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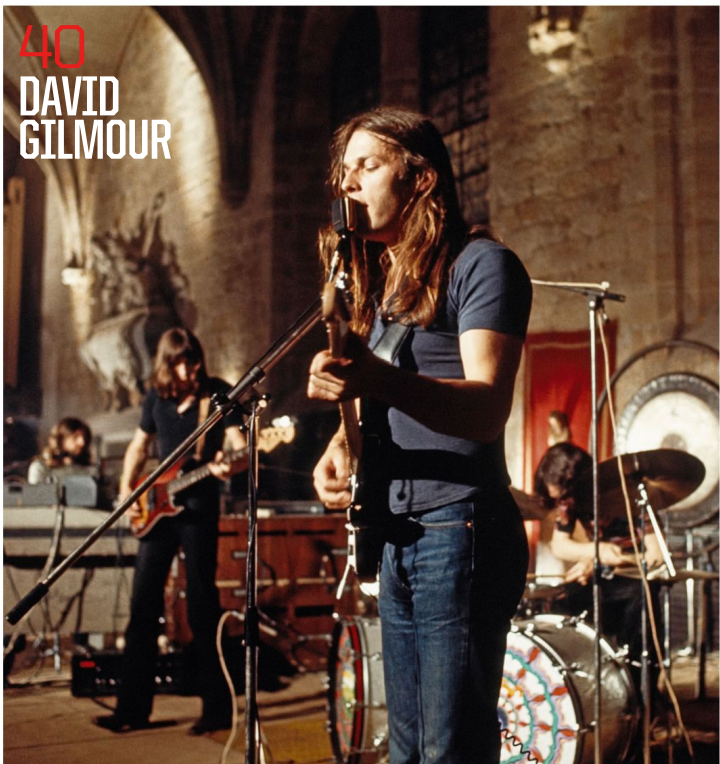
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THE GAS Contents

40 DAVID GILMOUR





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Words: Paul Elliott Photo: Alice Backham

HOT LEG!

B

ack in December 2021, TG tipped Wet Leg – the duo of guitarist/vocalist Hester Chambers and vocalist/guitarist Rhian Teasdale – as one of the hottest new acts around. Five months later, their self-titled debut album hit number one in the UK and in Australia.

This photo captures them on their recent UK tour, on stage at the Electric Ballroom in London's Camden Town on April 26. An appearance at Glastonbury follows this month.



SCENE

YOUR NEWS IN GUITAR



GUITAR

“IT’S A FIRST FOR FENDER”

JAMES BAY ON HIS ONE-OFF GUITAR AND NEW ALBUM

S

inger-songwriter James Bay couldn't be happier with his new guitar. Four years in the

making, the Fender Pink Lemonade Mustang is a genuine one-of-a-kind. He talks about the guitar's design and about this forthcoming third album, *Leap*.

How did the project come about, James?

I'd finished writing my song *Pink Lemonade*, which I remember really nailing the sound for through a Fender Princeton and a guitar with P90s. I thought – in my indie rock, early-Kings Of Leon-inspired state – that the Mustang is one of the Fender guitars that really personified that sonic and aesthetic. I'd found a Fender Cyclone years before that I didn't buy – it was the only Mustang I'd seen at the time with P-90s. So I said, 'What I'd love to do, Mr. Fender, is recreate the

Cyclone, tweak a few things, put P-90s and a pinkish colour, and call it the Fender Pink Lemonade.'

Why did it take so long?

It's a first for Fender. Apparently, on every headstock they've ever produced, they've never put anything more than the model name after the word 'Fender'. So 'Pink Lemonade', in the Mustang font, is the first time they've ever done that. There were a lot of boardroom meetings to just allow one guitar to get made like that.

What are its defining features?

The colour is a bit unique in that it's sort of the Fiesta Red, but I wanted a coral type thing. I asked them to take everything off the back of the neck, so it's very woody, and there's lots of lovely relic-ing all over it. The P-90s are Curtis Novak hand-wound and they're stunning!

With its indie, grunge and stoner rock connotations, is the Mustang a good indication of where your ever-evolving sound is heading?

I will lean in that direction, but the list of sonics there doesn't

necessarily line up with, say, The Rolling Stones, which is an electric guitar sound I love. I'll always try and sound like them in some way or another. So yes and no. Before I met a record label – before anybody had any idea that I existed musically – I'd been in bands that were trying to sound like Kings Of Leon or The Black Crowes, so I'm often picking from a pretty long menu of different guitar sounds.

What can people expect from your new album, *Leap*?

I'm always trying to push a boundary somewhere. With the second album it was sonically – I threw a bunch of synthesisers at it and had a great time. But guitar is where I'm comfortable and also where I can push myself, so there's a lot on this album. It's still not drenched in solos, which is something I absolutely indulge in live, but there are more guitar parts, which I'm really excited for people to hear. There's a lot of live takes. Not from shows, but everyone in the room – so there's a very live feel and momentum.

Ellie Rogers



AMPLIFIERS

THE SAINTS ARE COMING!

BLACKSTAR LOOKS TO "THE FUTURE OF GUITAR AMPLIFICATION" WITH ITS LATEST VALVE AMPS

H

heavyweight tones require a heavyweight amp, right? Wrong. So says Blackstar, whose new St James line of amps – which it says are the lightest valve amps in their

class on the planet – sets out to deliver two things: true valve tone in a back-friendly format coupled with versatile modern features suited to today's 'playanywhere' requirements.

The line-up comprises two flavours of amps, named after their power amp valves – the St James EL34 (Fawn/black basketweave) and the St James EL34S (Black/silver birch). There's a pair of ECC83s in the preamps, plus two EL34s or 6L6s in the respective power stages giving us either 50-watt head/2x12" cab or 50-watt, 1x12" combo configurations across the range.

Incredibly, Blackstar has managed to get the weight of the heads down to 6.7KG, while the combo comes in at 12.7KG. For context, that's

approaching half the weight of many classic 1x12" combo amps.

How is that possible? Well, Blackstar has made use of a brand new, Patent-Applied-For switched-mode power supply design that removes some of the bulk from all models, while also making the amps universal voltage for use in any country. Next, there's the lightweight Candlenut wood cabinet which reduces weight even more, while maintaining the tonal properties and strength required. Finally, Blackstar and Celestion have teamed-up for the brand new Zephyr 12-inch speaker which uses a traditional (not neodymium) magnet to give a similar response to the much-loved Vintage 30, but at a lighter weight.

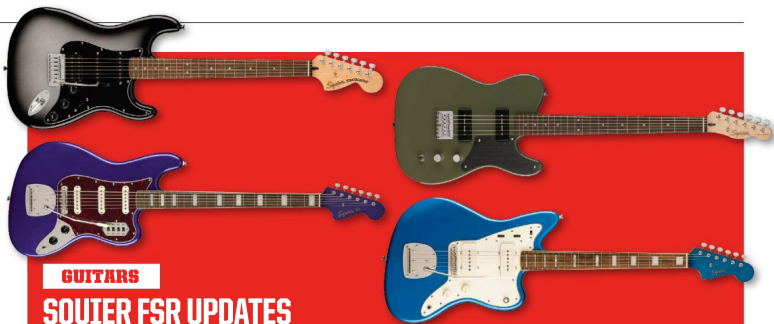
Back to the circuitry, each amp features two channels with the first channel on each offering a classic US clean sound. The EL34 models switch to a more chimy, 6os British-inspired sound, plus there's a 10dB clean boost taking it

into "creamy" territory. Meanwhile, the 6L6 models offer a more modern, higher gain circuit on the second channel, with a voice switch to add greater saturation and low end chug.

St James amps can operate at full power; in Sag mode which introduces natural compression and a softer attack; and at two watts for when you want to drive the power stage harder at lower volumes.

In addition to this, each model includes a built-in reactive load for speaker-free operation, while still running through the whole of the amp's circuitry, plus Blackstar has included its excellent Cab Rig DSP-driven emulated outputs for going direct. In turn, the Cab Rig can be edited via the Architect software for deep control over your cabinet sound, with three slots on the amp for storing cab presets. Blackstar St James amps are priced at £699 for the heads, £1049 for the combos and £499 for the cabinets.

Stuart Williams



GUITARS

SQUIER FSR UPDATES

Squier has unleashed a flurry of new finishes for some of its Affinity, Classic Vibe and Paranormal models.

First up is the Paranormal Baritone Cabronita Telecaster (£399) which with its 27-inch scale length and dual soapbar pickups gets an Olive Green facelift.

Meanwhile, the Affinity HSS Stratocaster (£249) and Telecaster Deluxe (not shown, £269) come decked in a sleek Silverburst.

It's the year of the Jazzmaster, and surf fans/shoegazers are going to love the Classic Vibe 70s Jazzmaster in Lake Placid Blue (£449) with matching headstock, block

inlays parchment pickguard. The final word is left to the Squier Classic Vibe Bass VI (£449), which boosts its crown as one of Fender's coolest and most curious guitars ever with Purple Metallic and Shell Pink finishes.

Contact your nearest Squier dealer for availability.

PICKUPS

SEYMOUR DUNCAN EYES CLASSIC TONES

Seymour Duncan has unleashed a trio of humbuckers aimed at delivering the basis for three iconic classic rock tones.

Now, it's not explicit about the sounds the pickups are based on, but it does give some clues – the '78 apes a hot-wound P.A.F. for "hard rockin' crunch", "articulate picked harmonics and tapped solos". While the High

Voltage is pictured in a red SG, while the Green Magic features a neck pickup with a reversed magnet. And it says Green in its name. The pickups are all available individually, as sets, and with covered (nickel or gold/uncovered (black, white, zebra or reverse zebra) as well as wider-spaced Trembucker models. Prices start at £197.95 individually or from £395.95 for a pair.



STRINGS

ERNIE BALL PAPA HET'S HARDWIRED MASTER CORES

Erníe Ball and James Hetfield have teamed-up for the first ever James Hetfield signature strings. Named Papa Het's Hardwired Master Cores, the strings are a custom gauge offered in 0.011, 0.014, 0.018, 0.028, 0.038, 0.050, and are apparently the result of a decade of development. The bottom three strings are wrapped in Ernie Ball's Paradigm coating, which, according to the company, results in a thicker sound and greater tuning stability.

They come in a custom graphic tin containing three sets, with an official price of £54.99



MONITOR

PEOPLE ★ NEWS ★ NOISE



Words: Stuart Williams Photography: Phil Barker

HISTORY REPEATING

Boss goes retro with a pair of digital Space Echo emulations with heaps of analogue character

I

n 1974 Roland launched the RE-201 Space Echo, with its self-oscillating, multi-head tape loop delay and spring reverb which went on to find favour with everyone from Pink Floyd to Radiohead. Now, the Space Echo is back with two of Boss' most faithful digital recreations to date: the RE-202 and RE-2.

First up is the vintage Boss-looking RE-202: a double-sized Boss pedal which

seeks to give you every control featured on the original RE-201 and more! Crucially, there's the 12-position mode switch, and while the original featured three playback heads, the RE-202 includes four virtual playback heads, resulting in longer (double) delay times. There's multiple reverb modes, plus a saturation control which emulates the RE-201's preamp, giving you lo-fi drive which can be used without the reverb.

Next up is the RE-2, which offers a more compact take on the Space Echo sound,

but with all the flavour. It features three virtual playback heads (same as the RE-201), and has 11 modes meaning that there's no preset 'reverb only' setting (although you can still select a dual mode and turn the delay off manually). Both pedals offer stereo operation, and also include tap tempo, plus tape-style wow and flutter effects for the true sound of Roland's iconic delay.

The Boss RE-202 and RE-2 are available now, priced at €399 and €249 respectively.



UP CLOSE



Digital tape

The original Space Echo used a spool of tape to produce its repeats. Here, Boss has recreated it digitally.



Modern features

Double the delay time, stereo operation, tap tempo, presets and more bring the Space Echo's charm up to date for 2022.



Additional features

As well as the delay and reverb sounds, there's an emulation of the preamp saturation to add a retro haze to your sound.

HOW TO

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

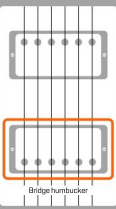
- ✓ String bending
- ✓ Palm muting
- ✓ Powerchords



RIFF OF THE MONTH

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL **DISTORTION**



Amp-wise, the Architects tone is typically supplied by Mesa Boogie, such as the Mark V or Dual Rectifier. Adam Christianson uses an L&L Instruments guitar with fitted with Bare Knuckle Ragnarok pickups, while Josh plays ESP and LTD guitars with Fishman Fluence pickups. The key to the riff is to keep the low end tight. A Tube Screamer style overdrive in front of the amp is the key to this and a fast noise gate will help keep the pauses in the riff as quiet as possible.

ARCHITECTS

When We Were Young

When *We Were Young* is the first single since Architects' acclaimed 2021 album *For Those That Wish To Exist*. The song begins with a powerchord with simultaneous semitone bends on each string. Use your first and third fingers to fret the notes and keep your hand locked in position as you turn your wrist slightly to bend both strings together. Try to keep the two notes in tune with each other.

The second part of the riff uses drop-tuned powerchords on the lowest two strings with the root note at the 4th fret. The D# to E move gives the song a dark, ominous quality – a typical quality of the Phrygian mode. Play the harmonics on the middle two strings by lightly touching them over the fretwire, lifting your finger off as soon as you pick. Experiment with finger positioning to find the cleanest possible harmonic.

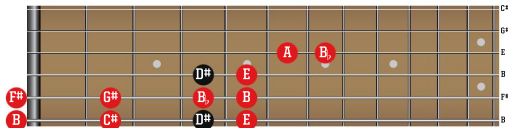
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:00 – 0:24

Tempo: 170bpm

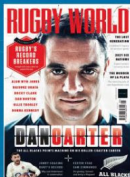
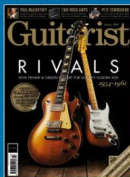
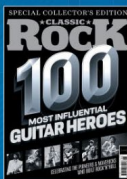
Key/scale: D# Phrygian

Main techniques: String bending, downstrokes, powerchords



The opening powerchord is played on the middle two strings at the 4th and 6th frets. After the initial powerchord, the bulk of the riff is played on the lowest two strings in the D# Phrygian mode (D# E F# G# A# B C#). As these two strings are tuned to 5ths, powerchords

can be played with easy one-finger barres. Finally, remember to tune your guitar to drop B (B F# B E G# C# from low to high). Try using strings a couple of gauges heavier than your usual standard tuning set to maintain your guitar's tuning and string tension.



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FIRST STEPS IN GUITAR...

PRACTICE FOR BUSY PEOPLE

Paul has hit the biggest obstacle every guitarist faces – finding time to practise! Together, he and Jenna are making a plan to fit guitar into his life...

A weird thing happens when you taking up a new hobby. You've enjoyed your lessons, and you promise you're going to practise every day. And then that just... doesn't happen. Despite your best intentions, you've gone backwards.

A big problem is feeling like you ought to practise a lot, but you can actually make yourself a better guitarist just by picking up the instrument for a brief moment. In 10 seconds you can try a new chord. In 30 seconds you can improve a riff. In 60 seconds you can drill a chord change. Better yet, when you finish you'll want to keep going, and that'll inspire you to come back. The only bad day is one where you don't practise at all. You'll need to work out what's stopping you from practising.

It's different for everyone, but here are some common obstacles:

Your guitar is miles away

If you've got five minutes, it's not going to happen if your guitar is at the back of a cupboard. Keep your guitar on a stand, ready to go. If it's already plugged in, even better. Seeing it will also remind you to play.

You don't know when you'll practise

If you just tell yourself "I need to practise at some point", chances are it'll get pushed down the list until you get to bed and realise you never did it. If you've got a plan – "I'm going to practise at 6:30 while my rice is boiling" – it's more likely to happen.



TEACHER

JENNA SCARAMANGA

Jenna has taught guitar for 15 years at music colleges, schools, and IGF summer camps. She studied with Guthrie Govan at BIMM, and was classic rock columnist for TG's sister magazine *Guitar Techniques*.



STUDENT

PAUL ELLIOTT

Paul has written about music since 1985 for various titles including *Sounds*, *Kerrang!*, *Q*, *MOJO* and *Classic Rock*. Among the many guitarists he has interviewed are Slash, Angus Young, Keith Richards and Jimmy Page.

Your guitar is not available

If you commute on public transport, you could still improve by looking at fretboards and memorising chord shapes, or trying to visualise yourself playing them. Pro athletes improve their performance by visualising when they can't train. Or you could get an app to learn the notes on the fretboard or do some ear training.

You're too tired

You need some low-effort stuff to practise. TG has got you covered.

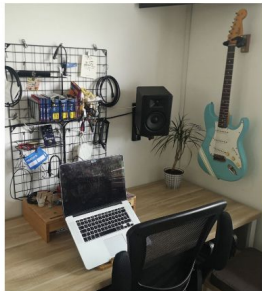
READY TO ROCK!

Keep a guitar at hand and you'll always be able to find time to practise...



1 PLAY PER VIEW

Keep your guitar near to where you sit, even in your living room. TV ad breaks are long enough to play a Ramones song.



2 QUICK RIFFS

Waiting on Zoom? Get a quick riff in. Or play for a minute at the beginning of your break. If you're watching YouTube, see if you can play a chord before the 'skip ad' icon appears.

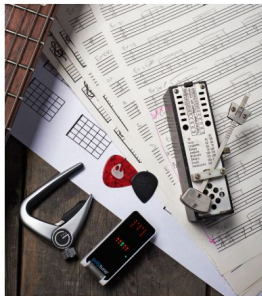


3 SOUL KITCHEN

With a guitar strap, you can practise in the kitchen. Boiling a kettle takes 2 minutes. Microwaved soup will give you a whopping 3 minutes, maybe more!

4 THE OLD SWITCHEROO

Pick any two chords, and count how many times you can switch between them in one minute. Next time you practise, try to beat your score.



5 E MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE

At 60bpm, one note per beat, this scale takes 23 seconds to play up and down. You can definitely find that much time!

FOUR SEPARATE ULTRA-SHORT EXERCISES

[BIT.LY/TCSSAUDIO6](https://bit.ly/tcssaudio6)



1 ARPEGGIATED CHORD

Pluck the strings one at a time, making sure they sound clear. Repeat three times, then stop.



2 PALM MUTED CHUG

This is easy, and sounds huge. Focus on getting just the right amount of muting.



3 PULL-OFF RIFF

This riff takes eight seconds. See how many times you can play it in a minute. No excuses!



4 TREMOLO PICKING

Pick each note with alternating up- and downstrokes. Try to make the upstrokes feel easy.

Words: Ellie Rogers Portraits: Jeremy Saffer

"I have this whole other side of my musical personality"

METALLICA GUITARIST **KIRK HAMMETT** IS EXPLORING NEW SOUNDS ON HIS FIRST SOLO PROJECT. HIS AIM: "TO DO SOMETHING THAT'S NEVER BEEN DONE BEFORE..."

As lead guitarist of one of the biggest-selling bands in history, Kirk Hammett needs little in the way of an introduction. While Metallica have been teasing fans with the promise of a new album since last summer, Kirk has emerged as the first band member to step from the mothership and fly solo with his new four-track, horror movie-influenced EP *Portals*.

Originally conceived as "background music" to accompany his *It's Alive!* exhibition of horror flick posters and memorabilia, *Portals*, explains Kirk, evolved to become a collection of "soundtracks to the movies in your mind".

Produced by Kirk, the EP is comprised of four high-concept instrumental tracks: *Maiden And The Monster*, *The Jinn*, *High Plains Drifter* and *The Incantation* – each inspired by a different era in horror movie history. The latter two tracks were co-written by conductor Edwin Outwater, whom Kirk first met while working on Metallica's *S&M2* concerts, and who leads

orchestral players from the LA Philharmonic to give *Portals* its baroque-meets-metal aesthetic.

Speaking from his home in San Francisco, Kirk discusses the origins of his new music and his go-to gear for these new recordings. And yes, he says, there is a new Metallica album in progress...

After working as part of a unit for so long, what's it been like to head out in your own creative direction?

