

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THE
"80s
ISSUE

Lita Ford poses with a vintage Corvette at a Chicago gas station, September 30, 1984 (BTW, Chicago's Matthews Roofing still has the same phone number!)

PAUL NATKIN/
GETTY IMAGES

LOUD, FAST AND OUT OF CONTROL, PART 3

THE BEST

A HORDE OF GUITAR STARS — INCLUDING REB BEACH, STEVE STEVENS, VERNON REID,

SOLOS, RIFFS,

LITA FORD, ERIC JOHNSON, STEVE LUKATHER AND WARREN DEMARTINI (NOT TO

SHREDDERS

MENTION ADAM JONES, ERIC GALES, JOHN PETRUCCI, SCOTT IAN, MARTY FRIEDMAN,

N' MORE

STEVE MORSE AND MORE, MORE, MORE!) — MUSE ON THE '80s' BEST STUFF

COMPILED BY

JOE BOSSO, DAMIAN FANELLI, BRAD ANGLE, JON WIEDERHORN, JIM BEAUGEZ & ANDY ALEDORT

WHAT WAS THE GREATEST GUITAR SOLO OF THE EIGHTIES?

How about the best guitar riff? The ultimate guitar album? The decade's most underappreciated player? Was *Back to School* better than *Back to the Future*? (At least one *GW* editor screams yes!) Did A Flock of Seagulls' Mike Score really have a more bitchin' hairstyle than Steve Stevens?

Well, whether you remember or not, we at *GW* have already opined on at least some of these burning issues — probably even more than once (and it all started with the February 1990 issue). Hey, we've been around for 42 years! This time, however, we decided to open things up to a host of guitar stars (plus a few *GW* editors), some of whom were already doing their thing 35 years ago, and some who weren't even born yet.

WE ASKED THEM TO ANSWER THESE 10 QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EIGHTIES — AND TO ELABORATE WHENEVER THEY DEEMED IT NECESSARY:

1. Greatest guitar solo
2. Best riff
3. Ultimate guitar album
4. Piece of gear that screams "Eighties"
5. Guitarist of the decade
6. Greatest shredder
7. Underappreciated hero
8. Best movie
9. Greatest hairstyle
10. Ultimate Eighties accessory.

Below, you can check out their answers — plus one or two kinda interesting sidebars along the way. Enjoy! And, by the way, for more about the February 1990 issue of *GW*, check out page 47!

VERNON REID (LIVING COLOUR)

SOLO: "Devil Take the Hindmost" by Allan Holdsworth. Insane fluidity like [Eric] Dolphy, "Trane and a space alien all at one go."

RIFF: "Sweet Child O' Mine" by Guns N' Roses. That riff is basic, but it feels elemental. It's like the guitar played itself and Slash just channeled it.

GUITAR ALBUM: *Discipline* by King Crimson. It's incredible that two guitarists with radically opposite approaches made such a beautifully subtle and colorful album. A total reinvention of Crimson. Adrian Belew and Robert Fripp basically made the rock equivalent of a David Lynch film.

GEAR: ADA MP-1 preamp into a VHT power amp.

MOVIE: *Aliens*

HAIRSTYLE: Mike Score of A Flock of Seagulls

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Allan Holdsworth. Every other metal or rock guitarist had to deal with the fact that Allan fundamentally shifted the game.

SHREDDER: Steve Vai, the mad, mercurial scientist. His openness and extraordinary range, not to mention insane chops. From David Lee Roth to Public Image Ltd., remarkable.

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Greg Howe was amazing then and is phenomenal now. His evolution from metal to fusion — with stops at bebop along the way — is incredible. Why is he consistently underappreciated? You tell me, or go ask Kermit the Frog.

ACCESSORY: A fanny pack. Never be caught dead with one.

JOHN PETRUCCI (DREAM THEATER)

SOLO: My favorite band is Rush, so I think of the solo in "YYZ." Not only do I love Rush and Alex [Lifeson], and that's an instrumental, but the solo he did just became very influential to me. It has a kinda exotic sound; he's using open strings and pull-offs, and it just has this nice slippery, slinky vibe to it. I love the whole vibe.

RIFF: Stevie Ray Vaughan's "Scuttie Buttin'." That's such a sick "Stevie Ray on fire" riff. It's bringing back memories of me trying to learn these things and being like, "What the hell is he doing!" [Laughs]

ALBUM: Joe Satriani's *Surfing with the Alien*. It just changed things for instrumental guitar music. Not that there weren't guitar heroes before that, but it ushered in a new type. It's a great combination of amazing, out-of-this-





Living Colour's Vernon Reid in action in 1989. His choice for guitarist of the decade? Allan Holdsworth!

MICHEL LINSSEN/
GETTY IMAGES

world playing and incredible songs.

GEAR: I don't know if this was made in the Eighties, but to me, the TC Electronic 2290. When I discovered that, I was like, Oh, that's how you get that sound. [Laughs] That real iconic famous chorusing sound — that was so Eighties in the best of ways.

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Yngwie Malmsteen. He blew the doors wide open as far as neo-classical shred guitar goes.

SHREDDER: Randy Rhoads

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Tom Scholz [of Boston] because of his amazing melodic solos, iconic and unmistakable guitar tone, lush guitar harmonies and orchestrations and incredible songwriting.

MOVIE: *Purple Rain*

HAIRSTYLE: The Flock of Seagulls guy always comes to mind. [Laughs] Mike Score had a totally unique Eighties look.

ACCESSORY: When I think of myself at that time, hair mousse comes to mind. [Laughs] And the Rockman by Tom Scholz!

SCOTT IAN (ANTHRAX)

SOLO: "Mr. Crowley," Randy Rhoads. His 1-2-3 punch of chops, technique and melody make this solo the one that not only stands out above all his other work, but above everyone else's in the Eighties. And it's fun to "air guitar" to!

RIFF: AC/DC's "Back in Black" came out in 1980 and set the tone for the rest of the decade.

GUITAR ALBUM: *Blizzard of Ozz* by Ozzy. Randy tops Eddie [Van Halen's] *Women and Children First* by a nose hair — and only because he was the new kid and it was all very exciting to hear someone come along A.E. — after Ed — and give us all ear boners.

GEAR: The Floyd Rose! Eddie, Randy, Alex, Kirk, Dave, Steve, Joe, Neil, Kerry, Jeff, Vernon, me! etc., etc. They're all first-name basis guitar players who used Floyd's — and this is only the tip of the iceberg.

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Randy Rhoads
SHREDDER: Steve Vai

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Ty Babor of King's X. Ty's playing on their two Eighties albums is wholly original. His tone is incredible, his feel, his sense of melody. He's a monster. You need to listen to King's X.

MOVIE: *Raging Bull*

HAIRSTYLE: Mike Score of A Flock of Seagulls

ACCESSORY: My Walkman Sport

STEVE STEVENS (BILLY IDOL)

SOLO: "Owner of a Lonely Heart" by Yes (Trevor Rabin)

RIFF: "Beat It" by Michael Jackson (Steve Lukather)

GUITAR ALBUM: Van Halen's 1984

GEAR: Scholz Rockman

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE:

Eddie Van Halen

SHREDDER: Joe Satriani

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Adrian Belew. A complete original. The only guitarist I've seen live and couldn't figure out how the hell he got such sounds out of the instrument. He also emits complete joy when he performs.

MOVIE: *Blade Runner*

HAIRSTYLE: Me [Visual aid, top right...]

ACCESSORY: Sony Walkman

ADAM JONES (TOOL)

SOLO: Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train" (Randy Rhoads)

RIFF: Ratt's "Lay It Down" — drop D!

GUITAR ALBUM: David Bowie's *Scary Monsters*

GEAR: ADA MP-1 preamp with a Roland AX-7 Keytar

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen

SHREDDER: Yngwie Malmsteen

OVERLOOKED HERO: [Gang of Four's]

Andy Gill. [He had a] huge influence on me. His style was so passionate and raw, very unique at the time. When I mention him, most people say, "Who?"

MOVIE: *Blade Runner*

HAIRSTYLE: Any member of Kajagoogoo

ACCESSORY: Sony Walkman

ERIC PETERSON (TESTAMENT)

SOLO: "Hook in Mouth" by Megadeth

RIFF: "Wrathchild" by Iron Maiden and "A Dangerous Meeting" by Mercyful Fate
ALBUM: *Rising Force* by Yngwie Malmsteen

GEAR: Parametric equalizer by Furman

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen

SHREDDER: Eddie Van Halen

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Dave Meniketti [Y&T] — amazing chops and killer tone. Never seen him in the limelight.

MOVIE: *Legend*

HAIRSTYLE: David Lee Roth

ACCESSORY: My case of cassettes. Still have it!



ERIC JOHNSON

SOLO: "The Pump" by Jeff Beck
RIFF: "Satch Boogie" by Joe Satriani
GUITAR ALBUM: *Reckless* by Bryan Adams
GEAR: Tube Screamer 808
GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen
SHREDDER: Allan Holdsworth
UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Andy Summers. He writes great orchestrated parts that fit the songs and embellish their integrity.
MOVIE: *On Golden Pond*
HAIRSTYLE: Mike Score from *A Flock of Seagulls*
ACCESSORY: B.K. Butler Tube Driver

GRETCHEN MENN

SOLO: I have to honor the first one that made my ears perk up: Nuno Bettencourt's solo on [*Extreme*]'s "Play with Me."
GUITAR ALBUM: Joe Satriani's *Surfing with the Alien*
GEAR: [Laughs] Maybe too much chorus, but the exact pedal? I couldn't tell you...
GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen. He was there at the beginning of the decade and changed the electric guitar in such a profound way for so many guitarists.
SHREDDER: I don't think I could choose one, as there are so many different flavors of amazing. The whole decade is an abundance of shred riches.
UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Warren DeMartini. I feel like those who know really know, but he's just a monster player. He garners plenty of admiration and respect among musicians, but I don't know if he truly gets recognized on a larger scale the way he deserves.
MOVIE: *The Shining* and, of course, *This Is Spinal Tap*.
HAIRSTYLE: I think they all did! [Laughs]

ROSS THE BOSS (MANDAWAR)

SOLO: "Mr. Crowley" by Ozzy Osbourne (Randy Rhoads)
RIFF: "Zero the Hero" by Black Sabbath (Tony Iommi)
GUITAR ALBUM: *Texas Flood* by Stevie Ray Vaughan
GEAR: Marshall JCM800
GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Stevie Ray Vaughan
SHREDDER: Steve Vai
UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Yours truly, Ross the Boss! I made six great records in six years with Manowar. No one has

topped that.

MOVIE: *Conan the Barbarian*
HAIRSTYLE: Angus Young
ACCESSORY: Hair spray
[For more on Ross the Boss, head to page 64.]

PAUL RIARIO (GUITAR WORLD)

SOLO: Scorpions' "Rock You Like a Hurricane"
RIFF: Ratt's "Round and Round"
GUITAR ALBUM: Dokken's *Tooth and Nail*. Nearly every hair metal guitarist from the decade most likely studied every solo, lick and riff from this album.
GEAR: Marshall JCM800
GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Steve Vai combined all the elements of technique and flash that nearly every guitarist wanted to emulate.
SHREDDER: Yngwie Malmsteen changed the course of neo-classical shred guitar in speed and technique that still resonates today.
UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Neil Giraldo is one of the most consistently tasteful guitarists who incorporated speed, restraint and clever phrasing in the most memorable way for not only Pat Benatar, but other artists like Rick Springfield (Hello? "Jessie's Girl").
MOVIE: *The Breakfast Club*
HAIRSTYLE: Billy Idol/Steve Stevens — the perfect pairing of Eighties hairstyles in one band.
ACCESSORY: Aqua Net hair spray. C'mon now, you couldn't leave home without it.



academic, classical sensibility to metal that left an imprint on the genre for good.
MOVIE: *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*
HAIRSTYLE: Anyone in Poison
ACCESSORY: Hair spray... and maybe a studded armband or two.

ERNIE C (BODY COUNT)

SOLO: "S.A.T.O." by Ozzy
RIFF: Van Halen's "Ain't Talkin' 'bout Love." It's fun to play — and people always know what it is.
GUITAR ALBUM: Ozzy's *Diary of a Madman*
GEAR: Roland G-707 guitar synthesizer. I actually had one.
GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: It has to be

"A FANNY PACK. NEVER BE CAUGHT DEAD WITH ONE"
 —VERNON REID

MARK HOLCOMB (PERIPHERY)

SOLO: Randy Rhoads on "Mr. Crowley"
RIFF: Anything by Metallica — but for me, the main riff in "Disposable Heroes."
GEAR: Any chorus pedal!
GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen
SHREDDER: Yngwie Malmsteen
UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Randy Rhoads lived in the shadow of EVH and contributed only two studio albums to Ozzy's legacy, but he brought an

Eddie Van Halen. Quick story: I wanted a left-handed Eddie Van Halen guitar. When I produced Black Sabbath's *Forbidden*, Tony [Iommi] said, if you ever have a chance, go say hi to Eddie. So I made it to a concert and said hi to him. He takes my number and calls me — back when we had answering machines — and left a message: "Ernie, it's Eddie Van Halen. Give me a call." I had that as my outgoing message for a year. Back to the guitar: Ernie Ball said they didn't make left-handed ones. I told Eddie and he

Albert Collins ("The master of the Telecaster!") and his band at the Nice Jazz Festival in Nice, France, July 1983



DJ, PLAY MY BLUES

A VERY ROUGH GUIDE TO THE EIGHTIES' OTHER GREAT BLUES RELEASES

BY DAMIAN FANELLI

THERE AIN'T NO denying it. In the Eighties, I was a Stevie Ray Vaughan freak. Sure, I bought his albums, but like any other hopelessly addicted drophead, I wanted more, more, more! More mysteriously addictive I-IV-V tunes, more magnetic Texas talent, more pentatonic personality — the kind that just drips off the fretboard when a true pro is at work.

That led me down a familiar path: *Listen to the guitarists your favorite guitarists listened to* — something as important and helpful today as it was back then.

Lucky for me (and for them!), it turns out a lot of these greats — including Albert Collins, Johnny Winter, Son Seals, Lonnie Mack and Albert King — were not only still alive, but they were releasing

new music — and touring — well into the Eighties (which is how I got to see Johnny Copeland, Otis Rush and Hubert Sumlin perform at small clubs during that pretty incredible decade).

What follows is a quick guide to some of the other great blues or blues/roots albums from that pair of 24-sided dice we call the Eighties.

ALBERT COLLINS

Frostbite (1980), *Don't Lose Your Cool* (1983)

While *Don't Lose Your Cool* is a perfect introduction to Collins' unmistakable Tele tone, style and sense o' humor, *Frostbite* features a genuine six-string masterpiece — "Snowed In" — during which Collins uses his Tele to imitate the many sounds associated with trying to start your car on a freezing, snowy night in Chicago.

ALBERT KING

I'm in a Phone Booth, Baby (1984)

It was mesmerizing' hearing Albert King — still on fire in 1984 — showing the young'n's where SRV got at least 39.6666666667 percent of his playing style. The "Thrill Is Gone"-esque minor-key lead-off track, "Phone Booth," is the highlight of this Grammy-nominated album.

LONNIE MACK

Strike Like Lightning (1985)

SRV fans got a little bonus in '85 when the famous Texan decided to produce this top-notch album by one of his early influences. Besides all the great Lonnie/SRV pairings on the album ("Double Whammy," "Satisfy Suzie" and "Oreo Cookie Blues"), Lonnie delivers his *own* goods all over the place. Be sure to check out the title track to see where SRV got at least 17.9 percent of his soloing style.

BUDDY GUY

DJ Play My Blues (1982)

As fun as it is to hear Buddy Guy being Buddy Guy, there's something really special about hearing him imitate T-Bone Walker's famous technique on "Dedication to the Late T-Bone Walker." The late, great Texan (Walker) had died seven years earlier, in March 1975. P.S.: The title track is pure Buddy Guy nirvana.

ALBERT COLLINS, ROBERT CRAY AND JOHNNY COPELAND

Showdown! (1985)

Despite its title, the album isn't exactly a shootout or throwdown; it's more a bunch of friends having "a natural ball." Still, you can't do much better than the opening track, a cover of T-Bone Walker's "T-Bone Shuffle," if you're looking for tasty blues licks to "borrow" — and it is truly inspiring to hear Robert Cray in a pure I-IV-V setting (Cray plays the song's extended third solo). Just sayin'!

GUITARIST PRODUCER TONE HUNTER

POLYMATH

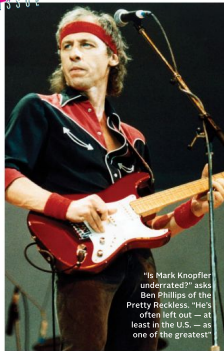
ADAM 'NOLLY' GETGOOD SIGNATURE HUMBUCKER SET

"The Polymaths can truly do it all - rich clean and crunch tones, outrageously chunky high gain rhythms and beautifully vocal leads."



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"Is Mark Knopfler underrated?" asks Ben Phillips of the *Pretty Reckless*. "He's often left out — at least in the U.S. — as one of the greatest"

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Mike Stern. He wrote and played some brilliant music that really epitomized the jazz-rock ethos. But being a jazz musician, his exposure to rock fans and the guitar community at large was inherently limited by the low popularity of jazz in mainstream culture.

MOVIE: *Bloodsport*

HAIRSTYLE: Billy Idol

ACCESSORY: My black leather "fanny pack multi-compartment man purse." LOL

MARK TREMONTI (ALTER BRIDGE)

SOLO: Jeff Beck's "People Get Ready," a great example of the pure emotion that one of the best players that ever lived is capable of laying down.

RIFF: "Lay It Down" by Ratt. It is just that classic Eighties metal-era iconic riff that everybody's learned over the years.

GUITAR ALBUM: Stevie Ray Vaughan, *Texas Flood*

GEAR: The ADA MP-1, a rack-mounted guitar processor. I never got the MP1, but I did have the MP2.

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen, hands down.

SHREDDER: Eddie Van Halen. He's the godfather of shred guitar and put that style of playing on the map.

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Neal Schon. He played with a lot of class and emo-

tion on those Journey recordings, but a lot of people didn't realize how talented a player and shredder he was at that time.

MOVIE: *Crossroads* was one of the reasons I wanted to start playing guitar. The "cutting heads" scene is one of the most iconic guitar movie scenes of all time.

HAIRSTYLE: Dee Snider

ACCESSORY: The Rockman Sustainer rack that Tom Scholz created.

JIM HEATH (REVEREND HORTON HEAT)

SOLO: Brian Setzer's solo in Stray Cats' "Stray Cat Strut" changed my life.

RIFF: Elliot Easton managed to get a ton of great country- and rockabilly-style riffs into the Cars' new wave songs. The solo in "My Best Friend's Girl" is a great example.

GUITAR ALBUM: Stray Cats' *Built for Speed*

GEAR: Boss DM-2 analog delay. Some jerk stole mine off of the stage at a gig in Amsterdam.

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Brian Setzer... this is getting redundant.

SHREDDER: I'm not really that well versed in shredders, but since he's from Texas and was a friend of mine, I'll go with Mike Scaccia from Rigor Mortis and Ministry.

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Dave Gonzalez of the Paladins and Jimmie Vaughan of the Fabulous Thunderbirds.

MOVIE: *Elvis '56* and maybe *Something Wild* with Ray Liotta.

HAIRSTYLE: The guy from Flock of Seagulls? [Laughs]

ACCESSORY: For me it was the Fifties-style shirt-jacks... two-tone maxi-style! We also liked the baggy pleated trousers. For me, the Eighties were all about the Fifties. [Laughs]

NATE GARRETT (SPIRIT ADRIFT)

SOLO: Glenn Tipton's solo in "Reckless" by Judas Priest

RIFF: Black Sabbath, "Sign of the Southern Cross"

ALBUM: Megadeth's *Peace Sells... but Who's Buying?* At that point, it was an arms race to see who could write the most impressive riffs and solos, and Megadeth came out on top in my book.

GEAR: Les Paul into a Marshall

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen. That's not even really up for discussion.

SHREDDER: Eddie Van Halen

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Glenn Tipton
MOVIE: *The Thing* by John Carpenter
ACCESSORY: Denim and leather — like Saxon was preaching about.

