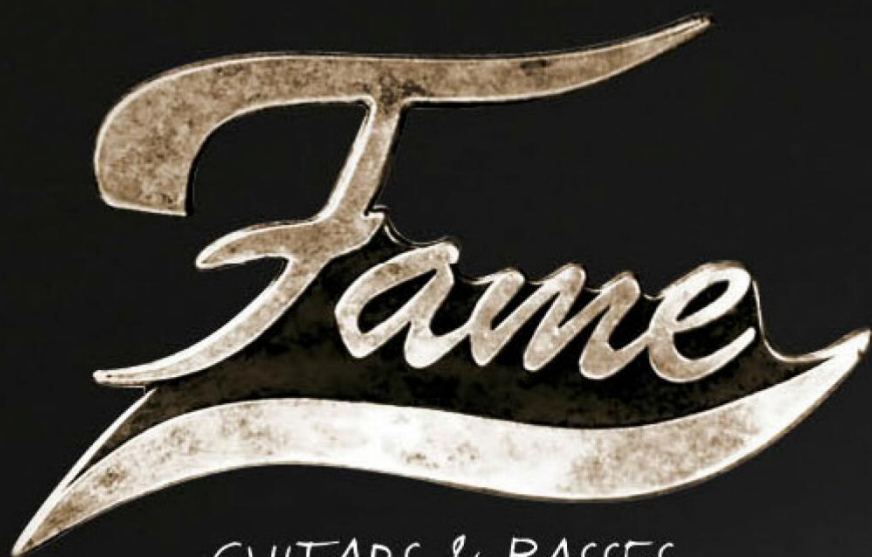




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LEARN
TO PLAY

BIFFY CLYRO
Tiny Indoor
Fireworks

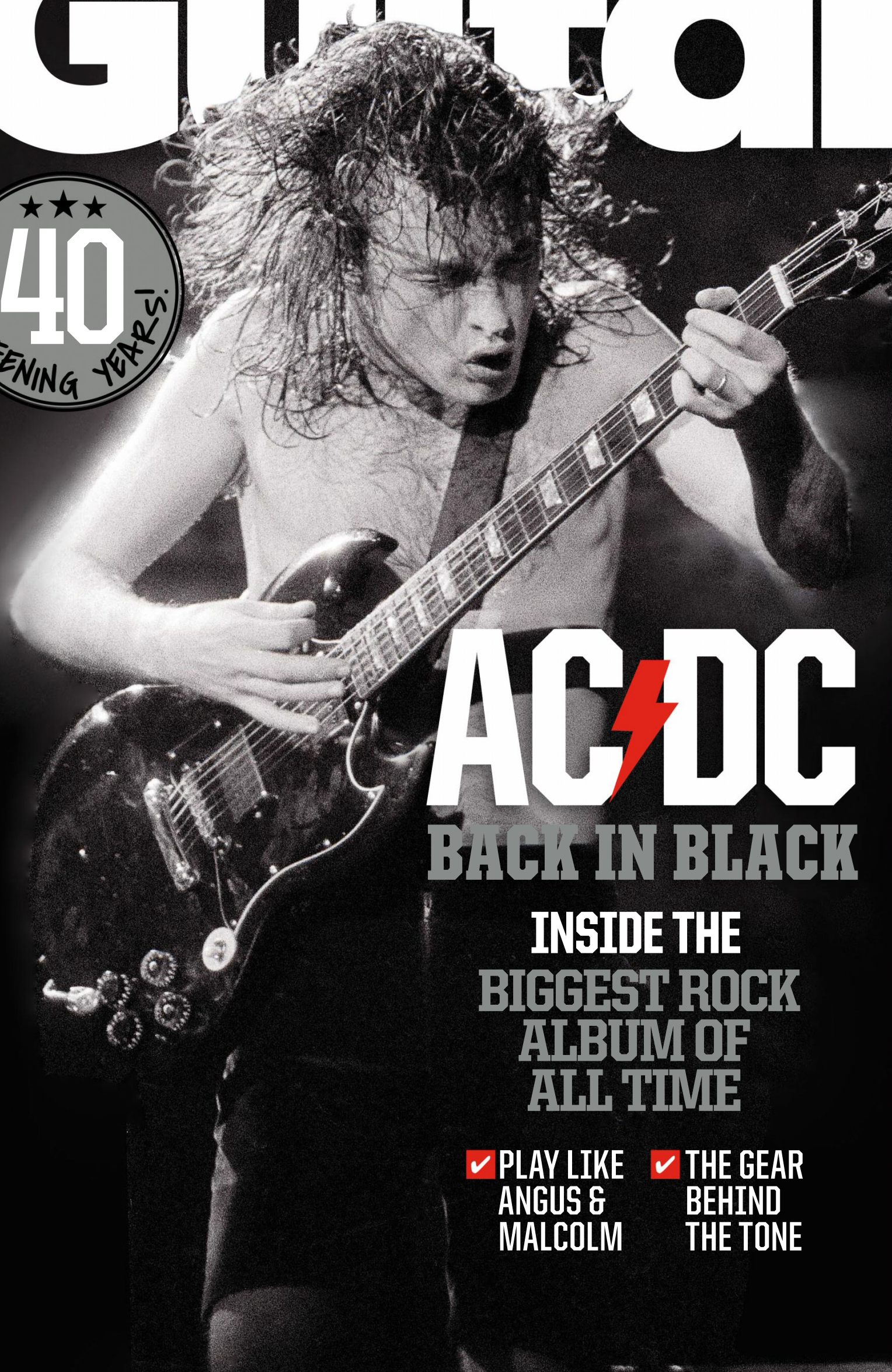
STEVIE RAY
VAUGHAN
Couldn't Stand The Weather

GERRY
CINNAMON
Sometimes

ALSO
STARRING

TOTAL Guitar

PLAY BETTER NOW!



AC/DC BACK IN BLACK

INSIDE THE
BIGGEST ROCK
ALBUM OF
ALL TIME

✓ PLAY LIKE
ANGUS &
MALCOLM

✓ THE GEAR
BEHIND
THE TONE



MUSE

NEW INTERVIEW!
NEW GUITARS!



THE 1975

"OUR FANS SAID:
WHAT THE @*\$*!
IS THIS?"



EVH FRANKIE

HANDS ON:
NEW STRIPE RELIC
+ TECHNIQUE LESSON

PLUS

PHOEBE BRIDGERS
YVETTE YOUNG
KING GIZZARD



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**18-22
august**

TOP 40 AND FUNK with Jason Sidwell



This course is for guitarists that are in bands or are planning to be in one; we will cover typical techniques & theories that will make you a better team player. From picking approaches to band relevant chord voicings.

MODERN BLUES with Gianluca Corona



This will give a fresh perspective on how to add drive, style and invention to the blues, as well as tips to hone your playing including a nod to the likes of Robben Ford, Larry Carlton and Gary Moore. Studying masters like these will help uncover a treasure trove of ideas for today's guitarists.

BLUES SONGS with Neville Marten



The aim for this course is to cover a range of blues tunes from classic to more modern. The onus is on great blues songs that everyone will know and enjoy playing. Guitarists of every level will be able to join in, whether you can improvise full solos or just play chords and a few licks.

ACOUSTIC SONGS with Chris Quinn



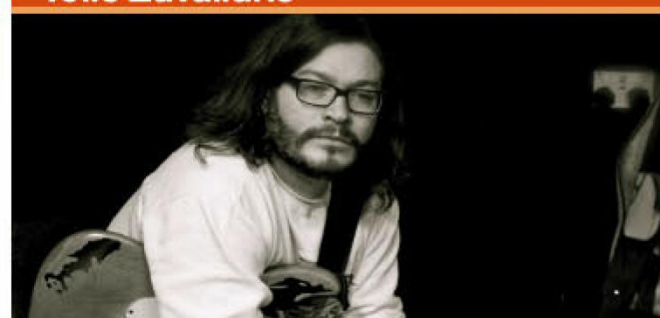
This course focuses on roots based music, ranging from folk to blues songs. You will study guitar techniques used by some of the greats of popular songwriting and also touch on useful fingerstyle methods and open tunings.

'70S ROCK & INDIE ROCK with Jon Bishop



This course will cover many of the main components that guitarists use, ranging from scales and chord riffing through to string bending and use of harmonics. Lots of classic rock and indie riffs will be looked at with iconic songs.

MODERN ROCK with Tolis Zavaliaris



The focus of this course will be on relevant techniques, from picking to legato, and to improve and supercharge your rock guitar playing. Guitarists covered will range from Randy Rhoads to Paul Gilbert, Yngwie Malmsteen to Steve Vai.

JAZZ with Gianluca Corona



This course will cover the basics (extended chords, simple diatonic licks, swing feel, blues) through to more advanced concepts and devices (chord substitution, modal phrasing, outside playing).

GYPSY JAZZ with John Wheatcroft



This course will help to get your playing 'campfire jam' ready, with a hands on look at the fundamentals of this inclusive and engaging style – from using the correct chords and mastering 'La Pompe' to adding authentic licks and lines.



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Production Controller: Frances Twentyman
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Printed in the UK by: William Gibbons & Sons Ltd on behalf of Future
Distributed by: Marketforce, 2nd Floor, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf London, E14 5HU
Overseas distribution by: Seymour International
Head of Newstrade: Tim Mathers

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UK reader order line & enquiries: 0844 848 2852
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Online enquiries: www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk
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Welcome...



You probably already know some of the backstory to AC/DC's iconic *Back In Black* album. By 1980, the band were well established, building on the breakthrough success of 1979's *Highway To Hell* and planning their follow-up when lead vocalist Bon Scott tragically died. Fans thought Bon was irreplaceable. AC/DC could've

ended right there. But, of course, fate would bring Brian Johnson into the picture, a singer Angus Young described as sounding "like somebody dropped a truck on his foot." A pretty good fit then, and, with Bon's soon to be legendary replacement in situ, the band began work on *Back In Black*. A tribute to the late singer and a massive commercial success, 40 years later *Back In Black* remains the best-selling rock album of all time, and is second only on the all-time list to Michael Jackson's *Thriller*.

TG's very own Paul Elliott is a self-confessed AC/DC nut, having interviewed Angus a handful of times – which in my view makes him the man to tell the story behind the making of the album, complete with career-spanning quotes from Angus himself. We've even interviewed 'DC superfan Justin Hawkins of The Darkness who gives his perspective on *Back In Black* and fraternal guitar duos!

Hopefully we'll spark your interest to try out our tutorial on Angus and Malcolm's playing style, too. There's a perception that the duo's playing is simple – and, though there's a seed of truth to that, there's magic behind those simple chords and pentatonic riffs that often goes unnoticed. And, when it comes to Angus' lead playing, well, I'd say he has a habit of playing down his abilities! It's all topped off with Rockschoo's tab of *You Shook Me All Night Long*. Enjoy the issue!

Chris

Chris Bird Acting Editor

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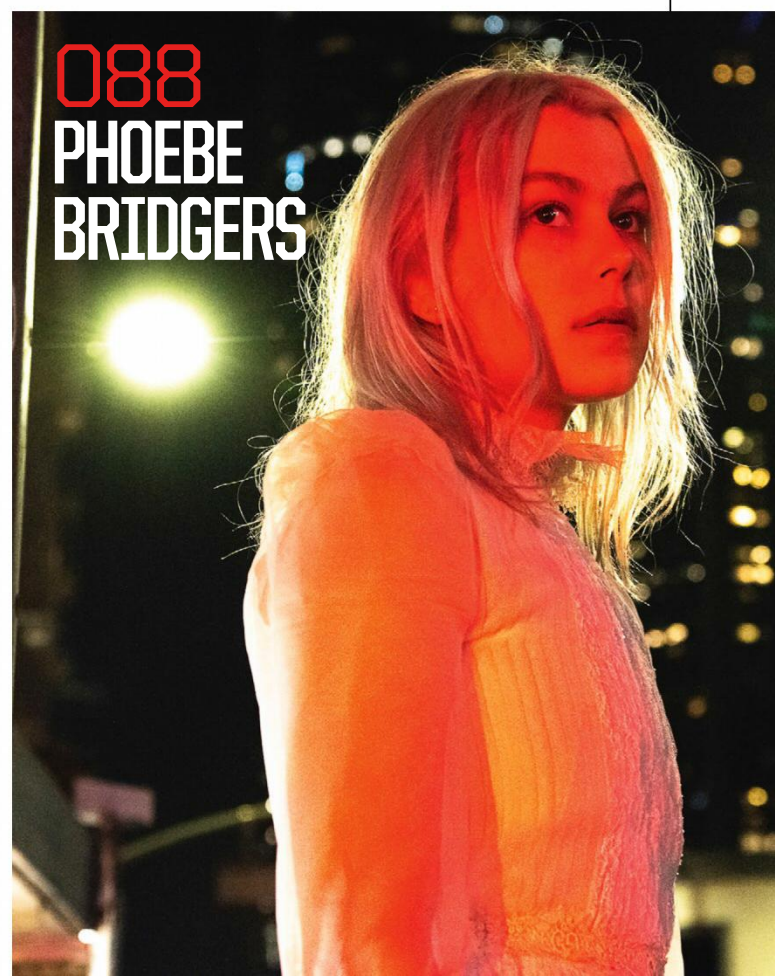
028
THE 1975



038
KING GIZZARD



012
EVH FRANKIE



088
PHOEBE
BRIDGERS

020
MATT BELLAMY

Words: Paul Elliot Photo: Rob Verhorst/Redferns

THE ETERNAL

J

July 18th, 2020 marks the 40th anniversary of the release of Joy Division's second and final album, *Closer*. This photograph from a concert in Rotterdam

on January 16th, 1980 features guitarist Bernard Sumner, playing a Shergold Masquerader, alongside singer Ian Curtis. The band would play only 19 more gigs. Curtis committed suicide on May 18, 1980. *Closer*, issued two months later, was Joy Division's masterpiece. Sounds critic Dave McCullough described it at the time as "breathtaking rock music". A 40th anniversary reissue of *Closer* is out now.



Alongside the album, remastered 12" of 1980 singles *Transmission*, *Atmosphere* (pictured) and *Love Will Tear Us Apart* are included in a deluxe bundle

SCENE

YOUR NEWS IN GUITARS

Squier get freaky with their Paranormal Series



GEAR

PARANORMAL ACTIVITY

SQUIER'S NEW PARANORMAL SERIES SEES THE REVIVAL OF FORGOTTEN FENDER CLASSICS THE TORONADO, CYCLONE, SUPER-SONIC, CABRONITA AND MORE

Summer NAMM may not be taking place this year, but Fender has unveiled the first of its releases due for the show with the Squier Paranormal Series, which brings several forgotten gems from the Fender archive back to life. That means beloved cult classic electric guitars such as the Toronado, Cyclone, Super-Sonic and Cabronita are available again, as well as the Offset Telecaster, a new Baritone Cabronita and a fresh vintage-styled Jazz Bass configuration. These new models all feature poplar bodies available in two finishes (apart from the Baritone Cabronita), and C-shaped, gloss-finished maple necks, as well as either string-through-

body hardtail bridges or Stratocaster tremolos.

Something of a cult favorite among alt-rockers, the Offset Telecaster combines Tele specs with the Jazzmaster body shape. The most affordable incarnation yet boasts two Fender-Designed Alnico single coils, three-saddle string-through-body bridge and gloss-finished slim C-shaped neck.

The Toronado was first launched back in 1998, and teamed a modified offset shape with dual humbuckers. Its Squier revival features a slim, gloss-finished C-shaped neck with Gibson-like 24.75" scale length, hardtail bridge, and individual volume and tone controls for its pair of high-output Atomic humbuckers.

The Cyclone dates back to 1997, with a Mustang-inspired shape but with a little extra

body mass. Squier's Paranormal version features a poplar body, Stratocaster vintage-style tremolo, Jaguar controls and a trio of Fender-Designed single coils. Like the Toronado, it features a 24.75" scale length and slim C-shaped neck.

The original reverse-offset Super-Sonic actually began life as a Squier model launched in 1997. This latest version features dual Atomic humbuckers, a C-shape neck profile, narrow 1.5" nut width and vintage-style tremolo. Not to mention that ace reverse headstock...

The new releases are available to preorder now, and will ship in summer/autumn 2020. Expect a closer look at the new models soon.

Paul Chapman (right)
onstage with UFO in
Oxford, 1980

ROUND-UP

The newspieces
picking our ears up

GABRIEL CYR



SPECTRUM EXPLORATION I

Return of the King

Our Guitarist of the
Year 2018 releases
his debut EP

Canadian guitarist Gabriel Cyr has released his debut solo EP *Spectrum Exploration I*. The four-track EP is available on Bandcamp and streaming platforms, coming after 2018's release of *Desolation*, the second album by Cyr's prog rock band Universe Effects.

Cyr was named Guitarist of the Year at the UK Guitar Show in September 2018 after being judged by a panel of *Total Guitar*, *Guitarist*, *Guitar Techniques* and *MusicRadar* editors.



Orange Crush

Orange Amps launch
Crest Edition wireless
headphones

Orange Amplification have introduced their Crest Edition wireless headphones, which last for more than 24 hours on a single charge. Available now. www.orangeamps.com

OBITUARY

ROCK IN PEACE

PHIL CAMPBELL AND RUDY SARZO PAY TRIBUTE TO PAUL CHAPMAN,
FORMER UFO GUITARIST WHO HAS PASSED AWAY AGED 66

Paul Chapman, former guitarist with UFO and Skid Row, has died aged 66. The news was confirmed by his son in a Facebook post on his father's page: "It is with a heavy heart writing this, today is my dad's 66th birthday. He passed away earlier this afternoon. He was a brilliant, energetic, loving and most carefree person and the first man I ever loved. Everyone he came in contact with loved him. No, ADORED him. Will keep everyone posted on his celebration of life. I appreciate everyone's thoughts and prayers as his family grieves and processes everything at this time. I love you Dad. So much."

Wales-born Chapman had the unenviable task of stepping into the shoes of some of rock's biggest guitarists: he had a brief stint replacing Gary Moore in Skid Row (1971-1972), before joining UFO – first alongside Michael Schenker for the 1974 Phenomenon tour,

and then as his full-time replacement from 1978 onwards. During Chapman's tenure with the band, UFO released four albums – *No Place To Run*, *The Wild*, *The Willing And The Innocent*, *Mechanix*, and *Making Contact* – before the group disbanded in March 1983.

After relocating to Florida, USA, Chapman formed a number of bands, including DOA, Waysted, Gator Country and Killer Bee. In recent years, Chapman spent much of his time teaching one-on-one guitar lessons.

"Just woke up to sad news of Paul Chapman passing," said Motörhead's Phil Campbell. "He was my main influence on guitar for many years and a brilliant bloke. Thoughts are with his family. RIP Tonka."

"I've known Paul Chapman since 1982 when UFO and Ozzy toured during *Diary Of A Madman* tour," said former Ozzy bassist Rudy Sarzo, adding that Chapman was an "outstanding musician and friend."



RIFF OF THE MONTH

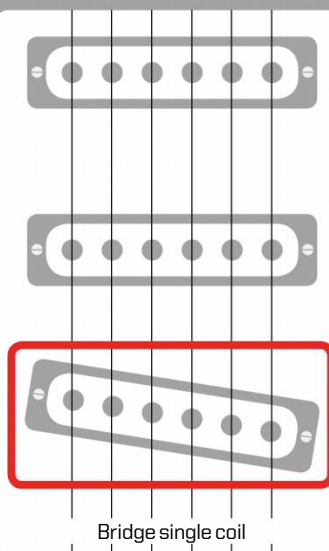
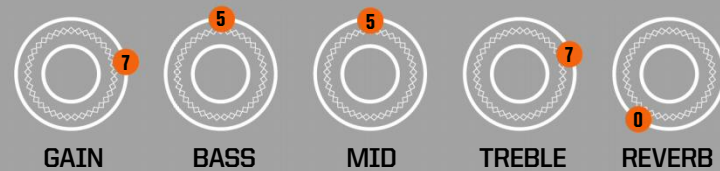
VIDEO
ON YOUR
CD

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ Open Csus4 tuning
- ✓ Open tuned chord shapes
- ✓ Odd time groove

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL OVERDRIVE



Bridge single coil

Simon Neil usually plays a Fender Stratocaster, so, no surprises, a bridge position single coil pickup will give you the best tone here. If you're using humbuckers then expect to have to dial in extra treble bite. Make sure your gain setting doesn't make the sound too muddy by experimenting with using less distortion or winding back your guitar's volume a touch – the intro and verses are actually fairly clean.

BIFFY CLYRO

Tiny Indoor Fireworks

A

ppearing on Biffy Clyro's upcoming ninth studio album *A Celebration Of Endings*, *Tiny Indoor Fireworks* is based around an open Csus4 tuning.

You'll be tuning to CGCFCE, so it's worth making up a hybrid set of strings; use a heavy gauge string for the low C, your usual preferred gauge for the third, fourth and fifth strings, and a lighter gauge for the top two strings,

which, unusually, are tuned *up* by a semitone. All tuned up? Right, let's crack on!

The song starts in 7/4 time and the main riff lasts for seven beats. Strum the opening chords (C5, G, Fsus2) twice, with a pause after the second strum each time. Hold the Fsus2, then strum it eight times with a 16th note rhythm. Next, play the line again with the chords in reverse order. The second half of the riff switches to 4/4 time and includes

some open strings. Watch our slowed down video and listen out for the click track to keep time.

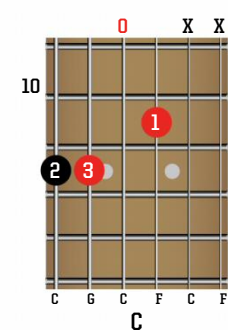
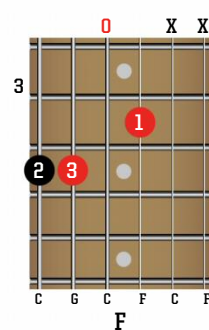
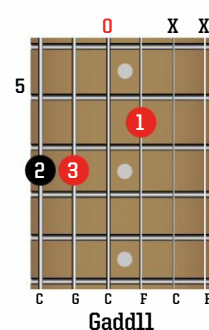
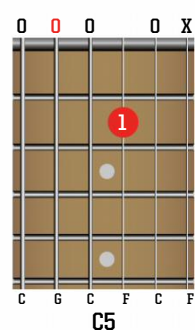
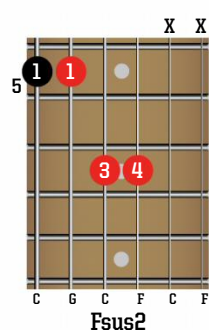
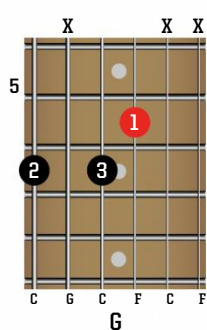
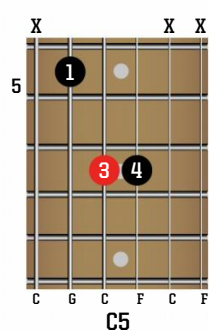
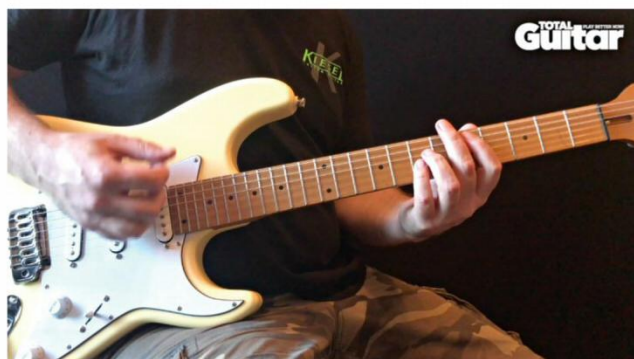
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:00–0:25

Tempo: 144 bpm

Key/scale: C major

Main techniques: Open Csus4 tuning, strumming



These diagrams show the chord shapes used in Simon's Csus4 open tuning. The riffs are based around three chords, C, G and F, but Simon finds different ways to

interpret them. The first part of the intro is based at the 5th fret and starts with a C5 powerchord, followed by some changing bass notes on the 5th and 7th frets.

For the second half, use the open C5 shape, followed by the movable major chord shape for the following chords; keep the fourth string ringing throughout.



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construction for
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Fender

EVH FRANKIE





Words Stuart Williams
Photography Neil Godwin/EVH Guitar

SOME KIND OF MONSTER

EVH'S NEW FRANKIE MODEL STRIKES THE BEST BALANCE BETWEEN AUTHENTICITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF ANY FRANKENSTEIN REPLICA TO DATE. HERE, WE TAKE AN EXCLUSIVE LOOK AT THE NEW MODEL, AND EXPLORE THE ORIGINS OF THE GUITAR IT IS BASED ON, WITH HELP FROM EDDIE HIMSELF

Some guitar players follow. Others build on what came before to innovate with new ideas. More than simply pushing things forward, they propel them into territories that are difficult to comprehend. Eddie Van Halen is the living, breathing embodiment of the latter description in every area of his approach to the guitar. From pioneering techniques and sounds that simply hadn't been heard in the way he did them before, to forensically experimenting with his gear, he's a one-off whose influence reaches far and wide, having set new standards for decades to come with guitar designs, amp tones, effects chains and manipulation of the guitar that are now staples in multiple genres. If Hendrix made the guitar sound like it was communicating with aliens, we wouldn't be surprised to learn that it was Van Halen on the other end of the line.

For now though, let's just focus on *that* guitar. You know, the one that merged Gibson and Fender traits with an aesthetic so muddled it'll leave your brain fried trying to describe exactly what it is you're looking at. The guitar that created yet another new standard for the instrument...



Like Brian May's Red Special, Eddie's original Frankenstein is a unique instrument – assembled from seemingly disparate parts – to create something unmistakable. The downside? Replicating it requires the mind of the man who put it together. In 2007, EVH – Eddie's guitar brand under the manufacture of Fender – did just that, tasking the Fender Custom Shop to painstakingly recreate the Frankenstein to exact details. Yours for £16,000 new, but the 300-unit limited edition nature means that if you can even find one, the original price-tag would be considered a snip.

Enter the latest version of Eddie's most distinctive guitar, the Frankie. Following the standard EVH Stripe series of superbly made, affordable production guitars, the Frankie builds on the modern features – selected by Eddie himself – of the 'pristine' models to bring us the closest replica to the original guitar to-date. This includes a number of Eddie's must-have features, including his EVH Wolfgang humbucker, Bourns low-friction volume pot, an EVH-branded Floyd Rose and D-Tuna for re-tuning to drop D in a heartbeat. Then there's that all-important stripe finish.

As Fender has proved before, high-end relic'ing techniques aren't limited to its top-end US Custom Shop models. The Kurt Cobain Jaguar, along with the hugely successful Road Worn series demonstrated just how good a relic from south of the border can be, and a quick glimpse at the guitar confirms that many of the guitar's visual cues are present.

In the meantime, settle down as

a Les Paul and the cut of a Stratocaster often worked in tandem, players began looking for ways to make their instruments match the excess the era was known for. The advent of blues and psychedelic rock, punk and heavy metal had long done away with the polite 'nice boy' image of neatly-presented beat combos, with bands flooding through the doors that Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath and many others had smashed off their hinges. Gentle whammy bar flutters had given way to all-out pitch assault. Guitar tones changed from clean/crunchy/fuzzy to hi-fi, gained-up, detailed and powerful. The electric guitar was here to party, and with that came a whole lotta changes.

Eddie Van Halen – at this point a pre-teen growing up in California – started his lifelong quest for tone at 12 years old after spotting a guitar in his local music shop. "It wasn't even a music store." Eddie told us in 2015. "It was kind of like a Radio Shack that also sold musical instruments, it was called Lafayette Music. I fell in love with this hollowbody 12-string because of the neck, and the first thing I did was I took six strings off, because it was a 12-string, and I didn't want 12! They didn't have what I wanted in the store, so it had already started there!"

