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The body of the Fame Forum Custom consists of mahogany and features a two-piece top made from high-contrast and evenly grained quilted maple. The experienced guitar builders in Danzig select for a particularly powerful grain with a three-dimension depth effect, which is highlighted by the illuminating Burst finish. An additional optical depth effect as well as clear body contours is created by the shimmering iridescent abalone purfling, which is rounded off by a cream-coloured binding.

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Regardless if shredder or Blues fan: fast runs as well as organic bendings are ideally supported by the slim, yet contoured 'C' profile of the mahogany neck. To reach even the highest frets, the Forum Custom features a flattened neck heel block, while neck tenon was extended and even reaches under the neck pickup which also helps to improve sustain and construction stability.

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NO ONE KNOWS

STEVE VAI
DIE TO LIVE

*Video riff

*Rockschool version

TOTAL Guitar

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OF YOUR PLAYING
- ✓ ELECTRIC &
ACOUSTIC TIPS
- ✓ 10 PRACTICE
CHALLENGES

INTERVIEWED

SONNY LANDRETH
SYLOSIS
TAL WILKENFELD

REVIEWED INSIDE! THE HOTTEST NEW GEAR

From Fender, Washburn, EHX,
Epiphone, BluGuitar and more

LEARN TO PLAY
THE
WHO
SUBSTITUTE

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JIMMY
EAT
WORLD



Ma



Sonnet

NATURAL RESPONSE

“Finally, an amp that can reproduce the full spectrum of sound of acoustic instruments. All I hear is my sound.”

Jon Gomm



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Welcome...



What better time to assess your playing goals than the start of the year? Well, as it happens, the start of the decade. So, this issue we've assembled a series of lessons to help you do just that. Using our guides, you can cut through the confusion and get straight to the point – getting more from your practice time and achieving real results, whatever your aim. In this month's cover feature, we're tackling everything from neater rhythm playing to whammy bar techniques, and we've tried to make it applicable to all genres and abilities. Use our Practice Challenges for each area you want to improve on and you'll start seeing improvements in no time!

Elsewhere, we've packed the issue with the usual mix of interviews, tab and gear reviews. Speaking of which, be sure to check back next month where we'll be giving you a preview of the most exciting new gear for 2020 from this year's NAMM Show. Until then, why not check out some drool-worthy live setups in our free Rigs Of The Heroes' supplement?

See you next time!

Stuart Williams

Stuart Williams Editor

MAKING THIS MONTH'S MAG



CHRIS BIRD

With festive celebrations all but a distant memory, now's the perfect time to focus on your playing – so says our resident tab, technique and tuition expert. "TG keeps me pretty busy," says Mr B, "so easy, repetitive exercises that I can drop in and out of work best for me. Take a look at our Workout on page 48 and get practising!"



STAN BULL

After (just about) recovering from the Christmas break, Stan has settled into his new role at TG. "One of my New Year's resolutions is to work on my own playing, as improving my technique is something I keep putting off. Luckily the 2020 Guitar Workout makes for an excellent starting point."



ALEX LYNHAM

TG's resident pedal expert has been waxing lyrical about Digitech's cult favourite Space Station effect in this month's FX File – a pedal which, Alex contends, redefined weird! Don't fancy the old school approach? Our pedal guru has recommended three contemporary effects flying the flag for unusual spacey sounds.

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TOTAL Guitar

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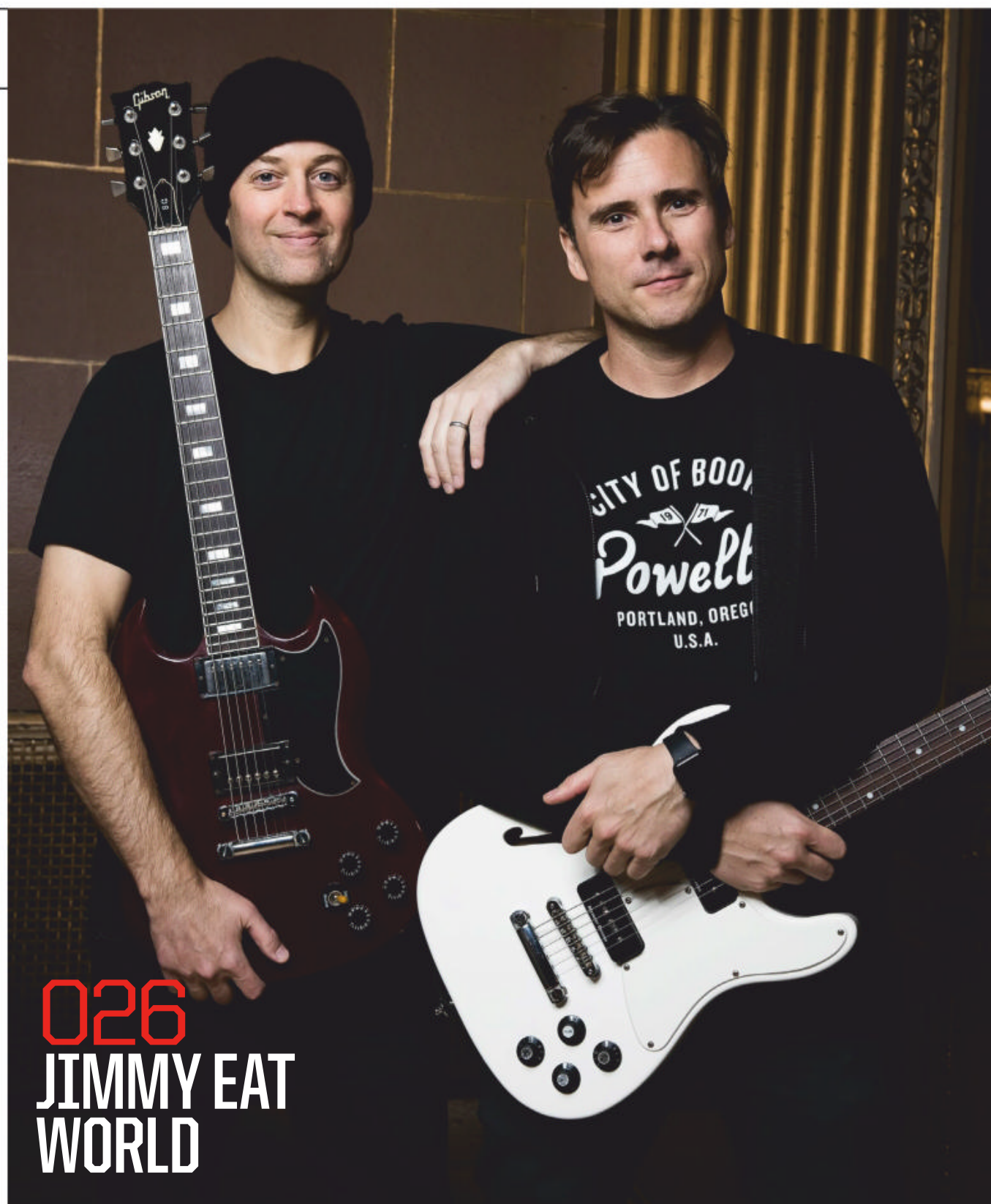
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048 2020 GUITAR WORKOUT

Improve your playing this year with our easy to follow workout plan





026
JIMMY EAT
WORLD

094
EPIPHONE
JASON HOOK
M-4 EXPLORER



MONITOR

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The new Cambridge 50
combo offers more than
just that trusty Vox tone



Photography: Olly Curtis

TUBE STATION

Vox's latest aims to take modelling to the next level



ox has unveiled the Cambridge 50: a combo amp that it says provides “new possibilities in a modelling guitar amp”.

At the heart of the Cambridge is Vox's Virtual Element Technology (VET), providing 10 amp models from Vox's hallowed AC30 models through to high-gain emulations of classic Marshall and Mesa/Boogie amps.

As well as this, Vox has made use of its Nutube technology in the preamp section of the Cambridge. We've used various products with this modern-day valve equivalent, which offers the response and sound of a preamp valve in a modern format. Also on-board are eight effects models, a USB for use as an audio interface and incorporated functionality for Vox's Tone Room and Jam Vox software. The Vox Cambridge 50 is priced at £275 and will be available soon.

UP CLOSE



Nutube

The Nutube packs all the feel and sound of a traditional valve into a modern, cost-effective format.



Speaker

The 50-watt Cambridge is equipped with an eight-inch Celestion VX12, and can also be used as an audio interface for your computer.

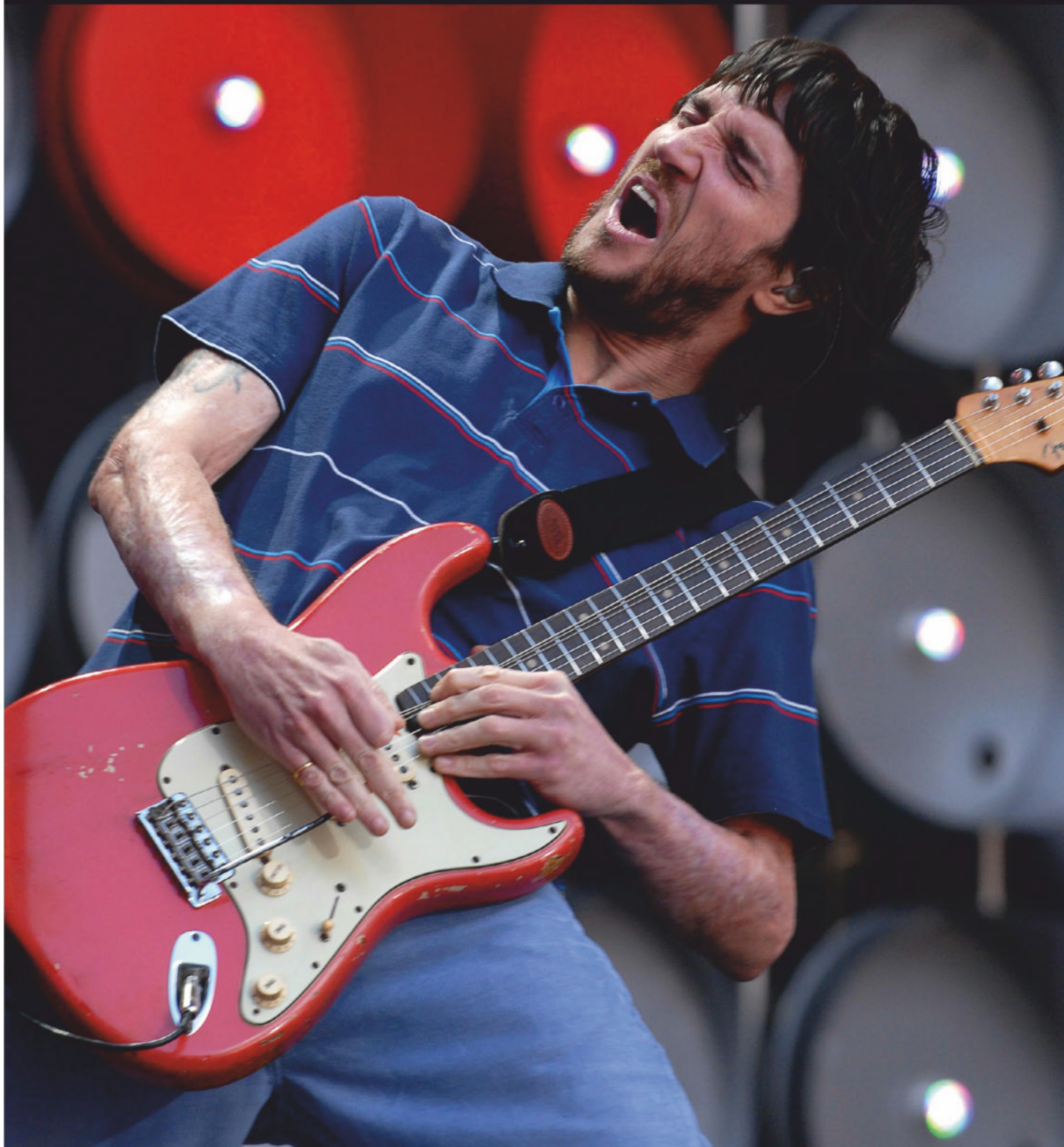


Modelling

Using Vox's Virtual Element Technology, the Cambridge 50 offers 10 amp models (plus a clean input for acoustics) and eight effects.

SCENE

YOUR NEWS IN GUITARS



Photos: CBrian Rasic / MTV / Getty / Chase Agnello / Dean / Chicago Tribune / Tribune News Service / Getty Images



NEWS

Frusciante's return sees perhaps the most beloved RHCP line-up reunited

FRUSCIANTE THAT!

RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS' PRODIGAL SON RETURNS AS JOSH KLINGHOFFER BOWS OUT

In a surprise move, Red Hot Chili Peppers have announced John Frusciante will rejoin the band after ten years away. The news marks the end of Josh Klinghoffer's two-album tenure with the band, which was announced in a statement on Instagram.

"The Red Hot Chili Peppers announce that we are parting ways with our guitarist of the past 10 years, Josh Klinghoffer. Josh is a beautiful musician who we respect and love. We are deeply grateful for

our time with him, and the countless gifts he shared with us. We also announce, with great excitement and full hearts, that John Frusciante is rejoining our group."

Frusciante first joined RHCP in 1988 before releasing *Mother's Milk*, replacing Hillel Slovak who passed away the same year from an overdose. Frusciante was an integral part of the band for its two most successful eras, recording *Blood Sugar Sex Magik* and then returning for the *Californication* album in 1998.

Speaking in 2009 of his decision to leave the band a second time, Frusciante said, "I really love the

band and what we did. I understand and value that my work with them means a lot to many people, but I have to follow my interests. For me, art has never been something done out of a sense of duty. It is something I do because it is really fun, exciting and interesting.

"Over the last 12 years, I have changed, as a person and artist, to such a degree that to do further work along the lines I did with the band would be to go against my own nature. There was no choice involved in this decision. I simply have to be what I am, and have to do what I must do."

"We announce, with great excitement and full hearts, that John Frusciante is rejoining our group"

ROUND-UP

The newspieces picking our ears up



Finck Plank

NIN guitarist gets a signature Reverend

With Trent Reznor reportedly planning on a busy year for Nine Inch Nails recording and touring, Robin Finck's new Reverend signature models could see plenty of action in 2020 – and they look built for it, too.

Based on Reverend's Sensei shape (sans Bigsby), the Robin Finck signature (price TBC) features a Korina body, bound ebony fingerboard, Railhammer Chisel ceramic humbuckers, Tune-o-matic bridge and stop bar tailpiece, volume and Reverend's versatile Bass Contour controls with a three-way switch.

The Railhammer pickups use two types of magnet bespoke to the wound and plain strings. The 'rail' magnet is for the wound strings and there's enlarged pole magnets for the plain strings. The advantage of this design is said to result in tighter low end response and more open frequencies. Finck's signature model is available in Midnight Black and Ice White finishes, with prices still to be announced at the time of going to press.



Metal guitarists: don't expect to be Nocturno's new favourite any time soon

FIVE MINUTES ALONE NOCTURNO CULTO

The Darkthrone guitarist on the Fender combo's black metal magic and why he doesn't miss playing live...

Got my first real six-string...

"It was some kind of a Jackson knock-off model. It was a cheap brand, Cort or something. Back then, when I was 14 or 15 years old, I played on this cheap guitar and I had some kind of a Peavey amplifier. I started playing with Darkthrone in 1988, and I was 16 when I bought my first real guitar, and that was a jubilee version of a Jackson. I think that Grover Jackson signed the back of the headstock with a marker."

Play authentic...

"When I was a kid the guitars that really stood out for me, the thing I had to have, was Gibson guitars. I think Gibson has been my main guitar brand since 89. The first guitar I bought from Gibson was an Explorer. It had this Tobacco Sunburst colour and it was just fantastic. The thing about Explorers is that they really don't break. The electronics? I mean, that guitar today, it's working perfectly. There has never been any hassle with it. Nowadays I tend to play on my Les Paul."

**"TO PLAY GUITAR LIVE AND DO THE VOCALS?
I THINK THAT IS A LOT OF HASSLE"**

Exit... Stage left...

"Since we don't play live, it is a very big difference between making music and creating an album and playing live. Playing live, there you are, you feel like you are in some kind of entertainment business. I don't miss it. I liked being on tour with Satyricon because I see myself as a guitarist. I know I have been doing vocals now on the Darkthrone albums, but basically I am a guitarist. To play live and do the vocals? I think that is a lot of hassle. I don't like it. If I could just play guitar I would be happy!"

The wolf is loose...

"Fenriz and I have been sticking around together for over 30 years. If we were to do heavy touring or stuff we would probably hate each other's guts. You can imagine. No, we are not in the same town. I haven't seen him in a year or so now. But we do keep in touch."

Red right hand...

"A lot of what creates a guitarist's sound is the right hand – if you are right-handed. Where you press the strings down with your left hand can be whatever, but it's how you play with your right hand that is so important. To me it's a big deal. It creates the sound."

Cum on feel the noize...

"Early in Darkthrone history we thought every little boy's dream was to have a Marshall stack. But those Fender amps were great. I think it was called a Performer 1000. It was a small thing but really pumped out a huge amount of sound [Laughs]. When I played with Satyricon on *Nemesis Divina*, both Satyr and I played only through that amp, with no boxes at all. And we also brought those amps with us on the first Satyricon tour in Europe."

Born too late...

"Of course I listen to metal but I am stuck in the 70s. Blues is not my favourite genre but when it comes to guitarists I am a big fan of 70s ZZ Top. Billy Gibbons, for the last 20 years he is up there with my favourite guitarists. He is great. And that is probably what I could call blues rock. I don't have any favourite metal guitarists because I don't listen to so much metal music."

Express yourself...

"Technology has certainly made way for more music and more bands to reach out. I think that's a good thing. But what I want from the sound on any album is personality. Let's take a really big band like Metallica. I would like them to record on our equipment. What would they do to express themselves through that gear? That would be interesting."

Darkthrone's latest album, *Old Star*, is out now on Peaceville Records.

OWN THE LOW END

METALLIC RED

JS SERIES **SPECTRA BASS** JS3

Introducing the new Jackson Spectra Bass JS3 – an assertive instrument featuring a sleek offset Spectra body shape with large upper horn for precise balance and playing comfort, and a speedy 12"-16" compound radius fingerboard that is the ideal platform for intricate riffing. Perfectly voiced Jackson pickups provide full depth and power, with a push/pull volume control (active/passive mode) and flexible EQ controls for fully customizable tone.

Jackson

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Gold Key: Not your stereotypical Abba fans

GOLD KEY

Gallows, SikTh and Spycatcher members team up for some 'Punk Floyd'...

Though they would very much appear to be a supergroup made out of various members of Hertfordshire's ever-thriving metal and punk scenes, there's a lot more to Gold Key than meets the eye. The atmospheric rock quartet's first album was easily one of the best British debuts of 2017 and they've been wasting no time in putting the finishing touches to its follow-up.

"For us, getting together felt like a return to innocence," says guitarist Laurent Barnard [Gallows], who is joined by singer/guitarist Steve Sears, SikTh

bassist James Leach and drummer Jack Kenny.

"There's a lot of music we heard growing up sliding its way into our sound – Pink Floyd, The Beatles, and, thanks to my mother, Abba. We were taking ideas from a palette of Gilmours and Lennons, but then mixing it with the dynamics and ferocity we acquired in our time playing heavier music."

Naturally, exploring more progressive and avant-garde sounds in his latest venture has called for a different sort

of philosophy when it comes to his six-string approach. Perhaps most evidently of all in his pedalboard...

"With Gallows, it's all about guitar into amp, playing loud and hard, sounding raw as hell," continues Lags, who recently switched from Orange to Victory amps for both bands. "I had to forget all that for Gold Key and pretty much depend on my pedalboard for everything."

Thankfully, the Boss MS-3 switcher is there to control it all from one place, the guitarist joking he'd be dancing in ways no-one needs to see without it. "I also use a DD-500 and a RV-500 for my delays and reverbs respectively, for soft shimmers or swirling repeats. A lot of people buy pedals and then forget about the updates, so my tip is get the updates, they're 100% worth it!"

FOR FANS OF Pink Floyd, Radiohead, Anathema **GEAR** Gibson Les Paul Standard Silverburst, Fender Coronado, Victory V30 mkII, Victory V40

"WE TAKE IDEAS FROM GILMOUR AND LENNON AND MIXED IT WITH THE FEROCITY OF HEAVIER MUSIC"

Photo: Dominic Berthiaume, Kaja Sosnowska



UNE MISÈRE

Gojira-rivalling heaviness from Iceland

The Reykjavik metal scene is thriving, we have all sorts of heavy music from black metal to hardcore,” says Gunnar Ingi Jones, guitarist of Icelandic metallers Une Misère. Having signed to Nuclear Blast at the beginning of 2019 for the release of their devastatingly heavy debut album *Sermon*, the quintet have been melting minds on their recent headline European tour – and feel their Icelandic roots play a massive part in that potent noise.

Though their music hits hard in its quest for all-consuming metallic heaviness, the members feel there’s definitely a sense of optimism behind it all. Hope remains one of the core values at the heart of their deceptively bleak wall of noise. “It’s very important to spread the message of positivity through heavy music,” says Gunnar. “No wound can cut you deep enough for you not to heal.”

FOR FANS OF Gojira,
GEAR LTD horizon 7, ltd ec-1000, boss



TORA DAHLE AAGÅRD

The rising Norwegian queen of blues

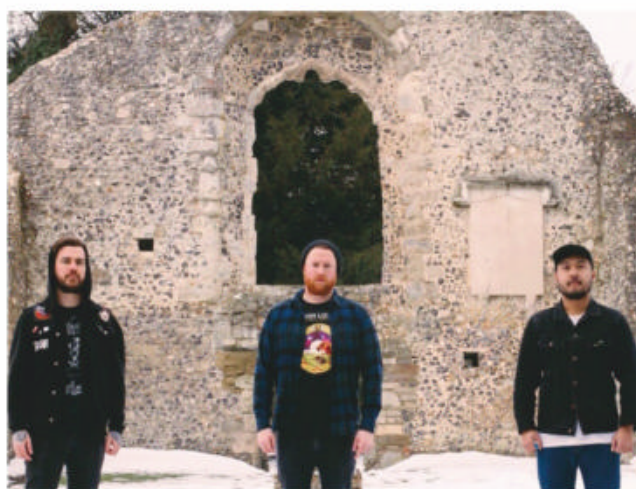
I don’t think I am a typical guitar player,” believes Tora Dahle Aagård, singer and guitarist of Oslo-based band Tora. “I don’t really listen to a lot of ‘guitar music’, though if I do, it will be players like John Mayer, Derek Trucks or John Scofield – those who know how to improvise and make their instrument talk.”

Having released her debut album last year after amassing a strong following on Instagram, sharing the stage with the likes of

Paul Gilbert and even playing London’s Royal Albert Hall as part of The Norwegian Blues Adventure back in November, the New Year will be involve a lot of new music but the same old guitar...

“I’ve had Vintage Thomas Blug signature Stratocaster for years and it’s the guitar I always come back to” explains Tora. “I’ll be releasing my second album with the band in Spring. I can’t wait!”

FOR FANS OF John Mayer, Jeff Beck
GEAR Vintage Thomas Blug strat



URNE

WHO? Ex-Hang The Bastard members Joseph Nally and Angus Neyra

SOUNDS LIKE Gooley fuzz stewing in a stewing cauldron of doom, thrash and classic rock riffs

GEAR Gibson SG Special, Orange CR120, Digitech Harmony Man

FOR FANS OF Mastodon, High On Fire, The Sword
HEAR *The Mountain Of Gold*



SELWYN BIRCHWOOD

WHO? Orlando’s rising star of lapsteel blues, previous Albert King Guitarist of the Year winner

SOUNDS LIKE The vintage soul of the delta originals brought into the modern world

GEAR Gibson 335/345, Gibson BR-9 Lapsteel, DR Z Maz Jr 18

FOR FANS OF Son House, Robert Cray, Johnny Winter
HEAR *Pick Your Poison*



WACO

WHO? Guitarist Tom Pallet and his Watford punk renegades

SOUNDS LIKE Jangly Brit-rock with that winning combination of loud guitars and louder hooks

GEAR Fender Jazzmaster, Laney LC30, Fulltone OCD

FOR FANS OF Biffy Clyro, Twin Atlantic
HEAR *Human Magic*

1 "This is my signature guitar, the Dellinger-JSM. It's got some cool features that are unique to it, and some that are a first for Caparison which I was really excited about."

2 The body is mahogany and the top is walnut, which gives it a unique sound. I find it to be little bit darker than a lot of typical bolt-on-neck guitars."

4 "This is the first edition Caparison did with a pickguard, which is kind of neat, and also the first guitar they did with black clock inlays and black binding. So visually it's quite different from the other Caparisons."

Interview Rob Laing

ME AND MY GUITAR

JOEL STROETZEL

KILLSWITCH ENGAGE

The metalcore man's signature with Japanese builder Caparison is much more bespoke than you might imagine

3 "The neck is maple with walnut reinforcement, which is something we fought for over the years, and it's a really cool feature to have on any guitar. If you're touring it's much more impervious to the elements than say a two-piece neck or something like that. So we've had really good luck with these."

5 The pickups are Killswitch Engage signature series Fishman Fluence. The bridge pickup is a little bit quieter and has a slightly different EQ curve than a standard fluence. And the neck is pretty much a standard Modern. The controls are slightly different too; you still have your push/pull to get your two different modes, passive and active sounds, but on the tone knob, instead of doing a high-frequency tilt, we ended up doing a coil-tap sound on these. So it's a pretty versatile guitar, given its simplicity."

Killswitch Engage's new album *Atonement* is out now on Metal Blade. The band play the UK's Download Festival in June.



Rory Clewlow with Enter Shikari - Pic: Tom Pullen



THE BEST AMPS IN THE WORLD

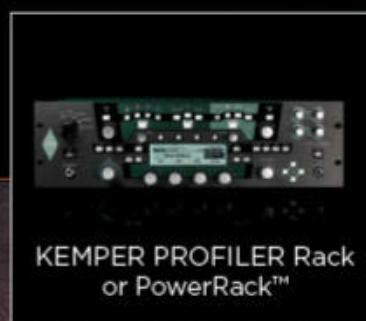
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Stage™



KEMPER PROFILER
Remote™

Dave Wyndorf of
Monster Magnet
embraces the sonic
punishment of another
massive stoner riff



BACK TRACK

A GUITARIST'S GUIDE TO THE ARTISTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

STONER ROCK

The stoner rock sound, much like its Seattle counterpart, emerged partly as a reaction to the vapid jock rock of the 1980s mainstream, but also as a result of punk rock's continuing influence on the drug and skate culture of southern California. This no-nonsense, bass-heavy sound also distinguished itself from grunge and the nascent doom scene by incorporating elements of '70s hard rock and psychedelia, so prepare yourself, listener, for some seriously heavy vibes...



START WITH KYUSS

BLUES FOR THE RED SUN (1992)

L While grunge was going supernova 1,200 miles further up the Pacific coast, Kyuss were busy fermenting their bottom-heavy sound in the arid hills surrounding Palm Desert, California, with much of that signature rumble courtesy of guitarist Josh Homme's preference for playing downtuned strings through a gargantuan Ampeg bass cab. Despite the flourishes of 1970s classic rock and primal blues groove that steer *Freedom Run* and *Apothecaries' Weight*, the most palpable influence is that of 80s hardcore punk (and particularly Greg Ginn): *Molten Universe's* lethargic, quaking riffs are a brotherly nod to Black Flag's *My War*, and *Writhe* has the bullish air of early Melvins.

Download *Freedom Run*



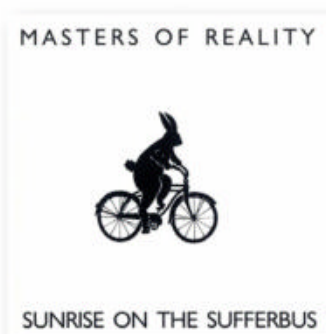
DON'T MISS OUT

MONSTER MAGNET

SPINE OF GOD (1991)

2 Sporting a sleeveful of influences that unabashedly blends the astral jamming of Hawkwind with the groove and grind of Sabbath, Monster Magnet's debut also boasts enough songwriting chops and Spinal Tap chutzpah to elevate it far above mere imitation. Dave Wyndorf's hard-nosed rhythm work dominates straight-up rockers *Medicine* (whose main riff recalls the Beastie Boys' *Sabotage*) and the gonzo blues rock of *Snake Dance*, but it's John McBain's psychedelic, effects-laden leads that keep things interesting; the slow burning, sitar-ish drone of the title track or soupy wah textures that underpin *Nod Scene* before exploding into full-blown, space rock lift off.

Download *Spine Of God*



WORTH A SPIN

MASTERS OF REALITY

SUNRISE ON THE SUFFERBUS (1992)

5 It would not be inaccurate to say that *Sunrise On The Sufferbus* is something of a musical bromance between Masters Of Reality frontman Chris Goss and legendary Cream drummer Ginger Baker, recruited here for a one-off stint behind the kit. Baker's driving rhythms throw some rockabilly swing into *She Got Me (When She Got Her Dress On)* and add a nervous energy to Goss's proto-metal riffing on *V.H.V.*, though the melodic moments here are equally satisfying: *Rolling Green* ditches the visceral tones for a rambling refrain of pure sunshine, while *100 Years (Of Tears On The Wind)* is as fine a slice of jangling, moody alt-rock as any that graced early-90s MTV.