REB BEACH (WINGER)

SOLO: "Crying in the Rain" by

Whitesnake (John Sykes)

RIFF: "Still of the Night" by Whitesnake

GUITAR ALBUM: *Surfing with the Alien* by Joe Satriani

GEAR: Tom Scholz Rockman

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Stevie Ray Vaughan

SHREDDER: Yngwie Malmsteen

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Andy Timmons. He was in Danger Danger, and no one knew how amazing he was at the time.

MOVIE: *Silverado*

HAIRSTYLE: Me! [See below...]

ACCESSORY: Boss Super Overdrive



STEVE LUKATHER (TOTO)

SOLO: "Where Were You" by Jeff Beck

RIFF: "Beat It" by Michael Jackson. It was Michael's riff. The fact that I played it is irrelevant. Ed gets a big nod for his solo.

GUITAR ALBUM: *Tones* by Eric Johnson or *Surfing with the Alien* by Joe Satriani

GEAR: Tri stereo chorus with stereo delay

SHREDDER: Hard to pick! Yngwie, Nuno, Steve Vai, Joe Satriani...

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Michael Landau, my best friend since we were 12. Everything he plays is masterful. People need to check out all his solo records.

MOVIE: *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*

HAIRSTYLE: Mike Score from A Flock of Seagulls — and my dear pal Steve Stevens.

ACCESSORY: Delay was probably something I've always used back to the Echoplex days of the Seventies.

DIAMOND ROWE (TETRARCH)

SOLO: Metallica's "One" or Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train"

RIFF: "Welcome to the Jungle" by Guns N' Roses

GUITAR ALBUM: Metallica's *...And Justice for All*. I don't riff gale!

GEAR: I don't see how anyone can say anything other than the Marshall JCM head! That was an Eighties tone staple!

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen

SHREDDER: Dave Mustaine or Zakk Wylde

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Adrian Smith doesn't get enough praise for all the amazing melodic guitar work he does (and did) for Iron Maiden.

MOVIE: *Aliens*

HAIRSTYLE: I'm going to have to go with all the boys that just let it grow: James Hetfield, Zakk Wylde, Eddie Van Halen, etc.

ACCESSORY: The whammy bar!

MAX CAVALERA (SEPUFLURA, SOULFLY)

SOLO: Pink Floyd "Sorrow." David Gilmour recorded that on a boat with a little amp, which makes it even cooler! [Laughs] *The Final Cut*, *A Momentary Lapse of Reason*, *The Division Bell* — I love all those records, and they're filled with great guitar stuff.

RIFF: Motorhead "Ace of Spades." It's just dirty!

GUITAR ALBUM: I love Link Wray's *Live in '85* because it starts with "Rumble," and "Rumble" is from the Fifties, and when he [first released it] it was banned. It was the only instrumental ever banned on the radio because it incited riots. What balls to make an instrumental song that gets banned!

GEAR: The B.C. Rich Warlock. It was what I was using, what Slayer was using and I think W.A.S.P. and Lita Ford and a bunch of other people. I think I got it from Lita Ford.

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: The Edge from U2

SHREDDER: Eddie Van Halen, man. Other guys come close, like Randy Rhoads right behind him, but I have to go with Eddie.

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Chuck Schuldiner from Death. Not just for the technical stuff of later years, which was mind-blowing, but the early stuff. Come on, the guy practically invented death metal! [Laughs]



MOVIE: *Planes, Trains and Automobiles*

HAIRSTYLE: There's a lot of mullets flying around... but I wanted to do something different, so I went with [bassist Jean-Yves] Blacky [Therault from] *Voivod*, with the shaved head on one side and long hair.

ACCESSORY: For us, touring at that time during *Arise*, *Beneath the Remains* and *Chaos [A.D.]*, it was the fanny pack.

[Laughs] I was actually thinking about bringing that back. It was cool because you could put everything in it!

MALINA MOYE

SOLO: "Beat it" by Eddie Van Halen or "Purple Rain" by Prince

RIFF: AC/DC's "Back in Black" or Zapp's "More Bounce to the Ounce" with Roger Troutman.

GUITAR ALBUM: Bon Jovi's *Slippery When Wet* or Guns N' Roses' *Appetite for Destruction*

GEAR: A Floyd Rose on a Kramer

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen

SHREDDER: Eddie Van Halen
UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Steve Lukather, Vernon Reid or Wendy Melvin

MOVIE: *Friday the 13th*

HAIRSTYLE: Randy Jackson or Buddy Guy with his Jheri curl!

ACCESSORY: Ray-Ban Aviator sunglasses

BILLY HOWERDEL (A PERFECT CIRCLE)

SOLO: "Diary of a Madman" by Ozzy Osbourne (Randy Rhoads)

RIFF: "This Charming Man" by the Smiths (Johnny Marr)

GUITAR ALBUM: *Spring Session M* by Missing Persons (Warren Cucurullo)

GEAR: Lexicon 480 L Digital Reverb

SHREDDER: Steve Vai

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: The Edge. In a decade filled to the brim with shredding virtuosos, the Edge could transcend



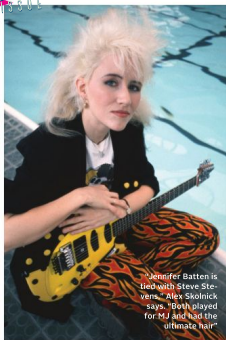
EIGHT FROM THE '80S

LOOKING BACK, GW-STYLE

CONTRARY TO POPULAR belief, *Guitar World* — which came into existence right around the middle of 1980 — didn't actually publish a ton of stereotypically squeakin', squawkin', screamin' and/or honkin' "ridiculously Eighties" covers! Sure, there are (literally) a couple of instances of Billy Idol axer Steve Stevens and his amazing hair... there's definitely a heapin' 'helpin' of our Mr. Vai looking very "of the time" every now and then... But for the most part, these days, GW's Eighties covers come off as more "generally vintage" instead of "insanely Eighties."

Above, check out what we feel are eight GW covers (all from the Eighties, of course) that somehow — whether for obvious reasons or more subtle criteria (For instance — Jeff Beck with his pink Jackson!) truly sum up the Eighties. Of course, 35 years from now, they'll probably have to lump the August 2022 cover into this pile!

— Damian Fanelli



Jennifer Batten is tied with Steve Stevens. Alex Skolnick says, "Both played for MJ and had the ultimate hair!"

the guitar and get right to the heart of the song. He filled space when needed and appropriately and modestly found his lane with taste and class. Always interesting and always thoughtful.

MOVIE: *The Lost Boys*

HAIRSTYLE: Robert Smith of the Cure
GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen

ACCESSORY: Condoms

DEAN DeLED (STONE TEMPLE PILOTS)

SOLO: "The Great Curve" by Talking Heads (Adrian Belew)

RIFF: "It's No Game, Part 1" by David Bowie (Robert Fripp)

GUITAR ALBUM: *I.O.U.* by Allan Holdsworth

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Elliott Easton

SHREDDER: Steve Stevens

MOVIE: *Pee Wee's Big Adventure*

HAIRSTYLE: Mike Score from *A Flock of Seagulls*

ACCESSORY: The CD Walkman

NILI BROSH

SOLO: Eddie Van Halen's "Beat It" solo

RIFF: "The Final Countdown" by Europe.

It's technically a melody rather than a guitar riff, but it's one of the catchiest that's synonymous with the Eighties.

GUITAR ALBUM: Van Halen's *1984*

GEAR: The old Tom Scholtz Rockman Sustainer

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen

SHREDDER: Yngwie Malmsteen

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Nuno

Bettencourt, but I've always felt it's because it was the early Nineties when Extreme hit big.

MOVIE: *The Breakfast Club*

HAIRSTYLE: A Flock of Seagulls

ACCESSORY: I was only two when the Eighties ended so it's a tough one to answer, but I'm guessing a pink hair brush would've been my version of it!

REEVES GABRELS

SOLO: "The Boy with the Gun" by David Sylvain (David Torn)

RIFF: "Metal Fatigue" by Allan Holdsworth

GUITAR ALBUM: *Discipline* by King Crimson

GEAR: Steinberger GLT TransTrem

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Bill Nelson

SHREDDER: Allan Holdsworth

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Eddie Martinez, a New York City player who was omnipresent on terrestrial radio in the Eighties. He could be heard on recordings by Robert Palmer, Blondie, Lou Reed, Lenny White, David Lee Roth, Meat Loaf and countless others. His fresh playing on Run-DMC's self-titled album (which included "Rock Box") presented the blueprint for the rock guitar/rap hybrid that was relentlessly exploited by others into the 2000s. He's a guitarist's guitarist, whose riffs you've played in your cover band and whose solos you've tried to copy but whose name you never took the time to learn. Now's the time to do your homework and hit "search."

MOVIE: *Amadeus*

ACCESSORY: Pro Co Rat distortion pedal

STEVE MORSE (DIXIE DREGS, DEEP PURPLE)

SOLO: "Don't Tell Me You Love Me" by Night Ranger (Brad Gillis, Jeff Watson).

The harmonies really hit a sweet spot, and the energy is intense.

RIFF: "Sweet Child O' Mine" by Guns N' Roses. Slash's intro is simple and beautiful, and it offered a new approach for rock guitarists.

GUITAR ALBUM: *Tones* by Eric Johnson

GEAR: A whammy bar guitar.

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Randy Rhoads

SHREDDER: A five-way tie between Steve Vai, Joe Satriani, Eric Johnson, Yngwie Malmsteen and Randy Rhoads.

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Mick Mars. His rhythm playing and riffs are very musical, and they're a great place to start learning the art of playing effectively.

MOVIE: Mel Brooks' *History of the World, Part I*.

HAIRSTYLE: Kip Winger. He's a great

musician and writer, but he also had the ultimate look, one that all singers wanted to emulate.

ACCESSORY: It's not an item — it's practicing the guitar. Everybody was playing so phenomenally well in the Eighties, so you had to be at the top of your game before walking out the door for a gig. The audience really listened to the guitar.

JAKE BOWEN (PERIPHERY)

SOLO: "Fight Fire with Fire" by Metallica

RIFF: The first riff of Metallica's "Blackened" after the intro

GUITAR ALBUM: *Master of Puppets* by Metallica

GEAR: Mesa/Boogie Mark IIC+

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen

SHREDDER: Eddie Van Halen

MOVIE: *Aliens*

HAIRSTYLE: Did James Hetfield have that awesome mullet in the Eighties?

ACCESSORY: Don't leave home without your machine gun bullet belt.

MARTY FRIEDMAN (SOLO ARTIST, EX-MEGADETH)

SOLO: "Wuthering Heights" by Pat Benatar (Neil Giraldo)

RIFF: "Here It Comes" by Ezo

GUITAR ALBUM: *Crimes of Passion* by Pat Benatar. Every solo is totally different, and every song has lots of unique and very effective guitar work.

GEAR: Quadraverb

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: It would be impossible to choose one, probably thanks to the high standard set by EVH.

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Steve Lukather. People know how great he is, but many are not aware that his massive body of musical work is so overwhelmingly expansive and diverse that there are literally no rivals as far as I know.

MOVIE: *The Last American Virgin*

HAIRSTYLE: The bass player on the first Cinderella album cover.

ACCESSORY: Hair

JOEL STROETZEL (KILLSWITCH ENGAGE)

SOLO: "Into the Fire" by Dokken (George Lynch)

RIFF: Opening riff to "Lay It Down" by Ratt

GUITAR ALBUM: *Rising Force* by Yngwie Malmsteen

GEAR: Original Eighties hot pink Ibanez JEM

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van

Halen

SHREDDER: Paul Gilbert

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Adrian Vandenburg. Killer vibrato [and] awesome-sounding hands.

MOVIE: *Purple Rain*

HAIRSTYLE: Mike Score of A Flock of Seagulls

ACCESSORY: Walkman cassette player!

ALEX SKOLNICK (TESTAMENT)

SOLO: "Beat It" (Eddie Van Halen, Michael Jackson). Not that it was Eddie's best, but it was darn good. More important is what it represented — a cultural milestone and the radical merging of hard rock guitar and pop via EVH & MJ.

RIFF: "Back in Black" by AC/DC. It was one of the first riffs of the Eighties, and it set the bar extremely high.

GUITAR ALBUM: *Metal Fatigue* by Allan Holdsworth

GEAR: Yamaha SPX 90 rack effects unit. If I'm not mistaken, Mike Stern still uses his.

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Joe Satriani. He was completely unknown outside

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: EVH

SHREDDER: EVH

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Vivian Campbell. His work on Dio's *Holy Diver* was some of the baddest stuff I heard as a kid.

MOVIE: *The NeverEnding Story*

HAIRSTYLE: Robert Smith of the Cure

DEAN BACK & TYLER CONNOLLY (THEORY OF A DEADMAN)

SOLO: "Ice 9" by Joe Satriani (Tyler), "Beat It" (Dean)

RIFF: "Hot for Teacher" (Tyler), GNR's "Mr. Brownstone" (Dean)

GUITAR ALBUM: *Surfing with the Alien* (Tyler)

GEAR: Ibanez JEM 777 (Tyler)

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: EVH

SHREDDER: Joe Satriani

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Jeff Healey (Tyler), Mark Knopfler (Dean)

MOVIE: *The Breakfast Club* (Tyler), *Top Gun* (Dean)

HAIRSTYLE: Jennifer Batten or Bruce Dickinson (Tyler), Jon Bon Jovi (Dean)

ACCESSORY: Ibanez Tube Screamer (Tyler), Sony Sports Walkman (Dean).

"BESIDES, WHAT OTHER MOVIE HAD A CHARACTER NAMED 'SKOLNICK'?"

—ALEX SKOLNICK

of the SF Bay Area in the early Eighties when I was fortunate enough to have him as a teacher.

SHREDDER: Yngwie Malmsteen

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Dann Huff of Giant. Listen to 1989's *Last of the Runaways*.

MOVIE: *Revenge of the Nerds* (1984). It's not my favorite on an artistic level, but it's one of several mid-Eighties comedies that just helps capture the era. Besides, what other movie has a character named "Skolnick"?

HAIRSTYLE: Jennifer Batten. She's tied with Steve Stevens. Both played for MJ and had the ultimate hair at the time.

ACCESSORY: Sony Walkman

MARCOS CURIEL (P.D.D.)

SOLO: Iron Maiden's "Powerslave" — Dave Murray's solo at 3:06.

RIFF: Metallica's "Seek & Destroy"

GUITAR ALBUM: Queensryche's *Operation Mindcrime*

GEAR: ADA MP-1 preamp

JOSH SMITH (NORTHLANE)

SOLO: "Crying in the Rain" by Whitesnake — the one and only John Sykes.

RIFF: Slayer's "Raining Blood"

GUITAR ALBUM: *Death, Leprosy*

GEAR: I own a fluorescent green and black swirled Ibanez with a double locking tremolo. Not a Northlane guitar but as shred as it gets!

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: EVH, duh

SHREDDER: Steve Vai. In the Eighties, GW editor Brad Tolinski wrote, "Steve Vai's guitar wizardry is so profound that in earlier times he would have been burned as a witch."

MOVIE: *Top Gun*

HAIRSTYLE: Jerry Cantrell's got us all covered with those locks.

DAVE DALONE (H.E.A.T)

SOLO: Kee Marcello's solo in

"Superstitious."

RIFF: "Money for Nothing" by Dire Straits

GUITAR ALBUM: *Hysteria* by Def Leppard.

It might not be the craziest playing, but it's damn effective and well executed.

GEAR: Anything that goes to 11! How about a Tri Stereo Chorus... preferably mounted in one of those Bradshaw racks, sitting in the trunk of a Firebird, driven by Jean-Claude Van Damme into the L.A. sunset to the sound of "Rough Boy" by ZZ Top. (Sorry, I got carried away!)

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: EVH

SHREDDER: Yngwie Malmsteen

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Dann Huff. Giant came along at the end of the cycle, and it seems they were a bit late to the party. But what a great guitar player!

MOVIE: *Back to the Future*

ACCESSORY: A Walkman and an attitude.

BOBBY KELLER

SOLO: "Mr. Crowley" by Randy Rhoads

RIFF: "Master of Puppets" by Metallica

GEAR: The George Lynch "Tiger Striped" ESP guitar for me. What more could you ask for?

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: Eddie Van Halen

SHREDDER: Jason Becker

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Jake E. Lee and Vito Bratta don't get the credit they deserve, even though Vito had maybe a different life scenario happen that prevented him from playing or continuing with White Lion. But Jake just slays.

MOVIE: *Nightmare on Elm Street* movies

HAIRSTYLE: Prince

ACCESSORY: A Walkman or a boom box.

DAMIAN FANELLI (GUITAR WORLD)

SOLO: "Texas Flood"

RIFF: "Crazy Train"

GUITAR ALBUM: *Texas Flood*

GEAR: My ol' EMG active pickups

GUITARIST OF THE DECADE: EVH because of obviousness; Steve Vai because of *Crossroads* and the JEM; SRV because he didn't get another decade.

SHREDDER: Mr. Malmsteen

UNDERAPPRECIATED HERO: Chris Hayes of Huey Lewis and the News. And while I'm at it: Albert Collins, Jimmie Vaughan, R. Cray, B. Setzer and Pete Anderson!

MOVIE: *Back to School*. "Remember — you're a Melon!"

HAIRSTYLE: Kiss guitarist Mark St. John from a 1987 Gibson USA "Artist Signature Series" GW ad that also features Michael Angelo (Batio) and Wayne Charvel. I know there were crazier hairstyles, but Mark St. John's hair in this ad pretty much leaves me speechless.

ACCESSORY: Food. [GWW](#)



THEN
Blackout (1982)

Rock Believer (2022)
NOW



MARC THEIS



SCORPIONS

"After a while, everything comes back with a twist" —
Rudolf Schenker leans into the iconic band's legacy status

By Gregory Adams

HAD SCORPIONS NOT become one of hard rock's most enduring global forces, guitarist Rudolf Schenker would have taken himself down a much different, yet nevertheless high-voltage career path. "My mother wanted me to have a real job, as a power electrician," the Hanover, Germany-born rhythm guitarist recalls with a laugh. Schenker adds that his mom just wanted him to have a more grounded backup plan in case Scorpions, the group he began in 1965 when he was still a teenager, didn't pan out. Though Schenker did manage to find work as a tradesman for a few

years, a heart-to-heart with his dad ultimately convinced the guitarist to follow his dreams and focus on music full time.

Nearly 60 years later — racking up countless world tours and millions of album sales along the way — there's no question Schenker made the right choice. In an abstract sense, though, you could argue the famously Flying V-toting guitarist has been working as an electrician all this time.

Fittingly enough, Schenker's affably getting into all things Scorpions over Zoom while sitting beneath a coterie of V's

hanging in his living room — from see-through, cherry red acrylic beauties, to his iconic, black-and-white signature Gibson. He reveals that he spent the early months of the pandemic at home adding anecdotes to the recent, German-language reprint of his 2009 autobiography, *Rock Your Life*. The past couple of years also found him and the rest of Scorpions — longtime lead guitarist Mathias Jabs, vocalist Klaus Meine, bassist Pawel Maciwoda and drummer Mikkey Dee — hunkering down in Hannover's Peppermint Park studio to record their 19th full-length, *Rock Believer*, adding 11 Marshall-cranking anthems to add to group's crunchy canon. Both projects act as testaments to Scorpions' impressive multi-decade run. While the book finds Schenker waxing nostalgic on band history and mega-hits like "Rock You Like a Hurricane" and "Winds of Change," Meine's lyrics throughout *Rock Believer* coyly hint at the massive, stinger-sized imprint they've all left on each other.

It's been seven years since the act delivered their *Return to Forever*, making this the longest wait between Scorpions albums yet. More often than not, it's been rhythm riffer Schenker that got the ball rolling on new material, but this time around Meine kick-started the creative process after sending Schenker the lyrics to *Rock Believer*'s celebratory opening track, "Gas in the Tank."

A palpable charge of excitement took hold of Schenker as he read over the lyrics, which have Meine gassing up his friend in the first verse by dubbing him a "king of riffs" with a particularly rowdy flair ("Move your fingers up and down the fret / The V is flyin' without a net"). The vocalist then playfully challenges his bandmate to give him "a dirty riff" that proves they're still in it for the long haul ("There's gotta be more gas in the tank"). Meine's gambit

worked — contrary to the old saying, flattery will get you somewhere. Schenker confirms that Meine's words jolted him toward laying down the tune's core melody of power chords and a certifiably fist-pumping chorus hook.