And so Eddie's obsession for tweaking his guitars was born. For his next pursuit, Clapton-loving Eddie set his sights on a Les Paul. "I got a paper route; we didn't have any money and my parents couldn't afford to buy us equipment. So I saved the money from delivering papers for two-and-a-half to three years, and bought my first real guitar: a '68 Goldtop Les Paul with single-coil P-90 pickups. I wanted a humbucking

RIGHT

A closer look at the body, neck and pickups of the new EVH Frankie model

to solder it back properly, then I painted it black and added binding. I did all kinds of crazy sh*t to it. The funny thing is, I only changed the bridge pickup and left the P-90 neck pickup. Since my right hand was covering the bridge pickup, when I played people were going, 'How the f*ck's he getting that sound out of a P-90?!' Because that's all they could see. Little did they know that I'd stuck a humbucker in there!"

While the concept of taking what are now valuable vintage guitars and making permanent modifications is enough to make modern tone-chasers' jaws drop, it's easy to forget that in the 70s, the concept of 'vintage' guitars didn't exist beyond a few choice years of production. These were practically new instruments that were yet to be viewed through the tint of time. So, without any reason to question his modifications, Eddie's next project would give birth to one of the most famous guitars in rock history.

"From there, I bought a Strat, and the rest of the guys in the band hated the way it sounded! And I couldn't really handle the hum, so it was just a logical marriage to – with the humbucker – cross a Gibson with a Fender."

The result is the bare bones of the Frankenstein: the svelte Strat body, complete with whammy bar, with a Gibson P.A.F. humbucker in the bridge position.

"I loved the vibrato bar, and that was probably the most difficult thing; trying to figure out how to keep that thing in tune. Everything from the bridge to the tuning peg had to be perfectly straight. The only reason a tremolo goes out of tune is because of friction. When you bring the vibrato bar down, if the string angle is wrong then it's not gonna slide

"EVERYTHING I DID BACK THEN WAS INTENTIONAL."

we explore the origins of the original Frankenstein, as told to TG by Eddie himself. Thought it was just a DIY paint job? We hope you're sitting comfortably.

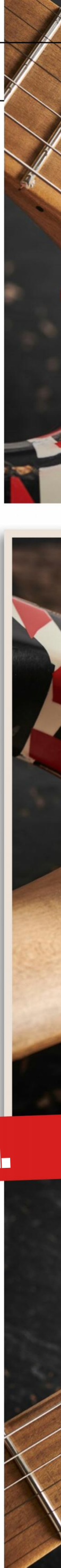
The late 70s and 80s was a renaissance period for the electric guitar: still a young instrument in comparison to many. The music was getting louder and the tones heavier, and players started to look for instruments to match. While the beef of

pickup! But in Pasadena, there were no Les Pauls with a humbucker in them. There was one store in Northern Pasadena – a Les Paul came in and they called me right away 'Hey, we've got a Les Paul!' I walk in and I go, 'Ah, sh*t! It ain't the kind Clapton plays!'. It didn't have humbuckers. So what do I do? I take the chisel to it right away!

"I hunted down a humbucker, took a chisel and made the hole bigger and crammed it in there. I was lucky enough

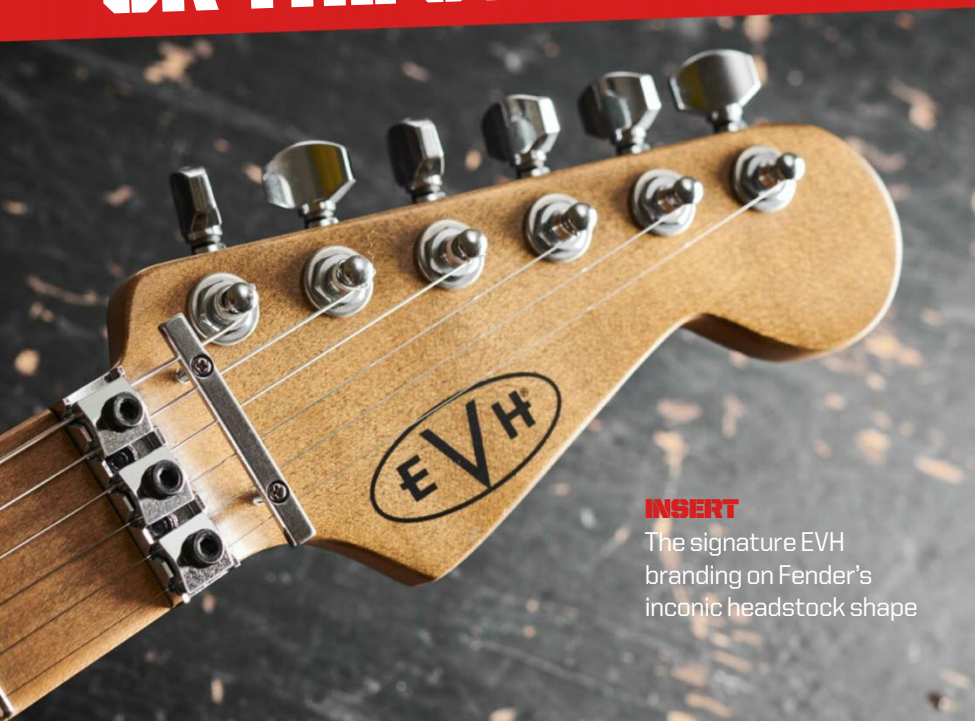
back to its original position. So, I would do things like take the string and put it through the tuning peg hole and wind it up instead of down, so there would be no tension on the nut to the tuning peg. I had a brass nut that I cut larger grooves into, and I put oil in it all to eliminate any friction that could cause the string to hang up."

"Another problem is Fender Strats always have the string retainers, I removed them. Again, to eliminate any other factor that would cause the string





OR THE OUTCOME OF A MISTAKE!"



INSERT

The signature EVH branding on Fender's iconic headstock shape

to not slide back and forth smoothly. As a result, if I hit an open string too hard it would pop out of the nut. So, I'd have to keep my index finger on the other side of the nut to keep it from popping out! I got away with that – in the club days, through the whole first record and live on tour. That's how I used the stock Fender tremolo until the locking tremolo was introduced [see boxout]."

With the vibrato problems overcome, there was still the issue of getting a humbucker into the Strat body, and Eddie approached fitting the humbucker with similar abandon.

"[The humbucker] is from a [Gibson ES-] 335. I yanked it out of there. I took the rear pickup out and it was really hard. I mean... I pretty much destroyed that guitar because you had the f-holes to get to the electronics. Man! Talk about a pain in the ass! I just yanked the stuff out and once I got the pickup out I said, 'F*ck this guitar!'" The P.A.F. was wax-potted and re-housed in a DiMarzio casing before finding its new home in Eddie's Strat body – a move that would cause confusion amongst tone hounds for years to come.

"But wait! There's also a single coil in the neck position, and the skeleton of a five-way switch where the middle pickup should be!" Well spotted. The single coil isn't functional, and therefore the switch doesn't need to actually 'switch', merely to be wired to keep the pickup's signal flowing to the rest of the electronics. Eddie puts this down to simply not being able to figure out the wiring for the single coil and the switch.

This ethos of both working with a plan and forming spontaneous ideas

is evident throughout the Frankenstein: the volume pot that's labelled 'Tone', the quarter-section of scratchplate, the industrial-strength eyelets in place of strap locks on his original. And of course, that unmistakable finish.

"It wasn't a tape finish, I used tape to paint it that way." Eddie told us. "I have no idea what possessed me to do that! Everything I did back then was either intentional, or the outcome of a happy mistake." As far as mistakes go, they don't come much happier than that...



RAISING THE BAR

Eddie on how the Floyd Rose became his whammy of choice

"So, in '79, somebody goes, 'Hey, there's a guy here named Floyd Rose and he wants to show you something'. He comes in and goes [with cupped hands], 'You wanna try this?' and I say, 'Sure, what the f*ck, why not!?' So I gave him one of my guitars and asked him to put it in because I didn't know how to do it. It was different to the Fender tailpiece and it wasn't a direct swap.

"So I tried it, once it was ready to go and... It was a pain in the ass! For one, the Allen screws on the neck were very small, and in order to torque it down you'd either strip the Allen key or the screw would strip. But more importantly, when you're playing the guitar, things bend and they move and the neck shifts a little bit. Depending on the temperature of the gig from the beginning to the end, the temperature fluctuates. So between every, f*cking, song I had to unclamp and tune! And then Dave and the rest of the guys would be going, 'Is he ready yet?!' It was just a pain in the ass. So, first I told him, 'Beef the thing up!', because I kept snapping sh*t.

"So he comes back the next year with a beefed-up model. But there was still the problem of having to tune between every song, so I told him, 'Put some fine-tuners on it. I played a little cello and violin when I was in elementary school and those instruments have finger adjustable fine-tuners. Okay?' So that's what I meant.

"Then the third year, he comes along and goes, [cupped hands] 'I did it!', and I go, 'No! You f*cking numbnut!' Because now you needed a wrench to fine-tune it! So now instead of three, you've got nine, you know? I'm going 'No, you idiot, I meant f*cking finger tuners! You've seen 'em before!' Then he patents the fucking thing behind my back. P*ssed me off... Whatever!"

EVH STRIPED SERIES FRANKIE

Hands on with the affordable relic'd Frankenstein replica

You've read the story of the original, but how does the new Frankie stack up? Well, without having Eddie Van Halen's Frankenstein to hand, we need to judge this guitar on its own merit. Here are the standout Frankie features...



1 NECK & FINGERBOARD

EVH necks have always impressed us, and the Frankie's lives up to previous models we've played. It's 22-frets, with a standard 25.5" Fender scale length. The compound radius is the same profile as found in other Stripe models, but here, the already-comfortable oil finish takes on a new level of familiarity thanks to its worn-in appearance and feel. It's smooth, comfortable, fast and very playable.

2 HUMBUCKER

The Wolfgang humbucker is a tonal delight, particularly under some gain where it delivers the thick, harmonically rich tone of a bridge humbucker that we hear in our heads, minus the wool that some 'buckers are associated with. Its finishing move, though, is the clarity and separation you get, even with hefty

distortion. Interestingly, the original Stripe series humbucker was mounted parallel to the strings, but the Frankie's is tilted at an angle like Eddie's. If you've ever wondered whether a properly aligned and spaced pickup really makes a difference in a Strat-style guitar, we'd suggest using a Frankie as Exhibit A.

THE FRANKIE'S NECK LIVES UP TO PREVIOUS MODELS:

UP CLOSE

**Relic'ing**

Fender's relic'ing process reveals the EVH's basswood body on the rear. Or, do it yourself with years of constant gigging!

**Tuners**

Like most of the EVH's guitars, the Frankie comes equipped with EVH-branded Gotoh tuners.

**Scratchplate**

The spliced scratchplate is one of many oddities on the Frankie, and the holes where the electronics should be are blocked off.

3 TRUSS ROD

A Strat neck it might be, but this one is reinforced with a graphite (rather than standard steel) truss rod. What's more, the usual options of either trying to fit a key into a narrow rout, or having to remove the neck to adjust the relief of the neck are easily diverted by the thumbwheel at the neck-joint. It's small considerations like this that typify the design of EVH guitars. Are they the first and only brand to do it? No. Should other companies? Absolutely.

4 D-TUNA

If you've ever tried balancing a Floyd, you'll have learnt just how painful tearing your own hair out can be. So, when you have a Floyd-equipped guitar and your bassist suggests playing in drop D, it's no wonder you've also considered how best to attack someone with a set of Allen keys. The D-Tuna solves this issue – no need to unlock anything and risk throwing out that finely adjusted Floyd. Simply pull a lever and boom, your bottom string drops by a tone.

5 FLOYD ROSE

The Frankie's Floyd is set flush against the body – as per Eddie's preference – and there's no carve underneath. This means you can drop the pitch but you can't raise it. Is that a problem? It wasn't to Ed, so we can live with it. The included Floyd here is a licensed model, made by EVH and featuring a brass block with chromed finish.

**6 DUMMY SINGLE COIL.**

Relic'd guitars divide quicker than Carol Vorderman armed with a scientific calculator. So, if the Frankie receives criticism, it'll be of this pickup and the five-way switch that sits in the middle pickup rout. They aren't wired in, and, though the pickup can become a working model with the aid of your soldering iron, you'll need to introduce a working switch. Thankfully that's possible due to the quarter-section of scratchplate, pre-cut and drilled with space underneath for the switch skeleton. An easy job, but also an easy target for those who rally against relics.

7 FINISH

Eddie Van Halen owns the trademark to the instantly-recognisable striped finish, and its pattern is specific and exact across all Stripe models. But here, we see it in its war-torn state. Fender are masters of the relic'ing process, and this knowledge is imparted to the company's Mexican factory, which means that the aged-fakery is pretty much the best you'll find on a production guitar. It's not modelled exactly on Eddie's original – nor does it claim to be – but it is very convincing.

Original scratchplate screwholes, paint bleed and tape lines as well as decades of grime all contribute to an authentic ageing. The finish is satin urethane rather than the nitrocellulose used on Fender's Road Worn guitars, and as such is potentially more hard-wearing and likely to age differently. We suspect this is intentional, replicating Eddie's DIY paint job rather than recreating vintage mojo.

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Basswood
NECK: Quartersawn maple (graphite reinforced)
FINGERBOARD: Maple, 12"-16" compound radius
FRETS: 22, Jumbo
SCALE: 25.5"
PICKUPS: Direct Mount Wolfgang® Humbucking (Bridge), Dummy Strat® (Neck)
CONTROLS: Volume
SWITCHING: Dummy five-way blade
HARDWARE: Relic'd chrome
FINISH: Red with black and white stripes relic
CONTACT: evhgear.com
MSRP £1,329

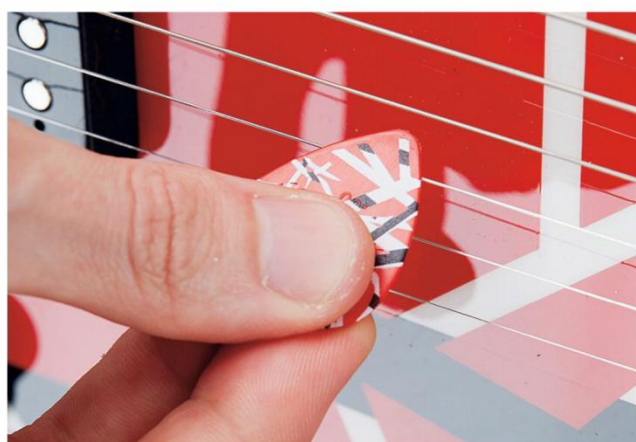
SMOOTH, COMFORTABLE, FAST AND VERY PLAYABLE



ATOMIC PICK

If you want to get Eddie's lead tricks down, you're going to need to pick like him. Get forensic as we put Eddie's technique under the microscope

Eddie is an aggressive picker, striking the strings hard and percussively. With a huge arsenal of playing techniques at his disposal, he constantly moves his pick hand around the guitar body to make adjustments to the volume knob and pickup selector, to use his whammy bar or the kill switch, and to find the sweet spot for his signature harmonics. Donning a 2016 standard EVH Striped Series guitar, we put together this simple breakdown of the techniques you need to know to play like the legend.



1 THUMB AND FIRST FINGER

Sure, Eddie takes a standard thumb and first-finger grip at times, but he'll also switch to thumb with first and *second* fingers.



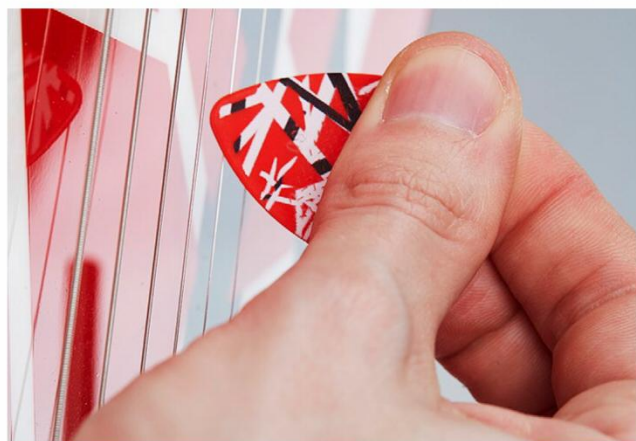
2 THUMB AND SECOND FINGER

For tapping and kill-switching, Eddie tends to use his first finger, preferring to hold the pick between thumb and second finger.



3 HYBRID PICKING

For 'pick and fingers'-style riffs (such as *Hot For Teacher*), Eddie lifts his second finger off the pick to reach the higher strings.



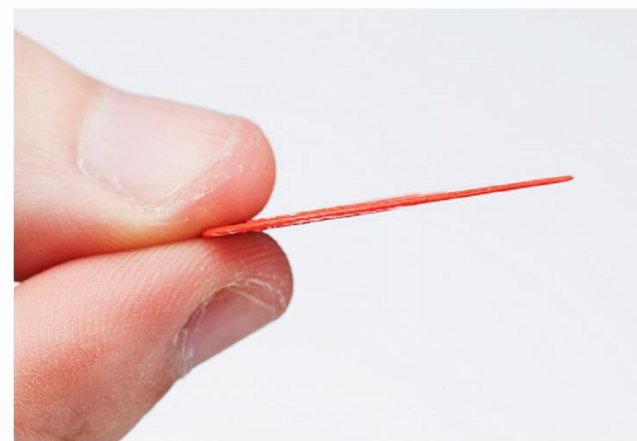
4 TIP OF THE PICK

Eddie often plays with a lot of the tip showing, even on fast licks. It's unusual for lead guitar, but who are we to argue?



5 TAPPING

Sometimes Eddie keeps hold of the pick in the 'instep' of his middle finger and rests his thumb on the neck to keep his hand steady as he taps.



6 A BENDY PICK

Eddie's signature pick is a surprisingly thin and bendy 0.6 mm. Conventional wisdom says this is too thin for accuracy, but it works for Eddie!

SHRED LIKE ED

With plectrum firm in hand, we turn our attention to the techniques that make Eddie one of the all-time greats of guitar

Eddie's use of thin picks points to the fact that he's not renowned for alternate picking, usually combining legato and picking for speedier licks or using less strictly-timed tremolo picking instead.

Furthermore, he will always be remembered as the man who popularised two-handed tapping. For the uninitiated, this simply means that you 'tap' the strings against the frets with a picking-hand finger – and it's a relatively

easy way to play blazingly fast. We're also taking a look at Eddie's trademark pinched harmonics, whammy bar tricks and his often underrated rhythm guitar style. You might as well *Jump* right in!

TREMOLO PICKING

TRACK 07

$\text{♩} = 90$

TAB

2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 7

BU

12 — 14 — 14(17)

The idea is to play rapidly alternating downstrokes and upstrokes on each note – a typical EVH technique that's used in the *Beat It* solo, for example. Steady, even picking is key to success.

CROSS-STRING TAPPING

TRACK 08

Here we're mixing up tapping and pull-offs in a repeating phrase - an idea Eddie used in *Hot For Teacher*. Aim to re-pick the string with your tapping finger as you move away after each tap.

BLUESY PINCHED HARMONICS

TRACK 09

♩ = 55

PH

BU

BU

BU

1/4

T
A
B

Digging into the descending notes of a blues scale lick is a trait of Eddie's. The positions of the harmonics alter as you change fret so try to shift your pick in tandem with fretting-hand moves.

PITCHWHEEL WHAMMY SCOOPS

TRACK 10

This lick essentially boils down to six notes. Pick only the first note, dip the bar on the second note, then pull off, hammer on, dip again, then pull off to finish. Aim for a steady, fluid sound.

RHYTHM & RIFFING STYLE

TRACKS 11-12

♩ = 120

D G/D D A/D D⁵ D Asus⁴ A Dm⁷ C/D G/D F/D Asus⁴ A

TAB

E B B G D A D

1 7 8 10 5 3 3 6 5 3 1 5 5 5

7 7 11 6 2 2 5 4 2 2 7 6 7

9 12 7 0 4 2 5 5 3 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

1 cont. sim

As used in *Panama*, *Running With The Devil* and many more of the band's hits, the idea with this signature EVH rhythm technique is that the bass note stays the same while the chords above change (known as a 'pedal tone' technique). Palm-mute the open sixth string to prevent note bleed. We're in D-Tuna style drop D tuning here.

Words Amit Sharma Photography Jolyon Holroyd

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Muse frontman **Matt Bellamy** on Tom Morello's unending inspiration, buying Jeff Buckley's Telecaster, and how Manson guitars will be at the forefront of the instrument's evolution...

2020

may be a "year off" for Muse, but life in quarantine could hardly be considered a vacation for Matt Bellamy, one of the 21st century's bona fide guitar heroes. The frontman's home studio has been busier than ever, hosting recording sessions for his debut solo outing – symphonic piano overture *Tomorrow's World* – as well as tracking and production work for The Jaded Hearts Club, his Beatles-themed supergroup with Blur's Graham Coxon and The Last Shadow Puppets' Miles Kane.

Don't worry, though: Bellamy will be back to arena-demolishing duties as soon as it's safe to do so. "We're going to get musical and get back in the studio probably next year for another album," Bellamy reveals. "And we

were hoping to do a tour, if the world comes back to any normality – probably in 2021 or 2022." And when he does get back on stage, you can be sure of one thing: there will be a Manson custom guitar slung around his shoulder.

All guitarists love the gear they play, but it takes an extra-special connection with your choice of guitar to become heavily invested in the company that makes them. That's exactly what Matt did when he had a 'Remington moment' in 2019, becoming the majority shareholder in Manson Guitar Works – the brand that evolved from famed UK luthier Hugh Manson's custom-built models into an internationally recognised innovator of guitar design. Of course, it's fair to say that Bellamy's association with the company has had a big part to play in spreading the Manson name across the globe, and his latest Meta Series MBM-1 model with Mansons Guitar

Works and Cort is scheduled to be released soon.

The Muse frontman has been fiercely loyal to the brand for the last 20 years, rarely spotted cradling any other guitar, and his non-traditional requests of effects, MIDI controllers, lasers and unorthodox paint-jobs for his instruments have helped propel the brand's reputation as the company where 'anything goes' when it comes to guitar design. "It really all started from Hugh retiring. It sort of stemmed from that really, him retiring and passing it on to me to keep it going" Matt said of his decision to invest in his favourite guitar company. "It's run by Adrian [Ashton, Manson's MD] and there's about four or five employees there. It was good timing too because at the time the band was finishing a tour last year and it seemed like a good time to put some focus into this.







UNDISCLOSED DESIRES

Manson Guitar Works Pickup designer Simon Thorn investigates the mysterious inner workings of Jeff Buckley's Telecaster

"In terms of other, more higher-end, interesting things that we're working on, I've been doing guitars with [Korg] Kaoss Pads in for a while, and some of the feedback we've got from people who have bought those is that sometimes they didn't realise that you actually have to take MIDI out of the guitar and put it into, whether it be a Kaoss Pad or a synthesizer, or some other MIDI-controlled device. So I've been very keen to try and develop a guitar where out of the box with a Kaoss Pad, it does cool stuff – you don't need to actually attach it to anything else. What I've worked on is a long way from being in production – I've had one made for me that I have on tour, but obviously a lot of labour-intensive time and hours went into it, so it's not quite cost-effective to actually make it saleable yet.

"If you look up the tour that I did last year – the guitar solo in the song *Break It To Me* has the kind of effect that I'm talking about.

It's the electronics and components from a [DigiTech] Whammy pedal, and all of those components are built into the guitar, along with a Kaoss Pad screen. So, essentially, it's a guitar that has a really sort of customisable Whammy scenario – so instead of using a whammy bar, you're using the Kaoss Pad, so you can do anything from pitching up an octave, down an octave, two octaves up, two octaves down, you can even do divebombing, or you can do touch rhythmic playing.

"That's the guitar that I'm most excited about trying to get it to the point where we can actually sell it and make it available. At the

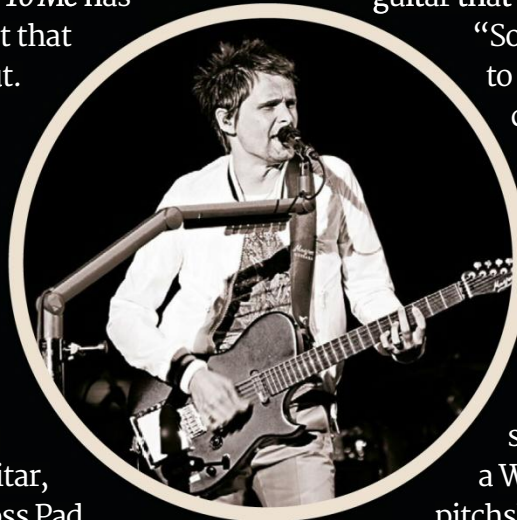
moment, it takes about a month or two just to build one of them. So I'm hoping to get that out, because to me, that's a real evolution and a step beyond what the whammy bar was in the 20th century. I think, nowadays, you can do a lot more with this."

"The main thing I'm focussing on right now is – my favourite effect to have built-into a guitar is the Whammy pedal. I have all the components of that built into the guitar itself, and then I also have the Kaoss Pad as well. So essentially instead of having the whammy bar, I've got the X/Y controller and I can set it to anything from a divebomb to just going up or down a tone, or entire octaves. So at the moment that's very expensive, it's a custom job. You have to dismantle all the components and stuff like that. But we're hoping to do a collaboration with DigiTech where we can maybe launch a guitar that has that built-in.

"So what I'm keen to do is a guitar that can do something quite impressive using the X/Y controller straight out of the box. So it'd have the X/Y controller and something like a Whammy / pitchshifter

components built into the guitar. That's what I have on stage, but we're yet to get to the point where that's even remotely affordable. It's like a £10,000 guitar, so I'd rather do more research where we can find a way to bring the cost of the components down. It'll never be a \$500 guitar, but we might be able to get it down towards the \$2000 range."

"We're starting to talk about getting into effects pedals as well,



"And, obviously, it's personal to me as well, because it's a small business in Devon, which is where I'm from. So where the factory is and all that stuff, it's just down the road from where I went to school."

So, Matt – what products are in the pipeline?

"Over the years we had a lot of enquiries from people who just can't afford to pay the £1800–£2000 for a handmade Manson. So we had a lot of enquiries from people who'd rather be in the \$500-type range. We did some research and looked at companies like Fender, but Fender do the same with Squier. It's that same model that we're using to do the low-priced thing. The Meta series don't always have all the

electronics built-in, but I'm hoping that if our collaboration with Cort goes deeper, we might be able to get some guitars with some of the more special effects stuff built-in.

"We've got the Manson MBM-1 coming up soon. We've been working with Cort – the majority of the guitars that we do are handmade in Devon, but since I've come on board we've done a deal with Cort for a higher volume of guitars at a lower price. We design them, they manufacture them and send them to us then we put the electronics in, verify the guitar and then send them out. So our Meta series is really our first foray into real low-priced guitars which are Manson-branded and everything.

"AS LONG AS THE GUITAR CAN KEEP UP WITH MAKING INTERESTING SOUNDS, IT WILL ALWAYS REMAIN RELEVANT"

so we might be developing some. It's a bit early to say what they're going to be because it's just research and development at the moment. It could be next year or something. I'd like to do a combination of both [traditional and modern effects]. I think I'd do a couple of fuzzes, but fuzz sounds that are a bit more unique and unusual, and specifically recreating some of the sounds I use in the studio. I'd like to create an effects box that does one of my standard sounds in the studio, which is basically the crunch and bite of a Vox amp, but also with the high saturation of a Diezel amp, like a metal sound. So those two things with a blend control – the weight of a metal sound with a Vox. I'd like to do a pedal that does that, and then get experimental, but probably just start off with one or two really interesting fuzz options.”

Speaking of guitar's place in the 21st century, you've stated that guitar has become a rhythm rather than a lead instrument – do you still stand by that statement, and how does that feed into the guitars that Manson makes?

