SLASH
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Plus:
ROGER McGUINN
MICHAEL ROMEO
INTERPOL
AND MUCH MORE!

BUDDY GUY’S
BLUES EXPLOSION!

JOHNNY MARR’S
COMET RIDE!

GUITAR & BASS
TRANSCRIPTIONS
GUNS N’ ROSES
“ROCKET QUEEN”
RAGE AGAINST
THE MACHINE
“BOMBTRACK”
THE BEATLES
“WHILE MY GUITAR
GENTLY WEEPS”
(Featuring ERIC CLAPTON)

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IT STRIKES US AS NOT ONLY UNSUSTAINABLE BUT DISRESPECTFUL.
SO WE ASKED OURSELVES: WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF WE DIDN'T
LEAVE "IMPERFECT" EBONY BEHIND? TURNS OUT THE ANSWER
TO THAT QUESTION IS NOT ONLY A THING OF BEAUTY,
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At age 82, living legend Buddy Guy is still the blues' most ardent champion. In this exclusive interview, the dynamic, unpredictable guitarist talks B.B. King, Muddy Waters, Jimi Hendrix and his new album, The Blues Is Alive and Well.

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Despite being busy as hell with the reunited GNR for the past two years, Slash managed to carve out plenty of time to record a hot new album — Living the Dream — with Myles Kennedy and the Conspirators. In this GW exclusive, the cat in the hat discusses the new disc, his gear and the surreal GNR experience.

50 EFFECT PEDALS HOW-TO

In this massive Guitar World guide to effects, we offer pointers on overdrive, distortion, fuzz, chorus, delay, reverb and more — plus we explore some of the tunes that made them famous.

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We recently caught up with the prolific and eternally in-demand ex-Smiths guitarist in his private U.K. studio, the birthplace of his new solo album, Call the Comet.

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Strange Bedfellows

EDITING A MAGAZINE is a lot like casting a movie, sitcom or variety show. You have to stumble upon just the right combination of guitarists and bands to cover each month—a well-rounded cast of characters, if you will. When I consider this particular issue of GW, a mashup of Slash, Buddy Guy, Johnny Marr and Roger McGuinn, I can’t help but think of The Dead Pool, a 1988 movie that brought together a truly unlikely bunch, including Clint Eastwood, Jim Carrey, Liam Neeson and—in a very tiny role—Slash! It might’ve even been the very first time I saw Slash or heard “Welcome to the Jungle,” which is featured in the film—although it’s “performed” by Jim Carrey. I remember sitting in the theater as a young’un, watching a not-yet-famous Carrey lip-sync his way through a GNR tune, thinking, “What the hell is this?” Here’s hoping you don’t have the same reaction as you make your way through this issue!

Seriously, though, that was pretty much exactly 30 years ago, and Slash is still a larger-than-life figuré, still a massive force in live and recorded music and still one of the most recognizable guitarists on the planet (if not the most recognizable). Most importantly, Slash—a major inspiration to an entire generation of six-stringers—is still giving it his all, as heard on the appropriately titled Living the Dream, his new album with Myles Kennedy and the Conspirators. We’re excited to have him back in Guitar World. Products named in the pages of Guitar World are trademarks of their respective companies. PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

NEW-GEAR ALERT: Be prepared to see and hear more about this brilliant new pedal, the Mini FUZZ by King Tone Guitar. It’s a germanium fuzz with a bias knob and a bias indicator light. As designer-builder (and monster guitarist) Jesse Davey puts it, “You might’ve noticed your fuzz sounding great one day and terrible the next; this often is due to temperature changes, which cause the bias to be incorrectly set. Normally you’d have to open the pedal and set the bias by measuring the internal voltage with a multimeter, but not anymore. The bias indicator light lets you know when the bias is set for the current temperature. The light indicates three settings: under-biased, center-biased and over-biased. These are three unique tones, and they’re normally missed without access to an external bias.” For more info, check out kingtonguitar.com.

—Damian Fanelli

Editor
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Pillow Talk

What the hell was that travel pillow doing around John Mayer's neck on the September 2018 cover? His music is so bland and boring — I guess he puts himself to sleep. He may be a great guitar player, but I have no desire to listen to his music. Thank you, though, for the lessons with Doug Aldrich and Richie Faulkner. The interview with Dave Mustaine about the new Killing Is My Business reissue was great too. Thanks for keeping the metal alive.

— Brian Omer

Just got the new issue with...John Mayer on the cover?! If I’m in charge, he never gets on the cover. You just had a major feature on him recently; that is more than enough. Okay, he has the Royal House of Dune-looking outfit on, but still, that’s enough of Mayer for my taste. As a reader/subscriber since the Eighties, I’ve been along for most of your ride. How about a full-blown Talking Heads piece? Maybe it’s time to expose them to the youngsters. Cheers.

— Kurt S. Dzinich Jr.

The Secret Is Out

Forgive the multiple photographs, but I want you to see pics of the Secret Tone Lab, my home studio where my two bands — 11:40 Express and Immediate Blues Band — practice. The Lab [shown below] is adorned with Guitar World covers from the past 20-plus (or minus) years, a few Guitar One covers (most that were published), several iconic center-fold posters from GW, countless clipped photos of artists and ads from the magazine and my pride and joy, a signed thank-you note from GW’s Andy Aledort when I bought his (killer) CD, Put a Sock in It, a few years ago. I’ve been a subscriber to GW since the mid/late Nineties; appearing in Guitar World would be the crown jewel of the Lab! [Editor’s note: Be sure to check out Kyle’s Defenders of the Faith submission on Page 17.]

— Kyle Everett

Casting the First Stone

I’ve been reading your mag since the mid Nineties and wanted to congratulate you on the new direction you guys are taking, especially after being a little concerned that the magazine was starting to feel like a dinosaur for a while there. One way you could continue this trend is by focusing on sub-genres, or even specific city- or country-based scenes, from time to time.

Stoner rock seems an obvious choice, but I’m probably biased. There are so many amazing bands around the world, from 1000Mods in Greece to Greenleaf in Sweden, and onto the proggiest exponents like Elder, among countless other bands in the States. I’ve also noticed that the online community has started to take notice of Melbourne, Australia, seeing online comments regularly asking, “What the hell’s happening in Melbourne with so many great releases?”

I think this genre makes for a worthy feature because it’s one of the most intact threads from the birth of modern rock and metal. It’s like a mosquito in amber that tells us so much about the climate and the riffage that existed in the time of the primordial soup! Yes, I’m talking about drawing a line from Cream and Black Sabbath, dodging the glam and over-produced hype of the Eighties, and landing in the Californian desert in the Nineties where Kyuss brought to grinje the kind of riffage, groove and heaviness that guitar-music lovers crave.

There seems to be a stoner-rock renaissance lately and it kinda makes sense, with all this talk about rock being dead, the stoner rock community is laughing behind the school bike shed at 4:20 asking, “How much more guitar would you like, sir? Challenge accepted!” Audiences can’t seem to get enough; with almost every act releasing on vinyl, this genre is satisfying a global yearning for what made heavy rock great in the first place: intensity, authenticity and mind-bending creativity.

— Justin “JC” Cruickshank

Bending the Rules

Thanks for your recent [April 2018] feature on B-bender guitars! You’ll be happy to know that, after reading the story five or six times, I just bought my first B-bender model — a late-Nineties Parsons/Green Fender Tele. I know it’s unlikely, but it would be great if you guys could publish at least one B-bender lesson in the mag. Keep up the bendy work!

— Ted Fry

Ink Spot

Here’s my Jimi Hendrix tattoo, done by Mike Dubois at Speakeasy Tattoo in Chicago a couple of weeks ago. I’m pleased with his work and thought it was worth sending in!

Send a photo of your ink to GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com!
Kyle Everett

**AGE:** 53  
**HOMETOWN:** Stephenville, TX  
**GUITARS:** '59 Les Paul Standard and '59 Les Paul Custom Shop, Fender Standard Telecaster, Fender Classic Stratocaster  
**SONGS I’VE BEEN PLAYING:** ZZ Top “I’m Bad, I’m Nationwide,” Jeremy Camp “Glory,” Led Zeppelin “Ramble On” and originals by my bands, the 11:40 Express and Immediate Blues Band  
**GEAR I MOST WANT:** Any Les Paul Custom Shop or Standard, Marshall 1959SLP Super Lead 100-watt head with 1960TV 100-watt 4 X 12 cabinet

Brad Stemple Jr.

**AGE:** 45  
**HOMETOWN:** Columbus, OH  
**GUITARS:** Peavey Wolfgang Patent Pending USA STD  
**SONGS I’VE BEEN PLAYING:** Testament “Electric Crown” and Steel Dragon “We All Die Young”  
**GEAR I MOST WANT:** Friedman BE 50 head and EVH Signature Ivory USA Guitar

Dave Calloway

**AGE:** 56  
**HOMETOWN:** Santa Cruz, CA  
**GUITARS:** Fender Jazzmaster, Rickenbacker 330, Gibson Les Paul Classic  
**SONGS I’VE BEEN PLAYING:** Link Wray “Black Widow,” Los Straitjackets “Outta Gear,” Ramones “Rockaway Beach,” the Yardbirds “Happenings Ten Years Time Ago”  
**GEAR I MOST WANT:** Any pre-CBS Fender Telecaster

*Are you a Defender of the Faith? Send a photo, along with your answers to the questions above, to GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com. And pray!*
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Escape from New York

HOW INTERPOL TOOK THE NYPD’S ADVICE, HEADED UPSTATE AND CREATED MARAUDER, THEIR GRITTY, ENERGETIC AND URGENT-SOUNDING NEW ALBUM

By Richard Bienstock

WHEN INTERPOL FIRST got together to begin working up the songs for their new (and sixth) studio album, Marauder, they convened at what guitarist Daniel Kessler recalls as a “godsend of a rehearsal space” in New York City.

“It was the Yeah Yeah Yeahs’ room, in a basement on the Bowery, that they decked out as a great little clubhouse,” he says. “You’d go down there and leave New York behind. And then, when you were done, you’d emerge back into the world like a mole from a hole.”

Unfortunately, that godsend of a space didn’t last long. “Some neighbors called the cops on us — twice,” Kessler continues. “And the second time the cops came they were basically like, ‘This is not a suggestion, but we think you guys should go...’”

Where Interpol eventually went was upstate New York, where they recorded Marauder with producer Dave Fridmann (Flaming Lips, Mogwai) at his own Tarbox Road Studios. Though Interpol — singer Kessler, guitarist and sometimes bassist Paul Banks and drummer Sam Fogarino
— had self-produced their last two records, they found working with Fridmann to be a good fit.

“Dave heard the songs we had put together and he understood they had this really strong identity. This energetic, urgent feel, which I guess came from working on them in that less-than-glamorous rehearsal space in New York City,” Kessler says. “He wanted to keep that rawness and liveness, so he had the idea to record everything to tape, and to limit the number of tracks we could do. Once we got comfortable with that method we were very not precious about it. We’d lay down a guitar track and go, ‘Okay, that sounds cool. Let’s keep it and move on.’ It was a very quick process.”

The result is that *Marauder* “sounds like us playing together in the rehearsal room,” Kessler says. “It’s a really textural record, and there’s a lot of dynamics and atmospherics, but it also jumps off the stereo.”

Throughout the record; in particular on the first single, “The Rover,” which marries the band’s trademark sharp-edged riffs and evocative single-note lines to a jaunty, fuzzed-out rhythm. It’s a rocking, rollicking track that, Kessler says, “has this nice straightforwardness to it. It’s just a pure rock song.”

When it came to Kessler’s gear on the record, he kept things fairly straight and pure as well. His main setup was a late-Sixties Epiphone Casino played through a Fender Princeton Reverb, which was augmented by either a Vox AC-30 or a Fender Deluxe, depending on the tune. As for effects, he says that was more Banks’ department. “I’m not a big pedal dude,” he says. “I just go for a classic amp sound that wraps nicely around a semi-hollow body guitar. That feels like home to me.”

In an unusual move, even as Interpol were working on *Marauder*, they took time out to launch a four-month tour to celebrate the 15th anniversary of their seminal debut album, 2002’s *Turn On the Bright Lights*. According to Kessler, the act of going out and playing old music actually helped them with their new music.

“Because when we went into the studio we were really tight from playing live,” he says, then laughs. “Ironically, it felt like a healthy exercise to go back and play your first record in order to record your latest record.”

And while Interpol have undergone member changes and other musical shifts in the decade-and-a-half since *Bright Lights*, Kessler says that other things haven’t changed so much. “I remember leaving some of those early *Marauder* rehearsals in New York and feeling like I was walking on air in a way that reminded me of times I’d had in the early days of Interpol after we’d come up with a new song.”

“To me that’s symbolic of the fact that we’re still hitting new frontiers, and that it’s still an exciting time to be a part of this band.”

Interpol’s brand-new album, *Marauder*, was released August 24 via Matador. Check out interpolnyc.com for more information about the band.
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WHEN PROGRESSIVE METAL titans Symphony X found themselves with some time off after their 2015 album, *Underworld*, guitarist Michael Romeo decided to — for his next project — strike out on his own. It had been almost 25 years since he had released *The Dark Chapter*, a 1994 solo demo tape that served as both a springboard and a blueprint for Symphony X. Showcasing Romeo’s dazzling fretboard wizardry and dynamic, grandiose arrangements, *The Dark Chapter* garnered enough buzz to land the then-nascent Symphony X a record deal.

Inspired by film score masters Bernard Herrmann and John Williams, not to mention the otherworldly, haunting and cinematic prose of H.G. Wells (whose most famous work lends the album its name), Romeo set about creating *War of the Worlds, Pt. 1*, his first proper solo album. Recorded mostly at Romeo’s home studio in Hazlet, New Jersey, *War of the Worlds, Pt. 1* covers a remarkable amount of sonic ground in less than an hour.

“I knew I wanted the record to be heavy — a lot of riffs and guitar-driven material — but I also wanted to have a lot of orchestral stuff,” Romeo says. “It’s heavy, it’s a little progressive, a little melodic; but it also has that epic, orchestral, film-score-ish vibe to it.”

To bring his vision to life, Romeo enlisted Long Island native Rick Castellano — a singer he had been following for a number of years — for vocal duties, in addition to drummer John Macaluso. Rounding out the supporting cast is Black Label Society bassist John “JD” DeServio, who Romeo has known since high school.

“It was definitely cool, it was something we always talked about,” Romeo said of working with DeServio. “He’s awesome, he’s an awesome player. No freakin’ doubt.”

Though longtime Symphony X fans won’t mistake Romeo’s neo-classical guitar textures for anyone else, the touches of EDM, dubstep and DJ scratching sprinkled throughout the record are liable to raise eyebrows. Though one wouldn’t naturally group those sounds or genres with his brand of symphonic metal, Romeo didn’t see their incorporation into the record as any sort of delicate balancing act.

“It’s all stuff I’m into,” Romeo said. “Obviously, I’m a metalhead, and I like orchestral stuff and some electronic music, so it wasn’t really that big of a deal just trying to make it all work. I think sonically, it all kind of fell into place.”

Michael Romeo
THE LONGTIME SYMPHONY X GUITARIST STRIKES OUT ON HIS OWN WITH *WAR OF THE WORLDS, PT. 1*, HIS FIRST PROPER SOLO ALBUM
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ONLY LOUDER
ALTHOUGH YUCCA VALLEY, California, is just three hours east of L.A., it might as well be a world away. In fact, you could say It’s A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World away, since the town provided some of the striking desert scenery in Stanley Kramer’s classic 1963 comedy. Sadly, a lot of the wide-open spaces in the film have been replaced by Walmarts and Starbucks. But Yucca Valley, bordering Joshua Tree National Park, is still slow paced enough to recall a simpler time.

