

"La Grange" ZZ Top



By Douglas Baldwin

ZZ Top's third album, *Tres Hombres*, is a study in the contradictions that define the band and, in particular, guitarist Billy Gibbons. The trio's simple, boozy boogie-rock is infused with subtle, surreal sarcasm, and Gibbons' mastery of intimate blues informs songs that have become arena-anthem huge. "La Grange," an outstanding cut on an outstanding album, celebrates the establishment immortalized in *The Best Little*

Whorehouse in Texas by appropriating John Lee Hooker's "Boogie Chillun," keeping the vocals to a sly minimum, and setting the amps to "afterburner."

THE HYBRID PICKING

"La Grange" is chock full of the twists and turns that distinguish Gibbons as a guitar genius. The rhythm-guitar figures, for one, are hybrid-picked: your thumb and index finger manipulate the pick while your bare middle and ring fingers pluck the strings. Your fin-

gers play everything except the isolated A strings—even the pairs of notes that include the A string. Using the notation *pl* = pick, *m* = middle finger, and *a* = ring finger, Fig. 1 sorts out the picking for the first two measures. The fret hand ain't slouchin' either—its 1st and 4th fingers spread out to play frets 2 and 5, respectively, with the thumb providing leverage from directly behind the neck.

Gibbons, bassist Dusty Hill, and drummer Frank Beard move up from the original key center of A to C for the first guitar solo. For Rhy. Fig. 2, Gibbons transforms the usually open-string-dependent boogie shuffle into an all-fretted affair. You'll find this figure easier to grasp if you envision the three chord shapes as they appear in Fig. 2. At the first interlude, Gibbons tweaks a traditional blues turnaround by displacing the chromatic descending line of G-F#-F (usually played in the same octave as the droning A) down an octave. The three outlaws then return to the key of A to restate the intro, after which Gibbons blazes into the outro guitar solo.

A-HOW, HOW, HOW, HOW?

On the surface, Gibbons' soloing covers standard blues-rock territory: his notes are found almost

exclusively within the minor-pentatonic position any first-year guitar player memorizes (Fig. 3). Yet no one would mistake his phrasing for a schoolboy's meandering. How does he do it? First, check his tone—just enough grind and compression to let his notes sing, but not so much as to obscure his dynamics. Next, note the accuracy and emotion of his bends and vibrato. He starts by confidently bending a B \flat up to a C—he knows where home is—and proceeds to work the whole yard, descending melodically across the entire fretboard by the end of the solo's sixth measure. Hybrid-picked *double stops* (two notes played simulta-

neously on adjacent

strings) are tossed in for contrast.

And, of course, Gibbons offers some textbook examples of pinch harmonics here, slathering them on like gravy on biscuits during his second solo. The simplest way to achieve these squeals is to choke up on your pick so that the tip of your thumb digs into the strings along with the pick, causing the string to be excited at a *nodal harmonic point*. Using a Mexican peso for a pick, as Gibbons reputedly does, may also add to your Rio Grande tone. ♩



TONE ZONE

GUITAR 1: Solidbody
PICKUP/POSITION: Single-coil/Bridge and Middle
GAIN: 4
EQ: Bass/Mid/Treble: 5/3/5
GUITAR 2: Solidbody
PICKUP/POSITION: Single-coil/Bridge and Middle
GAIN: 6
EQ: Bass/Mid/Treble: 5/5/5
GUITAR 3: Solidbody
PICKUP/POSITION: Single-coil/Bridge
GAIN: 11
EQ: 5/7/8

Fig. 1



Fig. 2

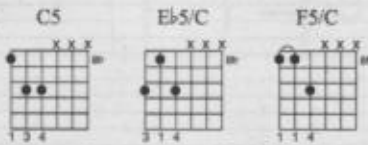
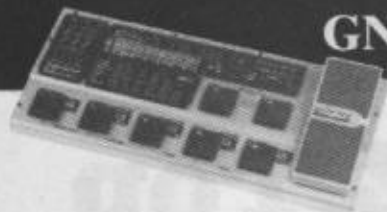


Fig. 3





LA GRANGE

As Recorded by ZZ Top

(From the Warner Bros. Recording TRES HOMBRES)



Words and Music by Billy F. Gibbons,
Dusty Hill and Frank Beard

Lyrics

Intro

Rumor spreadin' 'round in that Texas town
'Bout that shack outside La Grange.
And you know what I'm talkin' about.
Just let me know if you wanna go
To that home out on the range.
They gotta lotta nice girls, ah.

Verse

Well, I hear it's fine, if you got the time
And the ten to get yourself in.
And I hear it's tight most every night,
But now I might be mistaken.