“I can't remember exactly what I said, but I think what I *meant* was I think that unless a guitar is a lead instrument. I think in the 20th century, the guitar could exist just as a rhythm instrument, just in the background, strumming along, playing powerchords or whether it

be rhythmic chords on acoustic guitar or whatever. I kind of feel the guitar as a rhythm instrument is not as important as it used to be. But I think the guitar as a lead instrument, playing cool, big melodies, or doing something that when it happens in a song, you go, ‘Oh my god, there's a guitar!’, that's a guitar and you can hear it doing something really important. Like a big riff, or a cool lead melody, or even a solo or whatever, I still think all that stuff is very much important and relevant to modern music. And obviously the acoustic guitar has stayed very important. I think what I meant by that was just, you know, strumming along doing powerchords is no longer enough for the guitar to be an exciting instrument, especially in contemporary music.”

Where do you think the future of guitar lies?

“I think it probably lies there. All music consists of some kind of element of a riff or a melody of some kind. I don't just mean guitar-based – whether it be a piano, a synth or even a vocal lick or something. A good composition always seems to have really interesting melodies, or riffs or licks or catchy parts, however you want to call it.

“I think as long as the guitar can keep up with making interesting sounds, it will always remain relevant in that way. Because in terms of a performance instrument, I do think it does feel the best. I play piano, I play keys and stuff like that, but when I'm

onstage, it feels restricted, you don't feel like you can run around, I don't feel like

I can do much. With contemporary music, you've got a lot of people that have something on a laptop in the background, and then they have an interesting frontperson who runs around. But the guitar is the only instrument that really bridges that gap – you can actually be a frontperson playing an instrument.

“I think that's why the guitar has always remained so exciting:



SHOWBIZ

Matt's 'Delorian' Manson sitting side by side with Buckley's Telecaster

because you can run around on stage, you can still be a frontman or woman, and you can still play musical notes as well. There aren't really many instruments that have been able to give that freedom – whether it be drums, laptops, keyboards, you are restricted to a seat or a standing position mostly. Unless you want to get the keytar out... But I'm not sure about the keytar! [laughs]

You've had some instruments that have been very close...

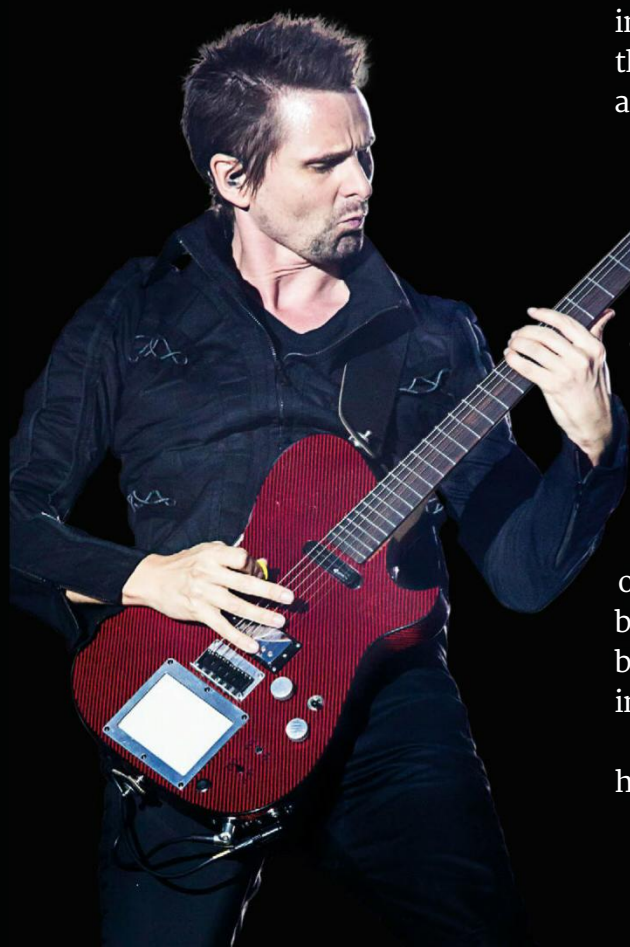
“I know, I know... I've dabbled! [laughs]”

So, apart from the technological aspects, what do you think are the most important elements of a good guitar?

“Some of the things that I'll say are probably a bit more about the fact that I'm a frontman running around – so for me, I think guitars that sound good but are very lightweight. I'm not a fan of big heavyweight guitars, but that's more of an onstage thing. In the

studio, it's almost the opposite – you want something that's got a nice, woody tone so that when you've got a clean sound, it has an element of character to it... elements of imperfection, you know what I mean? I think sometimes some modern guitars can lean too far in the 'totally clean, even tones across every note' [territory], to the point where it kind of loses a little bit of character. So I've often played a lot with putting different pickups in my guitars – especially for studio use – that have a little bit more of a slightly crunchier tone, or a slightly more imperfect feel about them.

“But it has to be something that feels good to you. I'd say probably the most important thing is that when you pick it up, you feel like you are you; you're not just trying to be someone else. It's a cheesy maxim, but essentially [adopts American accent] *be yourself, man*.





“But what I mean by that is, for me, that was a very real thing insomuch as, to this day, if I’m playing a Strat or whatever, I play the blues. The blues just starts coming out. I can’t stop playing the blues on a Strat. So, whatever style of music you’re in – or whatever style of music you want to do, or whatever you identify with yourself as an artist – make sure you’ve got the guitar that makes you feel like that’s what you’re gonna do, and it doesn’t pull you in another direction. For me, I had to make a guitar that was brand new in order to feel like everything I’m doing on it is gonna take me in a new direction, and not make me feel like I’m replicating music from the past.”

Tom Morello seems to adopt a similar ethos – he recently supported you on tour and you gave him his own custom-made Manson model. That must have been pretty surreal, given what a huge influence he was on Muse...

“Yeah, he’s a great guy. I’d say he’s been really influential on my concept of guitars as well. We mentioned that whole Whammy thing – a lot of that stems from some of his playing in the 90s, and how he used the Whammy pedal. A lot of it was me watching him, going, ‘How could he be doing this in a way that he wasn’t stood just in front of his pedalboard? What if he wanted to go out into the crowd, or what if he wanted to walk around the stage and do some similar stuff?’ So my thinking was, ‘What could we do to make guitar work for someone without having them in a fixed position on stage?’ ‘I think he’s probably the most innovative guitarist of our generation. So I felt like I had to give him something to say thanks for all the amazing riffs.’”

You’re not looking to sign him up as a signature artist, are you?

“[Laughs] I dunno... Maybe! I’m not sure if he’s into that kind of thing. I mean, that’s a good idea... I think at some point I would want to expand out and get some other people involved – get some other guitarists to do signature models,



NEW BORN

Matt with the new Limited Edition MA in Metallic Bluebell

and he would certainly be top of my list, that’s for sure.”

Manson is best known for its solidbody T-types. Do you see the company moving into other styles of guitars?

“For sure, yeah. To me, it feels like it’s leaned slightly metal, slightly hard-rock, and very modern. But having said all that stuff about being modern – it’s weird that I said all that, because I’m now about to say the exact opposite [laughs]. One of the things we are looking at is a collaboration with Graham Coxon from Blur, and we’re gonna work on a kind of really interesting vintage-type of guitar. It won’t be a vintage-looking guitar, but the tonality of it is gonna be very much the whole hand-wound pickups and all that kind of stuff. So that’s something that is actually very different for the company – it’s very different to everything that I’ve done with the company. It’s very different to any of the guitars that I play. But we are looking to tap into that a little bit, the vintage sound. That will be a line we do on the side.

“I’m looking to do a bass at some point. I’ve got myself a little band I’m doing called The Jaded Hearts Club, which is fun, and I play the bass in that band. I’ve actually been developing a cool bass, which is based on the Hofner bass that Paul McCartney played, but it’s obviously going to be a much more modern-looking and sounding version of that as well – I like the idea of expanding the bass range a little bit. Obviously, I’m a smaller bloke; when I play bass, I’m similar to Mike Kerr from Royal Blood in terms of the shorter-scale, more lead-type bass playing. In other words, bass playing where you’re playing lead riffs, not just bottom-end stuff. So I’m trying to develop a bass that has that kind of feel to it.

“We might also start doing a really high-end, precise exact replica of one of my first Manson Guitars that I had made. There are two guitars that I regard as the two most special guitars that I’ve had, and they were made around about 20 years ago. It was around the time that *Origin Of Symmetry* came out and I first had enough money



to have my own custom guitar. We’re thinking this year or next year to do a limited edition replica as a celebration. It would be exact – I’m talking sourcing the electronics from that period to go into the guitar, and all the mouldings and stuff so you wouldn’t be able to tell the difference between that one and my one. We might put together an experience where people could come down to the factory, see how things are made and meet the guys. Maybe I could be there lurking in the background or something, I don’t know!

“The two most special to me – the first one is called The Delorian. It’s one that I used on the first few tours with the band, and it has that metal, aluminium look like the Delorian

from *Back To The Future*. Then the other I just used to call the Black Manson, but Hugh has another name for it, 007 or something. That was the first one to have all the electronics in.

It had the proximity wah-wah, the phaser, it also had a ribbon control in it. I’ve used that guitar on pretty much every album that Muse has ever recorded, it’s like my go-to recording guitar. I used it on tour a lot in the early 2000s, but once I threw it across the stage and it nearly broke and I got scared and never played it again on stage. I don’t tour with it anymore, but those are the two that we’re considering doing really high-end replicas of.”

Have you ever had any ideas so crazy, the guys at Manson just said, ‘Nah, it’s impossible’?

“[Laughs] Honestly, they’ve been very, very open. The double-neck guitar – I mean, they made a version of it – but originally I wanted the six strings to essentially be a ribbon controller MIDI thing, so in other words, like the bend on a MIDI. It was a double-neck guitar, and one

of them was fretless: it was a fretless MIDI controller that could send bending notes on a sustained note. So that was a real headache – it took about two years to make, and ended up with a much-compromised version of what I was looking for. “But pretty much everything I’ve come up with, they’ve been generally pretty good. I keep trying to cram so much electronics into a guitar that it’s too much that can fit into the body, so there’s always that. So I’m hoping that as technology gets smaller and smaller, I can hopefully get more stuff in there, so the guitar itself, without needing any outboard gear in terms of MIDI stuff and synthesizers and all those kinds of things, I’m hoping to get as much of that into it as possible.”

And, finally, what was your last great gear discovery?

“Well, I’ve gotta say, I just bought Jeff Buckley’s guitar that he used to record the *Grace* album. I’m not kidding! I had a whole team of people doing due diligence on it to make sure it was absolutely the right one, interviewing his family and all sorts. And I managed to get it verified, and I’ve got his Telecaster that he used to record the whole *Grace* album and the song *Hallelujah*. It’s interesting, because he was a huge influence on me as a vocalist, but he was actually a great guitarist as well, and obviously *Hallelujah* is a legendary recording. I haven’t bought it to hang it on the wall with a picture of Jeff saying, ‘Look what I’ve got’. I’ve bought it to actually attempt to use it and integrate it, and keep this guitar part of music. I’d like to believe that’s what he would have wanted.

“But what’s fascinating about the guitar is its sound. It sounds so weird – it doesn’t sound like any other Telecaster. I’ve had all the electronics analyzed – nobody’s changed anything – but the pickups, they think the neck pickup was a mistake by the manufacturer because for some reason it’s slightly out-of-phase, and they’re also saying there’s something weird about the wiring. To cut a long story short, it’s got an

“I HAD TO MAKE A GUITAR THAT WAS BRAND NEW IN ORDER TO FEEL LIKE I’M NOT REPLICATING MUSIC FROM THE PAST”



→ extremely glassy, bright sound, and it doesn't really sound like any other guitar I've used before. I've already used that, actually. It's actually a song with the Jaded Hearts Club, a cover song that I've actually recorded it on a little bit. But I'm hoping to use it here and there on the next Muse album as well. It's amazing to have a bit of history like that, and to just feel a little bit of his greatness."

Glad to hear it's gone to a good home! Where did you track it down?

"I was doing an interview with a guitar magazine in France, and the guy that ran the guitar magazine brought his friend in, who's a vintage guitar collector called Matt [Lucas], and he wanted to surprise me midway through the interview, and show me that guitar. I guess he wanted to capture it on the interview – 'Oh, what's your reaction to this? And how's it feel?' and all that kind of stuff. At that time, I said to the guy, 'If I can ever use it or whatever, let me know.' I didn't hear from the guy, and that was at least two or three years ago. And then out of the blue, about six months ago, he contacted me and

said, 'Oh, by the way, I am maybe looking to move this guitar on, if you're interested.' And obviously, at that point, we had a lot of talks about where it came from, and all the background, and he's even got a letter from Jeff's best friend at the time, who's a girl who lived in New York [Janine Nichols]. It was actually her guitar – Jeff didn't have a really good guitar at the time [Buckley's apartment had been robbed around this period in

1991], and when he started touring, she lent this Tele to him.

"He used it for all of his touring and his recording at that point, and then when he sadly passed away, she got it back. She kept it for 10, 15 years or so. Then, eventually, she passed it on, and she wrote a long letter with the guitar, saying she really wanted it to go to someone who's actually going to play it, not just put it on the wall. So that's what I'm doing

– I'm trying to adhere to the letter she wrote to make sure it gets some play. The only problem is I don't think I've written any songs good enough to play it on yet! [laughs] So the pressure's now on..."

So, it's safe to say it's probably a studio rather than a live guitar?

"I think so, yeah – maybe one day I'll bring it out for something, but we'll see."

"I DON'T THINK I'VE WRITTEN ANY SONGS GOOD ENOUGH TO PLAY ON JEFF BUCKLEY'S TELECASTER YET!"



ORIGIN OF BELLAMY

Here's some Muse you can use to master Bellamy-style tricks and techniques that'll fill any supermassive track hole

It's perhaps serendipitous that we're featuring Muse in the same issue as Eddie Van Halen; Matt's more virtuosic playing borrows from the shred legend's canon. Head back to p18 where you'll find a lesson on some of Eddie's techniques that you can also apply to the Muse mindset. Besides his classic

and classical influences, Matt Bellamy has an alt-rock core – and that's exactly what we're looking at here.

Matt's a tight rhythm player. Not as groovy as the best funk and soul players, for example, but his metronomic, bang on the beat timing is spot-on for rock. Bear that in mind as you play

through these tab examples and try to recreate that feel. As an exercise, try playing just one bar of music along to a drumbeat or metronome and do your best to play as close to the pulse as possible. Stick to a straight 4/4 rock beat (no funk or shuffle grooves) for the most a-Muse-ment.

TRASHY BARRE CHORDS

TRACKS 13-14

♩=140

Am Em F

cont. sim.

Barre chords are the most simple and direct way to spell out the harmony of a song, and Matt often opts for this approach over powerchords – and it's a more emotive sound. Check out songs such as *Bliss* and *City Of Delusion*. Use down-picking in bars 1 and 2 to set yourself up for a faster down-up approach from bar 3.

ARPEGGIOS

TRACKS 15-16

♩=100

Em G Em⁶ G Gaug

let ring throughout

Play 4 times

A key part of Matt's playing, mellow and ethereal Radiohead-like arpeggios can be heard in tracks like *Citizen Erased*. The chords we've used are typical Muse traits, too – Em⁶ and Gaug use notes from outside the key signature, creating an ear-catching chromatic run (C# D D# E) along the third string as the chords change.

OCTAVE RIFFS

TRACKS 17-18

♩=130

Play 4 times

cont. sim.

Matt uses octaves in tracks such as *Time Is Running Out* to fatten up melodic lines so they become more like rhythm parts. The trick is keeping the idle strings silent by stubbing a free fretting finger up against them. Our lick is played in a linear fashion along the length of the string for a melodic sound that's easy to remember.

Words Gregory Adams Photography Mara Pelena

PEOPLE POWER

THE 1975'S NEW ALBUM *NOTES ON A CONDITIONAL FORM* IS THEIR FOURTH CONSECUTIVE UK NUMBER ONE, AND ANOTHER GENRE-HOPPING EXTRAVAGANZA. LEAD GUITARIST ADAM HANN EXPLAINS THE THINKING BEHIND THE BAND'S ECLECTIC APPROACH - AND HAILS THE ALBUM'S LEAD SINGLE, *PEOPLE*, AS "OUR FIRST PROPER ROCK SONG"

TOO SHY

The 1975, with guitarists
Matty Healy (centre-left)
and Adam Hann (centre-right)





The 1975 have always been a hard band to peg. Since the release of their self-titled debut album in 2012, the Manchester-based foursome have embraced a wide swathe of styles — acoustic balladry, bouncy Balearic house, AutoTune-abusing R&B, the slick sheen of 80s pop. Their current album, *Notes On A Conditional Form*, continues the genre-jumping journey, bringing elements of punk, neo-soul, downtempo electronic music and country into the band's ever-morphing approach. And in this album's first single, *People*, a song mixing T. Rex swagger with black-eyeliner screamo, there is the heaviest-sounding riff they've ever recorded — a riff described “ridiculous” by its creator, lead guitarist Adam Hann.

“The main riff in the chorus of *People*, that's one of those jokey heavy riffs you play for fun, you know?” Hann says of the garage-glam anthem's origins, adding that its numbskull-simple groove was regularly goofed-on during soundchecks before the band's frontman Matt Healy suggested they maximize its potential for their new LP. Hann concedes that *People* may be The 1975's “first proper rock song,” but the beneath-the-fingernail grime of its guitar tone first cropped up on the otherwise sugary *Give Yourself A Try* from 2018's *A Brief Inquiry Into Online Relationships*, which yielded a Grammy nomination for Best Rock Song the following year, leaving the band, in Hann's words, “super confused as hell”. In both cases, the guitarist got dirty by cranking the overdrive on an Audio Kitchen Little Chopper head and then distorting the mic channel with a Thermionic Culture: Culture Vulture processor.

“We put this valve distortion unit across the mic channel, and that gives it this super-dry, ear-piercing quality that I'm sure many people are not too fond of,” he says with a laugh. “So when *People* came out, going by the comments on our social media, a lot of our fans were like, ‘What the fuck is this?’”

Such a reaction is hardly surprising. The in-the-red screech of *People* is in stark contrast to the other songs *Notes On A Conditional Form*. The album begins with *The 1975* — their fourth



experimental album,” Hann admits. “Those elements are definitely there, but the majority of the album is straight-up songs. I don’t think we anticipated that when we set out.”

One of the reasons for veering toward more traditional pop structures instead of an all-ambient affair is because the band were writing this material on the road while touring support of *A Brief Inquiry Into Online Relationships* — and as in the case of *People*, they adjusted the sonic parameters of the album during soundchecks. Adjusting on the fly likewise meant that the band missed their scheduled February release date, the album finally being issued on May 22nd.

“It’s proven to be quite difficult to write, record, and finish an album while continuously touring and marketing,” Hann reflects. “We had a [mobile] studio on the bus, which is great and definitely lets you get more work done on the road, but it’s not a replacement for a real studio.” He explains that electronic production touches were tweaked on the bus, but guitars and vocals were tracked between tour dates, when time and space wasn’t a premium. “We underestimated how difficult it would be to just drop in and out of studios to get it finished.”

Hann himself used a Master Built Strat for sessions in London, Los Angeles and Brackley UK, but also employed the JP6 and a pair of custom Fano JM6s, which were thrown through Fender Twins, Vibroluxes and the Audio Kitchen (On their latest round of touring, Hann has switched to using Kempers onstage). The 1975’s gear list was arguably more compact than on previous recordings, but Hann managed to think outside of the box in terms of tone and performance — he temporarily escapes standard tuning to explore the rich chime of just intonation on *If You’re Too Shy (Let Me Know)*. “In this case it sounded cleaner,” he says, “and the interaction between the notes was nicer so it worked. But on another track, the crunch of standard tuning sounded nice in the context of the track.”

And while Hann exudes pride in what The 1975 have achieved with *Notes*, he insists that this album will be, in one key respect, a one-off. “It’s been an interesting year,” he says, “being on tour and trying to finish this album, but we would never do this again. It’s been super draining for everyone involved...”

self-titled composition in as many albums — which builds a tableaux of piano and digitalist squelching around an impassioned monologue from climate activist Greta Thunberg. *Me & You Together Song*, meanwhile, is the kind of overwhelmingly jubilant, throwback jangle that would have scored a thousand teenage rom-com scenes in the late 90s. Hann and Healy conjured those cheery, paisley swirls by strumming Strats and 335s through a clutch of Fender Twins and chorus-cranked Roland JC-120s. Hann also credits his Music Man JP6, bought with inheritance money when he was a teenager, as the “secret weapon” behind the crispest tones beaming through *Me & You Together Song*, as well as earlier hits such as *Girls* and *I Like America & America Likes Me*.

As Hann says of his early-2000s John Petrucci signature: “In the middle position on that guitar the two humbuckers are coil-split and out-of-phase, so you get this super clear, crystal, bell-sounding clean tone. What’s funny is, because it was literally one of the first models of that guitar, the subsequent ones have different electronics; they don’t quite sound the same. We’ve hunted around on eBay to

try and find an original one. I met one of the guys from Music Man at one of our shows, and basically he was like, ‘You just need to give me the guitar and we’ll find out exactly what it is.’”

Though Hann went through a Dream Theater-loving shred phase in his youth, his playing across *Notes On A Conditional Form* can sometimes take a backseat approach. Take his subtle and supportive work on the twitchy, Ibiza-primed *Frail State Of Mind*, an electronics-forward composition where he folds the slightest sparkle of six-strings beneath thick blankets of synths and sampled trumpets. “It’s not obtuse, it just fits in as a layer under that,” he says. With all members — including drummer George Daniel and bassist Ross MacDonald — also having a hand in layering keyboards and digital programming, Hann says that *Notes On A Conditional Form* was initially conceived as a more “ambient, electronic-influenced album” and sister set to *A Brief Inquiry Into Online Relationships*. Considering they first teased the LP with the jagged punk explosion of *People*, plans clearly changed along the way.

“We thought that we were going to make a slightly more leftfield,

AXOLOGY

Guitars

Fender Master Design 1950s Relic Stratocaster Moss, Fender Jaguar Olympic White, Music Man JP6 custom Pollock paint

Amps

Kemper profiles of 68 custom Vibrolux, 68 custom twin, Audio Kitchen Little Chopper, Marshall JTM45

Pedals

Strymon Mobius, Timeline and Big Sky, Keeley compressor pro, Klon centaur, Analogman King of Tone, ZVEX super duper chass mod, Wampler plectxtortion, EH Microsynth and Hog

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Words Amit Sharma
Photography Oily Curtis

Life in Technicolour

RECENTLY VOTED ONE OF THE 10 BEST MODERN PLAYERS, COVET MASTERMIND **YVETTE YOUNG** DISCUSSES HER DISTINCTIVE FINGERSTYLE APPROACH, HER PIANO-BASED ORIGINS AND HER SIGNATURE IBANEZ TALMAN AHEAD OF NEW ALBUM *TECHNICOLOR*...

"I know it sounds cheesy... But guitar really did save my life," says Covet singer/guitarist Yvette Young ahead of the release of the trio's second full-length, *Technicolor*. In the middle of an interview about the key instruments, amps and effects used on its 10 dazzling shoegaze-y tracks, she drops a bombshell on how her trusty six-string was there for her in her greatest time of need, giving her the strength and courage to ponder and eventually embrace a more positive future. It's an incredible powerful message to share.

"I didn't take guitar seriously until I was in hospital, thinking I'd have to live there for a long time," she continues. "I was really depressed about it and decided it would be a good outlet for me. I wrote some sad songs with lyrics and really started focusing on music."

"I was not in a good place but having a new instrument to teach myself was so empowering. It made me feel like I had a voice and gave me confidence. That's what really pulled me out of that darkness... I took that with me through college and never looked back!"

The young Californian started out playing classical music on violin and piano from an early age, though by her own admission, neither instrument had particularly resonated with her. She describes the switch to guitar many years later as arguably her greatest lightbulb

moment, one which allowed her to delve deep into new worlds of self-expression and lose herself in the calmness of her own hypnotic noise. Having now found her true calling, it wouldn't take her long to start creating and performing, eventually establishing herself as

one of the most exciting players of a new generation by fronting Covet. Her connection to her instrument is as personal as it gets. It would be her salvation...

"I grew up playing classical violin and piano, but I always associated that world with competitiveness, pressure and stress," admits Young. "Piano and violin were things I did for other people – my parents kinda forced it on me – so the guitar felt very different. It's a thing that no one else can touch, this amazingly personal outlet for me to express myself and explore. I write what I want to write, and play what I want to play. There was something really liberating about picking up a new instrument, not learning the rules and just playing for fun. It's been so good to me."



➔ **Certainly there are numerous advantages, but what's your absolute favourite thing about being a guitar player?**

"Songwriting is my passion, I think. Above all else, I love composing music and using pedals to enhance that whole experience. It feels like a playground to me, while also being super meditative and therapeutic. I can lose myself in writing a riff for nine hours and forget to eat or go to the bathroom! I don't necessarily write with theory but I have the ear from my classical background, so I tend to write by ear. I feel like an outsider to the instrument and whole virtuoso guitar world, but it's a lot of fun. That said, I like Guthrie Govan a lot. He's so versatile in how he writes. Melodically, he's one of the most appealing guitarists out there."

What do you remember about your earliest influences?

"I don't think I ever listened to one individual player. I grew up going to shows and just seeing bands in general... I just loved that. Coming from a classical background, my parents were very strict and didn't allow me to go to shows for a long time. So to me, seeing punk and noise/math rock shows felt like a different, cool world of counter-culture. That's what made me want to pick up the guitar. I started on an acoustic because I was listening to a lot of folk players like Cat Stevens, initially doing the whole fingerpicking thing..."

And then you got your first electric guitar...

"It's so funny, my first one was a super cheap \$90 SX Tele, but it was outfitted with really nice handwound pickups made by Bill Lawrence. I didn't have the money for a guitar back then, so I actually swapped it for my drum machine. I thought it was time for a change! I ended up playing it for a really long time. What I found really interesting about that guitar was the neck was actually alright, usually cheaper Teles – especially around \$90

– don't have necks that feel too great. This one was actually quite comfortable."

Now, of course, you have your own signature Ibanez model. How did you initially become involved with the company?

"I was playing extended-range fanned-fret headless Strandbergs for a while because they approached me about doing a video. I'd never played an extended-range guitar before, so had to write a song on seven-string in a week and be ready to perform it. And then just from being on people's radar, Ibanez reached out saying, 'No pressure, we know you are with Strandberg, but we'd love to send you a guitar', and I could ask for anything."

"So they made me this sparkly peach Tele-style Talman and I actually cannibalized the Bill Lawrence pickups from the SX Tele because I liked them so much. I don't play that guitar live much because the pickups are a bit lower output than the Seymour Duncan Five-Twos that I have on my signature. That volume bounce is a little annoying to deal with, but I really love this guitar. It sounds amazing and I will bring it out again one day."

What made you go for a lesser-known body like a Talman?

"Mike, my Artist Rep there, suggested it and originally I wasn't sure if I wanted a metal guitar, because I'm not much of a metal player. And he explained they were discontinued but he thought I'd like the body shape and feel. As soon as I got it, the neck felt so fast – I think it's a Wizard profile. That was my first taste of an Ibanez Talman. Then I remember at NAMM, I needed to borrow a guitar for a demo so I went to the Ibanez booth and he let me borrow my sunburst one. I did the demo and really loved it. The neck was different, it's a Custom Shop neck, that wasn't so glossy, it was super dry-feeling. I remember Mike handing me it back at the end of the day and telling me to just keep it."

"And I can't explain it... I don't know if it's the paint job or the wood, but it's my most inspiring guitar. For some reason, when I plug into that one I write a lot. Maybe it's the neck, maybe it's magic, maybe I'm crazy and just imagining things! Through playing those guitars, I realised I'm more of a traditional guitar player. As much as I love ergonomic fanned-fret things, they're wonderfully built, though I still like having a bit of weight. I use a lot of clean tones and feel like there's more sustain with more wood. I feel it while I'm playing."

What other features were you looking for from your first signature?