In that sense, it’s the perfect setting for TK Smith Electronic Guitar Service. That’s where TK Smith produces — by hand — his midcentury-modern Paul Bigsby–inspired Smith Special guitars; axes that would’ve looked right at home in the hands of Grady Martin or Merle Travis.

“I’m a Paul Bigsby nut,” Smith says, referring to the pedal-steel and solidbody pioneer of the Forties and Fifties who’s best remembered for the vibratos that bear his name. “In the Eighties, I played in a Western swing band. Our steel-guitar player owned a Bigsby pedal steel, so he turned me on to Bigsby’s guitars. Before that, I only knew about the vibratos.”

While Smith’s guitars come with the sort of price tags you’d expect from high-end, handmade custom axes, his pickups cost about the same as everyone else’s — and they could very well help make your 2018 guitar sound like a sizzling 1958 jazz/rockabilly/blues machine.

Here’s a primer on Smith’s pickups:

**C.A.R.** (medium output), from $320: The Cast Aluminum Replica is just right for traditional jazz, swing, rockabilly, Travis picking or blues. Use it in the bridge if you want the “Grady Martin sound”; use it in the neck for jazz, swing and blues. It’s got a distinct hollow, wooden tone that floats very nicely on top of an ace rhythm section.

**CCII POLE PIECE** (medium vintage output), $159: This version has the same dynamic range, responsiveness and punch as the Blade, but the high mids and top end are more pronounced. There’s more natural growl and bite while maintaining the CCII tonal palette. It’s a great alternative for players who find the CCII a little too mellow.

**SUMMERTONE** (medium to vintage output), $195: The SummerTone is a direct replacement for a dog-ear P-90 and offers woody, articulate, big, clear tones. It shares tonal characteristics with the CC II and C.A.R. but leans closer to the C.A.R. in terms of voicing.

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“On ‘Signs,’ and, in fact, on a lot of songs, I will put the pick away every now and then and just play with my hands. I’ve found that when I have to sing and play at the same time, it helps to not use a pick. For whatever reason I can connect better with the rhythm parts that way. A lot of that part of my style comes from listening to Jimmie Vaughan, Albert Collins and Jeff Beck. Those are the three guys I have studied more than anyone else, when it comes to how to attack the strings of a guitar.”

“Blew Up (The House)"
“The set list in Tulsa was all over the place. Three of us decided to change the first song the moment we got onstage, except we didn’t tell the other two guys. [laughs] So we were all behind the curve from the get-go. We’ve tried putting ‘Blew Up’ in other places in the set, but it just works best as an opening song. That’s part of the fun of set lists: the trial-and-error of finding out what works and where.”

“Red Light"
“That one, on the record, is more like a pop song geared for radio. But live, we do it more like a soul tune than a pop tune. Plus we have what we call our ‘Bob Marley moment’ in it when we do a bit of ‘Three Little Birds.’ That gets everybody smiling. You can’t be sad and listen to Marley.”

“Stronger Together"
“It’s one of the songs from my new album, Signs. It’s probably the hardest one for me to sing in the set, and I’m still getting used to doing it live. It has a lot of lyrics in a short amount of time and you really have to breathe right to get through it without messing it up. Plus my voice was kind of in bad shape in Tulsa, so I was a bit worried about singing that night. We’d just come from Colorado — there were forest fires there, so I had a nasty cough from all the smoke. But actually, it’s really easy to sing in the room at Cain’s. It’s very forgiving, so everything was cool and it all worked out.”

“Rack ‘Em Up"
“I use a Gibson 335 on it. When I go to the bridge pickup on that guitar and turn the tone down, or almost all the way down, I get that nasty old ‘Hubert Sumlin meets Howlin’ Wolf’ tone. ‘Rack ‘Em Up’ lends itself well to that kind of sound.”

“Forty Days & Forty Nights"
“When I was a kid, I lived in Minneapolis. There was a local group called the Hoopsnakes. Their lead singer and their keyboard player, Bruce McCabe, ended up joining my band. He’s the guy who wrote a lot of my first songs that were on the radio, like ‘Rack ‘Em Up’ and ‘Lie to Me.’ He’s a musical hero of mine. His band did a version of ‘Forty Days & Forty Nights’ with the same riff I use. The riff in Muddy Waters’ version doesn’t really sound similar to it. My rendition is more like a Delta blues version of Muddy’s song.”

“Lie to Me"
“As you might imagine, there are some folks who are there only to hear ‘Lie to Me.’ So when I start out doing an acoustic-folk version of it, I can almost hear them out in the audience going, ‘Aw, man. I wanted to rock.’ [laughs] So it’s cool when the band comes out for the big finale. Those same people are now like, ‘Yes! We get to rock again!’”
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DEAR GUITAR HERO
ROGER McGUINN

He's a co-founder of Sixties pop-rock titans the Byrds, and his distinctive 12-string Rickenbacker jangle is one of the most influential and imitated guitar sounds of the past 53 years. Oh, his playing also inspired a Beatles song and he helped invent country rock. But what Guitar World readers really want to know is...

Interview by Damian Fanelli

I always thought it was brilliant that you inserted a bit of J.S. Bach's “Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring” into the guitar solo for the Byrds' “She Don't Care About Time” in 1965. What inspired that?

—Harry Falstaff

I was always a fan of Pete Seeger, and he put out an album called Goofing-Off Suite [1955] where he played “Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring” on the banjo. So I learned to play that on the banjo too. And then when I got to the studio to record “She Don’t Care About Time,” I remembered it and just threw it in there. George Harrison was in the studio that day; I think George and Paul had come to watch us record. George liked that a lot [laughs].

Q: You and former Byrd Chris Hillman are teaming up with Marty Stuart for a U.S. tour that pays tribute to the Byrds' Sweetheart of the Rodeo album, which turns 50 this fall. What about the tour are you looking forward to most?

—Jules Santorelli

First of all, it's great to get back together with Chris; I haven't done that in many years. But we're playing with Marty Stuart and his band, the Fabulous Superlatives, and they're excellent. And, of course, Marty's got Clarence White's Telecaster, and he knows all of Clarence's licks. So it's really like getting back together with Clarence and playing those songs.

Q: What can you tell me about your brand-new studio album, Sweet Memories?

—John MacDonald

It's a lot of fun to listen to! We've been driving cross-country, and it's really good driving music. I've recorded “M. Tambourine Man,” “Turn! Turn! Turn!” and “So You Want to Be a Rock 'n' Roll Star” plus a new version of “Chestnut Mare” called “Chestnut Mare Christmas” with Marty Stuart on guitar. I actually played all the instruments on the album except for that one song. Then we added seven other songs we'd written, plus another one that's really funny called “Friday,” which has an interesting back story. There's this girl named Rebecca Black. Around 2011, her mother bought her a recording and video session from this company in California. They had two songs pre-written, and she could take her pick, so she picked a song about Fridays — you know, everybody's looking forward to the weekend and so on. So she recorded this video and it went viral; she got more than 100 million views on YouTube. This guy Nate Herman from Second City in Chicago — he's an actor and musician — he decided to make a spoof of the video, and I ran across it a few years ago. In the spoof video, he's in a record shop talking about a song Bob Dylan had written called “Friday,” but the tape had been erased and lost and so on. But they found a video of it by the Byrds in a thrift shop in Venice, California, that was labeled “head cleaner.” You can find the Nate Herman video on YouTube if you search for the Byrds' “Friday.” Anyway, I thought it was so funny, so I recorded it.

Q: In my opinion, the late Clarence White of the Byrds was one of the greatest guitarists of all time. What was he like as a person?

—Damien Linotte

He was a delight to play with. He was a brilliant guitar player, probably the best one I've ever worked with. I compare him to Jimi Hendrix or Eric Clapton. He was excellent, and he also was a very good friend. The night before he was killed by a drunk driver [July 15, 1973], he came to my birthday party. He said we should get together and work together some more. It doesn't have to be the Byrds or anything, but it would be great to work together. I said sure, and I was ready to do that. Then he got hit by a car.

Q: Besides the Sweetheart of the Rodeo album, what other songs will you be playing on the Sweetheart of the Rodeo 50th Anniversary tour?

—Midge Lessons

We're gonna do Byrds songs that led up to the recording of Sweetheart of the Rodeo — songs that we did back on Turn! Turn! Turn! like “Satisfied Mind,” and then onto “Girl with No Name” from Younger Than Yesterday and “Old John Robertson” from The Notorious Byrd Brothers, plus “Mr. Spaceman.” Pretty much anything the Byrds did that was country-ish before we went to Nashville to record Sweetheart of the Rodeo.

Q: What was it about Clarence White's playing style that you appreciated the most?

—Zakk Kyle Jr.

Clarence had a way of syncopating things, and he was unpredictable. He never played the same licks twice, really. He'd just go into it and improvise every time. He was almost like a jazz guy.

Q: What can you tell me about the Beatles' first film, A Hard Day's Night, inspired you to get a 12-string Rickenbacker. Two years later, your 12-string playing style was the main influence behind Harrison's "If I Needed Someone." Did you guys eventually become friends?

—Fred Freelancer

We were friends, and we did hang out together from time to time. Interestingly, the first thing he ever learned to play...
on the guitar was the first thing I’d learned to play on guitar. It was the lead break from Gene Vincent's Woman Love, the flip-side of “Be-Bop-A-Lula.” He was in Liverpool and I was in Chicago, and we both learned how to play the same song.

—Stephen Longo

I met Elvis Costello at Storyville New Orleans probably around 30 years ago — before Jimmy Buffet bought it and turned it into Margaritaville. It was a famous old club. Elvis showed up. He was at my gig and came backstage after the show. He asked me if he could play my Rickenbacker, and I said sure. He started to play it and went, “Wow, this is hard to play!” So we got to be friends, and we bump into each other at airports and everything. I did a gig in Boston and he showed up — stuff like that. Anyway, I asked him if he’d like to be involved with Back from Rio, so he wrote “You Bowed Down.”

—GARY OWEN

What’s up your signature seven-string Martin guitar? What’s the extra string — and why?

—Kristi Branford

It’s got a high G string. What I did was try to get the best part of a 12-string on a six-string. I was on the Concord from Paris to New York, and they promised they’d treat our guitars really well.

But I got to New York, took my guitar out and it was all smashed. I thought, man, it’s not a good idea to carry a six-string and a 12-string acoustic; I’d like to get the best of both on one guitar.

So I went to Dick Boak at Martin Guitar. We had lunch together and drew out the plans on a napkin. He made a seven-string prototype in the custom shop. But before he could send it to me, a couple of guitarists came and played it and they said they wanted one too. So they made a whole run of them. I think they made about 260 HD7’s, which are around $5,000.

The European market said they wanted one that wasn’t quite so expensive, so they made the D7 and took out the mother-of-pearl abalone. It’s pretty much the same guitar. Basically, it’s got the best part of a 12-string — you can play leads up and down the neck like George Harrison used to do.

—Gib Dumoulin

What’s your favorite amp to use with your Rickenbacker?

—Phil Wall

I don’t really use an amp with the Rickenbacker much, but when I do, I use a Roland JC-120. I have a Roland Cube 80 that I carry with me, but I prefer to go through the board, which is what I did at the Columbia Records studio.

—Andy Winters

Well, we loved it. We wouldn’t have recorded it if we didn’t love it [laughs]. But obviously we weren’t doing it for commercial reasons; we were doing it just out of the love of the music. I was quite surprised that it didn’t go over better than it did when it came out because we loved it so much, so we thought everybody would pick up on that. But there was a misunderstanding. The country people thought we were interlopers and the rock-and-roll people thought we’d sold out to the country crowd. It took about 40 years for it to catch on, but gradually it became more and more revered. It’s probably the most-respected Byrds album of all time, which is weird.

What’s the real reason you recorded over Gram Parsons’ lead vocals on “The Christian Life” on Sweetheart of the Rodeo?

—Brian Cancemi

It was because [singer-songwriter-producer] Lee Hazlewood had a contract with Gram at the time. They resolved that, but I had already overdubbed a few vocals at that point. It wasn’t a personal thing.

What’s your favorite Byrds album from the Clarence White era?

—Hank Brennan

I guess it’d be Untitled [1970].

Yeah, it got stolen, and it resurfaced maybe 20 years ago for a lot of money — and then it kind of disappeared. I haven’t seen it lately.

—Brian Cancemi

It was because [singer-songwriter-producer] Lee Hazlewood had a contract with Gram at the time. They resolved that, but I had already overdubbed a few vocals at that point. It wasn’t a personal thing.
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A MAN and the BLUES

At age 82, living legend BUDDY GUY is still the blues’ most ardent champion. In this exclusive interview, the dynamic, unpredictable guitarist talks B.B., Muddy, Jimi and his new album, The Blues Is Alive and Well

BY ALAN PAUL

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL NATKIN
BUDDY GUY IS, IN MANY WAYS, THE last man standing: a link to the titanic Chicago bluesmen of the Fifties and Sixties who electrified the music and in the process birthed rock and roll. At 82, Guy is still a bundle of caged, coiled energy, emitting a feeling of tension, like a cobra ready to strike at any moment. He’s a master of dynamics who brings songs up and down, punctuating low-volume, cleanly articulated Strat runs with bursts of overdriven clusters of notes and flurries of fury. His voice is just as powerful an instrument, displaying all the same subtleties and strength. His performances have you leaning forward in your chair to catch every note before blowing you onto your heels with a burst of muscular energy.

You can hear all of it on Guy’s new album, The Blues Is Alive and Well, which features guest appearances by Jeff Beck, Keith Richards and Mick Jagger. “The love these guys have for him is readily apparent,” says Tom Hambridge, who produced, played drums and wrote or co-wrote 13 of the 15 songs on the album. “They all basically say they will drop anything they are doing to work with Buddy. It’s not fake.”

These blues-based rock stars and their peers spent decades singing Guy’s praises while the bluesman was scuffling without an American record deal — despite having been a prime influence on Beck, Richards, Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix and many others, as well as a direct link to Muddy Waters, Son House, Sonny Boy Williamson and other musical giants, all of whom he recorded with.

Guy finally got his shot again in 1991 with Damn Right, I’ve Got the Blues, and he hasn’t looked back, assuming his rightful place as a guitar legend while touring and recording consistently and running his Chicago club, Buddy Guy’s Legends.

“Buddy’s the hardest-working guy,” says Hambridge, who has produced Guy’s last five albums. “He’ll always stay in the studio until we’ve got it nailed. He always plays a song all the way through, but he’s open to everything around him. Everything’s on the table, which is amazing for a guy his age — and he seems to be getting more and more open.”

You were the first musician I ever interviewed, back in 1985. You’ve come a long way since then, sir!

BUDDY GUY: Hey, thank you, and that’s nice of you to say. But the blues still needs all the help it can get, man, because it’s being ignored by radio. The AM stations used to play jazz, blues, gospel, whatever the disc jockey decided to play — now you don’t hear that. I just love to hear Howlin’ Wolf, Muddy Waters or T-Bone, and you can’t do that unless you got satellite radio.

Well that’s true, but at least we have things like satellite. And your personal standing is a lot better now. Back then, guys like Stevie Ray Vaughan and Eric Clapton were talking about you as their favorite guitarist, which kept your name out there, but you didn’t have a record deal and were playing little joints.

Yeah, that’s true. I think they helped me more than anything else. So many people have said to me, “I didn’t know who you were until I heard what Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton or Jeff Beck said.” I’m like, “Yeah, okay.” You know, I was playing blues before those guys got a famous name for themselves. That’s a part of this business and I’m not angry about that, but we all should have a chance to be heard. We owe a lot of thanks to the British guys who helped all of us, coming in and telling everyone who Howlin’ Wolf, Muddy Waters and Sonny Boy Williamson were.