It's something that I've been living with for a long time. You know, I have this whole other side of my musical personality, but I've never had a real platform to express it. Now I do and I'm really happy about that. It's pretty weird because usually, at this point with an album release, it's not just me, it's the four of us, and we have each other's backs and we're supporting each other. But this time, taking it all on by myself, I feel a little bit naked and a little bit insecure. When I'm feeling that way, that's when I need to take a step back and say, 'It's okay to believe in the music,' and that gets me through all those feelings of self-doubt.

*How did the idea for *Portals* come about?*

It never started with the intent of this stuff

becoming part of an album and being released as a solo project. The first couple of songs

– *Maiden And The Monster* and *The Jinn* – were my attempt to write background music for my museum show of horror movie posters, and that turned into something else. Then I met Edwin Outwater working on *S&M2*. He's a big horror fan and I am as well, so I said to him, 'Let's collaborate on something and make it horror movie-influenced and cinematic.' That's where *High Plains Drifter* and *The Incantation* came from. It's funny, I have these four pieces of music, and I still don't have any background music for the exhibition – I just realised that!

Portals combines both, but which came first, your love of guitar or your love of horror?

That's an interesting one because when I think about it, they both happened around the same time. I saw my first horror movie when I was five years old. It was *The Day Of The Triffids*. Also, I remember, at four or five years old, being aware of music and the radio, and my sister going around singing Beatles songs. So, I think they both kind of crystallised inside of me around the same time. When I was fifteen years old, I got hold of a guitar, and acted upon

"I'LL LISTEN TO A PIECE OF CLASSICAL MUSIC AND PRETEND EVERY INSTRUMENT IS THE ELECTRIC GUITAR"



➔ another love of mine that is just as intense as horror movies, and it became another obsession. It was a natural progression for me to bring the two together. My first attempts at that were designing these guitars with horror movie posters on them like my Mummy, Frankenstein, Dracula and Nosferatu guitars. That was a cool way of bringing the two genres together, and so when I wrote *Maiden And The Monster*, it occurred to me that I could do the same thing musically, and knowing that was a huge lightning bolt of inspiration and creative determination. I sat down, and the first thing I played was that arpeggiated part in *Maiden And The Monster*. I started playing chromatic. It's a C#m7 chord going chromatically from C# to Cmaj7 to B5 and back to Cmaj7, and that was the basis of *Maiden And The Monster* – everything came out of that simple progression.

What were the main musical influences for *Portals*?

I've been listening to a ton of classical music for what seems like forever and ever now. I just love it. One of my favourite things to do is sit down and listen to a piece of classical music and pretend every instrument is the electric guitar, and it's amazing how everything kind of changes. So, classical music has been a big influence on me. Also prog. I discovered prog three or four years ago and, oh my God, I can't believe that I missed out on so many great prog albums all this time! I can definitely see a line where late 60s and early 70s prog is really instrumental in influencing hard rock and heavy metal. So there's a huge prog influence on this EP.

What did you want to get out of working with players from the L.A. Philharmonic?

The timbre of classical music, for me, is so beautiful. There's a completely different colour that's found in so many different ways with classical instruments. A cello through a PA might be one of the heaviest things I've ever heard in my life. I wanted to really take advantage of that and exploit that in these tunes.

How did writing instrumental music change your approach?

It was great that I was able to get out of that structure of riff, verse, chorus, huge middle part, then back to the riff, verse



and chorus. I'm glad I was freed of that and free to go wherever the music wanted to go. That's pretty much how these arrangements came about. The whole process was a lot simpler and a lot smoother than I expected it to be, and I can tell you one hundred percent that it sounds a lot more complicated than it was to make or record, and that really is a beautiful thing.

Back in the day, you took lessons with Joe Satriani, the godfather of narrative instrumental rock. Did any of his words of wisdom come flooding back when you were making *Portals*?

Joe's influence is just in me. It's part of my guitar style because he showed me all these different exercises. He showed me modal thinking and music theory, how to get melodies out of certain chords and how to make chords out of certain melodies. All that stuff that he taught me way back is still with me to this day. That stuff will always be a part of me, and it'll never ever go

MASTER! MASTER! Kirk in his natural habitat, on stage with Metallica.

away because it's intrinsic in the way I express myself, and I'm so grateful to Joe for giving me those tools.

Which of your guitars did you use on the EP?

I used Greeny, of course [the Les Paul named after its previous owner Peter Green, and later owned by Gary Moore]. Then I used my natural finish ESP Oujia guitar for a lot of the cleaner stuff. I used an Olympic White 1964 Fender Strat for some of the arpeggiated stuff. I used a Teufel Tesla guitar, which is a guitar made by Ulrich Teuffel in Germany. He makes amazing guitars. That guitar is very unusual and it's not really something I play a lot, but I love his guitars and I love what his guitars do. The Tesla has a lot of things I don't usually use. For one, it doesn't have a headstock. Two, it has a Kahler, and three, it has one of those kill switches that a lot of other guitar players use a lot. I used that on *The Incantation*. It was drop tuned – I dropped the E to a D. I also used a Fender Acoustasonic



— you know, those new ones. It was a Strat Acoustasonic, and I'm so pleased with those. I also used a Martin D-28.

Is that a sitar we hear on *The Incantation*?

Yeah! I'd bought a cheap Danelectro sitar for five hundred bucks and played it on the demo. Then when it came time to record the actual track, I said to my equipment guy, 'Send me down that sitar,' but he sent the wrong one. He sent this Coral Electric Sitar from the 60s that I'd used on *Wherever I May Roam* [from 1991's *Metallica*] and a few other things. That was the fancy sitar, and I didn't mean for the fancy sitar to come down, but it came down anyway so I used it!

What about other gear?

Amp-wise, I used a Mesa Boogie called the Triple Crown, which isn't available now. It was a model Boogie made for a hot second. I used that in conjunction with a 1974 Model Marshall Plexi from like, 1969. That Plexi is well known in L.A. and makes the rounds through all the studios. I rented it, but I blended it with the Boogie to get a different sound. And of course, I used my Wah pedal. I also used a Boss Chorus pedal, which is something I don't really use a lot, but I started using it on a couple tracks just for a different kind of augmentation. I really, really like chorusing. I also used a Gretsch on *High Plains Drifter*, a Fender Deluxe, and a Rotovibe. That Fender Deluxe was from 1954 or something

RELOAD

"There's all different types of music that I'm sitting on, and it's a lot of varied stuff," Kirk says.

— you know, the old tweed. It's so beat up, it's ugly. I call it 'The Phantom' because it's so ugly, but it sounds amazing!

You were quite restrained in terms of pedals and effects...

I tend to be pretty conservative when it comes to effecting the sound, and it's all because I just love the sound of a guitar through an amp. Sometimes, when I try to colour it up with effects, I don't like it. I just love the purity of guitar. Don't get me wrong, I love effects and I have a ton of pedals, but sometimes it's hard for me to integrate successfully, or it's hard for me to use them on a sensible level where it really augments the part. Just putting a pedal on there for novelty — I don't believe in that.

Is soundtrack work something we'll see you do more of?

Yeah, absolutely. That's pretty much in the cards and it's pretty much a given for the future. I was pretty active during Covid, writing a ton of different types of music. I wrote Metallica music, I wrote the *Portals* music — all different types of music that I'm sitting on, and it's a lot of varied stuff. I can safely say that I'm not done writing this type of music because I really, really enjoy it and it feels different. Going back to Joe Satriani and the way he does his albums — his approach is very traditional, and I purposely stayed away from that. What happened when he started putting out albums was he created a template for a lot of other guitarists to copy on their own solo albums. That's great — I'm not knocking that — but I just wanted to do something different that's never been done before.

Do you have an update on when we can expect a new Metallica album?

Well, let's just say that over the Covid years, we weren't just sitting around on the couch texting each other, complaining about how we couldn't work. That was the exact opposite of what happened! We've been working through the last years — so you can draw your own conclusions from that!

"I HAVE A TON OF PEDALS, BUT I JUST LOVE THE PURITY OF A GUITAR THROUGH AN AMP"

Words Amit Sharma

TRACK BY TRACK

Portals

The techniques and textures in Kirk Hammett's solo EP

1 Maiden And The Monster

The opening track on *Portals* certainly sets the scene well – its otherworldly discordance notably more soundtrack in feel than your typical instrumental guitar album. The opening movement starts with a C[#] and G[#], presumably played on the fourth frets of the A and high E strings in standard tuning, against the pedal tone of the open B string. The fretted notes then descend chromatically from the fourth position to the third (the bass note moving from C[#] to C) and second (from C to B) before coming back up, while the open B string continues to ring throughout. When the lead guitars come in, Hammett sticks with C[#] minor pentatonic pattern – occasionally incorporating a flat five ‘blue note’, in this case a G. After three and a half minutes or so, Hammett then introduces some C[#] Phrygian ideas, very occasionally implying the fifth mode of the F[#] harmonic minor scale (C[#] Phrygian Dominant) by raising the E to an F, as well as sweeping through some C[#]m and F[#]m arpeggios. The bluesy riff in F[#] at the end brings its seven minutes and 17 seconds to a fiery conclusion.

2 The Jinn

While very different in delivery and feel to *Maiden And The Monster*, the second track on the EP also carries some more exotic-sounding Phrygian Dominant flavours – this time in B. After a two-minute build, with harmonised cellos providing the melody above Hammett's distorted powerchords, there's a key change to E. The three highest strings are played open against

an E root on the second fret of the D string, the bass note then moving to F and finally G, and therefore built from the E Phrygian scale – the third mode of C Major. This pattern then moves into A minor, similarly using the two higher open strings against an A root played on the seventh fret of the D string and a minor third C note played on the fifth fret of the G string, descending to the fifth and fourth frets respectively. The most dramatic change, however, comes a minute later thanks to a finger-twisting half-whole diminished riff in the key of F[#], starting out on cello before Hammett's guitars joins in moments later. This idea then evolves into an old school metal riff, using the same notes as chords but swapping the F[#] for an open E, over which Hammett mixes bluesy E minor pentatonic and more modal-sounding E natural minor leads. After some riffing in G and other Thin Lizzy-esque single-note runs, the song finally returns to the B minor idea it started with.

3 High Plains Drifter

Taking its name from a 1973 Clint Eastwood movie, *High Plains Drifter* could very well be the most cinematic piece of music Hammett has ever created. The opening motif screams vintage horror movies, especially considering how it takes an incredibly suspenseful half-diminished idea in C and transposes it down a whole tone to A[#] and then once again to G[#] – moving through different keys each time. The tension lifts towards the end of its first minute when Hammett



introduces some major chords played on an acoustic and some arpeggiated lines that could easily have been borrowed from an Ennio Morricone score. The moody intro then makes a return, this time in the key of F and making use of a low E, that would suggest the guitars are tuned half a step down – again moving down a whole step twice and this time

harmonised in fifths for extra sonic weight. After all those builds comes the big outro solo, combining F minor pentatonic ideas with F Phrygian licks and rounding it all off with finesse.

4 The Incantation

The longest and final track on *Portals* feels like the closest thing here to what Hammett is best known for, with a doomy riff soon following its *Godfather*-esque orchestral beginning. Much like Black Sabbath's self-titled opener from their 1970 debut – which, let's face it, singlehandedly invented heavy metal as a genre – the riff uses the tritone interval to great effect, bouncing between a low E, a B and a B_♭, at a relatively slow tempo. Moments later, there are some screaming wah-drenched leads from Hammett in E minor which then unfolds into the breakdown section featuring the Coral Electric Sitar before going into double time for another elongated solo section, ending with some big bends, dive bombs and whammy screams. All in all, the new *Portals* EP is chock-full of surprises and showcases a side of Hammett we'd love to hear more of.



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"Less is more"

For singer-songwriter
Grace Cummings,
playing guitar is
all about serving
the song...

Grace Cummings hails from Melbourne, and her sophomore record, *Storm Queen*, was conceived and recorded during the longest lockdown to happen anywhere in the world. The self-produced album has a raw, live feel with little in the way of accompanying instrumentation beyond Grace's own acoustic guitar - and it's all the richer for its simplicity and self-restraint. She explains, "I've got an album here that is quite sparse and has a lot of space, which was something that was kind of probably just forced on me a little bit because of the pandemic," before ultimately concluding: "I think that maybe less is more."

At the very beginning of our interview, Grace makes an interesting distinction: "I do play guitar, but I'm not a guitarist, if you know what I mean? I'm a guitar player." She is, in fact, also many other things - a singer, a songwriter and an actress - but Grace's relationship with the instrument is defined by its ability to serve her and her music, rather than the other way around. It's a distinction that will resonate with many.

She grew up listening to her parents' collection of Neil Young, Bob Dylan, Lucinda Williams and Van Morrison records, as well as plenty of traditional Irish music. "I was also obsessed with Wu-Tang Clan, AC/DC, The White Stripes and Radiohead," she adds for contrast. Another of her all time favourites is Spiritualized, and the influence of frontman Jason Pierce looms large on her elegantly minimalistic approach to tracks such as *Up In Flames*, *Heaven* and *Freak*. "He has these really, really simple things to say," she explains. "Simple but so grand





and universal and dramatic, and he gets it across in this really classic way – a way that's never going to go out of style."

As a child, Grace learnt to sing and play the piano and drums. Later, she taught herself to play the guitar, but does confess to having had one traditional lesson, then taking a dislike to the teacher and never going back. Instead, she learned to play by looking up favourites by the likes of George Harrison and Bob Dylan, and committing the chords to memory by writing her own songs with them. As such, her playing reverberates with plenty of idiosyncratic charm, and some recognisably retro nuances.

OLD SCHOOL

"There's a warmth you get from an older guitar," Grace says.

Although she still writes on piano, portability played a key role in the guitar overtaking as chief writing instrument. Grace explains, "I used to write things on the piano, but then I stopped doing it because, you know, you could go somewhere and take a guitar with you. I think if I didn't have to bring a guitar around, I wouldn't have been able to learn a bunch of stuff."

Another striking thing about Grace's music is how guttural and intense her lyrical delivery is – channelling, at times, the fervent punk poeticism of visionaries like Patti Smith or even Tom Waits. Musically, however, she tends to conjure the heady ambience of the 1970s folk scene, so it's rather fitting that the guitar she used to record *Storm Queen* – a 1975 Martin D-18 – comes straight from that era.

Says Grace, "There's a certain warmth that you get out of an older guitar that's been played and played. The body of this guitar is so old and there's just so much that's happened to the wood. All that sh*t that happens over years and years that contributes to the warmth of it – like Neil Young's guitar or Willie Nelson's guitar." From a tonal perspective, she adds, "I'm not really motivated by the top end twang in new guitar strings."

While sparsity rules on *Storm Queen*, Grace doubled many of her acoustic guitar parts, and her bandmate Cahill Kelly, who Grace describes as "one of the best guitarists I've ever come across," added some tasteful

electric flourishes. Elsewhere, Miles Brown provides theremin on *Fly A Kite*, Kat Mear adds fiddle to *Freak*, and Harry Cooper adds gravelly sax to the album's title track.

Even with little accompaniment, Grace manages to achieve fullness and depth by harnessing the grand sonic expanses offered by open and altered tunings – and in particular, spends a lot of time in drop D. Influenced by acoustic Led Zeppelin and Neil Young tracks, she says, "I think that it's just so huge – the feeling or emotion – it gives a kind of a drama to what you're doing without doing much at all."

Whether it's drone notes and open strings for fingerpicking or big open chords for strumming, she explains, "you can play something really easily while you put this big story over the top of it."

While open tunings might provide a vast canvas for Grace to paint her lyrics upon, they pose a procedural challenge at gigs that many self-accompanying guitarists will be familiar with. "I've been playing a bunch of solo gigs lately and a lot of it," she explains, "is the audience waiting for me to tune my guitar. It's alright, you just tell a story in between, but I really noticed on this last tour how much I change the guitar for what I'm doing." She laughs, "So, more stories or more guitars will fix that problem!"

When playing live with her band, Grace is one of three guitar players, and she describes her role as "a foundation to the other two guys." In this scenario, she will typically go electric and play a favourite old Gibson SG, which she recalls as having been "a bastard to play" until she recently had it overhauled. Now, it's "the easiest, most playable guitar" she has.

Amp-wise, she favours Fenders and has a particular soft spot for the compact yet punchy Blues Junior. She explains, "I love them even when you're playing big venues – or especially when you're playing big venues – because they're such a small little thing, but you can really crank them, and the kind of distortion that comes out is really lively."

After a Covid-necessitated hiatus from gigging that lasted for a significant chunk of her career so far, Grace returns to international touring this summer. It's a welcome change. "Thank God," she laughs, "we're all sick of hanging around!"



Interview Amit Sharma

"You get this huge spread that's not possible on a six-string..."

THE EIGHT-STRING GUITAR OPENS UP A WHOLE NEW WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES. TWO OF ITS LEADING EXPONENTS - **MÄRTEN HAGSTRÖM** OF MESHUGGAH AND **TOSIN ABASI** FROM ANIMALS AS LEADERS - REVEAL ALL

In 2020 the art of eight-string guitar is in rude health. This was once an incredibly obscure instrument, with roots going as far back as 19th century classical music. But since 2007, when Ibanez launched the RG2228, the first mass-produced eight-string, its popularity has grown and grown. You can easily find an eight-string in most first-hand guitar shops.

This popularity is mainly thanks to metal bands who called for lower and thicker tunings to take their imaginations to the extreme - foremost among them Meshuggah, math-metal pioneers from Sweden, and Animals As Leaders, masters of instrumental tech-metal from Washington D.C. In both bands' new albums, the extended range of the eight-string is explored by two guitarists: Märten Hagström and Fredrik Thordendal on Meshuggah's *Immutable*; Tosin Abasi and Javier Reyes on Animals As Leaders' *Parrhesia*.

In conversation with TG, Märten and Tosin reveal the secrets to mastering this instrument - and what it gives them in terms of creativity...

What have you both learned about getting more mileage out of an eight-string?

Tosin: That's an important question, because a lot of people might be looking at their guitars from a six-string perspective. Ultimately, the six-string can be the core of how you understand an eight-string, especially if you retain standard tuning. We often tune our eight-strings to drop E, so you can still perceive it as a six-string in standard

tuning. All scales and shapes repeat per octave, so it's good to acknowledge the repetition within the fingerboard.

Imagine if you're playing an A power chord on the fifth fret on your sixth string - with our tuning, if you barre all the way down, you have another fifth interval and a low octave. It's like drop D, because those three strings give you a functional chord. That helps retain orientation. You can use lower notes in the same positions, while also finding

higher notes to create more width and distance.

Märten: We didn't have an engineering masterplan or any idea how to go about using eight-strings. With Meshuggah, it's always been about finding unique sounds. So we learned how to play eight-strings as we were learning how to compose with them. Our technique is something we manufactured as we went along. The best advice I can give is find how the extended range can benefit your style. That's what worked for us. It affected how we attack the strings and how we write riffs. It was all about new atmospheres and avenues that weren't available on a six-string. Start thinking about what the extended range can actually enhance. To be honest, we would have loved to continue using baritones and seven-strings. We didn't



➔ necessarily want to add extra strings, but we knew we liked the tone.

A lot of players find the jump from six to seven easy enough, but eight is an entirely different ball game...

Mårten: I think the beauty of eight-strings is that it takes away the normal aspects of guitar playing – they can feel huge, like playing a piano. There are a lot of adjustments in terms of angles, like with your wrist and picking technique... all these small things you have to get used to. As you said, if you play a six-string, everything will transpose pretty nicely onto a seven. Eights are a different matter. For me, it's all about being comfortable with the tone. Sometimes I hear eight-string stuff and it sounds like someone's just detuned something. And other times I will hear someone actually utilising what the instrument can do.

Tosin: It's all about taking the chord voicings you know and adapting them to the eight-string, and using octave displacement. You can also have a lot of fun using the low E as a pedal tone in your riffs, using other chords to superimpose against it, like a G major. There are a lot of options out there. I like to make use of the full range of



EIGHT BALLER
Mårten Hagström
(right) on stage
with Meshuggah

eight-string prototypes, though we were actually already working with Ibanez on custom seven-strings at the time. It was far from finished, but me and Fredrik found that his eight-string lent itself well to playing differently.

In what sense?