"I knew it would definitely be a Talman with a really vivid colour to catch people off the cuff, because everyone usually goes for nice colours. Mine is either an eyesore or it could be dope! That's how I ended up with this sparkly green finish that looks like it's from Nickelodeon. I kinda sticker-bombed it. The guitar actually comes with a custom sticker pack that I designed, because I'm primarily a visual artist. I went to school to study art, I never thought I'd be doing music, and this felt like a way of tying both worlds."

"I know a lot of my demographic is younger punk and indie fans, and in those circles, people usually customize their guitars. I wanted to give them an opportunity to do that if they wanted to. It has a U-Shape neck profile, a bit thicker than the Prestige models I have but I don't necessarily mind that. Some people prefer thicker necks, I usually prefer thin necks, so this one is a nice middle-ground. My primary goal was to make music a fun, light-hearted thing for people. It's easy to get deterred by not being technical or flashy enough, to go online and get intimidated by all these people killing it. I wanted to make a guitar that sounded automatically great as soon as you plug it in and hope people will feel encouraged to write their own music on it."

Are you still mainly using Vox amps?

"Yes, my main amp at home for my demos – and actually in the studio this time – is a Vox AC10. My first amp was ever the four-watt AC4TV, which is also a tube amp, so they're what I've always played through. Maybe it's out of habit or weird loyalty but they so suit what I do. I love pushing them just a little bit, so it's clean when I lay back but breaks



WHAT'S MINE IS YOURS

Yvette wants to give fans the opportunity to customise her signature Ibanez Talman



NO PICKS ALLOWED

"You can get a lot of detail using fingerstyle, with counterpoints in your playing which are more difficult with a pick"

"I NEVER WANTED TO DO POWERCHORDS. I'D CALL MY GENRE 'DETAIL ROCK'!"

up a bit when I dig in. I really depend on my fingers dynamically because I don't use a pick, so I don't have a lot of attack. It can actually be more forgiving in a lot of ways, because I can really control the dynamics. It's a little harder to lay back with a pick sometimes."

What made you decide to play electric guitar completely fingerstyle?

"I think it came from my piano background. I had the finger independence and dexterity from those days, so playing without a pick

felt better to me. I was already so used to working with my fingers and controlling them, and picks always felt like a weird, artificial extension of my hand. I couldn't quite get the polyphony that I liked. You can get a lot of detail using fingerstyle, with counterpoints in your playing which are more difficult with a pick.

"So I just gravitated to the whole two-handed tapping, fingerstyle sort of thing. A lot of bands I listened to did that. There's a British band called TTNG who are really cool and math-y. I listened to them a lot growing up and

really liked their guitarist Tim Collis, who used a lot of fingerstyle. That's where it came from. I never really wanted to do the powerchord stuff. I guess I would jokingly call my genre 'detail rock' (laughs)!"

There a lot of effected guitars on the new album - what were your main tools for the recordings?

"The Meris Mercury7 is my favourite reverb in the whole world because it has this pitch down feature where you play a note and it sounds like bombs dropping, a bit like Godspeed You! Black Emperor. It's such a great ambient pad sound. Just one big hit and the sustain drops and overlaps into what you play next. I also have an MXR Carbon Copy Deluxe, which is a great analog delay.

"I use The Warden, a compressor from Earthquaker. I have to say it's been pretty instrumental in getting a lot of variation in my tones. The way the compressor works with other effects is amazing, you can really toy with it and change your sound - if you push into driven sounds by cranking the sustain knob without any overdrive pedal. It's very cool. I also have a Walrus Audio Julia, which is an amazing chorus. My favourite effect of all is chorus/vibrato. Anything with that modulated, warbly sound I love. There's also a Caroline Somersault Lo-Fi Modulator and then my primary gain pedal this time was the Longsword made by Electronic Audio Experiments, who are an indie brand."

You use some altered tunings to help get more mileage out of your two-handed approach. Which are your favourites?

"I used to use way more tunings but for the sake of my sanity and memorizing shapes I've been using less. I actually don't memorize chord shapes at all. When I write a riff, I hum it and hear the harmonies, then teach it to myself really slowly. It's not like I'm in there banging out riffs, I have to piece it together meticulously.

"Certain tunings assist with that, they can make certain interval stretches a little easier and more accessible. Some people might say that's cheating but it's not at all - why would you not want to do the exact thing you hear in your head. My main alternate tunings on this album were just D A D F# A E and F A C G B E, or very slight variations, because I probably couldn't memorize it all..."



UNDER PRESSURE

"Whenever I play the sweep run in *Parachute*, I'm always thinking, 'Don't f*ck it up!'"

➔ **Well, those open strings definitely seem to come in handy!**

"For me, I just want to find music that moves me emotionally. Melody is always the primary focus, so the unusual tunings assist me in filling out those melodies. I use a lot of open strings, as well as playing bass patterns at the same time as a more lead-y guitar line. I'm used to playing like a bedroom guitarist! When I didn't have a band, having those open tunings and implying bass parts was really helpful. It filled out my sound a lot. That's how I ended up writing what I write."

You recently released a new song, *Parachute*, which interestingly also features some vocals...

"It's one of the more simple ones and a rare song that just came together in

"I JUST WANT TO FIND MUSIC THAT MOVES ME EMOTIONALLY"

one sitting. The universe was like, 'Here's your song!' so it wasn't much of a struggle. There's a little sweep run in there and whenever I play it live, I'm always thinking to myself, 'Don't f*ck it up!' It's the most unnerving part of the song. I love the chords at the end, they feel really dense and heavy, though not Cattle Decapitation heavy. I used a lot of chorus, it's one of our more indie tracks... And yup – I sing on it! Our past stuff was purely

instrumental, except for my solo projects. My rule in music is don't rule anything out. If you hear something it and the song needs it, then do it. It's whatever serves the music. I'm a slave to music (laughs)! I heard vocals in this one and thought to myself, 'I guess we're not an instrumental band anymore!'"

***Technicolor* is out now on Triple Crown Records.**



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NEW WEIRD AUSTRALIA

Words: Stan Bull

AUSSIE SHAPESHIFTING POLYMATHS **KING GIZZARD AND THE LIZARD WIZARD** HAVE RELEASED 15 STUDIO ALBUMS SINCE 2012, RANGING FROM JAZZ TO THRASH METAL. VOCALIST AND LEAD GUITARIST STU MACKENZIE SPEAKS TO TG ABOUT AC/DC, RECORDING IN SHIPPING CONTAINERS AND HIS NEWFOUND LOVE FOR THE GIBSON EXPLORER...



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NUCLEAR FUSION

Joey Walker (left) and Stu at St Jerome's Laneway Festival in Melbourne



“KING GIZZ WAS MADE TO BE LOOSE... WE DIDN'T HAVE A REHEARSAL FOR YEARS!”

My dad played guitar, and when I was a kid, he used to sing my little brother and I to sleep every night” says Stu Mackenzie, bandleader of Australian garage-psych innovators King Gizzard And The Lizard Wizard. “He was a young dad, and he was learning, so it was this beautiful experience of falling asleep listening to him work out the song. It was far from performance; I think it was his meditation as well.” Through these humble beginnings, the instrument would remain a background instrument for the

young Mackenzie, until he was presented with an alternate take on guitar music. “Becoming a teenager, guitar was always something that my dad did, and therefore it wasn’t ‘cool’ [laughs]. I guess, as a classic Australian, it was seeing videos of AC/DC playing live that made me think, ‘No, actually, guitar is cool!’ The music my dad liked, I like now, but it wasn’t electric guitars with loud, primal energy. It was Bob Dylan, Neil Young and Paul Kelly. So seeing AC/DC on TV made me say, ‘Please, Dad, can I have a guitar?!’”

“My dad was left-handed, so initially I learnt to play upside-down. Because of that, I can still have a fiddle on an upside-down guitar – it’s still ingrained in my brain a little bit. After a few months, my dad very kindly said, ‘Okay, I think Stu’s ready now’. I was 15 at the time, and a lot of my friends sang or played piano or drums, and I felt like I had to catch up. So a lot of my adolescence and high school years were about trying to catch up to my friends who were more accomplished or had learnt more than me. I always felt like it was never about the

skill, just about being good enough to join in on the jam and the hangout. That was the drive.”

Formed in Melbourne in 2010, King Gizzard have spent the last decade scaling the modern rock precipice, including a sold-out headline show at London’s Alexandra Palace last October. Speaking of the group’s origin, Stu tells TG: “We were not long out of school, and to me, it was starting to get annoyingly serious. I was like, ‘Come on, guys – we shouldn’t know what we’re supposed to be doing now. Let’s just make the easiest music possible and have fun and jam’. I guess King Gizz at the time was made in order to be a loose, improv-type project, and the earliest music we made was like one or two chords with a couple words, so no one had to go to rehearsals [laughs]. You could rock

up with a guitar on your back or a tambourine and you could play, or you could yell into a microphone and join in. We didn't have a rehearsal for years!"

As is the case for many of us, Stu's early gear holds a certain sentimental value for him to this day. "I saved up and bought a '91 Fender Japanese Strat", says Stu. "I still love it. I added some extra frets so it's tuned quarter-tone up and down. It's 24 frets an octave, so you have to sharpen your fingertips to get in there these days. That was my main guitar. I worked my part-time job as much as I could to save up for that thing, and I really loved that guitar. That's what's being used on the first few Gizz albums.

However, when it comes to choosing gear, Stu often takes a more economical approach. "I've always gravitated towards standard stuff. I like standard gear, because I like being able to replace stuff – being on the road and not having a bizarre amp so that you can get the same one. I'm so aware of how breakable everything is. I've always liked [Fender] Hot Rod DeVilles because they're replaceable. I have a really simple pedalboard that hasn't changed a huge amount over the years. I love [Jim Dunlop] Crybaby Wah pedals, just the standard model. I've got a pretty low-tech set up, which I like. I feel anxious if I've got rare stuff [laughs]."

But surely this mindset of only using tried and tested equipment goes out the window when it comes to recording for a band as sonically varied as King Gizz? "I definitely use a lot of different stuff in the studio", confirms Stu. "My approach has always been to not stress if I can't recreate it live, because you just figure out something else. The studio is an adventure to me. You'd borrow a guitar pedal off your friend, use it on one song and give it back – there's really no rhyme or reason to it. You can try stuff and use broken analogue gear and tape machines that are f*cked – that's my jam in the studio. It's the exact opposite to my approach to the live performance stuff, because you've only got to do it once."



MIR. BEAT

Stu onstage with his custom Microtonal Banana axe



DOUBLE-TROUBLE STU TALKS 12-STRINGS

"I'd been playing this 12-string Hagstrom for years, and I love that thing – it has such an amazing sound. The pickups are microphonic and it feeds back in an amazing way. That's the 12-string on most Gizz recordings, but it was made in 1967 and it's just f*cked. I can't play it live – the neck is all warped; the tuning pegs are so stiff. I've replaced so many things on it over the years that it's just got to the point where I give it to someone to have a look at and they're like, 'You play this thing live? You're an idiot!' [laughs]. So I'd been keeping my eye out for another 12-string for literally years before I found a 12-string Gibson SG. Every time I'm in a new city, I'd go to a guitar store and look for a 12-string that actually worked and stays in tune. It took a long time before I found that SG, and I love it. It's a great, functional guitar. It sounds very different to the Hagstrom, but I've just learned to embrace its sound."

HOT WAX

From jazz to folk to thrash and beyond, here are 10 of the best guitar tracks so far from one of the most ambitious bands in modern rock



HEAD ON/PILL

(Float Along – Fill Your Lungs, 2013)

Though not the first of the band's studio albums, *Float Along – Fill Your Lungs* was the release that helped cement The Gizz' reputation in the UK as an exciting new force in the world of garage rock. 16-minute opener *Head On/Pill* finds the band effortlessly combining Indian-influenced 60s psychedelia with drone-y shoegaze and Oh Sees-style guitar freakouts over a repetitive, hypnotic beat.

"That was actually the first time we used two drum kits in a recording. Cav [Michael Cavanagh] has always drummed, but when Eric [Moore] joined Gizz, he was playing percussion and theremin and sh*t. We were always like, 'We can't have two drummers, that's insane', but eventually it was like, 'F*ck it, we can have two drummers, who cares?' So *Head On/Pill* was the first song we recorded like that. It just came out of a lot of jams. I think that it will always be one of my favourite things that we've done. There was just a spark. I feel like songs are these little gift packages that just drop into your body and then exit and belong to the world. At that point in the band's career, we'd been playing shows, but I feel like we'd just learnt to play together. We're one piece now, and that was the moment we learnt to do that."



CELLOPHANE

(I'm In Your Mind Fuzz, 2014)

The third part of a seamless four-song suite, this track from 2014's swampy *I'm In Your Mind Fuzz* finds Stu frantically riffing on top of a propulsive, krautrock-inspired beat. From a guitarist's perspective, *Cellophane* remains one of the most memorable songs in the band's catalogue to date.

"Of the four tracks of that suite, this was the last one to come together. The *I'm In Your Mind* thing was first, and it did really feel like it needed to go to some other place. The song just needed to go somewhere else and then come back. When we were piecing together that record, there was this one jam we recorded, and it had Cookie [Cook Craig, guitar] playing bass, and it was his riff. It was Cook, Cavs and myself, playing this loose guitar solo/riff thing. I had recorded five or 10 minutes of it with one mic when we were rehearsing, and it happened to be in the same key as [the *Mind Fuzz* songs]. At the time, it was quite a lot slower, but I just used this jam as a launch point to write a song around it – and it was written really easily. *Cellophane* is a segue – a section – and it's awesome that people have latched onto it, because we didn't really think of it as a song. It's always surprising to us the things that people dig!"



THE RIVER

(Quarters, 2015)

On their first of two releases in 2015, *Quarters* found the band dipping their collective toes into the realm of jazz-rock, with each of its four tracks clocking in at precisely 10 minutes and 10 seconds. The most distinctive guitar work of the album comes from opener *The River*, with its slinky 5/4-time riffs dictating the ebb and flow of the track.

"We were just beginning to be open to changing our sound a little more, feeling more free to be quiet and lean less on yelling constantly. That song was written in the middle of summer, when we were renting a ski lodge in Hunter Mountain in upstate New York, where we recorded most of *I'm In Your Mind Fuzz*, but we wrote a handful of other songs there that ended up on different records, and this was one of them. The earliest jams of *The River* were from there. It's another one of my favourite songs that we've put together, because I think we were in a free headspace in that time, trying something that we hadn't done before. We recorded that in Daptone Studios in Brooklyn, and it was pretty loose – we recorded the whole record in a day, save for a handful of overdubs, and it was pretty improv-y. Sometimes things just fall into place, and that was one of those things."



TIME-FATE

(Paper Mâché Dream Balloon, 2015)

The Flute-heavy *Paper Mâché Dream Balloon* saw the band recording almost exclusively with acoustic instruments. Here, the guitarists offer up pastoral, mellow psychedelia, led by broken chords and folky fingerstyle picking. *Time-Fate*'s counter-melodies keep the acoustic front and centre, perfectly demonstrating that the instrument's use far exceeds simply playing a chord sequence.

"There's a lot of flute on this album, and I was just learning to play at the time. It took a lot of takes just to get a very simple line. I really can't play very well, but I can play well enough: 'Roll tape, roll tape, roll tape, roll tape... Okay, got it'. This song is a Cookie Craig-penned song. We recorded it out in the country in rural Victoria, where we converted a shipping container into a studio. I'm not sure if other people can hear it as a shipping container, but when I listen to that record, I just [hear] the specific reverberation in the room. The main acoustic on this record is a nylon-stringed guitar that was one of my dad's – it's a left-handed guitar strung right-handed. I wanted it to be in our little shipping container studio for a couple of weeks and so that when anyone came over they could play it."



ROBOT STOP

(Nonagon Infinity, 2016)

For their eighth album, The Gizz pulled off an impressive feat – *Nonagon Infinity* can be played as one endless loop, finishing perfectly in time to where it starts, with no gaps between songs. This opening track combines classic Gizzard elements (harmonising guitars, riffs doubling the vocal melody, Eastern scales) with a lengthy solo that employs a number of different guitar styles.

"I think we were ready to do another rock record – to get in there and make something loud and fast. I think we were listening to a lot of Krautrock. I know we were listening to Hawkwind a lot at the time. In our heads, this was our space rock album, but when you listen back to it that it maybe doesn't sound like that. *Robot Stop* was maybe the fourth song that came together, and it felt like, 'Oh, that's the vibe of the album'. We tried to record it as live as possible. For us at the time, it was a lot more high-tech than anything we'd ever done, and a lot more progressive. It was recorded in lots of chunks, but we had to know the sequence. We didn't do a lot of tempo-matching; there was no click-track. We mostly worked it out in the rehearsal room, and it was quadruple the amount of practice we'd ever done for a record. It was so much harder than any record we'd ever made."



RATTLESNAKE
(Flying Microtonal Banana, 2017)

Kicking off an ambitious five-albums-in-one-year run, 2017's *Flying Microtonal Banana* found the group dabbling in microtonal tunings thanks to Stu's custom-built 'Flying Banana' guitar, with additional frets added across the neck to allow for clear notes to be played between semitones.

"I had been to Turkey, and I brought home a bağlama, which is a Turkish stringed instrument. I wrote a handful of songs on it and I really thought we were gonna make this bağlama record, but it just didn't work. The logical conclusion was to work out how to tune an electric guitar like that. It was a coincidence that this guy Zac Eccles approached me about making a guitar, and I said, 'Let's add some crazy frets to it'. We wrote all new songs, which was cool, because the guitar was so inspiring and it had this sound all of its own. I thought we'd write a song but we wrote a whole record. *Flying Microtonal Banana* felt low-stakes because we were doing something weird on purpose. I like quarter-tone music because it's the exact middle of the 12-tone. It feels like the exact furthest away you can get from the notes that you're familiar with. It's dissonant in this beautiful way."



CRUMBLING CASTLE
(Polygondwanaland, 2017)

This monster of a track from the otherwise synth-heavy (yet folksy) *Polygondwanaland* showcases a number of melodic King Crimson-style riffs, played with absolute dexterity, before finally sinking into a sludgy doom metal outro. Despite clocking in at nearly 11 minutes, the boys' guitar work never takes an unnecessary detour, playing only to propel the song itself forward.

"This was the hardest song that we'd ever made. It came about when we were making *Murder Of The Universe* [2017], and it started off as this more metal-ish, heavy track, but it just felt like it had this rhythmic depth to it. We were doing this polyrhythm thing where the bass and drums are in one groove and the guitars and vocals are sitting in another pocket, and it just kept pulling away from that record and saying 'I don't belong here, I've got this other vibe going on'. So that song was left off that record, and it kept developing, morphing. I think we recorded four or five different versions of it before it felt done. It was a super challenging song, and we were still learning how to mess around with these types of music. It was really scary [laughs]. I wish I could remember what we were trying to do with the ending!"



THE GREAT CHAIN OF BEING
(Gumboot Soup, 2017)

To some, the band's fifth album of 2017 plays more like a b-sides collection for what has come before it, but a closer listen reveals some of the band's most memorable guitar work to date. Freed from any concept album continuity, the band range from Sleep-esque stoner metal (*The Great Chain of Being*) to the group's funkier riffs yet (*Down The Sink*).

"That type of music [stoner rock] is something we listen to a lot on tour, especially whilst driving. It definitely started to seep into our subconsciousness. (*The Great Chain Of Being*) is like a road song to me. We were trying to finish the five albums in a year, trying to make things varied and trying to experiment with recording as well. I think the recording is slowed down on the tape machine. We were messing around a lot at this point, and it was the fifth record of the five. We thought, 'Let's just try everything'. I think it allowed us to be super free and be open. In a lot of ways, each song just felt lower-stakes, therefore you can take more risks - which was the point of the five records, just to see how many risks we could take. Obviously not everything is going to pay off, but some of my favourite songs I've ever written came out of that year."



BOOGIEMAN SAM
(Fishing For Fishies, 2019)

After going an entire year without releasing a new album, King Gizz delivered two in 2019, starting with the boogie woogie-influenced *Fishing For Fishies*. The album's perky, upbeat style is none more apparent than on *Boogieman Sam*, which showcases a staccato fingerstyle riff at the heart of the song and a fingerpicked solo to boot.

"We wanted to do a whole record that had a swing feel, and I think that's where the boogie thing came from. They're kind of the same but they are different, and it went into this blues realm. It's in drop D which is pretty rare for us, though it's not in [the key of] D. The tuning just allows us to do that riff. Maybe if you had really long fingers you could do it [in E standard], but I need to be in drop D to play that one. It was one of the middle songs to come together for that record, and it's just a really fun jam and a fun live song that gets a bit loose and stands out a bit. I'm not a fingerpicker, it's not the way I learnt to play. I just use clawhammer - my thumb and my first finger - and I think it's just because I'm bad at it [laughs]. That solo is just played on a single string. I don't even know how it came together, it was just like, 'This sounds funny, let's do this!'"



PLANET B
(Infest The Rats Nest, 2019)

On *Infest The Rats Nest*, the boys dive headfirst into thrash metal, complete with tapping solos, double-bass drum patterns and palm-muted chugging riffs. Mackenzie uses every trick in the book to create as thrilling a metal album as you'll hear.

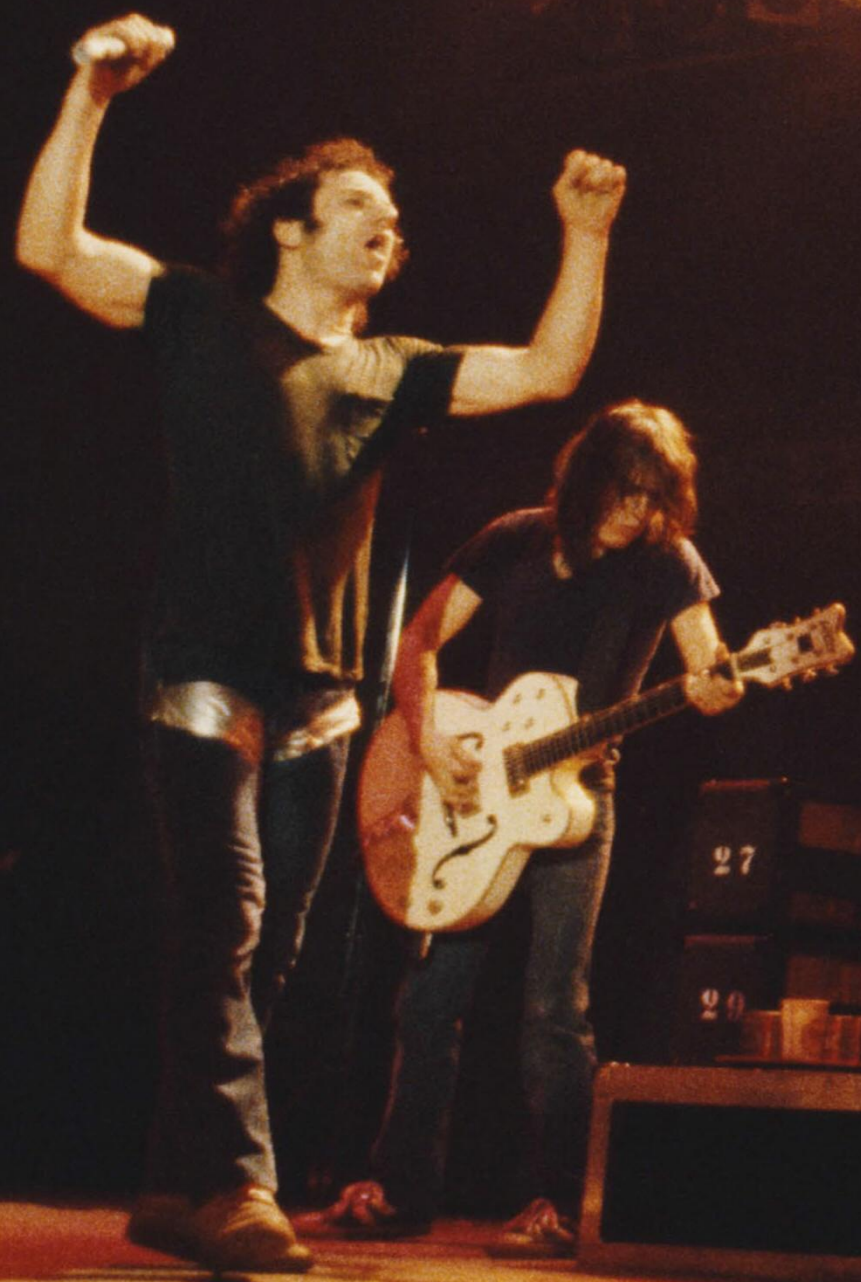
"This is my bread and butter - what I grew up with but never felt like I was gonna play. When I was learning guitar, I'd bring *Master Of Puppets* or *Reign In Blood* to a lesson, and the teacher would be like, 'You can't play that, you're just learning. Here's some Jack Johnson.' Cava and Joe and I grew up on a fair amount of heavy metal, and so the three of us just started jamming this heavy stuff which just turned into the record. It was very natural. People come into it like, 'Oh, they made a thrash metal record', but that record feels more 'us' than a lot of records that we've made. I got the Gibson Explorer around the same time, and during a jam it was like, 'I think we should make the heaviest record we've ever made.' That guitar came up at the right time, where I was open to playing an Explorer [laughs]. Every single guitar track on that record is the Explorer - Joe and I did all the overdubs with that guitar. We'd never done that before, where one guitar plays all guitars!"

A SOUND THAT SHOOK THE WORLD

Created by a band in mourning, **Back In Black** was the album that resurrected AC/DC. And as Guns N' Roses guitarist Slash said: "It saved rock'n'roll!" From tragedy to triumph, this is the story of AC/DC's greatest victory...

Back In Black is many things. With more than 50 million units shifted, it is the biggest selling rock album of all time. For many, it is also the greatest hard rock record ever made. It was the album that turned AC/DC into superstars, and it has been inspiration to countless rock bands for 40 years, from Def Leppard to Metallica, Guns N' Roses to The Darkness.

Most remarkable of all is what *Back In Black* represents on a human level, for AC/DC's greatest success followed their darkest hour: the death of their singer Bon Scott. Most bands would have been broken by such a loss. But with *Back In Black* – "our tribute to Bon," as lead guitarist Angus Young called it – AC/DC pulled off the greatest comeback in rock history. It is, in the words of Slash, "One of the huge Cinderella stories of rock'n'roll."