White Americans thought the British guys were doing something new. When I came to Chicago 61 years ago, if a white face walked into the club, we figured it was a policeman and weren’t happy to see them. They would take my 40-cent pint of wine and pour it out — and we ain’t got another 40 cents. Then I come to find out it’s Michael Bloomfield or Paul Butterfield — those young white musicians started coming by, the first white fans we saw in there, listening to every note.
You just turned 82 and put out a great new album. Why is it important to you to still put out new music in this era instead of just touring?

I dedicated my life to this music. I went to sleep and woke up and a lot of the greats who I learned everything from was no longer here. When we were all in good health we sat around having a drink and said that whoever be here when the rest is gone, please try to keep the blues alive and well. You don’t think much about that when you’re laughing about it, but all of a sudden there it is. We lost B.B. King three years ago and Muddy Waters been gone over 30 years. Like my mother told me once: "If you don’t want to leave here, you better not come here." So I understand that, but I made a pledge and I don’t know nothing else to do but play music.

Most of us do it till we drop, but I feel like I’m cheating if I can’t give you 100 percent. I’m 82, and I don’t know what’s gonna be there when I’m 83, 84, 85 so I’m going strong WHILE I CAN!

That's very sad, and a lot of people felt at the end, B.B. should have retired from touring. But I took my son when he was 13 because I wanted him to see B.B. He was diminished but he sang great and played some sweet licks and it was wonderful to spend an evening in his company.

Well, it's an honor to watch him and it would have been okay with me even if he sang the same song all night long. Whatver he did was worth watching. B.B. King had all the special effects he needed in his left hand. He could vibrate that left hand better than anybody that ever did it. But when you get old, you don’t have what you had when you was 24, 25 years old. I used to listen to a song one time and I had it in my head. Now I’ve got to study that goddamn thing for three, four weeks before I can remember.

No one is sitting in your audience thinking that’s an old man up there. You have the energy, charisma and power of a young man. Do you get that from the audience? From the music?

To be honest, I don’t know. If I look out there and see somebody with a frown I know I have work to do. There’s so many angry people in the world today and when I see somebody smiling when I play a few good licks, I think, “You mighta been angry, but I made you forget about it for those minutes that I played.” Music makes you forget about anger sometimes.

Your guitar playing is often pretty aggressive. Is that fueled in part by working out your own anger? Maybe you’re not only making the audience feel better, but yourself as well.

Well, I feel much better by making somebody else lose their anger. I’m not angry at anybody. I wake up every day and wonder what’s wrong with the world. Some people are angry and don’t even know what the hell they angry about. I save it for the stage.

We have a lot of problems but you were born in a time and place where you weren’t even considered a full person!

Yeah! And I was down there in Louisiana recently ‘cause they named part of a highway for me. Think of that! My daddy was a sharecropper. We didn’t have machinery; we did it all by hand and they’d give us whatever they thought was just enough to eat to live. Live to eat. Well, the children of the people whose land we lived on came to my highway dedication and they started crying. Don’t forget where you came from.

Given all that, how big a deal was it for you and B.B. to be in the White House playing for President Obama in 2012?

That's kind of hard to even explain. When I left Louisiana I was using an outhouse and to be in the White House playing for the President and First Lady, that was one of the unbelievable times of my life. Someone said that if we sing “Sweet Home Chicago,” we probably could get him to join in. B.B. and I looked at each other, but I thought that if I call him and he don't come, I'm gonna feel like crawling under a table and don't never come out. Sure enough, he made some speeches about us and we was hitting “Sweet Home Chicago” and I said, “Wait a minute Mr. President. Could you join us?” And he did. He called me back there to play a second time, looked at me and said, “I think I might have to put you on salary.” This was the President told me this!

Tom Hambridge said you are open for anything. Have you always been so open, in the studio, to trying different approaches?

Oh yeah. You never know. My eyes and ears
are open to jazz and gospel, which was the big headliner in the South before B.B. and T-Bone Walker showed us how to bend and shake the strings. People like Sam Cooke, Mahalia Jackson and the Soul Stirrers were it. Then B.B. came out with “Three O’Clock in the Morning” and changed guitar and I had to learn how to play a few notes and bend a string like he do. Les Paul and Leo Fender made those guitars be heard by electrifying them.

And you’re somebody who really took advantage of the electrification, doing things like bending above pitch and using feedback. I had played with Muddy and them and was happy just sitting in the corner playing rhythm for them cats, but I wanted to do my own thing too. When I was turning left getting that feedback, the guys at Chess went, “What the hell was that? Don’t nobody want to hear that.” All of a sudden you put on a Cream or Jimi Hendrix record and hear what I had been doing all the time. Willie Dixon came to my house and said, “The British are coming, and you been trying to give us this ever since you been here. And we was too fucking dumb to hear what you had.” Excuse my language!

Did that make you feel satisfied that you were right, or angry that no one had let you do it earlier?

I was brought up to believe what’s for you gonna come for you. What’s not for you, you not gonna get it anyway. I know guitar players that can play way better than I can, no doubt about it. Some of the things I did back in the day with Muddy Waters, Howlin’ Wolf, Sonny Boy carry me today. They were like the Henry Fords. Henry Ford been dead how many years, but his name is still there on the car.

Your early playing had a very distinct, clean Strat sound.

The first time I went to California in 1967, I played the Avalon Ballroom with Jefferson Airplane and all of ‘em and everybody wanted to be the headliner and they said they had a problem so I said, “Man, I came to play. Call me out now.” Well, after that no one wanted to play after me. That’s the truth. I wasn’t introduced to hippies, so I’m thinking, “What’s this?” And I just went out and played and when I finished, everybody asked, “What you got in that amplifier?” Whatever Leo Fender put in there!

All I knew was I bought a Bassman that was about to fall to pieces; it was rusted and locked at the volume, treble and bass. It didn’t have nothing but an on and off switch. No one’s ever been able to quite replicate that sound. I was playing it wide open and the distortion and everything came out there. No pedals or special effects. Just play your amp, man, and they was giving you exactly what you wanted. My old Strat got stolen but I still have the amp.

Every time I see you, I think about what an interesting gig it would be to be in your band because you go wherever you feel like, switch songs, change tempos, hold a chord to talk, bring it down, bring it up. Are you just following your instincts?

Right! They just sit on that groove and know: Buddy gonna do that thing, just keep your eyes and ears open ‘cause he gonna hit some licks. If I miss a lick and make a hole, they fill it up. I don’t want to be like a sewing machine and make the same stitch every time, man. I make mistakes and then I make you forget about it.

On “Blue No More,” you played a Gibson hollow body. Do you like playing different guitars after playing the Strat for so long?

We were looking for different tones and I played a 355 that was in the studio. I came to Chicago with a Gibson Les Paul and they stole from that from me in Chicago ‘cause I didn’t understand how pawnshops worked up here. You had to be quicker than down in Louisiana.

I loved hollow body guitars too but what made me go and love with the Fender... I couldn’t afford another guitar cracking up. I was on a tour of Africa and my Strat blew off the top of a car, and it was scratched up, but played fine. So I stuck with that Strat!
Slash, photographed in Los Angeles July 31, 2018
DESPITE BEING BUSY AS HELL WITH THE REUNITED GUNS N’ ROSES FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, SLASH MANAGED TO CARVE OUT PLENTY OF TIME TO RECORD A HOT NEW ALBUM WITH MYLES KENNEDY AND THE ROCK DISCUSS THE NEW DISC, GEAR AND THE GN’R EXPERIENCE.
Except for one thing: Slash doesn’t take breaks.

“No, that’s just not in my nature,” he says with a laugh. “I can only be dormant for a week or so, and then if I don’t have something planned to do I’ll go crazy.”

Thankfully, he has a lot on tap to keep him busy. Upon returning home, the 53-year-old guitarist will be heading straight into rehearsals with his other project, Slash featuring Myles Kennedy and the Conspirators. The band will be gearing up for a U.S. tour in support of their new album, a dynamic, high-octane 12-song collection titled Living the Dream.

The record, their third as a unit, finds the band — which includes singer Kennedy (also of Alter Bridge), bassist Todd Kerns, drummer Brent Fitz and rhythm guitarist Frank Sidoris — further refining the sound and style heard on their 2012 debut, Apocalyptic Love, and 2014’s sprawling, 17-track World on Fire. It’s a mix of straightforward, explosive riff-rockers (“Call of the Wild,” “Mind Your Manners,” “Sugar Cane”) and more epic and layered compositions (“The Great Pretender,” “The One You Loved Is Gone,” “Lost Inside the Girl”), further studded with all manner of slight stylistic diversions, from funky, wah-drenched workouts (“Read Between the Lines”) to swaggering, Seventies-style stomping (“Serve You Right”) and hook-filled, soaring anthems (“Boulevard of Broken Hearts” and first single “Driving Rain”).

“There’s definitely a lot going on in this record,” Slash says. “It stays in the hard-rock realm, but it also branches out and just sort of hits the edges of what you would normally expect from us. But this particular little unit is pretty flexible, you know?”

At the core of that unit, of course, is Slash, whose inimitable riffing and distinctive lead guitar work holds the whole thing together no matter how far out the band ventures. More than three decades into his career, the guitarist remains, undoubtably, one of the most instantly recognizable and influential players in all of rock and roll. A fact that has only been reaffirmed these past few years as he has remained in demand, touring extensively and playing to millions of dedicated fans the world over.

To that point, due to Slash’s busy schedule with Guns N’ Roses — the reunion sees the guitarist, bassist Duff McKagan and Axl Rose playing together for the first time in more than two decades — the writing period for Living the Dream stretched across several years. Beginning in 2015 during the Conspirators’ World on Fire tour, the band moved forward penning the album in fits and starts before commencing in earnest at the very end of 2017. But despite being a drawn-out process, Slash says he never doubted that the record would get done. “I always knew at some point it was going to happen,” he says. “Because I had no intentions of breaking up the Conspirators to do the Guns N’ Roses thing.”

And indeed, Slash is now ready to move full-speed ahead with his band. “We have the new album, and then the U.S. tour. Then I have another Guns N’ Roses run at the end of the year,” he says. “But after that the Con-
“I mean, sometimes you just have to not overthink it. Don’t let yourself get inhibited by trying to be musically fucking profound or anything. Just do it as spontaneously as possible.”

spirators will do Europe, we’ll do South America, and we’re looking to see if we can do Australia and other places. I love playing with these guys, and so we’re going to play everywhere we can play. We’re definitely going to be busy for a while.”

Which, of course, is just how Slash likes it.

The material on Living the Dream was written over the course of several years. How did everything come together?

We had some songs that we worked on during the World on Fire tour in 2015, like “Serve You Right,” “Lost Inside the Girl” and “Call of the Wild.” “The Great Pretender” was another one. And I was attached to those ideas, so when it came time to really start on this album I definitely wanted to revisit them. But they were in such a skeleton form that it was almost like starting over. Then there was a bunch of stuff I wrote this past January, after one of the legs of the Guns tour was over. A song like “Mind Your Manners” — that was the first thing we played when we started rehearsing at the beginning of this year. I wrote it the second we plugged in at the rehearsal studio, just to have something to jam on. And that turned into a song. So all the material felt pretty fresh. It wasn’t like going back and digging up old arrangements from years ago and doing them exactly the way we’d done them before. Everything was pretty new in its own way.

I recall you telling me once that you compile song ideas by recording them into your phone.

I still do that, yeah, [laughs] Hotel rooms, dressing rooms, buses, wherever. Because I always have my guitar with me on the road, and more often than not I’m just noodling around. So anytime I stumble onto something that sounds cool I put it on the telephone. Because I’ve tried all different kinds of methods of recording stuff, from having a Pro Tools rig on my laptop to, back in the day, just having a Fostex [four track] with me. But those things involve plugging shit in and
Well, what happened was, I've been using a studio in North Hollywood as a rehearsal space forever. I've rehearsed there with Myles and the Conspirators, I've rehearsed there with Slash's Snakepit, with Velvet Revolver, even with Guns back in the day. But whenever I'm there with a band, we have to lock it out. And I thought, “God, I would love to have a place where we could just go in and record stuff as we do it, whenever we want...” So a while back I had a couple weeks off and I went looking for properties. And I found this great little place and bought it for really cheap. I gutted it and turned it into a small jam-room-slash-recording-studio. It's really a comfortable place for us, and it's tucked away and private. It's nice to have your own space that's always set up for you and that has your vibe.

So what's the vibe at the Snakepit? I brought in things I like and put up a bunch of photos of guitarists on the walls. A lot of it is Neil Zlozower stuff. There's a cool picture of Pete Townshend in there. Rory Gallagher. Keith Richards. A great painting of Lemmy. A painting of Ozzy. Some monster-type stuff [laughs]. It was just whatever we could fit in there alongside the gear.

What gear did you use on the new record? I did pretty much the whole record, with the exception of one song, with a brand-new Marshall Jubilee 100 watt. And what's funny is, I had found a couple people that had some original Jubilees from the Eighties, and I bought a bunch of them — probably six or seven — because you don't see them around that often. Then on top of that I have my own Jubilees. But most of those are in the Guns N' Roses rig. So Marshall actually gave me a brand-new one to use. And it sounded great. So I ended up using only that one and none of mine! [laughs] So that's the amp on everything. The only song that's different is "The Great Pretender" — for that one I used an old Fender combo, that belongs to a friend of mine, and combined that with one of my '59s. They sounded really good together, and it was just so different from the setup for everything else.

What were your main guitars? I used a '54 [Gibson Les Paul] Goldtop on a bunch of songs. And then I used my '58 Les Paul and also my [Kris] Derrig Les Paul replica. I also had a '58 Reissue Tobacco Burst that I picked up from a dealer in London. And that was basically it. Then for the acoustic stuff I used my Martin D-28 that I bought new, back around the time of the Apocalyptic Love record.

You're obviously a Les Paul guy, but I don't recall you using a '54 Goldtop in the past. I've never used it before. Primarily I used it for the song “Call of the Wild,” because that main riff is something I thought might be a little too muddy with humbuckers. And so I said, getting it set up, and there's always something that doesn't work just right that you have to fix for a second. And ideas get lost in the time it takes to do that. So the phone is great. You just hit record and go.

Were you coming up with song ideas for Living the Dream while on tour with Guns N' Roses? No. I did do some writing, but I was really thinking in terms of Guns at that time. So I have some ideas in my phone that are primarily for that. Because that's where my head was at. I tend to get into one thing and then focus on that 100 percent. I'm not thinking of anything else. It's the only way to do it when you've got two things that are so all encompassing. You have to shut one off to do the other.

So that means you're putting together ideas for new Guns N' Roses material? Yeah, I think there's a little bit of that activity going on.

For an album? There's talk about doing some recording. I think we all would love to do something that we thought was really cool. We just haven't really sat down and put our noses to the grindstone to do it. We haven't really had time. But there's been a couple things that we've dicked around with at soundchecks.

When it came to recording Living the Dream, you did it, for the first time, in your own studio, the Snakepit. What led you to build your own facility?

So how did you get it set up, and there's always something that doesn't work just right that you have to fix for a second. And ideas get lost in the time it takes to do that. So the phone is great. You just hit record and go.
Ibanez AZ guitars are all about MORE, they’re made to do more, play more, and cover more styles. Exotic tops & killer finishes offer MORE in the looks department, while a flexible pickup/electronics system delivers MORE sounds, making an AZ the perfect do-it-all axe. Also, players are raving about the roasted maple neck. When you grab an AZ, it grabs you right back. Ultimately, an AZ just makes it easier to make MORE music, and that’s what it’s all about.
“Well, maybe soapbars will do the trick...” So I pulled out the Goldtop, and those pickups gave the riff a certain kind of clarity that was needed. And the guitar had such a great tone that I ended up using it a bunch on the record. I used it for “Lost Inside the Girl.” I used it for “The One You Love Is Gone.” I used it for a couple other songs as well. It just has this great scream to it.