Download *V.H.V.*



DON'T MISS OUT

WITCH

WITCH (2006)

3 No stranger to scorched-earth guitar rock, Dinosaur Jr.'s J Mascis formed Witch with King Tuff's Kyle Thomas to celebrate their love of doomy psychedelia, with Mascis himself forfeiting guitar in favour of a drum stool. Opener *Seer*, with its duelling solos and cavalry charge rhythm section, is as fine a slab of acid-fried heavy metal as you'll find this side of *Paranoid*, while highlights *Rip Van Winkle* and the occult-meets-glam rock *Changing* showcase guitarist Asa Iron's virtuosity without devolving into the repetition of so many over-baked jam bands. *Isadora* closes things as a sort of sonic digestif, an acoustic Jekyll that turns into a monstrous, doom metal Hyde.

Download *Seer*



WILD CARD

ELDER

LORE (2015)

6 Elder's early days as a by-the-book stoner metal outfit have since ceded ground to a stylistic restlessness and mellower sound, blending progressive and psychedelic rock influences that, convergently, share an aesthetic with scene godfathers Yawning Man. With almost every track here exceeding the 10-minute mark, guitarist Nick DiSalvo has plenty of room to stretch out, filling each song with invention: the shape-shifting *Compendium* surges from a looping, proggy intro to a midsection of spiralling textures, while *Legend* and the title track share a similar trajectory of low-end chugging crowned with trippy, acid-washed leads. A splendid evolution.

Download *Compendium*



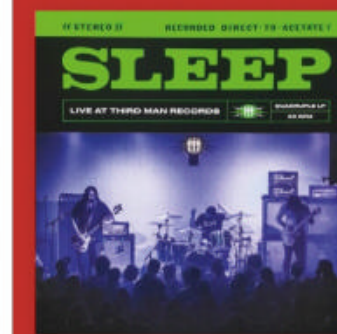
ALSO RECOMMENDED

FU MANCHU

THE ACTION IS GO (1997)

4 It comes as no surprise that Fu Manchu's roots lie in the SoCal punk scene; with their riffs gussied up with more horsepower than your typical stoner dirge, the band's sound lies somewhere between post-hardcore acts like Quicksand and the fuzzy psych rock of Deep Purple. *Anodizer* and *Unknown World* are all crunchy, feel-good grooves reminiscent of Clutch or even Audioslave, and there's a darker tone to be found in *Grendel Snowman*'s Helmet-influenced metallic chug. Though the riff-solo-riff formula may not be reinventing the wheel, this particular wheel is undeniably one hell of a good time.

Download *Anodizer*



LIVE!

SLEEP

LIVE AT THIRD MAN RECORDS (2019)

7 This marathon two-hour performance at Jack White's Third Man Records in Nashville is something of a career retrospective for one of stoner rock's most influential exports. While the full aural nuance of guitarist Matt Pike doesn't quite fully translate to the final mix, cuts like *Holy Mountain* and *Leagues Beneath* retain much of their ponderous groove and intensity, while the bluesy, acid rock licks of *The Botanist* and fan-fave *Dragonaut* cut through the green fog in fine style.

Download *Dragonaut*

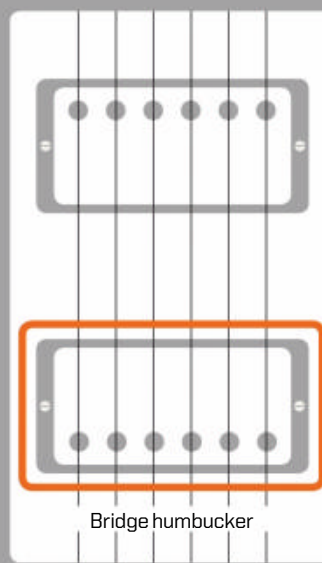


WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ Drop-C tuned riffing
- ✓ Exotic scale sounds
- ✓ Palm-mutes, octaves, bends & more

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL DISTORTION



Wouldn't You Rather features both Myles and Mark on guitar – each, most likely, double-amped through PRS MT15, Cornford RK100 (Mark), Diezel Herbert and VH4 amps (Myles). For general riffing, most of their drive tones come from their amps – but pairing a distortion pedal with your amp might get you closer to the recorded sound. If you're after a more authentic sound we'd recommend using an amp modeler and exploring Bogner and Mesa/Boogie presets. Finally, make sure to use a bridge-position humbucker.

ALTER BRIDGE

Wouldn't You Rather

"I'd have retired already if it were not for the use of altered tunings," Alter Bridge guitarist Mark Tremonti related to TG in November. Of course, he was talking about the writing process for the band's latest album *Walk The Sky*, and how swapping your guitar's tunings can be a source of creativity and inspiration. Lead single *Wouldn't You Rather* is a case in point.

The drop-C (CGCFAD) tuned guitars provide a weighty bottom end, and, as it turns out, give you loads to learn in just one short riff. You'll be switching between palm-muting, octave shapes, string bends, sliding position shifts, harmonics and more – all within four bars.

Despite this, Mark and Myles' (Kennedy, frontman and guitarist) riff isn't too tough to play. The timing after the string bend can

be a little tricky, but follow our slowed-down performance in the video on your Guitar Skills CD and you'll be up to speed in no time.

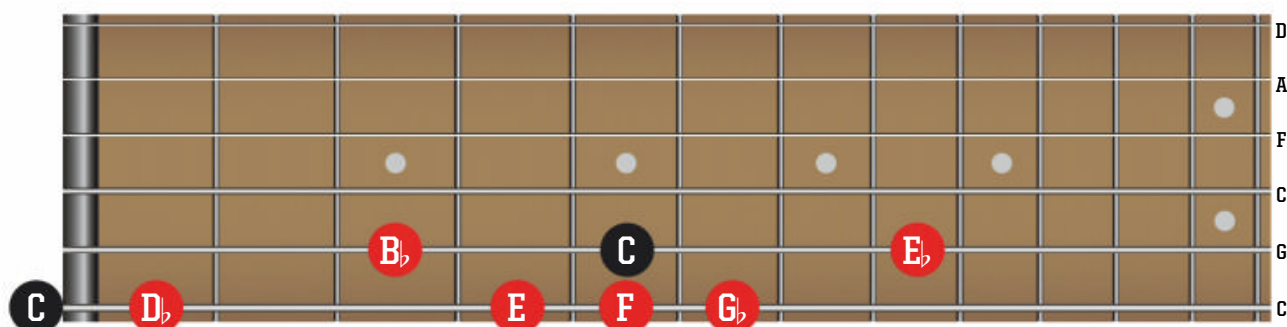
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:17–0:26

Tempo: 108 bpm

Key/scale: C blues scale / C Phrygian dominant

Main techniques: Palm muting / octaves / string bends / slides / harmonics



The riff that kicks in at 0:17 is by and large a single-note affair, using notes from the C blues scale and the C Phrygian dominant mode. However, it's not clearly in either scale, so we've just plotted out the notes as played on the fifth and sixth strings. Watch out also for octave shapes (not shown here) played in 5th and 8th positions on the third and fifth strings.



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GETTING STARTED WITH... SLASH CHORDS

Get creative with some easy new shapes as TG explains how slash chords work

"I've heard of slash chords, but what are they?"

It's a simple idea – they're chords whose lowest note isn't the root. The root note in, say, an A chord would be A; in a G chord it would be G, i.e., the root is the note the chord gets its name from. Easy! It's the same for any kind of chord – Am, Amaj7, A13 or any other kind of 'A chord' all have A root notes. Now, to come back to slash chords – if you played an A chord, but with a different note in the bass, then that would be a slash chord. Get it?

"I think so, but I don't really understand why it's important."

Well, it's important in that it's a whole other category of chords you can use in creative ways.

"Got it. Can you give me some well-known examples of slash chords?"

Sure! Jimi Hendrix's *Little Wing* is a masterclass in slash chords – in fact, much of Jimi's rhythm style uses them. Van Halen's *Running With The Devil* is crammed full of slash chords. For a 90s take on proceedings, have a listen to Reef's *Place Your Hands*.

"How do I get started with slash chords?"

Take a look at the box out on the right where

we're looking at a handful of shapes and covering some essential basics.

"That's really easy! Surely there's more to it?"

Well, we've shown you the easiest way to understand slash chords – just use any note other than the root in the bass. As you say – simple! There are potentially limitless possibilities, though. Just think how many 'slash notes' you could apply to the chords you already know. And every time you learn a new chord, you could be making up even more slash chords – just add or take away a bass note.

"How do I go about using these shapes in some music?"

Take a look at our tab examples below where you'll find a mix of typical shapes played in a more musical context. The first example is based in the open position so the chords are easy beginner-friendly shapes.

"How shall I tackle the second example?"

Hopefully it's not too tough to play. For now though, play through the tab slowly and see if you can identify the bass notes. None of the bass notes are root notes of their respective chords – which means they're slash chords.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ A mixture of slash chord shapes
- ✓ How root notes relate to slash chords
- ✓ Two musical examples

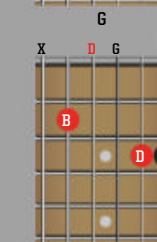
SLASHER PICS!

Four chord shapes to get you rocking



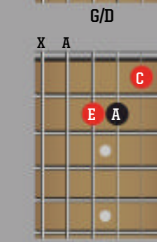
1 OPEN CHORD: G

You probably already know this open G chord.



2 SLASH CHORD: G/B

Ditch the low G and the chord becomes G/B – because B is the lowest note.



3 OPEN CHORD: AM

Another easy open chord. Surely you know this one!



4 SLASH CHORD: AM/G

Here we're adding a G note in the bass. Hence you get Am/G.

1 STEP-BY-STEP CHANGES

TRACK 07

♩=60

C G/B Am G D/F# Em

Chord	T	A	B
C	0	1	2
G/B	3	0	2
Am	0	2	0
G	3	0	2
D/F#	3	2	0
Em	0	2	0

G/B and D/F# are the slash chords here. The idea is that these chords offer a step by step move from C to Am and from G to Em.

2 HIGHER UP THE NECK

TRACK 08

♩=75

D/F# G/B D/A C/E N.C.

Chord	T	A	B
D/F#	7	7	9
G/B	8	7	9
D/A	5	5	7
C/E	5	5	7
N.C.	7	5	7

We're using two powerchord shapes here – with fifth- and fourth-string root notes. Switching between the full shape and just the root note adds shape to the riff.

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THE FX FILES TG'S CLASSIC STOMPBOX GUIDE

BANK UP

This control moves up a preset.

BANK DOWN

This control moves down a preset. Pressing both switches engages bypass, but it can be fickle, meaning that live, your best bet is to put the XP-300 inside a loop using a pedal like the BOSS LS-2.

FOOT PEDAL

On every preset or patch there's a variable parameter that is controlled by this rocker.



INPUT TRIMPOT

On the rear of the pedal, there's an input trimpot that allows you to change the input level. The pedal isn't true bypass, and its circuitry does colour your sound, so it pays to adjust this until it's right for your guitar and amp setup.

DIGITECH SPACE STATION

Released at a time when the boutique pedal scene didn't exist and the big manufacturers weren't innovating, the XP-300 redefined weird

Hot on the heels of the success of the Whammy II, DigiTech decided to invest in a larger product line-up of expression-based effects – the appropriately-named 'Xpression' series. There were four pedals; the XP-100 Whammy/Wah, the XP-200 Modulator, the XP-300 Space Station and the XP-400 Reverberator. Depending on the model, you had between 30 and 50 presets to choose from on the pedal. All of these had in common

that there were no user-controllable elements of the preset sounds apart from a single parameter per patch, controlled by the rocker pedal. The XP-300 became a cult favourite, inspiring numerous boutique pedal makers with a taste for outlandish sounds.

In terms of sounds, the Space Station lives up to its name. Some of the highlights include patch 2

(a shimmer reverb with fifths added), 22 (a broken-sounding digital delay), 28 (a sample-hold arpeggiator that you can speed up or slow down), as well as the various arpeggiators above 30. The most fun has to be 10, the 'reverse' mode. Pushing the rockerdown 'slows down' your guitar signal, stops it, and then starts replaying it backwards.

It's glitchy and doesn't track well, but it's one of the coolest expression effects ever.

The Space Station is now incredibly rare, but, by virtue of the XP-200 and XP-400 having the same internals apart from the chip which contains the presets, it's possible to get one of the less sought-after pedals and mod it into a Space Station.

THE DIGITECH SPACE STATION'S 'REVERSE' MODE IS ONE OF THE COOLEST EXPRESSION EFFECTS EVER

UNDER THE INFLUENCE



EARTHQUAKER DEVICES RAINBOW MACHINE

£229

The EQD Rainbow Machine, the standard bearer for 'weird' pedals in the mainstream, harks back directly to a number of the pitch, glide and arpeggiator modes on the XP-300 with its dreamlike, shredded delay lines.



RED PANDA TENSOR

£289

When initially announced, Red Panda claimed the Tensor was inspired by the 'warp' time modes from the Space Station and was intended for guitarists that wanted to remove the fragile and rare pedal from their boards. It doesn't quite have the magic of the XP-300, being a bit too clinical and less expressive, but it's a good attempt nevertheless, and an interesting pedal in its own right.



OLD BLOOD NOISE ENDEAVORS DARK STAR

£175

In many of the OBNE Coffee & Riffs videos, an old Space Station can be seen among their test pedals in the shop, and that's hardly surprising given their innovative and often oddball pedal designs. The Dark Star is a shimmer reverb with a momentary infinite feedback mode, which isn't a million miles away from some of the pitch-harmonised reverbs on the Space Station.

CLASSIC TONES

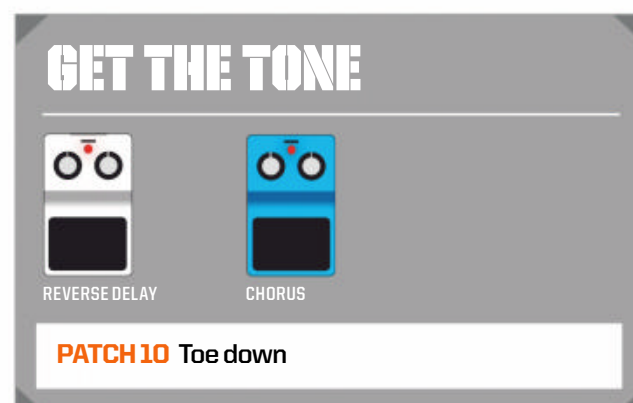
GET THE TONE #1 SHOEGLAZE SWIRL

It's a well-known trick to run reverb into drive in order to create muddy, compressed washes of sound. Pulling the same trick with the fifths reverb on the Space Station results in a roaring hurricane of noise fit for any shoegaze band. Although it's a bit glitchy, the tracking is good enough to play chords with.



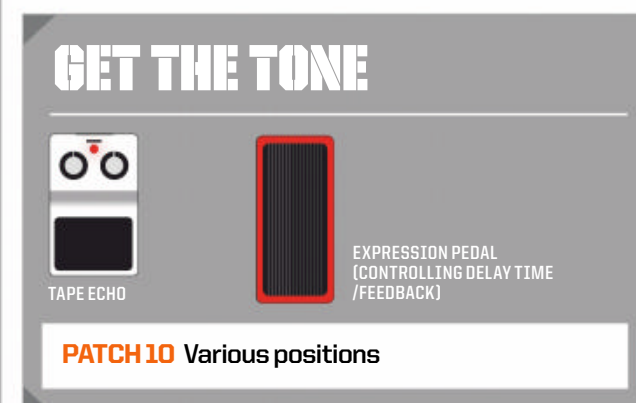
GET THE TONE #2 GLASSY CHORDS

The somewhat erratic tracking and smooth swells of the reverse mode mean that, when paired with some chorus and a Jazzmaster tremolo arm, you can make weird, glassy chords using the top three strings. Add some drive and you're into the sort of tonal territory that Kevin Shields would no doubt approve of.



GET THE TONE #3 MANGLED TAPE LEAD

If while playing a solo you move the rocker expressively like a wah pedal, you will get often unpredictable results. A neat trick is to 'park' the pedal at 3/4 open, play a flurry of notes and then fully close the pedal. The effect is a little like a jammed tape echo becoming unstuck, with a slew of notes suddenly sounding.



- ✓ Solo the length of the fretboard
- ✓ One tabbed hard rock lick
- ✓ Learn scales and chords

WHAT THE F?

CAGED SCALES

Cage fight! This match up of chords and scales will help you upgrade your solos

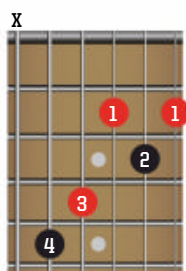
Okay, stick with us here! We all know that scales aren't that exciting, but the CAGED system will transform the way you play. You already know open C, A, G, E and D chords, right? The CAGED system plots these beginner-friendly shapes across the

fretboard as barre chords, helping you play all the way up and down the neck.

To transfer this to lead guitar, you'll be linking a scale with each chord, and that's not as hard as it sounds. The chords are relatively easy and the scales have similar finger patterns, so you'll soon be blazing around the fretboard.



1 C SHAPE



D chord

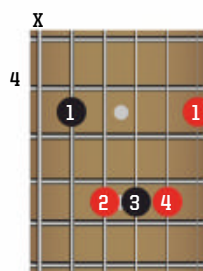
Play an open C shape, move it up two frets and make sure to use a barre. You'll get this D chord.



D major scale

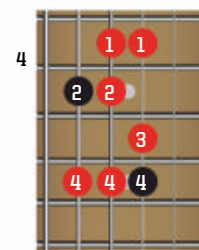
This is the D major scale. It's so similar to the chord shape that you can jam around both.

2 A SHAPE



D chord

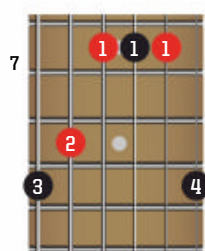
Another D, but this time our barre chord is based on an open A chord shape.



D major scale

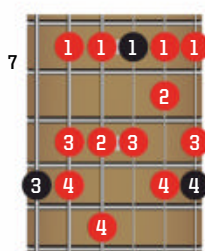
Just like before, the scale and chord are similar enough that both lead and rhythm are on the cards.

3 G SHAPE



D chord

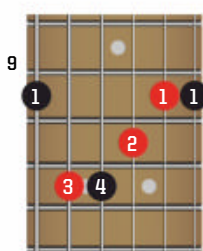
Okay, this chord is a toughie but it doesn't matter! Especially if you're thinking about a lead lick.



D major scale

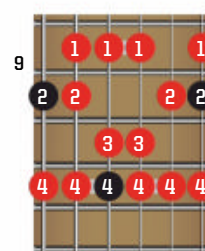
Again, the scale and the chord share notes. Try making up a lick using notes from both shapes.

4 E SHAPE



D chord

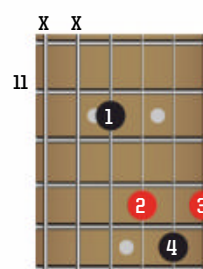
Hopefully you're starting to get the idea. Here's another D barre chord but using an E shape.



D major scale

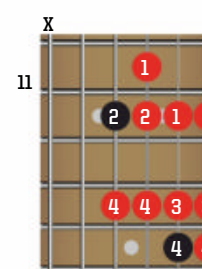
Are you getting it yet? The chords are easy to remember, so hook your scale-based licks around them.

5 D SHAPE



D chord

Here's the fifth and final one – a familiar open D shape, but all the way up at 12th position.



D major scale

Once again, both chord and scale use similar finger patterns. Try jamming with both.

6 ROCK STYLE CAGED LICK

TRACK 09

♩=130

D

BU BD

TAB

14 (15) (14) 12 10 12 10 12

BU BD

11 (12) (11) 12 12

BU BD

6 (7) (6) 9 7 9 7 5

BU BD

4 (5) (4) 2 5

If you still don't quite get why the CAGED system is so transformative, take a look at this lick. The backing chops away on a D chord. It could get dull, but the lead guitar covers the whole fretboard, expanding on the scale shapes we've looked at. Like we say, link a scale with a chord you're soloing over and you'll never run out of licks!



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After nearly three decades of playing live, Tom and Jim are happy to simplify their rigs these days

Words Jonathan Horsley Photography Will Ireland



JIMMY EAT WORLD

For the tonally-adventurous punks, heavy-gauge strings and the super-practical Fractal Axe-Fx IIIs are heaven

that has gauge .010 strings on it, it just feels like a toy. The pickups are Seymour Duncan P-90s. They are both bridge pickups. The guitars are all colour-coded but they are all the same guitar. The red one is for songs that we tune a half-step down, because for some reason we wrote a bunch of songs where we tune a half-step down. It seemed like a good idea at the time. And I have one that is in open E tuning that we have for some of our older songs. And then just a backup.”

MATON EBG808

2 “My acoustic guitars are from this Australian company named Maton. This guy was the first I had heard that had electronics built-in. There is something that happens when they build in electronics and it just doesn’t sound quite the same, but this one... The 808, I’ve always liked the smaller-bodied guitars. I feel like they record better for some reason. I love this guy. It is actually a wacky prototype of all-bunya wood, which is some Australian indigeneous wood. We went and toured the Maton factory in Melbourne in 2001, before *Bleed American* came out, and one of the guys at the shop let me take this one. They still make the body type but I have never seen one that is all bunya.”

FRACTAL AXE-FX III

3 “When we were mixing *Integrity Blues* – Kenny Andrews from Failure was mixing that record – we were at his place, he was showing us what Failure does, and it was just mind-blowing. Like, yeah! ‘Our entire audio production rolls in like 12 pelican cases and we can go play anywhere, and that’s it.’ I’m like, ‘Huh? That sounds really interesting.’ And so I got one of the Axe-Fx II XL+ to sit with, and took a month, literally, took a month and that is all I did, teach myself

JIM’S RIG

FENDER ARTIST SERIES JIM ADKINS JA-90 TELECASTER THINLINE

1 “This is my guitar. No, really, this is my guitar, my signature model Fender. In white! And it has been my guitar for a while now, since 2010–11. It’s an alder body, this might be a maple neck. I am still using .013s. If you put .012s on a Telecaster you won’t go back. When you are playing acoustic all the time and you pick up something

There has never been a pre-show vibe more calm. Jimmy Eat World’s latest album, *Surviving*, was released last night; another sold-out beckons tonight, and it’s just, well – it’s just so quiet. All is well; serene. Maybe that is due to the gear decisions Jim Adkins and Tom Linton made some time ago, having had the Fractal Axe-Fx units recommended to them by Kenny Andrews of Failure. Now, they place all their faith – and their tone

– in their Fractal Axe-Fx III units. It makes life easy. They wheel in a case, use MIDI switching systems from RJM to access their tones, and off they go. There’s definitely something to be said for trusty, reliable old gear; no meltdowns to be found here. Elsewhere, Adkins uses his signature Telecasters and a Maton acoustic, while Linton uses a Gibson SG as his number one and a couple of genuine curios, such as a Gibson Challenger and a truly weird electric that we’d love to identify for you, but one that even Linton has no idea what it is.



The Fractal Axe-Fx III unit has become integral to the Jimmy Eat World touring rig

the ins and outs of it. The thing is, you really have to know what you wanna get, or you are just going to be lost in videogame world. There is no manual really, because every firmware update is going to have potentially minimal fixes to significant changes. I've slowly been trying to get rid of my pedals 'cos I can't fucking stand doing the *Riverdance*. And then the troubleshooting if something's wrong! [With this] you are not killing the person in the front with the half-stack in their face. It's funny, we used to play basements, carrying around two half-stacks and the Ampeg refrigerator, like, what the fuck were we doing!? There's no... WHY!? You don't need that, man, and the larger the

venues you get to, the less and less that matters 'cos it is all the PA system. It doesn't matter. You could play with a PigNose amp mic'd up in a stadium and it doesn't matter.

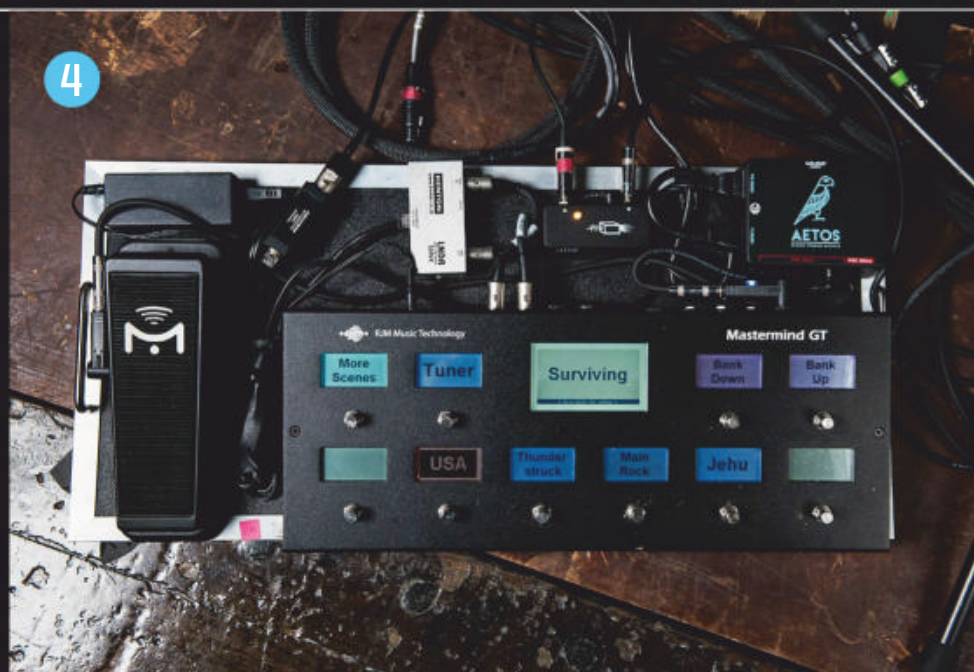
"You have to approach your sound construction, your sound design, from the aspect of, 'What do I want to do?' So what I do is, I'll map out the song for what is happening as the song goes by, and sometimes it might be one tone throughout the whole song, or sometimes it might be drastically different tones for different parts; you are not limited in any way. So I could have a crazy rhythm stoner-rock type thing and then break off to another insane, really clean, shimmery jazz chorus,



with a shit-load of phaser, and then go back to stoner-rock with one click, and you get all of that. It's paralyzing at the same time. I can do anything that I want. You have to really zone in to what you want. I'll switch it myself.

"A lot of people will have someone in tech world shifting your parts, like when you get to a certain section of the song so you don't have to do *Riverdance*, and some people can actually run it off a time code. The bummer there is that everything has to be to a click, but the nerd in me thinks it's sort of cool that you can record a pass of the song, where you are switching things, how you would play them, and then have that be remembered, and then you don't control that data. But, I kinda like being a little bit more spontaneous than that, if I want to get something else. I've got a one-foot jazz number than I'm doing. Not full-on *Riverdance*. Yeah, it's about eliminating variables."

"I'VE BEEN GETTING RID OF MY PEDALS BECAUSE I CAN'T STAND DOING THE *RIVERDANCE*"



RJM MASTERMIND GT-10

4 “These things are super-fucking nuts, like, all these buttons are programmable to do anything you want, any parameter, any multiples of parameters. They can control up to 16 different devices. What I am doing here might sound crazy but it really is just scratching the surface of what’s possible. I can switch a button here and that could change a scene on the Axe-Fx, triggering a completely different set of sound, and I guess I could be sending a signal to a sampler offstage, or a lighting rig cue, or like if I had lyrics to pop up – whatever you could want to do, this device is qualified for. Fractal Audio makes a foot controller that is pretty good. They’re definitely coming for RJM. RJMs are not cheap. The functionality of them, it kinda takes a minute to programme it for what you wanna do, but once you get the hang of it it is really, really awesome.

You can have any parameter with this: delay times, wah, wet/dry, or all of them at the same time. You can assign your sweeping action to control almost any parameter on the Axe-Fx. ‘House lights off! Get the milk frothing!’ I have a tuner function here, I have Up and Down buttons that can move song-to-song and pull up a different preset on the Axe-Fx. So basically, on the Axe-Fx, I have every single song in our catalogue, like a separate, individual preset for that, and then this thing knows the setlist so I will just take the preset in the order of the set. It’s a crazy, insane path to get here, but once you do, it rules.”

TOM’S RIG

GIBSON SG

5 “This is a 1985 SG, and yeah, I think I’ve have had this one for five years now, and I just love it. I was playing Les Pauls before.



“Why, yes! This is my signature model!”



I had a '79 Les Paul but it's just so heavy and so hard to move around onstage with it, for me. I got a pinched nerve in my neck from when I was playing that thing. I just woke up one morning on the bus and my neck was, like, stuck to one side! 'Yeah, I should probably look for something lighter.' I've put in a Burstbucker Pro pickup. That's what's in it right now, and I am just experimenting with that. I think the [neck pickup] might be the original. The only time I use it is when I am going for a clean sound. When we are doing loud stuff I'll turn these up all the way and then I'll turn this guy to four and use it for a clean sound."

GIBSON CHALLENGER II

6 "I really like it. It is a cheapy guitar, and I did put in a different pickup. I put the Burstbucker Pros in this, too. It's not the original pickups. When we are playing live they don't get loud and noisy, no feedback. [What is the finish?] That's a good

question. It kind of looks yellow in this light but... I guess they were old parts at Gibson that were thrown out and they would rig out guitars from those pieces and sell them for a couple of hundred bucks. It was cheap. I don't remember how much but it was really cheap and it has held out. I think I got this right before we started our record *Futures*. That was when I got this guy. It has held up but you never know, with some accident? I play .013s. We've been playing those for a long time and I think we just started playing those because we were breaking a lot of strings onstage. I just think they sound better."