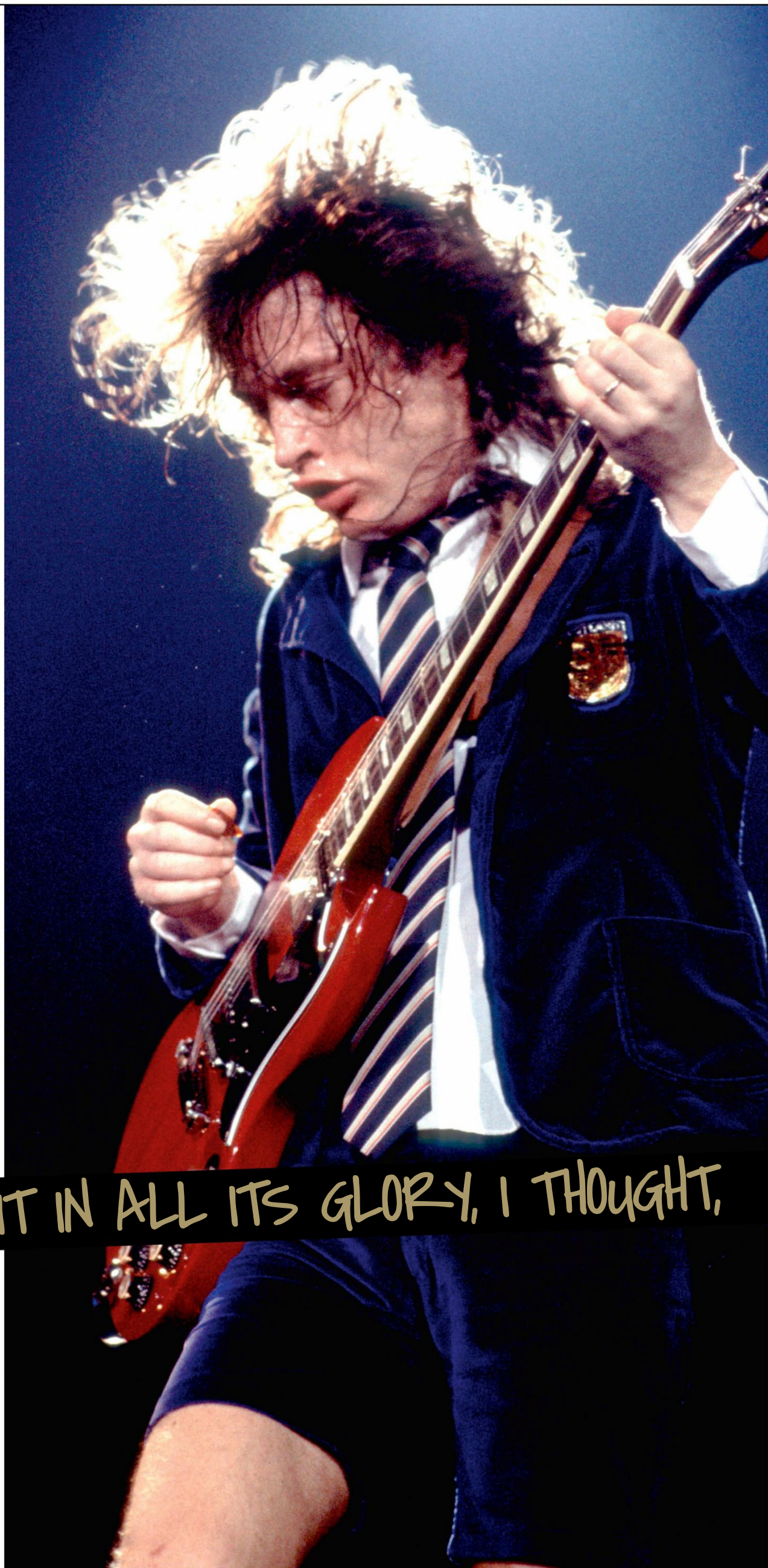


"THE EMOTION ON THAT
RECORD WILL BE
AROUND FOREVER"
- MALCOLM YOUNG

In January 1980, when Angus and his elder brother Malcolm, the band's rhythm guitarist, first began work on the album with Bon Scott in London, they knew they were on to something big. In the seven years since AC/DC had formed in Sydney, Australia – with Angus, dressed for the stage in his old schoolboy uniform, an unlikely looking guitar hero – they had built up a strong international following via relentless touring and a series of brilliant, balls-out albums, including *Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap*, *Let There Be Rock* and *Powerage*, the latter a favourite of Keith Richards. But it was with 1979's *Highway To Hell* that they had a major breakthrough, their first million-seller. And in the new songs they demoed in London, with Bon playing drums, as he had done as a young man in his first groups back in Australia, there was such potential that Bon had told his mother Isa in a phone call: "This one is going to be it!"

It was only a few days after that call – on February 19, 1980 – that Bon Scott was found dead in East Dulwich, London. He had been out drinking with friends on the previous night. Unsubstantiated rumours suggested that he might also have taken heroin. In the official inquest, the coroner cited 'death by misadventure'. He was just 33 years old.

Angus spoke for the whole band when he said, "You feel immortal until something like this happens." But at Bon's funeral in his hometown of Fremantle in Western Australia, his father Chick urged Malcolm and Angus to carry on with the band. And on April 1st, Brian Johnson, then aged 32,



"WHEN I FIRST HEARD IT IN ALL ITS GLORY, I THOUGHT,

formerly of glam rock act Geordie, was announced as AC/DC's new singer.

Those were big shoes that Brian Johnson had to fill. Bon had had it all: a powerful voice, a witty turn of phrase in his lyrics, and a macho stage presence that was the epitome of rock'n'roll cool. As drummer Phil Rudd said, "Bon was such a character." Moreover, he was, for Malcolm Young, a talismanic figure. "He pulled us all together," Malcolm said. "He had that real stick-it-to-'em attitude. Bon was the single biggest influence on the band." But in Brian Johnson, they found the right man for the job, and as it transpired, even Bon had been a fan of Brian's. Back in the early 70s, Bon's old band

Fraternity had opened for Geordie on a UK tour and witnessed what he later described to Angus as the best Little Richard impersonation he'd ever seen from a singer rolling around on the stage and screaming his head off. As Angus said of that conversation: "It was rare that Bon ever raved about anything." What Bon hadn't known was that Brian Johnson had been screaming in agony that night, and had subsequently been rushed to hospital suffering from appendicitis.

COMPASS POINT STUDIOS

After Brian was broken in during rehearsals in London, the band travelled to the tropical island of Nassau in The Bahamas to record *Back In Black* at Compass Point Studios with producer Robert John 'Mutt' Lange, who had worked on *Highway To Hell* and would later produce multi-million selling albums for Def Leppard, Foreigner, Bryan Adams, Shania Twain and more. In just five weeks, AC/DC had the whole album in the can, and it was the first song recorded, the album's title track, which set the tone. It was also one of the numbers demoed with Bon back in London, with a funky, stop-start riff and a lyric that was both a statement of invincibility and a salute to Bon. As Brian said, "The whole point of the album was to celebrate Bon's life."

There were times, however, when Brian struggled. Firstly, when the band was working on *Hells Bells*, the mighty epic they had already marked as the first track on the album. The riff – dubbed "ominous" by Malcolm and "mystical" by Angus – called for a heavy opening statement, but Brian just couldn't find the words, until Mutt



NOISE POLLUTION
A sweaty Angus performs alongside one newly-appointed Brian Johnson

around," he said. As Malcolm explained, "All these emotions were in play when we were recording."

The last song recorded ended up as the last song on the album. Malcolm and Angus wrote it in 15 minutes: a slow, swaggering boogie number they called *Rock And Roll Ain't Noise Pollution*. An anthem was born, and *Back In Black* was complete, save for one detail. In May, during the mixing of the album at Electric Lady studios in New York City, Malcolm had a flash of inspiration

F*CK - IT'S MAGIC!" - ANGUS YOUNG

Lange said something that flicked a switch in Brian's head. A storm was breaking over the island. "Rolling thunder," Mutt noted. Brian took the phrase and ran with it: "I'm a rollin' thunder, pourin' rain/I'm comin' on like a hurricane." Brian also felt, at times, as if Bon was watching over him. "I was a little worried," he said. "Like, who am I to try to follow in the footsteps of this great poet? Bon really was a kind of poet. And something happened to me – a good thing." Angus had similar experiences. "We still think Bon's

while taking a wee. What was needed, he decided, was a tolling bell at the start of *Hells Bells*: a dramatic flourish. The engineer, Tony Platt, was dispatched across the Atlantic to record the bell at a grand old English church in Loughborough, only to find that he couldn't get a clean sound because pigeons roosting in the bell-tower flew off noisily every time a note was struck. As a result, Platt commissioned a custom-made bell from a specialist foundry in Leicestershire. And with that, the job, finally, was done.

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

When Malcolm returned from New York with the finished album, his brother knew they'd nailed it. As Angus later recalled: "When I first heard it in all its glory, I thought, 'F*ck – it's magic!'"

There was a dispute over the album's cover. The suits at Atlantic Records felt that an all-black design would be bad for business, but the band would not yield. The black cover was in memory of Bon. There was no backing down on that.

Back In Black was released on July 21st, 1980 – five months and one day after Bon Scott had died. Rolling Stone writer David Fricke declared the album a masterpiece and a milestone in rock. "*Back in Black* is not only the best of AC/DC's six American albums," Fricke wrote. "It's the apex of heavy metal art: the first LP since *Led Zeppelin II* that captures all the blood, sweat and arrogance of the genre. In other words, *Back In Black* kicks like a mutha." In the UK, Record Mirror's review – headlined: 'POWER IS RESTORED' – critic Robin Smith stated: "The resurrection shuffle starts here. Brian was the perfect choice, possessing an almost uncanny feel for the band's songs."

Back In Black was an immediate hit. Within two weeks of its release, the



album was at number one in the UK. The first single, *You Shook Me All Night Long*, made the top 40 in the UK and US, and the top ten in Australia. By early October, when the band finished touring in North America, the album was certified platinum in the US as it began an incredible thirteen-month residency in the Billboard top ten. At one point it was selling 10,000 copies a day.

THEIR LEGACY

Brian Johnson had been anxious before his first gig with the band in Belgium, one month before the album was released. According to Angus, “He was sh*tting himself!” But his fears had evaporated when he saw a banner held up in the audience: ‘R.I.P. Bon Scott, Good Luck Brian.’ “It just lifted me,” Brian said. An even greater tribute followed when AC/DC returned home to Australia at the end of the *Back In Black* tour in February 1981. After their gig in Sydney, Bon Scott’s mother Isa told Brian, “Our Bon would have been proud of you, son.”

40 years on, *Back In Black* is still the benchmark for hard rock.

As Rage Against The Machine guitarist Tom Morello said, unequivocally, no matter how good the newest rock or album is, “*Back In Black* will kick its ass.”

What AC/DC created, in the wake of tragedy, was as near to perfect as any rock album could be: ten tracks of electrifying rock ‘n’ roll, all killer, no filler. Brian Johnson delivered, on debut, the performance of a lifetime. In Phil Rudd and bassist Cliff Williams, there was the best rhythm section in the business, no frills, no fancy stuff, just driving it home. And at the heart of it all was the guitar power of Malcolm and Angus Young: Malcolm, wielding his Gretsch, all about the rhythm, a master of riffs; Angus, with his Gibson SG, playing off Mal, and conjuring up one killer solo after another.

THE AFTERMATH

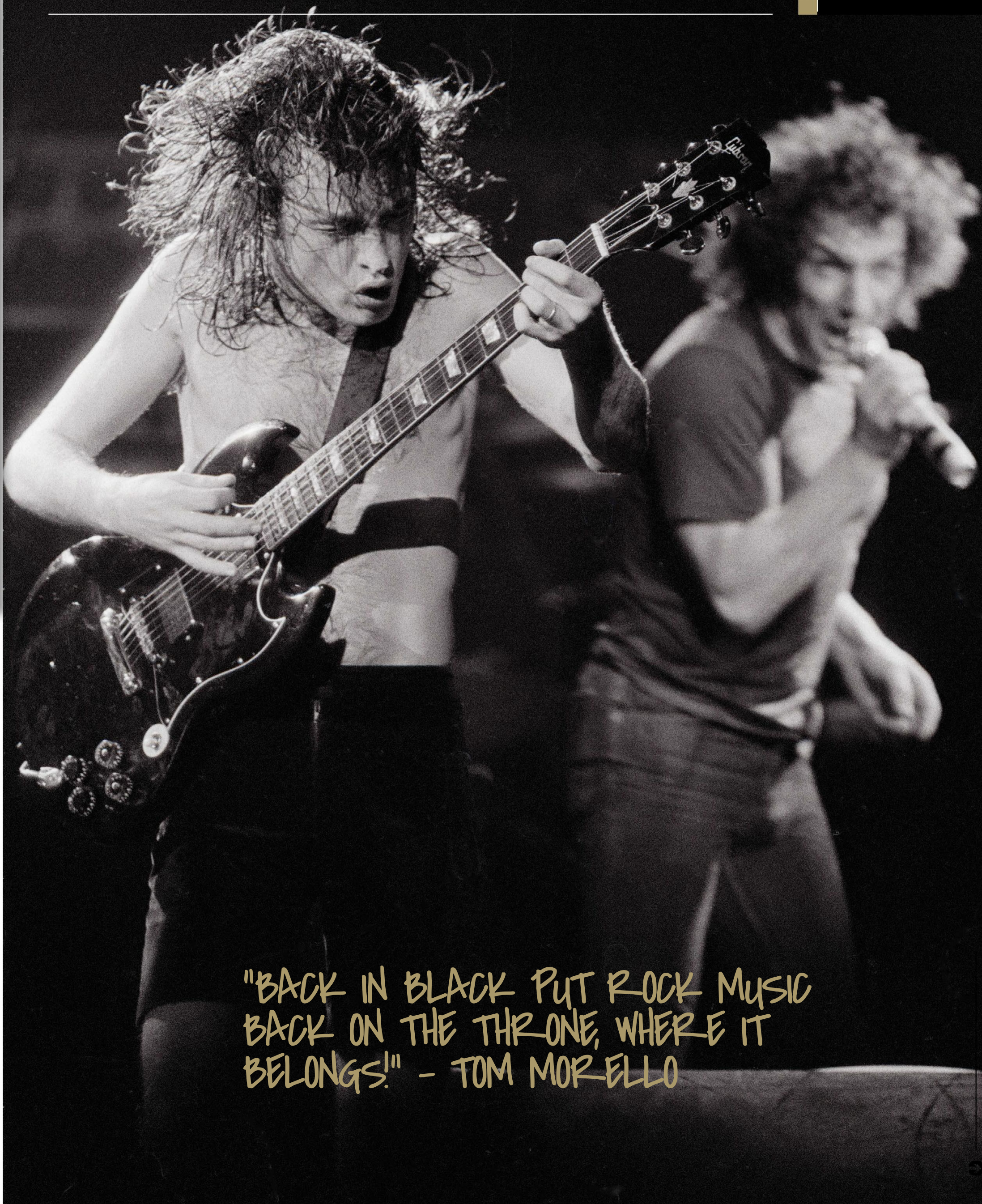
In 1980, *Back In Black* was a triumph not just for Brian Johnson and AC/DC but for rock music, period. As Tom Morello recalled: “Disco was huge and punk and new wave were ascendant, and along came this AC/DC record which just destroyed everybody. It put hard rock music back on the throne, where

ROCK’N’ROLL SINGER

Bon Scott and Angus Young, we salute you!

it belongs!” And as Slash saw it: “*Back In Black* saved rock’n’roll! It was the defining rock record that came during the biggest lull for rock music. It just exploded!” Slash was just a kid of fifteen when he first heard *Back In Black*, and as he said of its impact: “AC/DC was always a great band, totally genuine. But the miracle of the whole thing was that *Back In Black* was just a great new record, it was still AC/DC. We all missed Bon, but we let him go and at the same time welcomed and embraced Brian.”

In 1978, the NME writer Nick Kent described Thin Lizzy’s *Live And Dangerous* as “an album made by heroes.” So, in the truest sense, was *Back In Black*. As Malcolm Young once said of AC/DC’s music, in which Chuck Berry was a primary influence: “It’s just loud rock’n’roll – *wham, bam, thank you ma’m!*” But there was something else in *Back In Black*, something deeper, and it was Malcolm, again, who defined it most clearly. “We meant it,” he said. “It’s real. It’s coming from within. That’s how that album was made – because of what we’d all gone through. And that emotion on that record – that will be around forever.”



"BACK IN BLACK PUT ROCK MUSIC
BACK ON THE THRONE, WHERE IT
BELONGS!" - TOM MORELLO



Photo: Kevin Nixon



ANGUS YOUNG

My life in shorts

Interview Paul Elliott

THE AC/DC GUITAR HERO ON THE BAND AND *BACK IN BLACK*, THE PERILS OF GOING ON STAGE IN A SCHOOLBOY INFORM, AND WHAT SHAPED HIM AS A PLAYER – THE POWER OF THE BLUES, AND THE “NASTY” SOUND OF CHUCK BERRY’S GUITAR

A

ngus Young is a rock’n’roll legend, but not a man to take himself too seriously. As he once said of his art: “You don’t go to the butcher for brain surgery.”

Born on March 31st, 1955 in Glasgow, the youngest of eight children, Angus was just eight years old when his family emigrated to Australia, and it was in Sydney, in 1973, that he and his older brother Malcolm, rhythm guitarist, formed AC/DC. The band went on to sell more than 200 million albums worldwide, including 50 million of *Back In Black*.

The death of Malcolm Young on November 18, 2017 left Angus as the last remaining founder member of AC/DC. But it was Malcolm’s wish that the band carried on, banging out loud, raw rock’n’roll, just as they always did. And as Angus said: “I enjoy playing. That’s what keeps me going.”

What first turned you on to rock’n’roll?

The sound of Chuck Berry’s guitar. It’s everything rolled into one: it’s blues, it’s rock and roll, and it’s got that hard edge to it. To me, that’s pure rock’n’roll. It’s not clean – it’s nasty.

Did playing guitar come easily to you?

As a kid, I was never one for the tennis racket. I was more interested in getting my fingers round the guitar neck, because when I was little – I’m little now, but I was ‘little’ little – getting a hand around

the neck was a big thing. That was the hardest part.

What do you remember of those early days, when you were just a regular schoolboy like all the others?

I didn’t go to school much. I was prize truant. When I went in it was like, ‘Welcome, Mr. Young! A year is a long holiday, you know? The first day I went to that school, we all went to assembly and the headmaster dragged all the boys who’d been caught smoking up on the stage in front of the whole school. Of course Malcolm was one of them.

So, you were always a naughty boy then?

I got into a lot of trouble when I was young. I wouldn’t say I was a budding bank-robber or anything, but I was a bit of a juvenile delinquent.

➔ You also got into blues music at an early age. What did you love about it?

It's the emotion in those old blues records. I've never really been into the depression stuff. I've always liked the happy sort of blues music, like Muddy Waters. Even though he might have been singing about his woman running off with a nineteen year-old bus driver from Florida, there would be an element of humour in it, and that's what I've always loved. I've never been a great lover of the real sad element of the blues. There are some great sad songs, but I prefer the happier side. And the grammar in blues music is fantastic. Some of the things that Muddy would sing: 'I just love them pretty womens, I'll kill for them young pretty things.' They'd sing 'whummen' instead of women, and 'choo' instead of you. But you get what they mean.

When you and Malcolm formed AC/DC, with Dave Evans as the singer, were you thinking big?

Early on, we always thought we'd be lucky if we got past the first week!

There was a defining moment in April 1974 when AC/DC appeared at an open-air concert in Sydney's Victoria Park, and you wore your old school uniform on stage for the first time...

That was the most frightened I've ever been on stage, but thank God, I had no time to think. I just went straight out there. The crowd's first reaction to the shorts and stuff was like a bunch of fish at feeding time – all mouths open. I had just one thing on my mind: I didn't want to be a target for blokes throwing bottles. I thought if I stand still I'm a target. So I never stopped moving. I reckoned if I stood still I'd be dead.

The band played on the Aussie pub circuit, where audiences were notoriously tough. How scary was it?

Some of the places we played were worse than toilets, let me tell you, and there was that much scrapping going on, you were behind the amps! When I was at school and there was a dance with a band, it was always a band like Van Halen, with the guy with the long

blonde hair wiggling his hips. In the pubs we played in, in front of that hot, sweaty, beer-swilling crowd, you couldn't even hope to do that. This was the kind of audience you couldn't even tune your guitar to. If you bust a string, that was it. Sometimes you finished with just two strings, because there was no way they were going to put up with a couple of minutes of you fixing the guitar. I remember one night I said to the rest of the band, 'I'm not going out there.' The police couldn't get in the place. There was some madman running around inside the hall with a meat cleaver, chopping into the people! And the front row was all bikers. I said, 'They just want blood!' You looked out and it was just like murderers' row, and the look on their faces is like, 'Send us the little guy in the shorts!'

Is it true that Malcolm once had to 'assist' you in getting on stage?

Yeah. Suddenly I just felt a boot and I was on. And there's this deathly silence. All you can do is play – and pray! You put your head down and hope a bottle doesn't come your way.

That became part of my stage act. I learnt to duck and keep moving.

When Bon Scott became AC/DC's singer in 1974, he'd already been around the block a few times with various bands, and had a taste for the rock'n'roll lifestyle. What did you make of him back then?

Bon joined us pretty late in his life, but that guy had more youth in him than people half his age. That was how he thought, and I learned from him. Bon used to say to me, 'Whatever I do, you don't.' Oh, I had a few wild nights over the years, but most of the time everyone else was having them for me. Because of the schoolboy uniform, some women have tried to mother me – they think I'm cute because I'm so short. But playing has always been the thing for me. I never really looked beyond the next gig. In the early days, all my mates used to say to me, 'You must be meeting loads of girls...' Well yeah, I used to meet plenty of girls, but none of them used to want to go home with me.

Some women would come up and make, er, bold statements, but I don't know why. There's nothing sexy about a schoolboy, is there?

In the summer of 1976, when the band first played in the UK, it was during a performance at the Reading Festival that you first treated an audience to something that would become a tradition – a little on-stage striptease. What prompted you to do this at Reading?

Some blonde girl walked real slow across the photo pit right in front of the stage and thirty thousand eyes went with her. It was a real showstopper. Malcolm said to me, 'You gotta do something to get the crowd's attention back!' So, I dropped my trousers.

And ever since, you've had AC/DC audiences singing 'Get 'em off!'

I always thought they were singing, 'Get 'im off!'

Malcolm said that it was Bon's voice, and his witty lyrics, that gave the band its 'flavour'.

Bon called himself a 'toilet wall graffitist'. He was full of compliments about himself! But he could conjure a story from anything. *She's Got Balls* was about his first wife. And he did say he wrote *Problem Child* for me, but you now, I never owned a knife like it says in the song. My dad took my knife off me when I was four. Just having a guitar was bad enough, I suppose. But yeah, Bon summed me up in two words!

He could have used one word...

That's right (laughs). With four letters!

On April 30th, 1978, AC/DC played at the Apollo theatre in Glasgow, the city where you and Malcolm were born. And from that came one of the greatest live albums ever made: *If You Want Blood You've Got It*.

It was the magic show. One night, guitars out of tune, feedback, singer farting, whatever...

In 1979, the band had its first million selling album with *Highway To Hell*.

That was the album that broke us in America.

But the album's title provoked outrage among America's so-called 'moral majority' – as did the cover, on which you were pictured with devil



SCHOOL DAYS

"The crowd's first reaction to the shorts and stuff was like a bunch of fish at feeding time."

Photos: Kevin Nixon/Getty Images

"IF YOU GO BACK
TO THE BLUES,
THAT'S THE
STANDARD
TEMPO IN MOST
OF THE STRIP
JOINTS, AND
THAT'S WHAT WE
RELY ON, TOO"





horns and a forked tail. What did you make of the controversy?

As soon as we called the album *Highway To Hell*, the American record company immediately went into a panic. With religious things, I thought everywhere was like Australia. There, they call them Bible-thumpers, and it's a limited species, very limited! Christianity was never a popular movement. It's that convict background! But in America, you had guys in bed sheets and placards with prayers on, picketing the gigs. I said, 'Who are they here for?' And they said, 'You!' And we had that thing – that if you play the record backwards you get these Satanic messages. F*cking hell, why play it backwards? It says it right up front: *Highway To Hell*!

After the *Highway To Hell* tour, you, Malcolm and Bon got together in London to begin working on the album that would become *Back In Black*. How much of it was written with Bon?

Bon wrote a little of the stuff, a week before he died. We started writing the music with Bon on drums. He was a drummer originally. He'd bang away while me and Malcolm worked out the riffs.

When Bon died in February 1980, after one too many drunken nights, had you feared that his life might end that way?

As a person, Bon stared death in the face a lot. The way he said it was, 'One day you gotta go. You gotta be a stiff.'

Did you feel, as most AC/DC fans did, that Bon was irreplaceable?

Well, when we auditioned singers, they'd say, 'How am I supposed to sing over all this volume?' We said, 'We



HAVE A DRINK ON ME

"Some places we played were worse than toilets!"

"NOWADAYS, EVERYTHING SOUNDS SO NICE. I WANT THAT HISS!"

don't want you to sing – we want you to scream!"

You certainly found the right man for the job in Brian Johnson.

Yeah. I always said he sounds like somebody dropped a truck on his foot. And, like Bon, Brian had a good sense of humour.

On the simplest level, *Back In Black* was a great rock'n'roll record. But

on a deeper level it was, as you described it, a memorial.

The whole *Back In Black* album was our dedication to Bon. That's why the album cover was pure black, and why the album starts with a bell ringing, something sombre and different to anything else we'd done.

Was this album also Brian's finest hour?

Brian has recorded a lot of strong stuff

with the band – the *Back In Black* album especially, and *For Those About To Rock*, which still gives me goosebumps.

After all that this band has been through, can you explain its longevity?

People have said we've hung around long enough! But some bands fade when they try to adapt to what's current. We play rock music. It's a little bit late for us to do a ballad. Rock is what we do best. Sometimes I'm asked if



I LIKE TO HEAR THE VALVES WARM UP"

I want to play music other than AC/DC. Sure, at home I play a little blues, but after five minutes I'm like, sod this! And I'm playing hard rock again.

From the start, you've played it simple, straight-up hard rock'n'roll, nothing fancy...

It's a challenge to keep coming up with songs of the calibre of *Let There Be Rock*, *Highway To Hell* and *Back In Black*. Every song we write has got to stand up. Most of our stuff is just about sex, as is most rock music. It's pretty hard to write

a song about your dog. But I've never really found a sexual thing in music. I've never found anything sexy that was meant to be sexy. Now, that's a good Freudian thing. But if you go back to the blues, that's the standard tempo in most of the strip joints, and that's what we rely on too. It has to be earthy.

Have you kept up with modern music?

Nah. When I get in a car, the first thing that goes in is a Muddy Waters tape, even though I've played in four hundred times. I love that and Chuck Berry. Nowadays everything sounds so nice – buzz-free, hiss-free. I like that hiss! I like to hear the valves on the amplifier warming up. It's pure energy. I still spend hours sitting and listening to the sound Chuck Berry's guitar makes. There's not a day that goes by when I don't pick up a guitar. And I'm getting there – I've got two fingers going now!

What you learnt the hard way in the early 70s – to go on stage and keep moving – is something you've done ever since. How do you keep it up?

After a show I just wind down for a couple of hours. I try to hide, just in case somebody grabs me and says, 'Hey, you didn't play this song tonight!' I need time to relax. I wouldn't like to be the 'Angus Young on stage' all the time. I'd be burnt out inside a week. On one American tour my weight went down to ninety-four pounds, and I was a hundred and nine pounds when we started.

Do you still get nervous before a show?

Sometimes it is

frightening. But you've got to psych yourself up a bit, give yourself a good kick up the ass. Usually, once I've got the uniform on, I'm okay. I'm on edge, nervous, but I'm not in a panic. At least I don't have to put on make-up. I sport my own pimples. And some nights I'm in stitches when I'm trying to be The Schoolboy. But because of nerves, I've tripped over and even forgotten to do my zipper up a few times. I go for a pee and forget. Last thing before I go on stage, I always go for a p*ss and then have a cigarette. If you ever see my



HIGH VOLTAGE

Angus onstage with Brian Johnson

shorts smoking, you know I didn't put it out right!

How do you feel when you're up there on stage?

I'm on my own little cloud. Adrenalin takes over. It's like when you take off in an aeroplane. It's exhilarating. When you're firing well, it's the best feeling in the world. And when it goes wrong, it's like someone's shoved a red-hot poker up your backside. But for me, the shows go so quick. You're on and you're off, and then you have to go back to how you are as a person. That's the hard part, because once you go into being The Schoolboy it's pretty hard to come off it. I'm like two different people – sometimes three!

Who's the third?

That's what I'm trying to figure out! I've been up there playing and thinking, what are those feet doing? I'm watching them to see which way they want to go. That's all I ever do, follow the feet and the guitar. The duckwalk comes naturally.