How about effects?
There’s not really much of anything. I used an old MXR Phase 90 on “Slow Grind,” and there’s maybe some chorus on a few things. Otherwise it’s just wah. Two wahs, actually. One was my signature [Dunlop Slash Cry Baby Wah] and the other was a standard Cry Baby that’s been in my arsenal for god knows how long. My wah tends to be very thick and midrange-y, which is fine. But there was one song. I think it was “Read Between the Lines,” where I wanted something a little bit more old-fashioned, so I used the old Cry Baby.

“Read Between the Lines” has wah all over that main riff, and it’s in a funkier style for you guys. How did that one come together?
Okay, there’s two different thoughts on the origin of that song. My memory is of playing it for the band, and then Myles coming in and not being too enthusiastic about it. He said, “You know, maybe that would make a good instrumental...” [laughs]

That’s sort of a gentle way to make your feelings known.
Yeah, exactly! And I was like, “I don’t wanna do a fuckin’ instrumental!” This was a few years ago. But fast-forward to 2018, and Todd, Brent and I were in the rehearsal studio banging the stuff out to get ready to record. And I sent a tape to Myles and I said, “This is that song you didn’t necessarily go for, but I’m just telling you to try and come up with something because I think it’s really cool.” And Myles got back to me and he said, “No, I love this! I never said I didn’t like this!” And I was like, “Huh... I have a very distinct other memory of it!” [laughs] But what he came up with was so great. So it ended up working out.

You mentioned earlier that “Mind Your Manners” is a song that came together on the spot in the rehearsal room. It’s such a great, high-energy riff-rocker. It really captures that spontaneity and immediacy.
Yeah, I mean, sometimes you just have to not to overthink it. Don’t let yourself get inhibited by trying to be musically fucking profound or anything. Just do it as spontaneously as possible. Get to the next chord changes. It doesn’t matter if it’s a I-IV-V. Do it because it feels good!

Then there’s a song like “The Great Pretender,” which sounds considerably more composed. In particular, that great single-note guitar theme, which is a very “Slash” type of part. It’s reminis-
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of an experience was it to walk out there with Axl and Duff as Guns N’ Roses and kick into that first song? Actually, the first song of the show wasn’t as surreal as showing up there for soundcheck. That was, I think, the real surreal moment. But at the same time, one of the interesting things about reuniting with Guns is that it doesn’t remind me of anything from the past. There’s not flashbacks, like, “I was standing here at this time 20 years ago...” or some bullshit like that. I just look over and I see two guys I’ve known for 30 years. There is that familiarity, and there’s a familiarity with the songs, but it all seems very new.

But that said, I have to say that that moment I got onstage at soundcheck at the Troubadour it was sort of like a time-lapse camera that went all the way back to 1985. [laughs]

One of the things that’s been a nice surprise at the Guns N’ Roses shows is to hear you playing songs from Chinese Democracy.

Yeah. You know, it’s very different... it’s really cool stuff, but it was played by guitar players that are very different from me style-wise. I’ve sort of adapted my own way of playing those songs to where I feel comfortable with them, but without losing the integrity of how the guitar parts go. So it’s been a lot of fun to do, like, the song “Chinese Democracy,” which I love playing. And there’s a song we’ve been playing lately called “Madagascar,” which, I don’t even know exactly what the guitar parts are on the original at this point because I’ve changed it so much. [laughs]

That said, I also want to give credit where credit’s due — the guitar players that played on Chinese Democracy, Buckethead being one of the main ones — are fucking amazing guitar players. I have to give those guys a shout-out because that stuff was cool. Very different from what I normally do. So it’s been interesting learning some of the stuff that was on that record. I definitely had to figure out ways to adapt to it.

As far as the Conspirators go, there has always been a healthy amount of Guns N’ Roses material in your live shows. Will that change now that you’re actually out there playing those songs again with Guns N’ Roses?

Yeah, definitely. The thing about doing Guns N’ Roses material with the Conspirators is it was just fun for me to do because I hadn’t done it in so long. And even as we built up more of our own material we kept doing it because it’d become part of the gig, you know? I think people had come to expect it. But at this point, after touring for this long with Guns N’ Roses and knowing it’s going to continue on indefinitely, when we go out to support this new record I plan on leaning more on all the Conspirators material. I haven’t sat down yet and really started focusing on what we’re going to do and what we’re not going to do, but that’s the plan. I don’t have any need to do all the Guns stuff anymore. Because I’m doing it.

What do you like about playing with the Conspirators?

The connection is just something that happened from the get-go. And you know, it started out with my name on the marquee, and then it said, “featuring Myles Kennedy.” But once we did the Apocalyptic Love record it was like, “I don’t want to necessarily go about changing what we’ve already established up to this point, but it feels more like a band...” So we came up with the Conspirators and just put the whole idea together. So it’s led by me, and I sort of direct the ship and pretty much write all the music. But at the same time I very much treat the whole thing as a band. We just have this natural relationship of it being very band-like. There’s been a very comfortable, magic kind of feel from the very beginning. I like playing with them because that exists.

Given that, I would assume, in your mind at least, it won’t be another four years before we get another Conspirators record.

No. I think we’ll find some sort of comfortable rhythm. We’ll figure it out as we go. [laughs] Just like we always do. [laughs]
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THE GW GUIDE TO FX

☑️ LEARN HOW THEY WORK
☑️ EXPLORE THE SONGS THAT MADE THEM FAMOUS
For many guitarists, much of the joy of playing comes from letting it rip with a dirty tone, and there are three flavors of true grit: overdrive, distortion and fuzz. Although the boundaries may blur between them, the way they produce gain is quite different.

On the whole, overdrive offers the lowest amount of gain of the three types, and aims to simulate the sound of a tube amp running at ear-splitting volumes — minus the tinnitus. It can also be used to boost an already cooking amp into further levels of saturation, or even other dirt pedals in a process known as “stacking.”

What makes overdrives so versatile is their “soft clipping,” as opposed to a distortion pedal’s “hard clipping.” Clipping describes the way a circuit compresses your guitar signal, so a more gentle clip will retain more of your core guitar and amp tones than a hard clip, where the dynamic range is further compressed to achieve higher levels of gain.

Many overdrive pedals also serve up a mid-frequency hump, as evidenced by the likes of Stevie Ray Vaughan, who was known to occasionally use an Ibanez Tube Screamer to help his Fender combos cut through a band mix.

## THE RIFF
Stevie Ray Vaughan and Double Trouble – “Pride and Joy”

Much of the joy of playing comes from letting it rip with a dirty tone.
The distortion control works in exactly the same way as with overdrive, except there is much more gain available, resulting in a thicker sound with more harmonics.

Start by dialing in a neutral-sounding clean tone on your amp. If you have a DS-1, set the level and distortion knobs to 10 to give maximum dirt without boosting the volume. We've set the tone to four for the required bite – tweak your amp's midrange and treble if the tone controls on your pedal aren't versatile enough.

THESE PEDALS ARE GREAT FOR GETTING KILLER GAIN TONES AT LOW VOLUME
The launch of the Maestro Fuzz Tone in 1962 was a game-changer: it was one of the very first effects pedals that secured its place in rock 'n' roll history when Keith Richards plugged one in to record Stones classic "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" back in 1965. Since then, fuzz has evolved to become one of the most varied effect types, spawning octave-fuzz effects like the Octavia (think Hendrix's guitar solo in "Purple Haze") and the high-gain, scooped grind of Electro-Harmonix's Big Muff, which inspired the title of Mudhoney's debut EP Superfuzz Bigmuff, and can be heard on just about every distorted guitar track on the Smashing Pumpkins masterpiece Siamese Dream.

What all fuzzes have in common is a lower clipping threshold than a distortion pedal, resulting in an almost totally square wave. That's why some fuzzes sound almost like a synth at times. The key difference between sounds lies in the transistors used: vintage fuzzes such as the Fuzz Face used germanium transistors, producing a warm, mid-gain sound. Raunchier fuzzes, like the Big Muff, tend to employ silicon transistors, which produce a harsher, more compressed tone. Because fuzz circuits are relatively simple, pedal builders often will employ a host of other tweaks, from multiple modes to noise gates and beyond. Listen to Matt Bellamy's use of a Z.Vex Fuzz Factory on "Plug in Baby" to hear just how far it has come.

### Fuzz

This governs how much clipping is applied to your guitar sound. Some fuzz pedals feature only this control, while the Big Muff is labeled "Sustain" and also features volume and tone controls.

### Amp Settings

Dial in a clean sound on your amp to play the opening clean riff, then kick in the distortion with your pedal. It's quite mushy so set your pedal to give plenty of fuzz and don't add too much bite with the tone control. Aim for "unity gain" so that your pedal doesn't add masses of volume when you switch from clean to dirty.

### THE RIFF

The Smashing Pumpkins' Siamese Dream is a fine example of fuzz in action.

### THE LAUNCH OF THE MAESTRO FUZZ TONE IN 1962 WAS A GAME CHANGER
Leslie refers to the early rotating speaker designs, which were intended for organ players, but were quickly adopted by guitarists looking for their signature swirl. And no, the speakers don’t actually rotate. The classic Leslie 122 consists of two speakers: one treble and one woofer. In front of the treble speaker sits a “horn,” while you’ll find a “drum” in front of the woofer. Those are what actually do the spinning. Two speeds were traditionally available: fast (as on Soundgarden’s “Black Hole Sun”) and slow (Cream’s “Badge”), controlled via a brake circuit. As the drum and horn rotate, the direction of the sound relative to your ears changes, seemingly causing fluctuations in pitch. This is known as the Doppler effect.

The Leslie’s number one problem is that it’s a separate amp entirely, and a heavy one that can break down — not suitable for taking on tour. Thankfully, there’s a host of rotary speaker pedals now available.

**THE RIFF**

Cream – “Badge”

**LESLEI SIMULATOR**

- **VOLUME**
- **SLOW**
- **DRIVE**

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**5 ROTATING SPEAKER**

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**4 TREMOLO AND VIBRATO**

Tremolo and vibrato are two of the most misused terms in guitardom, thanks to Leo Fender. That whammy bar you’re depressing is attached to a vibrato system. And vibrato is also the name of a guitar effect, and a fretting technique. In 1954 Fender dubbed the Strat’s vibrato the “Synchronized Tremolo,” giving birth to a misnomer.

Tremolo is periodic variation in volume of your guitar signal. Besides rate and depth controls to adjust the speed and intensity of the trem, most tremolos also pack shape controls, which go from a gentle triangle throb to square-wave chop. You may find a perceived volume drop with more extreme tremolo settings, so watch out for tremolos with volume controls.

Vibrato is a periodic variation in pitch; it’s mechanically the same as chorus, but with the dry guitar signal removed. It can emulate fret-hand vibrato at subtle settings, up to fast-rate Leslie wobbles and broken vinyl seasick warbles at more intense settings.

**THE RIFF**

Duane Eddy – “Rebel Rouser”

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**VIBRATO CAN EMULATE BROKEN VINYL SEASICK WARBLES AT INTENSE SETTINGS**
Don’t bore us, get to the chorus! Well, okay then. Often unfairly maligned as “the Eighties effect” owing to its use on just about every guitar track during that decade. Chorus is designed to imitate the shimmery sound of a chorus of singers trying to pitch the same note. Essentially, it splits your guitar signal into a “dry” half and a duplicate “wet” signal, which adds a series of short delays and pitch variations. The wobbled signal is then blended back with the dry signal (if you remove the dry signal entirely, you get a vibrato effect instead).

Without getting too techy, the differences between the two sounds produce a “comb filter” effect, a series of harmonically-ordered notches in the frequency spectrum of your guitar tone. These differences can then be manipulated by rate and depth knobs.

The original choruses, such as Boss’s much-lauded CE-1 Chorus Ensemble, were based around analogue “bucket-brigade” delay chips and are famed for their deep, syrupy tones. Modern digital units, such as TC Electronic’s Corona Chorus, offer increased clarity and versatility, including multiple choruses at once, as well as stereo outputs and increased EQ and level options.

CHORUS WAS USED ON JUST ABOUT EVERY GUITAR TRACK DURING THE 1980S

Andy Summers makes the most of his chorus pedal on the Police’s “Message in a Bottle”

The Police – “Message in a Bottle”

**AMP SETTINGS**

- **GAIN**
- **BASS**
- **MID**
- **TREBLE**
- **REVERB**

Summers’ tone benefits from a little overdrive for bite. Try your amp’s gain or opt for an overdrive pedal with drive set low. Place your chorus pedal after your overdrive, set the depth to around six or seven and the speed to about three. Listen for a “detuning” effect because extreme chorus settings can be dissonant.
When the first phasers dropped in the early Seventies, they set guitarists’ faces to stunned. As a result, everyone from Jimmy Page and Keith Richards to Eddie Van Halen went through a phaser, um, phase. To understand how they work, we’ll need to talk physics: soundwaves have regular peaks and valleys. In a phaser, two identical soundwaves are aligned so that when one is peaking, the other is in a valley: they’re “out of phase” with each other. Get too out of phase and the signals will cancel each other out.

Like other modulations, phasers split your signal into dry and wet halves, the latter of which passes through multiple filters, knocking the two signals out of alignment. When that’s mixed back with the dry signal, it creates cancelled-out gaps in your overall signal’s frequency range. The gaps are then moved by a low-frequency oscillator (LFO), which is controlled via a rate knob. Slow rates give a sweet swirl and sense of movement (a la Eddie Van Halen on “Eruption”), while faster settings yield a Leslie-like warble. Although rate is the only knob on MXR’s widely used Phase 90, many contemporary phasers add depth and resonance dials for more or less extreme phasing.

**AMP SETTINGS**

- **CHANNEL OVERDRIVE**
  - **GAIN**
  - **BASS**
  - **MID**
  - **TREBLE**
  - **REVERB**

We’ve opted for a distortion pedal to avoid having to crank a monster amp. Eddie’s sound has a lot of bite so we kept the tone fairly low. MXR’s Phase 90 pedal has one knob that adjusts the phasing speed; we set ours at around two or three o’clock. Use a delay with three or four repeats set to an eighth note pulse.

**THE RIFF**

**Van Halen – “Atomic Punk”**

**DISTORTION**

1. **TONE**
2. **LEVEL**
3. **DISTORTION**

**PHASER**

- **SPEED 2.5**

**DELAY**

1. **TONE**
2. **LEVEL**
3. **DISTORTION**

**WHEN PHASERS FIRST DROPPED THEY SET GUITARISTS’ FACES TO STUNNED**
If you’ve ever heard a guitar that sounded like an airplane taking off, there was probably a flanger in the signal chain. Flange swirls like a metallic phaser with extra whoosh, but its innards lie somewhere between phase and chorus.

Flangers split your guitar signal into dry and wet halves, the latter of which features a hint of delay. These delay times are shorter than a chorus at just a few milliseconds.

When the signals are blended back together again, the resultant phase interference causes harmonically ordered gaps or “notches” to appear in the frequency spectrum. The position of the notches is then swept up and down by a low-frequency oscillator (LFO, controlled by the rate knob), which alters the delay time of the wet signal just like a phaser.

Flangers are often intense-sounding, but with careful adjustment of rate and depth controls, they can produce very similar effects to chorus, too. However, crank up the resonance dial and you’ll get super-resonant sweeps that are unmistakably flange-like. You can hear it most prominently on Heart’s “Barracuda,” but a stellar clean example of the effect is the Cult’s “She Sells Sanctuary.”