UNIDENTIFIED ELECTRIC

7 "I don't know what this is. I think I got this on eBay and I use this for some songs that we have tuned to an open E. For songs like *For Me This Is Heaven* and a couple more, but this thing is crazy. Just the output on it is insane. It could be a Gibson



pickup, maybe. Maybe! [Laughs] Someone told me that maybe it was an old Ibanez neck, or some sort of Japanese guitar. Yeah, it was a cheap one. It was another one where I thought, 'OK, it looks kinda cool, probably won't sound so good', but I plugged it in and got lucky. We've used it on a couple of recordings, too. It sounds totally different to all the other guitars, which is cool."

GIBSON LES PAUL JUNIOR

8 "This is... I wanna say a 2001. I use this on the song *Futures*, and it is a backup to the SG, so if the SG breaks a string or whatever. Yeah, I replaced the tuners. I put Grovers on these. I think one of them came off. My old guitar tech put these on there. I love it. I like the P-90s. It just depends on the song."

FRACTAL AXE-FX III

9 "It took a little bit for me to get used to the tone. I think with the last Fractals that we had, I was having a problem having a good distortion sound, but with these new ones I really like it. I really like these a lot more. Yeah, like the hold-outs of some of the notes just kinda fizzle out weird, and that's a bummer. I still hear it with the IIIs. Maybe there is something I need to fix on it, I'm sure there is! [Laughs] I mean, I love my amp - I used an Orange 80 - but sound-wise, for the people mixing front of house and everything else, I think you can control the sound much more on these. I'll usually have tremolo; just the basic stuff. Tremolo, phaser, and a couple of different delays."

"MY '79 LES PAUL WAS SO HEAVY I GOT A PINCHED NERVE IN MY NECK"



8

Words Amit Sharma
Photography James Sharrock

TAL Wilkenfeld

Australian musician Tal Wilkenfeld – known for her work with Jeff Beck, Prince and Herbie Hancock – sits down with TG for a run through her new album and an insight into her incredible journey so far...

“It sounded like fun!” laughs Tal Wilkenfeld on relocating from Australia to America for a career in

music at just 16 years old. “Every kid that age just wants to go and explore and feel free. Well, maybe some don’t, but I certainly did...”

It’s a decision that ultimately paid off. After switching from guitar to bass while at the Los Angeles College For Music, she relocated to New York and made a name for herself in its ever-thriving jazz scene, leading to an invitation to jam with The Allman Brothers at Manhattan’s Beacon Theater. After recording her instrumental fusion debut,

Transformation, she would go on to join the bands of virtuoso masters like Jeff Beck, Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock, as well as recording with Prince, Toto and Jackson Browne.

But it’s this year’s long-awaited follow-up record *Love Remains* that best captures Wilkenfeld’s musicality in full, dazzling glory – blending that keen ear for melody with her soulful voice in a collection of atmospheric rock songs, ranging from the down-tuned rumblings of *Corner Painter* to the ethereal echoes of *Under The Sun*. Having played both guitar and bass on the album, talking to TG inside the London headquarters of her new major label home, she gives us a closer look at the sounds and situations that got her here...







➔ **When did you realise this would be a heavier album compared to your debut, sharing more in common with rock luminaries like Jimi Hendrix and Jeff Buckley than the jazz fusion world?**

"I started with rock'n'roll. That's where it all began, listening to Jimi Hendrix at the age of 14. When I moved to America two years later, I was persuaded to investigate other kinds of music. I got a scholarship on guitar when I was 16, switching to bass six months later. We were encouraged to listen to jazz fusion and things that would help improve technique or how well you know your instrument. I got really heavily into it because it's interesting... Who doesn't want to get to know their instrument better and find easier communication from brain to fingers to listener? Later, I moved to New York and went on stage with The Allman Brothers, who despite getting called blues or southern, to my ears just play rock'n'roll. And with Jeff Beck, he's so prolific he gets called a fusion musician, but he's still a rockstar. I've played a lot of rock, with the exception of Herbie Hancock and Chick Corea – those involved different styles of music. Mainly, it's been rock'n'roll with advanced musicians."

The opening track *Corner Painter* has a down-tuned grunginess to it. What exactly are we hearing?

"On that I played a Yamaha baritone in standard tuning, so with a low B. It was one that Jackson Browne made for me. He took the face off with the help of Bill Asher, one of the guys he works with in LA, and they moved the bridge back with thicker strings. They were copying one of the baritone acoustics he has. I wanted this album to be like Jeff Buckley's *Grace* – where one minute he's singing the title track and it all feels really heavy, then he goes into *Corpus Christi Carol* or *Hallelujah*, which melts your heart. The Beatles had such versatile albums. The people I've worked with, like Jeff Beck and Herbie Hancock, go all over the map. Paul Simon explores all these kinds of styles and sounds, he can go in so many different directions, even though his focus is always on the songwriting."

We heard your vintage 1950s Epiphone archtop was previously owned by Ben Harper...

"When I went in to record the song *One Thing After Another*, I couldn't find an acoustic that sounded right. So I went to a guitar store and found a guitar that looked and sounded great. The store knew me so I put my credit card to secure it and took it back with me. It was exactly the right sound for the song. I actually returned it, because I wasn't sure if I was ready to buy it. A few weeks later I called back and they told me, 'Oh no, we just sold it last night!' And then they explained it had actually been given back to the owner, so I asked who and they told me Ben Harper. I know Ben so I sent him an email after a couple of days saying, 'Hey, so long story short, I found this great guitar...' I asked if there was any way I could still buy the guitar and sent him a link to the song. He wrote back saying, 'Shit! If you had told me 24 hours ago it would have been yours, I literally just sold it!' He wasn't sure if there was any way out of that but he said he'd get back to me. And as the weeks went by, I thought I'd lost it – then I got this email asking for my address because he was going to send me the guitar!"

There are some other altered tunings that give each song its own unique feel...

"*One Thing After Another* is on the Ben Harper Epiphone with a dropped-D and a capo on the first fret. For *Haunted Love*, it's my Sadowsky NYC5 bass tuned to EADGC with a capo on the third fret so I could use open strings ringing through the chords. I used an open C# tuning on songs like *Love Remains*, *Pieces Of Me* and *Under The Sun*. Some of it was on this old J45 and one of Jackson's Gibsons, this CF-100 with a cutaway."



FULL CIRCLE

While she is well known for playing bass with Jeff Beck, Tal started out as a guitar player

What kind of amps did you have in the studio?

"Funnily enough, I actually played through guitar amps for most of the album. It was a Music Man and an Ampeg guitar amp. My producer Paul Stacey [Oasis, Steven Wilson], whose brother Jeremy played drums, kept plugging us into all kinds of things until we got a sound we liked, without any rules. I never went in thinking we had to use certain things in conjunction for specific things. We just experimented with everything that was there, so it was a really fun process. It's not even necessarily what I'll end up doing on the next album, it will depend on what kind of sound I'm going for at that moment in time..."

What advice can you offer those who are hoping to switch more easily between guitar and bass?

"You choose a role when you choose an instrument. The instrument doesn't dictate the role, as much as other people might beg to differ. If you look at a band like The Who, Pete Townshend's role was more like a bass player, even though he played guitar. It was him holding down the rhythm and the

Photo: Randy Holmes/Getty

"THE INSTRUMENT DOESN'T DICTATE A ROLE, AS MUCH AS PEOPLE BEG TO DIFFER"



BECK IN BLACK

"Jeff's a singer, he just sings through his guitar"

"PRINCE CARED ABOUT HIS MUSIC AFFECTING PEOPLE"

grooves, while their bassist was playing all over the place like a guitarist typically would. Stereotypes are broken so much that I don't even see them now. I don't really think about switching from guitar to bass or vice versa, it's more about what mindset you're choosing to be in. In terms of their differences... I really don't know the answer. Blake Mills played guitar on most of my album and on one song we switched with him on bass and me on guitar. That was what was right for that song. Each human will approach the bass or guitar different according to their own senses. We all hear different things in different registers. Whatever I hear on guitar might not work on bass, and in those cases I try something else. It's more person-to-person than instrument-to-instrument. There's no limits when you think like that."

There are some really unusual chord changes in some of the music. What's your approach when it comes to breaking out of key?

"I always let the melody dictate the chords and the rhythm. I believe that's why any unusual chord structures or rhythms might sound more natural and less odd – it all follows the melody. I hear it when I listen back to all my favourite old blues recordings, stuff like

Lightnin' Hopkins. Bob Weir (Grateful Dead) told me that people would joke around with Lightnin' saying he was going to play the 12-and-a-half bar blues. It's not about staying in a box that somebody else has imposed on you, it's about the story you're trying to tell. I fit takes 12-and-a-half bars, then that's how many bars this blues will have. You follow the melody. I listen to all my favourite folk songs and they do the same thing..."

Which songs come to mind?

"There's one by Bob Dylan, *It's Alright Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)* and every so often you hear a bar of five in there, just because he had a couple of extra words to say. That's why it works and doesn't feel unnatural. I approach my music from the same place. What am I saying?

What's the story? What are the chords and rhythms that are going to support that story? If you go from the ground up, starting with the chords or rhythm, you've already locked yourself into a different story. That's a different way of making music – I love using it too – but it creates a different results that will be more groove-orientated or set-in-stone. The melody will have less influence because of that. One thing I like to do is let them influence each other all at once. The chords and rhythm can influence the story but it's a back-and-forth story until you land upon that place where it feels cohesive, natural and true."

One of your first big breaks was with Jeff Beck. What do you think is the secret behind all that feel?

"He's a singer! He just sings through his guitar. Just listen to him playing *Where Were You...* that was always my favourite song in the set. I would just stand there on the side of the stage with my jaw on the floor every time. They were all such fun songs to play."

Similarly, not many people can say they've worked closely with Prince. What was he like to be around?

"He was fun and mysterious. He liked to have long conversations about things,

playing devil's advocate a lot. He was a huge music fan. The very first time he called me, his first question was, 'Do you like the drum rolls of Jack DeJohnette?' And I said, 'Of course!' to which he replied, 'Great, we're going to be friends'. The time after that I went to his house and we took a limo and drove around listening to music. He kept asking questions about what I think about different artists; it was nice. He genuinely cared about how music could affect different people and was always looking to grow. He was also very fast in the studio, we recorded to tape and moved very quickly. You might get the chance to punch something but you'd only get one shot at it before moving onto the next thing. I liked that. He wasn't nitpicky."

Herbie Hancock and Chick Corea's bands are notorious for improvisation and playing free to varying extents. How can musicians get better at thinking on the spot?

"I think being able to play what's in your head is important. Just sitting with your instrument and hearing something, then executing it. If you stumble to find where it is, then you learn – ultimately increasing your vocabulary and allowing you to step into your own voice instead of somebody else's. If you do loads of transcribing, you might just end up sounding like the person you're transcribing. I've never really done that, I want to expand on what my voice is. Herbie's actually the one who got me singing. There are no limits, you can go anywhere in his band. It takes a concentrated mind to play jazz. You need to know your theory and a fair few standards to play with other musicians. I went to New York to do it, because it felt like the epicentre of the live jazz scene. So get on a plane and go there, if you want!"

Once you were there, did the theory side come naturally?

"It's not that much to learn, to be honest. All you need is some scales and modes, from the major to melodic or harmonic minor. You can get so much out of just the pentatonic scale alone. Then there are other kinds of players



like Wayne Krantz who was one of my favourites, he had this whole mindset about not playing scales and going note-by-note.

You can dive deep into different things, but eventually you learn it all so you can discard it and not even remember what you're doing. That's the place you want to get to. People don't just wake up and are able to talk through their instrument instantly. Although some people can wake up and play anything without knowing any of this information, like Jeff Beck. He can play a D7 chord without knowing what one is. He doesn't think he can count in odd-meters or do any of that stuff, but he plays in odd-meters and over complicated chord changes all the time. Not everyone needs to study, theory is just there for those who can't initially hear it."

What advice do you have for guitarists hoping to get better at fingerstyle playing?

"I've always played with my fingers on bass, it's ultimately the same thing. I would say a lot of the folk songwriters would be great to learn from, with all that pattern-orientated, chordal finger-picky stuff. Leonard Cohen,

ROYAL BLOOD
Tal and Prince first bonded over Jack DeJohnette's drumming

for instance, playing that nylon acoustic on *Songs From A Room* or *Songs Of Love And Hate* sounded so great. He was incredible on those albums. It was the three year anniversary of his passing not that long ago. He was one of my biggest inspirations in life. Through him I learned it's not about focusing on the music, it's about focusing in on yourself. When you do that, you'll find so much that you might want to express artistically."

In that sense, it's easy to forget about this incredibly personal and introspective side of creativity...

"You have to look inside and think why is this such a difficult situation to understand or why you choose to go down certain harmonic roots. There are so many psychological questions which are directly about music but also inform how you create. You have to ask why yourself why you want to be leading into that emotional space, what is unresolved there? The questions are endless. The goal is to get to the place where your choices aren't coming from a need within you, but rather a bigger picture result. I'm not doing this because I need it, I'm doing this because the music wants to go there. I'm not forcing it to go there. It's the song leading me, not me leading the song."



RELOAD

Words
Amit Sharma

Sylosis are back! Singer/guitarist **Josh Middleton** explains why he felt the time was right...

“It was a slow realisation, I guess,” answers Josh Middleton, when asked about the moment he realised Sylosis would definitely be making a return. In 2016, he announced the metal band he formed in Reading when he was just 15 years old were going on hiatus, freeing up the time needed to join Architects initially as a live guitarist and, soon after, as a full-time member. It was a move that – in the eyes of many fans – left the future of his original group shrouded in uncertainty...

“What a lot of people don’t know is that I split the band at the end of our last tour in March 2016,” explains Middleton. “I was really unhappy in the band and felt I’d boxed myself in, musically. It was like there were all

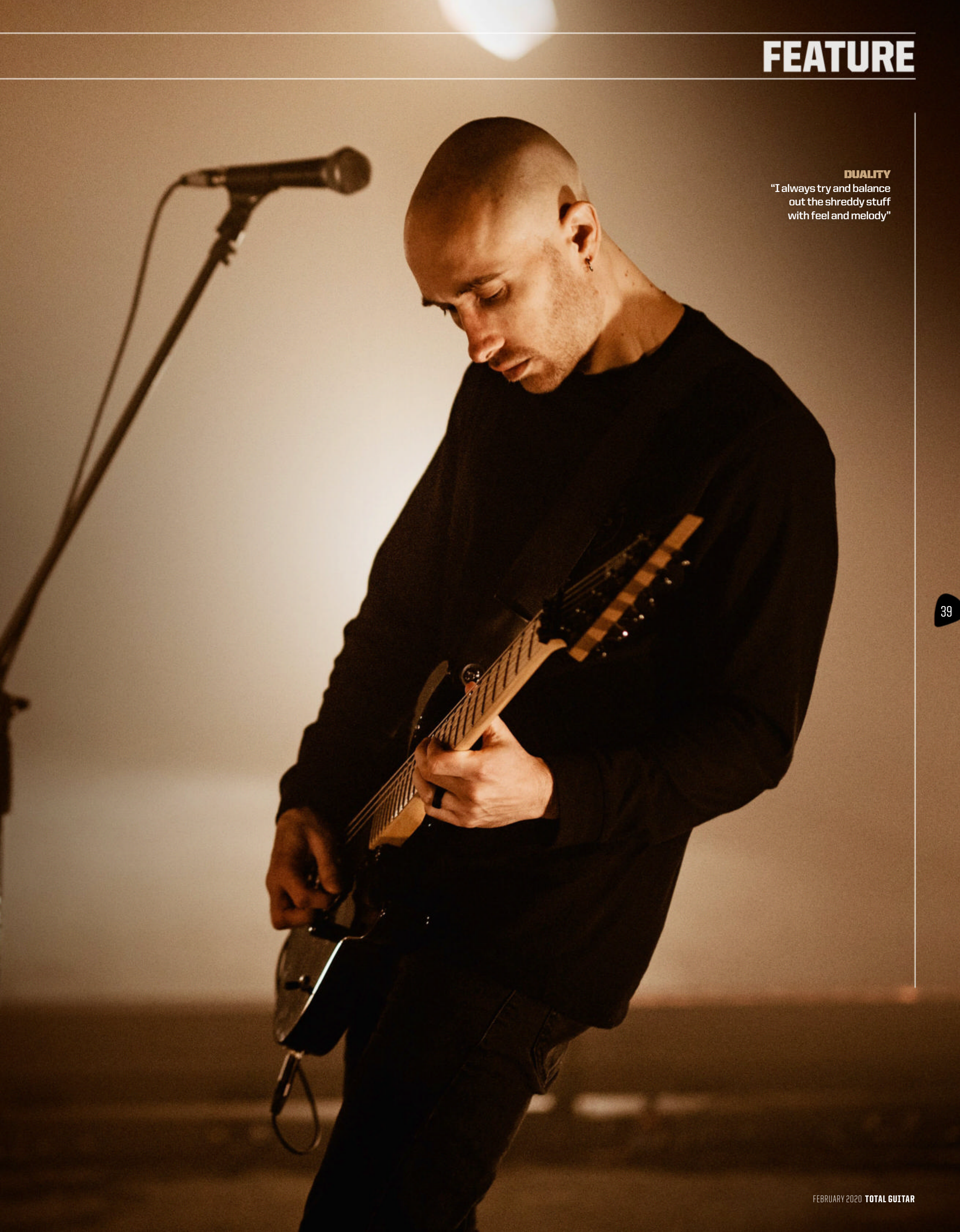
these self-imposed restrictions about what we could and could not be. So I basically told the guys I didn’t really want to do it anymore.”

As fate would have it, some of the music heard on this year’s *Cycle Of Suffering* was actually composed with a new project in mind – one free of the self-imposed restrictions that were getting in the way. There was just one problem: a lot of it sounded like Sylosis...

“I actually had the idea of starting a new band and was already writing music from a fresh perspective, then I realised it wasn’t too different to Sylosis – so I came back round to thinking it could work,” he laughs. “I guess I needed to think of it as a new band to realise I didn’t need to be worried about doing whatever I wanted. Just as I was beginning to come round to the idea of re-starting Sylosis, after amassing all these songs, a new path opened up for me in Architects...” ➔

DUALITY

"I always try and balance out the shreddy stuff with feel and melody"





After what happened with Sylosis in 2016, how did you ensure you wouldn't end up going down the same routes?

"It was less about my guitar playing or the instrumentation, I guess, and more about stylistic things – what kind of music we should play. Sylosis has had a very strict, almost elitist viewpoint on metal. I wanted to break all the rules and stop worrying about things sounding too much like whatever, and just enjoy what I'm playing. Sylosis will always have technical elements to it, and our comeback single *I Sever* is just as technical as we've ever been. Some parts very tricky to play while doing vocals, with these weird rhythms that are hard to sing over. I ended up chipping away at the album over the years, leaving enough time to understand how I felt about Sylosis and whether I wanted to continue with it. The answer was yes! I love playing these songs, and then it all worked out schedule-wise with Architects taking some time off."

You've been playing massive arenas with Architects. What have you learned that you might not have been aware previously about touring at that level?

"I really admire Sam [Carter] as a frontman. There are certain things I've picked up from him, because he's so good with crowds. We had done some arenas in Sylosis, supporting bands like Megadeth – obviously not headlining – and it's all about what translates onto those big stages. I will always love playing fast music, but maybe going 220bpm in an arena can sound a bit wishy-washy after a while. Some songs seem to suit certain environments I guess. The goal has always been to put on the best show possible... I guess touring in Architects has been a lot more comfortable!"

What would you say are the main differences in your approaches for each band?

"Stylistically, the bands are very different. When I joined

Architects, I wanted to stick to that sound. One of the best comments we had with the first single from *Holy Hell* [Hereafter] was someone saying it sounded just like the last album. I thought that was cool because I'd written that one! That was exactly the compliment I needed when I was trying to make something that sounded like Architects.

"Sylosis has always been in E standard up to this point, though the new album is in D standard, which is still a relatively high tuning for metal. Architects is the total opposite, there are songs in G# or F#. The tuning is generally C# standard, which isn't that low, but we tune the lower string down like Mastodon or Neurosis do – with low-octave power chords. The main thing to get used to was playing really thick strings, which are still nowhere near as tight when you play in standard. So I think the tunings are the main difference and I really notice that in how I pick."

What gauges have you found work best for these lower tunings?

"The lowest I've tried is a 0.72 – which is very thick, but doesn't quite sound bright enough. There's a balance between string tension and dullness, so I tend to use a 0.68; it's thick but still flops all over the place. As much as I love digging in and playing aggressively, if you play too hard you might go sharp. It took a while to get used to a lower string that was a huge leap from the tuning of the other strings, unlike seven-strings or eight-strings that are more relative. I found writing riffs in this tuning was quite refreshing, to be honest."

"I WANT OUR MUSIC TO BE POWERFUL"

I think guitarists get stuck in ruts just staring at the fretboard and knowing what frets to use for different kinds of riffs in different keys. If you know modes and scales, you kinda see the same shapes. But when you have this weird tuning, it forces you to write riffs in different ways. You can't rely on things like power chords because you might not be able to play them."

Your solo in *I Sever* opens with some wide pentatonic legato stretches that are almost a bit Zakk Wylde...

"I agree! I really like Zakk Wylde as a player, but I don't really tend to play that style myself. It's weird, I like a lot of bluesy guitar players though I don't really like blues music. I love David Gilmour, he's incredibly bluesy. Same with Zakk, there are a lot of bluesy licks in a shreddy way, which you wouldn't really find in my playing. That said, there are some big pentatonic leaps that feel really

satisfying. People's ears are drawn to big intervallic leaps – that's why sweep-picking, string-skipping or fast pentatonics can sound faster. You're skipping over a lot of notes, which can make it feel like you're covering more ground quicker. So I guess Zakk isn't an obvious influence, but I do like those big pentatonic stretches."

For some of the slower, hooky parts near the end of the solo, you harmonise to make more of a statement...

"I always try to balance out the shreddy stuff with feel and melody, something memorable to stick in there. When you double-up things, harmonising an octave lower or higher can really emphasise the notes – it's a great tool for hammering a particular melody home and focussing on key points in your solo. It depends what the song calls for... *I Sever* is quite intense but also moody and epic, so I wanted my solo to transition into that as well."

It's interesting how the riffs go from very technical to the simplicity of one fast chug; that kind of switch is very powerful...

"That's a perfect example of what I wouldn't have allowed myself to do three or so years ago. I would have been worried it's too simple and not technical enough, so therefore too meathead and beneath this band. I just want our music to be powerful, whether that's through emotion and melody or pure heaviness. Sometimes, you might just need to chug on one note!"

***Shield* uses arpeggiated chords to colour in some of the lower-end riffs. How do you write those parts?**

"One thing that works for me, especially with melodic stuff like *Shield*, is to write on a piano. We have one at my parent's house and whenever I'm round there, I always have to sit down. It's so refreshing to play because I never really had lessons. It's different to the fretboard for me, where I feel

like I know where all the notes are. I view the piano a bit more blindly, I just put my hands around and play about until certain melodies perk my ears up. I'm always looking for a good chorus or epic middle-eight, and I tend to work backwards from there, adding riffs in later. So the chorus of *Shield* actually came to me on piano, and then I wrote the song on guitar. Writing on different instruments breaks you out of your comfort zone. You might even come up with the same chord progressions, but the fresh perspective can make it feel new and exciting."

***Arms Like A Noose* has a very discordant acoustic intro. Is that something you might have picked up from listening to artists like Opeth and Devin Townsend?**

"Those are both artists who have influenced me, for sure. When I really got into writing key changes, I was listening to Dimmu Borgir. A lot of black metal is just moving a minor chord around,



EMOTIONALLY OR JUST PURE HEAVY" ➔

it's not like traditional Western chord progressions, instead you're changing key with every chord. It can be very dark-sounding. Opeth are great at that, even on an acoustic guitar, those movements can be really cinematic and moody. There's no real approach for that stuff with me, I just blindly move around minor shapes, occasionally sticking in a major somewhere. Then I have to make sure every note on top of that chord is in key, but then the key will change..."

Similarly, *Abandon* incorporates some more unusual atmospherics...

"It goes a bit 70s prog in the middle-eight, influenced by bands like Rush, Genesis and even Kate Bush, thanks to the 80s-esque synths, plus there's a chilled, Gilmour-y guitar solo. It always feels like a vibe-killer sticking something like that in the middle, so that's why songs like that usually end up last. Something big, slower and epic can take the sting out of an album if not put in the right place. Though it's not really what we're known for, our fans should be used to the more down-tempo tracks by now. It's probably my favourite song out of everything I've written, actually. It felt very powerful to me."

What was the main gear you used on the album?

"It's pretty much the same for Architects – my sound doesn't differ much between the bands, even though there's the tuning difference. I recorded this album with an ESP Horizon, with the Fishman Fluence Moderns, going into a dual-channel Peavey 6505+ though on the rhythm instead of lead. There's so much mid-range on the green channel, that I kept the mids around one. It's not scooped, even with the mids off it comes through really clear. That went into an oversized Mesa/Boogie cab with 2005 Vintage 30s in – I've gotten really nerdy about ages of speakers. There was a period where V30s were sounding incredible in Mesa cabs, between 2000 and 2005. I mic up with an SM57 and, apart from the Maxon

OD-808 boost in front tightening the low-end, that was about it. I don't push the drive or boost with high-gain amps, I keep the volume at noon, the drive nearly off and tone at 11 o'clock. So it's more for tightening and filtering before the signal hits the amp."

Is your 6505+ still the main profile on the Kemper you use live?

"At home I have a handful of heads – a 6505, 6505+ and a block letter 5150 – and they do sound different enough. I switch between them a lot but it will always be one of those amps. I make Kemper

profiles of everything I do and use that live for both bands. That combination of heads, cabs and speakers always brings a clear mid-range no matter what you dial on the amp."

What kind of ambient effects do you use for leads or background noises?

"I'm not a big pedal guy, but I love delay on my leads. It's probably quite common but I'm a fan of the Strymon BigSky. There's a setting on there called Cloud that has this incredibly unique type of reverb. One thing I've always done is use ambient guitars layered up in the background. It probably comes from listening to Dimmu Borgir, I liked the ambience but I didn't want to have keyboards. There was a band called Misery Signals whose first album was produced by Devin Townsend.

He added a load of ambient stuff on there, particularly on the first

track. Since 2005, I've always used guitars for ambience, so long delay trails and mushy nine-second reverbs are definitely fun to play with. I like that almost choral echo."

Finally, you have a new member in bassist Conor Marshall – who also plays in Conjurer. What was it that made him a good fit?

"I love Conjurer. They've been on my radar for quite a while and I'd say they are definitely one of the best emerging British metal bands in recent years. They have a lot of influences I like – you can hear a lot of Mastodon and Neurosis vibes in there but it's still quite fast and energetic, which I like. As much as I love all the doomy stuff, I'm a big fan of that intensity and obvious aggression. I reached out to Conor because he looks great and runs around on stage which helps me being behind a mic. Funnily enough, we've only met a handful of times..."

INTO THE PIT

Josh gives us his tips for ultra tech-metal tightness...

DON'T PUT THE GUITAR DOWN

"Just always have a guitar on you. As long as you don't annoy your partner or family, you can sit there hammering out scales watching TV. You don't even need to hear it, you get your fingers used to whatever exercise or lick it is. It will always go in, even if you're not really consciously practising and stuck into some movie or TV show."

KEEP AN EYE ON THE ANGLE OF YOUR WRIST

"The main thing for me was learning *Battery* by Metallica and playing it over and over again, all day long. I remember when I couldn't do that – and it was so frustrating. I realised a lot of it came down to your wrist angle. If you hold your wrist out straight, with your pinky at three o'clock, then twist the pinky down to half four – that's my starting point for picking. Whenever I've taught other guitarists who have been struggling with picking, I've noticed their pivot points were different."

PRACTICE UNPLUGGED AS WELL AS WITH DISTORTION

"That's a big one for me. When the distortion is on, there can be all these unwanted string noises and scrapes that you might not be aware of. I think people need to practice in two different ways – with an amp, using a lot of gain, but also with a totally clean sound or not plugged in at all. If it sounds clean unplugged, hopefully it will sound clean distorted..."

But you have to be used to playing distorted so you're muting your strings properly and not getting unwanted noise!"

PRACTICE SLOWLY AND STEADILY

"A lot of guitar players want to skip as many steps as possible and play Paul Gilbert licks just like he plays them. But shredding through things quick like that might mean you're not that tight or clean. What a lot of people hate doing is practising really slowly, but that's actually how I spend most of my practice time. It's all really boring slow speeds and picking every note assertively. I keep going round and round again, I don't try to speed it up. I feel like if it's clean and tight slow, you will get to where you want to be – it won't take that much longer but you'll be better for it."