Intro

Moderately Fast Shuffle ♩ = 160 (♩ = ♩♩)

A7

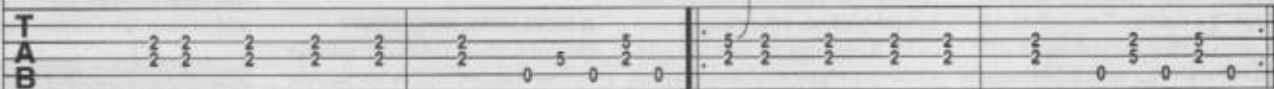
Gtr. 1 (clean)

play 3 times

mp

w/ pick & fingers

1/4



play 7 times



Copyright © 1973 Songs of Mosaic
Copyright Renewed
All Rights Reserved Used by Permission
Reprinted by Permission of Hal Leonard Corporation

La Grange

0:47

Verse

Gtr. 2: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1 (7½ times) Gtr. 2 tacet

Gtr. 1 tacet

A5

Rhy. Fig. 1

play 4 times
End Rhy. Fig. 1

Gtr. 2 (dist.)

1:31

Guitar Solo

Gtr. 3 (dist.)

C5

mf

E♭5

F5

Gtr. 2

Rhy. Fig. 2

End Rhy. Fig. 2

Gtr. 2: w/ Rhy. Fig. 2 (15 times)

Gtr. 3

C5

E♭5

F5

C5

E♭5

F5

C5

La Grange

Chords: Eb5, F5, C5, Eb5, F5

Chords: C5, Eb5, F5, C5, Eb5, F5

Chords: C5, Eb5, F5, C5

Chords: Eb5, F5, C5, Eb5, F5

Chords: C5, Eb5, F5, C5

Handwritten musical notation for a guitar piece. The top staff is a treble clef with notes and chords Eb5, F5, C5, Eb5, and F5. The bottom staff shows fret numbers: 11, 12, 11, 12, 11, 12, 11, 10, 12, 11, 10, 8, 10, 8, 9, 8, 10.

1:58

Interlude

2nd time, Gtr. 3 tacet

A5/G

A5/F8

AS/F

AS

Gr. 3

Gtr. 3

Measures 1-4 of the guitar 3 part. Measure 1 contains a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a double bar line. Measure 2 contains a single eighth note on the first line (F#4). Measure 3 contains a single eighth note on the first line (F#4). Measure 4 contains a single eighth note on the first line (F#4). The staff is empty for the rest of the measures.

Gtrs. 1 & 2

[illegible]

La Grange

||| Digitech Guitar Workstation Powered



Digitec
The Future is Now

Download

Gitr. 2 tacet

Gtr. 1 AS

The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is presented in two systems. The first system consists of a single staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody is written in a simple, folk-like style, featuring eighth and sixteenth notes. The second system consists of two staves. The top staff continues the melody, and the bottom staff provides a harmonic accompaniment using a simplified notation system where letters (A, B, C, D, E, F, G) are placed above the staff lines to represent specific notes. A double bar line separates the two systems. A tempo or style marking '1/4' is placed above the second staff in the second system.

Outro-Guitar Solo

Gtr. 2: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1 (till fade)
Gtr. 1 tacet

The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is presented in two systems. The first system consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. This is followed by a half note G4, a half note F#4, and a half note E4. The melody then continues with a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. The second system consists of a bass clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The bass line begins with a quarter note G3, followed by a quarter note F#3, a quarter note E3, and a quarter note D3. This is followed by a half note C3, a half note B2, and a half note A2. The bass line then continues with a quarter note G2, a quarter note F#2, and a quarter note E2. The score concludes with a double bar line.

*Gtr. 3

*w/ misc. pinch harmonics till end

The 'Finger exercise' section consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a sequence of chords: A5, C5, D5, and A5. Each chord is marked with a wavy line indicating a tremolo or rapid vibration. The bottom staff is in bass clef and shows the corresponding fingerings for the chords. The first staff has a 3-measure rest, and the second staff has a 3-measure rest. The fingerings are indicated by numbers 1 through 5, with some measures showing a 7-measure rest.

The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is presented in two systems. The first system consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature (C). The melody is written in a simple, folk-like style with eighth and quarter notes. Above the staff, the notes are labeled with their corresponding scale degrees: C5, D5, A5, C5, and D5. The second system is a bass clef staff, likely for a guitar or bass accompaniment. It features a series of chords and single notes, with some notes marked with a '1' and a '7' indicating fingerings. The overall style is that of a traditional folk song.

La Grange

The guitar tablature for "La Grange" is as follows:

System 1: Treble staff has a triplet of eighth notes (A4, B4, C5) and a triplet of eighth notes (D5, C5, B4). Bass staff has a triplet of eighth notes (7, 7, 7) and a triplet of eighth notes (7, 7, 7). Chords: A5, C5, D5, A5.

System 2: Treble staff has a triplet of eighth notes (A4, B4, C5) and a triplet of eighth notes (D5, C5, B4). Bass staff has a triplet of eighth notes (7, 7, 7) and a triplet of eighth notes (7, 7, 7). Chords: C5, D5, A5, C5, D5, A5.

System 3: Treble staff has a triplet of eighth notes (A4, B4, C5) and a triplet of eighth notes (D5, C5, B4). Bass staff has a triplet of eighth notes (7, 7, 7) and a triplet of eighth notes (7, 7, 7). Chords: C5, D5, A5, C5, D5.