**THE HUMBLE FLANGE SWIRLS LIKE A METALLIC PHASER WITH EXTRA WHOOSH**

**THE RIFF**

The Cult – “She Sells Sanctuary”

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**AMP SETTINGS**

The flanger’s intensity should be quite high; its time delay speed should also be high. Manual and width controls are at moderate levels. Set your delay pedal to give five or six repeats at about 430ms – where the repeats fall on the beat in time with the music. The repeats should be the same level as the direct sound.

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**FX GUIDE**

**1. MANUAL**
The Manual control sets the centre point of your flange’s sweeping range.

**2. WIDTH**
Aka: Depth or range, this controls how extreme the sweep is across your signal.

**3. SPEED**
The speed controls how quickly the rise and fall of the flanger’s sweep occurs.

**4. REGEN**
Regen feeds some of the delayed signal back on itself to create a more intense effect.

**BILLY DUFFY**

Billy Duffy used a flanger to bring richness and depth to the Cult’s “She Sells Sanctuary.”
Possibly the most versatile guitar effect, delay comes in many forms. Early tape-echo units were used to record and play back sound. As the tape degraded, so did the sound of the repeats, something known as “wow” and “flutter” on modern-day recreations. Bucket brigade delay chips were used to create solid-state analogue delays in stompboxes in the Seventies, while Boss pioneered the first digital delay with the DD-2 in 1983.

Analog delays have a darker tonality, while digital delays feature repeats that are exact replicas of your dry sound. Modern digital delays tend to have modes that emulate analog sounds, as well as tape and other old-school units. Delay pedals feature controls for feedback, effect level and delay time. Shorter delay times yield rockabilly slapback to big solo tones and, with higher feedback levels, the post-rock orchestration of Mogwai.

Guitarists have played around with rhythmic delays set to specific note divisions, the most famous example being U2’s the Edge on “Pride (In the Name of Love).” Fully featured delays make getting these sounds easy through the use of tap tempo footswitches (where you literally tap) and the subdivision switches, which divide the tempo into specific note values.

MODEM DIGITAL DELAYS TEND TO HAVE MODES THAT EMULATE ANALOGUE SOUNDS
Where delays offer distinct repeats, reverb is a blend of the reflections that occur when sounds bounce off surfaces around you, decaying as soundwaves are absorbed by the air and surrounding material. You’ll only tend to notice it in areas where it’s particularly obvious, though, such as a tunnel, a cathedral or a cave.

Early effects involved placing microphones in actual physical spaces—these included chamber reverb, plate reverb (literally a “plate” of sheet metal with a pickup attached to capture vibrations) and spring reverb (similar to plate reverb but cheaper and more compact, owing to the coiled nature of the spring). Spring reverb proved especially popular and quickly became the go-to onboard effect for guitar amps. Sixties Fender “blackface” amps are still considered among the most desirable sounds for guitarists. Now most guitar amps feature a spring reverb of some sort, whether physical or digitally emulated.

Reverb pedals offer digital recreations of these spaces—some real (room, hall), and some imagined, such as the deepest depths of outer space. Controls usually consist of level, decay (length of reverb “trails”), tone (to emulate bright or dark spaces) and pre-delay (how long before the reverb kicks in). Like delay, you’ll often find these modulated by other effects, such as chorus, tremolo or pitch for shimmering, synth-like pad sounds.

**1 Blend** The blend control sets the balance between your original sound and the reverb-effected signal.

**2 Reverb** Increasing the reverb time will lengthen the decay of your reverb, meaning it will take longer to fade out.

**3 Tone** Thick use of reverb can clutter your sound, so the tone control can add or remove frequencies to give you ambience.

**4 Pre-Delay** Some reverb pedals offer a pre-delay control, which controls how long it takes for the reverb effect to hit after you pick your notes.

**5 Modes** Just as with delay effects, there are many different flavors of reverb, from retro plate and spring to modern reverse effects.

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WE CATCH UP WITH THE PROLIFIC AND ETERNALLY IN-DEMAND EX-SMITHS GUITARIST IN HIS PRIVATE STUDIO — BIRTHPLACE OF HIS LATEST HIGH-FLYING SOLO ALBUM, CALL THE COMET.
PEARHEADED ON GUITAR BY JOHNNY MARR, THE SMITHS’ unique output of music from 1982 guaranteed them the solid title of “timeless institution,” even after their split in 1987.

And with every decade since, their future-proof back catalog has continued to influence generations of aspiring musicians. While Johnny is perhaps best known for the five years he spent in the Smiths, that time represents just a fraction of his musical life. After leaving the band more than 30 years ago, at the age of 23, he’s remained in constant change. His prolific nature and restless creative disposition has seen him collaborate with an array of artists over the years including Bryan Ferry, Beck, Talking Heads, the Pretenders, Hans Zimmer and Noel Gallagher’s High Flying Birds; in addition to longer-term projects he’s embarked on with the The, Electronic, Johnny Marr and the Healers, Modest Mouse and the Cribs.

Johnny’s latest solo album, Call the Comet, comes after an intense period of reflection, which saw him dwelling deep into the past with his autobiography, Set the Boy Free. And now, with his mind firmly back in the present, we dropped by to find out more about his new work.

We arrive at his imposing red-brick Victorian factory building in Manchester, England, and take the elevator to the top floor — the location of his private studio space. After a warm welcome and a quick brew, we take a close look at some of the guitars in Johnny’s collection and make ourselves comfortable in the control room among the various instruments, amps, pedals and gizmos lying around in the aftermath of the album’s recording (perfect timing for a photo shoot!).

Congratulations on your new album, Call the Comet. How are you feeling now that it’s finished?
Thanks very much. I’m really proud of it. It’s exciting. To be honest with you, I don’t really talk to people a lot about it. I’m still feeling a little bit like I’m rubbing my eyes coming out of the studio...

What was the inspiration behind it?
I wanted to make a modern rock record. I had an instinct about what that would be, but I didn’t analyze or conceptualize it — I just walked into this place with one song written, which was Spiral Cities and I just fell into trying to find this feeling of contemporary rock music. That’s one of the great things about having a life in music — I’ve learned that I can follow a feeling. A couple of other times in my career — [the Smiths’] Meat Is Murder was another time — I was following a feeling. I was following a different idea on Call the Comet. Sometimes I follow a concept — like putting the solo band together, that was more ideas about the kind of group I wanted to be in and the kind of songs I wanted to write. I had a lot of time to think about putting a solo band together when I was with the Cribs and Modest Mouse. I collected titles and developed a certain kind of idea about what I wanted to sing about.

What was the feeling behind the first single from the album, “The Tracers”?
It’s inspired by Tyrannosaurus Rex. The feeling, when I got “The Tracers” together, was all about this rumbling in the drums and bass, and this idea that it was night time outside, the moon was out and there was a sense of portent — that kind of excitement you get when you’re a kid and you stay up too late and there’s a sort of mystery in the air and potential danger. That, to me, is one of the things that rock music does very well — or rock music as I’ve always thought of it. I went into this record being drawn to that feeling without even being aware of it, until I wrote “The Tracers.”

Did it feel good to get back to making music and playing guitar after concentrating on your autobiography, Set the Boy Free?
I spent a year writing the book and I found the promotion of it quite draining, to be honest. I think, because I’d written the book, I had, literally, filled up all the pages, so everything was blank to me. Ordinarily that might be scary, but because making records and being in a band is what I do, I just had to get on with it. My only direction was to follow a feeling, cross my fingers and hope for the best. I was in the process of escaping into this big factory and into my new record and hopefully coming out the other end having gone through a whole mood, and using rock music to do it. Because the book was directly about the events that had happened in my life and was quite big in the mainstream, I found myself in a lot of mainstream media, and that’s quite intrusive, I think. I wanted the book to get the attention, but it definitely took it out of me. So, I was very eager to get in and play music, almost as a kind of refuge.

There’s no doubt about it — making the record was an escape, and most of the themes of the record are about escape through alternative thinking. Whether that’s being a musician, or living in an alternative society, or being a character in the song “Rise,” or escaping with “The Tracers,” or escaping into “Spiral Cities.” “Fall in all in detournement, follow illumination” [“Spiral Cities” lyrics] — that’s very much about going to a place. The lyrics for “New Dominions” are also concerned with escaping to a different environment.

Are you feeling more grounded having gone through that process?
Yeah, there’s no escaping the way society affects people — the difficulties, the hardships, the frustrations and just a weird feeling in the air. To deal with that, I kind of took full advantage of the fact that I’d been a musician since I was a kid and decided to honor the fact that being a musician gives me a means of escape. When you’ve been doing it a long time — particularly if it’s your livelihood — you can sometimes overlook just how much of an escape creativity and being an artist is.

Does music often feel more real to you than what other people might call “real life”?
That was entirely the conclusion I came to as a child, but it expressed emotional truths that didn’t necessarily have to be expressed through language. I think the abstract nature of sound and music is the most effective means of communication. For example, if you make some really insane discordant, disorientating sound on a drill through reverb — as an industrial musician would — that’s going to convey the horror of potential doom probably better than any language! I bought into the abstract nature of music being more descriptive and better at evoking emotions when I was about seven years old during Irish house parties at the house I lived in with my family — usually these very dramatic and sad tunes. That would then come out in stuff that I would write.

As a kid, when you heard music were you listening out for the guitar?
Always, yeah! That’s how I started out — just always looking out for guitar sounds, really. I identified to myself that the guitar was my main interest at a really young age. The grownups used to talk about me and my guitar, so it was reinforced — that was my thing. My parents were probably amazed by it, and also they really liked that idea because they loved music. Even when I was a teenager and I was playing really loud in my room and everything was all about the guitar!

You threw yourself into it early. What was it like gigging with a band like Sister Ray at such a young age?
I kind of saw it as clocking on to an apprenticeship, really. It was scary being in Sis-
and paraded about, as Chris was told, “You should get this kid in your band, ’cause he’s a shit-hot guitar player.” Chris looked at him, then looked at me and said, “Yeah, but he’s a kid?” and I was standing there going, “Yeah, this is kind of ridiculous. I’d much rather be with my mates at the moment.” I also knew that I had loads to learn. I knew what kind of standard I wanted to get to.

What was the focus behind concentrating on your technique?

I was just so into using the guitar as a machine to make a great 45. I never forgot that. It was always in the service of not only a song, but also of making a record. I discarded loads of shreddy stuff because it wasn’t interesting to me and still isn’t. I would listen to records of that stuff and think, “This is rubbish — I’d rather be listening to the Temptations.” Luckily, I’d followed Rory Gallagher around and had seen Thin Lizzy so many times that I knew what really great blues rock and impressive flash guitar playing was all about.

That twin-guitar thing was really flash and was a great sound, and it did the teenage boy thing, but it’s not pointless, silly shredding that doesn’t sound anything like music. I wasn’t a snob about it, but as a teenager I had this idea of an approach to the guitar that I knew was going to take some thinking about. A lot of it was about discarding the stuff that I didn’t need. Right from the off on a record I always thought the guitar should make its presence known in the first three seconds.

Was it as much about the production of rock music you listened to that informed your technique?

I think growing up and being smitten by glam rock as an 11-year-old guitar player, and hearing all those great arrangements — whether it was Mick Ronson, Mick Ralphs, Chris Spedding and the guys in the Sweet — all those guys who were making these great three-and-a-half-minute guitar records. I never dropped that. The impression those glam records made on me and that excitement never, ever went away and is still with me now. I think the song “Bug” off the new record has got a bit of that in it. It deliberately doesn’t have a solo in it and it comes back to the intro riff and it’s a chant. I feel like I’ve made a guitar record — it’s a record that happens to be made by guitars, but it’s not about necessarily about the guitarist.

Considering Hendrix and all the past masters, it almost seems pointless to try and make a statement based on technique alone...

I always thought being an authentic musician was to aspire to or develop your own unique and original style, whether it was fancy and impressive or not. For me, when it comes to technique and expression, it’s all there in John McLaughlin, in My Goal’s “Beyond” (the first acoustic record he made), because the technique facilitates the music. He’s trying to say something fast, not just for the sake of it, but for the feel of it — and then it’s completely valid.

How important do you think is it for guitarists to know the history of their instrument?

I think it’s the same in any artform, whether it be painting, poetry or whatever. People who are into doing something truly great study the past masters. It’s partly just because of obsession, but I made it my business to find out what Les Paul, Django Reinhardt and people like that were all about, and I think young musicians will always do that. I can’t imagine a really great guitar player not knowing those things. You really need to have heard Les Paul — not just him whizzing up and down the neck playing really fast. You need to understand what he was about and the technology. Understanding the context of it is a fascinating thing.

Perhaps the pinnacle of technique is when reacting to emotional responses becomes second nature...

I think that’s what everybody is really looking for in an instrument. That’s what I understand about John Coltrane and Jimi Hendrix — there’s no gap between impulse and expression. It’s about trying to make the instrument invisible, at least during improvisation, which kind of goes against a lot of what some people think being a musician is about (the worship of the instrument). It’s the closest thing to what we understand as being magic, that I know of — that improvisation between people when in a split second someone reacts to someone else is pretty magical. The guitar’s a conduit.

I think many would agree that there’s something magical about guitars...

There’s a lot about the guitar that is different to other instruments — the fact that electricity is involved and the really fabulous colors! One of the benefits of learning the guitar, for me, was that it was something where I could be on my own and just fuck everybody off and do something really engaging on my own. I feel very lucky to have found something that’s been a lifelong obsession, let alone get paid for it.

It’s a great thing if you’ve got an identifiable style. As Chet Atkins said, “If your mother hears you playing on the radio and she knows it’s you, you’re a good guitar player.” There’s a lot to be said for that. 🌟
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Pedals of a Different Color
FENDER PUGILIST DISTORTION, SANTA ANA OVERDRIVE, MARINE LAYER REVERB AND MIRROR IMAGE DELAY

By Chris Gill

SINCE THE EARLY Fifties, Fender has remained a music industry leader in the worlds of guitars, basses and amplifiers with their expansive ranges of top-notch instruments and amps. However, one significantly related category that Fender hasn’t pursued quite as extensively over the last six or seven decades is effect pedals. Through my most thorough research, I was able to come up with only 15 stomp boxes (not including utility tools, such as volume and expression pedals or tuners) that Fender released prior to 2018, and almost half of those were announced over the last 10 years.

However, this year, Fender has finally plunged headlong into the wild and wonderful world of stomp box effects. And to date the company has announced nine new pedals, almost doubling the number of effects the company has ever offered in one fell swoop. The
The line currently consists of bread-and-butter effects, including overdrive, two distortion pedals, fuzz, boost, delay, reverb, compression and a buffer. No wacky modulators, filters, pitch shifters or even wah or tremolo yet, but hopefully those effects are in the works.

We’re taking a look at four of the first of Fender’s new pedals to hit the market: Santa Ana Overdrive, Pugilist Distortion, Mirror Image Delay and Marine Layer Reverb.

FEATURES Most companies that enter the stomp box game merely tend to imitate, basically offering yet another choice instead of something truly new. Fender takes a very different approach, introducing several features so cool that we’re surprised no one thought of them before and that they haven’t become more common. I particularly like the magnetic battery access compartment at the front of the pedal, which is simply genius. The LEDs that illuminate the knob settings look awesome, but even better is the ability to turn them on or off with the flick of a switch on the rear panel. The Mirror Image Delay and Marine Layer Reverb pedals have a Dry Kill on/off switch. Setting this function “on” sends only the “wet” signal to the pedal’s output, which is ideal for a parallel loop setup where a dry signal always comes through the amp and the wet, processed signal is blended in separately for maximum clarity. The Santa Ana Overdrive also includes a true bypass/buffer switch and a boost function switch for selecting level or gain boost.