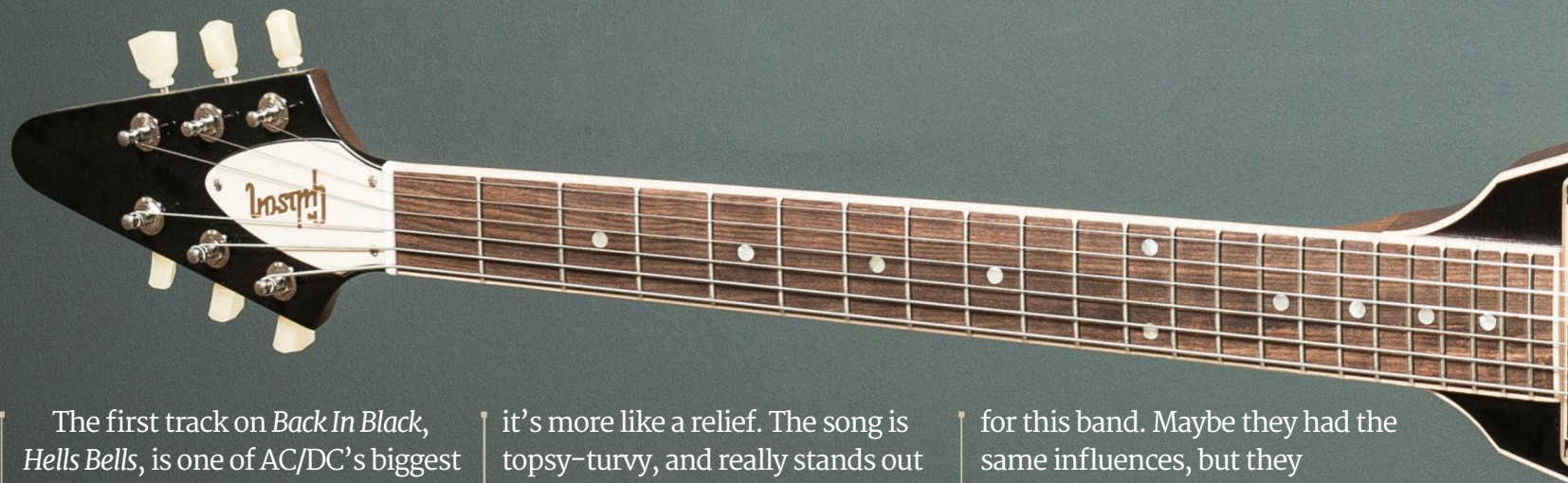
And it's still the best feeling in the world?

Yeah. When I put the uniform on, and the legs start shaking... I'm ready.

"It's all in the FINGERS"

THE DARKNESS FRONTMAN **JUSTIN HAWKINS** EXPLAINS THE GENIUS OF AC/DC'S FRATERNAL GUITAR DUO ANGUS AND MALCOLM YOUNG – AND HAILS "THE ULTIMATE ROCK RIFF" IN *BACK IN BLACK*

Interview Amit Sharma / Photo Will Ireland



"I still think *Back In Black* is the benchmark sonically for how you want a rock record to sound. You have to hold it up comparatively to *Back In Black*, because no other album has the same power and illusion of simplicity. It's a truly timeless record. There's a lot more going on in the production than first meets the ear. You can't just have guitars playing riffs, there's more clever stuff that (producer) Mutt Lange brought to the record and as a result it really stands up. Now, as a 40 year-old record, you almost can't believe it. My brother Dan (guitarist in The Darkness) still references it for mixes. If our mixes are not comparable to that album then it isn't acceptable.

The first track on *Back In Black*, *Hells Bells*, is one of AC/DC's biggest songs, and with good reason. It starts off with a bell, and it actually feels like you're inside the bell if you listen loud enough. *You Shook Me All Night Long* is another of my favourites because it's essentially just a pop song.

And the album's title track has the ultimate rock riff. It does everything in those four bars. You don't need anything else and even the chorus alone is superfluous. And it's all deceptively slow, so it creeps up on you. The lyric and the delivery of the lyric, on the other hand, are frantic. You get sucked in by riff and then by lyric, but everything is a hook – that's how perfect a song it is. Instead of the chorus being the big uplifting bit that the whole song builds up to,

it's more like a relief. The song is topsy-turvy, and really stands out from everything else in the genre where you spend most of the time waiting for the chorus. In this case, you're waiting for the riff.

I think they must have built it from the riff up. All of the parts are almost like an afterthought, it's like they started with the riff and the rest was just jamming. A riff like that is gold dust. When we worked with Roy Thomas Baker, who produced *Bohemian Rhapsody*, even he said there was no better rock riff than *Back In Black*. If the greatest producer in the world thinks that, there's got to be some truth in it.

The history of Angus and Malcolm Young is that they developed individually and then came together

for this band. Maybe they had the same influences, but they interpreted them in different ways and didn't approach it as brothers until they started working together and Angus joined the band. There's that story about Angus turning up and just playing solos and running about. Apparently there was a raised eyebrow or two followed by a slight suspicion it might just work. That chemistry between Angus and Malcolm is AC/DC's blueprint. It really is in the fingers for those guys.

The tones in *Back In Black* are as authentic and real as it gets. You can tell the album was recorded in a really unforgiving way, which means the playing had to really be spot-on. A million bands will have tried to make an album like that

"ANGUS SAYS HE NICKED IT ALL FROM CHUCK BERRY, BUT

and found they weren't able to play in that tight and disciplined way. Everything from the way the kit is tuned to the level of muting on the bass lines makes it such a perfect record. All these things sound simple but I really don't think it is. It took the band years of doing exactly that to get to that standard. I love how it was all panned, too. All AC/DC records are like that, to be honest. You can be driving around and hear exactly what each guitar player was up to. Maybe that's why they became so iconic – it was so clear what their roles were. They weren't buried amongst each other, lost in a wall of sound.

Angus' parts are more saucy than fancy, and all of his solos are totally singable. Angus had a lot of recycled phrases. I think that's the charm of AC/DC – if you're inclined to analyse

it, the music always gives you exactly what you want. There's no left turn that leaves you disappointed. Everything they build up to, every crescendo, satisfies. Angus' solos are a huge part of that. After he's played a certain phrase, you know the next one's coming and even if you'd never heard that particular solo before you'd know what to expect. He always delivers. He's a legend and those are his phrases. He says he nicked it all from Chuck Berry but honestly – those voicings and scales are all him. You can spot them a mile off. You know exactly what he's going to do and every time he does it you're like, 'Yes, I'm glad he did that!'

I know that they monitor really fucking loud for their live shows. I don't think there's any attenuation happening between amp and cab. It's all natural – real amps played through real speakers. There may be some Wizard stuff they were using on recent tours. That's how I roll sometimes, I like a Wizard. The last time I went to see Rick St. Pierre, who makes them, he gave me one of Angus' plectrums. Which felt like a clue – I'm on the scent and I've gotten on the trail now – I'll soon get to the source of these secrets. But what we know is that it's loud and played properly. That's all you need, to be honest."

THOSE VOICINGS AND SCALES ARE ALL HIM"

HIGH VOLTAGE ROCK 'N' ROLL TONE

THE GEAR AT THE HEART OF THE AC/DC SOUND

Few rock guitarists have earned the same respect from the blues world as Angus Young. There's an undeniable, tangible honesty to AC/DC's music that pays homage to the

very roots of rock 'n' roll, sticking to the traditional formula of a few easy chords and powerful pentatonic licks.

Along with his brother Malcolm, who sadly passed away in 2017, Angus's raw and uncomplicated tones echoed that essence of sonic purity – favouring a more direct and undiluted kind of attack.

Here, we're looking at the gear used by the Young brothers. Their signal path is renowned for simplicity and it works thanks to the sheer quality of its combined ingredients. Very little has changed over the years – even Stevie Young is rocking Malcolm's gear since he took over the reins. Read on as we cover the essential basics.



ANGUS YOUNG

GIBSON SG STANDARD

Though occasionally spotted holding a Les Paul and an ES-335, there really is only one guitar associated with AC/DC's duck-walking lead maestro. And it would be fair to say his loyalty to the Gibson SG has never waned. He's well known for his 1970 Custom as used on the *Back In Black* tour, his black 1967 Standard and various cherry red Standards.

Generally keeping his guitars un-modified, he'll play them until they break down (pots and pickups often get waterlogged with sweat). Replacement parts are also usually stock, though his '67 is reputedly equipped with custom Seymour Duncans. Whereas Malcolm opts for heavy strings, Angus prefers a lighter option in .009-.042s. Typically, you'll need to dial in a lead tone with the guitar volume set to 10 and just back off down to 6, 7 or 8 for a rhythm tone. You could use an overdrive pedal, but for Angus it's just bridge-humbucker, amp, rock!

MARSHALL PLEXI SUPER LEAD 1959SLP

It's a legendary amp used by countless greats such as Eric Clapton, Pete Townshend, Jimi Hendrix, Jimmy Page and more – and it's at the core of Angus' tone. Typically the valves in Angus' amps are biased to give a little more drive. Not a wise option with your pride and joy but a blown valve or two is no big deal for Angus' mega-rig! You don't need to crank the amp. Dial the bass, middle and treble in between 2 and 4, and set the gain at 6 or 7 and for a good starting point.

SCHAFFER-VEGA WIRELESS SYSTEM

Acting as preamp, boost and compressor, the Schaffer-Vega wireless system appeared in Angus' rig from 1977. If you're dead set on authenticity you can buy a recreation of the preamp in the form of the Solodallas Schaffer Replica Classic.

ROCKTRON HUSH

Not exactly an effect, but Angus has used this pedal for noise reduction. Useful if you need it.



ROCK OR
BUST:

SGs available now

1. EPIPHONE SG STANDARD £399

Complete with mahogany body, 'batwing' scratchplate and a pair of alnico 'buckers, this Epi is the essence of Angus on a realistic budget.

2. GIBSON SG STANDARD '61 £1599

There are several SGs available from the big G, but for Angus vibes we'd opt either for the Modern Standard or this '61 model harking back to the original design.



MALCOLM YOUNG

'63 GRETSCH JET FIREBIRD, AKA THE BEAST

Malcolm's main go-to guitar, The Beast's original red paint was stripped to reveal its trademark natural wood finish. After trying out a humbucker in the middle position in the 70s, the neck and middle pickups were removed all together, leaving the cavities open and keeping just the one Filter'Tron pickup in the bridge position. The Filter'Tron is key to the DC rhythm tone; with greater clarity (though less output) than a traditional humbucker, allied to increased power over a typical single coil, there's a balanced output with a sweet top end.

All the tone controls on The Beast were bypassed, so the signal path is simple: bridge pickup, volume pot, output. Early on, Malcolm replaced the stock Gretsch roller bridge and Burns tailpiece with a Badass wraparound bridge, though in later years the original system would be reinstalled. Malc was never a trem user, but the extra string length between the stock bridge and tailpiece would alter the tone and sustain.

1971 MARSHALL SUPER BASS

Like Angus, Malcolm is a Marshall guy through and through, and, whereas Angus prefers Super Leads, Malcolm would opt for Super Bass heads. Originally designed as a bass amp, the Super Bass shared circuitry with the SL model but was tweaked to give greater clean headroom at high volume. Perfect for Malcolm, whose rhythm tone is surprisingly clean – and his amp settings reflect this. Keep bass and mid at around 3, with treble and gain around 7 for a ballpark tone. Other Marshalls have been seen in Malcolm's rig over the years, the JTM45 being used more than any other model, but the Super Bass gives the quintessential DC rhythm tone.



ROCK OR
BUST:

Gretsch Jets available now

1. GRETSCH G5222 ELECTROMATIC DOUBLE JET BT V-STOPTAIL £495

It's not actually a Malcolm model, but the chambered body and natural finish recall The Beast. Broad'Tron pickups deliver high output with crystal clear highs.

2. GRETSCH G6131-MY MALCOLM YOUNG SIGNATURE JET £2749

The G5222 strikes a balance of modern and authentic at a quarter of the price of a Custom Shop 'Salute' Jet. Think 'aged' rather than 'relic'd'; a homage rather than a replica.





For those about to PLUCK

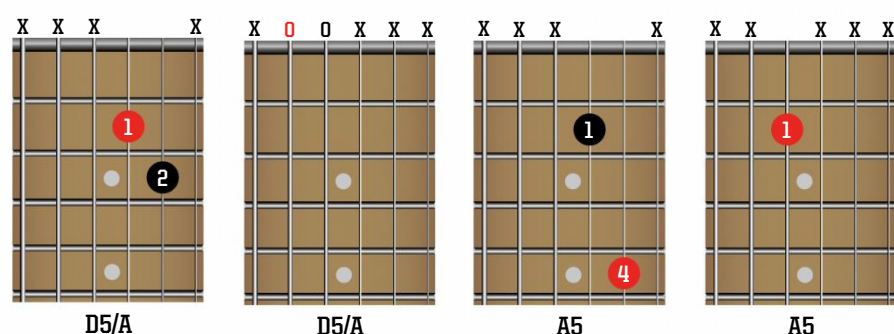
WE SALUTE THE RHYTHM & RIFFING STYLE OF THE DC DUO

Angus and Malcolm Young are straight-ahead, no frills rock 'n' roll guitarists – the product of listening to classic blues and rock guitarists such as Freddie King, Jimi Hendrix and Chuck Berry in their formative years. The secret? Aggressive, fully committed strumming with downstrokes on Malcolm's open and powerchords paired with a slightly more fluid down-up approach from Angus.

There are two elements to our lesson. First, a look at the duo's approach to chords. Though easy open shapes feature heavily, there are a few tricks they'll employ to fatten their sound and keep things interesting. With some chords under your belt you can move on and take a look at our tab examples, which offer a more in depth rundown of Angus and Malcolm's rock 'n' roll and blues riffing roots.

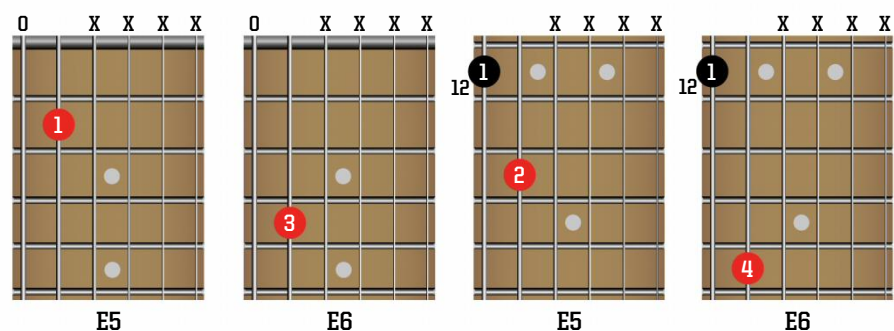
1 OCTAVE-UP POWERCHORDS

In the pre-chorus to *Rock 'N' Roll Train* Malcolm plays low powerchord shapes while Angus plays high. It's a clever trick that helps create a fatter sound. These D/A and A5 shapes will get you started.



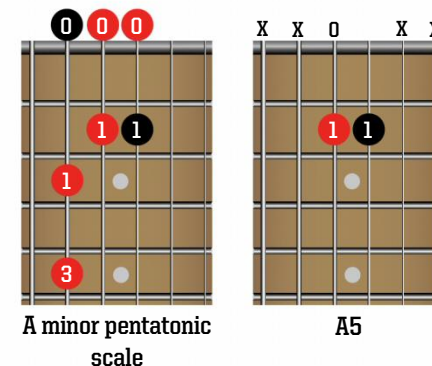
3 ROCK 'N' ROLL BOOGIE RIFFS

Another octave-up trick can be found in the verse riff from *Rock And Roll Ain't Noise Pollution*. Angus plays a simple E5-E6 boogie riff in the open position. Malcolm plays the same part an octave higher. It's a bit of a stretch, but cool stuff if you can manage it.



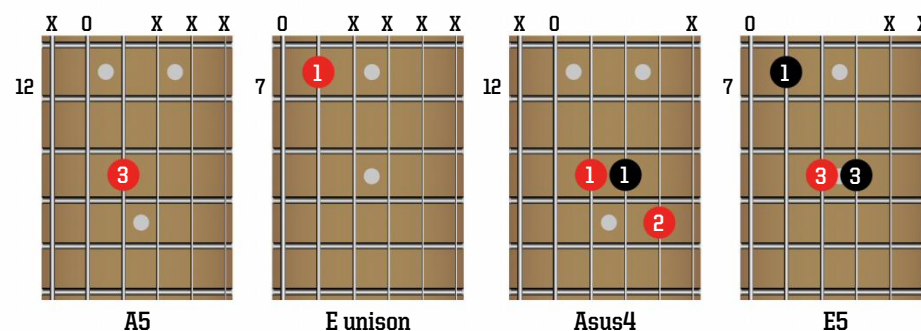
2 POWERCHORDS & BLUES-ROCK RIFFS

Check out both *Whole Lotta Rosie* and *It's A Long Way To The Top...* and you'll find Malcolm playing open position powerchords while Angus riffs on a pentatonic-based rock 'n' roll line. Typical Young stuff.



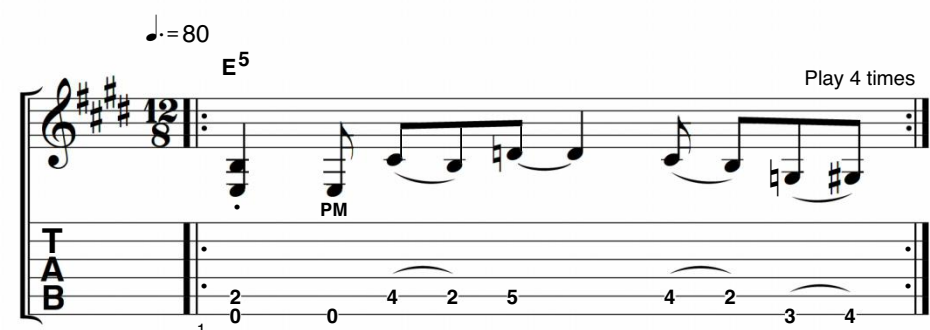
3 THICK AND THIN

When jamming with another guitarist, try out this idea from the verse of *Touch Too Much*. Malcolm plays thin-sounding two-note shapes (A5 and E unison) while Angus plays fatter chords across four strings (Asus4 and E5). It gives a nice separation between their parts.



ROCK 'N' ROLL RIFFING

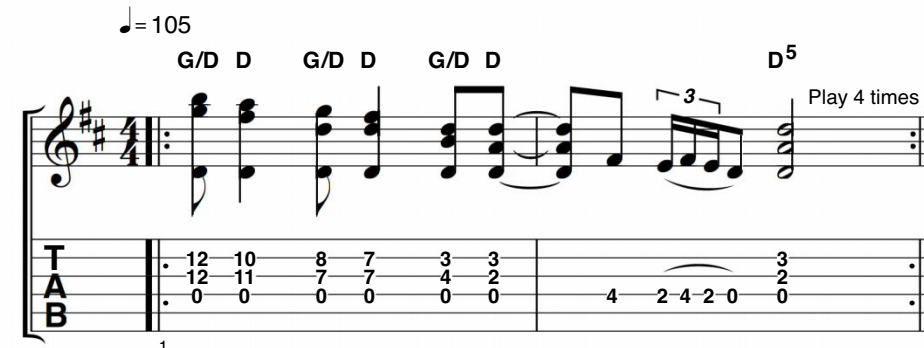
TRACK 19-20



This is a classic rock 'n' roll style riff akin to songs such *The Jack*. Use downstrokes throughout except where there are hammer-ons or pull-offs.

OPEN-STRING PEDAL RIFF

TRACK 21-22



There's a similar vibe to the opening line of *You Shook Me All Night Long* here. The idea is to keep the fourth string ringing out as the diads change.



HYBRID PICKED STACCATO RIFF

TRACK 23

♩=100

E⁵ D⁵ A G/D *Play 4 times*

These chords showcase the staccato sound of riffs like *For Those About To Rock...* and *Stiff Upper Lip*. Aim for a short, clipped sound to each chord.

OPEN CHORD RIFF

TRACK 24

♩=100

E⁵ D A G⁵ A G⁵ *Play 4 times*

Back In Black, Highway To Hell - open chords like these are found throughout AC/DC's back catalogue. The offbeat change in bar 1 (to the D chord) is a typical AC/DC trick.

PLAYING IN UNISON

TRACKS 25-26

♩=120

G⁵ C G/B

let ring

D/F# Dsus⁴ G⁵

let ring

Most often, Angus and Malcolm play unison rhythm guitar parts (ie, the same parts) - but occasionally they'll mix it up. For example, if Angus was playing this line, Malcolm might jam along with simple two-note powerchords or major/minor diads; when Malcolm plays riffs like these Angus will often play in unison then finish with a lead flourish.

CHORDS AND ARPEGGIOS

TRACKS 27-28

♩=70

A⁵ G⁵ D/F# A⁵ D/A G/B D/A ^{1/4}

let ring

As the band's rhythm machine Malcolm Young chops away, Angus often overlays a supporting arpeggio or riff, as in bar 1 of our riff. The G5 to D/F# change here is the same as C to G/B in the previous tab - just in a different key and played on different strings. You can hear the phrasing is similar though.

OFFBEAT RIFFING

TRACKS 29-30

♩=100

B⁵ B⁵/A B⁵ G⁵ D⁵ A⁵ N.C. A⁵ N.C.

TAB: 4 4 4 4 4 4 3 0 3 2 2 2 0 3 4 2 0 3 0 7

Another great example of the band's offbeat riff style - a neat rhythm trick they would use to punctuate guitar parts in tracks like *T.N.T.*, *Problem Child*, *If You Want Blood...* and more. In most cases Malcolm uses an all downpicking approach whereas Angus tends to be a little more fluid in his picking approach.

BACK IN BLACK-STYLE SYNCOPATION

TRACKS 31-32

♩=90

TAB: 7 2 7 3 7 4 7 5 7 5 7

Probably AC/DC's biggest track, *Back In Black* demonstrates the Young brothers' super-tight timing, particularly on the unusual riff that kicks in at 0:14. Try out our similar example to hone your timing. Malcolm would generally down-pick the riff but we've included down- and upstrokes to help you feel the rhythm.

CHUCK BERRY INFLUENCE

TRACKS 33-34

♩=90

E⁵ D⁵ A⁵ E⁵ D⁵ A⁵

TAB: BU 2(4) 0 0 3 0 3 2 0 2 2 2 0 2 0 0 2 3 3 5

We're looking at Angus' Chuck Berry influences here in this blues scale-based lick. Our lick is played in open position but there's a lot to be learned from transposing the lick higher up the fretboard. For instance, try moving every note five frets higher; the open strings will be at the 5th fret and you'll be playing in A minor.

MINOR TO MAJOR LICK

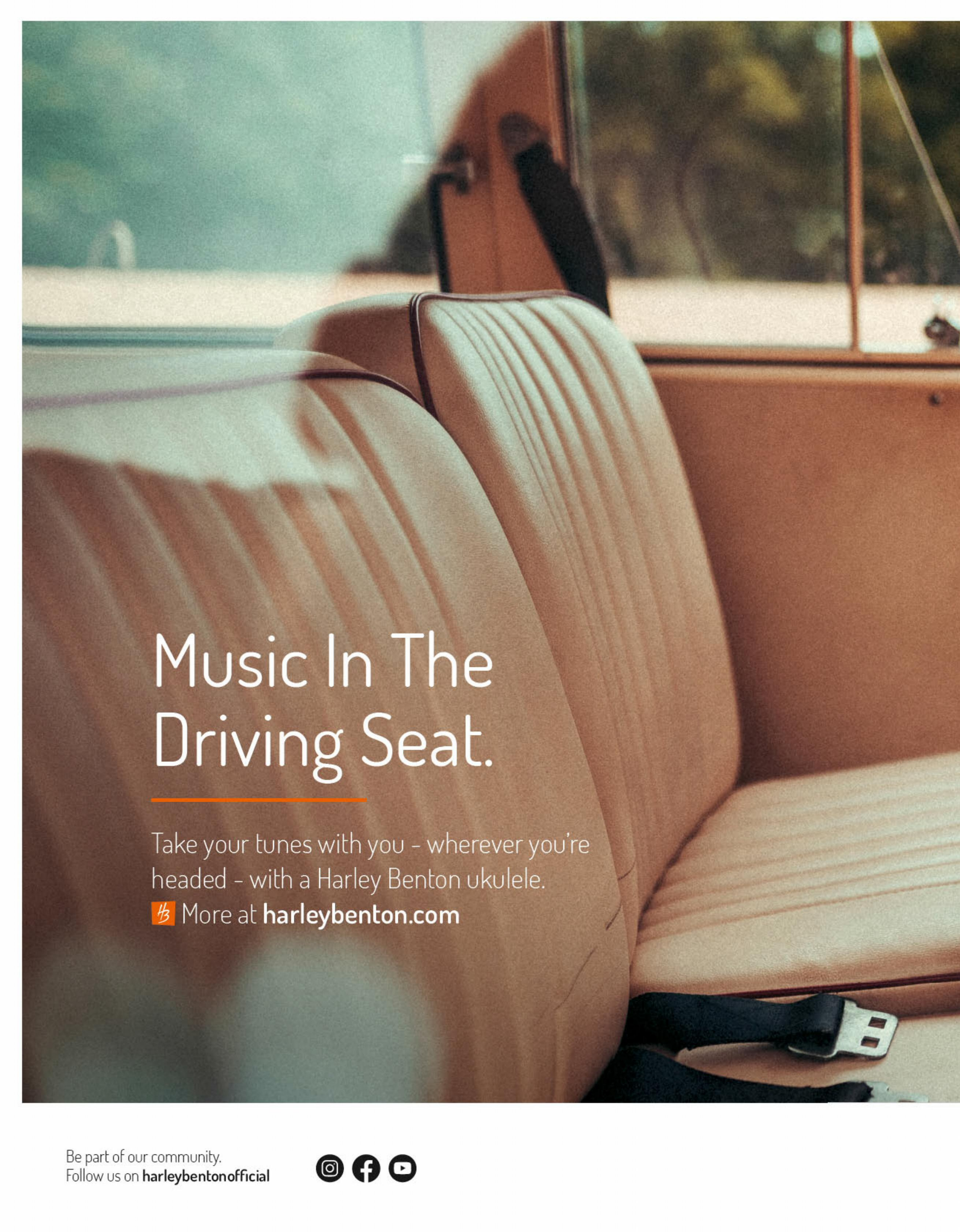
TRACKS 35-36

♩=100

A G D/F#

TAB: BU 4(6) 2 5 BU BD 4(6) (4) 2 4 2 4 7 5 BU 7(9) 5 8 BU BD 7(9) (7) 5 7 7 7 5 5 6 7

Another blues influenced lick, this more sophisticated line moves around the fretboard and takes in two scales and two tonalities. You'll kick off in bar 1 with an A major pentatonic lick (A B C# E F#) before switching to A minor pentatonic (A C D E G) in bar 2. Watch out for the minor to major flourish at the end as you play C and C# notes.



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Harley Benton

AC/DC YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT LONG

Rockschool take a look under the hood of this classic rocker from *Back In Black*

Hopefully you've read this month's cover feature and you're well on your way to becoming a *Back In Black* buff!

This track – the album's lead single, released shortly after the album hit record stores in 1980 – is a great way to get to grips with Angus and Malcolm's style.

The duo seamlessly weave their guitar parts to build the verse, based on '5th' chords (aka powerchords, for example, G5, D5) built with a root note and a 5th interval.

Be sure to avoid any major 3rds from ringing unless they're notated in the tab – this is the difference between the hard rock sound of powerchords compared with the bright, almost indie-style major chords you'll get if you accidentally hit those 3rds.

Keep the idle strings muted so you can give full power with your picking hand. With AC/DC, it's all about rhythmic impact, which comes from well-timed chords and a hard rocking right arm!



Rockschool Classics
GUITAR
6
MUSIC 1

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YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT LONG
Words & Music by Angus Young, Malcolm Young and Brian Johnson
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AC/DC YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT LONG

TRACKS 37-38

♩=128

G⁵ **G⁵add⁹** **G⁵**

TAB

1. **D⁵** 2. **D⁵**

TAB

3



FULL TRACK + BACKING (TRACKS 37-38)
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!