System 4: Treble staff has a triplet of eighth notes (A4, B4, C5) and a triplet of eighth notes (D5, C5, B4). Bass staff has a triplet of eighth notes (7, 7, 7) and a triplet of eighth notes (7, 7, 7). Chords: A5, A5.

System 5: Treble staff has a triplet of eighth notes (A4, B4, C5) and a triplet of eighth notes (D5, C5, B4). Bass staff has a triplet of eighth notes (7, 7, 7) and a triplet of eighth notes (7, 7, 7). Chords: C5, D5, A5, C5, D5, A5.

C5 D5 A5 C5 D5 A5

C5 D5 A5 C5 D5

A5 C5 D5 A5

Begin Fade

Fade Out

"Couldn't Stand the Weather" Stevie Ray Vaughan



By Douglas Baldwin

One year after blowing away blues and rock guitarists with 1983's *Texas Flood*, Stevie Ray Vaughan stormed back with *Couldn't Stand the Weather*. Although the relentless shower of notes from the previous release carried over, this time a musical rainbow of both original and cover material shone through. Guitar Slim's "The Things (That) I Used to Do" and Jimmy Reed's "Tin Pan Alley" were nods to blues classics, while Jimi Hendrix's "Voodoo Chile (Slight Return)" pointed to a far edgier rock influence that also showed up in Vaughan's title track.

Reminiscent of the funk-blues of the Band of Gypsies, it confirmed that the new blues guitar hero could compose hip tunes as well as fry the strings on his Strat.

THE INTRO

Vaughan (Gr. 1) previews the verse by cleverly reversing the order of the descending chord section and the I (Dm) chord vamp. He treats the Bm-A7-G7-F#7 progression in measures 1-7 as if each chord (played by big brother Jimmie) were a new key, improvising in free time with the respective root-position B, A, and G minor pentatonic scales.

Measures 8-19 then drop dynamically into a super-funky, James Brown-approved bass line derived from the D minor pentatonic scale, chromatically flavored with the 3rd (F \sharp) and 5th (G \sharp /A \flat). Acknowledging an implied D tonality, Vaughan caps his mini opus de funk with a back-snapping, hyper-synco-pated four-measure riff (Riff B) over the bass line. He repeats the pattern similarly four times, with octaves drawn from the gritty 3rd (F) and quicksilver licks in the root position of the D minor pentatonic scale. Note that you could take advantage of the bluesy major/minor ambiguity of the bass line by switching to a major tonality—via a classic double stop hammer-on to the major 3rd—in measure 2 of Riff B, as shown in **Fig. 1**. This bar functions as the “response” to measure 1’s “call”; it’s also the place to begin improvising, as Vaughan does each time Riff B appears (in between the verses and after the solo).

THE VERSE

Jimmie comps like a madman on a Dm7 chord in measures 1-8 (Rhy. Fig. 1), and then returns to the Bm-A7-G7-F#7#9 changes of the intro. Dig the slick way he uses broken chords, double stops and

sparse single-note lines to flesh out each chord change. In addition, check out how the crucial 3rd (D) is highlighted over the Bm, as are the respective major 3rds (C# and B) over the A7 and G7 chords. This is fertile territory for creative rhythm playing. **Fig. 2** contains a much different, but ultimately cohesive, way to sail through a Bm–A7–G7 progression: with double stops in 6ths relative to each change. One of the most versatile tools available to the discriminating guitarist, 6ths double stops exist in that netherworld between melody and harmony, and can function as either or both.

THE SOLO

SRV turns a very un-12-bar format into a blues bash after all in his 31-measure solo. In bars 1–15 of the Dm vamp (Rhy. Fig. 3), he busts loose in the root position of the D minor pentatonic scale. Idiosyncratic bends and phrases invariably resolve to the root—appropriate when taking a modal approach. In measures 16–31, however, SRV takes a different

tack: he looks at Bm-A7-G7-F#79 changes in measures 16-23 as a new progression in the key of Bm, and, accordingly, shifts his attention to the B minor pentatonic scale, placing emphasis on the root (B). The second time through the progression, though, he relocates to the G minor pentatonic scale for the G7 chord. He then bangs down hard on the F#79 chord in measures 30-31, in unison with Jimmie for conclusive resolution. ♪



Fig. 1

G7

Treble staff: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half).

Tablature staff: 12, 12, 10, 10, 12, 10, 11, 10, 11, 12, 10, 11, 12, 10, 10.

Fig. 2

Bm A7 G7

Treble staff: Bm (quarter), A7 (quarter), G7 (quarter), Bm (quarter), A7 (quarter), G7 (quarter), Bm (quarter), A7 (quarter), G7 (quarter).

Tablature staff: 2, 7, 8, 10, 9, 7, 8, 8, 7, 7, 5, 5, 3, 1, 0, 3, 1, 6, 2, 0, 3, 2.

w/ pick & fingers

TONE ZONE

GUITAR 1: Solidbody
PICKUP/POSITION: Single-coil/notch between middle and bridge
GAIN: 7
EQ: Bass/Middle/Treble: 4/4/7