The Pugilist Distortion has a cool dual-distortion circuit design, with each circuit providing individual tone and gain controls. A Blend knob allows users to blend the circuits together to create rich, layered distortion. The Santa Ana Overdrive has three-band EQ, plus presence and two different voice modes. The Mirror Image Delay provides digital, analog or tape delay type settings, dotted 1/8th note on/off and two variations of each delay type, as well as controls for delay time, modulation depth and rate, feedback and level. The Marine Layer Reverb has hall, room and special reverb type settings also with two variations each, a filter on/off switch and pre-delay, reverb time, damping and level controls.

PERFORMANCE While the effect categories that Fender selected for its new line are certainly bare-bone staples, each of the pedals has its own distinct personality that make them worth consideration by players who may already own dozens of stomp boxes. The Pugilist Distortion excels at producing wicked high-gain distortion effects with stacks of harmonically complex layers that are really easy to dial in to perfection. The Santa Ana Overdrive produces fat lead tones as well as distinctive hard rock rhythm crunch, and the switchable boost function is great for punching a solo above the mix (level setting) or adding extra creamy compression and sustain (gain setting).

The Mirror Image Delay delivers rich, musical-sounding echo and slap-back effects with impressive clarity and “edgy” warmth, particularly in the analog and tape settings. The modulation section also allows those who prefer more creative (i.e. weird) textures to dial in some unusual effects. The Marine Layer Reverb’s hall and room reverbs are exceptional, with smooth tails and realistic ambience, while the “special” effects, which includes an octave reverb layer and modulated reverb, also provide creative sustenance for those who prefer something a little different (and without spending several hundred dollars to do so).

STREET PRICE: Santa Ana Overdrive, $199.99; Pugilist Distortion, $99.99; Marine Layer Reverb, $149.99; Mirror Image Delay, $149.99.

MANUFACTURER: Fender, fender.com

THE BOTTOM LINE Fender’s new line of effects impresses for each pedal’s utilitarian functionality, distinct sounds, useful and innovative new features (particularly the magnetized battery compartment door) and most of all for their exceptionally affordable prices.
If all of these instruments are under $399.99, just imagine the amazing prices on the thousands of other guitars we have in stock – ready and waiting for you to check out!
I’VE ALWAYS BEEN fond of Jericho Guitars’ extended-range guitars, but what fascinated me most is that they regard a 25.75-inch scale length to be the proper scale length for all six-string guitars. Compare that to Gibson (24.74-inch) and Fender (25.5-inch). Jericho’s standard scale length provides an ideal marriage between intonation and string tension, especially for many modern players who down-tune regularly.

I asked the gang at Jericho Guitars to explain the reason behind the 25.75-inch scale length. Their response was, “What you get with the slightly longer scale is a truer source signal. Traditional and modern forms of amplification, like impulse responses, benefit from the extra harmonic content provided by this scale length.” Considering that, I believe Jericho’s Fusion Walnut EverTune might be the best guitar for today’s players who gig and record consistently. The combination of Jericho Guitars’ standard scale length and the inclusion of the EverTune Bridge makes it nearly impossible to play out of tune, regardless of the tuning you choose. More traditional players shouldn’t feel left out since the Fusion Walnut Evertune’s aesthetic and sound will also appeal to the classic rock and country crowd.

FEATURES It’s immediately apparent the Fusion Walnut EverTune blends two classic guitar designs in its appearance, but what’s even more noticeable is the outstanding fit and finish. The guitar features neck-through-body construction with a three-piece mahogany neck, flanked by two gorgeous slabs of solid walnut for its body and a very thin semi-gloss finish that almost feels matte. The ebony fingerboard features block inlays, medium jumbo frets and a super-flat 17-inch fretboard radius. It’s the first Fusion model that comes with a factory-installed EverTune bridge, a revolutionary spring-designed bridge (and saddles) that delivers precise intonation and keeps string tension intact despite temperature and humidity changes. The guitar’s striking looks are further enhanced by black hardware, which include Grover locking tuners, a GraphTech Black TUSQ XL nut and custom black covered Seymour Duncan JB (bridge) and ’59 (neck) pickups with push/pull “coil-splitting” on both tone knobs.

PERFORMANCE The Fusion Walnut EverTune has a firm response and balanced tension. I attribute this to its scale length in concert with the EverTune Bridge, which contributes a tactile elasticity where you feel more in control and connected to the instrument. Even more stunning is the way the EverTune Bridge compensates for intonation, where every fretted note and chord sounds perfectly in tune, regardless of the amount of pressure applied. Also, the slim, flat C-shaped neck profile is uniformly contoured, making your hand literally glide across the whole neck.

The guitar is dense and dark sounding, which perfectly complements its brooding aesthetic. The JB and ’59 pickups are a great choice here, offering defined tones without being overwhelming, and combined with the coil tapping, further expands your tonal options to craft many shades of vintage and metal tones. For the guitarist who relies on precise intonation and full-bodied sound, the Fusion Walnut EverTune is an absolute must.

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**CHEAT SHEET**

| STREET PRICE: $1,199.99 | ● The EverTune Bridge keeps intonation and tension spot-on, despite the amount of pressure you exert on the fretboard. |
| MANUFACTURER: Jericho Guitars, jerichoguitars.com | ● The Seymour Duncan JB and ’59 pickups provide a great array of fiery output and vintage burn, with even more flexibility if you use both coil taps. |
| THE BOTTOM LINE The Jericho Guitars Fusion Walnut EverTune combines flawless intonation and playability in a guitar that’s tailor-made for any player who craves focused, dynamic tone. |
the moment of truth

Hollywood, California - December 8th 9:58 PM

Eric McFadden sits down with his trusty Ovation Mod TX. These are the moments when the music is most organic. When fret buzz is a thing of beauty. When the notes are spiritual. Ovation, more than five decades of moments like these.
BACK IN THE “Golden Era” of the acoustic guitar — I’m talking about the 1930s here, folks — the differences between “budget” models, like a Gibson L-00 or Martin OOO-18, and high-end models, such as the Gibson Nick Lucas Special or Martin OOO-45, were mainly a matter of wood quality and cosmetic embellishments like pearl inlays. In terms of tone, all of the models sounded excellent, with only subtle differences in the expanded tonal complexity of the more expensive guitars.

In more recent times, the schism has widened and the difference between a sub-$1,000 acoustic and a boutique guitar that costs thousands of dollars is much more dramatic. However, PRS acoustics have much more in common with the Golden Era philosophy. Their affordable SE series instruments perform well beyond the usual standards of other acoustics in their price range, delivering tone that’s comparable to their Private Stock acoustics. While these days it’s not difficult to find a good-sounding acoustic for less than $1,000, PRS SE acoustics offer guitarists sound and playability that are elevated to an entirely different league.

FEATURES The PRS SE Acoustic series is currently comprised of six models: three different variants of the cutaway Angelus models and three full-body Tonare models, each available with mahogany, maple or ovangkol back and sides. I reviewed the SE Angelus AX20E, which features X-bracing and mahogany back and sides, and the SE Tonare T40E, which has hybrid “X”/classical bracing and ovangkol back and sides. All current PRS SE acoustics include built-in Fishman GT1 electronics, solid Sitka spruce tops, mahogany necks, ebony bridges and fretboards and bone nuts and saddles. The neck specs are also identical, including the 25.3-inch scale length, wide fat profile, 11.8-inch radius, 20 medium frets, Birds fretboard inlays and 1 11/16-inch nut width.

Cosmetically, the SE Angelus AX20E and SE Tonare T40E differ slightly, with the latter being the fancier of the two with its tiger acrylic purfling and rosette and cream body binding compared to the former’s simpler black and white binding and rosette. The Fishman GT1 electronics are virtually “invisible,” with only a small block for the output jack and battery compartment access mounted on the lower treble side and rotary volume and tone controls mounted above the low E string inside the soundhole.

PERFORMANCE Whenever I receive an
acoustic guitar for review, I prefer to approach the instrument “blind” and guess the price before doing further research. After spending a few hours playing the PRS SE Angelus AX20E and SE Tonare T40E and making my best guess, I was shocked (in a very good way) to discover that my price estimates were $1,000 to $1,200 more than the street prices of these guitars (and that was with the knowledge that these are SE series instruments). The refinement and complexity of tone in both instruments is simply unheard of in the price range that these guitars sell for.

The T40E is an expressive, dynamic instrument with outstanding bass-to-treble balance that’s powerful, sweet, and rich thanks to its ingenious combination of X-bracing and classical fan-style bracing. The cathedral reverb-like resonance is stunning. This model is by far the best fingerstyle instrument I’ve played in the sub-$1,000 price range, and it even outshines guitars I’ve played costing three to six times as much.

The AX20E is also a great fingerstyle instrument, but its more focused range and output makes it better for strummed rhythm playing and more aggressive flat-picking techniques. Whereas some mahogany guitars can sound overly warm, the AX20E is brilliant and lively with rich harmonic overtones and the depth of overdubbed acoustic layers. The Fishman undersaddle pickup delivers natural acoustic tone with little embellishment — perfect for these guitars as they sound awesome on their own.

CHEAT SHEET

LIST PRICE: SE Angelus AX20E, $649; SE Tonare T40E, $699
MANUFACTURER: PRS Guitars, prsguitars.com

- The SE Angelus AX20E is a cutaway model with mahogany back and sides and X-bracing, while the SE Tonare T40E is a full-body model with ovangkol back and sides and hybrid “X”/classical fan bracing.
- Both models feature solid Sitka spruce tops, mahogany necks with ebony fingerboards, bone nuts and saddles, and built-in Fishman GT1 electronics.
- THE BOTTOM LINE
Delivering responsive dynamics and sweet, complex harmonics, these new SE acoustic models from PRS perform at an elevated level comparable to much more expensive boutique instruments but with an entry level price tag.

Admittedly, I was never much of a “wireless guitar” guy. I hated having to deal with replacing batteries and traveling with a bulky receiver and a transmitter that had to live on my guitar strap. Plus, I always thought the sound wasn’t as good as using a really good instrument cable. Well, things have drastically changed in regards to wireless technology because companies like NUX have improved audio quality and streamlined the idea of wireless guitar with the release of their NUX B-2 2.4 GHz Wireless System.

It combines a transmitter with a receiver that fits in the palm of your hand, a built-in rechargeable battery and crystal-clear guitar response that sounds as good as a high-quality instrument cable. The NUX B-2 2.4 GHz Wireless System delivers 32-bit digital wireless sound quality and detailed 44.1 kHz frequency response with a wide dynamic range of more than 110 dB, which allows for a full frequency range of your guitar or bass. The B-2 features a cleverly elegant 1/4-inch swivel-jack design (280° of rotation) on the transmitter and receiver so you can easily plug in and rotate the unit away from your playing area. Both units include a power on/off switch and a channel button to scroll through the four channels, with red/green LED indicators. What’s even better is the B-2 operates in the 2.4 GHz frequency range, away from any TV or radio signal interference.

Setting up the B-2 is as simple as powering up, selecting the same channel for both the transmitter and receiver, plugging the receiver into your amp and inserting the transmitter to your guitar. That’s it. The sound is so uncannily clear and transparent you’ll forget you’re no longer using cables. The B-2 works flawlessly in a 50-foot range, and battery life lasts up to six hours, if you play continuously. If not, the units go into Sleep Mode, which extends battery life up to 20 hours. When it’s time to recharge, the included USB cable is coupled to charge both units simultaneously.

—Paul Riario
STREET PRICE: $129
MANUFACTURER: NUX, nuxefx.com

For video of this review, go to GuitarWorld.com/November2018
Any guitarist who has tried to combine computer software or mobile device apps with a traditional live performing rig (i.e. genuine amps and effect pedals) probably knows that while it can be done, it also can be a lot more complicated than it needs to be. Orange's new OMEC Teleport audio interface greatly simplifies the integration of software/apps, within an existing rig, by providing guitarists with a stomp box device that easily fits on a pedal board, converts analog audio to digital and vice versa, and connects directly to a computer or mobile device via USB. When you want to access sounds or models from your software, you simply engage the footswitch. You can also use OMEC Teleport as an audio interface for recording directly to digital audio workstation software.

**Features**
The “micro” pedal design of the Orange OMEC Teleport is truly as simple as it gets. There is a ¼-inch input jack, two ¼-inch output jacks for stereo output or sending signals to two different signal chains, a USB jack and a 9-volt DC center negative plug for a 2.1mm power supply plug (a power adapter is not included, but the unit can be powered with any standard 9-volt adapter or power supply). That’s it. There are no knobs to adjust as all settings, such as output level, are controlled within the software or app itself. The super compact size means that OMEC Teleport can easily fit into a crowded pedalboard. The package also includes a free download of IK Multimedia’s AmpliTube CS app (for Mac OS/PC) that provides models of four Orange amps and cabinets and seven stomp boxes. The app also has a loop drummer and single-track recorder.

**Performance**
Thanks to its true “plug and play” design, using OMEC Teleport couldn’t be any easier. Just connect a guitar or a pedal’s output to the input, connect the output(s) to an amp or other pedal in the signal chain and connect the USB jack to your computer (an optional cable is necessary for connection to an Android or iOS mobile device). Since I have so many unique pedals that haven’t been modeled yet, I particularly enjoyed placing OMEC Teleport at the end of my signal chain and using it to incorporate amp models from various apps into my rig. Even cooler was being able to blend my “real world” amp with modeled amps sent to sound system to create massive, complex tonal textures.

**Cheat Sheet**
- The USB jack connects directly to a computer without needing any drivers or further setup for true plug and play recording.
- The “micro” stomp box design allows guitarists to add digital models to their standard rig with the ease and simplicity of adding a new stomp box to a pedalboard.
- **The Bottom Line**
The plug and play stomp box design of the Orange OMEC Teleport makes it easier than ever to combine digital software/app models with pedals and amps in your performance rig, as well as to record digital audio with no fuss.

**Street Price:** $189

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More great ways in which songwriters have used first-inversion chords

LAST MONTH, WE looked at several stylistically diverse examples of musically appealing ways in which famous bands, recording artists and songwriters have used first-inversion chords (specifically triads) in some of their most celebrated songs. First-inversion means with the chord’s third being the lowest note in the voicing, or “in the bass.” I’d now like to continue with this worthwhile topic and cite a few more examples of compositionally effective ways in which first-inversion chords have been used in popular music.

One good, smooth-sounding way to use a first-inversion major chord is as a “filler” between the I and IV chords in a major key. This creates the feeling of a chord change without actually changing the harmony of the previous chord. Three famous acoustic guitar-driven examples that immediately come to mind are the intro and verse to “Don’t Follow” by Alice in Chains, the outro section of “Patience” by Guns N’ Roses and “Thinking Out Loud” by Ed Sheeran, all of which repeatedly go from an open D chord to D/F# to G (the first two songs performed on guitars tuned down a half step), using the common voicings illustrated in FIGURE 1. (The low F# note, which is the third of the D chord, may be conveniently fretted with the thumb.) The famous piano ending to “Layla” by Derek and the Dominos, elegantly performed by Jim Gordon, features the same three-chord loop, played down a whole step, in the key of C. FIGURE 2 shows pleasant-sounding guitar voicings for the progression in that key, as well as standard ways to finger them in the other important guitar keys of G, A and E major.

You could, of course, just use first-inversion chords sort of randomly or chromatically — as Pearl Jam’s Eddie Vedder did to great effect in “Better Man” — using the movable shape illustrated in FIGURE 3, and fingerpicking the strings to obtain the sparse, open-sounding voicing. Notice how much musical warmth and weight the low third in the bass provides.