"My mother wanted me to have a real job, as a power electrician," says Scorpions' Rudolf Schenker, seen here with a signature Gibson Flying V



"WE TRIED ALL OUR EQUIPMENT FROM THE EIGHTIES — THE MARSHALL STACKS, ALL THIS

"This time around it was fantastic for me — I could give the words a lift," Schenker says, "especially when you have lyrics where you're remembering [good] times — festivals in America, and knockin' them dead. We're saying 'This is our history; that was our way of living [and it was] unbelievable! I put that energy into the music.'"

While it's notable that *Rock Believer* arrives 50 years to the month of the band's hard-boogied 1972 debut, *Lonesome Crow*, stylistically Scorpions' latest appropriately hews closer to the chunkier, if hook-laden metal they've honed since Jabs joined up for 1979's *Lovedrive*.

Even beyond Meine giving his bandmates a knowing wink through his lyrics, *Rock Believer* is a determinedly self-referential album for the quintet. There are implicit shades of "China White" to the grimy and gain-singed, slow-stomp approach of *Rock Believer*'s "Seventh Sun." The up-stroke plinking of "Shining of Your Soul" flirts with the reggae/rock hybridization Scorpions had delivered on *Lovedrive*'s "Is There Anybody There," though this latest rocksteady groove takes on an eerie flavor due to Jabs' minor key waggling. Even *Rock Believer*'s Klaus Voormann-designed album cover, a close-up shot of someone screaming through a crimson veil, references the same kind of visceral, fever-pitch yell a figure gives on the cover to 1982's landmark *Blackout*. As they enter their seventh decade of activity, Scorpions fully embrace their hard rock heritage.

Schenker admits, however, that there was a period in the mid Nineties where Scorpions had contemplated their direction as they were playing Eighties-styled metal in the post-grunge era. A turning point came at the dawn of the 21st century as they worked on their *Moment of Glory* album with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Revamping old pieces with seasoned classical musicians revealed that Scorpions' bedrock was likewise "timeless." Since then, they've gracefully leaned into their legacy status, with *Rock Believer* continuing to both honor and tweak the band's DNA. "After a while, everything comes back with a twist," Schenker suggests of the balance.

Naturally, one of the bigger plot twists to the making of *Rock Believer* was the Covid pandemic. Initially, Scorpions had planned to record in Los Angeles

with producer Greg Fidelman (Slipknot, Metallica), but cross-continental travel plans were canceled as the pandemic worsened. Though the band and Fidelman had attempted to work remotely via Zoom, Scorpions quickly realized that having Fidelman on the other side of an iPad screen rather than the control room was less than ideal. Ultimately, they opted to track at Hanover's Peppermint Park to co-produce the collection with engineer Hans-Martin Buff. Scorpions had previously been to the studio for 2004's *Unbreakable*, which happened to be bassist Maciwo's first album with the group.

Understandably, Schenker explains that the sessions provided some relief for the group as they contended with the pandemic ("Outside was craziness; inside it was 'music, music, music.'"). Jabs added in a press release that being in a close-knit studio bubble juiced the energy of the sessions, and strengthened the brotherhood of Scorpions.

"Everything felt like it had in the 1980s, when the five of us rocked together, [hung] out at the corner pub in the evenings and [talked] about our music." It all made for a prolific stretch of music-making, with the band tracking upwards of 20 new songs. Though they'd considered releasing a double album, *Rock Believer* was trimmed to 11 songs — five bonus cuts were added to the deluxe edition.

Despite Schenker's hefty arsenal of Flying V's, he notes that he'd cut most of *Rock Believer* with an old '58 V he'd got off German guitarist Alex Conti — Eric Clapton had apparently also been interested in buying the guitar before Schenker secured it for his collection years ago. Jabs, for his part, played it looser, bouncing between a Bigsby-mounted '59 Les Paul, a '58 Les Paul, a '55 Les Paul Junior, an old Strat, a few Explorers and the Telecaster he'd played on "Winds of Change." Amp-wise, Scorpions laid down a good chunk of work using a collection of vintage Marshall heads maintained by Jabs' guitar tech, Ingo Powitzer. "We tried all our equipment from the Eighties — the Marshall stacks, all this equipment — to find that original, old Eighties sound," Schenker confirms.

Though he was dialing in old-school tones, Schenker was locking into a newfound groove alongside Maciwo and Dee. While Dee has been hitting the skins for Scorpions since 2016,

Rock Believer marks the first time the band have put the former Motorhead drummer's determined thud to use in the studio. This inspired Schenker to really dig into his rhythm playing, delivering dirt nasty downstrokes and palm-muted chugs at a furious clip on tempo-pushers like "Roots in My Boots."

"We were working close together, pushing the beat further rather than playing laid back. That gave the songs another kind of spirit," Schenker explains, adding of the organic drive of Scorpions' current rhythm section, "The latest albums in the world, they're mostly based on sound design. Because of Pro Tools, you bring in a riff, you [play] to a drum machine, and later on you put [real] drums on it. That's not the way you create great songs — you have to feel it! It's like a body. You have to get the body in the right position, so that's what we did when we were playing [at Peppermint Park]."

Since Schenker was tightening up his muscular rhythms, Jabs lets loose with a series of brawny leads. The two guitarists go for a tandem approach on bonus cut "When You Know," but it's Jabs alone that delivers the roadhouse slash-and-burn on "Knock 'em Dead," or the furiously ripping scale-climb on "Roots in My Boots." While Schenker has dropped some important solos throughout Scorpions' career — that's him wailing on iconic power ballad "Winds of Change" — the band's principal songwriter lovingly ceded the bulk of *Rock Believer*'s lead duties to his bandmate.

"It's important for me that everybody's happy," Schenker says, adding of his trust in longtime riff partner Jabs' personal touch, "When I see that Matthias is already playing the right lines, I don't want to interfere."

Fifty years have passed since the release of *Lonesome Crow*, more than 40 since Scorpions locked into their signature sting. It's clear at this point that the group are metal lifers — rock believers, if you will. It's been a minute since Schenker was a Hanover electrician dreaming of blasting the masses with a high-voltage dose of heavy metal, but some things never change.

"I see myself in the way that I [was] playing] the Flying V already, and I see myself in the way that I had a goal and went for it. The result is what we have now." **EW**

EQUIPMENT — TO FIND THAT ORIGINAL, OLD EIGHTIES SOUND — RUDOLF SCHENKER



THEN

Out of the Cellar (1984)

"I have a lot of material; it's going to be completed when it's completed."

NOW

?



WARREN DeMARTINI

The man who replaced Jake E. Lee in Ratt talks Eddie Van Halen, "Round and Round," Dio, Charvel gear and his legendary vibrato

By Joe Bosso

NINETEEN-YEAR-OLD Warren DeMartini made the move from San Diego to Los Angeles in 1982 just as the Sunset Strip glam metal scene was on the cusp of exploding nationwide. For a young hotshot guitarist looking to get noticed, L.A. in the early Eighties was like a mecca. There were clubs teeming with women and A&R scouts. There were parties and strip joints. And there were thousands of other like-minded

budding shredders hoping to be the next Eddie Van Halen.

"Back then, Eddie was sort of the apex of a new direction for guitarists of my generation," DeMartini remembers. "If you were just getting in the game like me, he was the guy to look up to. He made it all seem so exciting. Everybody wanted to play like him, and every band wanted to hit it big like Van Halen."

While most of his six-string peers hustled for gigs, putting up flyers and advertising their services in local musician's papers, DeMartini arrived in L.A. with something of an ace up his sleeve: He had already accepted an invitation to join the up-and-coming outfit Ratt, replacing his friend Jake E. Lee, who had signed on with Ozzy Osbourne following Randy Rhoads' passing. For the next few months, Ratt played every gig that came their way, soon becoming the house band at Gazzari's, the same club where Van Halen got their start.

"The competition was fierce, but it was also healthy," DeMartini says. "I thought the whole thing was fun, and I really loved performing. There were a lot of things that could break your competition, but I didn't let anything get in the way. I kind of kept my head down and worked on music. I just wanted to play guitar as best I could and learn to write songs."

Ratt (which also included singer Stephen Pearcy, rhythm guitarist Robbin Crosby, bassist Juan Croucier and drummer Bobby Blotzer) made a sizable splash with the release of their self-titled 1983 EP, and a year later they hit triple platinum with *Out of the Cellar*, which featured the smart-alecky pop metal smash "Round and Round" (written by DeMartini, Pearcy and Crosby). Throughout the decade and into early Nineties, DeMartini's energetic and snaky solos — a deft mix of fluid legato lines, spunky whammy bolts and a sinuous vibrato — highlighted a number of memorable hits that saw the band graduate to arena headliners before a combination of internal squabbles, substance abuse and the rise of alternative rock stopped them in their tracks in 1992.

Since that time, there have been a number of Ratt reunions, some involving DeMartini but none comprising what is regarded as the

"classic" lineup (Crosby passed away from a heroin overdose in 2002). The subject is a thorny one for the guitarist — there have been numerous lawsuits between members as to ownership of the band's name — but in the following interview he looks back at his time in the Ratt race.

Ratt's Warren DeMartini on stage in Rosemont, Illinois, September 21, 1985

PAUL NATHIN/GETTY IMAGES



"IF YOU WERE JUST GETTING IN THE GAME LIKE ME, EDDIE VAN HALEN WAS THE GUY TO

You mentioned Eddie Van Halen as being the top guy for guitarists when you were coming up. How much impact did he have on your playing?

Oh, a lot, sure. There was his sound, but there was also his whole style. He had a shuffle that nobody else had. I was crazy about that shuffle in "I'm the One." I think Eddie got more of that from listening to Eric Clapton, although he played much slower. There was the same kind of snapiness, though.

Kind of a funny story about Eddie: Robbin knew him a bit, and I think he also knew some people on Van Halen's crew, so we got passes to the band's show in San Diego during the *Women and Children First* tour. I drove us there, and we got to the arena before the opening act went on. A crew guy that Robbin knew showed us Ed's rig, and we talked for a bit.

A while later, halfway through Van Halen's set, I realized I left my jacket on the stage where we were talking, right behind the PA speakers on Ed's side. My keys were in the jacket, and losing them wasn't an option. My pass got me backstage again, so I climbed the stairs to the stage level and saw my jacket 20 feet away. Nobody was looking, so I went for it — halfway to my jacket, I paused and took in the view from Ed's world. The band was surrounded by the sold-out arena. Then Ed started moving to his left, and for a few moments his spotlight hit the two of us. Right when the monitor guy noticed me, I took a few more steps, grabbed my jacket and booked.

Wow, that's a great story.

Yeah, that was as scary as it was exciting. My first view to the stage! [Laughs]

People often cite your vibrato. How did you start to develop your technique?

From Jake E. Lee. I went over to his house, and it was the first time I saw somebody really play that way up close. I was pretty mystified about how to use vibrato, and Jake told me that I had to start slow and then go wide. After that, you don't have to think about it anymore. That was one of the few times I got advice from somebody and was able to put it to good use.

You replaced Jake in Ratt. What was the band like with him?

They were great — really great, in fact.

Good songs, and Jake was killer. I think there might be cassettes of their rehearsals floating around out there, but I don't know about any videos.

When you joined Ratt, did you and Robbin Crosby hit it off right away?

Oh yeah. I was friends with Robbin before he knew any of those guys. He and I went to the same junior high school — not at the same time, but we lived in the same area. I was interested in the guitar, and he was already in a band that played all the time. So when I first got into the guitar, he was out of high school and living the life. His band played covers, but they did some originals, too.

Did it take a while for you two to mesh as guitarists?

It was pretty easy, actually. I got turned onto a lot of cool stuff because of him — he always knew the stuff that wasn't being played on the radio. Playlists in San Diego at that time could be on the conservative side, but Robbin was listening to Pat Travers, Scorpions with Uli Roth, UFO — and way before they got on the air. We had a great time listening to that stuff together.

Lead guitarists usually get more of the attention from the press. Do you think Robbin ever minded the spotlight falling more on you?

If he did, he didn't mention it. I mean, he never said anything like that. And you know, I didn't think about that sort of thing. I was just very focused on making my own contribution to the band and doing the best I could with the time I had.

One of your first compositions for Ratt was "Round and Round." Did you originate the song?

After high school, I moved to L.A. in a Fiat piece of shit, and about all I had was a guitar, a Marshall stack and a little tape recorder. On that recorder was "Round and Round" in its earliest form. I'd been working on it for a long time, just crafting it. I remember thinking, "How do you even write songs?" I kept trying to come up with parts and then make them all fit together. About a year later, Robbin, Stephen and I completed the song one afternoon in a small apartment we shared in North Culver City.

You seemed to have figured out

songwriting quickly. You were also a writer on "Lay It Down," "Dance" and "Way Cool Jr." Did the band kind of look to you for hits?

I don't know. I think the tendency back then was to think your stuff was going to do well. Everyone's ideas got worked up, but not every song got recorded. We had to narrow it down to ten tracks because at that time we only got paid on ten songs per album. We did the best we could, and then you'd get word from the label [about] what's going to be a single. There was a pattern that the stuff I brought to the group was on that list.

Your solos were always very memorable. Did you demo them as you wrote, or were they off the cuff?

Both. Back then, we'd record basic tracks with maybe a scratch vocal, but a lot of times you wouldn't get the kind of guitar sound you wanted to commit to record. After we'd get most everything down, I'd go back and work on the guitar sound. I'd refine ideas.

You were playing Charvel guitars pretty exclusively at the time.

Right. That started because of those first two Van Halen records. The first Van Halen album was clearly a Boogie Body, but the second one was clearly a Charvel. That was part of the revolution Ed started, where you could put together your own guitar. A friend of ours happened to get a job at Charvel, and for a little while we could buy guitars and necks that were seconds — the stuff Grover wanted to throw away. You could get a guitar or a neck for cheap, so that's what I did; then I'd buy hardware and pickups and that kind of thing. Skip ahead a few years and I got a message from a friend who was a graphic artist at Charvel: "Grover Jackson wants to see you." I immediately thought, "Oh, man, he wants me to rat out whoever was selling me these seconds." Robbin and I drove out to Charvel, and Grover said, "You guys are obviously Charvel fans. I'll build you the best guitars I can, and we'll work something out later when you can afford it." Which was awesome. That's right around the time when the "crossed swords" guitar was built.

Ratt broke up in 1992 but regrouped a short time later. Through the years, there were several iterations — some

with you, some without. When you finally left, was it a difficult time for you? Were you ready to move on and try something new?

It was not a great time, because prior to that there was a lot of litigation about who could use the name. That got worked out and it seemed like we were in a good way to continue, but then it quickly turned into one step forward, four steps back. In hindsight, it really wasn't worth the trouble in trying to keep it together.

You did some stints in Dokken and Whitesnake, and for a brief time you were in Dio.

For a brief time, yeah. I got a call from [bassist] Jimmy Bain, who asked me to come down and jam. I said sure, and I went down to Joe's Garage in the valley. I plugged into my rig and started warming up on "Man on the Silver Mountain." Ronnie [James Dio] walked in and said, "You got the gig." He said, "We never played it like the record. We always played it really fast."

After that, we started working up material sort of chronologically, starting with Rainbow and then on to Black Sabbath stuff. It sounded amazing. When I played that riff from "The Mob Rules" and Ronnie came in, I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. But then as we got into his solo stuff, it just didn't match my style very well. The mirage of it working out kind of evaporated. But man, for a few days, it was heaven.

What happened with Whitesnake?

That was different, because other than the John Sykes stuff, I really wasn't familiar with Whitesnake. We did a tour right when Geffen put out a "best of." It was in the middle of the Nineties, kind of when rock wasn't doing so well. We toured Japan and Europe, and that was awesome because Ratt didn't play Europe that much. We played in Russia, too, and had a great time. As a permanent thing, though, I don't think that was ever taken seriously by David [Coverdale] or me.

Ratt continues on without you. You last played with them in 2018. Would you say that band a difficult alliance?

You could put it that way.



Warren DeMartini on stage with Ratt in Wales in late 2009

We talked about Charvel. You have a line of signature series guitars with them.

That's right. We just came up with another color we're going to add to what they call the "French" graphic. There's a red "French" graphic that looks awesome, so that's coming out. My Seymour Duncan RTM Rattus Tonious Maximus pickup is going to retail from the Custom Shop.

Are you working on new music or planning to tour?

Yes. I'm working on music all the time, but it's hard to pin down when that'll be ready. I have a lot of material, and it's going to be completed when it's

completed. And at some point, if I live long enough, it's probably going to be a solo effort, but I'm in no rush to put it out.

As for touring, I love it. I've done that on and off for 35 years, so I don't mind not being part of that world right now. I've been doing Kings of Chaos with Gilby Clarke, Matt Sorum, Kenny Aronoff and James Lorenzo. We do gigs once in a while, and there's always three singers. The last gig we did featured Dee Snider, Ann Wilson and Billy Gibbons. That was a lot of fun. I do get out and play live, but no actual tours recently. It's so hard these days with everything going on — there's Covid and all. I think it's better to wait for things to calm down out there. [GWR](#)

KEVIN NIXON/FUTURE

"I WAS PRETTY MYSTIFIED ABOUT HOW TO USE VIBRATO; JAKE E. LEE TOLD ME I HAD TO START SLOW AND THEN GO WIDE"



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DEF LEPPARD

Phil Collen and Vivian Campbell take you behind the scenes of their first album in seven long years, *Diamond Star Halos*, and talk Bolan, Bowie, Ronson and Reed

By Joe Bosso

IT WOULDN'T EXACTLY be an understatement to say that the Covid pandemic threw a king-sized monkey wrench into Def Leppard's plans. In June 2020, with just two weeks before the band was about to embark on a 30-date stadium tour that would also feature Mötley Crüe, Poison and Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, the group was forced to reschedule the entire run for the following summer. Nearly a year later, however, with Covid cases continuing unabated, the band announced that the rebooted tour was postponed yet again and would commence this year.

"Let's face it — no band likes to cancel concerts," says guitarist Phil Collen, "and obviously, Covid has been a shitty time for people all over the world. On that level, it is what it is. But to be honest, this is a band that's been through a few situations that derailed us for a bit. We've learned how to

handle those times and persevere. No matter what, we press on."

Fellow guitarist Vivian Campbell echoes Collen's sentiments: "It was very disappointing when we had to postpone those tours, but here we are now. We've got the places booked, and we're ready to go. We're definitely playing this time." He adds, "There was something positive that came from it. The time off led to an opportunity for us to make a great album, so now we're in a position to do a huge tour with a fantastic record to go with it. So it's all good."

The album Campbell refers to is *Diamond Star Halos*, Def Leppard's 12th studio recording and their first in seven years. As the title suggests — it's a pluralization of a lyric from T. Rex's "Bang a Gong (Get It On)" — many of the songs contained in the set draw inspiration from the

band's early musical influences. To be sure, there's an unmistakable Seventies glam-rock spirit on power rockers such as "Kick," "Fire It Up" and "Gimme a Kiss," and for good measure the band even enlisted David Bowie's legendary Spiders from Mars keyboardist, Mike Garson, to perform on a pair of stirring ballads, "Goodbye for Good This Time" and "Angels (Can't Help You Now)." Notably, there are a couple of detours to modern-day Nashville — Alison Krauss turns up to duet with singer Joe Elliott on the country-laced poppers "Lifeless" and "This Guitar" — that don't quite fit the sonic narrative, but they're sparky pinwheels of hooks and standout cuts in their own right.

All in all, the album is the spunkiest and most vibrant sounding record the band has made in some time, a feat made even more remarkable consider-

Def Leppard's Vivian Campbell [left] (who used mostly Les Pauls on the new album) and Phil Collen (with his signature Jackson PC1)

KEVIN NIXON



"IT WASN'T MARC BOLAN THE GUITAR PLAYER; IT WAS THE WHOLE THING — HIS SOUND

ing the fact that it was recorded remotely during the high point of Covid lockdowns. It was a trans-Atlantic endeavor, too, with longtime co-producer Ronan McHugh monitoring the flow of tracks coming in from various time zones: In the States, there were Collen, Campbell and drummer Rick Allen, while Elliot and bassist Rick Savage beamed their parts in from Ireland and the U.K., respectively. "It really wasn't as complicated or as difficult as it sounds," Collen says. "We've made lots of records without us being in the same room at the same time."