Mårten: We quickly figured out that powerchord chugging and riffing didn't really work, it wasn't as simple as transposing ideas down to the eighth string. The tone of the instrument lent itself better to the single-string stuff we're known for. For us it was like, 'Wow, this is a new tool that makes us sound different!' We sounded deeper and started to write unusual things that

an eight-string design that feels more approachable and guitar-like than the others out there. That was the starting point: a guitar that didn't feel like playing leads on a surfboard. It had to encourage people to play complex things, sounding incredible both clean and heavy. It also had to look modern – it's hard to introduce a new body shape that doesn't turn players off, so we designed something that felt bold and noticeable but not too alien. We're trying to distill what makes a guitar desirable. What is mojo? Why would you choose an Abasi over something else? It boils down to wood selection, like more stable and lightweight roasted woods which translate as a guitar that feels more alive, and pickups like the [Fishman] Fluence stuff, where you get a noiseless single coil with multiple voicings. It's been fun. Gary Clark Jr. bought one of our guitars [a six-string Space T] and we didn't even know. I had to reach out to him afterwards!

Both of your bands are known for unusual time signatures – or at least odd-time riffs against steady 4/4 beats...

"THE BEAUTY OF EIGHT-STRINGS IS THAT IT TAKES AWAY THE NORMAL ASPECTS OF GUITAR PLAYING" MÅRTEN HAGSTRÖM

the eight-string, almost like a piano or harp. You get this huge spread that's not possible on a six-string. Think of it as an opportunity to use three-octave chords. Other times, it's fun to just turn it up and play your favourite Meshuggah riffs!

Mårten, you were experimenting with eight-strings as far as back 2002 – they were the stuff of legend back then.

Mårten: We started discussing different ways to come up with new things after touring the [1998] *Chaosphere* album. We wondered what would happen if we recorded three bass guitars, for example. Just to see how different the band would sound. Randomly we ended up talking to a guy from Nevborn Guitars, who wanted us to try out their

seemed to capture the imagination, with this whole other kind of sound. We then started writing things for the eight-string before we even owned one. We would tune down our seven-strings, the entire [2002] *Nothing* record is an eight-string album recorded on seven-string guitars... which was a bitch! We would play four bars and then need to retune, again and again.

Tosin, you launched your own guitar company, Abasi Concepts, in 2019 and with great success – most of your models are currently sold out. What have you learned about making extended-range instruments along the way?

Tosin: Manufacturing high-end instruments is a challenge. The standard that guitarists expect is very high, and it should be! We've created

Mårten: A song like *Bleed* [from 2008 album *obZen*] sounds tricky but it's actually pretty simple. It's triplets in odd groupings over a 4/4 beat, with added strokes to make the rhythm move. That's something we do a lot in our riffs, it's that the awkward, funky groove that comes out when we write. The problem with playing triplets for seven and a half minutes is consistency. Being technically able to play them in a relaxed manner for that long, as if you were playing an AC/DC song, is the challenge. So the hardest thing isn't the timings themselves, it's the parts that are like 92 notes in a row that never repeat, like we did on [2005 album] *Catch Thirtythree*. It's the faster songs that have 16 full bars before coming back to the one. It can be tricky for the mind, especially when they only change ever so slightly. It might sound like the same riff over and over, but there are

8-STRING



subtle differences. You can easily get lost. It's like, 'Man, is this the one here or do we have another bar to go?' Keeping track is the hardest part, but it's often over straight 4/4... just like AC/DC!

Tosin: There's a thing I do quite a lot which is play in 4/4 but I'll make the end a little longer, maybe for another quarter note, so now you're in a measure of five. But the general sense of the phrase feels like it's in 4/4 and repeats evenly. It's all about arbitrarily extending or shortening the length of certain phrases. I like to do it because it rubs expectation. The evenness of rhythm is something so deeply intuitive that we all expect to be able to tap along or nod our heads. But I love rhythmic and melodic surprises. I'll come up with something that feels graspable, then I might add the complexity in, maybe every other repeat there's one less quarter note than before or I might extend the phrase a few more notes into the next octave. It can technically be 4/4 but exploring these ideas means you can sound like it's something way outside. The trick is to count in longer chunks.

Both of you have new albums out. What gear are we hearing on the recordings?

Mårten: In the studio, most of our albums have fallen back on Dual Rectifiers. Those are the go-to amps for us. This time I found the EVH 5150 III 100-Watt heads to be exactly what we were looking for. They had the gain, control and Mesa/Boogie-ness we needed, but with a more raw and unbridled kind of tone. They sounded less predictable, more organic. Instead of the usual Fortin 33 pedal as a booster, I actually ended up using Misha Mansoor's Precision Drive. That was suggested by our singer [Jens Kidman], as he had one. The gate on it isn't really all that good, it's cool for live use but in the studio it needs some work. But the sound of the Precision Drive going into the EVH was super. I would use the preamp of the EVH's second channel and run it through the power amp

SHOCK TACTICS
"I love rhythmic and melodic surprises," says Animals As Leaders' Tosin Abasi



a Mesa/Boogie Roadster, then out through EVH cabs. For the clean parts, I used my Roland JC-120 head.
Tosin: We used production for this album with my Neural DSP plug-in, but when it came time to mix we decided to take the DIs and see what kind of results we'd get by experimenting with real amps, cabs and mics. We started with my Morgan SW50R, which is a single channel tube head that I use as a pedal platform, with my Friedman BE-OD overdrive and the Bogner Harlow and Ecstasy Blue pedals. Those were the main drives we were running into the clean head. The Friedman pedal into the Morgan was perfect for all the slap tones and articulate stuff, even some of the heavier stuff. For the lead tones, it was my Abasi Pathos pedal going into the Morgan. We also ran a modded Soldano SLO from the 90s, which added this great character in the midrange when blended in.

And how about the actual eight-strings themselves?

Mårten: I'd say ninety-five percent of the guitars were recorded with my M8M Ibanez Custom. It's basically our signature M8M but with a bolt-on neck and it's a little shorter in scale with

a piezo mounted on it. It's my favourite instrument. I use it as much as I can, but not live because I'm scared of destroying it. For the clean parts, I used my Roland JC-120 head. I don't know what Fredrik used because he recorded in his studio. He wasn't around for any of this album and hasn't been writing for years, he's been busy doing his own thing. For the four leads he recorded at his place, I'm pretty sure it was his [signature] Ibanez Stoneman.

Tosin: We used Abasi Concepts guitars for nearly everything – the solo on *Thoughts And Prayers* was performed on an ESP. For some reason we weren't happy with the tone on the *Monomyth* solo so the engineer suggested using one of his guitars. We went digging through and there was this Les Paul. I couldn't even tell you what year it was from but it had this nice prominent midrange without being too bright, it sounded really smooth so I tracked with that. I'm pretty pragmatic in the studio – if my favourite gear is not doing what I want then I'm quick to find an objective solution. It's kinda funny though, because you wouldn't think a Les Paul would be anywhere near an Animals As Leaders record... but it happened!

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"We're searching for that perfect melody"

How the three guitarists in **Rolling Blackouts Coastal Fever** create an epic, filmic sound

Words: Jonathan Hirsley Photos: Nick McKinley

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One of the greatest gifts an artist can give their audience is a world to get lost in for a while. It can offer pure escape, or a different perspective, just so long as this painting, book, movie, song, whatever, takes you some place else to see the world or yourself anew.

The 21st-century is forever framed as 360-degree assault on our attention, and isn't it just. But, more importantly, what is that doing to our imagination? When you come across a record like *Endless Rooms*, the third album from the Melbourne-based indie-rock quintet Rolling Blackouts Coastal Fever, it's like a spa day for the grey matter. Even the cover, a photo of the lakeside cottage where they demoed the album, bright gold of the illuminated interiors framed by obsidian nothingness of the night sky, invites a daydream. There will be more to come.

Rolling Blackouts Coastal Fever's sound is constructed of a three-way-guitar conversation conducted between Frank Keane, Joe White and Tom Russo. All share vocal duties, too. You'll find Keane on a Maton cutaway dreadnought acoustic, nicknamed G-Train after Aussie rules footie hero Fraser Gehrig. "Particularly when we started off we had lots of songs in open G, and this was just this chugger, the G-Train," Frank laughs. "I love it. I've got another one which I call Madame Butterfly, which is named after an Australian Olympic swimmer from the 90s (Susie O'Neill) and is still very muscular but with a little more class."

Joe White prefers Fender electrics – Telecasters, Mustangs, Jags – with Tom Russo typically playing a late-'50s Gretsch Black Falcon. The three guitarists have very different but complementary styles, and those dynamics of difference stretch out to give songs such as *Tidal River*, *My Echo* and *Dive Deep* a three-dimensional quality,

a space that you the listener can enter and inhabit. This sound tells the band what the song needs, what they'll be singing about today.

"I feel like most of our songs are driven by the music," Frank says. "And then you are just trying to diagnose what world that lives in. Sometimes you are taken somewhere by a melody, or by the dynamic interplay between the instrumentation, the tones, and you situate it somewhere in your head and then you start to concoct this scene or world in which it lives."

Some of the influences brought to bear on the Rolling Blackouts Coastal Fever sound can be found not too far from the surface – the 90s US indie-rock canon, the Go-Betweens, the hypnotic clang of Echo And The Bunnymen – while others are buried deeper, occasionally referenced in the lyrics. Frank recently cited New Order as an inspiration for holding agony and ecstasy in equilibrium and a similar tension exists in much of RBKF's writing, gracing tracks like the propulsive and danceable *Saw You On The Eastern Beach* with a bittersweet aftertaste. But he has also mentioned French New Wave director Eric Rohmer's 1986 film *The Green Ray* as a key influence. Following Marie Rivière's Delphine into a shapeless summer (it was released in the US as *Summer*) of unsatisfactory relationships, the film seesaws between boredom and promise. Through the fug of Delphine's ennui, it is as though the metaphysical phenomena of the green ray – a flash witnessed at the last gasp of sunset – is lying in wait, pulling the film forward. It is a big mood, the kind that Frank Keane loves.

"When I am watching a movie I am really trying to write the juice of this world that it lives in, and I try to make connections with other worlds and try to curate this universe," he says. "If I am watching something, I don't really care for storylines that much. I just try to find these worlds. I really like those Rohmer films for that. I am able to sort of

"WE TRY TO FIND THIS PROGRESSION
THAT YOU NEVER WANT TO GET OFF"
FRANK KEANEY

➔ transport myself somewhere, and I do that with my songs as well."

RBCF's songwriting has guile. There's craftiness in their use of krautrock's forward motion, chasing down chord progressions that pull you in like quicksand. On occasion the melody is carried by Joe Russo's bass, with guitar as texture. As much as some of the guitar noise pulls focus – that intoxicating contrast between White's honeyed indie Americana and Russo's skronk and chime is hard to ignore – the melodies are box office, planting hooks that last for days.

"That's what really fires us up," Frank says, "because when we hit a point of progression and a melody and then start peeling melody and melody on the same structure, we find this thing like we are looking for the impossible waterfall. I think it is actually a staircase, a [Maurits Cornelis] Escher thing. We try to find this progression that you never want to get off, that just keeps having this perpetual motion. While in some ways we are a verse/chorus pop band, underneath the things that we are looking for are those sorts of perpetual motion machines."

Joe White adds: "Sometimes it's rhythm and chords that just feel good. But inevitably we are searching for that perfect melody to go with it."

The pop sensibility gives RBCF all kinds of permission to go nuts and experiment with electric guitar sounds. On the song *Tidal River*, they build and build, pushed into the sort of trebly fever you might have heard after hours in the Television practice space with Richard Lloyd and Tom Verlaine going at it. It's a moment that makes their guitars almost non-western in a musical sense and it tells us a lot about how these three guitarists and their individual styles pull the RBCF sound in different directions.

"That is Tom hitting the guitar real hard!" laughs Joe. "Yeah, that was something that we were querying, if that kind of weirdness should be there. But more and more we were building that song, and it just seemed to live in that *Midnight Oil*, crazy 1980s world where you could do whatever you wanted. So we leant into that, turned up the gain on his track and added a bit of extra skronk just to really dial it in. It helps to have the guitar on the other half of the song doing the sweeter melodies. But he really goes hard on that. Actually, he goes hard on most



of these songs. He is always digging in pretty hard. Tom and I are very different players. He works with a lot more scratchy, spiky attack. He hits the guitar pretty hard and I tend to lean on a few more effects like delay, reverb, and things like that just to bring more spacial width to the sound. We have definitely consciously tried to complement each other in that way."

This tactic has been priced in since the beginning. There was Russo, hitting a refurbished vintage Gretsch hard. White was on the Fenders. And it serves RBCF well in the present day, with Russo preferring the chime and sparkle of an AC15, White running a wet/dry rig of a Fender Blues Junior and Sovtek head. There were some delay and chorus pedal discoveries that shaped the tones on *Endless Rooms*. There's an EarthQuaker Devices Disaster Transport modulated delay on *Blue Eye Lake* and *Vanishing Dots*. An MXR Carbon Copy analogue delay did most of the heavy lifting.

"The tone on *Dive Deep* is mostly due to that being an extremely short delay with the mix turned all the way up," Joe says. "It turns it into this weird neon sort of sound. That was quite simple in the end – a really quick delay – but it just made it sound out of this world."

The house where they demoed the tracks with engineer Matt Duffy helped

HIGH ROLLERS

From left: Frank Kearney, Joe Russo, Marcel Tussie, Joe White, Tom Russo

find the sounds too. With a front that was all windows and a mezzanine floor, the acoustics were bright and lively. Marcel Tussie's snare drum sounded epic. Joe used ceiling mics in search of a wider sound. "Songs like *Vanishing Dots* and *Blue Eye Lake* and *Tidal River*, they've got some big, wide, expansive sounds on them that were certainly a result of the house we were recording in," he says.

It was only a two-hour drive out of Melbourne but this snatched moment of normality between lockdowns was a tonic, impossible to disguise in the music. "It was just excitement, this explosive explosion!" says Frank. "We were jumping out of their skin to be making music again. The album is basically a bottled version of that time when we were able to finally link up again."

RBCF leave *Endless Rooms* open to interpretation. Even when the melodies are putting on a happy face, there's the suggestion that something troubling is just over the horizon. There was a pandemic when this was written, ecological disasters, bushfires – the Great Barrier Reef is dying. That existential subtext is there if you look for it, tunnelling into the ecstasy from the early demo sessions. Which grabs the imagination first is down to you...

"DELAY AND REVERB BRING MORE SPACIAL WIDTH TO THE SOUND" JOE WHITE



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STRING SKIPPING

Supercharge your picking and soloing skills and create ear-grabbing ideas with TG's string skipping exercises

This special tutorial focuses on the art of string skipping with a pick. The aim is to develop your picking hand accuracy and also to provide you with some interesting new soloing ideas.

String skipping is a simple concept: the notes you play are on non-adjacent strings, so you have to 'skip' over certain strings as you play – and this calls for accurate picking. We're focusing on lead guitar here in our lesson, but it's worth noting that

string skipping also applies to arpeggios in a chord/accompaniment setting too. For example, Radiohead's *Street Spirit (Fade Out)* uses the technique extensively.

As inspiration for our lesson we've chosen some well-known guitarists who use string skipping to great effect. The idea is to learn our tab examples and then practise them with a metronome at a tempo to suit you. You can stretch yourself by gradually increasing the tempo and charting your progress over a series of days and weeks.



MINOR PENTATONIC STRING SKIPPING 1

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO](http://bit.ly/tg359audio)

♩ = 90

Am11

TAB

etc.

The minor pentatonic scale places two notes on each string so it's easy to create string-skipping patterns. This example works on the easiest string skip of all – the single-string skip. Start slowly and follow the picking directions and fingering shown in the tab. Dialling in an accurate technique at slower tempos is the key here.

MINOR PENTATONIC STRING SKIPPING 2

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

Things are getting tougher here as you skip two strings with your pick. Dial in some distortion and it's an impressive sounding lick, but it may take some time to perfect. Repetition at a slow tempo is the key so your brain can learn how far to move your pick from one string to the next.

C MAJOR SCALE INTERVALLIC EXERCISE

[BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO](http://bit.ly/tg359audio)

♩ = 135
Cmaj⁹ Fsus²

etc.

This pattern uses the 6th interval in a descending pattern. You can also play this type of idea with finger slides and continue it ascending or descending as long as you like. The idea in the last two bars will stretch your picking technique as it uses two string skips.

NUNO BETTENCOURT-STYLE STRING SKIPPING WITH A SCALE

[BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO](http://bit.ly/tg359audio)

♩ = 140
Am¹¹ D⁹ BU

etc.

This example places three notes on the third string and three on the first string. You can ascend or descend with this idea and it is possible to build up a lot of speed with this concept. Practise slowly to begin with and consider reversing the pick strokes, starting on an up-stroke.

CARL VERHEYEN-STYLE OCTAVE DISPLACEMENT

[BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO](http://bit.ly/tg359audio)

♩ = 140
Cmaj⁹ Fsus²

etc.

Octave displacement is a nice way to spice up the sound of scale runs. The idea is to take various intervals of the scale you are playing up or down the octave. This can be quite challenging at first but is a great way to implement the string-skipping concept. This example simply ascends up and down the major scale but sounds way more interesting with the various intervals displaced.

JOHN PETRUCCI-STYLE ARPEGGIOS

[BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO](http://bit.ly/tg359audio)

♩ = 140
G Am

etc.

This John Petrucci-style exercise is great practice for the picking hand. The fretting hand work is a bit fiddly so we have notated a suggested fingering in the tab. Once you have this exercise mastered, see if you can incorporate it in a solo.

PAUL GILBERT-STYLE TRIAD ARPEGGIOS

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

♩ = 140

Dm G C F

T 13-10 14-10 10-10 12-14 10-10 12-8 12-9 10-9 12-8 6-10 6-10 7-10 10-7

A 7-8 6-7 7-8 6-10 6-7 10-12 12-10 10-12 12-10 10-12 12-10 13-10

B 5-6-10 10-6 5-6-10 10-6 8-10-13 13-10 8-10-13 13-10

etc.

Paul Gilbert established a clever way to play triad arpeggios with string skipping. This method often sounds cleaner than sweep picking and it is also possible to apply patterns and sequences that would be impossible with the sweep picking technique.

FRANK GAMBALE-STYLE 7TH ARPEGGIOS

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

♩ = 130

Ebmaj7 Gm7

T 6-10-6 6-10-6 10-13-10 10-13-10

A 7-8 6-7 7-8 6-10 6-7 10-12 12-10 10-12 12-10

B 5-6-10 10-6 5-6-10 10-6 8-10-13 13-10 8-10-13 13-10

Frank Gambale has many great concepts under his fingers and string skipping is no exception. This example showcases a clever way to play 7th chord arpeggios with two string skips. For extra speed you can play this idea with hammer-ons and pull-offs.

ERIC JOHNSON-STYLE OPEN-VOICED ARPEGGIOS

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

♩ = 130

C Dm

T 5 5 8 8 12-10 8 6 6 10 10 10 13-12 15-13 12

A 3 5 7 10 10 12 9 7 5 7 7 12 12 14 15-13 12

B 3 5 7 10 10 12 9 7 5 7 7 12 12 14 15-13 12

etc.

The arrangement of the notes here make these E-J-style triads sound way more colourful than their closed voiced counterparts. These are fiddly to finger but there is an almost inexhaustible amount of permutations you can play with this idea. As always, accuracy is the key.

MATT BELLAMY-STYLE STRING SKIPPING

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

♩ = 95

Am11

T 17-17 15-15 17-17 15-15 17-17 15-15 17-17 15-15

A 14-14 14-14 14-14 14-14 14-14 14-14 14-14 14-14

B 14-14 14-14 14-14 14-14 14-14 14-14 14-14 14-14

etc.

This example is another good work-out and involves playing a down and an upstroke on each string before skipping. Again, the permutations available from this idea are endless, but accuracy is vital to creating an industrial sounding lead line like this.



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Shine On...

It was in 1968 that David Gilmour joined the band in which he would become famous as one of the **greatest guitar players of his generation**. 54 years later, **the last act of Pink Floyd is played out** with *Hey Hey Rise Up*, a powerful protest song in support of the people of Ukraine.