A more dramatic way to use a first-inversion chord is to create a chromatic bass-line “walk up” from the V chord of a major key to the relative minor, or vi minor, chord, with the insertion of a secondary dominant with the third in the bass. A good, well-known example of this can be found in the pre-chorus of Oasis’ mid-Nineties hit “Don’t Look Back in Anger,” where the progression, which is in the key of C overall, goes from an open G5 chord to an unusual and clever voicing of E7/G#. This utilizes the open D string in conjunction with three fretted notes, to Am, as is FIGURE 4.

The late Jeff Buckley employed this same “tug on my heart strings” move near the end of each verse in his impassioned cover of the Leonard Cohen song “Hallelujah,” for which the guitarist, using a capo at the sixth fret, plays an open D chord, followed by B7/D, which begs compellingly for a resolution to Em, as is FIGURE 5. Jon Bon Jovi’s piano-driven cover of the song, performed in the key of B, features the same move, in this case from F to E/G to Gm (that second chord, for you theory sticklers, is technically called D/F# — “D sharp over F double sharp”). Interestingly, in Cohen’s original reading of the song, which he recorded in the key of C, the songsmith follows the same basic progression but doesn’t make use of the first-inversion with the secondary dominant chord, in this case E7. So it’s essentially the same three chords as those cited earlier in “Don’t Look Back in Anger,” minus the G# bass note in the E7 chord.

That other great American songwriter, James Taylor, employed this first-inversion, secondary-dominant move to the relative minor chord in some of his classic songs, such as “Carolina in My Mind,” “Shower the People” and “Your Smiling Face,” using voicings like those illustrated in FIGURES 6 and 7. In the latter example, JT masterfully chains together root-position, first-inversion and second-inversion triads to create a chromatic bass climb that’s pretty much the opposite of what Paul McCartney did in the verses to “Maybe I’m Amazed,” which we looked at last time.

Senior Music Editor “Downtown” Jimmy Brown is an experienced, working guitarist, performer and private teacher in the greater NYC area whose professional mission is to entertain, enlighten and inspire people with his guitar playing and lessons.
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STEP INSIDE THE BOX

A pattern-based soloing approach

IN THE LAST several columns, I demonstrated ways to develop new lick ideas by moving between different pairs of adjacent strings while traversing up and down the fretboard, as opposed to remaining within a scale’s fixed position and “box” pattern. Now, I’d like to take the opposite approach and look at ways to get the most out of sticking within a single fretboard position.

When staying within a single box, licks can be built from moving across all six strings. A great way to elaborate on this approach is to take the melodic shapes and phrases that are played in a given position and move them up or down the fretboard through all of that scale’s other positions and patterns. Using this approach, you have a template for generating new phrases that are based on the articulations and rhythmic syncopation of the notes originally played in one position, and new melodies can be discovered when moving that template around to various positions.

To illustrate, let’s begin with the E blues scale (E G A B D) played in 12th position. A good way to develop a melodic idea while staying within a box like this is to play a line on the top three strings (the G, B and high E), then move over to the next set of three adjacent strings (D G B), then the next (A D G) and then, finally, the bottom three (low E, A and D strings). This results in four areas, or “cells.” In FIGURE 1, four one-bar phrases are played in this manner. Notice that the rhythmic motif for each lick and bar is similar. In this sense, it is the rhythm of the line that creates the continuity and sense of theme and development. This type of solo phrasing is readily apparent in the playing of Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix, Johnny Winter, Jeff Beck, Duane Allman and many other blues-rock greats. FIGURE 2 offers another example of this lick-development approach, wherein the rhythmic syncopation of each phrase is virtually identical.

FIGURE 3 illustrates what happens when we move this melodic and rhythmic template down to the next lower position of the E blues scale, 10th position. Because the various scale degrees are fretted with different fingers and fall on different strings, the shape of the melodies changes accordingly, yielding distinct results.

Let’s move down one more time, to seventh position, which generates the lick shown in FIGURE 4. Using this system for creating phrases and building solo lines can result in some unusual and unexpected results, and I encourage you to explore as many different variants as possible while utilizing this concept.

Guitar World Associate Editor Andy Aledort is recognized worldwide for his vast contributions to guitar instruction, via his many best-selling instructional DVDs, transcription books and online lessons.
“Having Dry n’ Glide has been huge. Now I can’t imagine getting through a set without it.”

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ALL ASPIRING GUITARISTS, in learning to play in the styles they are most interested in, analyze the solos of their favorite guitarist, and this is how each of us learns to “speak” in the musical language of our heroes. At a certain point, however, we must each take what we have studied and learn how to utilize it in a unique way, in order to sound like ourselves.

I, myself, am not aware of the nuances of my own playing, while I’m playing. It’s only when I listen back to a recording of one of my solos that I will think, “well, that’s interesting,” because I’m articulating that line with a lot of subtle bends, or I’m picking hard to get pinch harmonics, or what have you. I consider it an essential part of the learning process to record yourself and then scrutinize the recording to listen to what you did and focus on how you can improve.

FIGURE 1 offers an example of a typical way in which I might improvise a short phrase. The line is based on the D minor pentatonic scale (D F G A C), with the inclusion of the minor second, or ninth, E, which I like to use to bend up one half step to the minor third, F. I also like to bend the fifth, A, up a half step to the minor sixth, B. The addition of these two notes results in the D natural minor scale, also known as the D Aeolian mode (D E F G A B C).

In breaking down this three-bar passage, the basic notes in the first phrase are shown in FIGURE 2. Instead of fretting each note, I prefer to introduce subtle half-step bends throughout the line to give it more emotion and musical expression, as demonstrated in FIGURE 3. The first phrase is played with my guitar’s bridge pickup on and a strong pick attack, which yields a bold, aggressive feeling.

For the second half of the phrase, I switch to my neck pickup while backing off the intensity of my pick attack, in order to achieve a smoother articulation of the melody, as shown in FIGURE 4. That said, I’m still varying the pick attack, as well as my use of subtle bends, which serve to give the line character. It is these little variations and nuances that present your unique musical “fingerprint” and make your playing recognizable as your own.

FIGURE 5 offers another example of employing my bridge pickup with an aggressive pick attack, here with a lick based on the F7 blues scale (F G A B C D E). Again, I’m including the major second/ninth, in this case G7. If I were to transpose that lick back to the key of D minor, I get something along the lines of FIGURE 6.

Finger vibrato is, of course, one of the most expressive sounds on electric guitar, and you should experiment with different approaches to vibrato. FIGURE 7 illustrates subtle differences in vibrato, as associated with Yngwie Malmsteen, Zakk Wylde, Dave Murray and Michael Schenker. Each is slightly different, so be aware of the sound of your own vibrato as compared to your favorite players.

For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/November2018

Richie Faulkner has been a member of legendary U.K. heavy metal band Judas Priest since 2011. Their 2018 album, Firepower, became the band’s highest-charting album ever in the U.S.
SHAPE UP
Getting your chops in tip-top shape

A QUESTION I’M often asked is, “What’s the best way to warm up before trying to shred?” This month, I’d like to share my preferred warm-up and practice methods and also demonstrate some effective exercises for developing fret-hand dexterity and finger independence.

Let’s start with an exercise that I think every guitar player should do even before picking up the guitar, and that is properly stretching your hands and arms. To my mind, the best way to stretch before playing is to work out the entire arms, as well as the hands and wrists. Start by putting your fret hand in front of you with your palm flat, as in a “stop” motion, and with your arm straight out, then rotate your hand up and down. Next, point the arm out to the side with the palm in the same position, and turn your head away from your palm. If you do this correctly, you should feel the stretch all the way up through your entire arm. Turn your head away and gently rotate your hand in circles, stretching out all of the tendons in your fingers and wrist. Repeat with the other arm.

Now that we’re limbered up, let’s perform the most basic exercise of all: chromatic notes played on adjacent strings in ascending and descending manner. This time-honored practice drill helps to building fret-hand finger independence, strengthens the pinkie and gets all fingers working in synchronization.

As shown in FIGURE 1, I begin by playing the notes on the first four frets of the low E string — F F G G — with fingers 1, 2, 3 and 4. The pattern then moves up to each higher string. Be sure to use alternate (down-up) picking throughout. After playing the highest note on the high E string, G, I move up one fret and then descend in the opposite manner — 4 3 2 1 — and then repeat the entire routine across all of the strings in a descending manner. When playing through this exercise, be sure to fret every note properly and pick it cleanly, so you will be practicing proper technique and articulation.

A great twist on this chromatic exercise is to change the note pattern slightly, as demonstrated in FIGURE 2. Here, the fingering and fretting pattern is index-pinkie, ring-pinkie, middle-pinkie and ring-pinkie, starting on the low E string. As in FIGURE 1, the pattern then moves across to all of the other strings. You can shift this sequence up chromatically and continue up the entire fretboard, or start in a higher position, as shown in FIGURE 3, where I begin up at the 12th fret. At the end of bar 6, I shift down one fret and begin the pattern again, this time from the low E string and move back up across the strings. FIGURE 4 illustrates the same concept but played in double-time, as 16th notes.

This is my last column for now. I hope you’ve enjoyed the lessons we’ve covered and look forward to seeing you on the road!

Nita Strauss tours regularly with Alice Cooper and has her own all-female band, We Start Wars. Visit nitastrauss.com for more information.
EXONERATING THE WHAMMY
Using your vibrato bar creatively and tastefully

IN MY EXPERIENCE, the whammy bar — known more formally as a tremolo bar, or more precisely, a vibrato bar — started to get a bad name among modern metal guitarists who were trying to play with “modern” taste. Many players think of the whammy as something from the Eighties that was only used for cliché techniques, such as “dives” or “scoops” with harmonics, as shown in FIGURE 1, and that was pretty much it. The choice came down to: Do I have a whammy bar that I will shake wildly, or will I instead play with a fixed bridge? But in truth, like any articulation technique or device available to an electric guitar player, the whammy bar can offer a really fun and expressive way to expand your sound.

The examples in this column are derived from the title track from my 2016 album, Handmade Cities. When you hear the ways in which I utilize the whammy bar to articulate the melody on this track, you’ll hopefully come to appreciate the attributes of using the bar to scoop up to pitches, as opposed to standard string bending with the fret hand.

FIGURE 2 illustrates the basic rhythm part heard on this tune. I’m fretting a Dadd2 chord on the top three strings while adding the open low D pedal tone, and I rake across the chord tones while also using an arpeggiation approach throughout, picking the notes individually and in succession and allowing them to sustain.

FIGURE 3 illustrates the single-note melodic line I play in “Handmade Cities.” This melody is based on the D Lydian mode (D E F♯ G A B C♯), which is the same as the A major scale (A B C♯ D E F♯ G), starting from the fourth degree, D. In analyzing this line, the first note is scooped into from below, using the bar, which is slightly depressed as I pick the string, and then released. It would be quite difficult to sound the note in this way with standard string bending and then pull off to E and then hammer back to G, as I do here. When landing on that G, I articulate that note with another scoop. For the last note of the phrase, C♯, I depress the bar to make the note drop off slightly, which again would be difficult with a normal fret-hand reverse bend or downward finger slide. As you play through the remainder of this example, notice the subtle use of scoops, drop offs and ascents performed with the bar, all of which are used to add musical feeling.

Another fun whammy application is to slide from one note to a higher note but depress the bar on the higher note, so that the pitch doesn’t change from note to note, as shown in FIGURE 4. When articulating slides, I prefer the sound of the bar dip at the height of the ascent (see FIGURE 5).

FIGURE 6 illustrates the last part of the melody, and here I try to use the bar a little differently as the line progresses. This is my last column for now. I hope you’ve enjoyed these lessons and found them helpful in your own musical pursuits. Best wishes!

Plini is a progressive-rock guitarist from Australia whose self-released music has scored praise from contemporary and legendary artists. His latest single, “Salt + Charcoal,” is out now. Visit plini.co for more info.
GET WET

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PERFORMANCE NOTES

HOW TO PLAY THIS MONTH’S SONGS...

“ROCKET QUEEN”

Guns N’ Roses

TO ACCURATELY RECREATE the feel of Slash and Izzy Stradlin’s many guitar riffs in this classic hard rock song, use 16th-note “pendulum” picking or strumming whenever making your way through any 16th-note rhythms. The technique gets its name from the steady, continuous down-up, down-up motion of the pick hand that occurs regardless of whether or not the pick makes contact with the strings on every downstroke or upstroke. For example, when playing through the song’s signature opening riff in bar 19 of the transcription, the guitarist applies a pendulum-style method to their picking; any note that falls on the first or third 16th note of the beat receives a downstroke, while any note landing on the second or fourth 16th note is picked with an upstroke. For rhythmic durations lasting longer than a 16th note — such as the eighth notes in beat one, or for legato techniques, such as the fifth-string hammer-ons — simply let your pick hand pass silently over the strings, as a “phantom” upstroke, while the notes continue to ring.

You can examine this picking/strumming technique more closely by checking out the pick stroke indications in bar 19. Also check out the picking prompts above the Gtr. 1 part in bars 31 and 32 to see how Stradlin uses pendulum strumming to perform his funky, syncopated rhythms during the song’s chorus.

When playing through Slash’s first guitar solo (see bar 44), those of you new to playing with a slide should be aware that you need to position it directly over the fret, not behind it, where you would normally press down with your finger. For best intonation, try and keep the slide parallel to the frets as you play. And try not to let the slide “clank” against the fretboard at all. Let it “glide” on the strings.

—JEFF PERRIN

“WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS”

The Beatles

WHEN IT CAME time for the Beatles to record “While My Guitar Gently Weeps,” George Harrison called on his good friend Eric Clapton to come in and add rhythm and lead guitar. Clapton’s six-string contributions to the track are regarded as among the greatest in rock history.

This slow, haunting ballad features three guitars: two electric and one acoustic. The acoustic part, performed by George Harrison (labeled Gtr. 1), consists of standard open chords and barre chords, that he strums in a straightforward, repeating rhythmic pattern of two eighth notes followed by four 16ths. Clapton’s two guitar tracks are consolidated here into one part (labeled Gtr. 3), which consists of sparsely arpeggiated chords (very similar to the shapes Harrison plays) and soulful lead fills that serve as countermelodies between Harrison’s vocal phrases.

Clapton performed his parts on a Gibson Les Paul, played through a Leslie rotating speaker, set on slow speed. His licks are based primarily on the A minor pentatonic scale (A C D E G). When playing over the E speaker, set on slow speed. His licks are based primarily on the A minor pentatonic scale (A C D E G). When playing over the E chord during the bridge sections (see bars 16, 20, 40 and 44) the guitarist adds tasteful fills using double-stops (two-note combinations) based on the E Mixolydian mode (E F# G A B C D).

In his two guitar solos (see sections E and H), Clapton lays back into the beat, as if to mimic a vocal part with the expressiveness of his articulations. Particularly noteworthy and sweet-sounding are the big, one-and-a-half step bends he plays, from the A root note up to C, the minor third, specifically in bars 29-35 and elsewhere. The guitarist adorns several of these big bends, and others too, with a wide, bold finger vibrato, which greatly adds to the emotional expression of his playing.

—ANDY ALEDORT

“BOMBTRACK”

Rage Against the Machine

THIS IMPASSIONED PROTEST-rap-metal song from Rage Against the Machine’s landmark 1993 self-titled debut album features driving, powerful single-note, low-register riffs. They are octave doubled by guitarist, Tom Morello, and bassist, Tim Commerford, locking-in tightly with Brad Wilk’s hard-hitting “stomp grooves” on drums.

Probably the most challenging part of this song to play is the subdued intro riff (see bars 1-5), which is based on the E minor pentatonic scale, played in first position, and features a nearly continuous stream of picked 16th notes. There’s a lot of string crossing going on here, which requires some deft flatpicking. While strict alternate picking may seem like the logical approach to take, you may find that it’s easier to pick the first two notes on beats one and three of each bar (the octave E notes) with two consecutive downstrokes, followed by an upstroke, then a downstroke, then an upstroke, etc.