Recording separately is one thing; rehearsing for a tour is a different matter entirely. Unsurprisingly, the band is chomping at the bit to get going. "We can't wait," Campbell says. "To tell you the truth, we've never left that headspace of being a touring band. We've got a lot of rehearsal time scheduled, but I have a feeling that after a few days, we'll all be like, 'Oh, yeah, here we go.' It's just like riding a bike, really."

Let's start with the T. Rex influence on *Diamond Star Halos*. As a guitarist, what did Marc Bolan mean to you guys growing up?

VIVIAN CAMPBELL: He started the ball rolling for me. It wasn't Marc Bolan the guitar player per se; rather, it was the whole thing — his sound and image. He really was the grandfather of the glam rock movement; he had the hair and the androgyny, and of course, he made music that was such infectious ear candy. I was about nine years old when I first saw him on *Top of the Pops*. It was such a lightbulb moment where I went, "That's what I want to do. I want to wear my sister's clothes. I want to blow my hair and play guitar and make a living doing it."

You wanted to be that guy on the cover of *Electric Warrior*.

CAMPBELL: Yeah, exactly! He looked so great with his long hair and that Les Paul. That started me on the path. He just had the whole package, but the music was there. Out of that grew the different people who actually did influence me as a guitarist, like Rory Gallagher and Gary Moore. But I have to say, it was Marc Bolan who set me on my way to discovering them.

Phil, how about you?

PHIL COLLEN: Oh, I thought Marc Bolan was amazing, but for me, it might have been more David Bowie, who was from the same time period. I saw Bowie on *Top of the Pops* with Mick Ronson playing his Les Paul. The way he held that thing, I was like, "My God, this guy is so fucking cool." I was 14 and I was trying to identify myself. I'd already gotten into Deep Purple, Zeppelin and Hendrix, but then came Bowie, Bolan, Roxy Music, the Faces, but especially Bowie. That was the music that spoke to me.

I was going to bring up Mick Ronson. How did he impact you?

COLLEN: The thing about him was... well, there's his solos. They were phenomenal and they were different, and you could hum them. Great tone and melody. He was the perfect foil for Bowie. He was also a great producer. "Walk on the Wild Side" by Lou Reed — that's Bowie and Ronson producing. Like Phil was saying about Marc Bolan, Mick Ronson had the whole thing as an artist; it wasn't simply as a guitar player. As an entity, he was amazing.

There's a thread here: Bolan and Bowie... and you use Mike Garson on a couple of tracks. Did you ever think about Tony Visconti as a producer? He's the guy everybody has in common.

COLLEN: Not really, especially when we know exactly what we want ourselves. And to be quite honest, if we'd have brought in a producer, he would have just gotten in the way. Ronan McHugh is like part of the band. Anyone else would fuck it all up. We know exactly what we want. If we brought in anybody else, they just wouldn't get it.

Phil, I understand that you wrote "Kick" late in the record-making process. Turns out, it's the album's first single. Did you think the record needed that one sure-fire song?

COLLEN: Actually, that song and "Fire It Up" weren't written for Def Leppard. "Fire It Up" was one of the first songs I wrote, and "Kick" was the last. The co-writer on Kick is a guy named Dave Bassett. I programmed a drum pattern because I wanted to write a rock anthem, something you can sing in a stadium. Same with "Fire It Up." The funny thing is, rock anthems sound easy, but they're

really hard to write. Anyway, I wrote them and I played them for Joe. I told him I was going to give them to other people to record, and to each one he said, "That's a Def Leppard song." The other guys felt the same way.

Who were you thinking of giving the songs to?

COLLEN: Anyone from Lady Gaga to Miley Cyrus — you know, somebody who had a different thing. These songs are hard because they can come out corny if they're not done a certain way. They work as rock anthems. They're meant for stadiums.

It's interesting that you would think of giving them away. I would assume you'd want to save your best stuff for the band.

COLLEN: Yeah, but see, I never go, "Am I writing the best stuff?" I always try to write the best stuff, every time. If it's not there, it gets left by the roadside somewhere. I've got a million things on my phone that's not the best stuff. Nobody gets to hear it. [Laughs]

We've talked about the glam rock influence on the album, but you've got some country-tinged tracks that you did with Alison Krauss.

COLLEN: Yeah, our manager was talking to Alison's manager, and he mentioned that we had these two tracks. We said that we'd love to have her sing on the record and she could choose which song. She listened to them and said, "I love them both. Can I do both of them?"

I wrote "This Guitar" with CJ Vanston 17 years ago. He's one of the top piano session players in Chicago. Joe's been a champion of that song for years. Every five years or so, he goes, "We should do 'This Guitar.'" It never felt like the right time, though, but on this album we thought that we'd give it a go. Sav plays 12-string acoustic on it. He's really precise with his jangles. He sat there all day doing it till his fingers bled. And Viv's got the tastiest playing I ever heard on it. All these little links throughout, he's like Clapton or Gilmour. It's that kind of thing.

Vivian, that's some high praise. Did you play the pedal steel parts on the song?

CAMPBELL: I'm definitely not playing

AND IMAGE. HE REALLY WAS THE GRANDFATHER OF GLAM ROCK" — VIVIAN CAMPBELL



[From left] Rick Savage, Rick Allen, Joe Elliott, Phil Collen and Vivian Campbell

pedal steel. I don't even know where to begin with one of those things.

COLLEN: That's Ronan McHugh playing a keyboard with a pedal steel sound. But Vivian did play a traditional slide on the song.

CAMPBELL: They always ask me to play the slide parts, and I don't know why because I'm a shit slide guitar player, in my opinion.

I don't know about that. You sound great.

CAMPBELL: Thanks. I'm getting better, but I would never say I'm good at it. You have to recalibrate your playing to get on top of the frets instead of in-between. I'm always like, "Come on, come on. Just get up there..."

The song "U Rok Mi" features a section in which you guys trade solos.

COLLEN: That's right. I think I do the first, Viv does the second, and then I do the third and we both finish it off. We do a two-part harmony at the end.

You two have recorded together while in different rooms of a studio, but is there some slight psychological difference to not even being in the same building — or for that matter, the same city?

CAMPBELL: Nah. Phil and I have enough miles under our treads to know how to manage that. The only thing that's challenging about recording at home is the technical stuff. I'm still a complete Luddite with technology. However, once I get a good signal into the box, then I

have the luxury of working on my own schedule. I can get a cup of coffee, I can call my sister in Europe, and then I can get back to soloing. It's a lot easier when you don't have the pressure of people looking at you going, "Come on. Get it done already."

COLLEN: I've been using Guitar Rig since 2011, and I've had the same preset on it for my Man Raze albums and Def Leppard albums. That's my go-to. Live, we play through Fractals. When I do small gigs, I use Blackstar stuff, combos and what not. It's different, but it sounds exactly the same.

CAMPBELL: For me, this was my first time working with Guitar Rig. It's funny — that dropdown menu just keeps going. You find something and go, "OK, that's interesting. Hmm, that's cool. Maybe I'll come back to that." You just keep scrolling till you find something inspiring.

Now, you guys have a lot of guitars, but if you could boil things down, what were your main instruments for this album?

COLLEN: For me personally, it was a natural Jackson PCL. I've had it since 2007, and it's the one. I use it on a lot of the solos and things because it just sounds right. I do like my red Jackson PC Supreme — it's got the fattest neck they've ever made. It sounds great, but for some reason I didn't use it all over the album, and I should have. But I kept coming back to the PCL. There were also a couple of Telecasters. I used Squire Telecaster on the solo on "This Guitar," and there's a Squire Starcaster for the lick at the beginning.

Actually, we split that in half — I did the first bit and Viv plays the second half. You can hear the difference.

Viv, how about you?

CAMPBELL: Mostly Les Pauls. I used my Gibson Custom Shop Les Paul and my original Dio "Holy Diver" Les Paul. I also used a '66 Telecaster. It's been refretted with jumbo frets so I can actually bend on it. And I used my original Tom Anderson Strat for when I needed some shimmer or a little front pickup action. Those were the four that I used.

Last question: Do you ever turn on the radio and hear one of your songs — maybe a big hit — and you think, "Man, I wish I could do it over. There's something about it that's not right?"

COLLEN: Yeah, but the thing is, every song is a reference point, and you grow from it. Maybe there's something on the track that's a little naïve from a guitar playing standpoint, or lyrically there's something that makes you cringe. But you get past it and move on. It's like, one time the crew brought me a video of me playing with my old group Girl on *The Old Grey Whistle Test*. It was the Eighties and I was wearing spandex; you cringe and go, "Oh, my God. That's so embarrassing." On the other hand, that was then and it was really cool.

CAMPBELL: I used to get that, but you have to remember everything is a snapshot in time. You hear a song and it's what happened in the studio that day. It's pretty amazing, these little throwbacks. It's like looking in a diary. [GO](#)

ANTON CORRIJN

"MICK RONSON HAD THE WHOLE THING AS AN ARTIST; IT WASN'T SIMPLY AS A GUITAR PLAYER. AS AN ENTITY, HE WAS AMAZING" — PHIL COLLEN

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ROSS THE BOSS

"I had to change my image, so I became a rocker" — Proto-punk and power metal veteran Ross Friedman recounts his time with the Dictators and Manowar

By Joe Bosso

ROSS "THE BOSS" Friedman's uscular riffs and robust solos have powered not one, but two seminal New York-based bands that he co-founded: During the 1970s, there was the proto-punk/garage rock kings the Dictators, followed a decade later by the wildly influential power metal outfit Manowar. However, despite his brawny approach to the guitar, Friedman first got the six-string itch from watching a lovable pack of madcap TV mop tops.

"Oh, I loved the Monkees," Friedman says. "As a kid, seeing them on TV was really exciting. They had amazing songs. I could really relate to 'Last Train to Clarksville.' What a

solot! Of course, I didn't know it was studio musicians on those first records, and it didn't matter. The playing was incredible."

The Monkees were Friedman's gateway drug into the rock 'n' roll of the era. "The Beach Boys, the Who, the Doors, Jimi Hendrix and, of course, I loved the Beatles and Stones," he says. "It was really an exciting time. And for the most part, each band had a really incredible guitar player." Before long, he ditched his piano and violin lessons and picked up the guitar. "I was a young Jewish kid with glasses and short hair. I had to change my image, so I became a rocker."

He also started listening to the pioneering bands of heavy metal, listing Iron Butterfly, Steppenwolf and Black Sabbath as significant influences. "All those hard rock groups spoke to me," Friedman says. "When I met [bassist] Andy Shernoff, we discovered that we were into the same stuff, so we decided to make the Dictators all about our shared loves."

With the Dictators, Friedman experienced the New York punk explosion of the early Seventies firsthand. He recalls sharing bills with the Ramones at CBGBs: "We both played there a lot — we were probably a year ahead of them. The Ramones were like our

[from left] Manowar's Eric Adams, Joey DeMaio, Scott Columbus and Ross the Boss in the mid Eighties. "We wanted to be a little different than groups like Judas Priest and Iron Maiden and Saxon," Ross says

FIN COSTELLO/REDERNS



"THERE'S PICTURES OF ME OUT THERE THAT ARE SO EMBARRASSING. HEY, AT

brothers. We were from the Bronx, they were from Queens. We were very different bands, but we both had the swagger and attitude." On the whole, though, he gives low marks to much of the punk movement. "There wasn't an emphasis on musicianship," he says. "It was like, 'Hey, I can play sloppy and it doesn't matter.' I was the opposite of that. I practiced while everybody else was partying."

What was your first good guitar?

A 1963 white SG Custom. I remember my father said, "I'm not buying it for you. If you want that guitar, you're going to have to earn it. You're going to have to take out a bank loan." He got me a bank loan, and believe it or not, I paid it off. I still have that guitar, and I still use it. It's never left my possession.

In an interview you did some years ago, you said you never use effect pedals and you plug straight into an amp because, in your words, "That's the way a real man plays." Still agree?

[Laughs] That was probably said when I was in Manowar. See, with Manowar, we had this thing about manliness and being big, having hundreds of stacks and all that. My approach to guitar playing was always about plugging straight in. The only effect I might have thought about using was a wah pedal, but I didn't use one. I was very influenced by going to the Fillmore and seeing B.B. King and Chuck Berry, as well as Albert and Freddie King. They'd just walk on stage, plug into an amp and play.

You do use a tuner though, right?

Oh, of course.

Wouldn't a real man just use his ears to tune?

If you have any ears left, yeah! [Laughs]

I read another interview you did in which you seemed to be taking credit for people playing octaves in solos. Do you stand by that?

Oh, yes, but I have to elaborate on that because a lot of people think I claimed to invent it. I started doing octaves because I was influenced by Wes Montgomery. He played octaves, and I loved listening to him. So I adopted it and used it in my solos. On that first Dictators record, *Go Girl Crazy!* [1975], I did that a lot. But

it was a thing long before me. Way back when, probably in the 1920s and 30s, people were doing it. But I think I brought it to my style of music. I popularized it. I kept seeing guys doing it — grunge guys in the Nineties.

You left Manowar after nine years. How good were things in that band before they went bad?

Very good. We had a really good record contract, and we were able to buy lots of equipment. We had an excellent experience recording our first record at Criteria Studios in Miami. Everybody in New York was freezing our asses off, and we were in a swimming pool making *Battle Hymns*. Like most bands, we had our ups and downs, of course. Record companies kept dropping us, and we'd get signed again. We kept forging on. We signed with Atlantic and had huge success. *Fighting the World* [1987] and *Kings of Metal* [1988] were gold in Europe. Not to say we didn't want it to be platinum in America — of course we did. Eventually, things went away, but for a while things were really good.

Manowar definitely had a look. Were you going for a Viking sort of thing?

Well, we wanted to be a little different than groups like Judas Priest and Iron Maiden and Saxon. They were wearing denim and leather, which I think is a beautiful look, but we had to be different. We figured, "What's crazier and wilder than leather? Animal furs!" Think about it. In the beginning, we had really good outfits, but as time went on we didn't have the money to stay with it. We left EMI, so our outfits started to get kind of cheesy. There's pictures of me out there that are so embarrassing. Hey, at least I kept my pants on.

Thank goodness for that.

[Laughs] Yeah, right? A couple of years ago, my son showed me this picture of Manowar; it was from this record, *We Are No Angels*, and Joey and [singer] Eric [Adams] are in bikinis, all oiled up. I'm to the right of them, but I have my pants on, thank God. My son took a look at that picture and said, "Dad, that's so disturbing."

You've performed with singer "Handsome Dick" Manitoba in the

Dictators and the band Manitoba, but the new lineup of the Dictators doesn't feature him.

No, we had a fallout with Manitoba, and then I said to Andy, "Why don't we just get the band back together?" Which we did. But what happened was, our other guitar player, Scott Kempner, otherwise known as Top Ten, was diagnosed with dementia. We were just horrified, but we had to go on because Scott would want us to. So we got Keith Roth as our second guitar player, and he's a great singer. Then we got Albert Bouchard, the original drummer of Blue Öyster Cult, and we're just loving it. We're in the process of negotiating a record deal, and we have a few songs out. The response has been great. We're looking forward to gigging.

You still mainly play SGs and SG-style guitars, right?

I sure do. I play SGs and similar models. I don't use my old '74 Custom; it's a great guitar, but it's so heavy. That's one of the reasons I started using an ESP EC-1000, which is a Les Paul-style guitar. It's really light and sounds great. I also have a custom guitar by this man in Romania, Cristian Grosus. The company is called Grosman Guitars. This thing is like a SG on steroids. It's an amazing guitar.

Aside from the Dictators, you're going to head out on a solo tour soon.

I think so. Things are still changing around a lot because of Covid. We had an English festival, Great Yarmouth, that just postponed till next year. And there were other ones that got postponed. But we're hoping to start playing as soon as we can.

You play some Manowar songs in your solo show, but you don't do anything from the Dictators. Why is that?

No Dictators stuff, that's right. Those two styles don't clash on the same stage. It'll be the classic Manowar stuff and my stuff. People want to hear those songs from me. If I don't play songs from *Battle Hymns* [1982] and my tunes, people get upset. They want to hear it, and they have the right to hear it. They're coming to the show and they're paying goddamn good money, so that's the deal. I'm a people pleaser. [EW](#)



↑
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Nick of Time (1989)

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BONNIE RAITT

"Why would I want to repeat myself?" The blues-rock pro takes us inside her bold new album and charts her never-ending journey into the world of slide guitar

By Alan Paul

ROCK AND ROLL Hall of Famer Bonnie Raitt returns to some of her beloved musical and lyrical themes on *Just Like That...*, her first new album in more than six years. Her familiar smoky voice and biting slide guitar that still manage to cut to the bone—not to mention soothe the soul. But Raitt also stretches out on the album, and at its emotional core are four songs she wrote herself, each of which finds her taking different musical and lyrical

approaches. Especially noteworthy are "Living for the Ones," which pays rocking tribute to the friends and family she's lost in recent years, and "Waiting for You to Blow." The latter is a jazzy funky romp that takes a humorous look at a serious subject: remembering that every sober person is living one day at a time.

"Getting sober was the biggest life change I ever had," Raitt says, adding that, even

decades later, she still feels like there's a "little devil" on her shoulder.

"It's just waiting for me to blow, and you're just one step away from the whole thing caving in," she says. "I'm not really even talking about substance abuse, but about recovery from letting yourself slip into those morasses of self-doubt and pitying and victimhood—behaviors that aren't really righteous."

"Waiting for You to Blow" takes a serious subject and comes at it from an interesting angle—and with some really cool, upbeat music.

I always try to do something I haven't done, and songwriters are often sending me things that are exactly like "I Can't Make You Love Me" or "Something to Talk About." Why would I want to repeat myself? This is my 21st album, so I've said a lot of things about love from different angles. I wanted to do something that was out of my comfort zone, so I wrote some music that was a hybrid of funk and jazz that I've heard in my head. I started with a funk drum track, which I've never done before, then played jazzy chords over it. Then I did all these little horn parts that ended up being played on organ and guitar. The whole arrangement was conceived in my head, including the shuffle bridge, which is a little unusual as well. I've learned from Randy Newman and Mose Allison, in particular, to write about a serious topic [with some] satirical humor, a humorous point of view. I think it gets the point across better. I also felt like I stretched out on "Down the Hall" and "Waiting for You to Blow." Those were beyond my usual wheelhouse.

I also enjoy the acoustic-based songs.

Those are great, but I wasn't worried about doing a story song with finger-picking, which is the style of folk music

that made me learn the guitar in the first place, listening to Joan Baez, Odetta and early Bob Dylan. There's an immediacy and an intimacy about those songs [that are] mostly sung with one voice and one instrument, which also takes me back to Jackson Browne

"I always try to do something I haven't done," Bonnie Raitt says, "and songwriters are often sending me things that are exactly like 'I Can't Make You Love Me' or 'Something to Talk About'."

KEN FRIEDMAN



"LOWELL GEORGE SHOWED ME HOW TO USE A COMPRESSOR TO LET THE NOTE LAST



Bonnie Raitt and her band perform at a recent Santa Cruz American Music Festival in Aptos, California

and John Prine's first albums, which I adore.

Does that nice finger-picked acoustic guitar come back easily or do you have to work to get it back?

It never went away! I'm basically a folk music artist, and I accompanied myself alone for years. Most records have had one or two acoustic songs, and finger-picking is the only style of guitar playing I know. I don't know how to flatpick at all. I also do a lot of benefits and [going] through two years of Covid mostly meant being alone again. It was fun to revisit the songs in that way.

Was there any one artist or record that swung you away from solo finger-picking and toward electric slide?

I was always also into Fats Domino, Chuck Berry, Smokey Robinson and Ray Charles. I didn't really hear slide guitar till I was 14 or 15. I didn't get to see anybody play it, so I just figured it out in my room. I taught myself to play, so my hand positions aren't 100 percent correct — and I put the bottleneck on the wrong finger.

There is no wrong finger!

You can play more if you have it on your ring finger. Fred McDowell used his little finger, but by then I was already down the road with it on my middle finger. I

heard Robert Johnson and just tried to make myself sound exactly like whatever he was doing.