In this **30-page TG special**, we trace Gilmour's evolution as a guitarist via **20 classic Pink Floyd tracks** - from 1969's *The Nile Song* all the way through to *Hey Hey Rise Up*. Along the way, Gilmour's genius in landmark songs such as *Echoes*, *Breathe*, *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*, *Wish You Were Here*, *Comfortably Numb* and *Another Brick In The Wall* is **celebrated by a host of guitarists** - Kirk Hammett, Matt Bellamy, Sophie Lloyd, Derek Trucks, Jon Gomm, Steve Rothery of Marillion, Geordie Greep of Black Midi and Stu Mackenzie of King Gizzard And The Lizard Wizard. **Gilmour's story of his life in Pink Floyd** and beyond is told in his own words, and an **insight into the guitarist's creative process** is provided in an exclusive interview with **Bob Ezrin**, producer of Floyd's legendary double album *The Wall* and the last three albums of the band's career.

Finally, in an **eight-page in-depth lesson**, we profile the details of **David's playing technique**. From his trademark wide-interval string bends to his **melodic bluesy phrasing**, we've covered **everything you need to know** to play like the **Pink Floyd great**.





The Genius of David Gilmour In 20 Songs

"HE HAS THIS PERFECT GUITAR TONE, WHETHER IT'S ACOUSTIC OR ELECTRIC"

Words and Interviews Tim Tucker, Ellie Rogers, Amit Sharma, Grant Moon

From the late 60s all the way through to 2022, the music of Pink Floyd has been lit up by the brilliance of David Gilmour's guitar playing. Here, TG profiles the 20 Floyd songs in which Gilmour's genius is defined

— from 1969's *The Nile Song* to this year's surprise comeback *Hey Hey Rise Up* — with in-depth analysis from guitarists influenced by Gilmour's work: Matt Bellamy of Muse, Kirk Hammett of Metallica, Stu Mackenzie of King Gizzard And The Lizard Wizard, Steve Rothery of Marillion, Geordie Greep of Black Midi, Sophie Lloyd, Jon Gomm and Derek Trucks.



The Nile Song



By Derek Trucks
From the album: *More* (1969)

It's hard to find just one specific track to key in on with a player as talented as David Gilmour. When you go back to those early Pink Floyd records now, you can hear there has obviously been an evolution. But other things about Pink Floyd remained absolutely unchanged. There are certain things you can't run from if that's who you are!

"That whole idea of having your own musical identity is very beautiful. That's why we do it, to express who we are.

David Gilmour is one of those characters

who has this holistic thing going on. I feel like he's created his own universe on guitar through his tone and approach. And you can hear it in his earliest recordings with Floyd - on things like *The Nile Song*.

"When he plays, it takes you back and makes you feel like you're in a certain place. So whenever I hear him, it takes me back to spending time with one of my uncles when I was growing up. He was such a massive Pink Floyd fan, specifically David Gilmour's guitar playing. Any time I hear that tone, those are the things I feel and think about. It's always been there for me, with all these sounds that felt so magical.

"I can't think of a single time I've seen him or heard David play and not enjoyed it. I'm always intrigued by what he's doing. You know pretty immediately when it's him plugged in, his sound is very singular. I can't think of anyone else you could mistake him for... even though so many people have been influenced by him. There's a whole wave of players that got into the soundscape-y thing because of Pink Floyd, but you can't

duplicate that sh*t! I don't know if it's in his hands or the way he hears things or the way he attacks his instrument or dials in his gear... whatever it is, for some reason, a few people have it and most others don't!

"But I guess a big part of that sound comes from his bending. It's how he gets into those notes, and sometimes it's already halfway bent before he strikes the notes but always perfectly controlled. It's a rare thing, being able to make your guitar speak like that. Not many people can do it that well!

"This reminds me of a Hubert Sumlin moment I had. I would listen to his playing on those old Howlin' Wolf records from the 60s, trying to figure it all out and find those sounds, like, 'How the hell was he doing that?' And then one time we were backstage at a festival and he came into our room. There was this new Fender amp with a digital display on it and all these knobs, plus a brand new guitar with a tag on it. He plugged in and it was that same f*ckin' sound from the 60s! I was wondering how that's even possible. But it was just his hands and how he attacks each note, which is just like Gilmour. He could play through anything and you'll know pretty quickly it's him. I always thought it was the gear but, actually, it rarely is!"

WHICH ONE'S PINK?

From left: David Gilmour, Nick Mason, Richard Wright, Roger Waters

"It's a rare thing - being able to make your guitar speak like that"

The Narrow Way Atom Heart Mother

(Parts 1-3)



From the album:
Ummagumma
(1969)

On Floyd's fourth album, David Gilmour produced this three-part suite, on which he played all instruments, including guitars, bass, keyboards, percussion and drums. Part 1 is a beautiful folk-blues workout played on his 1960s Levin LT 18 in drop D tuning, with overdubbed strumming, picking and reverb-soaked bottleneck slide on acoustic and electric guitars. The tone shifts dramatically for Part 2, a Hendrix-like soundscape in which Gilmour wields his white Fender Stratocaster through Fuzz Face distortion, delay, reverb, wah-wah and other assorted effects. Part 3 features Gilmour's only vocals on the album, with layered overdubbed electric guitar parts, including impressive ethereal slide work.



From the album:
Atom Heart Mother (1970)

This 23-minute, six-movement epic was the first rock piece to occupy an entire side of an album. The extensive interplay between band and orchestra was a new direction for Floyd, and Gilmour's guitar playing throughout is one of the highlights, from his delicate slide guitar in the second movement (*Breast Milky*) through to the spacey-bluesy solo in *Funky Dung*, probably played on his recently acquired 1969 'Black Strat'. His final solo in the last movement, *Remergence*, makes liberal use of the Binson Echorec 2 he inherited from Syd Barrett. By this point Gilmour had developed the definitive Pink Floyd guitar sound that would go on to grace the band's classic 1970s recordings.

RIISING STAR

Gilmour (far right) on stage with Floyd at Hyde Park, London, 1969



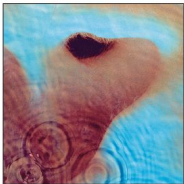
From the album:
Atom Heart Mother (1970)

#2 Old Sun

One of the earliest songs written entirely by David Gilmour sees him playing most of the instruments too, including guitars, drums and lead vocals. It's a beautiful arrangement, the folksy music and falsetto vocal perfectly evoking the theme of nostalgia in a pastoral setting, reminiscent of Roger Waters' song *Granchester Meadows* from *Ummagumma*. The recording starts

with double-tracked acoustic guitar chords, most likely played on his Gibson J-45, accompanied by a gently melodic bass guitar line (probably played by Gilmour himself) and electric slide guitar drenched in reverb, giving it the feel of a lap steel part. The long guitar solo at the end of the song is one of the most underrated in his canon, with its fluid mix of G major and G mixolydian phrases. The extended improvisation

is played on a Fender Stratocaster, probably his classic 'Black Strat', with fuzz, reverb and a touch of tremolo, and it showcases his stunning mastery of phrasing and melody. Gilmour himself always loved the song and continued to play it live right up until 2019. The church bells that open and close the original recording also look forward to *High Hopes* from *The Division Bell*, which has a similar theme.



By Stu Mackenzie
(King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard)
From the album: *Meddle* (1971)

Echoes

"Pink Floyd wasn't massive in my house when I was a kid, but my parents did listen

to some Floyd-adjacent stuff and I would've heard songs like *Money* or *Another Brick In The Wall Part 2* on the radio. When I was about 15 and starting to get my mind around what a guitar solo was supposed to be, the first one I attempted to learn was *Comfortably Numb*! Not note-for-note, but more to pick apart a few licks, learn how to bend strings, to learn how to hear when you're in tune and just try to understand what's happening. I've never tried to be a 'guitar hero', but I've always loved David Gilmour. He's never been a shredder really - he's a very melodic player, which I find really nice.

"It's a song that makes you feel like the guitar can do anything"

"The first time I saw anything Pink Floyd was their *Live At Pompeii* film, which is just the sickest thing. I still reference it in music and aesthetically from time to time, and *Echoes* is the pinnacle of that, as anyone who's seen it can attest. I love that song. It's a lot of King Gizzard's vibe summed up into one track. It allowed the idea in my mind of extending things out, at a time where I hadn't heard a lot of music that was so long-form. The first time I heard it was when I was first really learning to play guitar. The electric guitar, what it can do, effects and amps - these were all new things for me, an abstract concept, and obviously Pink Floyd were pioneers in changing the way people perceived what the guitar is.

"*Echoes* has got all the noisy, delay-based stuff I always thought was really cool. My favourite section and, to my mind, the climax of the song is when it gets into that 4/4, almost half-time groove. In the *Live At Pompeii* video, the camera's slow-panning past all of the gear, and Dave's doing these guitar squeals with his whammy bar. I always thought that was the coolest thing I've ever seen! I used to go to bed thinking about it. It was a visceral moment that encouraged me to keep playing the guitar and to keep trying new things. *Echoes* is a song that makes you feel like the guitar can do anything, that it's not just an instrument that's limited to one tonality or one effect. And that's pretty inspiring. I've never tried to play it or cover it - it's always felt too daunting! It's 50 years old now, but it's still so modern sounding. It still feels like a leap of faith, an experiment. I'm not sure how much other music feels like that. The whole of Pink Floyd's catalogue has aged very well, but I think *Echoes* has aged particularly well.

"Apparently David has a beautiful houseboat/recording studio? David, if you ever read this, would you please invite me over?"

HOLY GROUND
In concert at
Royaumont Abbey,
France, June 16, 1971



WISH YOU WERE HERE

Floyd in Kanagawa, Japan, August 1971



From the album: *Meddle* (1971)

Feartess

Meddle is often considered the first mature post-Syd Barrett Pink Floyd album, the point at which the remaining foursome cohered and forged the future direction of their sound. Much of this was down to David Gilmour finding his place as a key guiding force within the band, and one of the album's guitar highlights is this powerful collaboration between Gilmour and Roger Waters.

The distinctive syncopated guitar part is played on a rare variation of open G tuning, GGDGBB, which had been taught to Waters by Syd Barrett during the early days of the band. There are at least four different guitar parts layered throughout the song, including standard acoustic, 12-string acoustic and standard electric. It's Gilmour's sophisticated use of volume pedal, harmonics, feedback and reverberation that help to give this

modal sounding tune its distinct flavour. The folky vibe, philosophical lyrics, and interspersed snippets of Liverpool's football supporters singing *You'll Never Walk Alone* create something totally unique, and one of the most underrated compositions of Pink Floyd's career. It continues to delight hardcore Floyd fans to this day, while Roger Waters resurrected the song for concerts in 2016.

A Pillow of Winds Childhood's End



From the album: *Meddle* (1971)

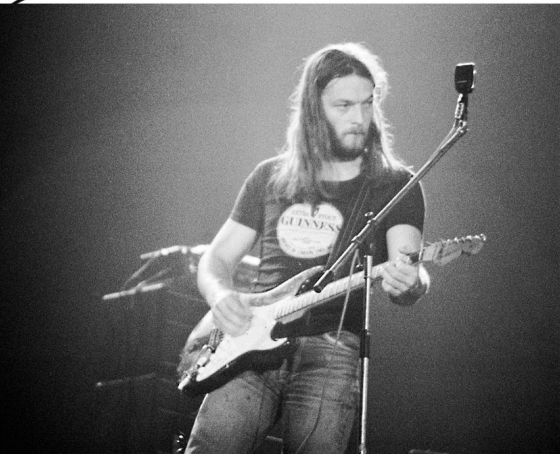
One of two beautiful Gilmour/Waters collaborations on *Meddle*, this started life as 'Dave's Guitar Thing' until Waters added the dreamy lyrics. It's underpinned by Gilmour's fingerpicked arpeggios on acoustic and electric guitars tuned to open E (EBEG#BE), and accompanied by a sweetly melodic slide guitar part, probably played on his legendary 'Black Strat'. The result is Floyd's unique take on the Laurel Canyon vibe, a style made popular at the time by the likes of Crosby, Stills and Nash, Joni Mitchell and Neil Young. Gilmour's double tracked lead vocals, and a warm fretless bass, reinforce the mood beautifully.



From the album: *Obscured By Clouds* (1972)

The sessions for the soundtrack album *Obscured By Clouds* took place while the band was already working on *The Dark Side Of The Moon*, and you can hear much of the flavour of their magnum opus in these cuts. *Childhood's End* is written entirely by Gilmour, and he layers the guitar parts beautifully, from the doubled-up Martin D-35 acoustic rhythm parts, to the power chords on his 'Black Strat' in drop D tuning. But it's the minor pentatonic solo, through Fuzz Face distortion and Benson Echoeric effects, that provides the highlight, showcasing the style that would make Gilmour one of the greatest rock guitarists of his generation.

Breathe



of maturity in the songwriting, and especially the lyrics.

"The opening chord progression of *Breathe (In The Air)* [Em to A] is such a lovely movement. Many people have used it since, and will do so for years to come. It's just so right for the song. And you can hear [Floyd keyboardist] Rick Wright's influence on the chords – these more jazzy voicings he comes up with add a great additional colour that's used throughout the album. He was a master of that.

"David's guitar playing has such texture. Take the vibrato pedal at the front. I have something similar called a Mojo Vibe [by Sweet Sound], based on a pedal Hendrix used [the Dunlop Uni-Vibe]. Vibrato's a modulation pedal but it's got a different character to tremolo or chorus. David's got great tone here. If you use effects, the trick is to be tasteful with them like this, to enhance the natural tone of the guitar without swamping it.

"His pedal steel playing's an important part of the song, too, both melodically and texturally. That's very much informed my playing over the years, which is funny because one of my pet hates is country music! The approach he takes is one you hear a lot, in terms of the melodies he plays and the way the guitar weaves around the vocal, and completes the song, really.

"I tend to think less in terms of scales and more about moods – if it sounds good, then it works. We're all born with this innate sense of melody and the harmonic relationship just between two notes as it changes and shifts against a chord. You can teach yourself a lot of that without having to get bogged down in the technical aspects, and again, that's what I love about David's playing. It's got that heavy blues influence but he's still got a great melodic sensibility.

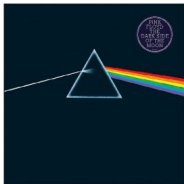
"When they do 'The Greatest Guitar Solos Of All Time' polls, *Comfortably Numb* usually comes top, as it should, and that makes me feel slightly justified in my own approach. For me the important thing about the guitar isn't insane speed or complexity. There's an emotional purity to David's approach – the choice of notes, the expression – that I try to encapsulate myself at times. But there's no one else in the world as good at being Dave Gilmour as Dave Gilmour..."

BLACK VELVET
Gilmour with that famous Strat

The first Pink Floyd album I bought was *A Saucerful Of Secrets*, but I really fully engaged with them around the time of *Meddle*, when they reached that tipping point of more musicality than just experimentation. Then, *The Dark Side Of The Moon* was such a jump. It's one of those records that most people probably have in their collection somewhere, even if they haven't listened to it in 25 years.

"It's such an important album, so masterfully arranged, and very few albums take you on a journey like that. It's the first time everything came together for Floyd in terms of the songs, the sonics and the special effects. It shows an additional level

"His pedal steel playing is an important part of the song"

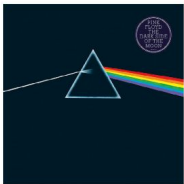


By Steve Rothery (Marillion)
From the album: *The Dark Side Of The Moon* (1973)



48

MONEY



By Matt Bellamy (Muse)
From the album: *The Dark Side Of The Moon* (1973)

For the three of us in Muse, hearing *The Dark Side Of The Moon* for the first time was a massive deal. For our second album, *Origin Of Symmetry*, we were working with [producer] John Leckie. He was kind of blown away by our lack of knowledge about the history of rock and music in general – and some people

probably still are, to be honest! He would show us some artists like Captain Beefheart and explain how that transitioned into Tom Waits. Obviously we'd heard of Pink Floyd, but we'd never really listened to them properly, or at least the way John wanted us to. So in 2001, he made us turn the lights out in the control room and play *The Dark Side Of The Moon* a few times. We were probably smoking spliffs going, 'Wow, what is this music, it's unbelievable!' It was such a mind-blowing experience. That was the first one that really hit us. It led to us making our fourth album, *Black Holes And Revelations*, in the south of France in a place called Miraval – an old chateau where they made parts of *The Wall*, which was the main factor in us deciding to record there!

"Picking out the best guitar moment on *The Dark Side Of The Moon* is a tough

ECLIPSE

The Dark Side Of The Moon tour, London

one, but I have to say *Money* stands out. That riff is super cool and there's a whole message to it – they were tapping into this anti-corporate and anti-war sentiment. It was so influential in terms of what music can stand for.

"David Gilmour is such an amazingly expressive and emotional player. He somehow makes you feel like you're hearing a human singing at times. He plays with a degree of expression that's very, very rare. There's no real technical trickery or showing off with him, unless it's there for an emotional reason. That tends to be my favourite kind of

guitar playing – where emotion and expression are number one.

If that takes you into a place of technical ambition, then so be it. But more often, it's his note choices and feel that take you away... they're evocative of infinite landscapes, things like Antarctica or the desert or roaming around the skies of Mars.

You get this feeling of floating around indefinitely when you're listening to David Gilmour play. I don't think anyone else has done that, for me, or at least to that degree. You feel so elevated and out of everyday life when listening to that band and his leads. It's incredible."

"That riff is super cool and there's a message in the song"

Wish You Were Here



By Jon Gomm

From the album: *Wish You Were Here* (1975)

This kind of Pink Floyd song is my favourite kind that they do.

Wish You Were Here is a simple song, but what they always have is this incredible attention to detail – both in the way it's performed and in the way it's produced. All of that means that the inner core of the song really flows out and hits you emotionally.

"With his guitar playing, there's always this kind of purity to David Gilmour. It's a pure beauty. He has this perfect guitar tone, whether it's acoustic or electric. There's this deep blues inside it. In the solo in *Wish You Were Here* – the intro solo and then the slide solos later on – the phrasing and the timing and the aesthetic beauty of it makes it so powerful. I think that's what really hits people about his guitar playing. Because he doesn't play fast or in different styles, he can often actually be

"It sounds simple, but there's so much going on"

underrated. What he does is quite subtle. Unless you try and analyse it, it's not that obvious.

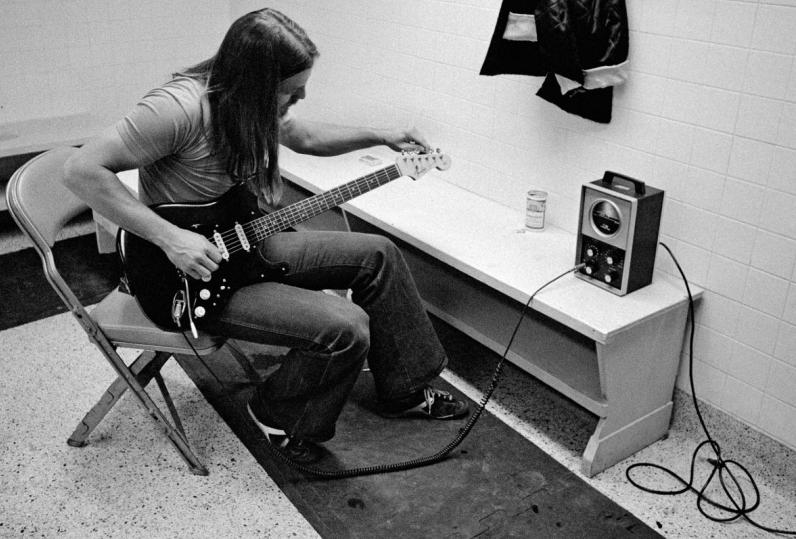
"With this particular song, right at the start, he's playing the chords and that's what you expect an acoustic guitar to do – to strum the chords. But they come packaged with a riff – a real melodic hook. So, the chords are presented but there's actually

a melodic hook as well, which maybe is something that people expect more from an electric guitar. For myself, as an acoustic guitar player – I remember learning this tune when I was a kid – and ever since then, whenever I write an acoustic guitar part, I always want to make sure there is a hook inside it so the guitar part has its own value and it's not just simply a backing for the other more important bits. The acoustic guitar part stands in its own right and David Gilmour always tends to do that. It can sound really simple but there's so much going on. It's just really clever and tasteful and perfect. And there is raw emotion as well – it's just that he doesn't scream it at you. It's put across subtly and that makes it more powerful, not less.