Guitarist
CHOICE

GEAR OF THE YEAR

BE PROVOCATEUR

ARTIST: **BROWNBEAR**

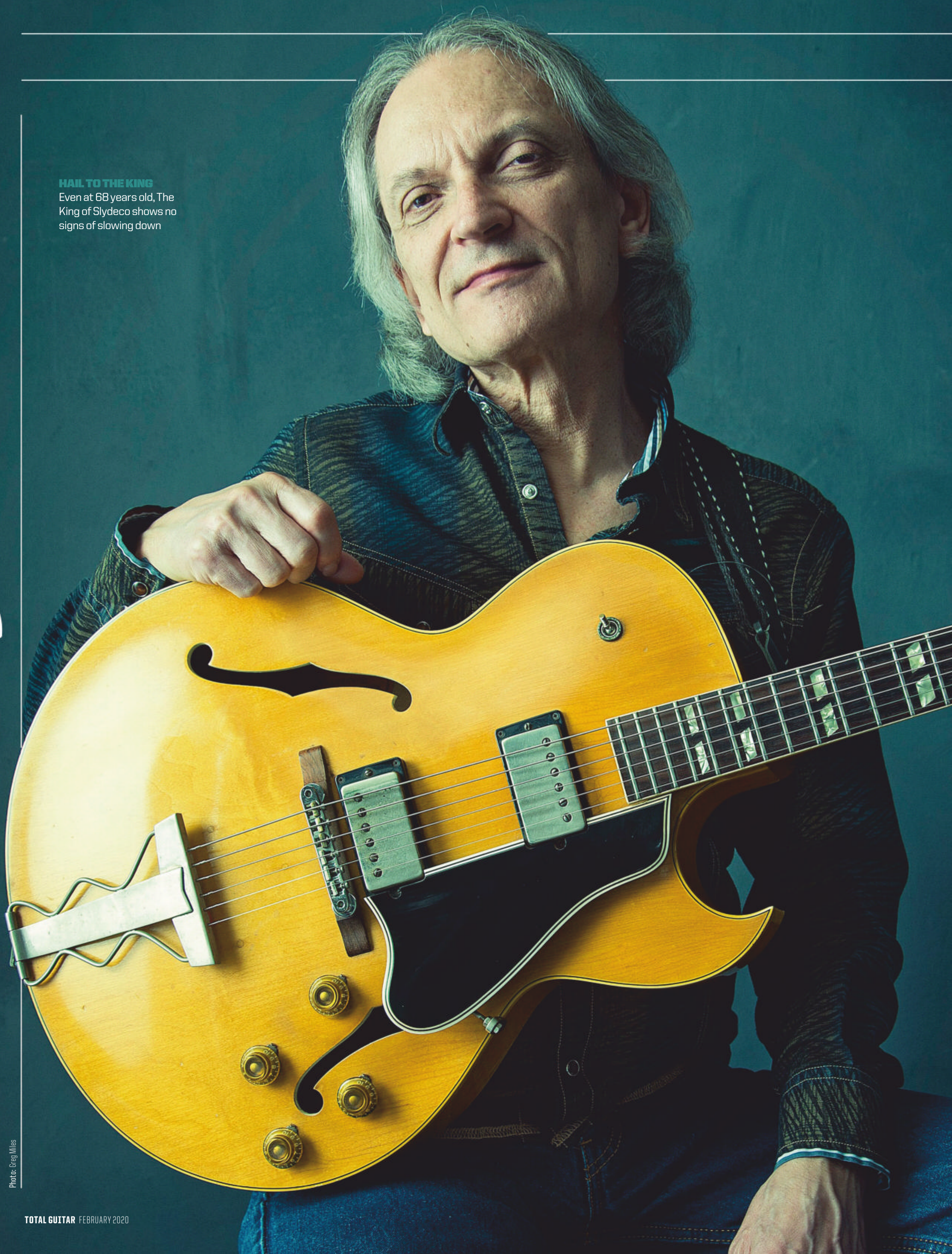
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HAIL TO THE KING

Even at 68 years old, The King of Slydeco shows no signs of slowing down



Renegade Master

Words Henry Yates

BENEATH **SONNY LANDRETH**'S BOOKISH EXTERIOR BEATS THE HEART OF A RULE-BREAKING MAVERICK. THE SOUTH'S GREATEST SLIDE MAN TOLD US ABOUT THE THRILL OF IMPROVISATION, HIS BATTLE WITH TENDONITIS AND HIS 'THREE-DAY LIMIT'...

Look elsewhere for your industry-standard rock hellraisers. Sonny Landreth ticks precisely none of those boxes: no ego, no attitude, no Harley, no whisky – and definitely no tattoos. “I don’t like needles, man,” drawls the 68-year-old. “I’m not having someone sticking that stuff on me. Plus, I sorta change my mind about things. So a bunch of tattoos – it’s not for me.”

Yet beneath that bookish exterior – imagine a nuclear physicist spliced with *Frasier*’s Niles Crane – Landreth is more renegade than any rock pig. Born in 1951, schooled in the lineup of Zydeco king Clifton Chenier and closely tied to his native Louisiana scene, his solo catalogue has pushed the art of slide guitar where others fear to swoop. Now, with experimental tunings, leftfield gear – and one song on which he goes entirely slide-less – *Blacktop Run* might be Landreth’s most daring album yet.

Are you pleased with how *Blacktop Run* came out?

“I’m real happy with it, man. I feel like a lot of things converged in a cool way. When you make a record, there are so many variables, and any one can put you on a detour. You might be happy with your playing, but sonically it isn’t happening. It’s frustrating when something’s not quite there. On this one, I was happy with everything.”

Is it important to push your guitar work forward?

“It is, because the minute I get bored, then I haven’t done the listener justice. Once I feel good about my core sound, I like to veer off, go on the hunt. It could be a new technique, a colour, a sound. I brought my old producer back, RS Field, and he’d come up with cool ideas like playing a backwards slide part or running the guitar through

a Leslie speaker on *Many Worlds*. I improvised those parts, and the solo, and I played the Leslie guitar live using a footswitch: I love the ‘cosmic dust’ that happens when you hit the switch and it starts to slow down. I also used a Dm7 tuning for *Somebody Gotta Make A Move* [low to high DADFCD]. Though I’ve experimented and used minor and seventh tunings before, this one is a bit different – it offers a lot of interesting harmonic possibilities, overtones and plenty of atmosphere.”

Much of this album was improvised. That takes balls, doesn’t it?

“It can be akin to a high-wire act without a net. But you have to be willing to take chances. If you don’t, it’s like the old Shakespeare quote – ‘familiarity breeds contempt’. I remember, when I started out, I was damn scared – if not terrified

➔ – about playing in front of people. Mostly, my thing has always been about preparation. But I still feel like improvisation is the highest goal in music. There's nothing else like it. And once you get a taste of succeeding at it, you don't want that to go away. So you gotta be willing to fall down and get back up. And that can happen within the same song, the same solo. The great trumpet player, Clifford Brown, would literally say there are no wrong notes. He would hit a clam, then he'd propel from that, he'd bounce and just go into the stratosphere, and make people go, 'Holy shit, what was that?'"

How do you prepare for a studio album?

"For me, I have to keep playing. I love coming off a run of live dates and going right into the studio, because you have an edge and a head of steam. Playing at home is super-important, but it's still nothing like playing a gig. Live, it's all happening, it's all on the line, something in your brain just clicks. It's about being able to keep that feeling inside me, and the biggest challenge is keeping that edge. I've noticed, it lasts about three days. That seems to be my statute of limitations. It's like, from that point on, you're on your own, kid [laughs]. So for *Blacktop Run*, we went from the road to the studio, several times. Hopefully just knock one over the fence, keep going like that."

What was the key gear on *Blacktop Run*?

"Well, I'm kinda funny about guitars. Sometimes it's whatever is closest to me – I'll just grab that guitar and start working. I have the two prototype Strats that I worked on with Fender [featuring DiMarzio Fast Track DP181 and Lindy Fralin Vintage Hot singlecoils]. I have a couple of vintage Strats – for *Groovy Goddess*, I was using a '66 with the Fulltone '69 fuzz, into the Demeter TGA3 and a 4x12 Bandmaster cab with Vintage 30s. I have one of Larry Pogreba's custom resonators: he's an eccentric cat, lives in Montana, off the grid. It's got a blue aluminium body with an Oldsmobile hubcap. It's really live-sounding, has a lot of air about it. That aluminium just has a whole different effect to steel and brass. I've done a ton of work with my '69 Martin D-28, which has just got richer and more complex. Then I use a '60 Les Paul.



"THE GUITAR IS STILL A POWERFUL TOOL – YOU CAN CHANGE THE WORLD..."

That's on *The Wilds Of Wonder*, through the Dumble Overdrive Special."

You've always liked leftfield gear – any recent discoveries?

"Well, I also used a Komet 60 – are you hip to them? Oh man, they're awesome. They're just an hour from where I live, in Baton Rouge. Some cats, they deserve the recognition. These guys are good friends of mine, they've been around a long time, but they're coming into their own. The Komet 60 is just way overbuilt – it's all hand-built, the best components, and it's more of a pure [ethos]: just plug in the amp, no channel switching, very touch-sensitive. You get the sound from the power section doing its thing and the power tubes heating up. I like to shed a little light onto cats like that."

You call your pedalboard 'the runway'. How's it looking?

"It's been through a lot of changes, but some pedals have stayed the same, for

ABOVE

"The minute you start thinking you've perfected something, you're presupposing there's an end to creativity"

the core lead sound in particular. The first pedal is the Demeter Fuzzulator, and I actually use that for a boost, so most of the time it's off. From there, it goes to the Hermida Mosferatu. That's a MOSFET design, and I've never heard any other drive pedal as smooth and dynamic – it's like the perfect midrange amp in a little box. Then it goes to an Analogman Compressor, into the Voodoo Lab Giggity: that's like a mastering EQ pedal, and it's great for fattening up singlecoils. On *Groovy Goddess*, it's the Fulltone '70 fuzz."

Love Dance With Me doesn't feature your trademark slide at all...

"No. I'd written a whole batch of songs that weren't slide songs – they were just regular old flatpicking or fingerpicking. What got me back into that was the 30th anniversary reunion with [former bandleader] John Hiatt last year. I had to do a lot of woodshedding to get back in shape. I hadn't played without a slide in 13 years. I just wish I could keep both

[techniques] up at the same time. Regular playing is real taxing on my left hand in a completely different way, because of my tendonitis, in particular the index finger."

How do you think tendonitis might affect your playing long-term?

"A long time ago, I realised I'd have to start doing maintenance to offset the repetitive motion syndrome. When you're doing anything over and over again – whether that's playing guitar or sitting at a keyboard – you're prone to injury, eventually. When you're young, you don't think about it because you feel so damn good. But it does catch up with you. I have 'trigger fingers', as they call them; three on my right hand and three on my left.

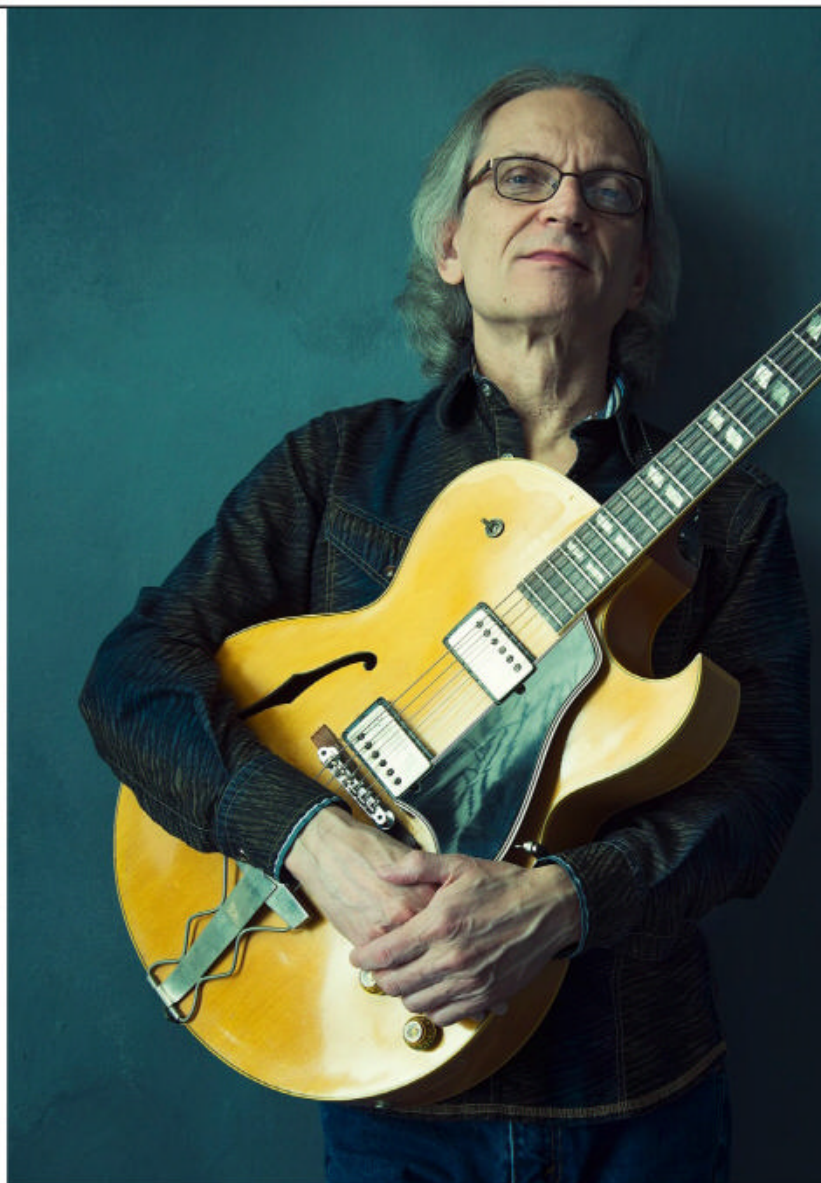
"But about five years ago, I was working with Jimmy Buffett, and he'd found this incredible sports medicine doctor. He has this technique where, essentially, he goes through the tendon with a metal bar and breaks up the calcification using a cold laser. Then the doctor showed me these isometric stretches and strengthening exercises, where you put your fingers in a rubber band and press them outwards. And, man, it was night and day. But if you don't stay on top of the maintenance, it gets very painful. Then there's the swelling. And what's really bad is the contraction – that's when the tendons to your fingers start pulling inward, as if you're going to grip a ball."

Does it ever feel normal to count Eric Clapton as a friend?

"[Laughs] I've had to pinch myself on occasion. Never more so than the first time he sat in with us. All of a sudden, he just cuts loose – and it almost blew me over. It just really hit me, like, 'Oh, my God, that's Eric Clapton, just tearin' it up'. The cat that inspired me so much as a kid, y'know?"

Drink and drugs wouldn't be compatible with the way you play, would they?

"Nah, man, I figured that out when I was 17 years old, playing the local bars. We recorded the show one night: I thought I was achieving nirvana, but then I listened back the next day, and just went, 'Oh my God, what shit was that?' The other thing is, I've really had to work at singing. I'm not a great singer. I have my voice, and as long as I'm in shape, I can do my best with it.



"I ONCE PLAYED SLIDE WITH MOTORCYCLE HANDLEBARS!"

Sonny on the weirdest thing he's ever had on his finger.

"I have you heard of David Tronzo, man? You should look up some of his YouTube videos – he comes up with some pretty wild shit. I haven't done anything that wild, like playing slide with a shotgun barrel. But I did once use motorcycle handlebars. When I was sixteen, my friend's family owned a Triumph and Harley-Davidson shop. I don't remember how, but I bought these handlebars, got a hacksaw – then I had a lifetime's supply of slides.

"What's funny is, I still have that slide, and when we started doing the acoustic set, about four years ago, I was having a hard time getting the notes to punch out. So I went back and started trying metal, got the old handlebar out – and that's what I've been using since. I sanded it as best I could, but never got it smooth, so it's funky, a little jagged on the edges. But because of the weight and the metal, I could get a more substantial sound, especially with a resonator. The cool thing with slide is, every single solitary thing I've ever used – wood, glass, metal, ceramic, Pyrex, you name it – they all sorta have their own sound. You can really get creative..."

But I had to quit smoking pot a long time ago. Marijuana smoke is hotter than tobacco, according to the experts – and I was struggling as it was, just to sing in tune and hold it together."

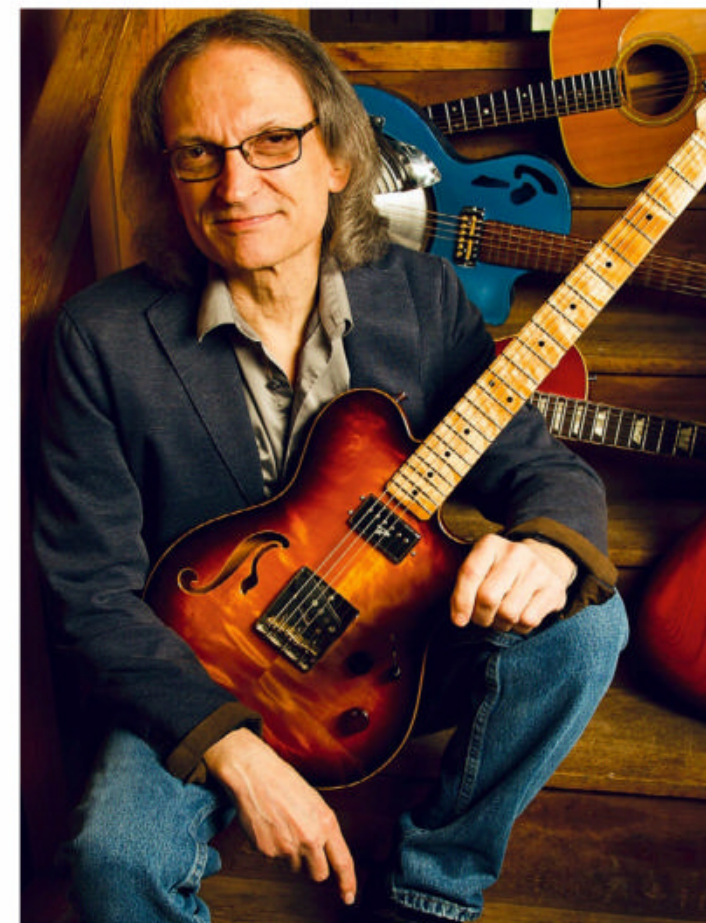
Do you think you can ever actually master the slide guitar?

"Oh man, I think the minute you start thinking you've perfected something, then you're presupposing there's an end to creativity, and I just don't believe that. That's a core belief for me. There's always more. The guitar just seems to keep going, and I think the reason is the personal connection. Physically, if you're holding this instrument close, it flips these switches inside you and that comes through in the music. Even with three chords, you can change the world. The guitar is still such a powerful tool. Just the versatility and the enormous palette of colours, sounds, genres – it just crosses all of that. And for me, slide guitar in particular, I think has a lot more potential to cross those lines. That's when it gets really creative."

You don't seem like a 68-year-old. What's the secret to staying young?

"If I find out, my friend, I'll let you know. I look pretty good on the outside. On the inside, it's another world. I feel the bumps a lot more than I used to. But I still love playing. There's nothing like it, man..."

Blacktop Run is released February 21st on Provogue/Mascot.



GUITARS & BACKING
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WORDS
CHARLIE GRIFFITHS, CHRIS BIRD

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Find audio tracks
for every example
on your Guitar
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2020 GUITAR WORKOUT

New Year, new you? How about New Year, new groove! If one of your resolutions is to improve your playing, you're in luck – TG's new workout plan is here to help!



Whether it's fingerpicking or sweep picking, fretting focus or strumming stamina, we'd all like to be a bit more consistent and confident with our playing, right? So, as we enter the new decade, what better time than now to work on some of the everyday techniques us guitar players try to stay on top of as we work towards mastering this fine instrument? For many of you, a number of these lessons will be well-trodden ground, but sometimes revisiting even the simplest of exercises helps us notice shortcuts and inconsistencies in our playing that can be improved. Follow each lesson slowly, example by example, and see if you notice a difference over time.



01 CHORD CHANGE CHALLENGE...

Start your workout with some essential chord changes

Say ‘open chords’ and most guitarists will quickly identify the easiest shapes – C, A, G and so on. Does that mean you can’t improve this area of your playing?

Well, we'd argue that you can. With so many ways to play our favourite instrument, different styles, techniques and so on, even the simplest changes can throw up a challenge here.

There's no 'one size fits all' method, but these three exercises will get you started. Try out the easier first and second tab examples before building up to the final challenge.



LEVEL 1 FOLK-EMON

TRACK 10

♩ = 80

C **G⁷**

Play 4 times

Measure	T	A	B
1	0	1	2
2	0	0	2
3	0	0	2
4	0	0	3

Think this folk style C-G7 chord change is easy? Try fretting one or both shapes with your second, third and fourth fingers - it's a challenge that will help you improve your dexterity.

LEVEL 2 BEATLE JUICE

TRACK 11

♩=100

C7 G7

Play 4 times

TAB

0	0	1	1
1	1	0	0
3	3	0	0
2	2	0	0
3	3	2	2
		3	3

The challenge here is keeping your guitar quiet in the gaps. It's harder than it sounds because the open strings tend to ring. Rest your strumming hand on the strings after each stab.

CHALLENGE!
STRUM
TIME!

60-90 BPM

Steady As You Go

This is a chord change exercise, so slowly practise the chord changes, er, obviously!

90-120 BPM

Chopping and Changing

If the rhythm's too tough, simplify your strumming so you can focus on the chord changes.

120-150 BPM

Shape Shifter

150 bpm not a problem? Rewrite the exercise and include a few finger-twister chords.

Here in this rapid rhythm you have to play the chords in quick succession while fretting every note as cleanly as you can. With the exception of the C to D7 change, which share a first finger C note on the second string, each chord requires a brand new fingering each time. Practise slowly to identify any fluffed notes.

[illegible]

02 ARPEGGIOS FOR RHYTHM GUITAR...

Aim for shimmering cleans and tighter picking with TG's arpeggio exercises

You probably know what arpeggios are – it's when you play chords one note at a time instead of strumming. Simple right? Well, yes, at least in theory.

In practice, arpeggios can be fiercely difficult to play due to rapid-fire string-jumping – you'll often play just one note on a string before having to move to another... over and again.

Take a listen to Radiohead's *Street Spirit (Fade Out)* or Tool's *Invincible* and you'll hear how relentless it can be. Follow our tab exercises and hone your skills.

LEVEL 1 SWEEPING STATEMENT

TRACK 13

♩=80

Cadd⁹ **C** Play 4 times

let ring throughout

For a flowing arpeggio, hold each shape and play three downstrokes then three upstrokes in a smooth sweeping motion. It takes time to learn to pick like this but your control will improve.

LEVEL 2 EVERY PICK YOU TAKE

TRACK 14

♩=110

Aadd⁹ Play 4 times

PM throughout

An all-downstrokes approach here makes it easier to settle into the rhythm – but take care to place your pick hand near the bridge for this Andy Summers style dry-sounding palm-mute effect.

CHORD BREAK

Use arpeggios to write riffs around the chords you already know



51

CHALLENGE!
BLACKWATER
PICK

60-90 BPM

One note at a time!

Practise the chord changes first, then take a look at picking the relevant strings.

90-120 BPM

Mid-Riffer

A medium tempo might reveal errors in your picking technique. Slow down again if so.

120-150 BPM

Arpeggio Artiste

If this speed isn't testing you, switch to down-up style alternate picking for an extra challenge.

This Mikael Akerfeldt-style riff is a step up compared to our shorter examples. We've notated a picking approach that takes the shortest route from string to string. A pure 'down-up' style may feel easier and it may even make your timing more regimented. However, the notated picking approach (known as economy picking) is a more efficient way to tackle passages like this.

♩=120

Am add⁹ **Adim/E^b** **Dsus⁴** **G⁵/C#** **Bm⁷/G#** **E** Play 4 times

let ring throughout



03 ARPEGGIOS FOR SOLOS...

Take your technique to the next level with our lead guitar workout

Wait, more arpeggios? Well, yes! Arpeggios aren't just for chord-based rhythm parts – you can solo with them too. Generally, you'll be aiming

for a melodic vibe with a tight delivery, whereby the strings don't ring out. And, because you're moving beyond basic chords, you'll be covering more of the fretboard. This is good news as far

as creativity and blazing solos are concerned, but it does also represent a bit of a challenge. Our licks will take you through essential shapes which you can apply to your own solos.



PICK ME...

When playing arpeggios, your picking technique is just as important as your fretting shapes

LEVEL 1 BEN'S SON

TRACK 16

♩=100

Cmaj7

Play 4 times

These notes come from a Cmaj7 chord. So what? Well, solo with the notes of the chord you're playing over and you're guaranteed to be in key. It's an idea you can apply to any chord progression you play over.

LEVEL 2 SKIP THE PICK

TRACK 17

♩=120

Play 4 times

This string-skipped arpeggio shape is much-used by shred legend Paul Gilbert. Slowly practise the hammer-ons with your first and fourth fingers and focus on the three-notes-per-beat timing.

CHALLENGE! KNIGHTS OF ARPEGGIA

60-90 BPM

Slow And Steady

At this tempo it's pretty easy to pick up on the shapes we've used.

90-120 BPM

Level Up!

It's starting to get serious now! Try your best not to let any notes ring out together.

120-150 BPM

Melody Master

Our lick tests both picking and fretting, so expect slow, gradual progress to reach these speeds.

This Matt Bellamy-style part uses arpeggios to outline the chord sequence. Practise by playing the shapes first as chords, then as arpeggios. Major and minor sounds are essential for all music, so try to memorise the Am and C arpeggios. Diminished shapes aren't so commonplace. Either use alternate picking or follow the directions below the tab.

♩=120

Am Bdim C Fdim G#dim Play 4 times

04 STRUMMED RHYTHMS...

Strum down. Strum up. Can there really be any more to this basic technique?

Well, yes, as it turns out! While alternating between down- and upstrokes is obviously the core of the technique, there is still a craft to be

mastered with strumming. The idea is to synchronise your downstrokes with the strongest rhythmic pulse of the music – your upstrokes should fall in between. Of course,

most of you out there will be familiar with strumming, but even the most experienced players have to practise. Take a look at the basics and build up to our challenge riff.

LEVEL 1 STRUM-DER WALL

TRACK 19

♩=80

Em7 A7sus4 Play 4 times

Famously used in 90s Britpop banger *Wonderwall*, this rhythm showcases 16th-note strumming. That means there are theoretically up to four strums in every beat (though only three are played in our riff).

LEVEL 2 UP, UP AND AWAY

TRACK 20

♩=120

D E/D Play 4 times

This rhythm starts on the downbeat, then focuses on offbeats. For a consistent strumming technique, simply match your downstrokes with downbeats and upstrokes with offbeats.



JOE STRUMMER
Strumming movements should come mainly from your wrist

CHALLENGE!
TOM STRUM

60-90 BPM

Ups and Downs

Focus on each one-beat grouping so that you understand the underlying rhythms.

90-120 BPM

Strummer Of 69

Increase your tempo and things should start to sound more musical than a slow run-through.

120-150 BPM

Rhythm King

The chord changes are easy, so you can really push the tempo high for a serious strumming challenge.

With some basics covered, take a look at this challenging Pete Townshend-inspired part which combines the strumming patterns of the previous examples with a couple of other rhythms. Had a go at our Oasis riff? Bar 1 mixes up those rhythms, opening on a 'down-down-up' instead of a 'down-up-down'.

♩=120

Dsus4 D Dsus2 D Dsus4 D C G C D Play 4 times

05 LEGATO LEAD...

You know the basics, now take your technique to new heights

Hammer-ons and pull-offs, some of the first techniques beginner lead guitarists learn, are among the easiest. For the uninitiated, the idea is to sound a note

with a fretting finger *without* picking the string – it's done by either 'hammering' down hard on the string or 'pulling off' to essentially re-pick it. Simple! Here we're looking at ways to take

these ideas a step further by using a technique known as legato – when you use a mixture of hammer-ons and pull-offs one after the other. Try out these exercises and hone your skills.

ONE BY ONE

Align your fingers one-per-fret to nail those legato leads



LEVEL 1 SPINAL HAMMER

TRACK 22

♩=125
B⁵

Play 4 times

OG ALTERNATE PICKING...

Master this and watch your playing become faster and more effortless

Just like strumming, alternate picking has down- and upstrokes at its core. Unlike strumming, this is more of a lead guitar technique, so we're talking mainly about

playing one string at a time. Okay, this might not sound overly exciting but bear with. How you pick massively affects your playing; get it right and your solos will soar! In truth, it's

much like strumming – synchronise your downstrokes with the musical pulse and place your upstrokes in between. Follow our exercises to see improvements in both speed and timing.

LEVEL 1 PICKERSLAVE

TRACK 25

♩=120 Em Play 4 times

TAB: 14 16 17 14 17 16 14 16 17 14 16 17

cont. sim.

Here we have two different six-note patterns on the middle two strings, each played with a sequence of alternating down- and upstrokes. Notice how the second grouping begins on an upstroke.

LEVEL 2 PICK LABEL

TRACK 26

♩=120 F#m Play 4 times

TAB: 17 14 16 14 16 14 17 14 16 14 16 14

cont. sim.

This Zakk Wylde-style lick has a two-note-per-string picking pattern. It's quicker than the previous lick but each grouping begins on a downstroke, which can make it feel more natural.



CLOSE TO ME

Aid your alt picking by keeping your picking hand close to the bridge

CHALLENGE! FLATTS PICKING

60-90 BPM

Raw Recruit

Just remember: 'down-up, down-up'. Don't veer from these picking directions.

90-120 BPM

Keen Picks-man

The middle tempos are important. You should start to 'feel' the music now.

120-150 BPM

Prince Of Picking

If you're alternate picking cleanly at this tempo, well, let's just say we're envious!

This bluegrass-style lick will have you moving about from string to string – quite the challenge when you're using strict alternate picking. Practise slowly and learn four or eight notes at a time, keeping your pick moving 'down-up' throughout. Try flicking your pick away from the strings on the upstrokes to lessen the chance of hitting the wrong string on the downstroke.

♩=120 C Play 4 times C

TAB: 3 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 1 3 1 0 2 0 1 2 4 0 1 2 3 1 0 3 1 2 3 1 3 0 1 2

cont. sim.