Was he the first guitarist who made you pick up a slide?

I heard John Hammond's slide guitar first, then "Little Red Rooster" and Elmore James. The Rolling Stones were my first exposure to real slide guitar, but the blues guys really fired me up.

Let's talk about how some different slide players influenced you, starting with Ry Cooder.

Ry is still a god to me. Ry and Lowell George are the biggest influences on my playing. I love the Delta blues: Son House, Fred McDowell, Robert Johnson, Johnny Shines, John Hammond. But Ry wrote the book on making it sound like your voice, which is what I try to do. He and Stevie Ray Vaughan are the greatest guitar players I've ever heard.

How did Lowell impact you?

He showed me how to use a compressor to let the note last longer, and that really impacted my slide style. I already kind of had my own style and was playing electric, but I wanted to know how he got the note to hold. Lowell was just remarkable. I can't come close to Ry or Lowell, but their lyricism has continued to be an incredible inspiration to me. I had never

heard anybody like Little Feat when a friend played me *Sailin' Shoes* — and I just about fell over. I loved them so much. And the first two Taj Mahal records are right up there in the pantheon of people that have taken blues and reinvented it and pushed it someplace new.

That first Taj record inspired Duane Allman to learn slide. Was he a big influence?

Not really — a totally different style of slide playing. But I really loved what he did. I loved the English guys, and Johnny Winter was terrific. There was a lot of slide playing at the time, and I've always gone crazy for it.

What about David Lindley?

He's great. Another different style of slide; lap slide is a different instrument. I mean, there's so many I love: Sonny Landreth, Roy Rogers, John Mooney. Derek Trucks is taking it to a whole other level.

In what way?

His cuts, and his facility to go anywhere, including Indian ragas. He will play such inventive notes. It's almost like when bebop first started. Not that he plays that style, but he's reinvented a lot of the ways that guitar can be used. He just goes places where I never heard anybody take it. To me, he has endless creativity and soul — and his tone is ridiculous. [CWB](#)

LONGER, AND THAT REALLY IMPACTED MY SLIDE STYLE" —BONNIE RAITT

SUSAN J. WEINAND



↑
THEN
Pride (1987)
↓

"Put my mom in a home just so I could go on tour? I'm not gonna do that."

NOW

?

EBET ROBERTS/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES



VITO BRATTA

The reclusive Eighties virtuoso — and one-time *GW* cover star — returns to tell his story. The former White Lion guitarist talks soloing, gear and what he's up to now

By Matt Wake

IT'S LATE 2019 and Vito Bratta has started playing electric guitar again. Just around the house. Ten minutes here, 30 there. He's careful not to play too long at one time, to avoid reinjuring his right wrist, which has been delicate since he heard it snap one day in 1997. It was a freak accident that happened as he was playing guitar lying on his back, wrist at a weird angle, while watching a baseball game on TV.

These days when Bratta picks up an electric guitar and plays, it's often classical-influenced arpeggios played with a pick. "And then every once in a while," Bratta tells *Guitar World*, "I start relearning stuff from back in the day." Meaning the brilliant, melodic guitar parts he played with his multi-platinum hard-rock band White Lion from the mid Eighties through the early Nineties — before Bratta

White Lion's Vito Bratta with his Steinberger GMA5 in 1988. "I regret that I was given a certain amount of talent to do something, and I don't use it," he says

walked away from the music business entirely.

Few guitarists during his heyday or since have wielded the balance of flair, feel and fearlessness — the soaring solo and singing fills on White Lion's signature hit song "Wait," for example — that made Bratta's playing so distinctive and thrilling. Summoning that style can even be elusive for Bratta. "I can't figure out some of my own stuff," Bratta says early on during our two, 90-minute phone interviews. "For the longest time I said I'm not gonna learn that 'Wait' solo because I don't remember what I did. But it came back to me."

Bratta lives in the same Staten Island [NYC] home where he grew up, and the red Lamborghini parked in the driveway is a rare extravagance. Besides supercars, he's been careful with his money, invested wisely and derives a solid income from his White Lion songwriting publishing and royalties. "The thing about the band was, we were worldwide," Bratta says. "I've gotten checks from Zimbabwe, from Lebanon and every single country you can imagine."

In the summer of 2018, Bratta went up into his attic, and for the first time since recording White Lion's 1987 breakthrough sophomore album, *Pride*, brought down the case containing the remnants of the guitar he used to record that album: a sunburst 1979 Fender Strat modified Van Halen-style with one humbucker (Seymour Duncan JB), one volume knob and a Floyd Rose tremolo system. The strings he used to record *Pride* were still on there. Alas, the guitar had seen better days. Foam inside the case had liquified from being up in a hot attic for decades. The Strat was his talisman since White Lion was coming up in rock clubs, including legendary Brooklyn hotspot L'Amour. "It's ridiculous how I wore it out," Bratta says of the Strat. "It was almost fearless. But I couldn't afford a fret job, so I did the album with that guitar."

On *Pride*, Bratta played the Strat through a Tube Screamer overdrive and into an old 100-watt Marshall Super Lead, which he still has somewhere. After he finished his last gui-



"SO THE GUITAR RECORDED *PRIDE* — AND THEN IT DIED IN FRONT OF ME."

tar track for the album, he put the Strat back into its case. "And I hear it pop," Bratta recalls. "The wood shattered inside where the Floyd Rose connected. So the guitar recorded *Pride* — and then it died in front of me. It just snapped. It was terrible." He removed the humbucker, which he later installed in some of his other guitars.

Bratta still has all his main White Lion-era guitars, some of which he recently put hands on for the first time in decades. "I went out in the garage," Bratta says. "And all of a sudden after all these years I got the bug back, so I started taking out all these guitars." The ESPs he often played onstage. The Steinberger GM2S with the White Lion decal. Back up in the attic, Bratta found his "childhood guitars," including a '75 Les Paul Custom and mid-Seventies Ibanez Destroyer.

Since excavating them, he's mostly left all those vintage electrics alone. Instead, Bratta purchased his first new guitars in maybe 40 years, a Gibson Les Paul Special and a Gretsch Duo Jet. He specifically wanted guitars that didn't have a tremolo bar. "What a crutch that was, you know?" Bratta says. "I found my playing went downhill live. Whereas in the old days, you'd end the song and just play some solo at the end or whatever, then it became you just reached for the bar and start a dive-bomb. But it was a load of fun. Because when all those PA cabinets are on the stage in a 20,000-seat arena and you do a dive-bomb, the feeling is like the floor just gives out."

Classically infused Ozzy Osbourne guitarist Randy Rhoads had been Bratta's last major influence. "My electric guitar playing always went hand-in-hand with classical," Bratta says. After White Lion's tour supporting fourth LP *Mane Attraction* limped to a conclusion in 1991 with the band back in clubs, Bratta had a plan for his next move. "My hope was that after White Lion after a few years I was going to put out a classical album," Bratta says. "And the difference was I was going to write all the songs, and I was going to do the standard classical repertoire."

That never came to pass, though, because Bratta's fingernails, critical in classical technique, have become brittle as he's gotten older and tend to break off easily. This has prevented what would've likely been, given his melodic and compositional gifts, an intriguing

musical phase for him. Still, after his wrist injury, the nylon strings were easier for him to manage. Throughout his years of seclusion, Bratta has kept a classical guitar nearby.

There are several reasons Bratta left the music business, the music business being chief among them. Bratta and the band worked hard on 1991's *Mane Attraction*. It's his favorite White Lion album, informed by the band's recent tour with Ozzy Osbourne and looking to write heavier material. But like many Eighties bands who released strong albums in the early Nineties, *Mane Attraction* didn't get a fair shake.

"I knew what decades meant to people," Bratta says. "I know that the Sixties ended and the Seventies came in, then the whole Eighties thing came in." He witnessed this firsthand one day while at Atlantic Records' New York headquarters, overhearing Robert Plant's manager yelling at label reps for pushing new bands like White Lion and Ratt instead of Plant, the former singer of hard rock's biggest band ever, Led Zeppelin. "So I knew that was coming down the pipe." But that doesn't mean it goes down nicely. Bratta recalls, "One of the record company guys says, 'You know what your problem is? You play too good. You need to start playing sloppy because that's what the kids are into nowadays,' and I took that as my exit. You gotta be kidding. You want me to suck?"

Bratta was not born to suck on guitar. As a child, he was first drawn to the instrument from watching musicians like *Hee Haw* country virtuoso Roy Clark play on TV. Listening to AM radio, he was entranced by Elton John's early piano-pop hits, an early root of Bratta's later song-within-a-song guitar solos for White Lion. He also loved Mountain's greasy rocker "Mississippi Queen," and decades later he ended up with one of Leslie West's Marshalls. He started playing guitar around age 13. Cream, Deep Purple and Black Sabbath seeped into young Bratta's musical mix. He put together a garage band doing songs like Free's anthem "All Right Now."

"There's an eight track cassette [recording] somewhere," Bratta says, "of me playing that when I was 15 or something at a rehearsal."

In 1977, he went to see Jimmy Page, one of his guitar heroes, perform with

Led Zeppelin at Madison Square Garden. His seats were so far back he scribbled his name on the storied arena's ceiling. Eleven years later, Bratta would be onstage at the Garden with White Lion, opening for AC/DC.

During his formative years, Bratta was in a cover band called Dreamer that worked the New Jersey club scene heavily, crossing paths with future stars like Nuno Bettencourt and Dee Snider. He'd often play guitar 15 or more hours a day, arriving at gigs hours in advance to practice backstage.

Eventually, Bratta teamed with Mike Tramp, a talented Danish singer who'd moved to New York, to form White Lion's creative nucleus. According to the guitarist, the "White" in the band's name was added after a copyright conflict. "On the way home from Manhattan, we drove past a White Castle [fast-food restaurant]," Bratta says. "I said, 'What about White Lion?'" White Lion recorded their 1985 debut album, *Fight to Survive*, in Germany, a country that would remain a strong market throughout the band's history. A clear Rhoads-era Ozzy influence can be heard on the title track. Lead single "Broken Heart" mixed dramatic dynamics, Tramp's sexy bar, a driving groove and Bratta's sidwinding soloing.

Eddie Trunk was a rising New Jersey-based disc jockey who frequented L'Amour, which was run then by the same people managing White Lion. Management got a Japanese import copy of *Fight to Survive* into Trunk's hands. "At that point in America, nobody even knew who they were," says Trunk, who went on to become one of rock's most influential tastemakers on radio and TV. Listening to White Lion's debut for the first time, Trunk was "just blown away, because it checked all the boxes for what I loved in hard-rock music. I became a fan pretty instantly."

Bratta and White Lion took a big step forward on *Pride*. With heavy-music genius Michael Wagener as their new producer and with a potent new rhythm section (bassist Jamesz Lomenzo and drummer Greg D'Angelo), recording took place at North Hollywood's Amigo Studios. Bratta has fond memories of the sessions, including hanging with Sex Pistols guitarist Steve Jones. Most importantly, the *Pride* sessions changed the guitarist's recorded sound forever and energized

IT JUST SNAPPED. IT WAS TERRIBLE" — VITO BRATTA



PAUL NATHAN/GETTY IMAGES (BOTH PHOTOS) INSET: FUTURE

White Lion's music.

"It was Michael Wagener that pushed me," Bratta says, "to just play the way I was always playing live, and not to be so clinical and stiff, play rhythm guitars first and then go in and play fills, which are never going to feel right." On *Pride*, Bratta now weaved hooky fills and arpeggios into his rhythm playing. This became a signature part of his guitar style, and lifted "Wait" into acid-washed power-pop ecstasy and a top 10 hit. Around this time, Bratta had begun a new way of composing solos that enhanced his playing's melodicism. To avoid falling into finger-memory scale-cliches, he'd listen to a song and compose the solo singing in his head and later learn it on guitar.

"Most of the solos are vocal melodies that later got embellished with guitar technique," Bratta says. "So out of 20 notes of a melody in a solo, five of them might be the melody. The others are little embellishments, little tricks or whatever." This composition method helped Bratta become one of few guitarists to do post-Van Halen two-hand finger-tapping in

a cool, non-caricature way. He'd turn to tapping when his head-composed solos ranged wider than his left-hand's finger stretching ability. "So how do you fix that? You've got to use your right hand, the Van Halen technique," Bratta says. He'd also drop in some tapping for tonal color. "It eventually just becomes part of you."

After *Pride* broke, some accused Bratta of being a Van Halen clone. It was a lazy knock, partially biased by the fact Bratta's long, dark-haired look evoked early Eddie. That's not to say — like most guitarists of his generation — Bratta wasn't inspired by EVH. "After the first Van Halen record, he changed the way people play," Bratta says. "He rewrote the book. I'm 16. Guess who was buying the book?"

Still, producer Michael Wagener says, "Vito always had his own style. That was the time of all those guitar players who had not the same but similar ideas, and Vito tried to stay away from that." Along with George Lynch and Zakk Wylde, Wagener says, "Vito is in the top three guitar players I've ever worked with."

Bratta eventually became a friend

of Van Halen, who gave him one of his signature guitars. They also played basketball and sped around in sportscars together when VH and White Lion were rehearsing at the same facility. Bratta's other primary touchstones include Stevie Ray Vaughan. After SRV's passing, he recorded the soulful White Lion instrumental "Blue Monday" in tribute to the Eighties blues great.

Trunk was the first person to ever play White Lion's music on U.S. radio. The band never forgot this. After White Lion received their first gold record for *Pride*, they gave it to Trunk. In 2007, Trunk coaxed the reclusive Bratta into the studio for the guitarist's first interview in about 15 years. In the interview, Bratta shed light on why he stepped away, including his wrist injury and the years he'd spent as caregiver for his ailing father.

When I talk with Bratta in 2019 after Trunk graciously connected us, the guitarist remains dedicated to his family. His father has passed and he's now caring for his mother at home, as well as looking after another family member.



"ONE OF THE RECORD COMPANY GUYS SAYS, 'YOU NEED TO START PLAYING SLOPPY BECAUSE



"And, of course, everybody out there is like, 'Come on, you could do tours,'" Bratta says. "Put my mom in a home just so I could go on tour? I'm not gonna do that."

Since the 2007 radio interview, Bratta sightings have been rare. He turned up later that year at two New York shows celebrating the now-defunct L'Amour. In 2015, he popped up at a Cheap Trick's Staten Island gig to see his old friend Rick Nielsen. Both times, Bratta sang backing vocals onstage but didn't play guitar. Bratta was interviewed for *Nothin' But a Good Time*, the excellent Eighties rock/metal oral history by Richard Bienstock and Tom Beaujour, published in 2021. But in general, Bratta's fade from public life has been so extreme it makes notoriously private former Guns N' Roses guitarist Izzy Stradlin seem publicity-thirsty.

For White Lion's third album, 1989's *Big Game*, Bratta adopted cleaner chiming textures, as heard on "Little Fighter," a spirited Greenpeace-themed single (Tramp was refreshingly willing to go beyond babes and booze for lyrical inspi-

ration) with a canyon-soar guitar solo. Like "Wait" and many other Bratta solos, "Little Fighter" was a first take. The solo Bratta is proud-est of from his entire career is also off *Big Game*, the restrained yet expressive lines on "Baby Be Mine." He says, "It sounds like it's an echo machine, but it wasn't. It was just me playing along with myself, and I just love the way that came out."

Occasionally he'll happen across a White Lion tune on the radio. He can't recall how he arrived at some of his bolder phrasing choices, shrugging it off with a sports analogy of "being in the zone." Bratta tries to avoid watching White Lion music videos or live footage online. "It's difficult, you know, because I do miss it," Bratta says. "And I regret that I was given a certain amount of talent to do something, and I don't use it."

So is there any chance Bratta would return to the stage, even just for one show? "I couldn't ever, ever say no to that," he says, "because it hurts not doing it. But a lot of things would have to change around here for me to be able to walk out of the house."

Still, he adds, "I'm just happy that I left it all out on the field. Sometimes I really feel like I exceeded my ability."

Bratta graced the cover of *Guitar World*'s September 1989 issue, brandishing his Steinberg and clad in a purple snakeskin shirt and black leather vest. The cover is framed and still up on a wall at his home. During our conversations, he thanks me for every single compliment. As we're getting off the phone, Bratta says, "Thank you for just even remembering me."

During White Lion's prime, Bratta was constantly amazed by the crowded heat of MTV-era guitar-thoroughbreds.

During our conversation he

lauds players including Nuno, Slash, Joe Satriani and Reb Beach. Skid Row guitarist Dave "Snake" Sabo is one of the few of his colleagues he's maintained contact with, though. In recent years, he's reconnected with White Lion drummer Greg D'Angelo. As of the time of this interview, he hadn't spoken to bassist James Lomenzo since the band broke up. As

for frontman Mike Tramp, "We've been in court against each other," Bratta says, referring to legal action regarding usage of the band name White Lion. "We've had arguments, but it's not like we hate each other. We just don't talk."

Many rock fans and guitarists still talk about Vito Bratta, though. He's humble and perhaps a little naïve, though, at just how badly he's missed and how much people would love to hear from him again. If a White Lion reunion isn't on the cards, perhaps an instrumental solo album. He's amazed people still care about music he made 35 years ago. "And to hear that people do," Bratta says, "how could I want any more than that?" **EW**



[above] White Lion's Mike Tramp and Vito Bratta perform at the Poplar Creek Music Theater, Hoffman Estates, Illinois, July 12, 1989

[facing page] White Lion in Chicago in 1987; Bratta is far left

[inset] The September 1989 issue of *Guitar World*, which is still framed in Bratta's Staten Island home

THAT'S WHAT THE KIDS ARE INTO, AND I TOOK THAT AS MY EXIT. YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING. YOU WANT ME TO SUCK?"



THEN

Meat Is Murder (1985)

Fever Dreams Pts 1-4 (2022)

NOW



JOHNNY MARR

The Smiths legend, now in what he considers “part four” of his career, discusses his career, sound and latest album, *Fever Dreams Pts 1-4*

By Joe Bosso

FOR JOHNNY MARR, the idea to record a 16-song double album came to him in a flash of inspiration. The title *Fever Dreams Pts 1-4* simply popped into his head one day, and that was it. “That title solved a lot of problems for me,” he says. “First off, it’s a great title. If I just called it *Fever Dreams*, you know, that’s good, but it’s not that good. *Fever Dreams Parts 1-4* makes you go, ‘OK, what’s that all about?’ It made me think that — ‘All

right, what’s this business of four?’ So I had to work backward from the title, and immediately I realized, ‘All right, it’s got to be a double album, and we can release it in stages.’” He laughs. “The record company thought I was a marketing genius, but it was purely because I had this title.”

From there, all Marr needed was enough songs to match the expansive nature of his con-

cept. Fortunately, the British guitar legend found that he had plenty of time on his hands. After wrapping a 2019 tour in support of his previous album, *Call the Comet*, he began work on new demos just as the Covid pandemic forced much of the world into lockdown mode. “I had already planned to make the record anyway, so in a funny way I was kind of fortunate in my timing,” he says.

During this period, the only project that conflicted with Marr’s album schedule was his work with composer Han Zimmer on the soundtrack to the new James Bond film, *No Time to Die*. It’s their third collaboration, a relationship that began with the dream-based movie *Inception* in 2010, and continued five years later with *The Amazing Spider-Man 2*. “I worked on the Bond film for a few months, but even then I was still able to write songs for my album,” Marr says. “As most people no doubt know, there’s plenty of downtime when making movies.”

Although the guitarist insists he was dead set against making a straight-up Covid-influenced album (“that would come off as dated very quickly”), he admits the day-to-day experience of recording in relative seclusion subconsciously permeated his lyrics. “I wanted to avoid being too direct about the state of the world, singing about stores being closed and all that,” he says, “but a lot of the album is about how I perceive things, and I made the leap to presume that my audience might be feeling the same way.”