"The influence on me is the prog approach. I consider myself a progressive artist. I like weird sounds, I like originality and I like things to sound like I haven't heard them before. Pink Floyd are one of the prog bands that I really love because their songs are melodic. It's popular music. The songs are not necessarily complicated, but they have a progressive twist. It's always real, honest music but with a progressive edge, and that's exactly what I aspire to do.

"In almost all of pink Floyd's songs, there'll be some kind of new thing that hasn't quite been done before – whether it's combining sounds, or whether it's a technical thing like time signatures. But there's still always that pop edge to their melodies, and there's always that bluesiness inside the phrasing and the guitar playing."





Shine On You Crazy Diamond



By Kirk Hammett (Metallica)
From the album: *Wish You Were Here*
(1975)

“I love *Shine On You Crazy Diamond* because there is a riff in that song, but it’s so sideways and so around

the back. When you listen, it’s actually blues. It’s a freaking blues progression but it doesn’t sound like it, and that in itself is a real accomplishment. So I really think that song is just amazing. With the opening to it, that weird ringing opening chord, *Shine On You Crazy Diamond* is just epic, and there’s so much that I love about that.

“Everyone goes on about *Comfortably Numb* and that guitar solo, and yes, the guitar solo is absolutely amazing with the delay and the chorus. But my favourite part is when he flubs a note and then turns it into an open G during the solo. I know everyone knows what I’m talking about! But I love that David left it in. I love that. “David’s sound is amazing. During the Peter Green tribute show [at

London’s Palladium theatre in 2020], David came down and played *Oh Well Part 2*, and when he started playing and soloing with the band that Mick Fleetwood had put together for that event, all of a sudden Pink Floyd was in the room. Or, it felt like Pink Floyd was in the room. It was insane! Everyone in the room was transported and we were all looking at each other like, “Wow, this is amazing and a real moment!”

“I love how understated Gilmour’s playing is because it is understated. If anything, I could be more understated, but sometimes I just regurgitate a ton of notes. I can’t help it – it’s just how I am! But David is very, very understated and that, in itself, is a real, real beauty to behold.”

“It’s a blues song, but it doesn’t sound like it”

Pigs (Three Different Ones) + Sheep



By **Geordie Greep** (Black Midi)
From the album: *Animals* (1977)

“Iy dad had all of Pink Floyd’s albums. I remember him playing them at home and in the car when I was a kid. It’s just great music, and they were one of the most cinematic bands around. Their albums – especially for the time, but even now – are really well produced, and David Gilmour is an absolutely excellent guitar player.

“He’s got the same sort of thing as Angus Young, where he’s not doing anything particularly headline-grabbing in terms of technicality, but just has a wonderful kind of ‘singing’ way of playing. He’s got great feel. Anyone can play the things he’s playing, but the way he plays them in particular is brilliant. He has a kind of toolbox and will repeat certain lines and go back to the same licks and things often, but he plays them slightly differently each time, with a different panache, so it’s always engaging.

“He got these huge sounds, but his natural touch still comes through”

PIG ON THE WING

The *Animals* tour,
Rotterdam,
Netherlands,
February 1977

“I think Pink Floyd’s *Live At Pompeii* is the best concert film there is, and *Wish You Were Here* is probably my favourite album of theirs, but I also love *Meddle*, *The Wall*, and *Animals*.

“*Pigs (Three Different Ones)* on *Animals* is where David has the TalkBox, of course, and it’s probably the best use of that ever. I can’t think of anyone who

uses it for that natural and emotional effect, rather than just a gimmick or a trick. On this it comes across as something totally sincere and in keeping with the context of the song. And in terms of the guitar solo, he just keeps going! You think, ‘Okay surely it’s time to wrap it up?’ But no, he keeps going and it’s just great!

“The outro riff on *Sheep* is probably one of the best riffs they ever did. It’s the same sort of thing as on [*The Wall*’s] *Run Like Hell*, but on *Sheep* it’s particularly excellent. It feels ‘of the moment’. He’s got a very classic guitar sound on there, and that’s another great thing about David – he never used too much distortion. He used Hiwatt amps at that time and got these huge sounds, but they were never saturated and over the top. His natural touch still comes through.

“No one else can make it sound quite like the guitar isn’t even an instrument, it’s just an extension of David’s own voice – and I really like his voice. It’s more that the music’s coming directly from his brain to the record, uninhibited by the properties of the instrument itself, which is the ultimate thing you want to do with any musical instrument, isn’t it? And of course, he’s the king of string bends. I bought myself my first proper Stratocaster recently and it really makes you want to do those Gilmour-style bends.

“On *Animals* and throughout, he never played more than he needed to. His playing is always very considered, and soulful. For me he’s the only guy to do the proper blues thing in a rock band where’s it not a bit ‘white boy playing the blues’ and naff. He’s just got his own style.”



Comfortably Numb



notes he's playing, because they are sweet but with a little bit of dirt here and there. For my cover, I kept close to my own sound, which has some raised mids and scooping out some of the lower frequencies.

"The first solo in *Comfortably Numb* is the happy one, going over the major chords. That's why there's such a contrast between the two leads – the short major one early on is what makes the longer minor solo at the end feel even more epic. The different moods help separate them really nicely.

"The minor solo being in the key of B is a big help. The only thing better would have been A minor pentatonic – that's always the dream for us rock guitarists! In this solo, David repeats a lot of similar minor pentatonic runs, quite often staying in that first position box and maybe venturing out to the second. But he does so much in that small amount of space! A lot of his runs have the same notes, but the timings are always changing ever so slightly, which I find really interesting. He's really good at making the same notes feel different each time. I don't want to use the word simple, because it isn't simple, but he does minimalism really well. There's no crazy tapping, he's happy to sit in that first minor pentatonic position and make it sound amazing. And you could listen to him play in that box for hours...

"But when he does break away from pentatonics, he carefully selects certain modal notes to make them feel subtle. He never over-uses those notes, so that's what makes them stand out a bit more when he does play them. He's very careful with certain intervals – you'll mainly hear pentatonics but when he throws in that minor sixth or something like a ninth, it feels so memorable. And every guitarist out there has pretty much nicked those ninth bends into the minor third!

"I find it's the precision of those bends that always blows me away. The guitar is like an extension of him, like it's part of his body.

I really had to pay attention to that while working on the cover, listening to that element of his phrasing. I'm used to a wide rock vibrato and it's taken ages to get there, so it was interesting to take a step back from that and go for slower bends that feel really soulful. And I don't think there's a better word for it – his bends have so much soul!"



By Sophie Lloyd
From the album: *The Wall* (1979)

"I recently covered *Comfortably Numb* and have to say learning all of the parts was really interesting. David Gilmour is definitely more of a minimalist and I'm all about adding as much shit as you possibly can! So I had to take a different approach and look at how he was playing and what kind of notes he was choosing.

"For my version, we used the Archetype: Nolly Neural DSP plug-in going into Logic, which really works for big lead tones because it has nice overdrives, reverbs and delays. It doesn't have phasers or anything else, it's just the basic pedals which keeps everything simple. David's guitar sound is incredibly sweet – it's clean-ish but with a bit of crunch, just on the edge of breaking up. I love that sound because it kinda emulates the

COMFORTABLY SUNG

Gilmour and Waters perform on stage at Earls Court Arena on *The Wall* tour, August 1980

"His bends have so much soul!"



Another Brick in The Wall Part 2



From the album: *The Wall* (1979)

There are very few examples that demonstrate rhythmic delay as well as Pink Floyd's three-part epic from *The Wall* – its middle section, *Another Brick In The Wall Part 2*, serving as the album's lead single and taking experimental guitar sounds to the top of the charts around the world.

Another Brick In The Wall Part 1 begins with Gilmour playing a palm-muted shuffle rhythm on the fifth fret of his A-string, with a 440ms delay set to roughly six repeats to duplicate the D note being played. Prior to *The Wall* he'd been using the Binson Echorec 2 for ambience, though interestingly at this point of their career he had switched to an MXR Digital Delay unit, later explaining, "I was tired of cleaning [the Echorec] and needed something more reliable". These rhythm guitar parts, including the louder clean chords

ABOVE
Floyd perform on stage at Earl's Court in London during *The Wall* tour, 6th August 1980

"Taking experimental guitar sounds to the top of the charts"

overdubbed were played on a Strat, with the first and second pickup positions utilised for more bite. The thicker-sounding and more effected fills were most likely sent through Electro-Harmonix pedals like the Big Muff and Electric Mistress to add extra overdrive and colour.

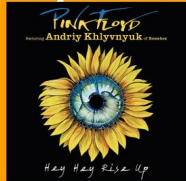
For the more scooped, funky-sounding rhythms heard in *Another Brick In The Wall Part 2*, Gilmour used his #0001 Stratocaster plugged straight into the mixing desk. The guitar had been bought from his long-time guitar technician Phil Taylor and, though it wasn't the first instrument of its kind ever made, its fabled history saw the instrument sell for \$1,815,000 in 2019, setting a new world auction record for a Stratocaster. "Some guitars make everyone sound the same," the Pink Floyd legend explained, noting that "others tend to emphasise the differences, which this one does." A Gibson Les Paul with P-90 pickups was used for the overdubs and leads, again plugged straight into the mixing desk but this time gated and compressed before being run back out into a mic'd up Mesa Boogie Mark I Amplifier.

Built mainly from the D minor pentatonic scale, the solo is an incredibly tasteful and typically understated affair, Gilmour sticking with choice notes over anything too flashy. Perhaps what's most remarkable about his phrasing are the double overdubs, such as the ones played on the thirteenth fret of the B-string, going up a whole tone the first time before being released and then climbing two tones on the second, giving these parts an almost liquid kind of feel as no frets are being crossed – the notes are bent from the same place. Some extra tonalities are added in occasionally, such as the second and the major sixth – the latter as part of a double stop on the twelfth fret of the G and B strings, a recurring motif from Part 1.

The final section of the trilogy is also its shortest, Gilmour using the same Les Paul and Electro-Harmonix pedals to bring it all to a fittingly grandiose conclusion. An expansive body of mind-melting sounds and styles, with a chorus hook that sits among the group's catchiest, it's no wonder *Another Brick In The Wall Part 2* became one of Pink Floyd's most enduring anthems.



Hey Hey Rise Up



Nearly 55 years after Pink Floyd's first single was released comes this glorious gesture of humanitarian aid from one of rock history's biggest bands. Using the Pink Floyd name to draw attention to its cause, *Hey Hey Rise Up* must surely be the band's final cut. The idea for the song started when David Gilmour saw a video on Instagram of Andriy Khlynnyuk, singer of the Ukrainian band Boombox. Gilmour knew of Andriy when Boombox came to play a show in London in 2015 to support of the Belarus Free Theatre, which Andriy couldn't attend due to visa problems. "So the rest of the band backed me for my set," Gilmour said. "We played *Wish You Were Here* for Andriy that night." Gilmour himself has strong emotional ties with Ukraine, having a Ukrainian



From the album:
The Wall (1979)

Run Like Hell

Gilmour takes on lead, rhythm and bass guitar duties for this stomping march-like piece, one of his major compositional contributions to *The Wall*. The main guitar part is notable for its iconic use of MXR Digital Delay effects, on the chugging D pedal tone and accompanying triad chord sequence.

He actually used two delays, set at staggered time intervals, to get this epic layered effect. The main guitar part is played on his 1955 Fender Esquire, with the bottom E string dropped down to D, with compression, courtesy of the MXR Dyna Comp, and a touch of colour from his Electric Mistress flanger.

On the Turning Away



From the album: **A Momentary Lapse of Reason (1987)**

Gilmour takes flight on one of the standout guitar moments of Floyd's first post-Roger Waters era album. A stately acoustic sequence in G underpins this political anthem, shifting in time signatures between 4/4 and 6/4, giving it something of a Celtic feel. As bassist Guy Pratt explains in his book, *My Bass*

And Other Animals: "It only has five chords in it, but they don't necessarily show up where you think they will." The guitar solo showcases the classic expansive Gilmour sound, with heavy delay and reverb and his distinctive approach to string bends, pinched harmonics and expressive use of the tremolo arm.



From the album:
The Division Bell (1994)

High Hopes

The culmination, and high point, of *The Division Bell* sees Gilmour weaving together what producer Bob Ezrin called a 'monochrome, high-contrast musical painting'. It starts in a bucolic mood, with birdsong, church bells and buzzing bees setting the tone of nostalgia for Pink Floyd's past.

Gilmour accompanies himself on nylon-string, and delivers an exquisite acoustic guitar solo, a rare thing on a Floyd recording. The pinnacle of the song sees Gilmour lift off on extended wings for over two minutes on a lap steel guitar tuned in E minor. It's an appropriate climax to the last Floyd album proper.



THE FINAL CUT
Pink Floyd performing
Hey Hey Rise Up. From
left: Nitin Sawhney,
David Gilmour, Guy
Pratt, Nick Mason

daughter-in-law and grandchildren, and he heard about Andriy's support for the Territorial Defence in Ukraine. In a statement he said: "Then I saw this incredible video on Instagram, where he stands in a square in Kyiv with this beautiful gold-domed church and sings in the silence of a city with no traffic or background noise because of the war. It was a powerful moment that made me want to put it to music."

The new single opens with an emotionally charged chorus of voices, courtesy of the Ukrainian VERYOVKA Folk Song and Dance Ensemble. This is followed by Andriy's vocals, sampled from the original Instagram post, singing the First World War Ukrainian protest song, *The Red Viburnum In The Meadow*, backed by Gilmour on guitar, Nick Mason on drums, Guy Pratt on bass, and Nitin Sawhney on keyboards.

Gilmour follows Andriy's stirring vocal with a related musical section in C# minor, which – as he told *The Guardian*, allowed him to be "the rock god guitar player". It doesn't disappoint. Gilmour delivers over one and a half minutes of impassioned solo lead guitar playing in three distinct sections. The first, starting around one minute into

the song, sees him at the height of his powers, showcasing his unique blend of overdriven blues and spacey effects. At 1.30, after a call of 'Hey hey' from Andriy, the drums back off the beat and Gilmour switches tone for a more mournful solo passage, his guitar gently weeping over the choir's washed harmonies. At 2.05, the drums kick back in and Gilmour's guitar increases in intensity, delivering the final white-hot lead break that seems to cry out for justice.

Despite not meeting Andriy for the recording, Gilmour was able to speak to him in his hospital bed in Kyiv, where he is recovering from injury: "I played him a little bit of the song down the phone line and he gave me his blessing. We both hope to do something together in person in the future."

If this really is to be the last recording under the official Pink Floyd name, it's a fitting gesture from a band that gave us such impassioned anti-war statements as *Us And Them*, *The Dogs Of War* and *The Final Cut*. The goal for this latest single is to raise funds for humanitarian charities and lift morale. A powerful addition to the legacy of Pink Floyd.



A powerful addition to the legacy of Pink Floyd



"SOMEONE WOULD COUNT IN OR START PLAYING... AND THEN YOU'D JUST FLY!"

MY LIFE IN PINK FLOYD - AND BEYOND. DAVID GILMOUR: IN HIS OWN WORDS...

Interviews Mark Ellen and Daryl Easlea

In extracts from two major interviews, David Gilmour looks back on his long career - with Pink Floyd and as a solo artist. He speaks about the formative influences that shaped him as a guitarist, and all that followed...

Joining Floyd in 1968 as their former leader Syd Barrett was losing control of the band and his sanity. The landmark albums and songs that defined Pink Floyd. The bizarre 'lost' album *Household Objects* (recorded with - you guessed it - household objects!). *The Final Cut* - the last album the band made with founding member Roger Waters. The reunion with Waters for the Live 8 concert in 2005. The solo records and session work that sustained the guitarist outside of Floyd. The thrill of playing guitar with a Beatle. And the satisfaction that comes from Floyd's mighty legacy...

GUITAR HEROES

I'm a real jack of all trades. I'm completely the anti-purist. I was never going to dedicate my life to being B.B. King. My influences were Pete Seeger, Lead Belly, Bob Dylan, Hank Marvin, all the blues guys and everything. It was all a complete hotchpotch, a mass of different styles and influences. I saw no reason why all these influences could not co-habit - and I still don't! Bill Haley's *Rock Around The Clock* was a pivotal moment for me. And that was superseded in what seemed like

months by *Jailhouse Rock* by Elvis Presley, also pivotal. The Beatles were pivotal. Jimi Hendrix was a pivotal moment. Pete Seeger was a pivotal moment when I was young. I learnt guitar from him. Too many to name.

THE EARLY FLOYD WITH SYD BARRETT

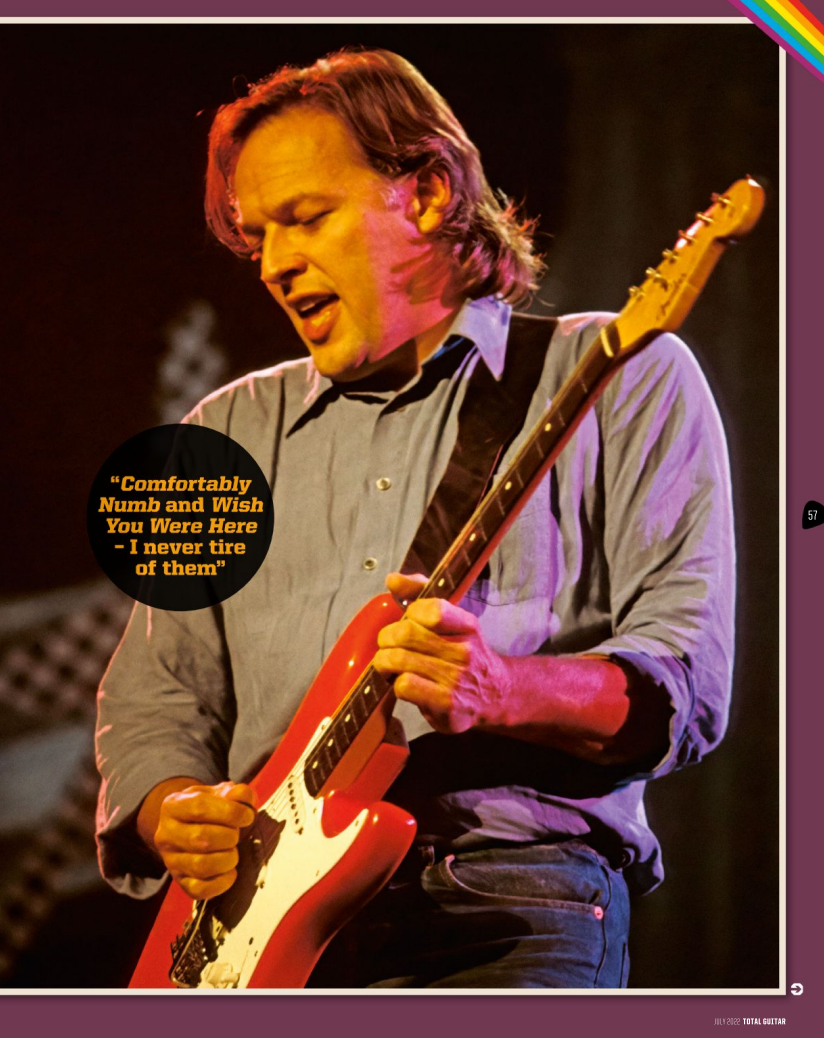
Syd would gradually phase out of live performance, and stick around and write songs for us. He obviously wasn't up to playing live very much, so they asked me to join, and for him to be the

THE SHOW MUST GO ON
Gilmour (right) leading Floyd in the 80s

Brian Wilson backroom boy figure. It could have felt very uncomfortable, but it didn't really. After five gigs, it obviously wasn't working. We went off to do the gig in Southampton and didn't bother picking him up. It's a well trotted-out story. We certainly didn't know those would be the last gigs we played together. I don't think we were ever in the studio at the same time. I worked on one or two of the tracks that were already recorded. All five of us are certainly on [1968 song] *Set The Controls For The Heart Of The Sun*. We didn't record whole new tracks until after he'd left.

ADVENTURES IN SOUND

The music was exploratory, and it was exciting to explore. But that, to me now, looks like a process - a process to find out what you do and don't like. And when you get older - necessarily, it seems to me - you find what you do like, and that maybe narrows your vision down a little bit. And in those early days, while it was exciting, there



***"Comfortably
Numb and Wish
You Were Here
- I never tire
of them"***

was an awful lot of it that was embarrassing and you go: 'Oh, God, what are we going to do now?'