AC/DC / YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT LONG

AC/DC YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT LONG (cont'd)

TRACKS 37-38

Chords: G⁵ C⁵ G⁵ C⁵ G⁵ D⁵ G⁵ D G⁵ D

7

TAB

Chords: G⁵ C⁵ G⁵ C⁵ G⁵ D⁵ G⁵

11

TAB

Chords: D G⁵ D G⁵ C⁵ G⁵ C⁵ G⁵ D⁵ G⁵

14

TAB

Chords: D G⁵ D D⁵ Dsus⁴ D⁵ Dsus⁴ D

18

TAB

Chords: G⁵ C⁵ G/B D⁵ D⁵

21

TAB

Chords: G/B G⁵ C⁵ G/B D⁵

24

TAB

2° To Coda

1. **D⁵** **G/B**

let ring - - - - -

TAB: 3 2 0 | 0 2 3 | 0 3 2 0 3 0

27

2. **D⁵** **Dsus⁴** **D⁵**

TAB: 3 3 3 3 | 3 3 3 | 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

29

TAB: 3 3 3 3 | 3 3 3 3 | 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

31

G **C** **G/B** **D** **C**

PM - - - - -

TAB: BU 5 (7) | 3 3 6 BU BD 5 (7) [7] (5) 3 5 | 5 5 5 3 5 3

33

G/B **G** **C** **G/B** **D**

1/4 1/4

TAB: 1 3 5 | 5 3 5 7 6 6 | 7 9 8 8 / 9 8 10

36

C **G/B** **G** **C**

hold bend - - - - -

TAB: BU (12) 10 BD (12) (10) 8 BU 10 (13) | BU 10 (11) 8 9 8 BU 18 (20) | 15 15 18

39

AC/DC YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT LONG (cont'd)

TRACKS 37-38

42

47

D.%. al Coda 
w/repeats

(8va)

C

G/B

G

BU BD BU 17 15 17 15 BU BD 17(18) (17) 15

TAB

17(19) (17) 15 17(19) 17 15 17 15 17(18) (17) 15

Θ Coda

49

D⁵

51

G major and minor phrases provide a bluesy backbone to Angus' solo. Work on an even fluctuation with your vibrato (e.g., in bar 33). It should be bold but not excessive! The pitches and timing of the string bends differ (eg, bar 40 compared with bar 43), so be sure to practise this. These subtleties will take your solo to the next level.

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN AND DOUBLE TROUBLE COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER

Learn the eternally
popular blues
guitarist's funkier
song with TG's full
transcription



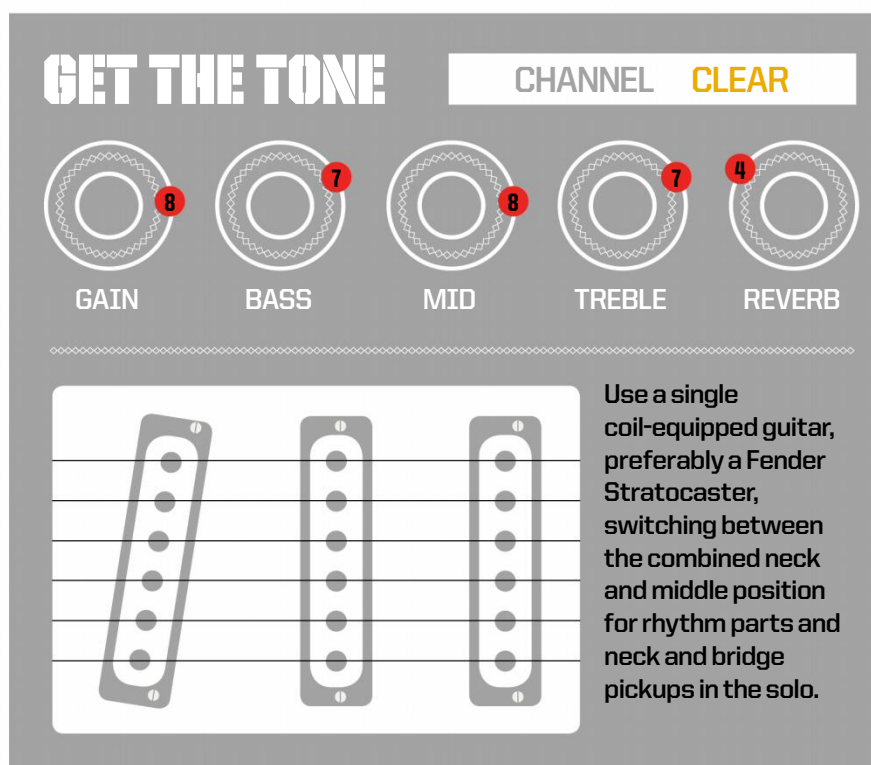
Couldn't Stand The Weather was released in 1984, building on the success of Stevie Ray Vaughan's debut album *Texas Flood* the previous year. The title track captures the blues great at the top of his game, showcasing his funky side but still featuring a blistering solo with SRV's instantly recognisable 'melting power tubes' guitar tone.

By no means an easy song to play, and featuring a broad mix of full/partial chords, blues harmonies, and rhythm and lead techniques, we'd say *Couldn't Stand The Weather* is likely to keep you on your toes. If you're going to learn it, you'll want to break it down into parts you can manage!

Start with a look at the chords. They're fairly straightforward and once you've got a feel for the Bm-A-G7-F#7#9 progression it'll be easier to map out Stevie's lead work over the top. Also make sure to refer back from the tab to the scale shapes for a clearer idea of how those licks are constructed.

GET THE SOUND

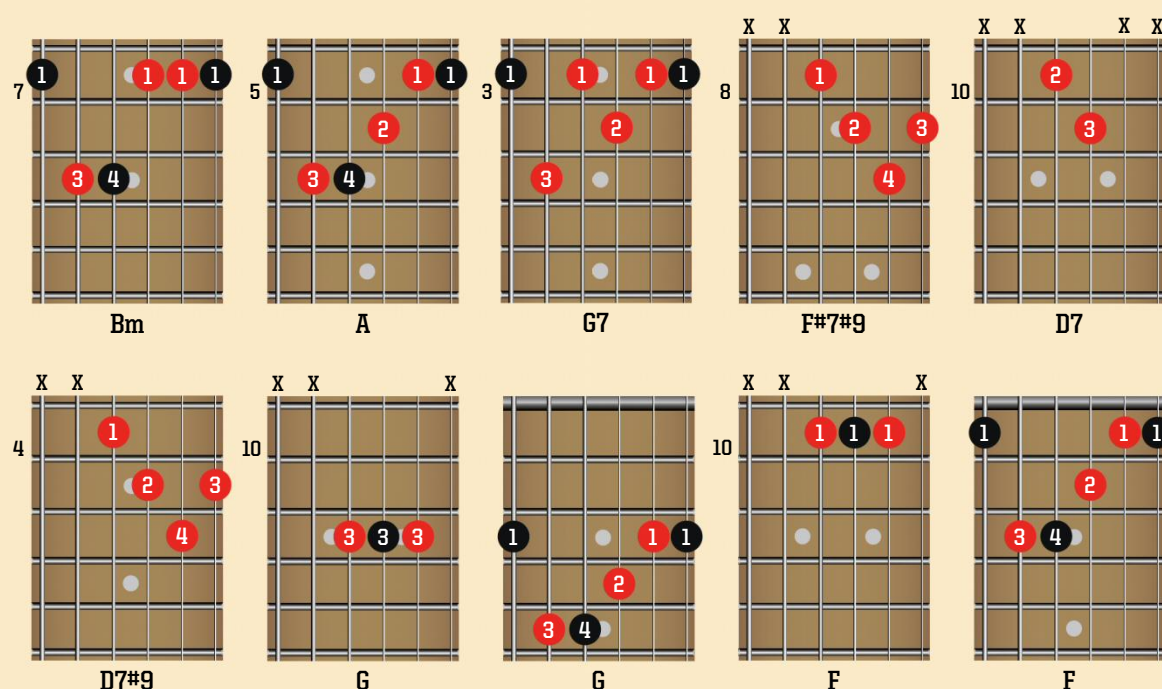
Everything you need to know before playing 'Couldn't Stand The Weather'



Vaughan's sound is a hotly debated topic. He is alleged to have set up over 30 amps in some recording sessions. In the early days, he used Fender combos and Marshall stacks (often using the Marshalls for his clean tones), soon including a Dumble Steel String Singer head in his tonal arsenal. Opt for a clean channel on your amp with the gain dialled in high and pair it with an overdrive pedal - Stevie typically used Ibanez Tube Screemers including TS-808, TS9 and TS10 models. Remember, the idea is to increase the sustain and 'singing' quality of your clean sound without too much distortion. If you're dead set on authenticity, you'll also need a Leslie style chorus effect for some of the rhythm parts and a wah pedal for the solo.

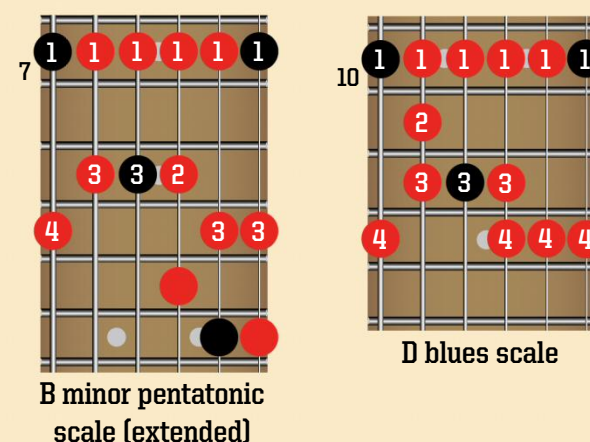
CHORDS

Rhythm guitar duties were covered by Stevie's brother Jimmie, and so these barre chords relate to his playing. Both Stevie and Jimmie play the F#7#9 shown here, rather than the more familiar shape with a root on the 9th fret. By including the top string, this voicing delivers a more biting sound while leaving the root to be added by the bass player. The D7 diad on the 10th fret is used throughout the main riff, and Stevie slides into the shape from below. The final G and F shapes are used in the ending by Stevie while his brother plays full barre chords lower down the neck.



SCALES

You'll need to be familiar with the B minor pentatonic scale shown here. Stevie uses this extended shape, occasionally adding 9th, major 3rd or 5th intervals for colour. In the intro, he plays the corresponding minor pentatonic scale over each chord: B minor pentatonic over a Bm chord; A minor pentatonic over A, and so on - just move the scale shape to match the chord positions. In the solo Stevie switches to the D minor pentatonic and blues scales over the D7#9 chord. This time, when the chords change to Bm, A, G and F#7#9, he sticks to B minor pentatonic. This simple approach is much easier than moving with the chords.



COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER
Written by Stevie Ray Vaughan
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♩=90 Freetime

Bm

let ring - - - -

1

A

3

G⁷

5

F⁷#9

7

let ring - - - -

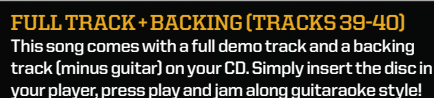
Stevie's intro is played in free time with a 'hinted' tempo of roughly 90bpm so aim to build up to roughly that pace before jamming along to our backing track, using the chord changes as your cue for each new phrase. Hold down the full F#7#9 shape in the final two bars, picking out the notes highlighted in the tab.

♩=120
N.C.

0:22 w/chorus

TAB

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

**STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN** COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER Main riff (Guitar 2 cont'd)

This riff is played by Jimmie Vaughan, who used a Leslie speaker cabinet for the chorusing effect on the original. If you're using an amp modeller you'll probably find a rotary effect lurking in there somewhere; if not, use a chorus pedal with the rate set fairly high. Remember to count carefully so you keep time in the gaps!

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER Main riff (Guitar 1)

73

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER Main riff (Guitar 1 cont'd)

Stevie's funk riff is tricky to play at full tempo, so practise slowly with a metronome at first. This will help you get a feel for which notes fall in between the gaps. It'll also help if you visualise a full 'E shape' D7 barre chord on the 10th fret. Just take note of which notes are from the chord and which are more colourful 'outside' notes.

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER Verse 1 (Guitar 2)

Play the D7#9 chord using the fingering illustrated in our chords boxout. You'll need to keep the open fifth and sixth strings muted throughout by using the tip of your first finger and angling your thumb around the back of the neck. Keep a constant 16th note strumming pattern throughout, releasing your fretting hand to create the rests.

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER Chorus 1 (Guitar 2)

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER Chorus 2 (Guitar 1)

Bm

2:30

A

G7

F#7#9

Stevie adds a beautifully understated rhythm part over the second chorus using high voicings on the top three strings. Use your first finger here to barre across the strings adding the extra notes (in bar 4) with your third finger. Strum lightly throughout to allow this part to blend into the mix.

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER Solo (Guitar 1)

N.C.

2:46

w/wah

D7#9

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER Solo (Guitar 1 cont'd)

Musical notation system 1 (measures 4-6). Includes staff and TAB with fret numbers and techniques like BU (bend up) and triplets.

Musical notation system 2 (measures 7-9). Includes staff and TAB with fret numbers, techniques like RP (release pick), and a 'let ring' instruction.

Musical notation system 3 (measures 10-12). Includes staff and TAB with fret numbers, techniques like RP (release pick), and a 'let ring' instruction.

Musical notation system 4 (measures 13-15). Includes staff and TAB with fret numbers, techniques like BU (bend up), BD (bend down), and a 'slow bend' instruction.

Musical notation system 5 (measures 16-18). Includes staff and TAB with fret numbers, techniques like BU (bend up), BD (bend down), and a 'slow bend' instruction.

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER Solo (Guitar 1 cont'd)

Bm

17

G7

20

F#7#9

23

Bm

25

A7

27

79

29

F#7#9

31

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER Main riff 3 (Guitar 1)[illegible]

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER Main riff 3 (Guitar 1 cont'd)

Bar 1: Treble clef, key of D major. Notes: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef: D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).
 Bar 2: Treble clef, key of D major. Notes: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef: D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).
 TAB: Bar 1: 10 10 12 10 11 10 12 12 10 10. Bar 2: 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 10 12 10 13.

Bar 3: Treble clef, key of D major. Notes: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef: D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).
 Bar 4: Treble clef, key of D major. Notes: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef: D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).
 TAB: Bar 3: 13 13 13 13 13 10 10 12 10 10 10 10. Bar 4: 10 10 12 10 11 10 12 10 12 10 10 10.

Bar 5: Treble clef, key of D major. Notes: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef: D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).
 Bar 6: Treble clef, key of D major. Notes: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef: D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).
 TAB: Bar 5: 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10. Bar 6: 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10.

Bar 7: Treble clef, key of D major. Notes: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef: D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).
 Bar 8: Treble clef, key of D major. Notes: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef: D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).
 TAB: Bar 7: 13 13 13 13 13 10 10 12 10 10 10 10. Bar 8: 10 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10.

Bar 9: Treble clef, key of D major. Notes: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef: D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).
 Bar 10: Treble clef, key of D major. Notes: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef: D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).
 TAB: Bar 9: 8 10 10 12 10 12 10 8 10 10 8 10. Bar 10: 8 10 10 12 10 12 10 8 10 10 8 10.

Playing dynamics are key here – and throughout the whole song, really, so try to emphasise the lead licks by picking a little harder. The fiery D minor pentatonic lick in bar 15 is a great example of when to put the pedal to the metal. By contrast, back off a little during the rhythm lines such as in bars 1 and 2.

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TAB GUIDE

Get more from TG by understanding our easy-to-follow musical terms and signs

What is tab?

This is where the key signature and time signatures are shown

♩ = 72 — This is the beats per minute (BPM)

0:51

2nd string 3rd fret 2nd string 1st fret 3rd string 2nd fret 4th string Open

1 2 3 4 5 6

E B G D A E

T A B

CD time (where the part occurs on the original CD)

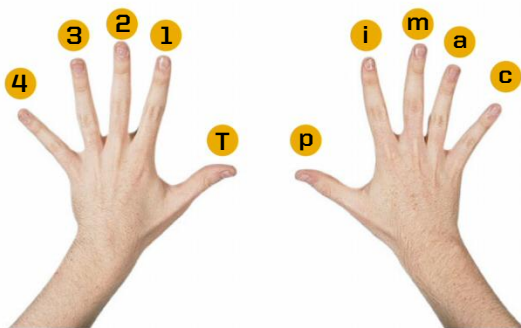
Tab is short for tablature, a notational system used to give detailed information as to where notes should be played on the fretboard. Tab appears underneath conventional music notation as six horizontal lines that represent the strings of the

guitar, from the sixth (thick) string at the bottom to the first (thin) string at the top. On these lines, numbers represent which frets you place your fingers. For example, an A note on the 2nd fret, third string, will be shown as a number '2' on the third line

down on the tab. Unfretted strings are shown with a '0'. The key and time signatures are shown in the notation. TG also includes a timestamp to tell you where in the original track you'll find each example and tempo expressed in beats per minute.

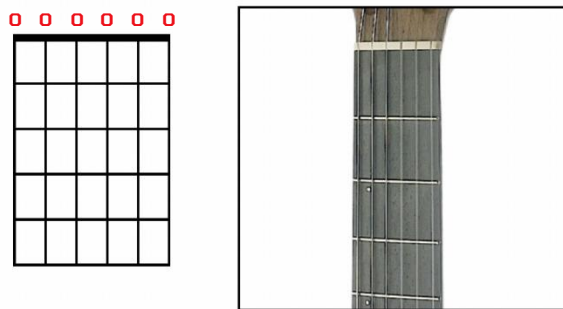
FRET BOXES: CHORDS, SCALES AND CAPO NOTATION

HAND LABELLING



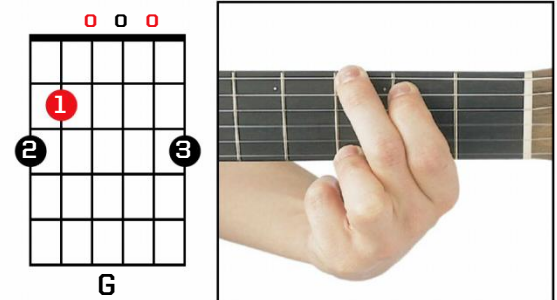
Here are the abbreviations used for each finger. Fretting hand: **1, 2, 3, 4, (T)**
Picking hand: **p (thumb), i (index), m (middle), a (annular), c (little finger)**

NUT AND FRETBOARD



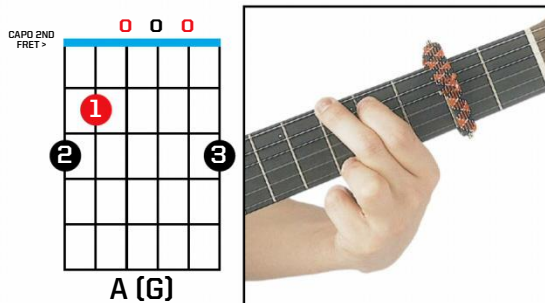
This fretbox diagram represents the guitar's fretboard exactly, as seen in the photo. This design is used for ease of visualising a fretboard scale or chord quickly.

CHORD EXAMPLE



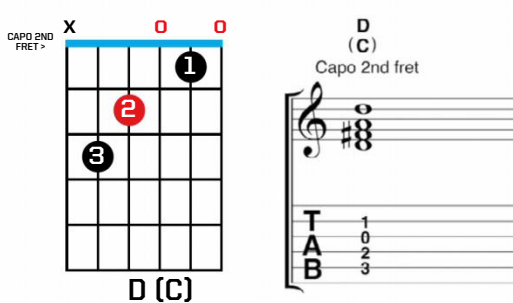
This diagram represents a G chord. The '0's are open strings, and a circled number is a fretting hand finger. A black '0' or circled number is the root note (here, G).

CAPO EXAMPLE



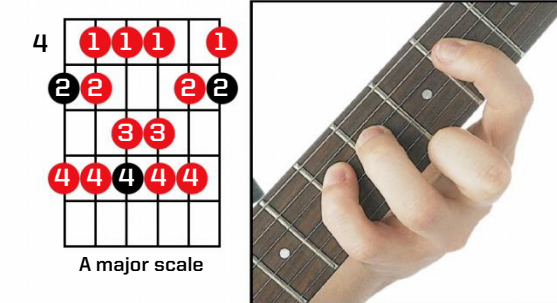
The blue line in the diagram represents a capo for this A chord, place it at the 2nd fret. Capos change the fret number ordering. Here, the original 5th fret now becomes the 3rd fret, 7th fret now 5th fret, etc.

CAPO NOTATION



Here the chord looks like a C in the tab, but the capo on the 2nd fret raises the pitch to make it a D. The 2nd fret capo'd notes are shown with a '0' in the tab as if they were open strings.

SCALE EXAMPLE



The fret box diagram illustrates the fret hand fingering for the A major scale using black dots for root notes and red dots for other scale tones. The photo shows part of the scale being played on the fourth string with the first, third and fourth fingers.

GUITAR TECHNIQUES: PICKING

DOWN AND UP-PICKING



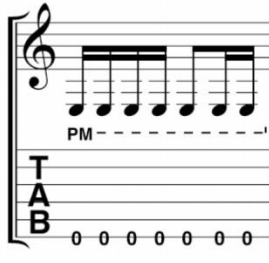
The symbols under the tab tell you the first note is to be down-picked and the second note is to be up-picked.

TREMOLO PICKING



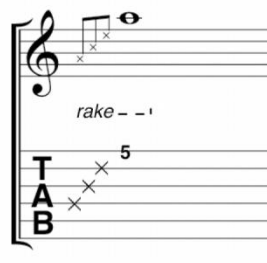
Each of the four notes are to be alternate-picked (down and up-picked) very rapidly and continuously.

PALM MUTING



Palm-mute by resting the edge of your picking hand palm on the strings near the bridge saddles.

PICK RAKE



Drag the pick across the strings shown with a single sweep. This is often used to augment a rake's last note.

APPREGGIATED CHORD



Play the notes of the chord by strumming across the relevant strings in the direction of the arrow head.

FRETTING HAND

HAMMER-ON & PULL-OFF



Pick the first note then hammer down on the string for the second note. Pick the third note and pull-off for the fourth note.

NOTE TRILLS



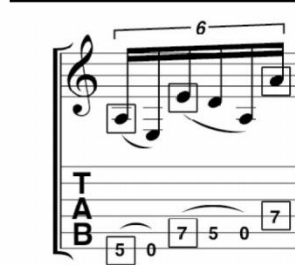
After picking the first note, rapidly alternate between the two notes shown in brackets using hammer-ons and pull-offs.

SLIDES (GLISSANDO)



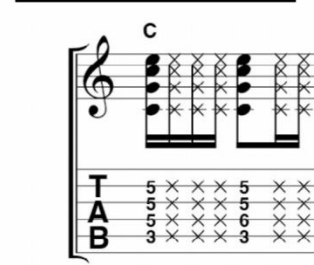
Pick the first note and then slide to the next. For the last two notes pick the first, slide to the next and then re-pick it (RP).

FRET-HAND TAPPING



Sound the notes marked with a square by hammering-on/tapping with your fret hand fingers, instead of picking.

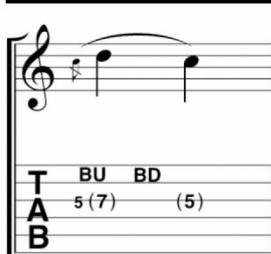
FRET-HAND MUTING



X markings represent notes and strings that are muted by your fret hand when struck by your picking hand.

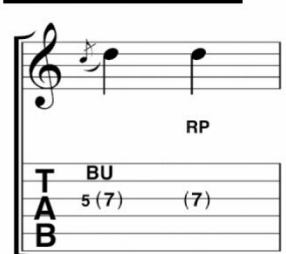
BENDING AND VIBRATO

BEND AND RELEASE



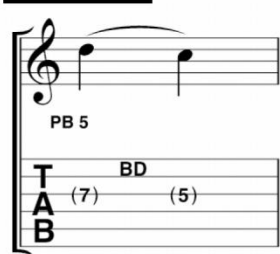
Fret the first note (here, the 5th fret) and bend up to the pitch of the bracketed note, before releasing again.

RE-PICKED BEND



Bend up to the pitch shown in the brackets, then re-pick the note while holding the bent note at the pitch shown.

PRE-BEND



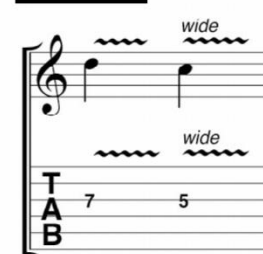
Silently bend the string up from the 5th fret (PB5) to the pitch of the 7th fret note, pick it and release to the 5th fret note.

QUARTER-TONE BEND



Pick the note then bend up a quarter-tone (a very small amount). This is sometimes referred to as a 'blues curl'.

VIBRATO



Your fretting hand vibrates the string by small bend-ups and releases. Exaggerate this effect to create a 'wide' vibrato.

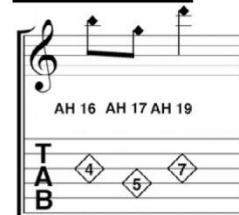
HARMONICS

NATURAL HARMONICS



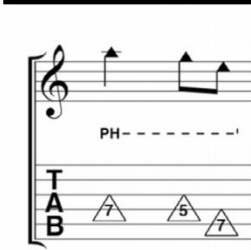
Pick the note while lightly touching the string directly over the fret indicated. A chiming harmonic results.

ARTIFICIAL HARMONICS



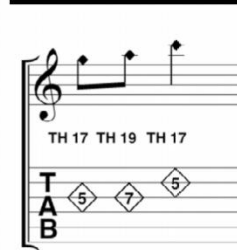
Fret the note as shown, then lightly place your index finger directly over 'x' fret (AH'x') and pick (with a pick, p or a).

PINCHED HARMONICS



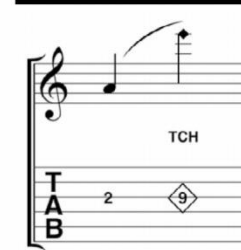
After fretting the note in the triangle, dig into the string with the side of your thumb as you sound it with the pick.

TAPPED HARMONICS



Place your finger on the note as shown, but sound it with a quick pick hand tap at the fret shown (TH17) for a harmonic.

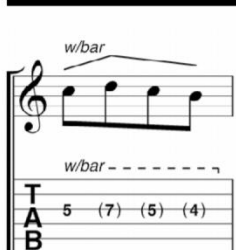
TOUCHED HARMONICS



A previously sounded note is touched above the fret marked TCH (eg, TCH 9) for it to sound a harmonic.

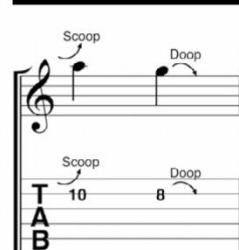
VIBRATO BAR / WHAMMY BAR

WHAMMY BAR BENDS



The note is picked as shown, then the vibrato bar is raised and lowered to the pitches shown in brackets.

SCOOP AND DOOP



Scoop: depress the bar just before striking the note and release. Doop: lower the bar slightly after picking note.

SUSTAINED NOTE AND DIVEBOMB



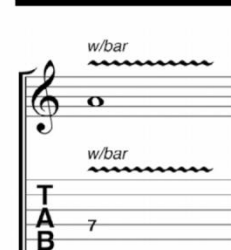
A Note is sustained then the vibrato bar is depressed to slack. The square bracket indicates a further articulation.

GARGLE



Sound the note and 'flick' the vibrato bar with your picking hand so it 'quivers'. This results in a 'gargling' sound!

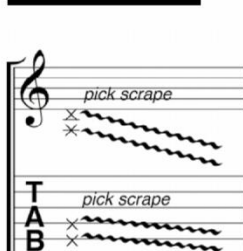
WHAMMY BAR VIBRATO



Gently rock the whammy bar to repeatedly bend the pitch up and down. This sounds similar to fret hand vibrato.

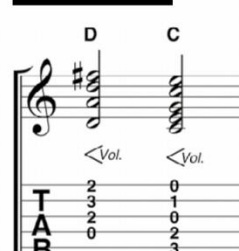
OTHERS

PICK SCRAPE



The edge of the pick is dragged either down or up along the lower strings to produce a scraped sound.

VIOLINING



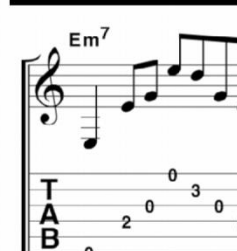
Turn the volume control down, sound the note(s) and then turn the volume up for a smooth fade in.