He cites the dark and dramatic groover “All These Days” as an example: “On that I sing, ‘Drinking with my shadow / escape the sensory / another day tomorrow, tomorrow, endlessly.’ A lot of people were doing that, sitting and drinking on their own late at night going, ‘What’s tomorrow going to bring?’” Similarly, there’s the surging disco-pop gem “Night and Day,” which finds Marr singing, “Just want to breathe in the hot spots / it’s all TikTok to me / stop the clocks, please.” “That was being really informed by all the imagery I was seeing from your country in the United States on the television,” he notes. “The album is littered with all these references without

“My Jag sounds like a Rick crossed with a Gretsch, but it plays like a Fender,” Johnny Marr says. “It would’ve saved me a lot of money back in the day”



“I LEFT THE SMITHS WHEN I WAS 24. ANY 24-YEAR-OLD LEAVING ANY JOB WANTS TO

being too overt to the point of losing the poetic sensibilities, I think."

Taken as a whole, *Fever Dreams Pts 1-4* is something of a masterstroke — a meticulously plotted 70-minute opus that breezes by like a record half its length. Throughout much of the album, Marr surrounds his songs with an court electronic rhythms while drizzling his arrangements with the kinds of sweeping, kaleidoscopic guitar textures that have been his calling card since the early days of the Smiths. Whether he's dabbling in driving electro-disco ("Spirit, Power & Soul"), getting introspective inside sophisticated balladry ("Rubicon"), rocking a rootsy rave-up ("Tenement Time") or luxuriating in arty dream anthems ("Ariel," "Sensory Street"), his rousing — and at times, symphonic — six and 12-string guitar treatments brim with commanding authority and crafty individuality.

At 58, Marr still maintains the seemingly ageless mod hairdo he's worn for years, and he boasts the kind of resume (the The, Electronic, Modest Mouse, the Cribs, and for a brief time, the Pretenders) that would make most guitarists green with envy. As he eases oh-so-coolly into elder statesman status, he considers his legacy as a pioneering modern rock guitar hero: "I was never a shredder, but the term 'guitar hero' to me sounds actually quite noble. Back when I started, I wanted to be a guitar hero who played great songs. This was at a time when there were a lot of things being done on guitar that I felt were outdated and corny. But there was also a generation of young men in the U.K. and America who were onto something new — Robert Smith, John McKay, Will Sergeant. A lot of us took note from Richard Lloyd and Tom Verlaine. Those guys were game-changers. I loved all that... and still do."

On the topic of game-changing guitarists, a lot of people would cite you and Peter Dinklage for how you both popularized the rhythm-lead style of playing in the early Eighties.

Well, I wouldn't disagree with that.

While other players showboasted their skills, you both seemed to operate with a kind of tasteful restraint.

A big lesson I learned when I was very young — maybe 11 or 12 — was when I read an old interview with John Lennon. He was talking about serving the

song and being a really good rhythm player. And then growing up in the Seventies, it seemed as if one of the Ten Commandments of Guitar was, "Thou shalt be like Keith Richards" — you know, be the engine of the band. There's people like Mike Campbell, too.

I remember that Lennon interview. He said, "I play rhythm. It's an important job. I can make a band drive."

Exactly. There it is. Now, to be honest, I'm still not above fetishizing the guitar the way we all do. You get me with another guitar player, and we'll trade our stories about the SG we got in 1980 or whatever. If there's a room full of guitar players, I'm the last to leave, man. I'm just as hooked as everybody else, and I have been since I was 5 or 6.

I just think that the way I looked at guitar playing was perhaps a little different from what others were at the time, and I think somebody like Peter Dinklage felt the same way. We both loved the look of Rick- enbackers. In my case, it was actually to restrict me and force me to play a certain way, believe it or not. With a Rickenbacker, I had to focus on chords, which was the right thing to do. Peter and I have that in common. Over the years, we've become friends, and of course, he's someone I've got great respect for.

Not to labor the Smiths, but does your time in that band now seem like a million miles away at this point?

Oh, yeah. Without a doubt. I've never felt like I've been running away from it, but I left that band when I was 24. Any 24-year-old leaving any job wants to not be defined by that. I'm proud of the records the group made, but in all honesty, I'd say I feel like I'm probably on part four of my career now.

After the Smiths, you've played with quite a few other bands. Do you go into these situations thinking they're temporary, or do you sometimes think far beyond that?

Actually, I go into each situation with no idea how it's going to turn out, and that's the exact same headspace as when I was 13, 14 or 15, when I would go around the neighborhood and play in different bands. The first major band I joined was called Sister Ray, and they were these really gnarly adults. I wanted to play with them

because they sounded like a cross between the Stooges and Hawkwind, and I'd never played that sort of stuff. I thought, "Well, I'll be a better guitar player if I learn to play at very high volume with these fairly druggo sort of reprobates who have a reputation for being amazing live."

Sounds like a solid career move.

Yeah. And then this other band that I joined had a really talented songwriter who lived just a few blocks away from me. It was a real challenge for me because he used to employ all these key changes and tunings. He was into Todd Rundgren and Andy Partridge, so we were playing all these passing chords. I got quite a lot of chops from that. Going into Modest Mouse, for example, was the grownup version of that. I was invited to go to Portland, Oregon, as a 10-day experiment, and what happened in that scenario was we got tight as pals very quickly. It was like a brotherhood, and then it was just too fucking weird to bail.

Did the same thing happen with the Cribs?

Very similar situation. We were supposed to cut four songs for a seven-inch or a 45 EP. I went in with all these riffs, and we just kept writing. The inspiration was flowing, so we went, "Let's make an album out of this." From that experience, we formed a very strong friendship. So it's actually the opposite of what it may appear to be on the outside. If you ask people I've been in a band with, they'll tell you that I get very committed.

Why then don't you tend to stick around longer?

I was in Modest Mouse for four years, and I was in the Cribs for three years. In each case, pretty much, I was ready to make another album, and the other guys weren't. So I'd just go somewhere else and make an album.

Let's touch on some songs on your new record. Tracks like "Receiver," "All These Days" and a few others have guitar sounds that hark back to the early days of the Cure and U2, but they also recall the early days of... Johnny Marr. Do you hear that?

Yeah, that was a conscious thing. I like those sounds. OK, I really have to put a kind of a modest disclaimer here: Along

with some other people, I'm one of the reasons why those sounds exist. I like them, so I use them. On the other hand, it's not like I haven't gone out of my way to do other shit.

For example, on the song "Ariel," or on "Receiver," as you mentioned, there's a real kind of flange thing going on, which is very much of my generation. And you know what? The part sounded great because of it. On "Ariel," when I played the main riff, I thought, "This is either me or Will Sergeant — or it's both of us together." Those sounds were the vocabulary I used in the Eighties. They were useful then, and they still hit the spot when required.

"Tenement Time" is drenched in delay sounds that collide off each other. And in "Speed of Love," you play a heavily delayed solo that sounds as if you're using an E-Bow.

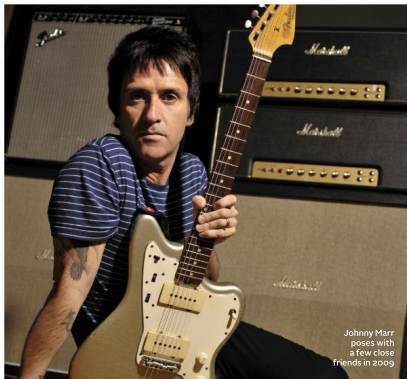
That's me playing one of my Jaguars that's customized with Fernandes Sustainer pickups. The guitar becomes a six-string E-Bow. Those pickups are amazing. If you've got the guitar on low, you can feel all the strings vibrate while you play. It's beautiful, like an electrical storm all through the track.

Are you using that on the solos in "Human"?

The first solo break has the sustainer on, but the end solo is a 12-string SG, which is pretty rare. I've got it going through a Leslie. If anyone can be bothered getting that together, I really recommend it for the sound.

In many ways, the album is like an instructional course on the many ways a guitarist can use delay and reverb. As it is with the Edge, those sounds are a real part of your approach to composition.

I just assume that delay is going to be part of the equation. I didn't realize how much delay I'd grown into using until in the early 2000s, when a friend of mine picked up one of my guitars in the rehearsal room and started to play. And I thought, "Shit, man. There's so much delay on there." Around about the same time, Neil Finn pointed out to me that I play very loud yet gently. I never knew I played loud, because it doesn't sound loud to me. My amps are very hot, but they're



Johnny Marr poses with a few close friends in 2009

also clean. As far as delay, I think I differ from somebody like the Edge, where it's almost a mirror of what he's doing. I play to it, so it's just this halo.

If you took it away, you would really notice. But while you're listening to it — well, maybe you would notice, but a lot of people don't realize just how much is on there. When I do sessions, which I still do, people are usually quite surprised how much delay I'm dialing in at first, but it usually kind of disappears behind what I'm doing because I'm quite a busy player.

You mentioned your Jaguar. Was that your main guitar on this record?

Yeah. Over the years, I've kind of honed things down. The Jag does a big job. In short, my Jag sounds exactly like a Rick-Backer crossed with a Gretsch, but it plays like a Fender. It would've saved me quite a lot of money back in the day. I use that, but I always use a Gibson, as well. These days, I use '73 Les Paul Customs for that dark thing. For the last seven or eight years, I've also played Yamaha SGs for their articulation. The guitar I've recorded with more than any of the guitars is the red Les Paul Standard that I got in 1985 when the Smiths did *Meat Is Murder*. If I'm ever doubling arpeggios, that's my go-to clean arpeggio guitar.

A while ago I started to use a Gibson double-neck. Now I'm never without one because it's just the best 12-string sound. It started with the movie *Inception*. It would be 3:30 in the morning, and I'd be jet-lagged and driving engineers mad while we were making a movie about people putting themselves to sleep. I realized the sound I was chasing was this distorted harmonic 12-string. And the only one that was in the building belonged to another composer. It was this funky old EDS-1275. I started using it, and I realized that it's the best goddamn electric 12-string sound. For a start, you've got the old humbuckers on there, but then you've also got this massive wood. That gives you the option of letting the other neck ring out if you want to put it in a drone, which I sometimes do. That's why I've recently acquired this very rare SG 12-string, because moving the other one around London, it's like carrying a friggin' sideboard.

Any other guitars?

I use a few acoustics that I've been using forever — Martins. There's this company in the U.K. called Auden that makes these beautiful 12-strings, all handmade. So that's it then — my Jags, some with the sustainer and my regular Jags, and then all the other ones. I try to keep things honed down. [GUT](#)

"I WAS NEVER A SHREDDER, BUT THE TERM 'GUITAR HERO' TO ME SOUNDS ACTUALLY QUITE NOBLE"

SOUND CHECK

the gear
in review



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POSITIVE GRID
Spark MINI

The Wild Bunch

**CHARVEL JAKE E LEE SIGNATURE
PRO-MOD SO-CAL STYLE 1 AND
SATCHEL SIGNATURE PRO-MOD DK22**

By Paul Riario

▶ THE HAIR METAL Eighties was a time when you could've easily identified a famous guitarist simply by looking at his guitar. Having one with a flashy finish or decked out with hot-rod modifications almost seemed a requisite in order to stand out among the growing hordes of competing ax-slingers. To do so — typically on a Superstrat — proved to be the ultimate billboard that flaunted the player's persona just as much as his or her unique style of playing. Do I even need to point out Eddie Van Halen? Two players and their guitars that embody this idea (see what I did there?) are the Charvel Jake E. Lee Signature Pro-Mod So-Cal Style 1 HSS HT RW — an affordable alternative to the Jake E. Lee USA Signature — and newcomer in a new color, the Satchel Signature Pro-Mod DK22 HH FR M. For those who are unaware, Lee is revered for formerly making his mark with Ozzy Osbourne, and Satchel is carrying the torch of that decade of headbanging music and debauchery by continually performing and recording with sensational glam metal auteurs Steel Panther. Both signature guitars are stripped-down, Eighties-era time machines that sound ferocious and are built to elevate your technical prowess game; but whereas one looks as classic as a tuxedo, you'll have to ask yourself whether you have the chutzpah to rock Bengal stripes on the other.



Charvel
Jake E Lee
Signature
Pro-Mod
So-Cal Style 1





Charvel
Satchel
Signature
Pro-Mod DK22

FEATURES The JEL appears as the most modest of the two with a Pearl White finish and 1-ply black pickguard and compared to the USA JEL Signature, it's nearly identical with the most notable swap being alder instead of ash for its classic So-Cal Style 1 body. From there, the JEL features a bolt-on maple neck, 12-16-inch compound radius rosewood fingerboard with comfortably smooth rolled edges, 21 jumbo frets and heel-mount truss rod adjustment wheel. A single volume Strat-style skirt control knob and five-way blade switch govern the Seymour Duncan JB SH-4 humbucking bridge and reverse-slanted single-coil DiMarzio SDS-1 middle and neck pickups. Rounding out the JEL is a hardtail bridge with a black base plate and Charvel tuning machines with pearl buttons.

The Satchel is hands down the loud and proud beast with its unabashedly Satin White Bengal striped finish on an alder Dinky body with sharper-radius top edges. The graphite-reinforced bolt-on maple neck displays a 12-16-inch compound-radius maple fingerboard with rolled edges, 22 jumbo frets and black dot inlays, Charvel die-cast tuners, and a heel-mount truss rod adjustment wheel. The active preamp comes courtesy of two Fishman Fluence Classic humbuckers with black/white bobbins, and the sole volume knob offering push/pull activation for the pickups' dual voices (Voice 1: vintage PAF/bridge and neck; Voice 2: hot-rodded PAF/bridge, clear and airy chime/neck). Other features include a three-way toggle pickup switch and a top-loaded (non-recessed) Floyd Rose 1000 Series double-locking tremolo bridge system.

PERFORMANCE The JEL and Satchel are similar in fit and function with their sparse control layout,

but what sets them apart are primarily their pickups, bridge choice and neck shapes. I gushed over the USA JEL when I reviewed it a few years back, but this iteration is almost indistinguishable from it since the pickups and neck profile are the same.

The JEL has one of the slimmest neck curves I've come across, which automatically puts you at an agile advantage for wide-interval finger stretches or wrapping your thumb over three strings from the top of the fretboard. Whether you're able to make do with a hardtail bridge is a matter of style, but Lee had no problem executing faux-tremolo dives on his guitar, so you'll need to be just as creative. The highlight for me is the pickup configuration of the JEL. The JB humbucker dishes out a punchy midrange and a broad bottom end with just enough searing gain for cutting through, while the reversed SDS-1's boosted output adds a darker and fuller single-coil quack that never loses its lustrious detail.

You'll need to double-check your self-confidence and swallow a healthy dose of swagger if you plan to strap on the Satchel onstage — but let's start offstage first. The Satchel feels thoroughbred fast with a slimmer C-profile neck and a low-action Floyd setup that makes harmonics scream and squeal louder than the audience at Budokan. The Fishman Fluence Classic humbuckers are primed to capably bounce between warmer classic rock tones on Voice 1 or switch gears entirely to Voice 2 for crunchier rhythms and heat-driven solos at the bridge or select the neck for a softer clean tone to arpeggiate that power ballad. It's a wildly fun guitar to brazenly wield even if you don't own spandex or drown yourself regularly in Aqua Net.

CHEAT SHEET
↓

STREET PRICES:

Jake E Lee Signature, \$1,299.99;
Satchel Signature, \$1,399.99

MANUFACTURER:

Charvel, charvel.com

- The JEL's Seymour Duncan JB SH-4 humbucking bridge pickup and slanted single-coil DiMarzio SDS-1 middle and neck pickups offer powerful warmth and punch.
- With a super-slim maple neck and a 12-16-inch compound radius rosewood fingerboard with rolled edges, the JEL encourages comfort and nimble playability.
- The Satchel's solitary volume control features push/pull activation for two different voicings on the active Fishman Fluence Classic humbuckers.
- Sporting a 12-16-inch compound radius all-maple neck with rolled edges and 22 jumbo frets, the Satchel is geared toward dexterous fret burning.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE:** The refreshed Charvel Jake E Lee and Satchel Signature Pro-Mod guitars are lean, mean six-string machines with street-lethal tones and looks that kill.

Round and Round

DONNER CIRCLE LOOPER

By Chris Gill

PESSIMISTS MAY SNIVEL that \$100 doesn't get you very much these days, but the folks at Donner beg to differ. Case in point: the Donner Circle Looper pedal, which cost just a little more than a Benjamin and is packed with features and functions that rival those of loopers that cost much, much more. In essence, the Circle Looper is a stereo multi-track looper that provides 160 minutes of total recording time, 100 rhythm patterns and 40 memory locations. The pedal is designed to be very easy to use while still offering impressive capabilities for performance, recording and practice.

FEATURES The Donner Circle Looper is arranged essentially with the looper functions and controls on the left and the rhythm functions and controls on the right, although the Merger button located in the center below the multi-color display brings together the play/stop functions of both sections. Two continuous rotary knobs allow users to select memory, level and fade out settings on the Looper side and select preset rhythm patterns, volume and bpm settings on the Rhythm side. The footswitch on the lower left controls record/dub or tap tempo functions, while the footswitch on the lower right controls stop/play/clear functions. Separate 1/4-inch right and left input and output jacks support mono or stereo signals. A 1/4-inch jack for an optional external triple footswitch controller allows users to toggle between Looper or Rhythm mode and scroll up or down between memory presets (Looper) or rhythm patterns (Rhythm).

The Circle Looper's specs are impressive, providing 24-bit/44.1kHz sampling with detailed, noise-free performance and a total of 160 minutes of recording time. Tracks in each memory location can be up to four minutes long, and users can overdub as many tracks as they like, as long as the total recording capacity is not exceeded. A micro USB jack facilitates connection to a computer where users can operate the pedal via free editor software that also can import and export looper files.

PERFORMANCE The Circle Looper's sound quality is simply outstanding. Even after overdubbing 10



tracks there was no signal degradation. The functions are very easy to use, and while the display is small it is very easy to read when standing at the pedal. Loops and overdubs are automatically stored, so if a memory preset is accidentally changed during performance you won't have to start all over again. The rhythm presets sound excellent and cover a wide variety of styles like rock, pop, metal, jazz, blues, hip hop, latin and more, plus an additional 10 metronome tracks are very helpful for loop recording. Because the rhythms and looper tracks are blended at the outputs, users will want to place guitar effects (particularly overdrive or distortion) before the input and connect the output to a full-range amplification system.



STREET PRICE:
\$109.99
MANUFACTURER:
Donner,
usdonnermusic.com

● The looper section records up to 160 minutes of audio (four minutes maximum per track) and allows infinite overdubs.

● The rhythm section provides 100 outstanding preset patterns in various styles, plus an additional 10 metronome patterns to facilitate loop recording.

● **THE BOTTOM LINE** The Donner Circle Looper delivers outstanding sound quality, sophisticated but easy-to-use functions and an impressive selection of rhythm patterns, making it a powerful performance tool.



Arres-Ted Development

GIBSON THEODORE

By Chris Gill

BY 1957 GIBSON grew tired of being upstaged by that cocky young upstart from California named Leo Fender and decided to do something about it. This was when Gibson president Ted McCarty rallied his forces to conceive numerous innovative new instruments, including the Explorer, Flying V and ES-335. Considering the legacy of the company's golden era, imagine how Gibson's current Senior Director of Product Development Mat Koehler felt when he stumbled across a guitar design doodle signed by McCarty and dated March 18, 1957, stashed away and forgotten in a portfolio of mid-Forties lap steel documents. With its sharp, tulip-shaped "double Florentine" cutaways, six-on-a-side angled headstock (the original Explorer headstock concept remained a 3x3 in Gibson's January 7, 1958, patent application) and sparse notes that specified a flat alder body and 1 1/2-inch thick body with edges generously rounded to almost a half-circle, this design represented a radical shift from Gibson's direction at the time.

Now, 65 years later, Gibson has finally turned McCarty's forgotten design into a very special limited-production custom shop Archive Collection model called — appropriately — the Theodore. Gibson is building only 318 Theodore guitars offered in natural, cherry or ebony finish versions.

FEATURES With its alder body material and six-on-a-side headstock design (quite likely the initial inspiration for the Explorer's scimitar/"hockey stick" headstock, although McCarty's drawing had more of a bird-beak shape), the Theodore certainly was conceived to go head-to-head with Fender solidbody designs. However, the dual P-90 soapbar single-coil pickups with individual volume and tone controls, three-way pickup selector toggle switch, wraparound bridge and 24 3/4-inch scale neck with rosewood fretboard and dot inlays maintain Gibson's distinct character. The original design appears to be an early concept for the double-cutaway Les Paul Special — perhaps the body shape was

initially nixed because it was reminiscent of a slimmed-down version of Rickenbacker's Combo 400 and 450 and Model 900, 950 and 1000 solidbodies of that era.