JAMMING

We would have a template of what we were playing live. Someone would count in or start playing, and you'd know what the title was, and you'd have a rough template and then you'd just fly off on any tack you liked, and the music would build up and fly away and wander off in another direction. And some of those directions were dead-ends and some were exciting.

THE ASCENT OF PINK FLOYD

If I watch [1972 concert movie] *Live At Pompeii*, I cringe. But mostly I can see how great it all is, and it's all sitting there in its memory box mostly happily. I'm very good at forgetting all the bad sh*t anyway. The great moments are legion. I have thousands of snapshot memories that are great. *Meddle* was a great moment for us. It showed the way forth and it was successful. *Dark Side Of The Moon* obviously was the breakthrough moment and was terrific, and we suddenly moved up from the medium-time to the mega-time.

ROAD-TESTING THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

That's slightly a myth. *Dark Side* was fashioned out on the road, because we started playing and honing it, but it wasn't that common. Things like *Echoes* we had done live, and later, with the *Animals* stuff, we had done the two tracks on the '74 tour. They were part of the oeuvre before being unleashed officially, but *Dark Side Of The Moon* was the one where that belief comes from – and it did help make it better, as we were pretty well conversant with the music. We would jam with something, use it or throw it away. By the time we got into a studio, we knew what we were going to do and we worked on it until it was right.

HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS

We spent an awful lot of hours of wasted studio time faffing around [with that aborted project]. I remember spending an inordinately long time stretching rubber bands across matchboxes to get a bass sound – which just ended up

sounding like a bass guitar! But we salvaged a little bit. The main drone at the beginning of *Wish You Were Here* [on the album's opening track *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*] was made with wine glasses which we recorded on 16-track, with a glass on each track at a semitone interval, so we could do chords and play it like a keyboard. It was a hugely difficult sampling system.

THE JOY OF COMFORTABLY NUMB

For the very palpable joy that things like *Comfortably Numb* and *Wish You Were Here* give to an audience, I never tire of them. I suppose playing that same old thing again can be seen as being tedious, but really I'm always happy to do the ones people love.

THE FINAL CUT

I was just trying to get through [that album]. It wasn't pleasant at all. If it was that unpleasant but the results had been worth it, then I might think about it in a different way. I wouldn't, actually. There are a couple of reasonable tracks, at best. *The Fletcher Memorial Home*, *The Gunner's Dream* and the title track are the three reasonable tracks on that. The rest of *The Final Cut* is dross.

THE SOLO ALBUMS

The first one was just a quick blast [titled simply *David Gilmour*, and released in 1978, it was recorded with bassist Rick Wills and drummer Willie Wilson, both ex-members of Gilmour's pre-Floyd band Jokers Wild]. We congregated down in the south of France, knocked out a few jams. It was really off the top of our heads, it was fun – comparatively, compared to Pink Floyd. *About Face* in 1984 was at a time when we knew Roger wasn't going to be part of anything we did, but before he'd officially left. He had us trapped in limbo. I was putting my toe in the water. Then he left and I was unencumbered and carried on doing Pink Floyd. There didn't seem to be any reason to do a solo project.

THE SESSION PLAYER

I did a lot of things. I was bored – and flattered to be asked. Some of the things I don't have a lot of affection for, and some I've never even heard. With Grace



"You're sitting there with Paul McCartney and your guitar is plugged in – it's magical!"

Jones, I'm on one version of *Slave To The Rhythm*, but I can't really hear myself on it. I can become a perfectionist when I'm with Pink Floyd, but going in, doing a guitar solo and then leaving is great.

PERFORMING WITH A BEATLE

I'm a kid, really. You get into Studio Two at Abbey Road, you're sitting there with Paul McCartney and your guitar is plugged in. You think that's an ordinary day's work, but of course it isn't – it's magical! Managing to persuade him to sing *I Saw Her Standing There* at the Cavern, with me doing the John Lennon parts, was absolutely fantastic.

PINK FLOYD'S REUNION AT LIVE 8

I thoroughly enjoyed it, though we had a few days of very tense rehearsals. We hadn't spoken to each other for years. Roger wanted to do *Money* – which we all did, actually – and *Another Brick In The Wall* and *In The Flesh*. In the end



I thought, actually, we're Pink Floyd and he's our guest, and he can just do what we tell him to do or f*ck off. [But the show] was magical. We were relaxed and we enjoyed it. We did a run-through of the set the night before to no audience in the park and that was terrific, and helped us feel relaxed and confident. It went very well.

STADIUM ROCK

I don't see the need for that sort of adulation on that scale. Also the strange thing about stadiums is you have no way of telling if it's going well. It's a crowd – in the singular. You can't really retain them as individuals. The power and energy of their 'love', so to speak, is a wonderful drug to boost your ego to the point where it's overinflated. If anyone else in any other pop group wants to go and do that, that's great. But I've forged a career that suits me pretty well. I've had reasonable commercial success and reasonable artistic satisfaction.

MODERN MUSIC

I don't listen to much new music.

When I have the radio on it all sounds dreadfully formulaised to me, but I'm not its audience. Obviously there are whole layers of music away from what we get on the radio and telly. It's like that thing they say about rats: 'You're never more than six feet away from a rat in London'; you're probably never more than a hundred yards from someone doing a great gig somewhere, but I'm just not aware of it. If a new Pink Floyd came along now I wouldn't know it had happened.

LEGACY

Obviously I accept there are people who want to go and see and hear this legend that was Pink Floyd, but I'm afraid that's not my responsibility. Been there, done that. To me it's just two words that tie together the work that four people did together. It's just a pop group. I don't need it. I don't need to go there. I'm not being coy or difficult, I just think that at my age I should do whatever I really want to do in life. But I'm thrilled that each new generation that comes along seems to latch on to us, and we

PIGS MIGHT FLY
Gilmour reunited with Waters at Live 8

get a fresh bunch of followers and listeners as the years tick by. Though I don't quite know what's made it work for us that way when it doesn't for quite a lot of other people.

WHY PINK FLOYD'S MUSIC STILL MATTERS

Quality. Universal themes. I can understand it. It's good stuff. People listen to Neil Young and Joni Mitchell the same way. We're in a fine, select group – it's great for every new generation to investigate. I'm happy to be considered part of it. Our music has depth, and attempts philosophical thought and meaning with discussions of infinity, eternity and mortality. There is a line which people cross that turns it into some magical, mystical realm, for which I don't claim responsibility – and don't hold any great truck with.

LIFE AFTER PINK FLOYD

I've had a life in Pink Floyd for a lot of years, and those years in what is now considered to be our heyday were ninety-five per cent musically fulfilling and joyous and full of fun and laughter. And I certainly don't want to let the other five per cent colour my view of what was a long and fantastic time together. I'm all for Roger doing whatever he wants to do and enjoying himself and getting the joy he must have had out of those Wall shows. I'm at peace with all of these things. But I absolutely don't want to go back. I don't want to go and play stadiums... under the [group] banner. I'm free to do exactly what I want to do and how I want to do it. I don't know if it's as good as Pink Floyd or worse than Pink Floyd or better than Pink Floyd. I don't give a sh*t. It's what I want to do and it's what I will do.

THE LAST WORD...

I've had a great career. I can do it when I want to and then lay off and do all the other things that make up a life. I've done the relentless... everything-ing – which is what you have to do to fight your way through and create a career of the sort we had. I don't need or want it any more. It's fine. No regrets. Nothing – almost nothing – but great memories. I've done it. And I'm happy with it.

"The solo in Comfortably Numb is actually a first take!"

INSIDE THE WORLD OF DAVID GILMOUR AND
PINK FLOYD, BY PRODUCER **BOB EZRIN**

Interview Paul Elliott

W

hen Pink Floyd recorded their classic double album *The Wall*, producer Bob Ezrin watched as David Gilmour played what is arguably his greatest solo in *Comfortably Numb*. It was, as he now recalls, a magical moment that still gives him chills.

Ezrin made his name as a producer with a string of albums that made Alice Cooper a superstar in the early 70s. In that decade he also worked with Lou Reed and Kiss, before taking on the monumental task of co-producing *The Wall* in 1979. Five years later he reunited with David Gilmour for the guitarist's second solo album *About Face*, and their understanding led to Ezrin co-producing all three studio albums from Pink Floyd's post-Roger Waters era: *A Momentary Lapse of Reason* (1987), *The Division Bell* (1994) and *The Endless River* (2014). More recently he has continued working with Alice Cooper and fellow rock legends Deep Purple.

Speaking to TG, he offers his insight into the making of *The Wall* and Gilmour's role in it. He describes the unique atmosphere of recording Floyd on the guitarist's houseboat Astoria. And he assesses the special qualities which, in his words, make David Gilmour the greatest guitar player of them all.

When did you first become aware of Pink Floyd?

I was introduced to Floyd by the members of the Alice Cooper band when I first worked with them in Detroit in 1971. They had two favourite bands. One was Pink Floyd and the other was T. Rex. So I really became aware of Pink Floyd through the album *Atom Heart Mother*, and later, like everybody else in the world, I was entranced with *The Dark Side of the Moon*. That was a transformative record for me.

In what way?

It showed me how powerful four people could be if what they were playing was great – and they were recorded properly. Everything about that record was wonderful – the sound effects, the vocals and especially the guitar. Every time the guitar appeared it was like a unique sonic statement and a powerful musical moment. *The Dark Side of the Moon* made me think that I'd really love to work with that band...

BEHIND THE WALL

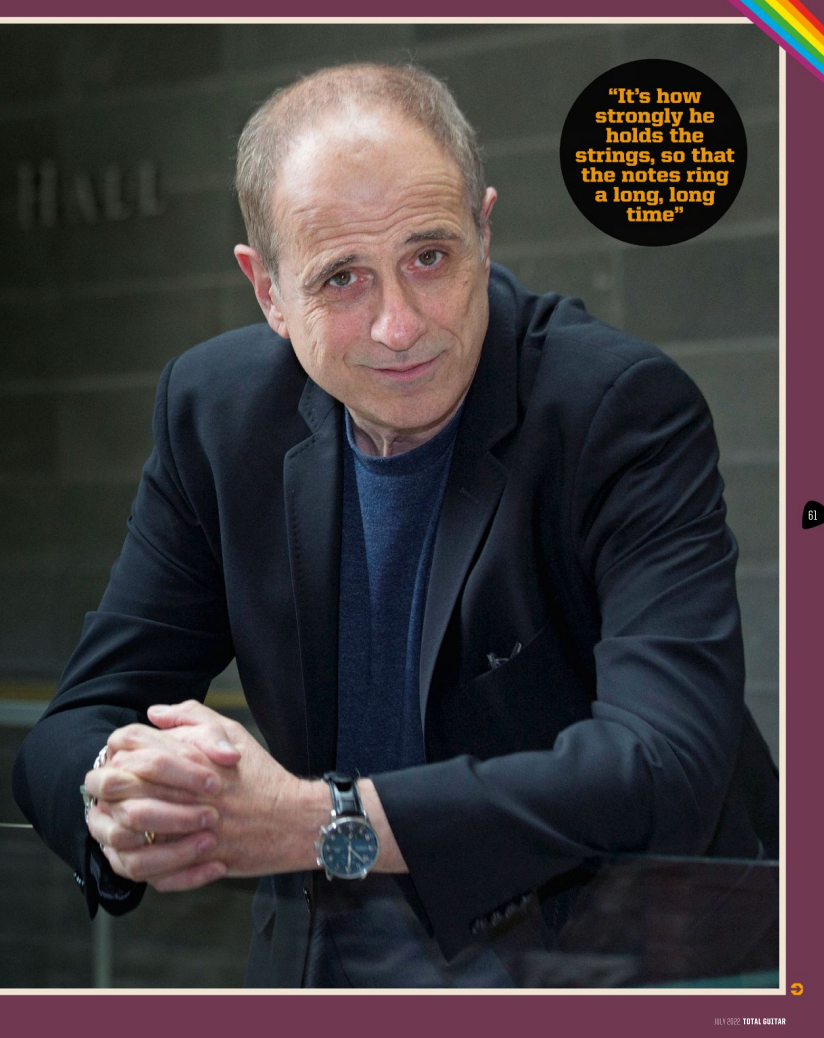
Pink Floyd insider
Bob Ezrin (right)

Your wish came true when you acted as co-producer of *The Wall*. Roger Waters, Floyd's bassist, lyricist and co-lead vocalist, was that album's architect-in-chief. How important was David Gilmour's role?

It's impossible for me to imagine *The Wall* without *Comfortably Numb*, without *Run Like Hell*, without David's voice, without that amazing guitar. So I feel like his contribution to the project was elemental and essential. It's one of the reasons why I fought for as much David Gilmour as I could possibly get on the record. That's not to say that Roger Waters isn't brilliant and didn't do a fabulous job on so much of that album, but if we had left it the way it was originally, it would have been a Roger Waters solo record and not a Pink Floyd album. It was important to me that David be prominent, and [keyboard player] Rick Wright, too, so that it felt like Pink Floyd.

You mentioned *Comfortably Numb*, on which David played two epic solos. What do you remember about the recording of this track?

The second solo in *Comfortably Numb*,



**"It's how
strongly he
holds the
strings, so that
the notes ring
a long, long
time"**

which may be the best solo of all time, is actually a first take. It was so powerful when I heard it and saw him play it, it literally brought tears to my eyes – and it has many times since then. Even though this is a record that I participated in, and by all rights by now should be fairly dry for me, that moment is still, for me, one of the most emotional moments in all of music. So that's what he played first, and then we spent a lot of time – scores of takes – trying to make it better. And it never got better. It was always that first moment of inspiration that produced the magic.

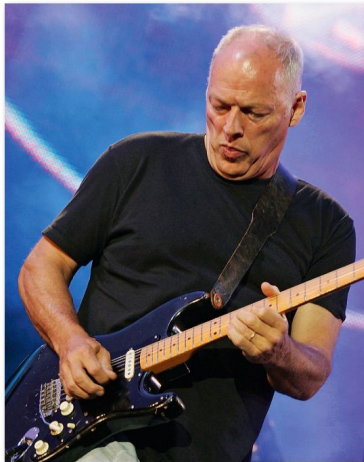
The album's big hit single, *Another Brick In The Wall Part 2*, also had a killer solo from David.

By the time we recorded *Another Brick In The Wall Part 2*, I had learned that David was very good on a first take. I had a sound set up for him, but I kind of lied a little bit. I said, 'David, can I just run the ending of the song so I can set up a sound for you?' So I let the song run, and of course I recorded it, and that solo that's on *Another Brick In The Wall Part 2* is exactly what he played. Just like that, off the top of his head. It was so good I decided: 'We're not touching it. We're gonna let it go all the way to the very end.'

When you worked again with Floyd on *A Momentary Lapse Of Reason* and *The Division Bell*, you recorded on David's houseboat Astoria.

How was that different to a regular studio?

Working on Astoria was inspiring, magical, other-worldly – separated from the mundane parts of our lives. You walked on to that property like going through the door of a magic garden, and I think that really informed the projects that we did there. Being able to look out the window on to the River Thames, it brought a kind of a liquid essence to the projects that we did there. You feel the river, the atmosphere of the Thames in



the autumn when it's grey and every so often the sun breaks through.

Astoria has a long history...

It's a 100-foot Victorian barge that was once the private tryst shack for Fred Karno, the famous impresario who developed the West End in London. He and his pals like Charlie Chaplin used to go down there when they wanted to get away from their wives or significant others and have dalliances from young ingenues from their various projects in the West End. The boat is beautifully appointed, and where David bought it, it was in fairly good nick. The idea was to put a studio in it without

changing it. I credit Phil Taylor [Gilmour's guitar tech] and the team that was around in those days with making it work. In the recording room the setup was drums in one corner,

keyboards along one wall and guitar amps on the far wall facing the bow of the boat.

Was it difficult to operate on Astoria in what was a fairly limited space?

If you think about how much room there might be on a 100-foot long boat, we weren't dealing with any really big spaces, but even so, the records we made in there, I think, sound huge. I think a lot of that comes using delays and reverbs to create space all around. It inspired us to try new things and make things sound as large and powerful as we could hear them in our heads.

You've worked closely with David for so many years. What makes him so unique as a player?

It's a combination of things. First and foremost, he has an innate musicality that's informed by the blues. So he's incredibly lyrical and melodic, and all his melodic structures are built on a blues foundation. And that makes them really soulful. Aside from that he has a majesty of tone, and that comes from the combination of his slow vibrato and his really precise picking and how strongly he holds the strings, so that the notes ring a long, long time. Add to that an amazing instinct for what's going to work where, and you end up with one of the greatest guitar players of all time. For me, the bottom line about David Gilmour is you could give him a ukulele and a Pignose amp and he'd still make it sound majestic and beautiful and stirring. It's in the fingers, ultimately, and he has an exquisite left hand. He massages the music out of the guitar. And also his right hand – the combination of picking and the occasional use of the tremolo bar, again it's kind of caressing the instrument and pulling the sound of it. It's a unique style. He doesn't pound the sound into the guitar – he pulls the sound out of the guitar. And that's an art form in and of itself. I've had the privilege of working with some truly great guitar players in my career, but I have to say that David Gilmour is my favourite of all of them, and I'm sure I'm not alone in that.

SOFT TOUCH

"David massages the music out of the guitar," Ezrin says.

"David has an innate musicality and a majesty of tone"

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In The Flesh

TG's in-depth analysis of Gilmour's playing techniques will help you tackle his greatest riffs and solos

Words Jon Bishop Photos Phil Barker

David Gilmour's lead style is a fusion of electric blues phrasing and rock guitar techniques, with an emphasis on string bending, whammy bar vibrato and a soulful touch, all delivered with unmatched taste and feel. To help you get inside his

style, here we take a look at his playing techniques. Small details such as fret- and pick-hand position all contribute to his signature style. We've tabbed some Gilmour-style licks for you on p67, so treat this initial section as a primer for the music that follows. If you can mimic Gilmour's technique, you'll get closer to his trademark feel.



1 PICK GRIP

David uses a traditional pick grip between his thumb and first finger. He veers between a 'flat on' position and a 45 degree angle, the latter giving more bite – ideal for occasional pinched harmonics.



2 PICK-HAND ANCHORING

David has a relaxed and free-moving picking motion. Occasionally, he'll rest his fingers on the scratchplate, just below the first string, for stability and a reference point for his pick hand.



3 STRING BENDING

David's bending technique is a simple approach employed by many players. Typically he'll add his first and second fingers behind finger three, with the thumb anchored against the top of the neck for grip.



4 WHAMMY BAR GRIP

Gilmour's tremolo arm use can be summarised like so: whammy bar vibrato – a lot; tone and semitone dips – quite frequent; wide interval dives – occasionally. He'll often hold the arm while picking the strings.



5 THUMB-OVER-THE-NECK CHORDS

David often uses his thumb to fret the bass string, freeing up his fingers to play the top part of the chord. Typically the fifth string isn't used with this kind of shape and will need to be muted.



6 SECOND FINGER TAPPING

Though he only occasionally employs the technique, typically David will tap using his second finger so that he doesn't have to make any adjustments with his pickrum, and he can quickly return to picking.



7 SCALE PLAYING

When soloing, David's thumb is generally rested on the back of the neck towards the top. This positions his hand so that he can rely mainly on his first, second and third fingers, with his fourth coming into play only occasionally.



8 DOUBLESTOPS

David often beefs up his lead work with doublestops played with his first or third fingers. Almost any pair of strings can work as a doublestop if you are using a minor pentatonic box shape.



Bend It Like Gilmour

TG breaks down Gilmour's huge four- and five-fret string bends from *Another Brick In The Wall*

Words Chris Bird Photos Phil Barker

Notable for David Gilmour's slick outro solo, *Another Brick In The Wall (Part 2)* is one of Pink Floyd's best-loved songs. And, though Gilmour's style and tone are silky smooth, listen closely at 2:13 and 2:31 and you'll hear a couple of physics-defying string-

bend licks. Spanning four- and five-fret intervals, you can expect to snap an occasional string playing these huge bends, even Gilmour himself tends to improvise in live performances rather than risk his strings with a straight copy of these troublesome licks. Read on as we break down David's string-bend technique.