FINGER NUMBERING



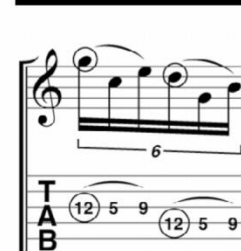
The numbers in the traditional notation refer to the fingers required to play each note.

PIMA DIRECTIONS



Any kind of fingerpicking requirements are shown at the bottom of the tab notation.

PICK HAND TAPPING



Tap (hammer-on) with a finger of your picking hand onto the fret marked with a circle. Usually with 'i' or 'm'.

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ACOUSTIC



Unplugged

YOUR MONTH IN THE ACOUSTIC WORLD

087

ACOUSTIC NEWS

088

PHOEBE BRIDGERS

094

ACOUSTIC TAB:
SOMETIMES



GIBSON ANNOUNCE FRANK HANNON CUSTOM

GIBSON HAS TEAMED UP WITH TESLA'S FRANK HANNON FOR THE BEAUTIFULLY APPOINTED LOVE DOVE ACOUSTIC

Hannon's first signature model with the company, the Love Dove is based on his 70s-era Gibson Dove, which Hannon used on Tesla tunes like *What You Give* and *Stir It Up*, as well as to record the intro to the version of the band's classic ballad *Love Song* that appears on the band's *Time's Makin' Changes* video collection.

The new guitar boasts a thermally aged Sitka spruce top and maple back and sides, a three-piece maple neck and a rosewood fingerboard with mother-of-pearl parallelogram inlays. Custom appointments include a 70s-era Dove bridge with scalloped wings decorated with mother-of-pearl wing inlays, a Dove pickguard with hand-engraved and painted details,

and a custom 'Love' engraved truss cover in Hannon's own handwriting.

There are also Grover Keystone tuners, a bone nut and LR Baggs VTC pickup system. The Love Dove is offered in a Vintage Cherry Sunburst finish, with an inside label signed by Hannon, for \$5,349.

For more information, visit www.gibson.com



IBANEZ BARITONE

THE ACFS380BT CUTAWAY MODEL SPORTS A LONGER SCALE LENGTH FOR LOWER NOTES

Ibanez has introduced a new baritone acoustic guitar to its Artwood Fingerstyle series, the ACFS380BT. The new model focuses on the "richer, low-end possibilities" of the instrument, with a deep Grand Concert style body and 27-inch scale. Features includes a solid Engelmann spruce top and pau

ferro back and sides, as well as a C-shape African mahogany/pau ferro five-piece neck and Macassar ebony fingerboard. Electronics are an Ibanez T-bar under-saddle and block contact pickup with an Ibanez DP1 preamp.

The ACFS380BT will be available soon for \$799. For more info, visit www.ibanez.com



LIAM GALLAGHER: MTV UNPLUGGED

OASIS LEAD SINGER GETS HIS ACOUSTIC MTV MOMENT

“Well there's something missing in this god almighty stew and it's your brother your brother don't forget your brother La as you were LG x”, reads the April-dated tweet pinned atop Liam Gallagher's Twitter page. Typical philosophical food for thought from the former Oasis singer, and, though he may well be missing his guitarist brother in their seemingly endless cold war of words, it's not evident here where six-string duties are ably handled by LG regulars Mike Moore and Jay Mehler.

Like most of Liam's gigs, you'll find a mixture of Oasis classics and Liam's own solo material here. Paul “Bonehead” Arthurs even joins in the show on *Some Might Say*, *Stand By Me*, *Cast No Shadow* and *Definitely Maybe* bonus track, *Sad Song*. As announced by Liam, it means the Oasis rhythm guitarist is the only band member to have played two MTV Unplugged shows – Liam famously ditched their '96 gig, leaving Noel to sing.

Yes, some of the songs also appear on January's *Acoustic Sessions*, but the acoustic format suits Liam's gentler post-Oasis, post-Beady Eye voice. We're still holding out for that much-rumoured Oasis reunion though!

Liam Gallagher: MTV Unplugged is out now on Warner Records

Phoebe Bridgers

US INDIE-FOLK WONDERKIND TALKS TUNINGS, TONE,
“PIANO F*CK-UPS” AND HOW LOCKDOWN HAS
IGNITED A PASSION FOR HOME RECORDING

Like most of us, Phoebe Bridgers – the singer-songwriter and indie lynchpin – has found her time in lockdown has had its pros and its cons. “But I’ve been reading more, eating more, exercising more,” she told TG’s sister mag *Guitar World*. “I feel like my quarantine body is Rhonda Rousey, you know? I’m just getting really yoked. And I’m eating loads of peanut butter.”

Bridgers is frequently described as a master of insightful, observational writing. In person and on record she is self-aware, but nonetheless brutally honest in a way that is equally amusing and affecting. Since her emergence in the late 2010s, her output has been prolific and multifaceted – from the expansive contemporary indie-folk and open-tuned experiments on her 2018 debut *Stranger In The Alps* and its new follow-up *Punisher*, to her work with Bright Eyes’ Conor Oberst in Better Oblivion Community Centre and with Lucy Dacus and Julien Baker in Boygenius. Bridgers also contributed vocals to four songs on The 1975’s recent number one album, *Notes On A Conditional Form*.

Now, amid the home-based preparation for *Punisher*’s release, she has had the opportunity to consume again. “I’ve been constantly listening to records and that has been really comforting to me,” she says. “So, [right now] I hope to do that for someone. I don’t want to remind people of what’s going on and I don’t want to distract people. I want to be there in the way that music always is.” We spoke to Bridgers about home recording, avoiding ‘lead carriers’ and how an unhappy accident led to an obsession with open-tunings.

What impact has the current situation had on how you play and perform?

“It’s made me become an engineer. I love gear, but I love gear that is handed to me on silver platter by friends who will say, ‘This is what you have to try...’ I recorded at Sound City, too, so it’s like everyone around me is a gear head. So I’m into it, but I don’t seek it out. I’ve never home-recorded before, but now I’m getting really good at it, so that’s been a silver lining. What freaks me out about the ‘live’ situation is that, [for instance] I had barely washed my hair, I was in my pyjamas and I started playing for Pitchfork Live and in like two minutes it was on 10,000 people and I immediately got crazy stage fright. I’ve never played to 10,000 people before! So it’s weird. It’s like living in an alternate reality, but I also feel really lucky to have a sense of purpose right now.”

What’s your home recording setup?

“I’ve been recording through the Izotope Spire. It’s so sick. It’s this little at-home thing with one giant button in the middle. If you’re not a gear head and you want it to sound normal without trying very hard, it’s great. I do all my sessions on them. It’s like glorified voice memos and it means I’m not having to work on my laptop. It’s only eight tracks, which is great for me, because it stops me overdoing it. Then you can plug a mic into it – recently I’ve been using this AKG C414 B-ULS – and it’s a great preamp. Since I’ve been doing that, it sounds so much better and I feel like I took my glasses off.”

Let’s talk about your early years as a guitarist. You reportedly learned piano

first, but hated it. Why did the guitar work where the piano failed?

“It just got easy all of a sudden. There’s kind of an end to it, whereas there’s an endless void with the piano. I was lucky, I would wind up going to an arts high school, but with the kids there, you could say you played the piano, but unless you are a virtuoso you’re not a f*cking piano player. There’s less freedom to be a f*ck-up. Whereas with guitar, it just got easier and I was just like, ‘I want to know *all* the chords’. Also, you could just pitch up on the street and play a song. I still wish I played piano. I know so many people who are technically piano f*ck-ups, but it’s great to have that tool onstage and go from one instrument to the other.”

You write using a lot of open-tunings. Where did that first come from?

“I think the first time was probably when I was trying to learn some song, like Joni Mitchell or Sun Kil Moon, that I loved. But I actually f*cked up my finger like a year and a half ago and it stopped me from playing E and F, which was in so many of my songs. I was cutting stems on flowers and the knife flipped and just hacked right on my knuckle. Since then it’s been really stiff and it hurts like sh*t. I hope that one day it heals but that’s been making me be more experimental with chords [and tunings].

“I play guitar in a weird way. When I met Tony Berg and Ethan Gruska, who produced both my records, I was basically a folk artist. It was sounding a little basic. Now I think of the writing process as going into the studio to f*ck up the thing that I just wrote. It’s like, ‘Show me a mode I can play in’ or ‘Show me an



"I THINK OF
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F*CK UP THE
THING THAT
I JUST WROTE"

ACOUSTIC

GARDEN SONG

Phoebe's well and truly paid her dues, meaning she never has to play the dreaded Farmer's Market ever again...



“MY MUM
WOULD MAKE
ME BUSK AT
TIMES SQUARE
AT ONE IN THE
MORNING!”

➔ instrument I’ve never played’. So, [similarly] I try to trick myself to write a song in an open tuning and not even worry about what the chords look like and focus on the melody instead. I’ve learned so much about my favourite gear that way, as well as my favourite chords and tones. Tony Berg was the first one who put me on to baritones because I was tuning the bottom string of my guitars down to C open and he was like, ‘You need a baritone.’ It was like, ‘Oh. Well, this is the only thing I play now!’ [I have a Danelectro 56 and] it’s perfect for me.”

With your mum’s, erm, ‘encouragement’, you did a lot of busking early on. When was the first time you busked and how did you feel about that as a kid?

“I don’t really remember the first time but I do remember she made me do it at Times Square at one o’clock in the morning! I always say she would totally have been a ‘momager’ if she knew how to do that, but instead she was making me busk and making me do the f*cking open-mic night at the Folk Music Center. She made me go up and introduce myself to Richard Thompson once. I would always play the Farmers’ Market near my house and it sucked! I was so depressed. I had no job, so she was like,



‘You’ve got to work for five hours every Saturday, get out of bed!’ I’d be like, ‘I can’t today...’ It’s just it’s a special feeling to be ignored for that long and also I did not have five hours of music at that point! I also had this one guy who followed me around and that was kind of scary.

“I would invite my friends to sleep over at my house so that we could wake up in the morning and then go and play. But however it started, which I actually don’t know – beyond knowing that I’m not that organised and I didn’t have a car – it turned into a very important part of my high school life. Harrison [Whitford, guitarist], who plays with us still, would sleep at my house and then we would go and jam all-day. It was always more fun with more people.”

At the risk of being twee, do you feel like you learned any valuable lessons from that early experience?

“Yeah. I just actually covered *First Day Of My Life*, the Bright Eyes song, for something. They wanted a happy song and I was like, ‘Oh god. I hate happy songs.’ That one popped into mind and I did it and I thought, ‘Why is this so easy?’ Then I remembered that I used to play it all the time [busking]. So I definitely learned useful lessons. One of the main ones was just being okay with people ignoring you. Now, when I play shows and there’s a loud bar at the back – to a degree, if it’s like someone screaming at their girlfriend then I will f*cking get the person kicked out – but if it’s just the crowd being rowdy, I’ve seen people crumple before, but that just bounces off me. I was so deeply ignored busking for so long that it gave me an ability to power through. I also don’t ever, ever get stage fright, unless I’m on television...”

Your list of collaborators – Conor Oberst, The 1975, Lucy Dacus – is really impressive. It seems like you’re one of these people who is good at connecting people. Do you feel that’s the case?

“I do. I have always felt that way. Again, I went to an arts school and pretty quickly found people who, for example, hated opera – newsflash! – and wanted to play rock shows instead. So that was part of it. Then, when I got older, I just met more and more people. I admire people with old friends. I think that’s the mark of a good person. There’s nothing weirder than someone who keeps recycling the same – in rap, they call them ‘lead carriers’ – second-tier friends that you keep around to tell you you’re great all the time. Then I meet people who have been playing in the same bands since they were teenagers and are best friends with the same four people and that to me is f*cking amazing. I think, as an adult, I’ve sort of accumulated people who have those teams.”



“IF YOU’RE
CONSTANTLY
EXCITED BY
WHAT YOU’RE
DOING, YOU’LL
BE ABLE TO GET
THROUGH”

On the gear side, what are your favourite guitars at the moment?

“Conor Oberst got me a totally murdered-out Waterloo guitar a couple of years ago for my birthday and that’s my prized possession now. Even the tuning pegs are black, the pickguard is black. Collings makes them and I feel like Collings are my favourite new guitars, by far. I just love them. I used to play this Epiphone Frontier from like 1968, with the lassoes on it, but it snapped, like, in-half, on tour. It was already going that way, but I learned my lesson about vintage guitars. Then I was like, ‘But I don’t want to play new guitars’ and I discovered Collings and that was it.”

“In the studio, I play this J-45 that used to be Glenn Campbell’s. It was clearly in some sort of house fire or something because it’s insanely dry and it’s just the craziest-sounding instrument. I would love to be able to recreate that sound live, but I haven’t recreated it on any guitar yet. It’s on all my records, but it’s not allowed outside and you’re not even allowed to tune it differently.”

On the electric side, what are your favourite amps and FX units?

“I use effects. I have one of those Mellotron pedals that’s supposed to sound like a choir and an orchestra [an Electro-Harmonix Mel9]. It sounds kind of f*cked. It’s supposed to sound like clarinets but it makes this screeching, horrible noise if you put too much through and I kind of love that. Julien Baker uses the male voices all the time, which is so rad.

“I use my [Catalinbread] Echorec indiscriminately and I think it gets on people’s nerves. They’ll be like, ‘There’s so much delay on this I don’t know what your timing is!’ I’m like, ‘But it sounds cool...’ Then I play through a Fender Reverb amp, very reliable, very sweet. I also have a knock-off Klon Centaur. I brought it into the studio and Tony was like, ‘Here’s the real one,’ which is crazy expensive. I was like: ‘F*ck you.’”

Things have changed a lot for musicians in the last decade and even more radically in

recent months. What principles about music-making have endured for you in all situations?

“I think the main thing is just that if you like it, everything will bounce off of you. If you release something that you love and nobody f*cking listens to it, it’ll be like, ‘Oh well. I just need to find the people who like this, because I know I genuinely like it.’ If you hate your music, or you half-assed it, or you let someone tell you how it should sound and you relented, not that compromise isn’t good, but [you’ll regret it].

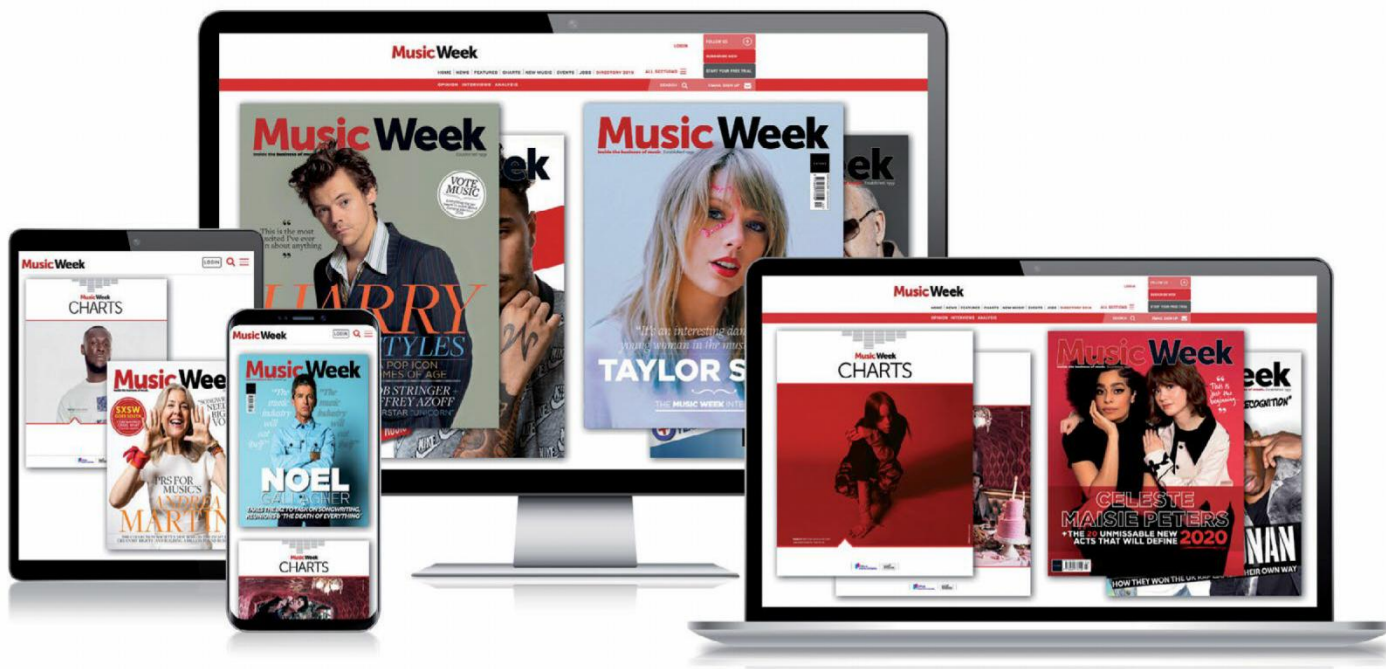
“I think that’s what’s helping me through this time. I like this record so I’m excited to get it out, but if I didn’t I would be making all kinds of excuses, like, ‘The world’s too weird, we should wait...’ and I wouldn’t be able to talk about it. If you’re constantly excited by what you’re doing, which is possible for everyone, everything will bounce off you. You’ll be able to get through.”

Punisher is out now on Dead Oceans.

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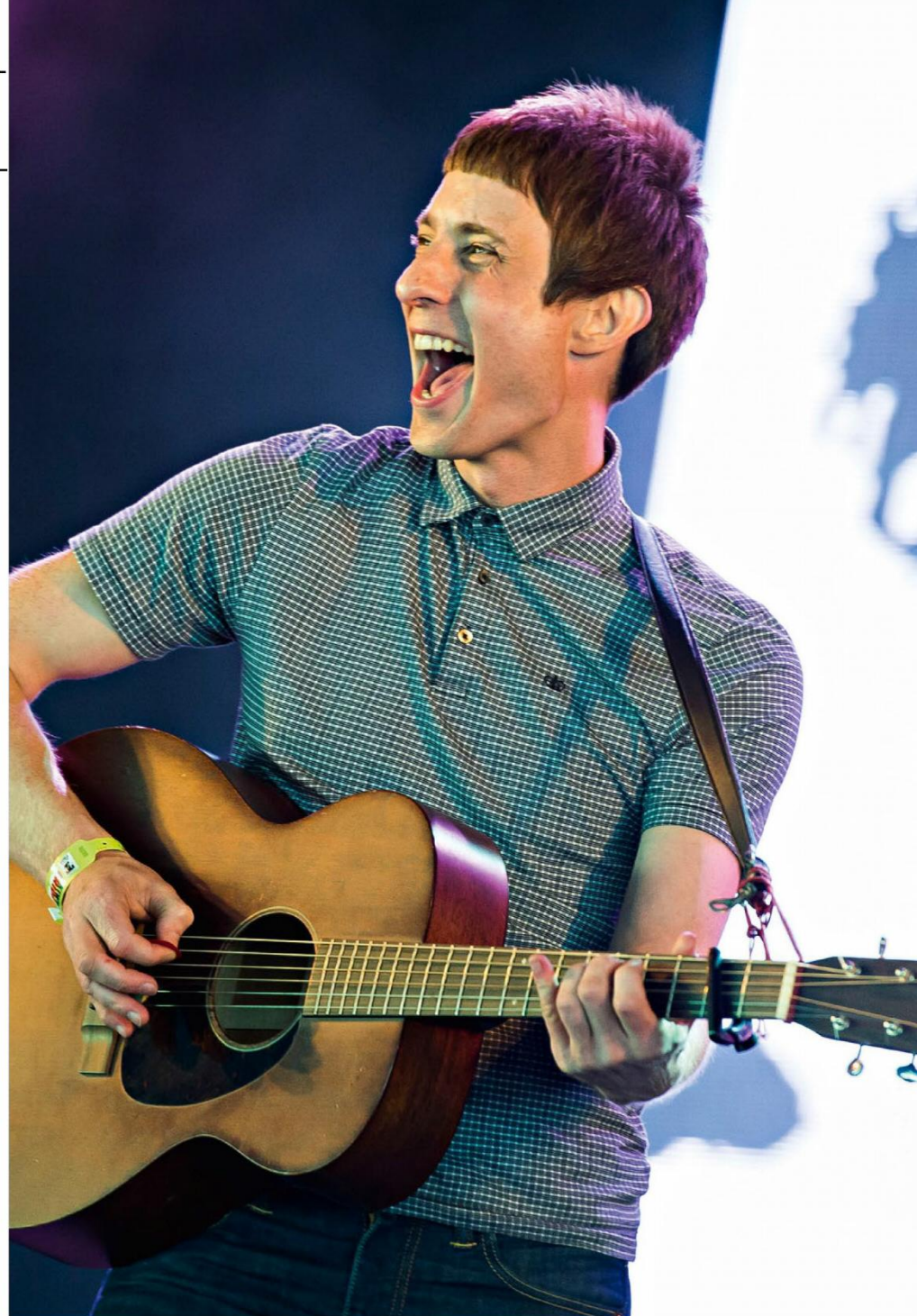
OPEN-MIC SONGBOOK

GERRY CINNAMON SOMETIMES

Add a little Cinnamon spice to your acoustic repertoire. Two chords and a capo are all you need...

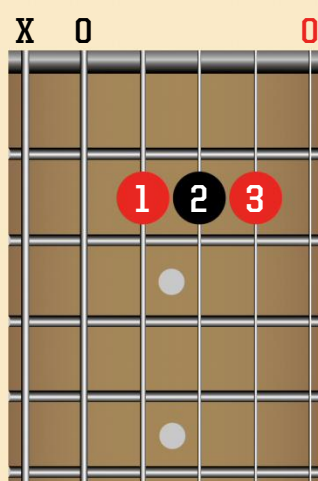
Glaswegian singer/songwriter/guitarist Gerry Cinnamon might just be the biggest British sensation you've never heard of. His rise has been more of a grassroots word of mouth process, quickly plying his trade in sold out stadiums and wowing festival crowds with his brand of busker-style but brutally frank acoustic anthems. And with his second album *The Bonny* hitting the top spot of the UK charts,

it's fair to assume his success is likely to continue. Here we're looking at one of Gerry's best known songs, *Sometimes*, which features on his 2017 debut album, *Erratic Cinematic*. You only need two chords to play the song, and, because *Sometimes* was recorded with a capo on the 2nd fret, you'll be using easy open C and G shapes. If you're a beginner, this is perfect for you, and we've spiced things up for experienced players with a tab of the solo.

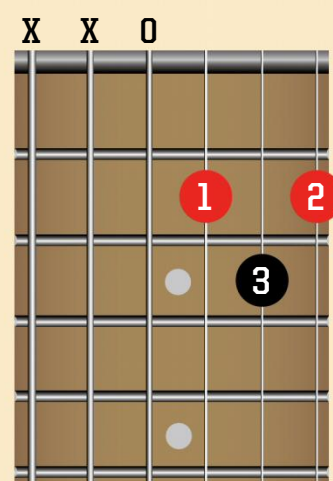


CHORDS

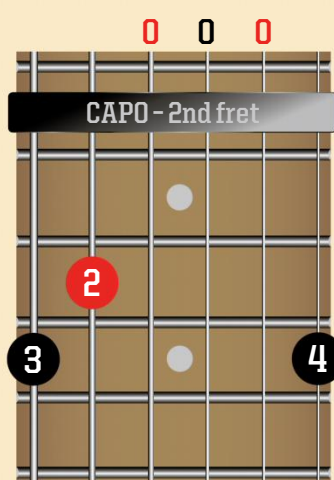
There's no strumming on Gerry's original recording, but jamming along with a simple down-up-style rhythm sounds great. We've shown some simple open chords here for you, both with and without a capo so you can choose how you play. Use our suggested fingerings to make the changes easier.



A



D



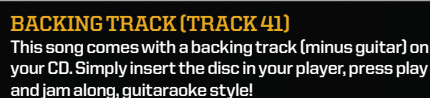
A
(G)



D
(C)

SOMETIMES

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Sometimes

A
Sometimes, just sometimes
Maybe more than some of the time
D
I'm on a false ego trip
Insecurity is rife
I'm not the ideal person
To be lecturing on life

But if you wanna know
Some things I've learned about myself
Been in sticky situations
I won't bore you with the filth
Breaking bones and sniffing gear
Pouring blood and sweat and tears
In a nutshell I suppose
It's the way the water flows
Yeah that's the way the story goes

A Sometimes, just sometimes
Well alright, maybe all of the time
D I'm on a false ego trip
Oh I'm a renegade of sorts
I roam the concrete jungle
Hunting idiots for sport

And now the cocaine scene
It picked me up and made me frown
That's when joking says that music helps the
medicine go down
Hey, it makes you feel alive
More like demons of the night
Flinging powder up your nose
It's the way the water flows
Yeah that's the way the story goes

Sometimes
D
Just sometimes

And now the world outside
Don't look the same for you and me
Drinking cider on a golf course
Just a distant memory
Down the park and pick a fight
Popping pills all through the night
Fucking waster I suppose
It's the way the water flows
Yeah that's the way the story goes
Sometimes
Just sometimes
Sometimes
Just sometimes
Just sometimes

TRACK 41

Capo 2nd fret

♩=150

A (G)

D (C)

0:18

TAB

7/9 9 9 9\7 7 7 7/5 5 5\4 4 4 4 4/9 9 9 9\7 7 7 7/5 5 5\4 4 4 4 4/9 9 9 9\7 7 7 7/12 12 12 12\7 7 7 7

7

A (G)

TAB

4/9 9 9 9\7 7 7 7/12 12 12 12\7 7 7 7/9 9 9 9\7 7 7 7/5 5 5\4 4 4 4 4 2 4 4 4 4/5 5 5 5\4 4 4 2 2 2 2

D (C)

A (G)

let ring - - - -

TAB

0 2 0 2 0 2 2 4 2 0 2 0 0 2 0 0 0 2 4 2 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 0

13

Remember that the fret numbers relate to the capo as a new nut, so the opening note starts on your guitar's actual 9th fret (i.e., seven frets higher than the capo). Fret the high notes using your third fretting hand finger, keeping your first finger ready for those fretted hammer-ons and pull-offs on the third string.

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STEVE LACY



98

It's fair to say Steve Lacy is not your average recording musician. Just 22 years old and boasting credits that include rap megastars Kendrick Lamar and Mac Miller, crossover R&B and thrash artist Thundercat and indie rockers Vampire Weekend, the primary tools in this young guitarist's rig are, wait for it... An iPhone and IK Multimedia iRig interface. He'll lay down beats in GarageBand or Ableton then record guitar and bass over the top. Even his vocals are recorded with his phone's mic. It's about as stripped back a rig as you could possibly imagine, yet Steve recorded most of his debut solo EP, 2017's *Steve Lacy's Demo*, with this modest setup.

It's a deliberate choice, of course, and one that fuels his creative process.

Steve's main gig since 2015 is with neo-soul trip hop act The Internet, the ultra-modern quintet at the head of the contemporary West coast funk scene, where his Strat, Tele and Rickenbacker lines play a typically laidback supporting rhythmic role. His tones are traditional funk: lightly compressed Fender-y cleans, occasional wah wah, and a sprinkling of modulation for richness when it's needed. If you want to play like Steve you'll be swapping between tasteful jazzy chords and simple single-note funk lines. It's not virtuoso playing, but feel takes time to develop and the young

Californian has it in abundance. Asked about his playing style, Steve told *Wired*, "Plaid is my genre. I was out shopping and I was in the Pendleton section. And I realised, scruffling through the shirts, this kinda looks like how my music sounds. Cos if you listen to a couple of songs it might sound like there's a lot going on, but it doesn't clash at all. And plaid, there's a lot going on, but it all goes together to be one pattern."

We're waiting to see what's next for Lacy, but, with comparisons being drawn with Pharrell Williams and having been awarded Grammy nominations both with The Internet and as a solo artist, we'd wager it'll be the big time for this talented player soon.



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