07 FUNK-STYLE STRING MUTING...

Get your groove on with TG's rhythmic riffing workout

If you've just been following our alternate picking workout, well, boy, have we got a surprise for you: more picking! Joking aside, funk riffs, especially the single-

note kind, typically have alternate picking at their heart – so the tab examples here are a great opportunity to further develop your abilities. What’s different? Well, here we’re

looking more specifically at string-muting – using muted strings to give a funky, percussive bite to your music. Combine the two techniques and you'll get the funk in before you know it.



LEVEL 1 PICKING IN THE NAME

TRACK 28

♩ = 90

Dm

Play 4 times

TAB

7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7

cont. sim.

Listen carefully to hear this funky, muted line played over our heavy Rage Against The Machine-style riff. Use alternate picking and press/relax your fretting finger to generate the notes and mutes.

LEVEL 2 TOE TO TOE

TRACK 29

♩.=110

Dm

Play 4 times

Keep your picking hand moving down and up, accenting every three notes here in our Steve Lukather-inspired riff. Listen closely! Several of the upstrokes should be emphasised.

CHALLENGE!
CHIC TO
CHIC

60-90 BPM

Up all night to get plucky!

While the tempo is slow, focus your energy on memorising the lick in full.

90-120 BPM

Cissy Struttin'

Emphasise the muted notes.
The medium tempo should feel
more natural than playing slowly.

120-150 BPM

Disco Demon

Move over Nile Rodgers!
There's a new disco diva in town.

Timing is key here in this Nile Rodgers-style riff, so tap your foot or count to four to keep, time and use strict alternate picking throughout to lock in with the music. You can really make a meal of the muted notes here, so pick firmly and let the strings 'pop' back against the fretboard. Use a compressor pedal if you have one – it'll help those funky mutes stand out.

♩=100

Dm⁷ Dm⁶ Dm⁷ Dm⁶ Dm⁷ Dm⁶ Dm⁷ Dm⁶ Dm⁷ Dm⁶ Play 4 times

The musical score is written for guitar in 4/4 time, with a tempo of 100 beats per minute. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff for the melody and a bass clef staff for the bass line. The melody is composed of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some notes marked with an 'x' to indicate natural harmonics. The bass line is composed of eighth and sixteenth notes, with fret numbers (7, 5, 6) and an 'x' indicating natural harmonics. The score is divided into four measures, each containing a specific chord: Dm⁷, Dm⁶, Dm⁷, Dm⁶, Dm⁷, Dm⁶, Dm⁷, Dm⁶, Dm⁷, Dm⁶, and Dm⁷. The final measure is marked 'Play 4 times'. The bass line is marked with 'TAB' and 'B'.

1 ♩ V ♩ V ♩ V ♩ V cont. sim.

08 FINGERSTYLE...

Using a pick isn't the only way to hone your chops

Whether you're a regular steel string strummer or an occasional acoustic maestro, every guitarist should have at least a few fingerstyle chops down.

It's a great way to reinvent tired chord progressions with depth and detail. Here you can take a look at some basics or level up with our more challenging part. If it's easy, try

challenging yourself by playing faster or by reworking the fingerstyle pattern for some new chords. If you struggle, take it slowly and work on one short phrase at a time.

LEVEL 1 LEN AND CO

TRACK 31

♩=70

C Am

Play 4 times

let ring throughout

TAB

p i m a p i m a

Start with this easy line and pick: thumb (p), index (i), middle (m) then ring finger (a). Already a seasoned fingerstylist? Use the riff as a speed test by gradually increasing the tempo you play at.

LEVEL 2 RULE OF THUMB

TRACK 32

♩=70

Csus² G⁵/D

Play 4 times

let ring throughout

TAB

m i p i m i p i

Step up your workout with this more challenging line which requires you to move your thumb from string to string. Break it down into bite-sized phrases if you struggle.



FEELIN' PLUCKY, PUNK?

Get to know which finger should pluck which string for more efficient playing

CHALLENGE!
PLUCKING
OUT LOUD

60-90 BPM

Fingers And Thumbs

There's a lot to learn, so keep it slow and practise the chord changes first.

90-120 BPM

Easy As PIMA

Start to apply the fingerpicking patterns and gradually increase your tempo.

120-150 BPM

Finger-pickin' Good!

At these tempos, you're a fingerpicker extraordinaire!

This Ed Sheeran-style riff uses a combination of single-note fingerstyle playing and two-note shapes. You can experiment with which fingers feel comfortable for you, but remember to check the notation for the downward stems, as these are played with the thumb.

♩=90

Gsus² D⁵/A D Dsus² Bm¹¹ Gsus² D⁵/A D

Play 4 times

TAB

p i a m p p i a m p p i a m a m p p a m i p i a m p p i a m p p i a m p p i a m m i p i a m

09 STRING BENDING...

Channel your inner guitar hero with this easy soloing tip

From BB to Bonamassa, Slash to Slayer, pretty much every rock, metal and blues guitarist who ever played a solo uses string bends – you don't need us to tell

you that! A humble technique it may be, but it's also a tricky one. Even something as simple as replacing your strings with a lighter- or heavier-gauge set can be enough to affect

how you bend. Basically, it's a matter of developing a feel for how far to bend, all the while keeping your ear attuned to tell you when you hit the sweet spot.



PITCH-SHIFTER

Three fingers are better than one when it comes to string bends!

LEVEL 1 BEND IT LIKE BERRY

TRACK 34

♩ = 90 ♩ = ♩³

A⁵ Play 4 times

TAB: BU 7(9) 5 BU 7(9) 5 BU 7(9) 5 BU 7(9)

This blues-tinged rock 'n' roll lick is a great way to hone your bends – simply bend the third string up by two frets. It should be the same pitch as the fretted note on the second string.

LEVEL 2 NOISEGARDEN

TRACK 35

♩ = 80 E⁵ Play 4 times

TAB: BU BD 7 (8) (7) 5 7 5 BU BD 5 (6) (5) 3 0 9 7

This sludgy rock riff uses semitone bends in a 'pull-down' motion. Fret the fourth string and turn your wrist to lever the string towards the floor. It's much the same when you reach the sixth string.

CHALLENGE! SYNYSTER BENDS

60-90 BPM

Round The Bend

Keep the tempo slow and practise each short phrase on its own.

90-120 BPM

Steady String Slinger

Start to piece the lick together and build speed as you gain confidence.

120-150 BPM

Pitch Perfect!

Once you've mastered the lick, try playing just a little bit faster to challenge yourself.

Build up your bending skills with a mix of techniques here in our Avenged Sevenfold-inspired lick. In the opening bar, aim to time your bends strictly with an eighth-note pulse. Bar 2 is more vocal and expressive, while bars 3 and 4 feature similar phrasing to our second tab – just remember not to bend downwards every time!

♩ = 120 E⁵ Play 4 times

TAB: BU BD BU BD BU BD BU 15(17) RP BD (17)(15) 12 BU 14(15) 15(17) BU BD 17(19)(17) 15 17 15 BU BD 14(16)(14) 12 14 12 BU BD 12(14)(12) 10 12 10 12

10 WHAMMY BAR...

Let's end our workout with a look at the techniques of Steve Vai, EVH and more

If your guitar's equipped with a whammy bar, you sure as hell should learn to use it – and crikey can it be tricky! A little vibrato here and there is simple, but there are

three other techniques, too. First, the scoop: quickly dip the bar down and release it back to pitch as you play a note. Doops are similar, but you dip the bar *after* you play the note. Finally,

there's the more challenging note-change technique where you use your bar to target specific notes. Once again, break our riffs down phrase by phrase and you'll see improvements.

LEVEL 1 SCOOPERMAN

TRACK 37

♩=70

E⁵

Scoop Scoop Scoop Scoop Scoop Scoop Scoop

Play 4 times

Scoop Scoop Scoop Scoop Scoop Scoop Scoop

TAB

7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5

Use hammer-ons and pull-offs to alternate between the 5th and 7th frets and dip your whammy bar before each note in order to scoop in from below. You don't need to bend to a specific pitch here, just whatever sounds good.

LEVEL 2 HAN VALEN

TRACK 38

♩=100

E⁵

8va

Doop Scoop Doop Scoop w/bar

Play 4 times

Doop Scoop Doop Scoop w/bar

TAB

15 12 15 12 14 12

This one's not hard, as such... It's just tough to remember exactly where to scoop or doop. Practise super slowly one note (or whammy bar move) at a time until you get a feel for it.



TIME AT THE BAR!
Whammy bar techniques are hard, but can be a lot of fun when mastered

CHALLENGE!
VAI-BRATO

60-90 BPM

Trem Trembler

Work on the basics and don't worry too much about small errors.

90-120 BPM

Van scalin' up

You should be getting an ear for it. Now nail those note changes.

120-150 BPM

Whammy Bar Whizz

Push the tempo higher and try to stay accurate with every dip of the bar.

We're stepping up the difficulty level here – aside from the doop in bar 2, every whammy bar bend is targeting a specific note. That means you need to check the tab for the relevant notes and listen closely as you adjust the bar. If your whammy bar only lowers the pitch (i.e., it doesn't bend upwards), try targeting the 16th, 14th and 12th frets in bars 1 and 2.

♩=80

Badd^{#11}

8va

w/bar w/bar w/bar w/bar w/bar w/bar w/bar w/bar

Doop

NH

Play 4 times

TAB

18 (19) (18) 16 (18) (16) 14 (16) (14) [14] 0 5 (4) (5) 7 (6) (7) 12 (11)

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

NO ONE KNOWS

TG takes a look at Josh Homme's
down-tuned stomping riffs, powered by
Dave Grohl's pumping drums

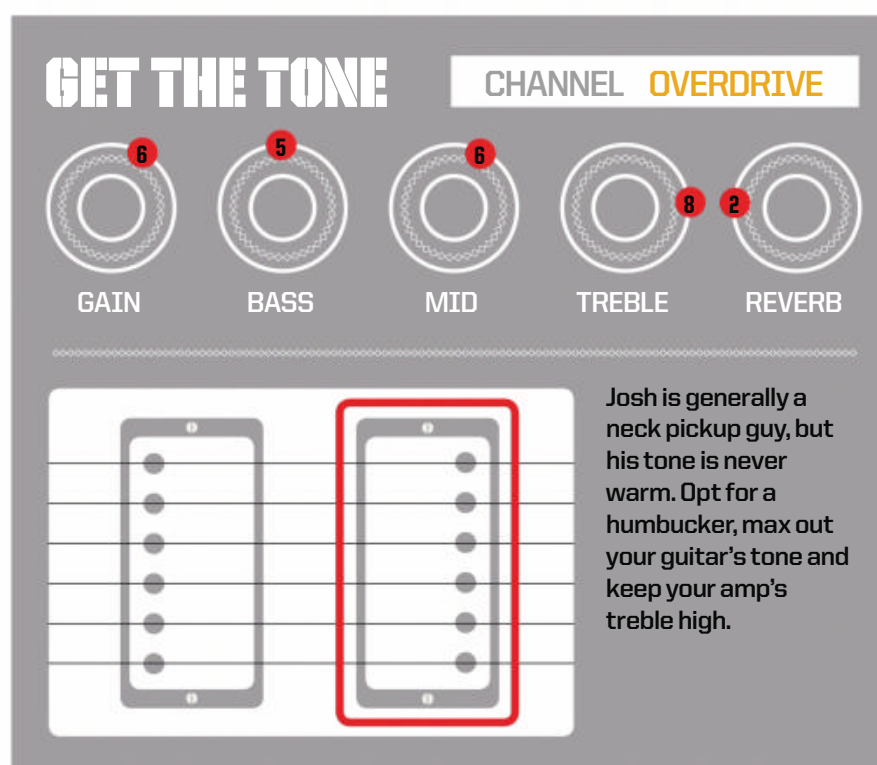
The lead single from QOTSA's breakthrough third album *Songs For The Deaf*, *No One Knows* is probably the band's best known song – it's also their only track to have topped the US Alternative chart. Put it this way... Even if you know nothing about QOTSA, you'll probably still recognise *No One Knows*.

The most important info for us guitarists is that song is in C standard tuning (C F B_♭ E_♭ G C). That means all six strings are down-tuned by four semitones. If you're de-tuning your guitar all the way from standard it's worthwhile using heavier gauge strings so your action and string tension remain optimal.

If there's one technique to master, it's Homme's choppy, staccato performance. It's not difficult – just lift off the strings to keep the notes short. It's such a major part of the song though that your fret hand will be bouncing on and off the strings to nail the feel.

GET THE SOUND

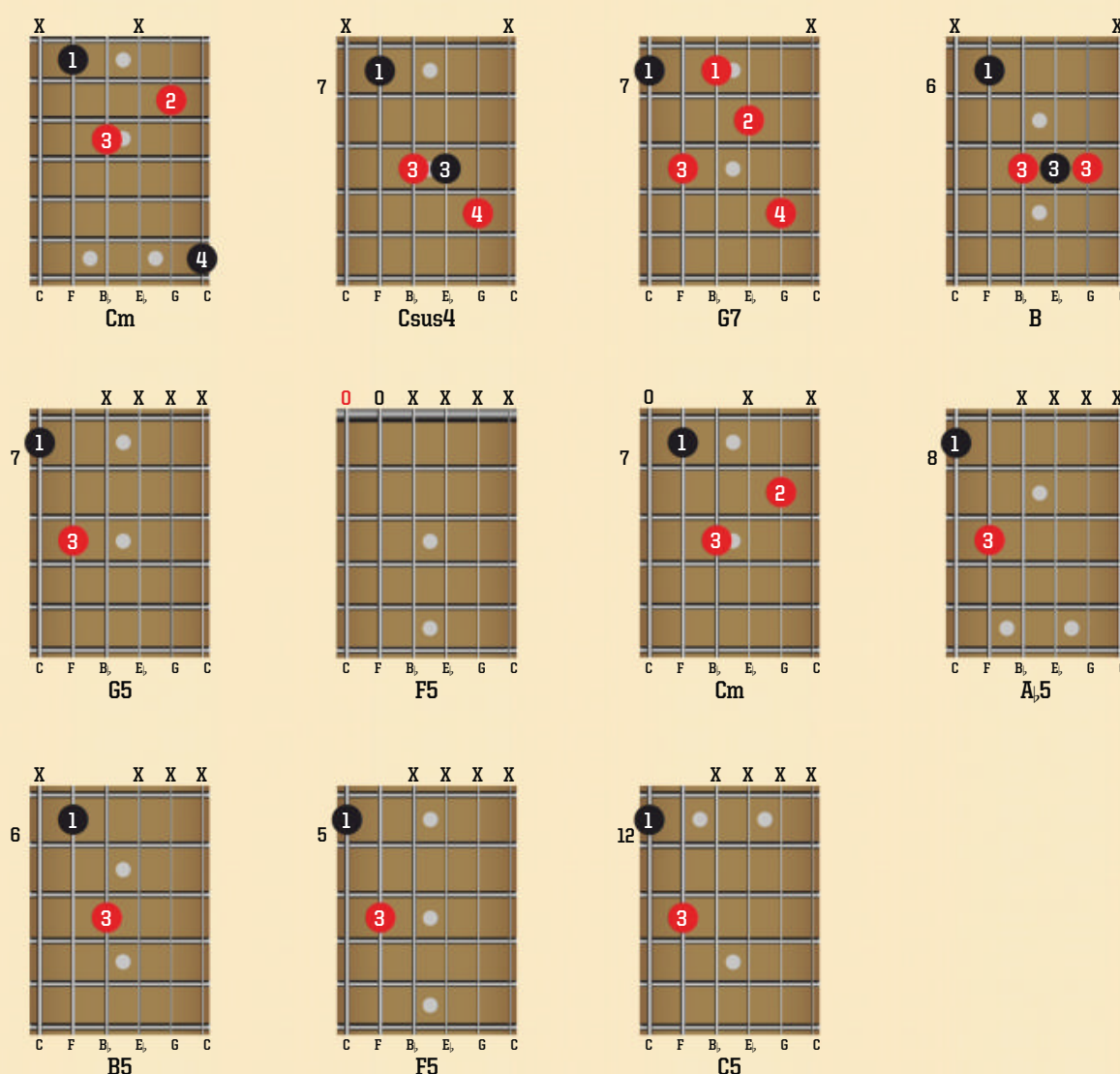
Everything you need to know before playing 'No One Knows'



The QOTSA brain trust keeps its own counsel on gear and tone. But this much we know: Homme is a vintage gear aficionado, favouring guitars by Ovation, Maton and Motor Ave. He loves Ampeg's VT series combos. Having played a Maton MS500 in the *No One Knows* video, we'd bet one would have been in the studio, too. There's plenty of low-end, some overdrive crunch and a saucing of fuzz. Pedals such as the Stone Deaf PDF-1 add the dirt, the likes of the Fulltone Fat-Boost hold it together. Probably.

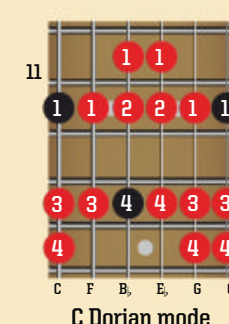
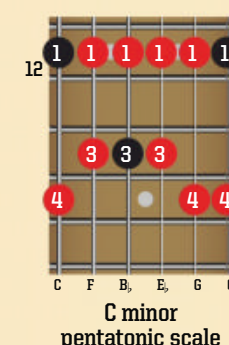
CHORDS

Remember, the guitars are down-tuned by four semitones, so the chord names don't relate to the positions you'd normally expect to find them in on a guitar in standard tuning. Still, chord names aside, most of these are easy to play. Just remember to tune down first!



SCALES

The song is mainly in C minor, so you can solo pretty much from start to end using the C minor pentatonic scale. The solo uses notes from the C Dorian mode, too. Learn these shapes and see how Homme's solo is put together. As with the chords, these scales look like they're in E, but down-tuning means they're actually in C.



QUEEN OF THE STONE AGE

NO ONE KNOWS

NO ONE KNOWS
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QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE NO ONE KNOWS Intro / main riff

♩=173

Cm Csus⁴

1

6

The opening Cm chord is a bit of a stretch, so make sure to warm up first. Leave out the 12th fret if you can't reach it. Notice that the third string is muted out – the way to do this is to curve your barring finger so you're not pressing down with your middle knuckle. Keep the sixth string quiet by stubbing the tip of your barring finger against it.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE NO ONE KNOWS Verse 1

Cm

0:13

PM

G⁷ B

Csus⁴

5

9

The verse consists of short, rhythmically-played chords and again relies on good fretting-hand-muting to keep things tidy. The final stab in bar 12 features unison notes played together. The note on the 5th fret is bent slightly sharp to provide a clashing dissonance.

[illegible]

The image shows a musical score for the song "The Sound of Silence" by Simon & Garfunkel. It includes a guitar staff with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The guitar part is written in a style that uses chord names (G⁵, G⁷, B) and fret numbers (10, 8, 7, 9) to indicate specific voicings and techniques. The bass staff is written in a similar style, using fret numbers (9, 7, 10, 8, 6) to indicate the notes. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, and the guitar part includes some complex chord structures and a final chord labeled 'B'.

Csus4

The musical score is written for guitar in E-flat major (three flats). The melody is on a single staff with a treble clef. The tablature is on a six-line staff below the melody, with fret numbers 0 through 10. The piece consists of four measures. The first measure has a whole note chord (C4, E-flat4, G4, B-flat4) and a whole note bass line (C2). The second measure has a whole note chord (C4, E-flat4, G4, B-flat4) and a whole note bass line (C2). The third measure has a whole note chord (C4, E-flat4, G4, B-flat4) and a whole note bass line (C2). The fourth measure has a whole note chord (C4, E-flat4, G4, B-flat4) and a whole note bass line (C2). The piece ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

[illegible]FEBRUARY 2020 **TOTAL GUITAR**

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE NO ONE KNOWS Bridge 1 & 2

1:10
2:34

Cm **G⁵ F⁵ G⁵ F⁵ G⁵ F⁵ G⁵ F⁵ G⁵ F⁵ G⁵ F⁵ G⁵ F⁵ G⁵ F⁵**

TAB

1

5

9

If you have an overdrive or booster pedal, kick it in here. Get the octave melodies in bars 1 and 2 down by practising only the root notes at first - this'll give you a marker to follow as you move around the fretboard. For the powerchords, emphasise the fretted G⁵ chords; the open string F⁵ should fall naturally in between.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE NO ONE KNOWS Main riff reprise

1:32

Csus⁴

TAB

10 10 8 9 10 10 8 9 10 10 8 9 10 0 5 1/4

9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 7 7 1/4

0 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 1/4

This reprise of the main riff takes us neatly into verse 3. Again, the unison notes are bent out of tune with a quarter-tone bend.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE NO ONE KNOWS Verse 3

1:38

Cm

TAB

PM PM PM PM PM PM PM

8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8

9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9

0 7 0 7 0 7 0 7 0 7 0 7 0 7 0 7



FULL TRACK + BACKING (TRACKS 40-41)
This song comes with a full demo track and a backing track (minus guitar) on your CD. Simply insert the disc in your player, press play and jam along guitar style!

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE / NO ONE KNOWS

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE NO ONE KNOWS Verse 3 (cont'd)

Chords: G⁵ G⁷ G⁵ G⁷ G⁵ G⁷ G⁵ G⁷ B

Chords: C^{sus}⁴ NH

Tablature for Verse 3 (cont'd) showing guitar notation and fret numbers.

Structurally, verse 3 is a repeat of verse 1 but with some rhythm variations and some of the flourishes and embellishments seen elsewhere. Overall though, there's nothing that you haven't seen earlier in the song already, so practise slowly and gradually take onboard where the changes occur.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE NO ONE KNOWS Verse 4

Chords: C^m G⁵ G⁷ G⁵ G⁷ G⁵ G⁷ G⁵ G⁷ B C⁵

Tablature for Verse 4 showing guitar notation and fret numbers.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE NO ONE KNOWS Verse 4 (cont'd)

13

17

Verse 4 is the longest verse so far and there is a new fill to learn in bar 18. It's a basic pentatonic line - a string bend from the 14th fret to the 16th, plus a couple of other notes. On its own it's pretty easy, but the big shift from the 8th fret makes it much harder. Simply omit the 8th fret note and move early while you're learning.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE NO ONE KNOWS Bridge 3

2:57

5

This high-octane riffing section leads up to the guitar solo. Bars 1 to 3 are fairly straightforward, but the triplet rhythms that follow may take time to master. For these triplets there should be three pick strokes in the space of four compared to bars 1 to 3. In reality, it's a bit of a 'feel thing', so listen closely and practise slowly.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE NO ONE KNOWS Outro verse (cont'd)

Chords: G⁵, G⁷, G⁵, G⁷, G⁵, G⁷, G⁵, G⁷, B, Csus⁴, C⁵, NH, G⁵, B.

Measure numbers: 6, 10, 14.

Once again, this final verse contains fills and rhythm parts you've already seen so it's just a case of learning the order.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE NO ONE KNOWS Ending

Chord: Cm.

Measure numbers: 12, 12, 12, 12, 12.

Timestamp: 4:09.

The track ends in the same way it begins, with stabs on the Cm chord. It's easy to aim to nail the timing and play the chords as cleanly as you can.

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STEVE VAI

DIE TO LIVE

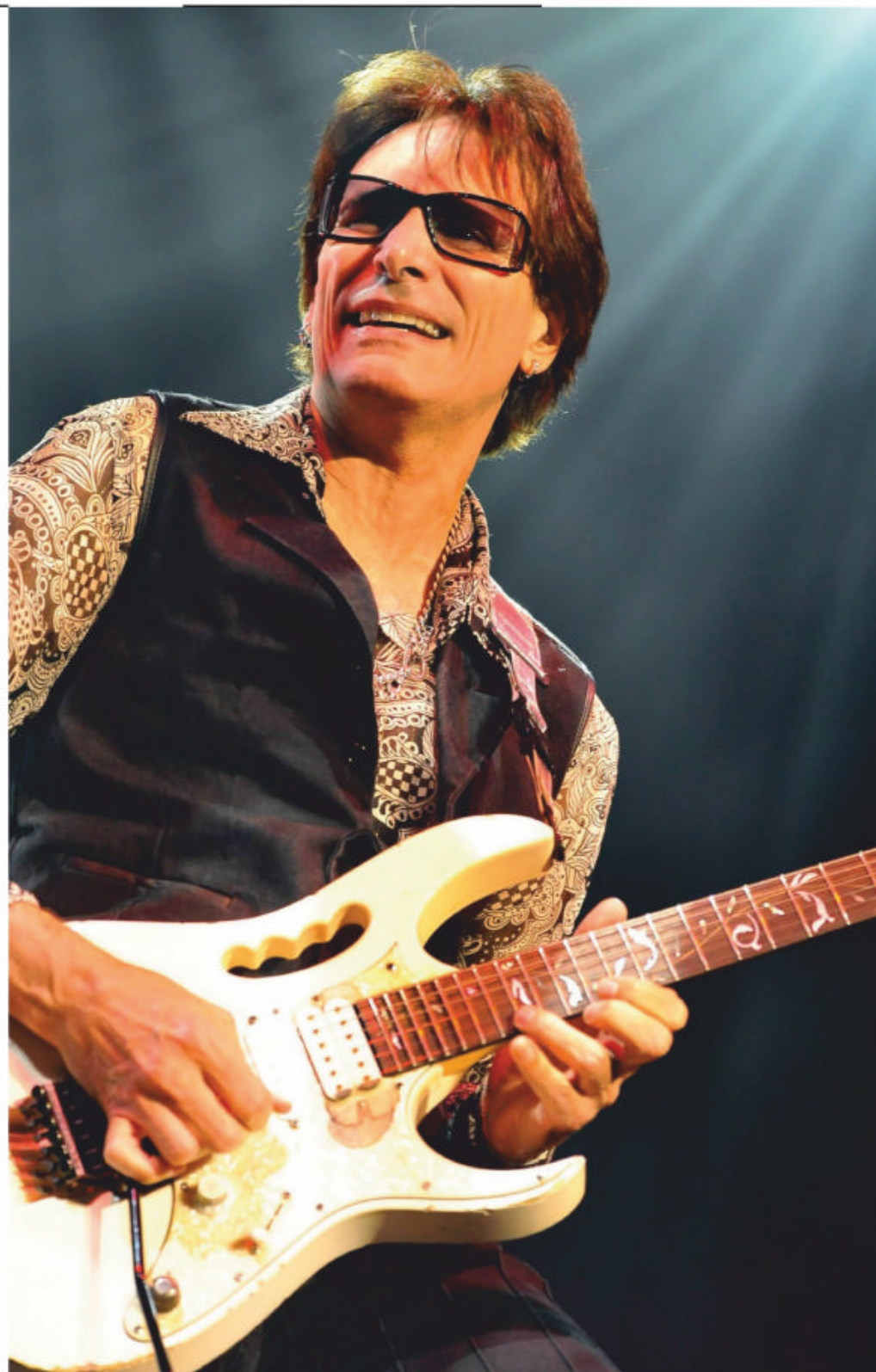
Get to grips with Rockscool's Grade Eight-level playing with a look at guitar genius Steve Vai's stunning instrumental

Appearing on Steve Vai's *Alien Love Secrets* EP, *Die To Live* features a blend of advanced harmonic and rhythmic concepts, quirky melodic lines, immaculate delivery and stunning use of harmonics, legato, tapping and whammy bar techniques. Plenty to be getting on with at Rockscool's Grade Eight level, then!

The song starts with a riff based around A and Asus2 chords. There are several major 3rd intervals throughout

the track, which, combined with the overdriven tone, can sound muddy – accurate tuning and pitch bending is imperative then if you're aiming for a tidy, Vai-like performance.

In bar 3 you'll encounter tapped-harmonics. These are played by bouncing a picking-hand finger on the strings 12 frets higher than the fretted notes. Also, be sure to watch out for the changes from 7/4 to 4/4, though it's only a matter of counting either seven or four beats per bar.



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DIE TO LIVE

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STEVE VAI DIE TO LIVE

TRACKS 42-43

♩=128

Staff 1: A Asus² A TH 14[†]

Staff 2: A Asus² A TH 14 PM

Tablature:

1: 12 0 2 2 0 0 2 2 2 4 0 2 2 2 0 0 2 4 4

4: 0 2 2 0 0 2 2 2 4 0 2 2 2 3 2 4 2 2

[†] Tapped harmonic: Fret notes as indicated in tablature and tap strings above fret indicated between the staves



FULL TRACK + BACKING (TRACKS 42-43)
This song comes with a full demo track and a backing track (minus guitar) on your CD. Simply insert the disc in your player, press play and jam along, guitaraoke style!