FOUR-SEMITONE BEND



Starting with your third finger at the 13th fret, the first bend is an easy two-semitone articulation from the 13th fret C note to D.



Starting from the two-semitone bend (D note), bend two more frets up to E. The trick is to back off the first bend slightly before the big push up to E.

FOUR-SEMITONE BEND LICK

BIT.LY/TGSS9AUDIO

BU BD BU BD

13 (15) (13)(17) (13)

The little grace note is a crucial part of our lick. It is the point where you back off the initial bend and push harder into the full four-fret move. Notice that you pick only the first note – all the other notes are generated with string bends.

FIVE-SEMITONE BEND



As before, work through the four-fret bend line from C to D, then E (the 13th, 15th and 17th frets).



Back off your four-fret bend ever so slightly ready for the huge push. This is a key part of Gilmour's phrasing



There's nothing left but to give it everything and push all the way up to F. We have no advice – just go for it!

FIVE-SEMITONE BEND LICK

BIT.LY/TGSS9AUDIO

BU BD BU BD BU

13 (15) (13)(17) (15)(18)

Our lick spells out the notes: CDEF – a full five frets. Once again the grace notes tell you to partly release one bend before pushing up to the next for the trademark Gilmour phrasing. Get the four-fret C-D-E bend steady and controlled before attempting this potential string-snapper.

GET THE SOUND

Get your tone sorted and you should find these tough licks a bit easier. Mild overdrive and plenty of compression will give you the smooth sustain you need to make the bends sing. Reverb (and, if you like David's later live sound, delay) will make your sound richer and give the illusion of lengthening those string bends. Select a neck position single-coil pickup on a Strat for authentic Gilmour tones.



CAREFUL WITH THAT AXE, EUGENE

These huge bends do snap strings, especially during repeated practice. We recommend tuning down a semitone, maybe even a tone, and using light gauge strings (0.008 or 0.009 gauge) while you hone your skills.

Gilmourish

Try your hand at the lead style of the godfather of the melodic solo, David Gilmour

Guitars B backing Jon Bishop Photography Phil Barker

Perhaps more than any other player, David Gilmour is the epitome of the lead guitarist who plays melodically and 'for the song'. Though primarily a player with blues sensibilities, Pink Floyd's progressive nature would see the younger Gilmour become an experimenter both sonically and melodically. Listen to Floyd's recorded output, particularly from 1973's *Dark Side*

Of The Moon, nary a note is misplaced, every note counts and every phrase has a purpose. And, though none of us has Gilmour's musical ear, we can all learn from the way he approaches playing the guitar and writing songs. From his signature bending technique to his sublime note choice and phrasing there's plenty in our lesson for you to try out. And once you've had a go at our lesson, why not try writing some of your own Gilmour-style licks?

ESSENTIAL SCALES



D minor pentatonic



D Dorian



G major pentatonic

Here, we're looking at a handful of David's most used scales. Get to grips with the shapes and you'll get a better understanding of his note choice and phrasing. First up is the

minor pentatonic scale (shown here in D), which David uses to create those blues-influenced lead lines. To add some sophisticated colour to the pentatonic sound he'll often

add E and B notes – creating the cooler, sweeter sounding Dorian mode. Our acoustic example is in the key of G major so the G major pentatonic will work here.

1 SPACEY ARPEGGIOS

BIT.LV/TG359AUDIO

$\text{♩} = 48$

Dm⁷ **Dm¹³** **Dm⁷** **Dm¹³** **Dm⁹** *Play 4 times*

let ring throughout

cont. sim.

We start with some spacey arpeggios, as heard in classic Floyd songs like *Us And Them* and *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*. Using alternate picking may feel a little unnatural at first but it helps to maintain an even feel, especially at the slow tempo of our example.

2 CLEAN-TONE SOLOING

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

♩ = 48

Dm7

w/bar

w/bar

BU BU

13-13(15)

10-12(14)

Dm13

Play 4 times

7-10-7

10-12-12(14)-(12)-10

12

The key to clean tone solos such as *Another Brick In The Wall, Pt. 2* is to select the neck pickup and dial in a fair amount of compression for extra smoothness and sustain. Pick lightly near the end of the fretboard for a fat, expressive tone.



3 PENTATONIC SCALES WITH ADDED NOTES

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

♩ = 48

Dm⁷ w/bar

Dm¹³ w/bar

Play 4 times

10-13

BU w/bar

12-13

RP BD

(13-12-10)

BU w/bar

13-15-13

10-13

BU w/bar

12-13

10

BU BD

12-10 9 (10|9)

10-13

T

A

B

David uses the good old minor pentatonic scale as the backbone of many of his solos, adding the odd extra note for colour. We're using the D minor pentatonic scale here with major 2nd (E) and major 6th (B) intervals added. These notes can also be tasteful points to bend the string from.

4 FUNKY DOUBLESTOPS

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

Using doublestops (two notes at once) is a great way to introduce a little funky punctuation to proceedings, and it's an approach Gilmour uses frequently. Check out *Another Brick In The Wall, Pt. 2* at about 2:21 for a typical example of his phrasing. Our lick shows some of David's typical shapes.

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

A fuzz pedal can be used to add a crazy amount of sustain. David used this effect to create the soaring solos in songs like *Time* and *Comfortably Numb*.

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

With their trademark drawn-out drawling sound, unison bends feature heavily in David's lead style. Our example should give you the general idea. In each case, bend the third string until it reaches the pitch of un-bent note fretted on the second string. Vibrato is the icing on the cake.



BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

Run Like Hell from *The Wall* is one of David's signature dotted eighth note delay moments. For our simpler example we've set a tempo of 120 bpm with, therefore, a delay time of 375ms. For the full *Run Like Hell* effect, keep the number of repeats (aka feedback) fairly high for a cascading, layered sound.

♩ = 110

Play 4 times

BU 15 (18) 13 BU 15-15 (18) BU BD 14- (16) (17) 10-12-10 12

We've already shown you on p66 how David executes those huge wide-interval bends in tracks such as *Another Brick In The Wall, Pt. 2* and *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*, but now it's your turn to try it out over our backing track. We've stuck to three-semitone bends here, but you could try a four-semitone bend in bar 2 if you're feeling brave.



9 WHAMMY BAR USE

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

♩ = 110

D⁵ *w/ bar*

C⁵ Scoop Scoop Scoop Scoop

T *BU* *w/ bar* Scoop Scoop Scoop Scoop

B 13 15 10 13 13 10 13 13 10 13 13 10 13 13 10 13

F⁵ Scoop *w/ bar* **C⁵** *w/ bar* Play 4 times

T Scoop *w/ bar* Scoop *w/ bar*

B 13 10 12 10 10 12 10

One of David's signature sounds is the addition of vocal-like whammy bar vibrato on string bends and long held notes. He also uses the bar for 'scoops',

10 ACOUSTIC LEAD

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

♩ = 65

G

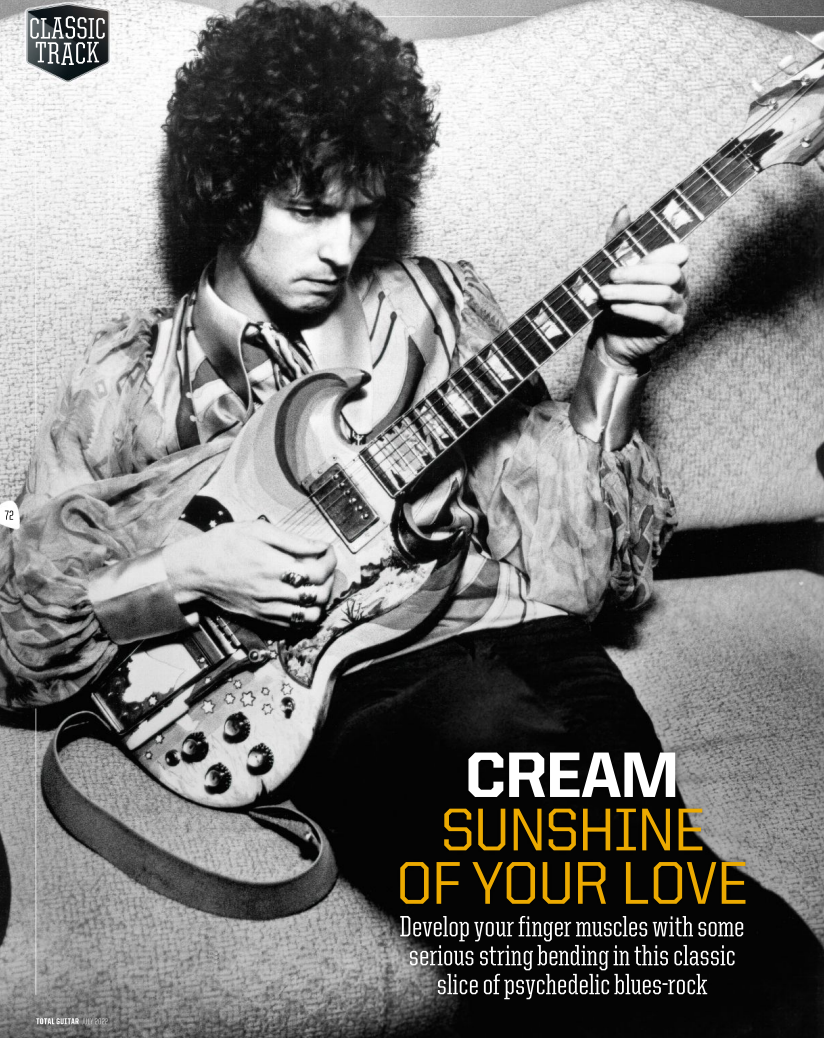
Cadd9

Play 4 times

BU BU BU

8 10 (12) 10 8 10 (12) 10 12 10 8 10 12 10

David is no stranger to the acoustic guitar and used it to great effect for songs like *Wish You Were Here* and *Lost For Words*. As with many of Gilmour's melodic ideas, simplicity is the key here.



CREAM SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE

Develop your finger muscles with some serious string bending in this classic slice of psychedelic blues-rock

This was one of two singles from Cream's second and most critically acclaimed album, 1967's *Disraeli Gears*. While Eric Clapton's iconic intro riff is instantly recognisable, *Sunshine Of Your Love*'s solo is arguably of even more interest to guitarists.

Generally, Clapton uses the D minor pentatonic and blues scales in the solo (following the form of the verse and chorus). He also includes notes from the D major pentatonic scale, particularly F#, a major 3rd interval, which provides contrast and a bluesy edge against the minor scales.

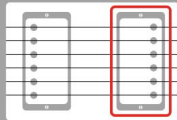
Clapton plays many string bends in his solo, including a run of extreme bends in bar 8. The widest stems from a 9th fret E on the third string, rising five whole semitones to A. You could cheat here and bend up from the 12th fret instead, following up with bends from the 11th fret in bar 9. This helps you maintain Clapton's feel and phrasing in a solo that he rarely, if ever, plays the same. It'll also save your strings!

GET THE SOUND

Everything you need to know before playing 'Sunshine Of Your Love'

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL OVERDRIVE

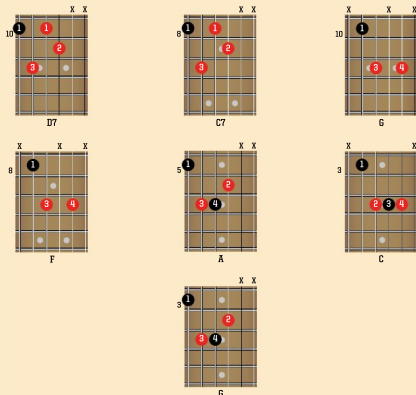


Use a neck position humbucker and roll off most of your guitar's tone.

Clapton used a 1964 Gibson SG into 100-watt Marshall JTM45 amps with 4x12 cabs. Typically, he'd wind down his guitar's tone knob close to zero, but crank the amp controls (volume and tone) to ear-splitting maximum levels – the secret of his renowned late-60s "woman tone". Shown here are the settings we used on our recorded version, but you could try maxing the tone controls on your amp provided you have separate master and gain controls to balance overall volume and drive levels.

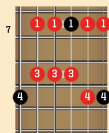
CHORDS

Clapton uses a simple selection of shapes in *Sunshine*, all based on familiar barre chords. He makes things a bit easier for himself by playing four strings at a time instead of five or six. If you've played through the first four bars of the intro you should be able to hear that the chord progression matches this opening melodic riff.



SCALES

The solo is based mostly on these two scales, with the major shape appearing mostly in the first half and the minor in the latter part. It's worth playing through the scales before tackling the solo. You'll gain insight into Clapton's note choice and get a feel for the slightly brighter, less bluesy sound in the first half.



D major pentatonic scale



D minor pentatonic scale

CREAM

SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE

SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE
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CREAM SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE Intro

BIT.LY/T6359AUD10

$\text{♩} = 116$
N.C.

1 12 12 10 12 12 11 10 8 10 10 10 12 12 10 12 12 11 10 10 8 10 X

cont. sim.

D7 C7 D7 N.C.

10 11 11 9 11 12 10 12 12 11 10 12 10 12 0 11 11 9 10 12 10 12 12 11 10 12 10 12 0

Fret the initial 12th fret D note with your third finger and the 10th fret C with your first finger. Move down two frets on beat 2 of bar 2 so your third finger plays the 10th fret D. Lift your fingers off the fretboard to mute the strings for the staccato hits in bar 5 and for all the rests.

CREAM SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE Verse

BIT.LY/T6359AUD10

D7 C7 D7 N.C.

0:17 11 11 9 11 12 10 12 12 11 10 12 10 12 0 11 11 9 10 12 10 12 12 11 10 12 10 12 0

1

G F G N.C.

12 12 10 12 12 10 12 12 11 10 10 8 10 10

3



75

BIT.LY/TG359AUDIO

Bars 1 to 2 repeat the riff from the last two bars of the intro, so the same guidelines apply. Fret the G and F chords in bar 3 with your first, third and fourth fingers. Mute the third string with your first finger by simply touching the string instead of barring right across.

BIT.LY/T6359AUDIO

[illegible]

Use all four fingers to fret these standard barre chords. Use upstrokes for the 16th note strums, but downstrokes for all the rest. Lift your fingers just off the fretboard to silence the strings on the staccato chords and muted hits (marked 'X' in the tab).

CREAM SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE Solo

BTT.LV/TGSS9AUDIO10

2:00

D⁷ C⁷ D⁷ N.C.

PB 12

PB 12

T BU BU

A 12 (14) 12 (14)

B 12 (14) 12 (14) 10 12 (14)

1

D⁷ C⁷ D⁷ N.C.

3

let ring - - - - -

T BU BD

A 9 (11) (11) (9) 7 9 7 10 9 (11) 7

B BU 7 9 7 10 (11) (9) (11) 10 9 (11) BU BD BU BU

4

D⁷ C⁷ D⁷ N.C.

G⁷ F⁷ G⁷ N.C.

T BD

A (9) 7 9 7

B BU BU BU BU BU

9 (13) 9 (14) 9 (13) 9 (12) 9 (12) 9 (10) 7

7

G⁷ F⁷ G⁷ N.C.

PB 9

T BU BU

A 9 (11) 9 7 9 (11)

B 7 9 7 (10) 9 7 9 (11) 9 (12) 9 (11) 7 9

10

D⁷ C⁷ D⁷ N.C.

D⁷ C⁷ D⁷ N.C.

T BU

A 9 7 9 7 12 (14) 12 10 11 X 10 12 X 12 10 11

B 12 (14) 12 10 11 X 12 10 11

13

CREAM SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE Solo (cont'd)

BIT.LV/T6S59AUD10

16

10 11 12 13 14

19

10 11 12 13 14

21

12 13 14 15

23

13 14 15

Clapton 'stretches' the pulse in places, hitting notes momentarily late to create a lazy feel aided by a wide, slow vibrato. His phrasing and string bends are the key to the solo, so practise short licks one at a time and use these ideas for the basis of your own improvised lead breaks.

BON JOVI

LIVIN' ON A PRAYER

It's time for big hair, bombastic riffing and all-out sonic excess! TG and Rockschoo! take a deep-dive into Jovi's signature track

Effortlessly merging power-pop with hair metal, *Livin' On A Prayer* brought Bon Jovi their second number 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart in 1986. With a ridiculously catchy bass riff and that Richie Sambora talk-box sound – coupled with a tale of love overcoming working-class struggle – it's no wonder that the anthem received tremendous acclaim.

Rockschoo!'s version has been arranged to capture the track's

essence, whilst being technically accessible for Grade One. In terms of the playing technique, try downstrokes with the picking hand to achieve the driving rhythms in bars 1 to 4 and 6 to 8, keeping your strumming hand close to the strings and aiming to strike only the fretted notes. You'll need to practise moving from this position to the first and second strings in bar 9, where the guitar part plays the vocal melody. Again, try to focus on avoiding any idle strings.



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BON JOVI LIVIN' ON A PRAYER

BIT.LY/TG55AUDIO

♩ = 112
E5



FULL TRACK + BACKING (BIT.LY/T6359AUDIO)
This song comes with a full demo track and backing track.
Enter the above link into your web browser of choice
on your play and jam along guitars style!

BON JOVI / LIVIN' ON A PRAYER

BON JOVI LIVIN' ON A PRAYER

BIT.LY/T6359AUDIO

Chords: C⁵, D⁵, E⁵

Tab: 5, 7, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0

Chords: E⁵, D⁵, C⁵

Tab: 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2

Chords: C⁵, D⁵

Tab: 0, 0, 0, 3, 3, 3, 3, 0, 3, 3, 0, 0, 5, 7, 5, 0

Chords: E⁵, D⁵, C⁵, D⁵

Tab: 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 7, 5, 5, 7, 5

Chords: E⁵, C⁵, D⁵, G⁵, C⁵

Tab: 2, 0, 0, 5, 0, 5, 7, 5, 0, 5, 5, 0

20

22

24

27

30

Watch out for the offbeat chords in the pre-chorus and chorus (bars 13 and 17, for example) - these rhythms are crucial to the impact of the song. You can practise these either with a click track, or by listening to our full track and playing along to build your confidence. The guitar mimics the first half of the bass riff in each bar (bars 25 to 28), and it's important that you mute the guitar strings where the rests are shown (in beats 3 and 4 of each bar).



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OPEN-MIC SONGBOOK

U2
WITH OR WITHOUT YOU

Confused by delay pedals? Learn this 80s classic that creates killer riffs from tempo-matched delay settings

Appearing on U2's mega-selling fifth album *The Joshua Tree*, *With Or Without You* was a huge hit, dominating charts worldwide. Consisting of a continuously looped four-bar chord progression, the song was a showcase for The Edge's rhythm-based delay effects. Whether you're using a pedal, a setting on your amp, or a virtual effect, you'll need to sync your delay to the tempo of the backing track (110bpm). This can be achieved two

ways: either by setting your delay to a dotted eighth note repeat then using 'tap' to input the tempo (not all delay effects have this option); or by setting the delay time to approximately 408–410 milliseconds. Next, set the feedback (the number of repeats) to 25–30% and your delay mix (between the 'wet' and 'dry' signal) to 50%. The resulting effect is hypnotic and very addictive, so why not experiment and create some killer riffs of your own?



CHORDS

There is no rhythm guitar on the original recording but it's the kind of song that's easily strummed along to. Just use the D, A, Bm and G shapes shown here.



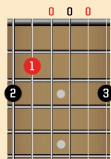
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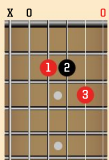
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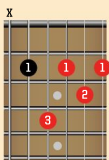
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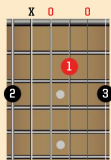
G



Asus4



Bm7



Gadd9

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THE GAS STATION

REAL WORLD REVIEWS OF THE
BEST NEW GEAR

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

HOW WE TEST

CURATION

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

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

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PLATINUM AWARD

Reserved for the very best of the best, TG's Platinum Awards are given to class-leading, gamechanging products that score a maximum 5 stars in every category.



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86 YAMAHA RSS02T

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A new, updated version of the classic multi-footswitch delay pedal

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A new benchmark?