The Theodore is not 100 percent faithful to McCarty's sketch — most notably the pickup switch is moved to the lower bout and the pickguard shape and knob locations are modified. McCarty's original plan was also to offer just a natural high-polish finish, but the new black and cherry options are certainly equally attractive. The original design specifies a symmetrical rounded bottom rim, while the Theodore's rim is rounded mostly on the lower bass bout. Interestingly, this rounded rim design appeared in 1960 with the Epiphone Crestwood and Coronet solidbody models, which Gibson started building in 1958. Other notable features include the body's contrasting dark walnut center strip, mahogany neck with 12-inch radius, chunky 1957 C-shape profile, 22 narrow/tall frets, nylon nut, Kluson tuners with cream buttons, CTS audio taper pots, humbucker



capacitors and a Switchcraft pickup switch and output jack.

PERFORMANCE Thanks to the body's slim 1 1/2-inch thickness, narrow shape and alder material, the Theodore is quite comfortably light, but it still provides that solid, distinctively Gibson feel thanks to its glued set neck with long tenon. The convex curves of the Florentine cutaways don't quite provide the upper fret access of a double-cutaway Les Paul Junior/Special, but the upside is that the neck feels more solidly anchored. Construction and attention to detail is perfect, as one would expect for a Gibson Custom Shop product.

The Theodore's tone occupies a distinct territory between a Les Paul Special and a Telecaster, delivering a punchy attack and bright overtones reminiscent of a Fender but instead of twang and clang its voice has more midrange body and bass bark. The "woman" tones produced by backing down the tone controls are very similar to an SG but with more bite.

STREET PRICE: \$4,999
MANUFACTURER:
 Gibson, gibson.com

● The 1 1/2-inch thick alder body, rounded lower bout body rim and sharp tulip-shaped "double Florentine" cutaways are radical departures from Gibson's classic designs.

● Custom Soapbar P-90 single-coil pickups combined with the alder body material provide punchy, bright tones with full-bodied midrange and aggressive bass.

● **THE BOTTOM LINE**
 The Gibson Theodore is something new and old at the same time, providing a combination of familiar and comfortable features and playability while delivering a bold, entirely new voice.



Buzz Bin Positive Grid Spark MINI



EVERYTHING IS SMALLER now. Your paycheck. A bag of Doritos. A Snickers bar (it's why "you're not you" lately). It's Shrinkflation! We can gripe all we want about it, but one thing that got smaller that I ain't complaining about is the brand-new Spark MINI "smart" amplifier. Inheriting all the integration and smart features from its flagship Spark sibling, but without any of the bulk — the wonderfully tiny Spark MINI is a full stereo amplifier and Bluetooth speaker that's battery-powered and — best of all — on-the-go portable.

Streamlined to sit on your desktop and smaller than a McDonald's Happy Meal, the 10-watt Spark MINI features a 1/4-inch input and three onboard knobs for Preset (Rhythm, Lead, Solo and Custom), Guitar (input volume) and Music (streaming volume). Rear-panel connectivity consists of a power button, Pair button (Hold for tuner), USB-C interface for recording and recharging, 1/8-inch AUX in and a 1/8-inch Headphone/Line Out. Despite its diminutive dimensions, the MINI's dual 8" angled speakers belt out a surprisingly wide and dynamic stereo field, with an underside passive radiator providing the omnidirectional bass thump. It's all incredibly detailed for such a small amp. The built-in Lithium rechargeable battery offers up to 8 hours of operation, but I've only had to recharge it once a week. Plus, the MINI shuts down to save power if you're inactive with it. Finally, you can order the amp in a few tolex and grille color options to match your decorative style.

On its own, the Spark MINI works as a great practice amp and Bluetooth speaker, but paired with Spark's free companion mobile app, you immediately grasp the massive potential of this small wonder. Within the app, users are able to engage with a bevy of intelligent features like Voice Command, Smart Jam and Auto Chords, as well as EQ Scenario and 33 virtual amps and 43 effects you can tweak. Plus, you can access Positive Grid's online ToneCloud community of users and artists to preview or download over 10,000 preset tones that you can load onto the amp if you wish to swap the current presets. The app also offers a video creation tool where you can share your live performances on social media. I could wholeheartedly recommend the Spark MINI just for its wealth of stellar-sounding amp and effect emulations. But having the Smart Jam accompaniment to listen to your playing and generating a realistic bass-and-drums backing track to your chord work is inspiring as a song or solo sketchpad — but also a motivating factor for you to play more guitar. Speaking of smart, Auto Chords is fantastic at displaying the chord sequence to just about any song you're trying to learn from inside the app's Music icon. For all its creative potential as a portable jam tool along with impressive amp and effects models beyond compare, there's nothing else quite like the Spark MINI for its size. — *Paul Riaro*

STREET PRICE: \$195
MANUFACTURER: Positive Grid,
positivegrid.com/spark-mini



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SOMETHING IN THE AIR

How to play "Save Something for Me"

"SAVE SOMETHING FOR ME," the second track off my new album, *Light of Love*, is a slow ballad, in a style not unlike two of my favorite Jimi Hendrix compositions, "May This Be Love" and "One Rainy Wish." Like those songs, "Save Something for Me" is built from a simple, repeating two-chord figure played during the verses. Additionally, all three songs utilize ringing open strings within the chord voicings, which serve to evoke a wide, atmospheric feel.

FIGURE 1 illustrates the intro chord progression, including the improvised single-note fills that fall on beat 4 of every bar. The intro and verse are built around a two-chord progression of G - Em, which functions as a relative major-minor chordal axis: G (major) is the tonic, or "home," chord, and Em is the relative minor of G major. There are many popular songs that take advantage of the harmonic attributes of the relative major-minor axis, such as Neil Young's, "Heart of Gold," Pink Floyd's "Wish You Were Here," Mountain's "Theme from an Imaginary Western" and Jimi Hendrix's "Little Wing."

After sounding the initial G chord, I slide the D note on the A string's 5th fret up one whole step (two frets) to E. While this note rings, I pick the open B string while applying some finger vibrato to the fretted E. Sounded together, the two notes form an E5 chord and imply an Em sound. The "hookiness" of the pattern stems from the vibrato, as the E and B notes ringing together sound lush and full. In bars 1, 6, 7 and 8, the descending lick I play on beat 4 is essentially the same. Relative to a G major tonal center, these notes describe the G major pentatonic scale (G, A, B, D, E). Relative to Em, they outline E minor pentatonic (E, G, A, B, D).

The phrases played on beat 4 of each bar of **FIGURE 1** serve as an improvisational element, so each is a little different while maintaining the relationship to G major/E minor pentatonic. Hendrix utilized the same approach for his single-note fills throughout "Little Wing."

FIGURE 2 presents the verse section. Bars 1-8 are restatements of the one-bar intro figure, and, once again, beat 4 offers an opportunity for improvisation, with fills that

FIG. 1 Intro

FIG. 2 Verse

connect the repeating chord changes. For example, in beat 3 of bar 2, I slide perfect 4th intervals on the G and B strings, which is a very Hendrix-y rhythm guitar move.

Bars 5-7 momentarily break away from our repeating G - Em pattern, with C - Am. The relative major/minor axis is working in different directions here. With C to Am, the relative major precedes its relative minor;

with Em to G, the relative minor comes first. In bar 7, the idea is flipped again, as the relative minor chord, Am, precedes its relative major, C, as the form moves back to the relative minor, Em and then resolves to the V (five) chord, D. In bar 10, a flurry of cascading triplet hammer-pulls move across the G, D and A strings and bring us back to the intro figure.

GW 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. His new album, *Light of Love*, is available from andyaledort.com and all streaming services.



For video of this lesson, go to [guitarworld.com/august2022](https://www.guitarworld.com/august2022)

CHAIRMAN OF THE BORED, PART 2

How to connect pentatonic boxes to find new ideas

THIS MONTH, WE'LL continue investigating ways to find new ideas and musical inspiration to help break out of a soloing rut. Many blues and rock players learn how to devise single-note licks by studying the "box" patterns for scales like minor and major pentatonic. By "boxes," I'm referring to fretboard shapes wherein all of the notes of the scale fall within three or four frets. One of the best ways I've found to break out of a rut when soloing and mine new musical territory is to move from one box and fretboard position to another as a line progresses, taking advantage along the way of what each new fretboard "destination" will yield.

Last month, we looked at connecting various positions of E minor pentatonic (E, G, A, B, D). The first step is to delineate the patterns as they fall within each box, such as staying within the first five frets, and also locating the notes of E minor pentatonic as they fall in higher positions.

A great place to start is up high on the neck, as shown in **FIGURE 1**. I start the phrase in 17th position, but by the last 16th note of beat 1, I've already moved down to 15th position. Bar 2 initiates a shift down to 12th position, and by beat 2, the shift continues downward, to 10th, 9th and 7th positions. The trend continues as I move down to 5th, 4th, 3rd and then open position, stringing together a long flow of notes that, hopefully, sounds more musical than just an exercise for shifting through scale positions.

FIGURE 2 breaks down these shifts in a clear way, as I move more slowly from one box to the next. Notice the slight differences in the ways in which I navigate from one area to the next, as these phrases differ from those in **FIGURE 1**. I've put a lot of time into studying and practicing these positional shifts, so that I can incorporate their benefits without the licks sounding too worked out. The whole point is to study these shifts so that they can be relied upon as a tool for free musical expression and invention.

As you explore the many ways to connect the boxes, note the various routes you can take. The slightest deviation in where

FIG. 1 N.C.(E)
Freely

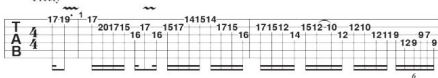


FIG. 2

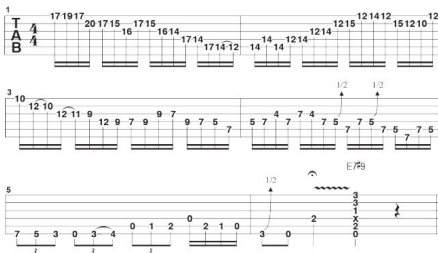
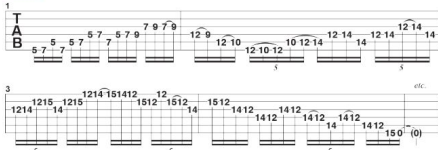


FIG. 3



you shift can result in completely different phrasing options. In **FIGURE 3**, the phrases move in reverse, as we begin lower on the fretboard and then ascend.

When you're in the heat of jamming with other musicians and another guitarist is

playing in one area of the fretboard, you can observe that and compliment it by staying "out of the way" and focusing on a different part of the neck. Studying these scale positions in this way will make those options more accessible and readily available to you.

more accessible and readily available to you.

Joe Bonamassa is one of the world's most popular and successful blues-rock guitarists — not to mention a top producer and *de facto* ambassador of the blues (and of the guitar in general).

MELODIC
MUSE

by Andy Timmons

For video of this lesson, go to
guitarworld.com/august2022EXPERIENCE
NECESSARY

How to play "Grace"

THIS MONTH, WE'LL look at "Grace," a tune that's featured on my latest album, *Electric Truth*. I wrote the song after seeing a Jimi Hendrix Experience Tribute show, which, as always, features so many great guitar players performing and interpreting the timeless and brilliant music of Jimi Hendrix. But the most inspiring thing for me that night was meeting Jimi's bass player Billy Cox and his wonderful wife Brenda. In our conversation, the word "grace" came up, which I really took to heart, and it inspired me to write this song when I got home. As a composition, the song is certainly Jimi Hendrix-influenced, but it was also inspired by my time with Billy and Brenda.

FIGURE 1 shows the 12-bar "verse" form that begins "Grace." The song is played with a slow, ballad-type feel and groove, similar to that of the Hendrix classic, "Little Wing." As in that song, the chords in "Grace" are embellished throughout the verse section with single-note and double-stop fills, which serve to fill out the rhythm part and provide melodic interest and a rhythmic "push" from bar to bar. Also, there's a bit of a swing-16ths feel underlying the rhythmic phrasing of these fills. Hendrix was a master rhythm guitarist and always played his parts with a deep, swinging groove, which you can especially hear on songs like "Little Wing," "Spanish Castle Magic," "May This Be Love" and "You Got Me Floatin'."

Through the first eight bars of the verse, C and Em chords alternate, as indicated in a simplified way in **FIGURE 2**. This repeating progression brings to mind the verses in the David Bowie classic "Space Oddity." After sounding the initial C chord in **FIGURE 1**, I play a single-note line based on the C major pentatonic scale (C, D, E, G, A). When the chord changes to Em, the sliding double-stop phrases that follow it are based on the closely related E minor pentatonic scale (E, G, A, B, D). Notice that C major pentatonic and Em pentatonic share four notes — D, E, G and A — with C major pentatonic adding C and Em pentatonic adding B.

Essential to the sound of these phrases is the way in which I articulate them, which is with an abundant use of finger slides and hammer-ons. When playing over Em, I switch from single notes to sliding 4th inter-

FIG. 1 C

FIG. 2

vals, which offer a nice textural variation.

Bars 7-12 of **FIGURE 1** represent the tune's melody, which begins over the same C - Em progression and then shifts to F - D^b - F - C/E - Bm7/5. When we reach F in bar 9, the subsequent chord, D^b, suggests a modulation to the key of F major, with D^b functioning as the $\flat 6$ (flatted 6th) chord. The progression then resolves nicely back to the

true tonic key of C major.

In navigating these new twists in the progression, I built the tune's melody around the subtle variables from chord to chord. In each bar, notice how the chord tones are acknowledged while the entire melody is tied together via clearly defined rhythmic phrasing. As the melody wraps up in bar 12, I simply arpeggiate the Bm7/5 chord.

Andy Timmons is a world-renowned guitarist known for his work with the Andy Timmons Band, Danger Danger and Simon Phillips. His new album, *Electric Truth*, is out now. Visit andytimmons.com and guitarxperience.net to check out his recordings and many instructional releases.

BLUES TRUTH

by Kirk Fletcher



For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/august2022

BLUES IS KING

The influence of legendary blues master B.B. King

THE GUITAR PLAYER who influenced the greatest number of Chicago blues guitarists, though he got his start in Memphis, is B.B. King. By the early Fifties, B.B. had many records out, which were very accessible to everyone in Chicago, and during that time he played in the city a lot and had a big influence on other great players, such as Buddy Guy, Magic Sam and Otis Rush. As a tribute to B.B., I'd like to dedicate this column to offering some examples of his signature licks and phrasing.

One particular earmark of B.B.'s playing is something you'll often hear in his song intros; a perfect example is the way in which he kicks off the blues classic, "Sweet Little Angel," on *Live at the Regal*. **FIGURE 1** is a phrase along the lines of this intro, in the key of A. Starting on the 5th, E, I move up to the 6th, F $\sharp$, followed by the A root and the second, B, which I then bend up a whole step to the major 3rd, C $\sharp$. The phrase then wraps up back on the 5th, E. **FIGURE 2** places this intro within the context of a three-bar opening solo statement.

In **FIGURE 3**, I elaborate further by following that simple intro with more complex phrases in bars 2 and 3. These phrases fall between the 10th and 12th frets and represent what many refer to as the "B.B. box," simply because licks and phrases like these are universally accepted as representative of B.B.'s individual sound and style.

When I play phrases like these, I can't help but remember how happy and excited I was when I first heard B.B. play. To this day, that great feeling inherent in his soloing still evokes pure happiness and joy. I can imagine a young Buddy Guy hearing this stuff on the radio and being fascinated and immediately hooked.

B.B. seemed to play with a rather light pick-hand touch. When I do this, I feel like my tone is better and clearer. I grew up playing a Stratocaster, so I had to do all I could to get a fatter sound to get closer to B.B.'s Gibson 335/345 sound.

Additionally, when you land on a note at the end of a phrase, add a nice big vibrato, striving to emulate the sound of the human voice. Vibrato seems to be something of a lost art, because all of the classic guitarists from the Fifties and Sixties that we love,

FIG. 1



FIG. 2



FIG. 3

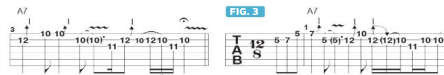


FIG. 4



FIG. 5



such as B.B. King, Albert King, Albert Collins, Otis Rush, Eric Clapton, each had their own signature vibrato. A great vibrato will set you apart and let the listener instantly know who is playing.

In **FIGURES 4** and **5**, I apply these B.B.-isms to a moderate shuffle groove. Once you have these phrases down, try expand-

ing upon them and inventing some twists and turns of your own.

This is my last installment of Blues Truth for now. I hope you've enjoyed these columns as much as I have enjoyed putting them together. Be on the lookout for my forthcoming new album, *Heartache by the Pound*, and I'll see you out on the road!

Kirk Fletcher, a former member of the Fabulous Thunderbirds, is an internationally respected guitarist and teacher. His latest album, *My Blues Pathway*, was nominated for a 2021 Blues Music Award.

Performance Notes

HOW TO PLAY THIS MONTH'S SONGS By Jimmy Brown



"GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS" Mötley Crüe



THIS FUN, LATE-EIGHTIES hair metal anthem features guitarist Mick Mars and bassist Nikki Sixx laying down some fat-sounding blues-rock-style riffs, with their

instruments tuned down one whole step, per their standard M.O. So while they play the song as if it were in the key of E, taking advantage of its friendly fingerings, convenient access to open strings and sonic heaviness, everything sounds in the lower, deeper key of D. For example, the opening G5 chord voicing, with its rich, resonant texture and pronounced strum and "rake" across all six strings, establishes the song's swagger right from the get-go, with what sounds like and F chord.

The song's main riff, which is introduced at section B, makes great use of sliding power chords, with Mars using his fret-hand pinkie (4) to grab the inverted G5 and A5 shapes with a mini barre across the A and D strings, sliding the finger from the 5th fret up to the 7th and back, which can be a little tricky to do smoothly. The key is to not press down any harder than necessary to fret the notes clearly, as doing so will only create undue friction against the fretboard, making the slides more arduous to perform than they need be.

As an alternative fingering option, you could try fretting the two strings and notes individually, with the tips of your 3rd and 4th fingers, sliding them together in lock-step fashion. Mars actually uses a similar technique to play a strummed-octaves fill right before the chorus, in bar 19, where he shifts a shape fretted with his 1st and 4th fingers on the A and G strings.

Notice in bar 9 how Mars quickly "chokes" (silences) the high chord stabs on the open B and high E strings immediately after hitting them, so as to prevent these notes from ringing into the following beat. This deft muting technique serves to keep the riff sounding tight and punchy. The guitarist similarly employs staccato phrasing during the bridge (section E), where he quickly chokes open-position, Chuck Berry-style two-note chords (E5, E6 and E7) immediately after strumming them. Doing so punctuates the riff effectively.



"PRIDE AND JOY" Stevie Ray Vaughan



SRV'S SIGNATURE BLUES shuffle, this classic song epitomizes the legendary guitarist's heavy-handed swing feel and commanding blues-rock presence, as he dem-

onstrates how to create an authoritative groove and fat-sounding riffs without having to use much in the way of overdrive, with his big tone being generated primarily "in the hands."

One important aspect of Stevie's renowned technique and touch that's challenging to convey on paper is his adroit use of string muting, with both his pick hand (via palm muting) and fret hand, which he would use to effectively suppress any unwanted sounds and ringing notes from muddying up his aggressive touch and pick attack. You'll notice throughout the song's intro how Stevie strikes open strings then immediately silences, or chokes, them so that they don't ring into the following eighth note. (These short-duration, or *staccato*, notes are indicated by those little black dots that appear over certain tab numbers, specifically the zeros.)

To authentically perform the song's signature "walking bass" riff that begins in bar 5, you need to pick or strum the eighth-note rhythms with an exaggerated swing feel — "*long - short, long - short,*" etc., using a down-up picking or strumming motion — downstrokes on the downbeats and upstrokes on the upbeat.