STEVE VAI / DIE TO LIVE

STEVE VAI DIE TO LIVE (cont'd)

TRACKS 42-43

6

A Asus² A

PM TH 14

TAB 0 2 2 0 0 2 2 2 4 0 2 2 2 2 3 2 3 7 5

8

A Asus² A

PM TH 14

TAB 0 2 2 0 0 2 2 2 4 0 2 2 2 2 3 2 3 2 4 2 2

10

A/D Asus²/D A/D

PM TH 14 PH

TAB 0 2 2 0 0 2 0 2 4 0 2 2 2 2 4 2 2 9 9

12

A

TH 14

TAB 0 2 2 2 3 2 4 4 4 6 0 2 2 2 2 5 2 5 2 4 2 2

14

Cadd⁹ C/F A

TH 14 NH

TAB 3 3 3 0 5 3 0 1 0 2 0 0 2 2 2 2 5 5 5 5 3 5

16

Fmaj⁹ G F To Coda A

BU BD BU

TAB 0 1 0 3 12 10 10 9 7 9 0 2 4 (5) (4) (5) 2 4 0

G **F#m11**

18 3

Fadd9 **E**

let ring

22 1

B/E **A/E** **E** **D/E**

BU BD

25 0

A **Asus2** **A**

28 0

BU **BD**

30 0

A/D

32 0

STEVE VAI DIE TO LIVE (cont'd)

TRACKS 42-43

A

TAB

34

Cadd⁹ **C/F** **A**

TAB

36

Fmaj⁹ **A** **Asus⁴**

TAB

38

F#m¹¹ **G⁵** **D. al Coda**

TAB

40

⊕ Coda **A** **Asus⁴** **F#m¹¹** **G⁵**

TAB

43

A⁵ **Asus²**

TAB

47

There are many tricky elements to this song, so home in on any challenging areas first. Those fiddly tapped harmonics are shown with the fretted notes in diamonds – simply tap at the fret marked TH. If 7/4 time is new to you, set a metronome to have an emphasised beat every seven beats – that's the first beat of the bar. Just remember to switch it off when you reach 4/4 time in bars 18 and 39.

JAM TRACK PLAY GUITAR WITH A BAND!

80S ROCK

Explore the melodic styles of guitarists like Phil Collen, Richie Sambora and Neal Schon with TG's soft rock play-along

The 1980s saw rock music producers taking production values to new levels, with bands like Def Leppard and Bon Jovi releasing albums whose sound would define an era. For guitarists wishing to recreate some classic tones, that means firing up a few effects pedals.

Top of any pedalboard essentials list would be modulation (chorus, flanger etc) and delay. Usually associated with ringing cleans, modulation effects were also commonplace on drive tones

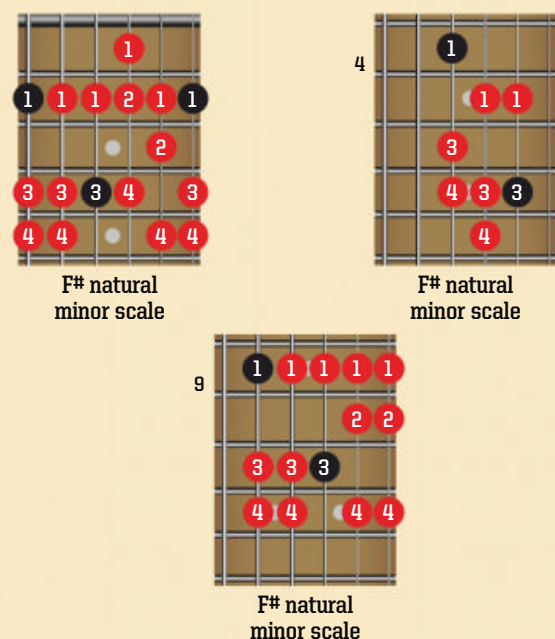
for solos. Delay is essential for slick leads, but the real secret weapon is the humble compressor, which will tame peaks in your signal and deliver authentic smooth leads.

This month's Jam Track is inspired by soft rock and ballads from the 80s. There are no direct shortcuts to play in the style, but, when it comes to soloing, try to stick to tuneful, melodic licks. The major and natural minor scales are better options than pentatonics for this.



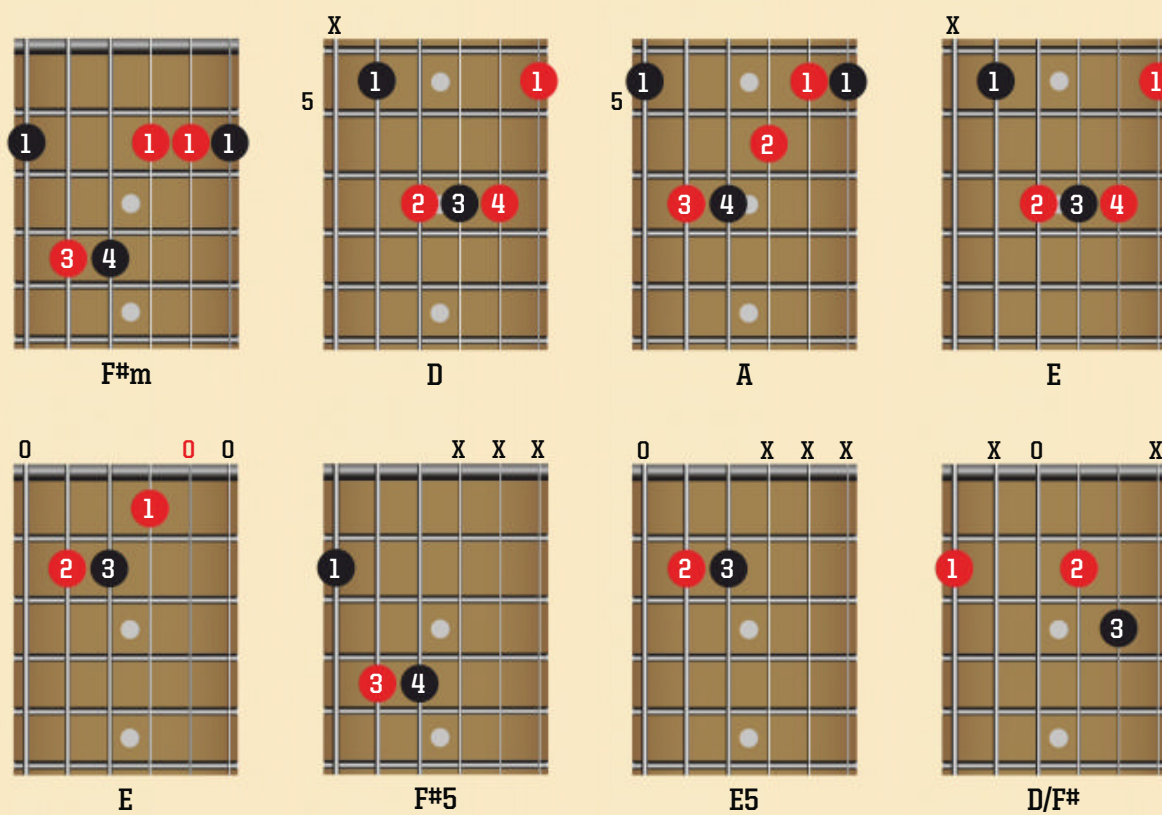
SCALES

The track stays in F# minor throughout. This is good news because it means you only need to use the one scale. The bad news is that sticking to one shape can get a little boring, so it's worth learning a few patterns so you can cover more of the fretboard. We've given you three shapes to work with. Try also practising them 12 frets higher up to expand your options.



CHORDS

Practise these shapes to jam along with our track. They're mainly barre chords, although the E chord in the verse and the E5 and D/F# in the middle are open position shapes. We've shown the full shapes for the barre chords, but you'll get a tighter, more focused sound if you focus your picking on the lower strings.



**BACKING TRACK (TRACK 44)**

This song comes with a backing track on your CD. Simply insert the disc in your player, press play and jam along, guitar solo style!

JAM TRACK / 80S ROCK**JAM TRACK**

Pour On The Hysteria

CHEAT SHEET

Tempo: 105 bpm

Time signature: 4/4

Key/scale: F# minor

INTRO / VERSE

||: F#m / / / | / / / / | D / / / | A / E / .|| x6

PRE-CHORUS

||: F#m / E / | D / / / | F#m / E / | D / / / .||

CHORUS

F#m / / /	D / / /	E / / /	/ / / D /
F#m / / /	D / / /	E / / /	/ / / D /
F#m / / /	/ / / /		

MIDDLE

| F#5 / / / | E5 / / / | F#5 / / / | E5 / / / |
| D/F# / / / | E5 / / / | F#5 / / / | / / / / ||

The chords are remarkably similar for the entire track - and this can pose a bit of a riddle if you're trying to play creatively throughout. Try varying the texture of your playing to match the music, opening out with flashier licks as the music builds, then taking it back down again during softer moments.

THE TURNAROUND LICKS OF THE BLUES GIANTS DUANE ALLMAN

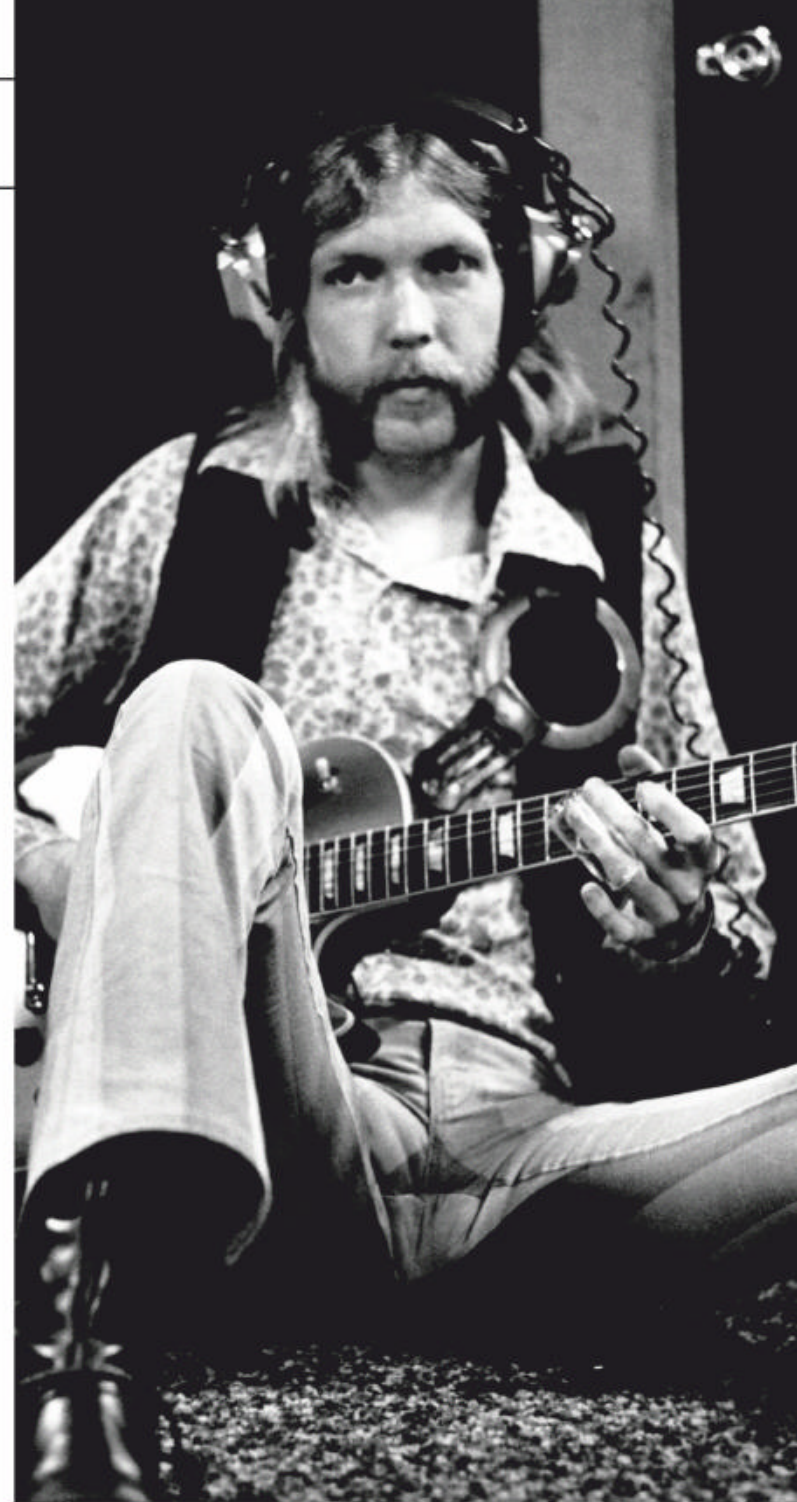
Learn the style of this legendary player with five tab examples and a backing track to practise over!

Though remembered by many as the guitarist who played slide on the extended outro of Derek And The Dominos' rock epic, *Layla*, there's actually a huge amount of other Duane Allman material to check out. In this month's lesson, we're concentrating on his standard-tuned non-slide soloing, which played an equal part in establishing Duane's credentials – particularly the attention-grabbing solo at the end of Wilson Pickett's cover version of The Beatles' *Hey Jude*, which would make Duane known to Eric Clapton, pre-*Layla*.

Duane was well-regarded enough by top industry figures of the day to be taken on as

a full time session musician at FAME studios in Muscle Shoals, playing for Aretha Franklin, Otis Rush, Boz Scaggs and many others.

Though Duane is probably most associated with a Goldtop Gibson Les Paul, he was known to use various other models, including the Fender Strat – so there's no need to feel you must have a specific guitar to play in his style. A sweet sounding, treble-rich guitar and a light, creamy overdrive is all you need to tackle this month's tab, including our final two examples – which are based on the harmonised dual-lead guitar lines Duane played with Dickey Betts on tracks such as *Blue Sky* – one of the last recordings he made in his tragically short life.



1 BRIGHT MAJOR PENTATONIC SOUNDS

TRACK 45

♩ = 92

E A

TAB

9 BU 11 (13) BU 11 (14) BU BD 11 (13) (11) 9 11 9 11 9 10 9 11 9 9 12 9 11 9 11 9 12

Duane was first and foremost a melodic player, with influences ranging from Robert Johnson to Miles Davis. Using a neck pickup and medium overdrive, this example takes an E major pentatonic (E F# G# B C#) direction and adds a few staccato rhythmic notes at the end. Use these approaches for a bright, Southern rock vibe.

2 COUNTRY-ROCK BENDS

TRACK 46

E E7 A

8va

let ring

TAB

12 14 12 BU 12 14 (16) BU BD 14 (16) (14) 12 14 12 14 9 BU 12 (14) BU 12 BU 12 (14) 12 9 11 9 11 9

Going for more of a soaring high register style, this Allman-influenced lick adds in some country-rock inspired string bends where the bent notes ring against a fretted note – aka an 'oblique' bend. This all takes place in bar 3. As you can see, you bend the second string at the 12th fret while holding the first string at the same fret – a classic lick!



FULL TRACKS (TRACKS 45-49)
These tab examples come with audio tracks on your CD. Simply insert the disc in your player, press play and jam along, guitar-aoke style!

THE TURNAROUND / DUANE ALLMAN

3 SOUTHERN FRIED LICKIN'

TRACK 47

An alternative take on our previous lick, this idea goes more for a memorable hook rather than what feels easy under the fingers – and you may need to chop and change position around the 9th to 12th frets to find perfect finger position at any given moment. Try using either your second and third fingers for the oblique bends here.

4 HARMONISED ARPEGGIOS

TRACK 48

Taking our inspiration from the Allman/Betts brand of harmony licks, this ringing arpeggio could easily be harmonised with a second guitar playing other notes from the same chords. You probably know E, E7 and A chords – just fret a shape you know and play the notes in time with our arpeggio.

5 MORE ARPEGGIOS

TRACK 49

This lick begins in the same vein as our previous arpeggio before switching to the kind of harmony line that the Allman Brothers became so famous for. Our track is in E Mixolydian (E F# G# A B C# D). To harmonise with our lick, aim to always be a 3rd higher or lower than the notes we play. For example, where we play an A note you'd play C#; where we play B you'd play a D, and so on.

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FRETBOARD FLUENCY
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EVERGREENS DO NOT SUFFER FROM ALZHEIMER'S.

Carol is no longer who she used to be.

She no longer recognises Nancy, her sister, or Jim, her husband. Most of the time it's as though she isn't aware of the things going on around her.

But when Nancy carefully puts headphones over Carol's ears and plays her most beloved song, her sister's eyes light up. She gently sways to the beat of the song, she even remembers the dance routine. She may nudge Jim's arm. Or tell him what

a fun guy he is. For the duration of that song, she's back again. For 4:35, she's Carol.

**THE POWER
OF MUSIC!**



th.mann
MUSIC IS OUR PASSION

ACOUSTIC



Unplugged

YOUR MONTH IN THE ACOUSTIC WORLD

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ACOUSTIC TAB:
SUBSTITUTE



MORE MORE MORTON

THE LAMB OF GOD GUITARIST COVERS NEW GROUND

Hot on the heels of last year's *Anesthetic* (and a UK acoustic tour earlier this month), Lamb of God's Mark Morton has announced the release of his solo EP, *Ether*, this month. The largely-acoustic EP features guest vocals from Lzzy Hale, Killswitch Engage's Howard Jones, John Carbone (Moon Tooth) and Mark Morales (Sons Of Texas). As well as three original tracks, the EP also features covers of *She Talks To Angels* (Black Crowes) and *Black* (Pearl Jam).

"Inspired by the acoustic sets I had the opportunity to perform last spring and summer in support of *Anesthetic*, I began writing some new songs to reflect that more mellow vibe." Mark says. "I'm stoked with the results and I can't wait for everyone to hear what we've been putting together. **Check back next month for an extended interview with Mark Morton.**



DEEP FAITH

ANOTHER NEW MODEL JOINS THE FAITH FAMILY

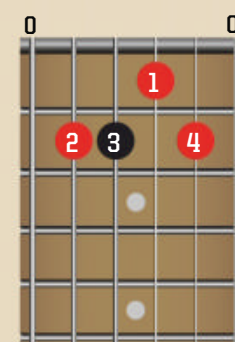
Following last month's announcement of the British company's debut nylon-string acoustic, the Lyra, Faith has announced another first – this time, in the shape of a baritone model. Its body shape is based on a Faith favourite, the baby-jumbo Neptune. The HiGloss Neptune Baritone (£1,099) features a 680mm scale length for tuning to lower registers and features an

Englemann spruce top with solid rosewood back and sides and flamed maple binding. The fingerboard, bridge, headstock plate and heelcap are Macassan ebony. This electro model is fitted with the Fishman INK3 preamp system that features an onboard chromatic tuner, three-band EQ and volume control. The under-saddle piezo pickup is Fishman's Sonicore.

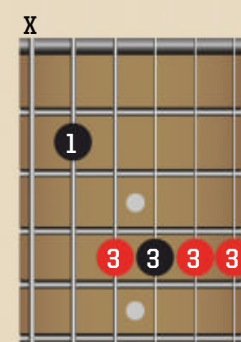
TRACKS 50-54

FIVE 6TH CHORDS

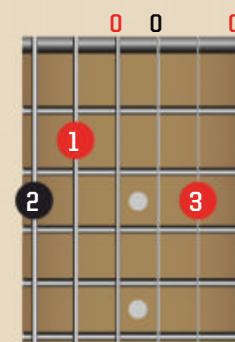
Essential chords to fuel your creativity



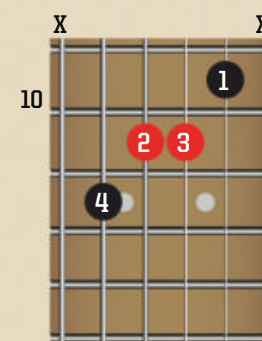
E6



B6



G6



A6



G6/B

Andy Shauf

CANADIAN MULTI-INSTRUMENTALIST ANDY SHAUF ON THE CRAFT OF SONGWRITING, VINTAGE GEAR, AND HIS NEW ALBUM, *THE NEON SKYLINE*

I'm always looking for something different," says singer, songwriter, guitarist, pianist, drummer and clarinetist Andy Shauf. "My hands want to go C to G to A minor and F, but instead if you think about it melodically there are so many ways you can go. Follow the melody and look at the chords later."

Over the past decade the Canadian artist has built up a reputation with award-nominated albums such as 2016's eclectic *The Party* and, the year before, *The Bearer Of Bad News*. The latter features his signature tune, the dark, eight-minute murder ballad *Wendell Walker*, and demonstrates his skills as a storyteller and multi-instrumentalist. Shauf plays all the instruments on his superb new record *The Neon Skyline*, a warmly down-home concept album that channel The Beatles, Paul Simon and Joni Mitchell, with hip echoes of Beck and the late Elliott Smith.

A self-professed gearhead, Shauf recorded straight to quarter-inch tape via a vintage Tascam 388 eight-track machine, in the "super-tiny garage studio" he rents in his hometown of Toronto. Celebrating the everyday, *The Neon Skyline* offers 11 well-observed, character-based vignettes, with sweet melodies and 70s-folk rock textures supporting Shauf's indie-brittle voice. Usually he writes on piano, but this time he reached for his acoustic.

"I wanted to get back to the kind of songs I was writing at the start," Shauf says, "ones I could play solo just guitar and vocal because that's how they were written. When I sit at a piano to write it's easy for my brain to fall into melancholic, slow, moody things. With a guitar my natural thing is more, 'Hey, let's play a C Major!' I'm trying to go for something more light-hearted and upbeat in feeling, and it's nice to go from a straight-up C to G."

Born in 1986, Shauf grew up in a small town in Saskatchewan, where his parents ran a Radio Shack store. What they couldn't sell they brought home, so when he was five Shauf got his first drum kit, then later started strumming on an unwanted El Degas guitar, later inheriting his grandfather's Minerva guitar. When he was 13, a high school friend showed him the chords to *Smells Like Teen Spirit* and he was off.

"I realised that as long as you have those shapes you can move them anywhere on the neck, make up your own combinations and write songs. I taught myself by ear and would

analyse why certain songs worked and why they were different from the song I just wrote. I'd wonder why the chord changes in [The Beatles'] *Michelle* are so satisfying, then try to work it out on guitar. I'm mainly a songwriter, and the learning is to satisfy that search for something different – the key changes in *Penny Lane*, the minor-key change in *The Fool On The Hill*. These are some of the best pop songs ever written, and there are so many sneaky music theory things in there."

Since Shauf's formative (or, as he judges it, 'embarrassing') 2009 debut *Darker Days*, he has stumbled across much smart music theory of his own: the Lydian mode feel of *The Party* opener, *The Magician*; the Dorian flavour of *Living Room* on *The Neon Skyline*. Back in the noughties when he was cutting his teeth live, his acoustic approach went against the grain. "Saskatchewan was a punk scene – bands like Silverstein and Comeback Kid were big. I'd play an acoustic set then the next one would be a super-loud hardcore band. It was cool though, the hardcore fans didn't leave when I played. It was all about helping each other out back then, and they'd listen and support you."

There'll be more of that from February when Shauf embarks on his 2020 tour in support of his latest work. He was in Europe last year with his side band Foxwarren, and will be back again in March with his six-piece band (clarinet 'n' all). In concert he favours his parlour-sized Waterloo WL-14 acoustic, but on the new album his main guitar was a 1970s Gibson J-50 dreadnought, bought especially for the job. "The 70s are often referred to as the bad years for Gibson, but I really like my J-50. Small parlour guitars are nice and punchy in the mid-range, but recording a dreadnought is better; it's just way more balanced. It took me a long time to realise that the big guitars I didn't want to play were actually the ones I wanted on my records."



TONE IT DOWN!

Take a cue from Andy and alter your tuning for some interesting effects...

"My guitar is always in C# standard tuning," says Shauf. "My grandfather's old Minerva would stay in tune for a while then start slipping lower, and settle in C#. I'm a slave to the capo now. I put it on the third fret to play in regular [E] standard, but you really feel the effect of the looser string tensions. Now when I play a standard guitar I think, 'What's missing?!' Tuning lower like this can be a quick way to get richer, more resonant tone from your guitar, and standard chords can give you fresh ideas in non-standard keys. Andy's guitar is tuned C#, F#, B, E, G#, C#: an open E shape gives you C#, an A shape gives F#, and a G shape offers an interesting E."

**“I WANTED TO GET
BACK TO THE GUITAR
TO WRITE MORE
LIGHT-HEARTEDLY”**

OPEN-MIC SONGBOOK

THE WHO SUBSTITUTE

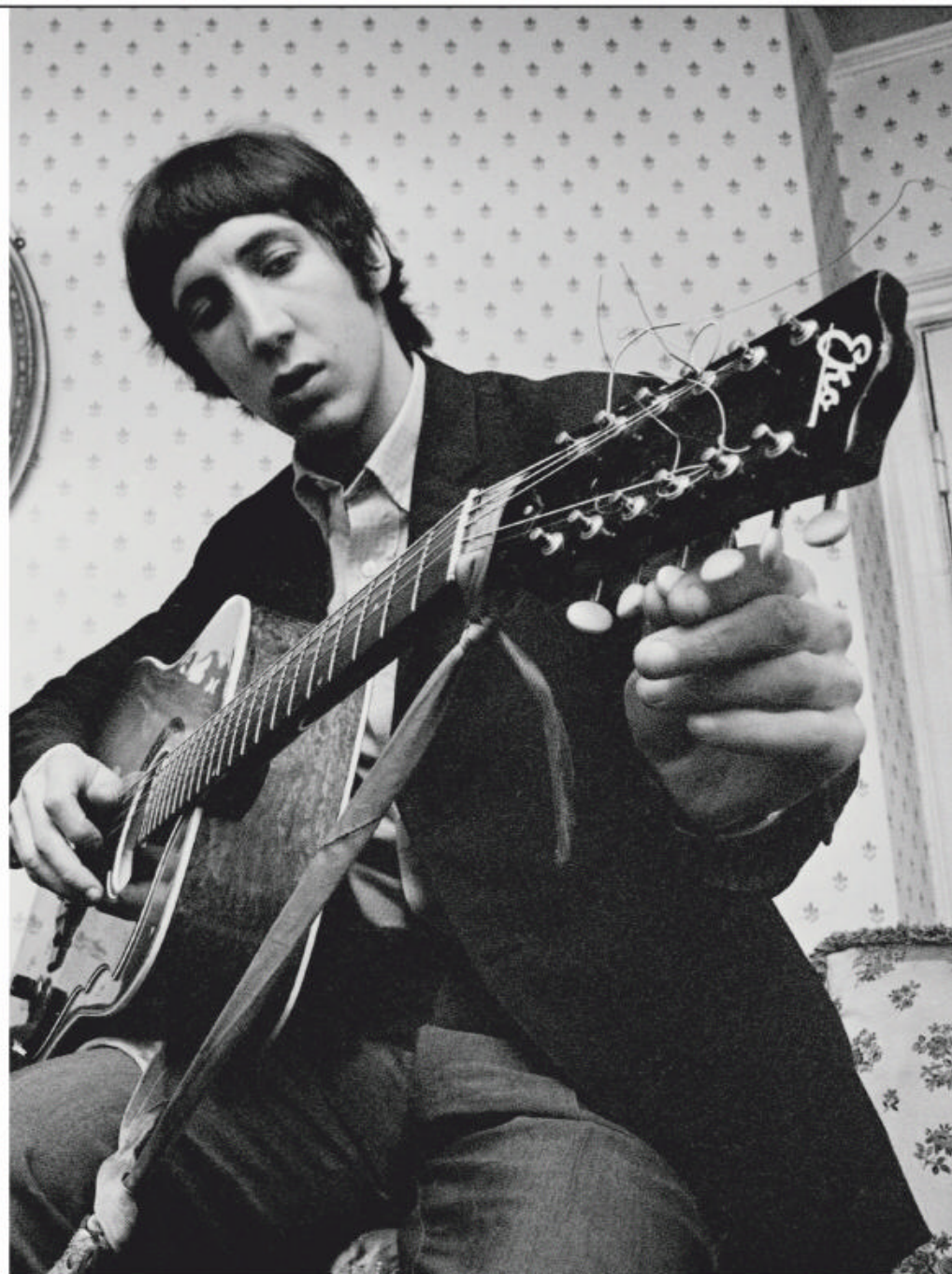
Test your timing with Pete Townshend's energetic strumming chops in this bona-fide British classic

With their triumphant hard rock debut *My Generation*, already on general release, The Who would follow up with this single in the Spring of 1966. The band already had form for non-album hits. Just a year earlier *I Can't Explain* had dropped – and both tracks remain fan favourites to this day.

Here you'll be looking at guitarist Pete Townshend's tight strumming technique and the chords he used to create the song's opening riff.

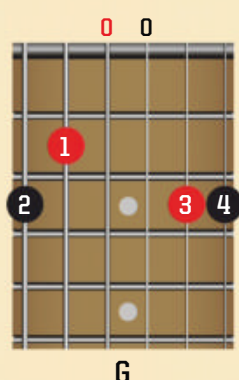
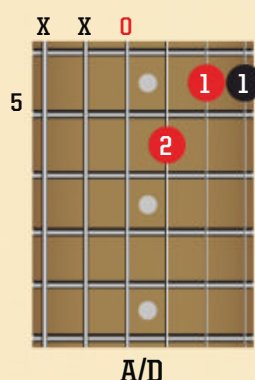
Townshend's approach to rhythm guitar has always been, shall we say, forceful! And, though windmilling with your strumming arm is all good fun, we'd say it's more important to get Pete's super-tight timing down first.

Initially then, strum firmly but keep your movements small and efficient – excessive motion can affect your timing as each strum moves farther away from the strings. Keep it tight and those partial chords will sound better too, as the idle strings stay silent.



CHORDS

Em, D (the second one!), G, A and D/F# are basic open chords. Easy stuff then! These should pose no problems! The other shapes are perhaps less commonly used on acoustic guitar, more often heard in electric rhythm guitar parts instead. And, though Townshend reached for a 12-string to record this track, it's by no means essential. Unless you're dead set on 100 per cent authenticity, any steel-string acoustic will do.



SUBSTITUTE
Words and Music by Peter Townshend
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**BACKING TRACK (TRACK 55)**

This song comes with a backing track (minus guitar) on your CD. Simply insert the disc in your player, press play and jam along, guitar-aoke style!