Another challenging part is the quick position leap that occurs at the end of boxed Fill 2 (see the bottom of the first page of the song), where Morello plays the repeating verse riff’s descending F# blues-scale fill 12 frets higher. This move will require some muscle memory to nail, so practice it slowly at first, ramping up the tempo only after you can perform it cleanly.

During the second verse, in bar 17, Morello does a quick behind-the-nut bend and release on his guitar’s open G and B strings by pushing down on them with his fret-hand fingers; a move that requires some speedy sleight of hand to execute in time and get back into regular playing position to fret the low F# note on the downbeat of bar 18. Again, practice this maneuver slowly at first until you get it down.

—JIMMY BROWN
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“WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS”

The Beatles

Words and Music by GEORGE HARRISON • Transcribed by ANDY ALEDORT

Am C/G D9/F# F G D E C A Cm Fm Bm E sus4

A Intro (0:00)
Slowly \( \frac{3}{4} \) = 58
Am
Gr. 2 (piano arr. for gtr.)

Gtr. 1 (acous.)
Rhy. Fig. 1

Bass w/pick

I look

Am G D Gtr. 2 E

Gtr. 3 (elec., w/light dist. and slow rotary speaker effect)

let ring

end Rhy. Fig. 1

B 1st Verse (0:17)

At you all see the love there that's sleeping

Am
Gr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 simile (see bar 1)
Gr. 3

PM

Bass

Transcribed by ANDY ALEDORT

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"WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS"

while my guitar gently weeps

I look at the floor and I see it needs sweeping

Still my guitar gently weeps

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\begin{align*}
\text{Am} & \quad \text{G} & \quad \text{D} & \quad \text{E} \\
7 & \rightarrow & \rightarrow & \rightarrow \\
& & & \\
& & & \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Am} & \quad \text{C/G} & \quad \text{D9/F#} & \quad \text{F} \\
9 & \rightarrow & \rightarrow & \\
& & & \\
& & & \\
\end{align*}
\]

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\begin{align*}
\text{Am} & \quad \text{G} & \quad \text{C} \\
11 & \rightarrow & \rightarrow & \rightarrow \\
& & & \\
& & & \\
\end{align*}
\]

end Rhy. Fig. 2
C 1st Bridge (0:51)

I don't know why
nobody told you

Rhy. Fig. 3

Bass Fig. 1

how to unfold your love

I don't know how
someone controlled you
They bought and sold

Gr. 1 repeats Rhy. Fig. 3 simile (see bar 13)
"WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS"

**D** 2nd Verse (1:24)

you I look at the world and I notice it's turning
E Esus4 E Am C/G D9/F# F

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

20

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end Bass Fig. 1

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while my guitar gently weeps With every mistake we must surely
Am G D E1/4 Am C/G

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 9)

23

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be learning Still my guitar gently weeps Yeah yeah
D9/F# F Am G C E

26

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end Bass Fig. 2

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**E** 1st Guitar Solo (1:58)

Am C/G D9/F# F

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

29

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grad. release
**WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS**

I don't know how you were diverted
You were perverted too

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 9)

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 simile (see bar 13)

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 simile (see bar 13)
"WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS"

I don't know how you were inverted

No one alerted you

Look at you all

Still my guitar gently weeps

Outro/2nd Guitar Solo

w/vocal ad lib

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 simile (see bar 1)

Gtr. 3

Bass

Bass Fig. 3
Am G D E Am C/G

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 simile (see bar 9)

begin fade

Am C/G D9/F# F Am G

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 repeatedly (see bar 1)

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 repeatedly (see bar 53)

D E Am C/G D9/F# F

fade out

Am G D E Am C/G
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Learn more at daddariofoundation.org
All guitars tune down one half step (low to high, E♭ A♭ D♭ G♭ B♭ E♭).
Bass is tuned down one half step (low to high, E♭ A♭ D♭ G♭).
All music sounds one half step lower than written.

**Intro (0:00)**

*Chord symbol reflects overall harmony throughout intro.*

Moderately $\frac{\text{♩}}{} = 120$

Gtr. 1 (elec. w/dist.)

Gtr. 2 (elect. w/dist.)

w/fdbk.

Bass

*On the recording, the tempo starts at 120 bpm and gradually decreases to 114 throughout the intro.

Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)

Gtr. 1

w/fdbk.
“ROCKET QUEEN”

Gtr. 1

Rhy. Fill 1
w/feedback

pitch: C#

Bass

Bass Fig. 1

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fill 1 (see bar 9)
Slight P.H.

Gtr. 3

w/feedback

pitch: C#

Bass

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 four times (see bar 11)
Gtr. 1 substitues Fill 1 second time
(see below bar 64)

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 three times (see bar 11)

*Use ring-finger barré to bend second string along with third string.

*
I can do you favors but then you'll do whatever I like
Here I turn me on to anything you better turn me on tonight

Use ring-finger barré to bend second string along with third string.

Chorus (1:04, 1:51, 3:03)
(Œ = 106)

am your rocket queen I might be a little young but Honey I ain't naive

Here I am your rocket queen oh yeah I might
be too much but Honey you're a bit obscene

A5    B5    E5    F5

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3rd time, skip ahead to bar 64

1st time, go back to bar 19

2nd time: Ow!

be too much but Honey you're a bit obscene

A5    B5    E5    F5

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3rd time, skip ahead to bar 64

1st time, go back to bar 19

2nd time: Ow!
“ROCKET QUEEN”

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 19)

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 three times (see bar 11)

Gtr. 3

N.C. (A5)

Bass

Gtr. 2

Gtr. 1

N.C. (C#5)

*Slide past fretboard and back.

Bass plays Bass Fill 2

(see below bar 104)

Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fill 3

(see below bar 103)

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 19)
Here I
B5 A5

Owl

N.C. (F5)  F#5

Fill 1 (1:31)
N.C. (F#5)

Rhy. Fill 2 (2:35)
N.C. (F#5)

Fill 2 (1:42)
N.C. (B5)
"ROCKET QUEEN"

H (3:29)

\( \text{ BPM} = 112 \)

E5 B5 C#5

Second time, Gtr. 2 substitutes Rhy. Fig. 2 twice

67 Rhy. Fig. 2

E5 A5 B5

end Rhy. Fig. 2

Rhy. Fig. 2a

P.M.

E5 B5 C#5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 67)

Gtr. 2

71 P.M.

Gtr. 1 and 2 substitute Rhy. Fill 4

second time (see bar 74)

Bass

0-7 0-7 0-7 0-7

E5 B5 C#5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 67)

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2a (see bar 67)

75 Bass

2nd time: So don't chastise me or think I mean you harm

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 67)

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2a (see bar 67)

79 Bass

Of those that take you Leave you strung out much too far

Baby,

Gtr. 1 and 2 substitute Rhy. Fill 4 second time (see bar 74)

end Rhy. Fig. 2a

2nd time, Gtr. 2 substitutes Rhy. Fig. 2 twice

end Rhy. Fig. 2

So don't chastise me or think I mean you harm

Of those that take you Leave you strung out much too far

Baby,
I see you standin' on your own
If you need a shoulder
Or if you need a friend

It's such a lonely place for you
for you to be

I'll be here standin' until the bitter end

Transcription for "Rocket Queen" by Jimi Hendrix.
“ROCKET QUEEN”

No one needs the sorrow
No one needs the pain

E5 B5 C65

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 twice similar (see bar 67)

Gtr. 2

Rhy. Fig. 3

E5 A5 B5

end Rhy. Fig. 3

I hate to see you walking out there out in the rain

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 (see bar 95)

I

2nd Guitar Solo (5:12)

Oh oh ah ah ah ah ah ah

E5 B5 C65

Gtr. 3

Rhy. Fig. 4

PM.

Gtr. 2

Rhy. Fig. 4a

Bass

Bass Fig. 2

Rhy. Fill 3 (2:44)

N.C. (F#5)

Gtr. 1

P.M. ~~~~~~~~~~~

Bass Fill 2 (2:44)

N.C. (F#5)
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 twice (see bar 103)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 4a three times (see bar 103)
Gtr. 3

Bass plays first two bars of Rhy. Fig. 4 (see bar 103)
Bass substitutes Bass Fill 3 (see bar 118)

Gtr. 1 plays first two bars of Rhy. Fig. 4 (see bar 103)

Bass plays first two bars of Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 103)
"ROCKET QUEEN"

Don't ever leave me

E5

Gtr. 3

Gtr. 1

Bass

Bass Fill 3

Outro (5:47)

Gtr. 3

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

Bass

E5

B5

C#5

M
Say you'll always be there

All I ever wanted was for you

E5     B5
Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

Freely
to know that I care

G#5    E
(grad. decrease tempo)

E5
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BOMBTRACK
Rage Against the Machine

Words and Music by TOM MORELLO, BRAD WILK, TIM COMMERFORD AND ZACK DE LA ROCHA • Transcribed by DANNY BEGELMAN

As heard on RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

**Intro (0:00)**

Moderate Rock \( \frac{\text{bpm}}{72} \)

N.C. (E5)

Gr. 1 (w/slightly dirty tone)

1

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
\text{C#5} & \text{C5} & \text{B5} & \text{C#9 (no3)} & \text{A5} & \text{E5} & \text{E5x} & \text{Bb5} & \text{A5} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[\text{mf}\]

Bass

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
\text{C#5} & \text{C5} & \text{B5} & \text{C#9 (no3)} & \text{A5} & \text{E5} & \text{E5x} & \text{Bb5} & \text{A5} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[\text{mf}\]

2.

(1) Uh

(2) bombtrack

N.C. (F#5)

(1, 3) Hey yo we’re just another

Gr. 2 plays Fill 1

Riff A

Grts. 1 and 2

5

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
\text{C#5} & \text{C5} & \text{B5} & \text{C#9 (no3)} & \text{A5} & \text{E5} & \text{E5x} & \text{Bb5} & \text{A5} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[\text{mf}\]

Bass Fig. 1

(play 3 times)

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
\text{C#5} & \text{C5} & \text{B5} & \text{C#9 (no3)} & \text{A5} & \text{E5} & \text{E5x} & \text{Bb5} & \text{A5} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[\text{mf}\]

Fill 1 (0:21)

Gr. 2 (w/dist.)

* volume swell

Fill 2 (1:06)

Gr. 2 (F#5)

* volume swell

"BOMBTRACK"

WRITTEN BY TOM MORELLO, BRAD WILK, TIM COMMERFORD AND ZACK DE LA ROCHA

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B 1st Verse (0:23)

\[ \text{bombtrack and suckers be thinkin' that they can fake this But I'm-a drop it at a higher level 'cause I'm min-}
\[ \text{clined to stoop down Hand out some beatdowns Cold runna train on punk Ho's that think they run the game}
\[ \text{But I learned to burn that bridge and delete those who compete at a level that's obsolete In-}
\[ \text{NC(F#5)}
\[ \text{Gtr. 2 substitutes Fill 2 third time (see previous page)}
\[ \text{(play 3 times)}
\[ \text{Riff B}
\]

\[ \text{stead I warm my hands upon the flames of the flag as I recall our downfall and the businesses that burned us all}
\]

C 2nd and 3rd Verses (1:18, 2:12)

\[ \text{2. See through the news and the views that twist reality}
\[ \text{bombtrack started as a sketch in my notebook Enough I call the bluff for manifest destiny}
\[ \text{And now dope hooks make punks take another look My}
\[ \text{NC(F#5)}
\[ \text{Gtr. 1 plays Riff B three and a half times (see meas. 11)}
\[ \text{Gtr. 2}
\]

\[ \text{Landlords and power whores on my people they took ya
\}[ \text{thoughts ya hear and ya begin to fear *1/2}
\[ \text{Dispute the suits I ignite and then watch 'em burn
\}[ \text{cardwill get pulled if you interfere with the}
\[ \text{Gtr. 2 substitutes Fill 3 second time (see next page)}
\[ \text{Gtr. 2 substitutes Fill 4 second time (see next page)}
\]

* bend open strings from behind nut
(2,3) Landlords and power whores on my people they took turns Dispute the suits I ignite and then watch 'em burn

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass plays Bass Fill 1 (see meas. 14)

Bass Fill 1 (see meas. 14)

N.C.(F5)

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Riff A three times (see meas. 6)

(2nd time) To Coda (skip ahead to meas. 28)

D.S. al Coda (go back to )

Burn burn Yes you're gonna burn Burn burn Yes you're gonna burn It goes a - one two three Another funky radical

Coda (2:59)

Beah

Coda

Fill 3 (2:22)

Gtr. 2

Repeat previous chord

Fill 4 (2:28)

Gtr. 2

Fill 5 (2:34)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

scoop dive

w/bar w/bar
SOUND OF HONOR

NEW CANDY APPLE RED
G5420T ELECTROMATIC® HOLLOW BODY
SINGLE-CUT WITH BIGSBY®

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GRETCHGUITARS.COM/ELECTROMATIC-HB

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MANY CLASSIC GUITAR tones were recorded using a “less is more” approach that this column has frequently described. However, for many modern productions today the credo just as often is “too much ain’t enough.” The latter was certainly the case when Tool guitarist Adam Jones recorded his tracks for his band’s 2006 album, 10,000 Days.

Jones brought several key elements of his guitar rig into the studio when the sessions started, including his trademark 1978 Gibson Les Paul Custom with its rare silverburst finish, 1976 Marshall Model 1992 JMP Super Bass 100-watt head and “blue face” Diezel VH4 head. This rig was the core of Jones’ sound on previous Tool albums and also played a similar role here, but engineer Joe Barresi, who himself is a guitarist and devoted gear collector, dramatically augmented Jones’ usual studio setup with a wide variety of amps that he owns, including a Bogner Uberschall and Rivera KR7 Knucklehead Reverb.

Most of Jones’ guitar tracks for 10,000 Days were recorded with him playing through three or more amps simultaneously. Each amp head was paired with a separate 4x12 cabinet, and three different mics — always a Shure SM57 and Sennheiser 421, plus a third mic that varied depending on what Barresi thought was needed — were used on each cabinet. The three different mic signals from each amp were blended and recorded onto a single track, but each amp had its own track to allow Barresi to make necessary adjustments during the mixdown process. Blending separate layers of power amp and preamp distortion and keeping the track bone dry (the only effect is a Heil Talk Box used for an instrumental interlude just past the halfway point) provides a potent combination of crisp attack, aggressive crunch and powerful but focused punch.

Complex layering of guitar tracks like this can result in incomprehensible mush in the wrong hands, but Jones and Barresi tweaked each amp’s EQ and gain to its individual strengths, balancing each element accordingly. As a result, the record’s compiled tone sounds much more harmonically rich, detailed and massive — particularly in the midrange — than any single amp could ever sound.

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- Epiphone Les Paul Custom Pro
- Seymour Duncan SH4 JB
- EVH 5150 III LBX head with EVH 5150 III 1x12 cabinet
- Blackstar ID:Core 40 V2
- MXR M222 Talk Box

**TONE TIP:** A minimum of two amps — one with focused midrange and sizzling treble and the other dialed in to tight bass thump — are needed to get an ideal blend, but three amps are even better with each handling bass, mids and treble separately.

**ORIGINAL GEAR**

**GUITAR:** 1978 Gibson Les Paul Custom with Seymour Duncan SH4 JB (bridge pickup only);

**AMP:** 1976 Marshall Model 1992 JMP Super Bass 100-watt head (Presence: 4.5; Bass: 0; Middle: 10; Treble: 3; Volume I: 4; Volume II: 5.5; Input I top left, jumper between input I bottom left and input II top right) into Marshall 4x12 with Celestion G12M Greenback speakers;

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