94 WALRUS AUDIO SLÖTVÅ

2022: A Reverb Odyssey

★★★★ SUPERB, A BEST BUY

★★★★ EXCELLENT

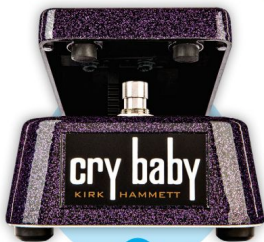
★★★★ ABOVE AVERAGE KIT

★★★ SOME ISSUES

★★★ POOR



03



04



01



02



05

START ME UP!

Five awesome new products to get your gear engine revving this month...

RITTER 2022 GIGBAGS

1 Gigbag giant, Ritter has revamped its range for 2022 with no fewer than six new product lines. Starting at £17.95 for the Fins series, featuring 5mm padding to the front, back and top, with 10mm on the sides, the collection peaks with the Arosa line (starting at £107.95), equipped with 33mm padding all round, four pockets, aircraft hanger, reflective stripping and more. There's a raft of bags across the range for everything from classical guitars to V and X-shaped models, plus dual electric guitar bags.

www.ritter-bags.com

LEHLE MONO VOLUME S

2 This volume pedal's mechanism design will not wear down, and is now a smaller, lighter footprint for your board. Lehle say it's also louder. Like the company's other volume pedals, it features magnet sensor VCA technology for precise control and durable use and features a 'high-end preamp' with discrete Class-A input stage and a dynamic range of 120 dB. It also has switchable presets for different boost stages up to +12 dB and calibration via USB-C.

£225

www.lehle.com

EARTHQUAKER DEVICES SPECIAL CRANKER

3 Another overdrive hits the market, but can ever have enough? We can't, and the way Earthquaker are pitching this new version of its old previously Japan-only favourite is reeling us in. EQD founder Jamie Stillman's favourite drive pedal ever, and he's not a man prone to mere hyperbole. The original pedal's More control is joined by controls for Level and Tone, plus a two-way mini-toggle for selecting silicon or germanium clipping. So more good stuff, then.

\$99

www.earthquakerdevices.com

DUNLOP KH95X KIRK HAMMETT CRY BABY WAH

4 The second signature Cry Baby for Metallica's master of treadles ups the bling as a companion to one of Hammett's favourite guitars. "I always feel a great energy when I play my purple sparkle Dujia guitar," says the guitarist. "I thought it would make a killer, sonically spiritual connection to have a pedal with that same outwards vibe." Sonically, it aims for an 'arresting' midrange as with a heady top end.

£209

www.jimdunlop.com

D'ADDARIO X5 ELECTRIC STRINGS

5 After acoustic success, the US company's latest coated strings have now been released in five electric gauges and promise longer life with a smoother feel. To deliver it the focus was on making the string coating extremely thin to minimise the dampening effect on vibrations; just 1/10 of the thickness of a human hair, followed by an extensive testing process to make sure they delivered. The sets are available in gauges 9-46, 9-46, 10-46, 10-52 and 11-49.

£16.99 a set

www.daddario.com



YAMAHA RSS02T £649

Yamaha's Revstar range gets a serious makeover and much more

Back in 2015, Yamaha took the wraps off its Revstar range, their first new electric guitar design in over a decade. It involved substantial R&D, not to mention worldwide evaluation sessions with industry insiders and artists, and the final designs mixed up Yamaha's long guitar history with a dash of motorcycle 'café racer' heritage and a flavouring of Japanese craft styles.

Seven years on, here is the Revstar Mk II. Outwardly similar in style these are far from a refresh: the new guitars amount to a substantial redesign. There are fewer models, too (nine in total, including two left-handed models), and the range is split into three levels: the start up Element, the meat-and-potatoes Standard, as with our reviewed RSS02T, both

mahogany neck is glued to the body but again hidden from view are two carbon graphite reinforcing rods either side of the truss rod to, primarily, increase stability. The Revstar's original neck shape from the 500-series models upwards is changed here to a less chunky profile with a slightly narrower nut along with a satin finish to the neck back.

So while the basic chassis has actually evolved quite dramatically, the updates don't stop there. The frets remain jumbo in size but are now stainless steel on this and the Professional models. The custom tailpiece is retained from the original version, although now it's nickel-plated, and it remains very much part of the 'café racer' style. It is slightly adjustable in height to introduce a trapeze tailpiece-like response.

“YAMAHA'S REVSTAR HAS A NEW LEASE OF LIFE”

made in Indonesia, and the top-level Japanese-made Professional.

Pulling our RSS02T from its quality gigbag, it appears very similar to the previous style but the changes start with that double-cut body shape which here is slightly enlarged in size. It's also a chambered design with a thin maple cap all hidden under the faultless gloss finish. Chambering can be used to reduce weight but here it's about improving the resonance and response informed by Yamaha's Acoustic Design process. Our sample has a very mainstream 'solidbody' weight of 3.55kg (7.81lb).

Like the original Revstar, the Mk II models centre on a Gibson-esque scale length of 24.75", the

Also retained here are the dual soapbar single coils, designed by Yamaha Guitar Development and made by pickup giants G&B, but there are plenty of changes to the actual electronics. Firstly, there's now a five-way lever pickup selector which gives us bridge, both and neck in positions 1, 3 and 5. Then in positions 2 and 4 two small capacitors come into play "to shift the phase of the pickup slightly (not like the typical out-of-phase sound) and create a taste of a 'half-tone' sound when they're mixed," explains Yamaha's Takashi Yamashiro.

The Mk II range also introduces another new feature called the Focus Switch. Described as a 'passive boost', if you take off the rear control cavity cover

1 CONSTRUCTION CHANGES

At this mid-level, the new Standard includes virtually all of the upgrades of the much more expensive Professional model. So, we get a body that's chambered, stainless steel frets, graphite neck reinforcement and a new, more mainstream neck profile with a satin finish.

2 PICKUPS & WIRING

The soapbar pickups here are one of the few elements of the design that hasn't changed. This new model features some tricky wiring on the five-way lever selector switch plus a new Focus Switch's passive boost.

3 CUSTOM TAILPIECE

The custom tailpiece appears on this model and gives Revstar a very distinct style. You can screw it flat to the body for a more stud tailpiece-type response or raise it to give a subtle shift that's more like the response from a trapeze tailpiece.

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Chambered mahogany w/ thin maple cap

NECK: Mahogany with carbon graphite reinforcement; glued-in

SCALE: 24.75" (629mm)

FINGERBOARD: Rosewood/12" radius

FRETS: 22, jumbo stainless steel

PICKUPS: Two YGD-designed VP5 soapbar single coils

CONTROLS: Master volume, tone (with pull/push 'Focus Switch' boost), five-way lever pickup selector switch

HARDWARE: Tune-o-matic-style bridge, custom tailpiece, die-cast enclosed tuners - nickel-plated

FINISH: Black (as reviewed), Hot Merlot, Sunset Burst, Swift Blue

CONTACT: Yamaha, uk.yamaha.com





Revstar Range

Let's take a quick peek at the rest of the Mk II Revstars...

The trimmed down range starts with the RSE20 Element at £399. These feature the same chambered body but without the maple cap, and there's no stainless steel frets or graphite reinforcement in the neck. Both use new VH3 covered humbuckers but with three-way lever switching and the original Dry Switch, a single coil emulation. Our Standard model also comes as the RSS20 with a stud tailpiece and twin VH5 humbuckers, but otherwise features the same specs. The Professional models include further graphite reinforcement in the body plus Yamaha's Initial Response Acceleration (I.R.A.) treatment: the twin humbucker RSP20 and RSP20X plus the dual soapbar RSP02T. All cost £1,599 including a case.



you'll see a small transformer inside your guitar! "We found that by passing the signal through a transformer, the level could be increased a little bit without a battery," continues Takashi, "and also shift the frequency range. It could give an effect as if the pickup is over-wound."

Plugging in and playing the result of all this original design and second-generation twerkery we get the impression that Revstar has come of age. The changes to the neck alone create a really good

player with effortlessly smooth string bends. Going through the pickup selections we have a pretty humbucking sounding array at the bridge and neck (power with a little cut), which, as you pull down the volume control, turns to cleaner jangle while those subtly phase-shifted mix positions certainly emulate the character of a Strat's mixed pickup positions. It's like Revstar has a new lease of life. The Focus Switch certainly boosts the lower and mid frequencies, rounding out the high end for

a thick, Santana-esque texture. Plenty of us might be thinking we could do that with a simple pedal boost, but using the Focus Switch, creates a character shift for some pretty huge sounding gained voices or, in contrast, some thick, rounded cleans. But it's just the overall feel and these really good sounding soapbars that sway the deal for us: a guitar that punches significantly above its price point.

Dave Burtluck

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

ALSO TRY...

EPIPHONE 1961 LES PAUL SG STANDARD

£620

There's certainly some SG-like influence in the Revstar design, but Epiphone is making some cracking guitars and this one features Gibson BurstBucker 2 and 3 humbuckers and comes with a hard case.



PRS SE STANDARD 24-08

£620

Another Indonesian-made all-mahogany solidbody, the new-for-2022 Standard 24-08 features dual humbuckers that can each be switched to true single coils.



CHARVEL JOE DUPLANTIER SIGNATURE

£679

This bolt-on T-style guitar has a mahogany body and neck, plus dual graphite rod neck reinforcement and a tune-o-matic and stud tailpiece.



“...PUNCHES SIGNIFICANTLY ABOVE ITS PRICE POINT”



★ CLASSIC ★ Rock

HIGH VOLTAGE ⚡ ROCK'N'ROLL



www.classicrockmagazine.com





LINE 6 DL4 MKII

£279



A new, updated version of the classic multi-footswitch delay pedal

A revelation when it first appeared 23 years ago, the DL4 gave guitarists instant onstage access to three different delays with tap tempo. Now, Line 6 has introduced a new version that's smaller than the original but keeps its features while adding more.

Anyone who's used a DL4 will be instantly at home with the MKII as the layout hasn't changed. What has changed is that there's 15 new models direct from the HX

an expression pedal or extra footswitches. There's also an improved looper that can have its recording time expanded to several hours with a microSD card.

A whole range of delay types are onboard, covering classic tonal territory and beyond. Besides straight digital delay, there's a fine selection of models based on vintage analogue gear – Echoplex, Binson Echorec, EHX DMM etc. There's also plenty of the more off-the-wall stuff like reverse,

The more esoteric side of things has been sympathetically expanded too with the likes of harmonised delays and patterned repeats based on Euclidean rhythm algorithms, while the eclectic range of 15 reverb types massively extends the unit's sonic capability.

Creating your effects remains the same as before with standard Time, Repeats and Mix controls plus Tweak and Tweak knobs that each adjust a specific parameter for each delay type. Operation is the same, too, with three instantly accessible presets. You can, though, change the Tap footswitch to operate like a bank selector for three extra presets, plus a full 128 presets can be accessed via MIDI.

A worthy successor to the original, the MKII offers an excellent range of sounds and features to rival the contemporary competition while retaining an easy familiarity that will tempt long-time DL4 users to upgrade.

Trevor Curwen

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

THE DL-4 MKII IS A WORTHY SUCCESSOR TO THE ORIGINAL

family of effects to add to the 15 originals. Pressing the 'Legacy' button determines whether the new or old are called up by the rotary model selector switch and all 30 can now have added reverb. The pedal is now standard 9V powered so can run from a high-current pedalboard power unit if you don't want to use the supplied adapter and features a new XLR microphone input, MIDI for parameter control and preset selection, plus provision for

pitched and stereo ping-pong delays. The 15 new delays have been chosen to complement what's already there. Some are brand-new, like ADT (automatic double tracking) for a cool doubling effect, and some are related to the legacy effects, like a tweaked Boss DM-2 model with added modulation and extended max. delay time of 1.8 seconds, plus a new Space Echo model – the more familiar RE-201 to accompany the previous RE-101.

1 MODEL SELECTOR

Choose your delay model here; new ones are legended in white, the originals in green and accessed by engaging the Legacy switch.

2 TWEAK AND TWEZ KNOBS

These each adjust a parameter specific to the selected delay type – or reverb type if the Legacy switch is held down.

3 TIME/SUBDIV KNOB

Turn this to adjust the delay time or alternatively hold down the Alt/Legacy button while turning to choose a tap tempo note subdivision value.

AT A GLANCE

ORIGIN: China

TYPE: Delay pedal

FEATURES: Switchable true, buffered, or DSP bypass, 128 presets (6 available from the front panel), 30 delays, 15 reverbs, looper, Micro SD card slot, Trails on/off

CONTROLS: Model Selector, Alt/Legacy button, Time/Subdivision, Repeats, Tweak, Tweak, Mix, A, B and C footswitches, Tap footswitch, Mic level knob

CONNECTIONS:

Standard inputs L (mono) and R, standard outputs L (mono) and R, XLR mic input, MIDI In, MIDI Out/Thru, USB-C, EXP pedal / FS 9V input

POWER: Supplied 9V DC adaptor 500mA

DIMENSIONS: 235 (w) x 114 (d) x 51 mm (h)



FENDER PARAMOUNT PD-220E

£649

A new benchmark?

With all the excitement around Fender's Acoustasonic models you'd be forgiven for overlooking the company's extensive array of more traditional flat-top steel string models alongside those bold hybrids. The Paramount series is especially one to watch, and we feel it's perhaps the company's most underrated line. Back in 2017 we were impressed by the first Paramount mahogany models we tried and felt they stood up to anything in their electro-acoustic £500 bracket. They even included a hard case.

Nearly five years later and a hard case is still included here on this enhanced model, but the acoustic market as a whole has gone from strength to strength; the quality you can get for your money nowadays continues to astound us. Does Fender's latest Paramount dreadnought stand up in this contemporary context?

This 2022 mahogany model offers offset X-bracing for optimised resonance and looks more refined than before (read: higher end). Rather than natural mahogany stain for the top we have an Aged Cognac Burst, plus a matte black headstock. It wears its very well indeed, and one again Fender shows a keen eye for pizzazz with the details. The 2017 models had a 1930s Weissenborn-style checked pattern around the body, back and soundhole, and the green, blue and red feather pattern here again looks back to the 1930s and 40s. Add in the snowflake inlays and it looks fantastic.

The guitar is a very tidy build and the aesthetic balances classy detail with the more rustic look mahogany builds can offer, alongside the comfort of a satin

neck where you can still feel the grain. This makes a really strong first impression. It's lightweight for a solid, back and sides mahogany dreadnought at 3.8lbs and the action here is relatively low for an acoustic and without any fretbuzz issues.

In our experience, mahogany acoustics tend to offer more midrange push in the tonal spectrum, and that's a great attribute to have in a mix with other instruments. If you're looking for deep bass boom and shimmering hi-fi trebles, they're not usually an obvious port of call and so it proves here, this is a quintessential mahogany dreadnought experience. It can take hard strumming and dexterous fingerpicking in its stride, with its mid and treble character clear and defined.

Like the Acoustasonic, the PD-220E finds Fender and Fishman joining forces on the pickup side of things for the undersaddle Sonitone 5 piezo pickup that can be blended with a body-sensing pickup for the top vibrations. You're limited to blend and volume controls just inside the soundhole, but comparing it to our own mahogany dread' with an original Sonitone system with our acoustic amp, it's a significant upgrade with less compression and represents the unplugged sound well.

With street prices of around £100 under the RRP, we're looking at one of the very best electro-acoustics available in this price range.

Rob Laing

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

1 FISHMAN SONITONE PLUS

The bass response is impressive but not overbearing plugged in, and blending in the transducer with the piezo adds warmth but if you're looking for more EQ control for yourself at gigs, invest in a preamp pedal or acoustic combo.

2 TUNERS

Open gear tuners work well with the 1930s vibe here.

3 POWER

A 9-volt battery powers the preamp and it's located in small fabric wallet fixed on the inside of the neck heel. It offers up to 100 hours of continuous use.



AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Electro acoustic dreadnought
BODY: Solid mahogany top, back and sides
NECK: Mahogany
SCALE LENGTH: 25.3"/643mm
NUT/WIDTH: Bone/43mm
FINGERBOARD: Ovalgkoi
FRETS: 20
TUNERS: Nickel open-back
STRING SPACING: 55mm
BRIDGE: 55mm
ELECTRICS: Fender/Fishman Sonitone Plus piezo and transducer
WEIGHT (kg/lb): 1.7/3.8
FINISHES: Satin urethane Aged Cognac Burst (as reviewed), Natural with Sitka spruce top, 3-Color Vintage Sunburst with Sitka spruce top
CASE: Fender Deluxe Black hard case included
CONTACT: Fender, www.fender.com



WALRUS AUDIO SLŌTVÅ

2022: A Reverb Odyssey



£209

If you buy pedals for instant inspiration, Walrus Audio's Slō Multi Texture Reverb was a real treat: one of the most – and we know this word is overused, but it is appropriate here – cinematic effects pedals we've ever tried. And the Slōtvā is the Slō with three programmable onboard presets. A welcome addition because this pedal has bags of potential, and you'll likely never settle on just one sound.

You can run it as a subtle, always-on hall reverb by dialling the mix back, but this is an expensive way to have that alone. Where the Slōtvā excels is its huge, otherworldly reverb via three algorithms (Dark, Rise and

Dream) with three modulation wave shapes you can apply to them (Sine, Warp and Sink). In summary, the Dark algorithm adds a lower octave to the reverb trail and it's well-named for the ominous atmospheres that it generates. The Rise algorithm adds an auto-swell, while Dream's lush reverb allows you to use the Sustain switch creatively to latch on to the signal.

In the other two modes that switch works differently, adding a reverb trail behind your playing which enables you to jam with yourself. It becomes the pedal's most addictive selling point for both solo playing and creating truly epic passages – often at

once. Detailed editing comes from the X control (its functions depend on the algorithm), a Depth control that can push the decay modulation into queasy places if you wish, with Decay and Filter shaping length and tone of reverb.

It's extremely creative, a lot of fun and yes, this pedal's over £200, but it sounds spectacular. We'd have preferred separate toggles for the algorithm and wave shapes this time, rather than dual function via holding a switch, but for the extra £20 (street) over the Slō it makes the choice a no-brainer.

Rob Laing

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



AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Multi-texture reverb pedal with sustain switch

CONTROLS: Decay, Filter, Mix, X, Depth/Rate, Algorithm / Wave Shape selector

SOCKETS: 1x input, 1x output, power

BYPASS: DSP bypass with switchable trails

POWER: 9V power supply (100mA)

CONTACT: www.walrusaudio.com

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Words: Elle Rogers Photo: Mitchell Wajack

SPICE

Hailling from San Francisco's East Bay, Spice are a rock 'n' roll unit cut from the DIY tradition. Their second full-length record *Viv* follows hot on the heels of their self-titled debut, and expands their visceral catalogue of weathered anthems to create what guitarist and founding member Ian Simpson describes as "gods rock-grunge with a pop polish."

Taking inspiration from the "big noise experience" of post-rock, Ian brings an appreciation of texture and a plethora of abstract guitar sounds to the party. "It's not very typical in rock 'n' roll,

or hardcore, or punk to have a very robust pedalboard," he says. "But I do."

Built with multiple delays, reverbs and loopers, the star of Ian's board, he says, is the Electro-Harmonix Holy Grail — although, due to relentless stomping, his has recently given up the ghost and he's in the market for a replacement. As he explains: "It has that really interesting thing where if you turn the blend up all the way, it sweeps the reverb in — like a reverse reverb kind of texture."

While his pedalboard may be chock-full of toys, Ian keeps it far simpler when it comes to guitars, depending on a single

workhorse in the form of a Mexican Fender Jazzmaster. To this, he's applied after-market upgrades — including 250k Fender Potentiometers and some handwound pickups he found on eBay — to make it more of a "tonally juicy" guitar.

This DIY spirit also translates to Ian's approach to playing and his contribution to the band's overall sound. A self-taught guitarist, he confesses to not necessarily knowing which notes he's playing at any given time, and instead, navigates the fretboard in a more instinctive way, with a focus on creating undulating soundscapes — layered with saturated reverb,

fuzzy distortion, and nuanced tremolo bar pitch alterations. "Our hearing is so sensitive," he says, "and we're very sensitive to sound and how it impacts our emotions. I think that pitch-shifting — even if it's half a cent — is more interesting to us than a flat note."

Although touring plans to support the new album are yet to be made, a Spice live show promises to pack a little more chaos than their recorded sound. "If you look at a band like Nirvana," Ian says, "they sound great on record, but they were chaotic live, and that was a part of their charm. I think that we kind of have that contrast."

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