SONG SHEET

Substitute

Intro

D / A/D / G/D / D / x2
D / / / / / / / x2

Verse & Pre-chorus 1

D G D
You think we look pretty good together
G D
You think my shoes are made of leather
Em D Em D
But I'm a substitute for another guy
Em D Em D
I look pretty tall but my heels are high
Em D Em D
The simple things you see are all complicated
Em D
I look pretty young
Em D A D/F# A
But I'm just backdated yeah

Chorus 1

D A/D G/D D
Sub-stit-ute your lies for fact
A/D G/D D
I see right through your plastic mac
A/D G/D D
I look all white, but my dad was black
A/D G/D D
My fine-looking suit is really made out of sack

Verse & Pre-chorus 2

D G D
I was born with a plastic spoon in my mouth
G
The north side of my town faced east
D
And the east was facing south
Em D Em D
And now you dare to look me in the eye
Em D Em D
Those crocodile tears are what you cry
Em D Em D
It's a genuine problem, you won't try
Em D
To work it out at all
Em D A D/F# A
You just pass it by, pass it by

Chorus 2

D A/D G/D D
Sub-stit-ute me for him
A/D G/D D
Sub-stit-ute my coke for gin
A/D G/D D
Sub-stit-ute you for my mum
A/D G/D D
At least I'll get my washing done

Bass solo

D / / / G / / / D / / / / / / x2

Repeat pre-chorus 1**Breakdown**

D / A/D / G/D / D / x4

Repeat verse & pre-chorus 2**Repeat chorus 2****Repeat chorus 1****THE WHO SUBSTITUTE Intro****TRACK 55**

♩=140

1

5

The first four bars are Townshend's famous intro riff, which also doubles as the chorus later on. For the last four bars, notice that the chords land on beats 2 and 4 – a rhythm which continues into the verse. More important is that trademark tight delivery. Strum hard and aim for metronomic timing to ape Pete's groove.

THE GAS STATION

REAL WORLD REVIEWS OF THE
BEST NEW GEAR

Welcome to the GAS (Gear Acquisition Syndrome*) Station! Every issue, TG scours the market for the hottest new gear and brings you transparent reviews that you can trust. From the smallest of accessories that make your life easier, to big investments such as brand new guitars, amps and effects pedals – if it's worth your attention, you'll find it here!

HOW WE TEST

CURATION

Our product selection is driven by our love of gear. We select the most exciting products on the market every month to bring you opinions you can trust.

FACE-VALUE REVIEWS

We're not gear snobs here at *Total Guitar*. We judge it on whether it looks good, sounds good and plays well – not by the name on the headstock.

*WHAT IS GAS?

Gear Acquisition Syndrome is the guitar-player's never-ending urge to acquire new gear, irrespective of whether they actually need it. Don't pretend you don't have it – we all do!

NO SNAKE OIL

You won't find us getting hung up on hokey mythology or nonsense marketing speak: we aim to bring you bullshit-free opinions on the gear you're interested in.

WE CAN'T BE BOUGHT

TG review scores are a true reflection of our experts' opinion on the product they've been testing. You'll never find a rating in our mag that has been bought and paid for.

REAL WORLD REVIEWS

We test every product under the conditions that they were designed for. For example, if an amp is designed to be played loud, rest assured that we'll have tested it at rehearsal/gig volumes!

BEST BUY AWARD

TG Best Buy Awards are reserved for stand-out products that earn a five-star rating. This is the best, most exciting new gear that you *need* to check out



BEST FOR...

Different guitarists have different needs. This badge highlights a particular strength that a product has in a TG Test or Group Test, so you can choose what's best for you



089 START ME UP!

Five new items for your rig

090 BLUGUITAR AMP1 IRIDIUM

A 100-watt amp... At your feet!

094 EPIPHONE JASON HOOK M-4 EXPLORER

An updated signature model from the Five Finger Death Punch guitarist

096 FENDER MUSTANG LT25

Fender's accessible, easy way to get to grips with recording, effects and modelling

098 TG TEST: WASHBURN BELLA TONO SERIES

Affordable acoustics that mean serious business

104 OVERDRIVE ROUND-UP

Four off-the-shelf overdrives to try today

106 SINVERTEK DRIVE N-5

Heavy gain for your clean amp



SUPERB, A BEST BUY



EXCELLENT



ABOVE AVERAGE KIT



SOME ISSUES



POOR

01



04



03



02



05



START ME UP!

Five new products to fuel your GAS this month...

BOSS WAZA-AIR

1 This wireless headphone system aims to restore the natural dimension, resonance, and 'moving air' feel of a real amp. The system offers three different sound environments, while its tones and controls come courtesy of Boss' stage-class Katana amps. Five amp types deliver tones from clean to high-gain, plus a full-range voice for bass or electro-acoustic. There are also more than 50 effect types, including mod, delay and reverb options, and the system comes loaded with six onboard memories to store setups. (£378, www.boss.info)

JOYO TC-1 TONE CHAIN

2 This easy-to-use multi-effects boasts footswitches for distortion, overdrive, delay and tap tempo (which also functions as a tuner), with each available as a separate effect. Each effect has its own adjustable parameters – mix, feedback and time for delay; gain, level, tone and a lo/hi switch for distortion; and drive, level and tone for overdrive. Other features include a cabinet simulation function, FX loop send and return and stereo and balanced outputs. (\$129, joyoaudio.com)

MESA/BOOGIE CABCLONE IR AND IR+

3 Impulse responses are rapidly becoming a staple effect in modern guitar amp rigs, but Mesa/Boogie has gone one better by teaming IRs with a reactive load and power attenuator, forming what could well be the best direct amp boxes on the market. There are 16 IRs onboard, with two banks of eight presets, including a host of classic Mesa cabs, and you can add your own, too. There's also a reactive speaker load for running your tube amp direct without a speaker cab. (from £599, mesaboogie.com)

MORLEY VOLUME PLUS

4 Tosin Abasi has collaborated with Neural DSP for his signature plugin, which boasts three onboard amp models – Clean, Rhythm (offering a wide range of dynamic gain), and Lead (featuring a booster for super-high gain and harmonically-rich metal tones). Effects-wise, you get Abasi's superlative Pathos overdrive and Logos compressor, plus a nine-band EQ, post-amp digital delay and reverb effects, and over 70 impulse responses captured by Adam Getgood. (\$129, morleyproducts.com)

JHS COLOUR BOX V2

5 Though you may not know it, some of the most iconic guitar tones of all time were created by plugging a guitar direct into a mixing desk, such as The Beatles' *Revolution*. Josh Scott's original Colour Box sought to replicate the sound of the legendary NEVE 1073 preamp with its two circuits running in series, and this follow-up adds a new set of controls along with its three-band EQ, which can shift each of the frequency bands, allowing you to shape the bass, mid or treble frequencies in more detail. (£399, jhspedals.com)



90



BLUGUITAR AMP1 IRIDIUM EDITION

£749

How good can a 100-watt four-channel amp at your feet be?

What a time to be alive – amps and cabs at our feet! Well, in modelled form, at least. But that counts for more now than ever, as the likes of Line 6, Helix, Kemper and Fractal have raised the game in recent years. BluGuitar's first Amp1 impressed us on its release in 2014, but it was a different proposition than the modelling

channel head at your feet – as opposed to a multi-effects unit with amp and cab models like the Kemper Stage, Line 6 Helix series and Fractal's forthcoming FM3. It's focussed on providing four preamp voices; three of them overdrive channels. There's also a clean channel designed with humbuckers in mind. There is cab modelling here too, though. The Amp1 Iridium Edition uses

survive the bashes of life on your 'board. The attractive blue and purple LED lighting on the logo and pedals also nods back to Blu's H&K roots. On the subject of lighting, the Nanotube 100 valve also glows behind its window on the Amp1's face. But what part does it actually play?

The Amp1 Iridium preamp is solid-state analogue. The Nanotube drives the 100-watt class D output stage/power amp. So it's a combination of solid state and valve with a pinch of digital in the brew too; the onboard reverb is the only digital part of the signal here. Plugging our SG Special into our cab, it's a trip through gain city as you go up. It's loud, too – not 'loud for a small unit'; we mean serious headroom. But with the PowerSoak feature it also sounds great at 0.15 watts of power.

The channel names do a very good job of explaining their characters, but it's not exclusively for metal palettes (though there are two other Amp1 models available to suite less gainy tastes). The Vintage channel here works well with the bridge single-coil/neck humbucker Tele we brought along for the ride; think hot-rod blues for Hendrix or even more

UNAPOLOGETICALLY VOICED FOR GAIN-LOVING PLAYERS

crowd in that it offered a tube-driven power section with an all-analogue signal path. It's the brainchild of German pro guitarist and former Hughes & Kettner engineer, Thomas Blug. This is the latest edition of his Amp1, and it's not to be confused with Strymon's recently released Iridium amp modeller. The chemical element iridium is from the platinum group, and BluGuitar's is unapologetically voiced for high-gain-loving metal players.

But not exclusively so, as we'll find out. It's important to stress this is a pedal amp – a multi-

loudspeaker models with impulse responses for recording direct, but they can be turned off if players prefer to use their own. The Amp1 offers an immediately clear setup to have in front of you – and that's kind of refreshing in this era of do-it-all wunder-units with small screens and complex interfaces. The Amp1 is designed to take on the amp role only and to work alongside your pedalboard and multi-effects. So how well does it shine in its field of expertise?

With a matte black aluminium casing, this has stealth looks and a sturdy feel that should confidently

1 CLEAN CHANNEL

The clean channel offers a good balance between West Coast boutique warmth and Fender cut for various pickup types and is an ideal platform for widening the Iridium's scope even wider alongside the amp's own boost and your overdrive pedals.

2 NOISE GATE

On the Amp1's left side are tone and volume Custom Controls for fine-tuning individual channels to your specific guitar/s, a parallel and serial FX loop switch and the three-mode Noise Gate; Off, Soft offering minimal gating between playing and Metal – a very good hard gate that proves especially effective for the Modern channel.

3 NANOTUBE

The sub-miniature vacuum tube used for the power amp here is soldered into place and more resilient than traditional tubes. It offers a very long lifespan, so maintenance will not be required here.

AT A GLANCE

TYPE: 100W valve pedalboard amp with solid state power amp and valve power amp

CONTROLS: Clean Volume, Overdrive Gain, Overdrive Master, Bass, Middle, Treble, Reverb, Master, Boost, Modern Volume and Tone, Classic Volume and Tone, Clean Tone; Clean/Overdrive, Boost, Reverb, Parallel/Serial, Noisegate.

SOCKETS: 1/4" input, 16 ohms & 8 ohms outputs, effect Loops: series/parallel, switchable +4/-10dB, FX Send & Return (2 x 1/4" Jack), Rec/Headphone Out (1/4" TRS-Jack);

DIMENSIONS: (W x D x H): 245 x 192 x 68 mm

WEIGHT: 1.2kg (2.6lbs)

The Ol' Switcheroo

Pedalboard amp by name...

It's understandable you'll have go-to sounds on the Amp1 that you want to call up quickly with the footswitches, and BluGuitar caters for that with Preset Mode. In the default Standard Mode, the left pedal switches between the clean and a drive channel, the middle switch activates boost and the right switch kicks in the reverb. Preset mode allows you to assign Clean, Vintage, Classic, Modern, Boost or Reverb to any of the three switches. You can use a standard amp footswitch or BluGuitar's own Remote1 to add in even more options too.

raucous garage rock tones. Classic is great for moving from EVH hard rock to the old-school gain of Maiden and Priest. The Iridium brings a smoother boutique warmth but it's never woolly; it really shines for our neck humbuckers, offering clarity where some amps and modellers feel muddier. Many will jump straight to the Modern channel; and we can't blame them. Think Metallica's 'Crunch Berries' Boogie territory; ...*And Justice For All*-levels of chug moving to more sharp prog-metal tones. The response and note articulation is immense,

and the onboard noise gate keeps it all tamed. This really feels like a full-bore head because it's designed to be one, just scaled into a floor unit. We can't help thinking of our experiences with Victory's preamp pedals; it's hard to dial in a tone that isn't impressive.

BluGuitar's professional musician mind has really put thought into making the Amp1 comprehensive, because in addition to the superb channel tones, there's two crucial features that make all the difference. The onboard footswitchable room reverb is musical and never

overpowering. The onboard boost acknowledges some of us just love to have a Tube Screamer to up the ante for rhythm and singing lead lines. The Amp1 Iridium Edition absolutely delivers on its premise and it's hard to fault for anyone looking for a high-gain, portable amp without compromise.

Rob Laing

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	USABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★



The sturdy, stealth-looking aluminium casing should survive life on your pedalboard



ALSO TRY...

VICTORY V4 KRAKEN PREAMP PEDAL

£349

Two channels and valve powered, but this is a preamp only so you'll need another amp's power section or dedicated power amp like Orange's Pedal Baby.



HUGHES & KETTNER BLACK SPIRIT 200

£789

The new unit from Thomas Bug's old employers is the Amp1's closest comparison, and with four analogue channels, digital modulation and delay, it's a serious rival on value.



SEYMOUR DUNCAN POWERSTAGE 170 GUITAR AMP

£329

Another way to power from the 'board, but you'll need pedals to supply the gain. It offers a whopping 170 watts of power to cover gig situations and includes a three-band EQ.



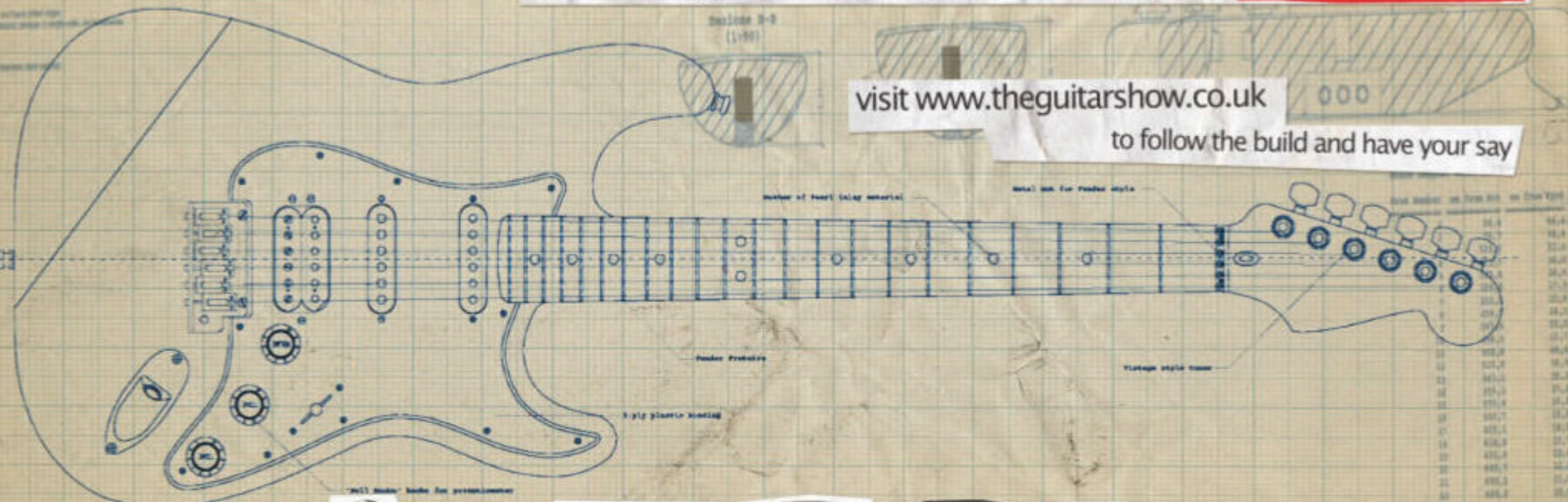
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GGG-07
Guitar rack



GHD-01
Guitar humidifier

GGG-03
Robot-shaped collapsible guitar stand



GGC-03
Metal Capo





EPIPHONE LIMITED EDITION JASON HOOK M-4 EXPLORER OUTFIT

£599

Five Finger Death Punch's guitar wizard unveils his debut Epiphone signature

Having earned his stripes in Alice Cooper and Vince Neil's bands before joining Five Finger Death Punch in 2009 – one of the fastest-rising heavy acts of the 2000s – Jason Hook is undoubtedly one of metal's modern masters. More recently, the Canadian was tapped by Epiphone to design a more affordable version of his 2013 Gibson M-4 Sherman. Much like the band he plays in, the custom racer-style red and white finish won't be to everyone's tastes, though the overall quality and affordability do more than enough to compensate.

it's an instrument that doesn't feel unreasonably bulky or heavy. The deeper upper body cutaway and angled scarf could actually make this one of the most playable Explorer-type guitars ever made, ideal for riffers and shredders alike. Thanks to the Grover Locking mini-Rotomatics machine heads and Locktone bridge and tailpiece, this is also a machine that feels remarkably dependable – a trusty workhorse players can really dig into without having to worry about tuning slippage. As is often the case with the best artist signatures, you don't necessarily have to be a fan of the

ONE OF THE MOST PLAYABLE EXPLORER-TYPES EVER MADE

In fact, it's the kind of instrument that would make an ideal project guitar to strip down and/or repaint purely because of how much you get in return for spending so little. The pickups are exactly the same as its limited-run Gibson equivalent, the classic pairing of a Seymour Duncan SH-1 in the neck and SH-4 in the bridge offering plenty of bark through higher gain channels settings without sacrificing any of the harmonic richness when voiced clean. Equally impressive is how loud the guitar resonates in your hands – just like you'd hope from any Explorer, it really does feel like you can hear all the extra mahogany, whether unplugged or overdriven to ooze endless sustain. That said,

player or indeed any associated bands to get the most out of said instrument. The sheer quality of the design and construction makes Hook's Epiphone debut a worthy consideration for anyone on the lookout for an inexpensive Explorer that can comfortably handle it all, taking you from screaming metal intensities to more subtle variations of jazz, rock and blues. It's hard to see where anyone could go wrong here.

Amit Sharma

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	PLAYABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★

- 1 MACHINE HEADS
The same Grover Locking mini-Rotomatics used on the more expensive Gibson Hook signature for maximum consistency and reliability.
- 2 BODY
A custom deeper upper cutaway and angled scarf for enhanced playability, providing easier access to all 22 Super Jumbo-sized frets.
- 3 PICKUPS
A fair amount of tonal ground covered courtesy of the tried-and-tested Seymour Duncan Vintage '59 and JB humbucker set.

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Mahogany
NECK: Mahogany
FINGERBOARD: Granadilla
NECK JOINT: Glued-In, Set Neck
SCALE LENGTH: 24.75"
NECK PICKUP: Seymour Duncan SH-1 Vintage '59 Humbucker
BRIDGE PICKUP: Seymour Duncan SH-4 'JB' Humbucker
CONTROLS: 1x Neck Volume, 1x Bridge Volume, 1x Master Tone
MACHINE HEADS: Grover Locking mini-Rotomatics
BRIDGE: LockTone Tune-o-matic
TAILPIECE: LockTone Stopbar



Photography: Olly Curtis





FENDER MUSTANG LT25

Modelling, effects and recording made easy

£139

From apps to computer software, mini headphone amps to rackmount modellers, there's no shortage of products available for us to plug into in order to practise playing the guitar. If anything, the amount of choice can be somewhat overwhelming, with interfaces replacing your amp, your amp doubling as an interface, all with pretty much everything you actually need under the hood.

the wrong button, you'll forgive us for actually feeling quite refreshed as we connect our guitar with a jack cable and start trying out sounds. That's not to say the Mustang isn't well-stocked – there are 30 on-board presets designed to get you playing and show off the variety of sounds within. Scrolling through each one is made easy by using the large encoder to the right of the screen. If you want to tweak the preset by swapping amp models

breakup of a Champ being pushed into overdrive. But the LT isn't just about clean or pushed sounds. There are some meaty higher-gain emulations on offer too, and they're equally as impressive at times as the more 'Fender-y' tones. Effects vary from utilitarian compression and gates, through to some more exotic sounds such as an octaver, an auto-wah and some surprisingly high-quality delays and reverbs.

Call us luddites, but we think the Mustang LT is pitching itself perfectly. By Fender's own description, it's aimed at beginners and students, and while the feature set here isn't crazy compared to some late-2019 offerings, what it does, it does very well. We enjoyed the un-fussy simplicity and interesting sounds, and most importantly, it made us want to keep playing! This part of the market features some strong competition, but the 'Stang has proved itself once more.

Stuart Williams

UN-FUSSY SIMPLICITY AND INTERESTING SOUNDS

Fender is no newcomer to the modelling amp game, its Mustang amps have always impressed us with the number of features, sound quality and ease of use. So what's the LT25 all about, then? Well, it's a modelling combo featuring an eight-inch speaker, 20 amp models, 25 effects, USB connectivity, and an auxiliary input. In an era where seemingly everything connects to everything else over bluetooth, requires some sort of smartphone integration and will switch your lights off if you press

or effects, it's as intuitive as pressing the encoder and scrolling through each category. When you're done customising, you can save your sound or just jump presets to discard your changes. Operationally, it's a joy in that we barely need to put our pick down – making our playing session uninterrupted.

That's great, then. But it's moot if the tonal weight isn't there to back it up. When we think of Fender amps, we're obviously transported to the super bright, clean spank of a Twin, or the smooth, mild

1 AMP MODELS
The Mustang LT covers all the tonal ground you're likely to need, from classic Fender cleans to higher-gain models

2 EFFECTS
With 25 effects built-in, the Mustang has you covered for dynamics, modulation, filters, pitch-shifting, delay, reverb and more!

3 USB
This lightweight combo can also double as an audio interface for recording your guitar to your computer

AT A GLANCE

- TYPE:** Digital modelling amp
- AMP MODELS:** 20
- EFFECTS:** 25
- CONTROLS:** Gain, volume, treble, bass, master
- SOCKETS:** Input, headphones, aux-in, footswitch, USB
- OUTPUT:** 25 watts
- CONTACT:** Fender EMEA, www.fender.com

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	USABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★

Photography: Neil Godwin



Words: Jonathan Horsley / Photography: Neil Godwin

WASHBURN BELLA TONO SERIES

It's good tone by name, but is it good tone by nature for Washburn's new series of Studio-sized acoustics?



For a split-second we thought Washburn was getting into the canned fish market with the Bella Tono series but – hold the mayo – Bella Tono translates as “good tone”, and this series is big news because it sees the Chicago-based guitar giant introducing a new body shape. OK, that’s not as dramatic as ‘Washburn’s skipjack tuna steak in brine’, but it’s nonetheless a tasty move, with the new Studio body design offering a more compact playing experience without compromising on tone. Not only that, but these compact, Chinese-made instruments

have an abundance of visual flair, a feel tailored for today’s player, options for onboard pickups and preamps, and all at a competitive price.

With the flagship models, the quite exquisite Elegante 24S and the electro-acoustic Allure SC56S, complementing their more affordable kin, the electro-acoustic Vite S9 and purely acoustic Novo S9, it certainly looks as though the Bella Tono series is well positioned in a hotly-contested market. And in the not-so-distant past, such a series would have been impossible at this price. Not so today, but with that comes rising expectations, and there’s only one way to find out if the Bella Tono series will meet ours...





ELEGANTE S24S

£439

Spruce almighty!

What is the build like?

Very nice. The Elegante features a solid spruce top with beautifully figured pau ferro laminate on the back and sides. The premium feel continues with the ebony fretboard and the details in the finish. There's abalone all over the shop, with the mountain and 'birds in flight' fretboard inlay, and the ostentatious rosette and purfling. There's even abalone to complement the padauk and ebony binding.

This looks a little smaller than the others in the series?

Ever so slightly. It shares the same depth but is 70mm thinner



than the Novo when measured across the lower body bout. The difference is subtle but surely contributes to the Elegante being such an accessible, welcoming instrument.

How does the pau ferro perform?

The CITES restrictions on rosewood have been lifted in recent months but it remains to be seen if the industry's go-to replacement will be phased out, especially for instruments at this price. And why should it? It looks stunning, and on a smaller-bodied acoustic such as this it helps keep the low-end tight.



AT A GLANCE

KEY FEATURES: Solid spruce top with select pau ferro back and sides, quarter-sawn scalloped bracing, mahogany C profile neck, 25.5" scale, 20 frets, ebony fretboard with abalone 'birds in flight' inlay, ebony bridge, diecast gold tuners

FINISH: Gloss Natural [as reviewed]

CONTACT: 01462 480 000 / Washburn.com

NOVO S9

£169

A serious entry-level guitar

What can I expect from the cheapest in the series?

Value, and plenty of it. Sure, the Novo has a laminate construction, with spruce on top and walnut on the back and sides, but at this price the finish is immaculate. Here, Washburn has plumped for okoume for the neck, which offers a more lightweight – and cheaper – alternative to mahogany.

That finish looks a bit different...

It's Gloss Charcoal Burst, and while it might not be the traditionalist's choice it nonetheless complements Washburn's tonewood choices nicely. And besides, if you're going all-in for



that moody singer-songwriter vibe it might be more your speed than cherry red.

What makes this so good for beginners?

It's so playable. Sharing the same slim C neck profile as the others in the series and its shallow body, the Novo is less intimidating a proposition for beginners than a dreadnought or jumbo. Not that long ago, beginner acoustics could be a chore to play, but instruments such as this will keep you playing longer. And, of course, the price isn't bad either.



AT A GLANCE

KEY FEATURES: Select spruce top with select figured walnut back and sides, quarter-sawn scalloped bracing, okoume C profile neck, 25.5" scale, 20 frets, ebony fretboard w/lotus inlay, ebony bridge, diecast black tuners

FINISH: Gloss Charcoal Burst [as reviewed]

CONTACT: 01462 480 000 / Washburn.com

ALLURE SC56S

£489

Life's a beach

What is the pickup system like?

Those who have played Washburn's Apprentice series of electro-acoustics will be familiar with the Barcus Berry LX4 pickup. Positioned on the shoulder of the instrument, with the pickup fitted underneath the saddle, the LX4 features an onboard tuner, and controls for bass, middle, treble, volume and presence. Like the others in the series, we find the Allure offering well-balanced tones, and the LX4 doesn't step all over the guitar's natural voice.

The arm rest is a nice touch. Does it make much of a difference?

It is and it does! The Studio body shape already sees the Bella Tono



series prioritise comfort, but the super-smooth bevel is very kind on the forearm.

And what about that fretboard inlay?

It's quite insane. And there's nothing like a taste of tiki island beach paradise in turquoise and abalone to brighten up your set at the Star and Garter. It might be a bit much for some. Besides, the Allure is already a handsome instrument, its solid spruce top and laminated acacia back and sides is immaculately finished in high-gloss.



AT A GLANCE

KEY FEATURES: Solid spruce top with select acacia back and sides, quarter-sawn scalloped bracing, mahogany C profile neck, 25.5" scale, 20 frets, ebony fretboard w/abalone and turquoise island inlay, comfort arm rest, abalone purfling, maple binding, Barcus Berry LX4 pickup and onboard tuner, ebony bridge, diecast gold tuners

FINISH: Gloss Natural [as reviewed]

CONTACT: 01462 480 000 / Washburn.com

VITE S9V

£219

Pimp my S9

This looks familiar?

Well, yes. Take the S9, give it a Venetian cutaway, install a Barcus Berry LX4 pickup system and onboard tuner, garnish with some vine inlay et voila! The Vite S9V. And it's perfect for those who liked the look of the S9 but really needed an electro-acoustic option.

That pickup system at this price? Not bad.

Indeed, and it makes the Vite a persuasive option for those seeking an affordable, playable instrument to play some shows or hit the high street with a songbook and an open gig bag to collect the



change from passersby. It can't be overstated how useful an onboard tuner is on a guitar at this price. As with the Allure, the LX4 is powered by a 9V battery, fitted discreetly in a compartment on the lower treble-side bout.

The cutaway looks inviting...

If upper-fret access is a priority, this is as good as it gets in acoustics at this price. Inveterate noodlers will enjoy exploring the territory between the 14th and 18th frets – especially when the neck profile encourages fleet-fingered playing.



AT A GLANCE

KEY FEATURES: Select spruce top with select walnut back and sides, quarter-sawn scalloped bracing, okoume C profile neck, 25.5" scale, 20 frets, Barcus Berry LX4 pickup and onboard tuner, ebony fretboard w/exotic wood vine inlay, ebony bridge, diecast black tuners

FINISH: Gloss Charcoal Burst [as reviewed]

CONTACT: 01462 480 000 / Washburn.com



HEAD TO HEAD

How do these Washburns compare to one another?

The Bella Tono series' Studio body shape is going to please those who tend to find a regular dreadnought or jumbo a little unwieldy, and a parlour too much of a toy. The Studio shape is shallow, with a four-inch depth, and is similar to a grand concert or auditorium style. The full 25.5-inch scale feels reassuringly familiar, the tone reassuringly full and well-balanced across the series. Tone-wise, the series plays the percentages.

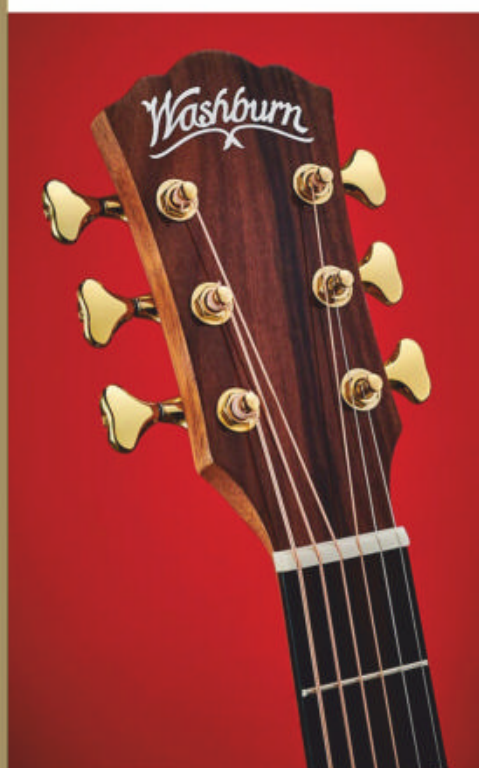
Indeed, when launching the Bella Tono acoustics at NAMM 2019, Washburn promised "to maintain the tight lows, focused mids and clear highs commonly associated with larger body sizes", and while it is no surprise to find a tight, upfront precision about the upper-mids across the series (which is articulate and convincing in the Novo and Vite models and has a bell-like chime quality in the premium Allure and Elegante instruments), there's plenty of low-end authority, too. There is no shortage of volume.

