

UNLEASH YOUR INNER ROCK GOD



GUITAR INTROS

Last month in Mixdown's bass column we looked at a few classic bass intros and what you could learn from them. But what's good for our four-string brethren is good for guitarists too. Two strings better, in fact. So let's check out some unaccompanied guitar intros, and the ideas you can steal... uh, borrow... nah, screw it, steal from them. These intros are going to borrow heavily from the Church Of Guitar Gods, but feel free to email or Facebook us with your own favourites.

VAN HALEN MAN ON A MISSION

"What the hell? Why isn't the choicing Mean Streets or Ain't Talkin' Bout Love or Hear About It Later... wasn't Eruption an intro to You Really Got Me?" Yup. And all of those are obvious, legendary and brilliant. Man On A Mission (from 1991's *For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge*) deserves a mention though because it's relatively obscure and a little different to a typical Van Halen 'featured intro.' On this one, Eddie Van Halen uses his right hand to tap a root/flatted fifth/octave pattern, then adds a descending figure by 'hammering on from nowhere' with his left hand. Bass player Michael Anthony joins in halfway through. It's a weird pattern which has a slight Primus feel to it thanks to that flatted fifth, but that same note also ties in with the Minor Blues scale used in the main riff. The same lick is used again in the song to build tension before the solo. So there are three things you can 'borrow' from this intro: the ear-catching weirdness, the way it ties in with the main riff, and the idea of calling back to it to build tension during the body of the song. Thanks Ed.

JIMI HENDRIX LITTLE WING

Jimi's Little Wing intro takes up a good portion of the whole song, and it's so damn tasty that he could have left it there and ended up with a

classic without singing a word. Stavie Ray Vaughan took this song and really ran with it too, re-casting it as an instrumental. But what's especially great about this iconic intro is that Jimi plays around with the chord progression that you'll hear later during the vocal parts of the song. He does this by throwing in little wiggly notes, hammer-ons, slides, harmonics... he basically throws a whole bunch of guitar at what would be an otherwise pretty but straightforward chord progression. The result is that when the band joins in and the vocals start, you're already familiar with the chord progression, having just heard Jimi outlining and suggesting it rather than blatantly playing it.

STEVE VAI BAD HORSE

This intro started life as something Vai played during his cameo in the film *Crossroads*. He extrapolated upon it to come up with Bad Horse, but the intro itself is kept relatively intact, just recast in a different tuning. Vai mimics a chugging choo-choo train, complete with whistle, by combining whammied harmonics for the whistle with varied levels of palm-muting for the engine sounds. Then the main riff of the song is based on the engine pattern. This one teaches us that we can mimic real-world sounds and use them as inspiration for a more abstract song.



EXTREME OUR FATHER

I hope they play this when Extreme tour Australia with Richie Kotzen in April 2013. On this one, Nuno Bettencourt's guitar is panned hard left with a delay repeat panned hard right. He's effectively only playing half of what you hear, letting the delay fill in the other half. So, if you listen to it in mono it loses its effect, but if you listen to it in headphones or on a stereo with simulated surround sound...whoa! You'll probably need two amps or a unit like the AxeFX or a POD to pull

this idea off convincingly on stage - even a stereo amp won't quite do it because the speakers are too close together. I've always found this kind of intro to be a bit of a brain-exploder, because as the guitarists performing it will probably never be able to fully separate the performed part from the heard part in the way that a non-playing listener will hear it.

BY PETER HODGSON



WHAT'S THAT SOUND

I'VE CAUGHT A VIRUS

So, there have been plenty of synthesizers in the past that have made a name for themselves with their big warm analogue tone and their inability to stay in tune, as their big warm analogue components go out of whack when they get working. We have always marvelled at the quality of analogue synthesizers and struggled with their problems. I know many people who have further struggled to find solace in a digital synthesizer that can take their place for the sound it produces. Personally, I have always been the believer that the analogue sound is the only sound, so I prefer to deal with the technical issues rather than turning to the other side of the room to use my digital synths. But, am I making the right decision?

Well, I am now forced to take a good look at my opinions and admit that there is tone in digital synths and that tone I refer to is coming straight out of Germany, from the Access factory. So dear synth lovers, the day has come where I have finally caught the Access virus having had the chance to get my hands on a Virus TI2 in the last couple of weeks. To be frank, the sound is of another planet, the complexity of the engine is mind boggling and the possibilities are just about endless. I had to let the demo song play three or four times over just to hear it again before I even started poking around in the

presets, it sounded THAT good. Let's take a closer look at what this particular synth gem actually offers. Firstly, the sounds that are to be found within the Virus cover so many genres and realms of synthesis design that for all the keyboards I have taking up space within my studio, I could just about get a single Virus TI desktop and it could do all the work... just about. For those of you who know and love German synth sounds, obviously they are all in there being that Access is from Germany to begin with. Secondly, don't stray if you're into the tones of Japanese manufacturers either as you will find they can be found in there too. Even a really old school out dated Roland style brass instrument that should have been left in the haze of the early 90's and never allowed to resurface again, but who knows over just to hear it again before I even started poking around in the



You may recall from my previous articles, I am a big fan of Novation sounds as they are simply awesome and I will always wear that badge with pride. They have a certain British charm like no other, but the beauty I found with the Virus is that they've been able to capture most of that charm with their own twist and squeeze it into the Virus for added value. Put simply, I will continue to use Novation for various projects as each synth has its own voice, but now I have caught the bug, or the Virus as would be the case. Access really have a lot to offer in their keyboards with control, access, integration and samples. They have taken charge to push the boundaries in digital synth design and tonal recreation that has really taken my ideas to a new level and this my friends is exciting. It's exciting because apart from the obvious, (that the synth is fast becoming one of the leading instruments in many band and artist line ups with their

processing power and tonal, sound and sample variations) is that synth manufacturers from around the globe have heard the virus warning and this will spread, fingers crossed - innovative. So, with the plague of NAMM 2013 upon us and the word of warning already out, the bar has been raised with exciting developments to come. I personally am not looking back so much anymore as I am looking forward to see the exciting influx of updates and new synths hitting the market in the new year... no doubt, synths about to get crazy!

BY ROB GEE

For more information on the Access range of products phone Innovative Music (03) 9540 0658 or visit www.innovativemusic.com.au