Equally important is to choke each upbeat open-string chord with both hands right after strumming it, which is challenging to do while simultaneously fretting and picking the walking bass line. Practice doing this slowly at first, until you get the timing and coordination down, then bring it up to tempo. The open-string chords, which may be thought of as "all-purpose passing chords," serve more of a rhythmic and textural function than a harmonic one, as they don't necessarily "agree" with the overall harmony of the riff. And so shortening their duration is critical to minimizing harmonic dissonance and sonic "mud." This approach also applies to the first verse, beginning at section B, where Stevie is strumming choppy Em chords for a percussive



"CIRCLE W" Spiritbox



of modern metal riffs in this. Tuning his low B string down — what's commonly referred to as 7-string tuning — then adding seven strings down one and a minor 3rd, enables the guitarist to play exceptionally heavy and dramatic performing intricate melodic sounding "stacked" power chords as well as single-note parts that use of wide intervals.

The song's angular intricate nimble string skipping and position shifts, which should be executed with both hands at a slower tempo before being taken to full speed, so as to not inefficient playing habits in memory. Notice how Stringer's open strings in conjunction notes played higher up the neck in which he "bounces" fretted open bottom string during.

During the song's verse (see sections B and C), Stringer the mix and plays lightly-tapped upper-register single-note and stric nicely in the arrangement Courtney LaPlante's vocals supporting the song's groove kicks in at section D. Stringer approaches, layering another single-note part over deep chords, creating a huge wall of sound.

For the breakdown and (see rehearsal letters J and clever use of 4th-fret natural (N.H.), using their high pitch dramatic contrasts to the low that preceded and follow the harmonics are a bit trickier than the more commonly used 7th and 5th frets, as they're precisely executed to

"GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS"

Mötley Crüe

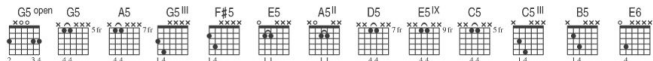
As heard on **GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS**

Words by NIKKI SIXX. Music by NIKKI SIXX, TOMMY LEE and MICK MARS • Transcribed by ANDY ALEDORT

All guitars are tuned down one whole step (low to high: D G C F A D).

Bass tuning (low to high): D G C F.

All notes and chords sound one whole step lower than written (key of D).



A Intro (0:00)

(0:02)

1., 2., 3.

4.

B (0:16, 2:26)

Moderately ♩ = 140

w/ad lib vocal

G5 open

(motorcycle sounds)

*Gtr. 1 (w/dist.)

G5 A5 G5 G5

C Verses (0:30)

1. Frie
2. Tri
3. Cra

need a
sweet to
Paris

fight
eat
France
D5

My
on
Forgot
A5 II

motorcycle
Halloween
the

and a
and
remember

switchblade
New Year's
romance
E5 IX

knife
Eve
romance

Handful
Yankee
got the
A5 II

13

W/guitar notation for measures 13-16. Measure 13 includes a repeat sign and the instruction "(repeat previous measure)". Measure 14 includes a "w/bar" instruction. Measure 15 includes a "1/4" instruction. Measure 16 includes a "w/bar" instruction. The notation shows a sequence of chords and notes, with a repeat sign in measure 13.

D Chorus (0:4)

hair feels
can't be
a
D5

right
beat
trois
D5

but
but
what I
you're the
Must-a
A5 II

need
best
broke

to
when you're
those

make me
off
Frenchies'
N.C.

tight
your feet
laws

are those
with those

(1.) girls
(2.) Girls
(3.) girls
G5 A5 G5

17

W/guitar notation for measures 17-20. Measure 17 includes a "w/bar" instruction. Measure 18 includes a "1/4" instruction. Measure 19 includes a "w/bar" instruction. Measure 20 includes a "w/bar" instruction. The notation shows a sequence of chords and notes, with a repeat sign in measure 17.

At the
B - B -
Doll Body
G5

Long
House
Shop
A5 G5

legs
in
and the
G5 III F#5 E5

and
Fort
Marble
E5

burgundy
Lauderdale
Arch

lips
Arch

Girls
Girls
Girls
C5 D5 C5

21

W/guitar notation for measures 21-24. Measure 21 includes a "P.M." instruction. Measure 22 includes a "P.M." instruction. Measure 23 includes a "P.M." instruction. Measure 24 includes a "P.M." instruction. The notation shows a sequence of chords and notes, with a repeat sign in measure 21.

Dancin'
Rockin'
Tropicana's
C5

in
D5 C5

down
Atlanta
C5 III B5

on the
at
where I
A5 II

Sunset
Tattletails
lost my
heart

Strip
heart

Girls
Girls
Girls
G5 A5 G5

25

W/guitar notation for measures 25-28. Measure 25 includes a "P.M." instruction. Measure 26 includes a "P.M." instruction. Measure 27 includes a "P.M." instruction. Measure 28 includes a "P.M." instruction. The notation shows a sequence of chords and notes, with a repeat sign in measure 25.

29

Red lips at the fingertips
Raisin' hell Seventh

G5 A5 G5 G5^{III} F#5 E5

P.M.

E Bridge (1:38)

(2.) boy (1.) Have you read the news I just need a new toy Soho Tribune I tell you

E5 E6 E5 E6 E7 E6 E5 E6

P.M. P.M. (repeat previous two measures)

33

did me Well then she broke my heart I'm such a
Dance for me I'll keep you over-employed Just te
C#5 B5 A5

Gtr. 2 (elec. w/dist.)

37

Gtr. 1 P.M.

Bass

story You know the one I mean

E5 E6 E5 E6 E5 E6 E5 E6

Gtr. 1

41

Bass

G5
Rhy. Fig. 1

45

Bass Fig. 1

Gtr. 1 repeats Rhy. Fig. 1 (see meas. 45)

Gtr. 2
N.H.

49

w/bar

N.H.

pitches: D, G, B

Bass repeats Bass Fig. 1 (see meas. 45)

D

F (3:07)

Girls girls girls
G5 A5 G5 G5^{III} F#5 E5 E6 E7 E5 E6

53 Gtr. 1

Bass

check that out man What Vince where Hey right there Hey

A5 G5 G5^{III} F#5 E5 E6 E5 E6

56 Rhy. Fig. 2

Bass Fig. 2

I know you from somewhere
(Girls girls girls)

A5 G5 F#5 E5 E6 E5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 twice (see meas. 56)

59 Gtr. 2

full

w/bar

full

-1/2

Gtr. 2

full

E6 E5

Girls C5 D5 C5 girls C5^{III} B5 girls A5^{II}

64 Gtr. 2 full V --- full - 1/2 full w/bar ---

Gtr. 1

Bass

Girls C5 D5 C5 girls C5^{III} B5 girls A5

67 full

70 G5 A5 G5 G5^{III} F#5 E5 E6

① string is sounded by pull-off

Rhy. Fig. 3

Bass Fig. 3

A5 G5 F#5 E5 E6 E5 G5 A5 G5 F#5 E5 E6

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 twice (see meas. 71)

73 Gtr. 2 w/bar --- 1/2 1/2 full vib. w/bar while trilling ---

[illegible]

"PRIDE AND JOY"

Stevie Ray Vaughan and Double Trouble

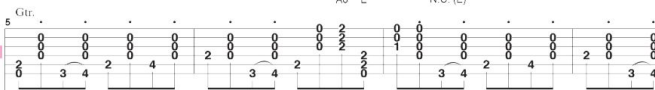
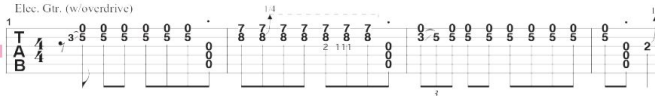
As heard on **TEXAS FLOOD**

Words and Music by STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN • Transcribed by ANDY ALEDORT

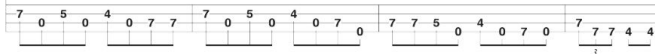
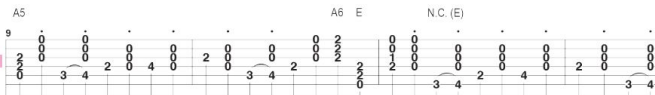
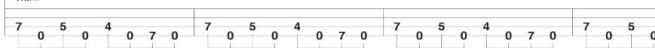
Tune down one half step (low to high: E_b, A_b, D_b, G_b, B_b, E_b).Bass tuning, low to high: E_b, A_b, D_b, G_b.All music sounds in the key of E_b, one half step lower than written.**A** Intro (0:00)Medium Blues Shuffle ♩ = 128 (♩ = ♩[♩])

N.C. (E)

Elec. Gtr. (w/overdrive)



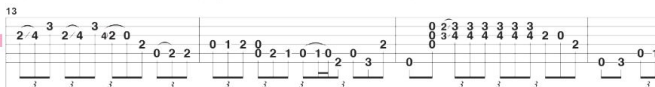
Bass



(B7)

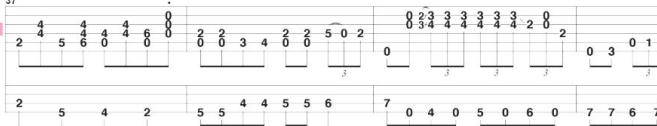
(A7)

(E7)



sweet little baby I'm her little lover boy
(B7) (A7) (E7)

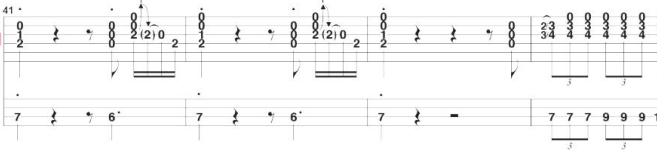
37



D 3rd Verse (1:17)

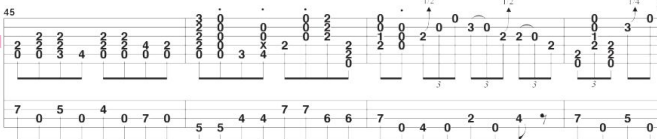
love my lady She's long and lean You mess with her you'll see a man get mean
E (E7)

41



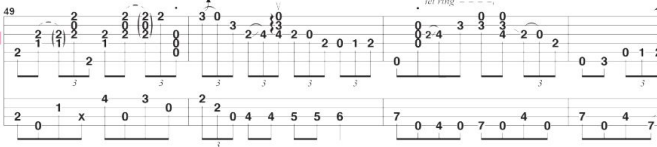
sweet little thing She's my pride and joy
(A7) (E7)

45



sweet little baby I'm her little lover boy
B7 (A7) (E7)

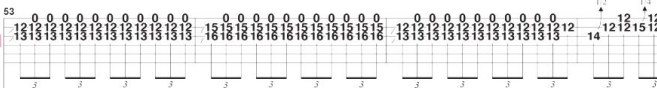
49



E 1st Guitar Solo (1:39)

(E) (E7) (E)

53



G 4th Verse (2:25)

love my baby like the finest wine Stick with her until the end of time
N.C. (E)

77

P.M.

sweet little thang She's my pride and joy
(A) A7 E

81

sweet little baby I'm her little lover boy
B7 A7 N.C. (E7) (B)

85

let ring - - - - -

H 5th Verse (2:47)

love my baby my heart and soul Love like ours won't never grow
E
Gtr.

89

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 simile (see bar 17)

sweet little thang She's my pride and joy
A7 N.C. (E) A6 E A6 E A

93

"CIRCLE WITH ME"

Spiritbox

As heard on **ETERNAL BLUE**

Words and Music by DANIEL BRAUNSTEIN, WILLIAM CROOK, COURTNEY LAPLANTE and MICHAEL STRINGER • Transcribed by

All guitars are 7-string guitars in Drop-A tuning down one and one half steps (low to high: F $\sharp$, C $\sharp$, F $\sharp$, B, F, E, G $\sharp$, C $\sharp$).
5-string Bass is in Drop-A tuning down one and one half steps (low to high: F $\sharp$, C $\sharp$, F $\sharp$, B, E).

All music sounds one and one half steps lower than written.



A Intro (0:00) (0:07)

Moderately $\text{♩} = 103$

Cut down the altar

N.C.

B5

N.C.

B

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

P.M.

1

TAB 4/4

9 7 0 5 7 0 7 0 2 0 2 9 7 0 5 7 0 2

Bass
*Bass Fig. 1

9 7 0 5 7 0 7 0 2 0 2 9 7 0 5 7 0 2

*Take 2nd ending on recall.

4

P.M.

B5

1. A5 P.M.

N.C. (B5) (A5)

9 7 0 5 7 0 7 0 2 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 14 14 14 0

9 7 0 5 7 0 7 0 2 0 2 5 5 5 5 5 5 7 7 7 5

2

A5

N.C. (B5) (A5)

6 P.M.

(Prod. sample: 1st bar of R)

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 14 14 14 0 14 12 12

end Bass Fig. 1

D 1st and 2nd Choruses (1:05, 2:09)

w/half-time feel

Feel the weight of a martyr

It

B5

A5

Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)

Riff C

19 light P.M. on ④

[illegible]

be yours

if you echo

birds

of

E5

G5

Gsus2

Gtr. 3 plays Riff C three times (see bar 19)

21 Gtrs. 1 and 2

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is for guitar, featuring a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains three measures of music. The first measure has a whole note chord G7 (G, B, D, F#) with a pink highlight above it. The second measure has a whole note chord G7 (G, B, D, F#) with a yellow highlight above it. The third measure has a whole note chord G7 (G, B, D, F#) with a blue highlight above it. The bottom staff is for bass, featuring a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains three measures of music. The first measure has a whole note chord G7 (G, B, D, F#). The second measure has a whole note chord G7 (G, B, D, F#). The third measure has a whole note chord G7 (G, B, D, F#).

2nd time, skip ahead to **H** (bar 46)

Traitor cut down the altar

It could all

be yours Vultures circling

A5

23

A5

E5

G5

[illegible]
$$\mathbf{E} \quad (1.24)$$

N.C.

B5

N.C.

B5

27 Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M.

PM

P

Month	COVID-19 Cases	Dengue fever Cases
January	0	0
February	0	0
March	0	0
April	0	0
May	0	0
June	1800	1000
July	2000	1200
August	2200	1400
September	0	0
October	0	0
November	0	0
December	0	0

H (2:25)(end half-time feel) **I** (2:27)

the flame

G5

A5 C5 A5 C5 B5

N.C. (B5)

*Gtr. 3 plays Fill 1 four times (see below bar 43)**Gtr. 2 (w/clean tone and delay effect*)**Riff D*

P.M.

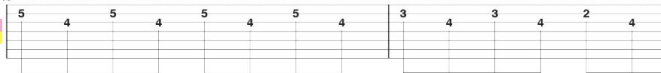
46 Gtrs. 1 and 2

46

Bass plays Bass Fill 1 (see below bar 44)

*Delay set to produce dotted 8th-note rhythms (436ms at tempo).

49 P.M.

**J** Breakdown (2:36)

(* = 105)

I held the power of a dying sun

I climb the altar and I claim my place

C5 B5

A5 B $\flat$ 5 B5

N.C. (B5)

(A5)

*Gtr. 2 plays Riff D (see bar 47)**Gtr. 1 (doubled)*

51

N.H. P.M.



Bass

**K** The Drop! (2:46)

God

C5 B5

A5 B $\flat$ 5 B5

A5

C5 B5

A5 B $\flat$ 5 B5

C5 B5

A5 B5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

55

N.H. P.M.

N.H. P.M.

N.H. P.M.

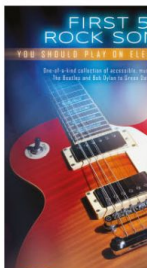
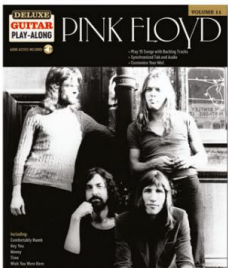
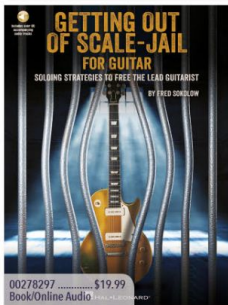
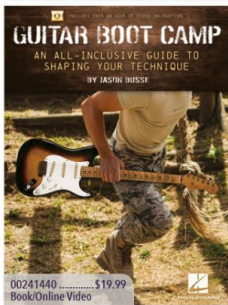
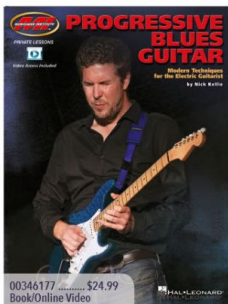
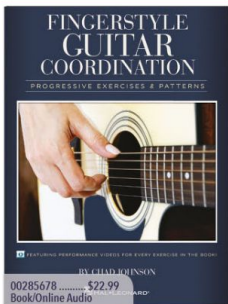
N.H. P.M.

N.H. P.M.



Bass

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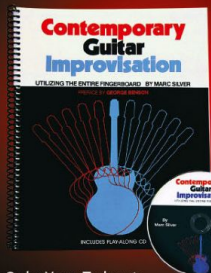
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GIBSON LES PAUL CUSTOM

CATEGORY: SOLIDBODY ELECTRIC GUITAR

THE DUAL-HUMBUCKER Gibson Les Paul Standard has earned rightful status as one of the most desirable electric guitars of all time. However, while the Standard may be the reigning Queen Bee, particularly amongst blues-rockers, certain discriminating breeds of guitarists, particularly those who perform more *intense* styles of music, consider the Les Paul Custom the King Kong of the guitar universe for its skull-crushing performance and monstrous tones.

I could easily fill this article with the names of a few hundred players who have made history recording and performing with a Les Paul Custom. For brevity's sake, here's a short list of the Custom's more notable champions: Randy Rhoads, Robert Fripp, Al Di Meola, Zakk Wylde, Vivian Campbell, John Sykes, Marty Friedman, Steve Stevens, Jan Akkerman and Les Paul himself. Its mighty roar has inspired the genre-defining rhythm playing of Steve Jones with the Sex Pistols, James Hetfield with Metallica and Adam Jones with Tool. Other notable Custom players include Lindsey Buckingham, Billy Duffy, the Edge, Peter Frampton, Ace Frehley, Danny Gatton, Bill Kelliher, Mick Mars, Joe Perry, Keith Richards, Mick Ronson and so many, many more.

The triple-pickup single- and double-cutaway (SG-style) models are the guitar industry's flashy equivalent of a fully loaded convertible Cadillac Coupe de Ville, but most players prefer the more sensible single-cutaway dual-humbucker version. The Custom's body construction has gone through numerous changes over the years, including the classic solid-mahogany version of the Fifties and the maligned "pancake" version produced during the late Sixties and Seventies (maple layer sandwiched between a mahogany top and back; ironically, the much-derided mid-Seventies model was used for dozens of classic, beloved recordings), but currently it's made with a two-piece plain maple top and solid one-piece mahogany back. Compared to the Standard, a Custom generally has a less-percussive attack, which results in an overall tone that is more evenly balanced between attack and sustain to provide enhanced note-to-note consistency. Generally (but not always, thanks to various changes Gibson has made to the Custom over the years), a Custom also produces tone that is darker and warmer than a Standard, which is why many metal players tend to prefer Customs over Standards.

The main reason for the Custom's appeal with shredders is its super-fast action, courtesy of a slim neck profile, silky smooth ebony fretboard and low-profile frets that earned the model its "fretless wonder" nickname. (Note: Gibson has made many changes to the Les Paul Custom over the years, including the fretboard material and style of frets, so your mileage may vary.) Wearing its classy black



SUGGESTED RIGS

ZAKK WYLDE METAL



Marshall JCM800 2203 100-watt head into Marshall 1960B cabinet with Celestion G12T-75 speakers with Boss SD-1 Super Overdrive

Tip: Zakk replaced the stock Gibson pickups with EMG 81 (bridge) and 85 (neck) pickups, which provide tighter, more focused tone.

SEX PISTOLS PUNK



Fender Twin Reverb combo

Tip: Turn all of the volume and tone controls to 10 for maximum impact and grind, then

The Cult's Billy Duffy stage in West Hollywood

A full-page photograph of a man with a shaved head and extensive tattoos on his arms, wearing a black t-shirt and a thin chain necklace. He is holding two Les Paul Custom guitars, one white and one black. In the background, another white Les Paul guitar is on a stand next to a black equipment case. The background is a dark, draped fabric.

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LES PAUL CUSTOM C

6 & 7 STRING / BONE WH

EXCEPT
SONIC VERS

Gil

9042

LZZY HALL

SIGNATURE EXPLORERBIRD // CARDINAL