THE SERIES IS NAMED 'GOOD TONE', BUT PERHAPS VERSATILITY IS ITS STRONGEST SUIT

While the Novo and Vite share much DNA, with a similar laminate construction and finish, and an all but identical feel, too, the Allure and Elegante are quite different instruments, with the latter using pau ferro laminate on the back and sides, the former laminate acacia. Both are strikingly figured. The high-on bookmatched pau ferro back on the Elegante is jaw-dropping under its high-gloss finish, and the Allure, with its comfort arm rest and ornate finish, has a real premium quality, and a playability that is hard to beat in an instrument at this price.

If there is one thing that is common to all in the Bella Tono series, it's that each instrument accommodates all kinds of playing styles. Whether you are a fingerpicker, a devout flatpicker or implement a hybrid style, there's a lot to love about the modern C profile and the player-friendly dimensions of the body. Sure, the series is named 'good tone', but perhaps versatility is its strongest suit.

The walnut back and sides makes for an appetising finish on the Allure SC56S



The Allure SC56S and the Vite S9V boast incredibly useful in-built tuners

FINAL VERDICT

Which tasty tone-maker is the true breadwinner?

If you are a gigging musician who's looking for a super-playable acoustic with a decent pickup and preamp system, the Allure is the one. But we would love to see a stripped down version without the tropical abalone island inlay. For many, that will be too much decor when a more low-key rosette and inlay would let the guitar speak for itself – something it's more than capable of. But in terms of build

quality and playability, this is a lot of guitar for the money. So too is the Elegante, which out of all the guitars in the series is the hardest to put down. Again, it might be over-dressed, but its punchy voice and easy ride makes for a seriously addictive acoustic. Each guitar in the series came out of the box with an impressive setup, the finishes largely unimpeachable save for the odd bit of grit in the body cavity. Beginners and those on

a budget will find a lot to like in the Novo and Vite. Tonally there's nothing between them, but we liked the more subtle inlay on the Novo, and if you can do without the pickup then that might be the guitar that presents the best value. What we'd like to see next are left-handed options, a little restraint with the abalone, and – with the Studio body shape a winner – an expansion of the series. Over to you, Washburn.

WASHBURN BELLA TONO ELEGANTE S24S



WASHBURN BELLA TONO NOVO S9



WASHBURN BELLA TONO ALLURE SC56S



WASHBURN BELLA TONO VITE S9V

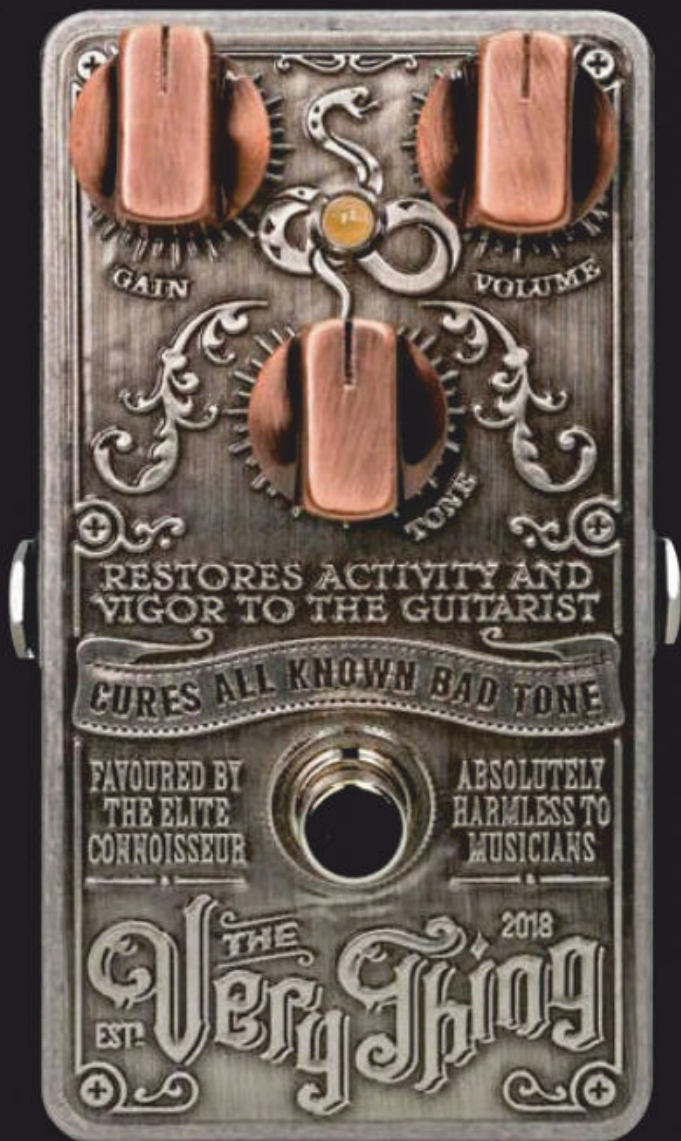


SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	PLAYABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	PLAYABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	PLAYABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	PLAYABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★



OVERDRIVE ROUND-UP

Overdrives are as overdone as they are classic, with every circuit modded, improved, redesigned and re-imagined almost to death. By ‘overdrive’, we’re primarily speaking of pedals that use soft clipping and volume gain to achieve their tone, with the most legendary example being the Ibanez Tubescreamer. With so many different possibilities in tone-shaping and clipping available within the framework of an op-amp amplification circuit, it’s perhaps inevitable that most new releases are minor tweaks of what has come before. Nevertheless, there’s still lot of innovation possible, particularly when builders bring a wholly novel circuit to market. Here, we’ve picked a few recent releases that are hopefully a little out of the ordinary, to see if they stack up.

Snake Oil Effects The Very Thing

£149

TUBESCREAMER-ESQUE

Much has been made of Snake Oil’s connection with Rob Chapman, while their kitschy art and names scream fad – but what do they sound like? Well, The Very Thing is a Tubescreamer-like boost, which excels when driving our Marshall-voiced open-ended 5W valve amp into saturation. The drive range on the pedal itself is somewhat limited, but it does clean up well. Popping the back off, we find a well-known variant of Jack Orman’s stripped-back Tubescreamer circuit, already the basis for several boutique drives. If you’ve got a decent tube amp already, then this is a solid option.

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	USABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★

Origin Effects Revival Drive Compact

£315

THE REVIVAL, REVIVED

The full-fat Revival Drive, with its myriad of options, had us somewhat bamboozled when we first encountered it, so this simplified version is music to our ears. Although we still needed the manual, it wasn’t as hard to get started and the tones are out of this world. Admittedly, subtle sounds aren’t usually our thing, but this pedal is incredibly impressive in terms of its versatility. The presence control allows for a wide range of articulation, while the blend control keeps the gain level manageable at all times. That said, there isn’t all that much gain on offer, full-stop.

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	USABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★



With thousands of variant models on the market, TG is here to help you pick an overdrive pedal off the shelf, right now.

EHX Operation Overlord Nano

£85

PATIENCE NEEDED

The Operation Overlord is an interesting beast. When we first plug it in, with all the knobs at 12 o'clock, we find it to be very different in timbre from the overdrives we're used to, much more mid-forward than the norm. In terms of the voicing, it feels more geared to a keyboard or electric piano. However, while the bass, mid and treble pots give you fine-grained control over the tone, the voicing never sat quite right with our setup. The gain range is so-so, until you switch it into boost mode, where it comes into its own. It's relatively picky, and required careful dialling in.

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	USABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★

Snake Oil Effects Marvellous Engine

£149

THE OUTSIDER

Okay, when we said these were all overdrives, we might have told a slight lie. Popping off the back of the Marvellous Engine reveals it's a ProCo Turbo RAT circuit with some mods, making it technically a distortion, although it has some decent low-gain tones as well. At the higher end of the gain spectrum it gives the amp a decent workout even with the volume down, and stays relatively articulate throughout. The one major change to the original circuit is a voicing control that can add in additional clipping; more akin to a presence control, but it does open up some additional sonic options.

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	USABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★

AT A GLANCE

BYPASS:
Origin: buffered bypass
Snake Oil: true bypass
EHX: buffered
POWER:
9-volt psu (all pedals)
CONTACT:
Origin: www.origineffects.com
Snake Oil: www.andertons.co.uk
EHX: www.ehx.com



SINVERTEK DRIVE N5 £165

Need a dirty channel for your clean amp? Take 5



Countless drive pedals purport to cram valve amp sound and dynamics into a stompbox, but results vary widely. You may be sceptical of similar claims from Sinvertex – the company behind the TG Best Buy-winning Fluid Time MK II analog delay – that the Drive N5 acts as a ‘tube amp overdrive channel’, but this feature-rammed stompbox is one of the few that actually delivers on its promise.

The Drive N5 is an evolution of Sinvertex’s original Distortion No. 5, which met considerable acclaim thanks to its ability to

mould itself to the frequency response of any amp via a four-band EQ and bevy of switches. The Drive N5 sweetens the formula with an improved dynamic response when you roll back your guitar’s volume knob, and an expanded range on every control.

There’s a ridiculous level of gain on offer, which you can tailor to sound more ‘American’ or ‘British’ using the three-way midrange selector switch, and if you fancy more definition, the top-end switch allows you to increase the pick attack on the high-end. The pièce de résistance

is the mode select switch, which you can set so that hitting the footswitch adds a volume bump, gain boost or both: one stomp activates the boost and a double-tap bypasses the pedal. It’s a killer feature for a stompbox this size and does away with the need for an additional pedal for solos.

It’s hard to say that any pedal is the ‘ultimate’ drive, but the N5 is such a straightforward route to great tone that it genuinely does add an extra distortion channel to any clean amp. High 5!

Michael Astley-Brown

AT A GLANCE

- TYPE:** Overdrive/distortion pedal
- CONTROLS:** Volume, gain, mid, treble, bass, presence, midrange switch, top-end switch
- SOCKETS:** Input, output, power
- BYPASS:** True bypass
- POWER:** 9V power supply only
- CONTACT:** Zoom UK Distribution
sinvertex.com

THERE’S A RIDICULOUS LEVEL OF GAIN ON OFFER

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	USABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★

Find Your Perfect Tone

Every issue, Guitarist brings you the best gear, features, lessons and interviews to fuel your passion for guitar



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REMEMBER

The Tremol-no allows you stop the tremolo movement off in both directions or just one direction

FIX YOUR GUITAR

INSTALLING A

TREMOL-NO SYSTEM

Your guide to fitting the brilliantly-named tremolo-blocking system in place

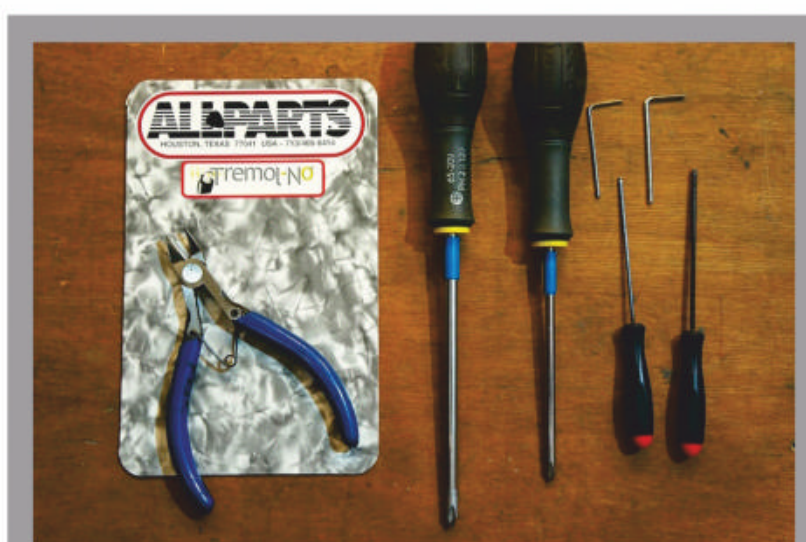
Words: Jack Ellis

There are a lot of odd, specialist gadgets and gizmos out there for guitars, but this one gives a unique advantage – it allows you to block off your tremolo on the fly with nothing but mere knob twiddling. We'll show you how to install it in this walkthrough, but first let's see what it's all about.

It's made for tremolos that are fully floating – that is any tremolo that can move in both directions. It's built to work in Strat and Super Strat designs, which is quite a wide spectrum

of tremolos. We're modifying an Ernie Ball Musicman John Petrucci JP6 here, but the Tremol-no will work on Fenders, Ibanez and basically anything that uses the Fender-style rear tremolo rout.

You may ask yourself, 'Why would I need this?' Well, if you rest your hand on the tremolo for palm muting then you'll see the pitch of the strings raise up, which can be a bit of a pain. It would be a shame to permanently block off such an awesome floating tremolo system...



WHAT YOU NEED

- ▶ Tremol-no unit
- ▶ Allen Keys

- ▶ Wire Cutter
- ▶ PH1 Screwdriver
- ▶ PH2 Screwdriver

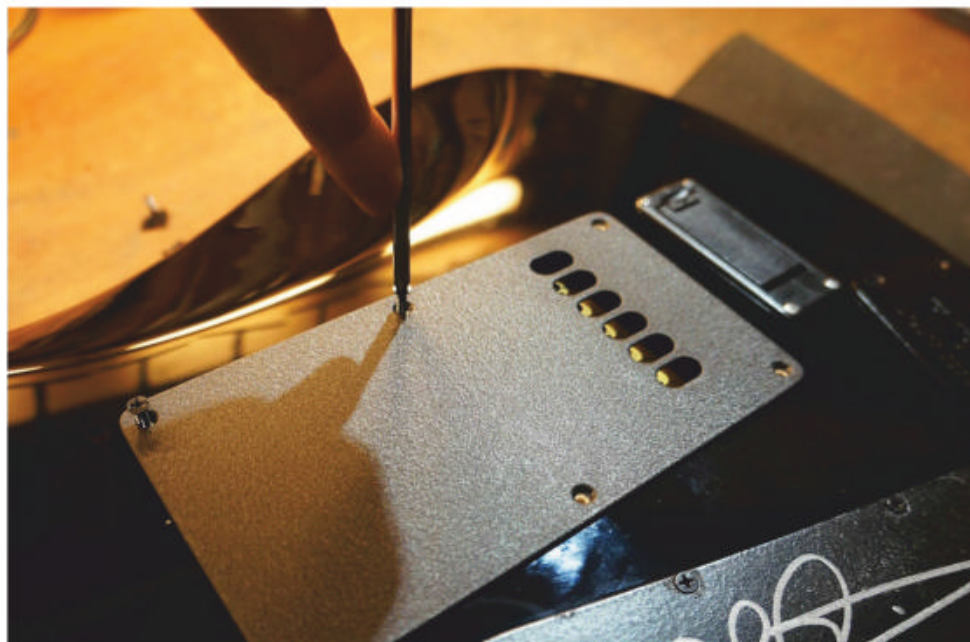
SKILL LEVEL

Easy



MEET YOUR EXPERT

Jack Ellis runs Jack's Instrument Services from his workshop in Manchester. In his career he has worked on thousands of instruments, from simple fixes and upgrades, to complete rebuilds. For more info, see: www.jacksinstrument services.co.uk



1 Gain access. Whip off the back cover and store the screws carefully. These things are easier than a plectrum to lose. Measure the gap between the old claw and the timber as we'll put the new one in the same location. If your tremolo is balanced already you can keep the strings on and 'in tune' – we'll show you why later!



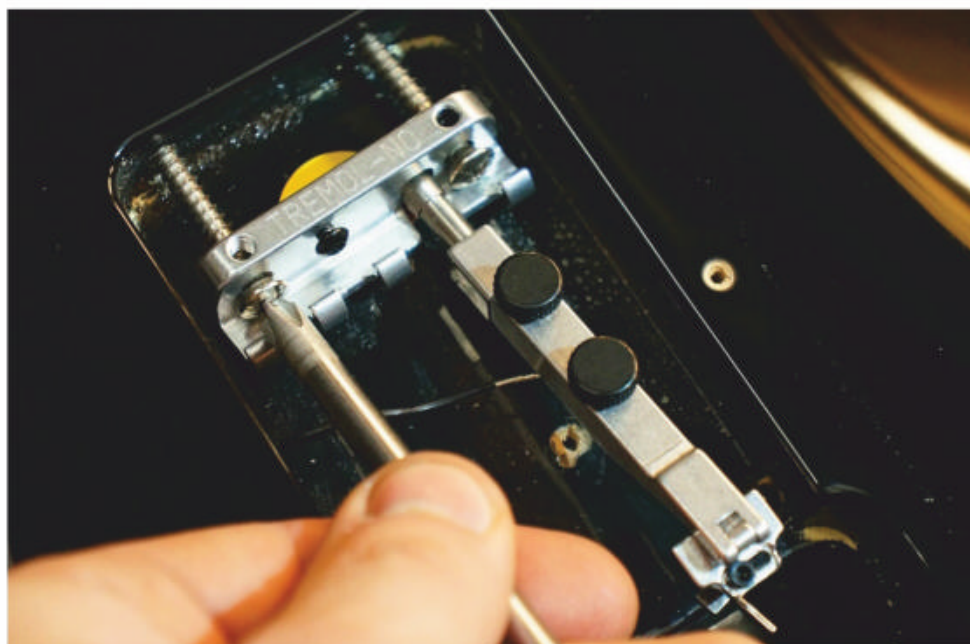
2 As Tremol-no kit comes with its own tremolo claw built in, we need to take out the old one. This starts with removing the three springs. Take note of the orientation of the springs as it may help to replace them the same way as they were. This handy hook tool makes the job a breeze.



3 Let's retire that old tremolo claw now. With the springs out the way it should be dangling around. Using a PH2 screwdriver, unscrew the wooden screws that are drilled in diagonally. They can take some force so make sure you have good pressure on the screw head, otherwise it can strip the screw, and you don't want to go there.



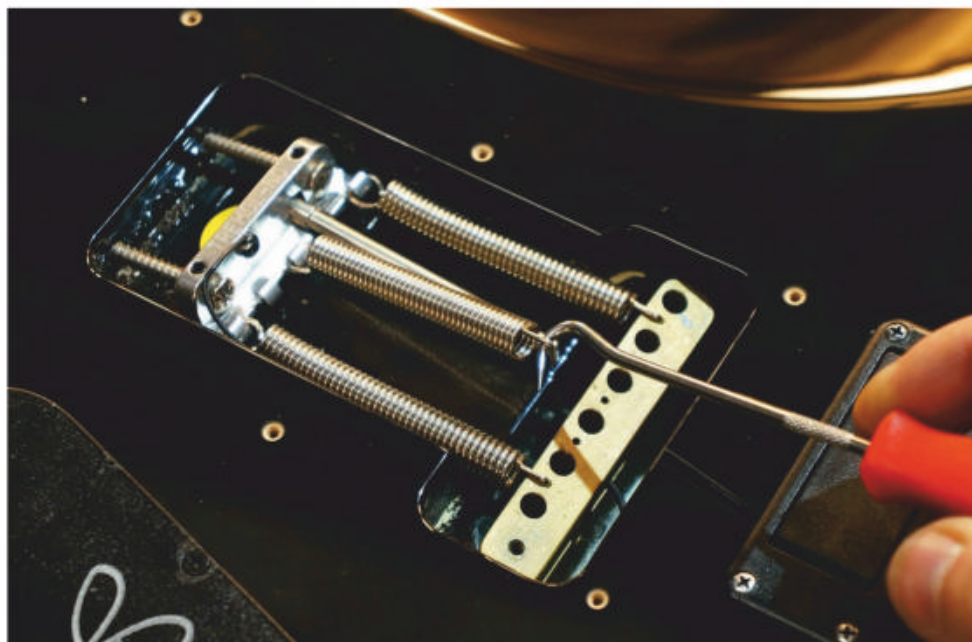
4 On Strat-style instruments there's a wire soldered onto the claw. Chop it off at the claw and we'll replace it later. This wire connects the ground circuit to the claw and therefore the springs to tremolo to strings to you! This helps keep circuit humming down to a minimum, so it's recommended to replace it later.



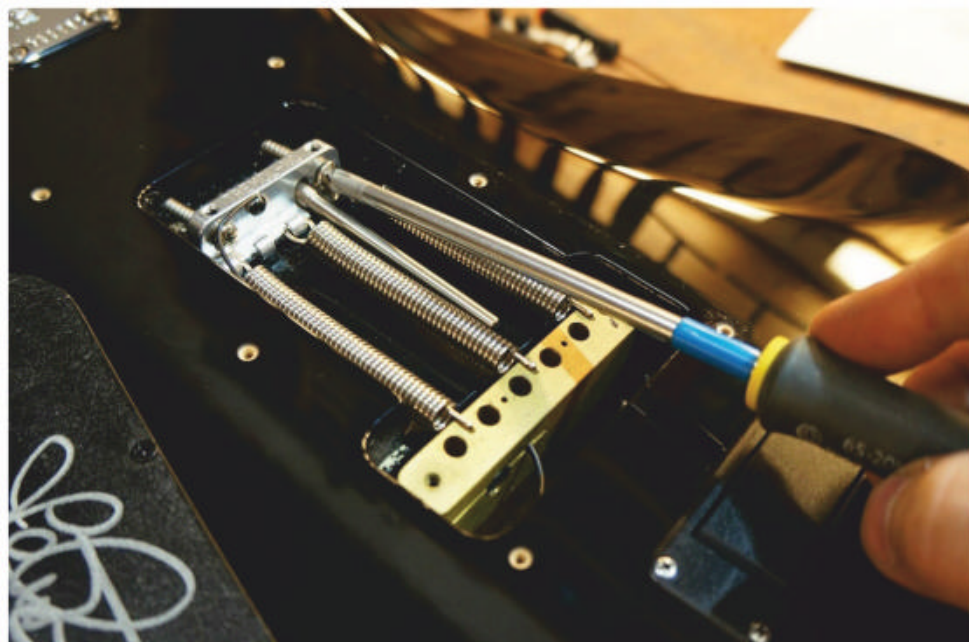
5 Break out the Tremol-no from the packet and screw it in. It's a direct replacement for the old claw, so you know what to do already! It might help you to remove the sliding part from the Tremol-no so it's not in the way while you're working on it.



6 Let's reattach that all-important ground wire back onto the new and improved tremolo claw. You'll never get that soldered to aluminium, so it needs to be bolted on. A good tip is to make a wire loop round an allen key, pop the bolt through this eyelet and when you tighten it should stay put.



7 See how we ended up taking off the slidey parts? We needed a little more space... So it's time to re-spring the tremolo to the claw. We advise starting with the tremolo claw loose with lots of the wooden screws protruding. Pop all the springs in, then you can re-tension the wood screws later.



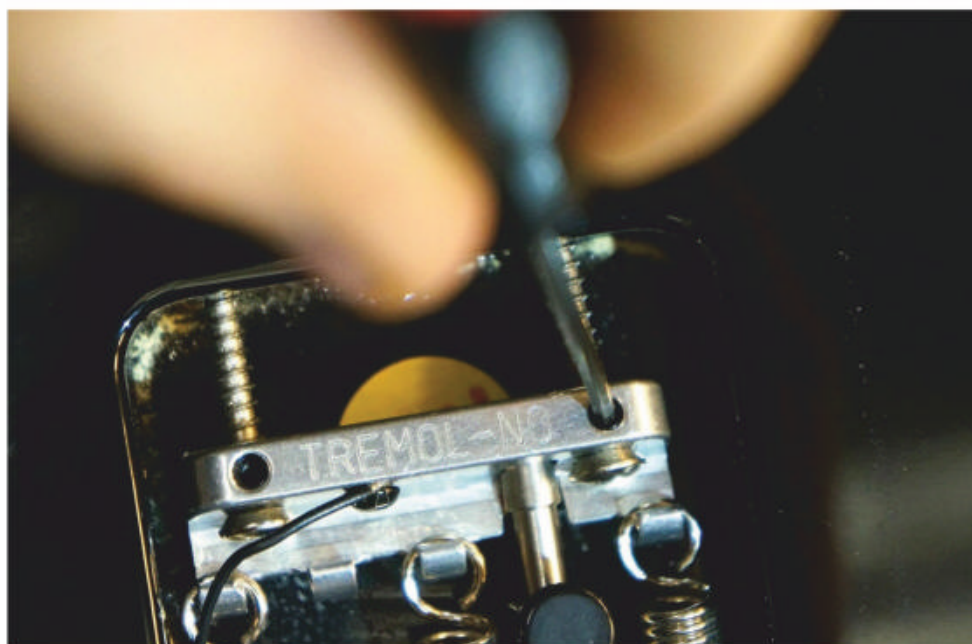
8 If your tremolo was already balanced at the start of all this then you can now tighten the tremolo claw screws back up to re-balance. Either use the measurement you took at the start or tighten until the strings are back in tune! There will be a small bit of tuning slippage sure but you'll be close at least.



9 This is how your floating tremolo should look when it's balanced - the bottom plane is parallel to the string line, and on this guitar, parallel to the paintwork too. If your tremolo is out of whack then you need to re-balance it. Adjusting it is a combination of balancing the spring tension versus the string tension



10 You will have noticed that we've ignored the Tremol-no for a couple of steps. It's designed to augment the tremolo system so we needed to get the trem right first. Tighten up the clamp onto the tremolo string block and make sure it's not misaligned, so it doesn't drag on anything. Don't over tighten it.



11 What use is this gizmo if everything isn't locked in place? Let's do up the final locking bolts. There are two grub screws that anchor onto the tremolo claw wood screws, thus locking the tremolo claw in place. Tighten this up but be wary that it may move the claw slightly. Tweak the screw tension until it balances correctly again.



12 You're done, nice one. The two thumb bolts allow you to lock the whole tremolo down into fixed-bridge mode, whilst the other thumbscrew allows you to use the tremolo-dropping pitch only - handy for heavy palm-muting techniques. You need to let the tremolo balance freely, then butt up against the slider to set it.

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The Playlist

Sepultura's veteran axeman **Andreas Kisser** talks us through the songs that have shaped his life...

**The first piece of music I remember...
Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony***
When I was a kid in the 70s we'd go to my grandfather's house most Sundays. He had come over to Brazil from Germany in the 20s and had a lot of albums, and I remember Beethoven's Fifth especially because it's got a very strong riff – very heavy, very metal! I would stand there with a pencil, pretending to be Herbert Von Karajan conducting the orchestra.

**The song that made me want to play guitar...
Stairway To Heaven – Led Zeppelin**

I started learning guitar on my grandma's acoustic. I wanted to learn to play classical guitar but my real goal was to learn *Stairway To Heaven*. My grandma's neighbour was a music teacher and she started teaching me some chords, some Brazilian pop music, and eventually she taught me the basics of *Stairway*. After that, I never stopped.

The song I tried to learn that I just couldn't nail...

***Rising Force* – Yngwie Malmsteen**

When the album *Rising Force* came out it [in 1984], it changed things. It was insane, fantastic, and it showed a different way to play. I tried to learn the title track and gave up in the end, but the song opened my mind to new possibilities. It ultimately led me to take a more dissonant approach to solos in Sepultura, and helped me get a signature sound, an identity. That is what every artist is really looking for.

**A riff I wish I'd written...
Bloodstone – Judas Priest**

Glenn Tipton and KK Downing were technically amazing and had such good taste, and *Bloodstone* is one of the most original

riffs in metal. The intro is beautiful, it explores the chords and uses open strings – that can create lots of noise on distorted guitar but they control it so well. This riff creates expectation and then goes to the song in a very strong, direct way. It's a masterpiece.

**The song I want to be remembered for...
Guardians Of Earth – Sepultura**

It would be amazing if any of our songs were around and remembered when we're gone! We've got such momentum on our new album *Cuadra*, and *Guardians Of Earth* is like a story in a track, with classical guitar – which is what I love – melodic lead, and very aggressive vocals. It has a bit of everything I've used across my career.



**The greatest guitar solo of all time...
For The Love Of God – Steve Vai**

It incorporates all the known physical possibilities of the guitar. He starts very slow playing the melody and theme, and then he goes everywhere, using every type of technique. But everything makes sense – it's not just a 'workshop' song. It's an amazing composition with Steve playing guitar like Paganini playing the violin.

**The greatest guitar tone of all time...
Scott Ian's with S.O.D.**

Scott Ian's tone on S.O.D.'s albums still gives me goosebumps. For a long time guitarists neglected rhythm playing – they were more concerned with solos, technique and showing off. But he had the perfect, monumental sound for the purpose of the songs, that was the genius of it – doing what the songs ask for. He's also proof that 90 per cent of any player's sound is in their hands.

**The song that reminds me of home...
Crucifados Pelo Sistema – Ratos De Porão**

Ratos De Porão are a hardcore band from Brazil who have a real punk and metal influence. They've been around for over 40 years and they represent that raw, São Paulo sound. São Paulo's a huge city, a metropolis, and their music fits the vibe here.

Sepultura's new album *Cuadra* is out on February 7th via Nuclear Blast.



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