

→ **AS A LAP** and pedal steel player, are you particularly fond of the Weissenborn acoustic lap steel that BJ Coles plays on *Then I Close My Eyes*?

"Definitely. That's my Weissenborn he's playing. I played it on *Smile*. But he was over my house one day and I had him play it on *Then I Close My Eyes*. The Weissenborn's a lovely thing. I always felt pretty good and comfortable on slide instruments. There are places between the notes where I like to go, and you can really go there on slide instruments."

THAT'S BECOME ANOTHER signature thing for you. A defining element in many classic Floyd tracks...

"When I started doing pedal steel and lap steel on shows, the first track I can remember using it on consistently was *One Of These Days*, where it's tuned to an open E minor chord. And then when we got to *Dark Side Of The Moon* and we were doing *The Great Gig In The Sky*, I invented a different tuning for that because it's hard to know exactly what is the best tuning on slide. Open tunings are by definition rather restrictive. So I found a tuning which is kind of an open G6. The top four strings are the same as a regular guitar: EBGD. And if you tune the bottom A down to G and the E down to D, you get a five string open G chord, but you've got a three string E minor chord at the top. So you can do quite effective majors and minors. And that's the tuning I tend to use quite a bit, the one I originally laid down for *Great Gig In The Sky*. By that time I needed to have two steel guitars on stage. The pedal steel was a bit cumbersome. It had more strings than I could actually deal with – eight strings on each neck – so what I ended up making was a six-string slide. I bought two cheap Fender copies called Jensens. They cost nothing in England in the early seventies. I got a red one and a yellow one and eventually I put Fender pickups in them. That's what I used for a long time: one tuned to the open E minor and one tuned to the open G6."

WHAT KIND OF acoustic guitars came into play on your new album?

"I have two or three Martins that I use for most things. There's a D-35 I have had for a very long time, which I played on *Wish You Were Here*. That's the same guitar I'm using on some of these tracks. It's great for strumming. I also have a 1945 D-18 that projects a little more, so it's a little better for picking and playing single-note stuff. And the acoustic guitar on *This Heaven* is a nice Baby Taylor that's great for taking on airplanes. In its case it still fits in the overhead locker. I have a couple of those that I take with me and one of them just happened to be lying around when I was recording that track."

YOU PLAYED A Gibson acoustic on *Live8*. Is there a story behind that one?

"I believe that's a J-200 Celebrity Model. It came out a few years ago. I was in Air studios and that guitar was lying around. I tried it and liked it."



Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the Floyddest of them all?

"THE FINGERS AREN'T VERY FAST, BUT I THINK I AM INSTANTLY RECOGNISABLE. I CAN HEAR MYSELF AND JUST KNOW THAT IT'S ME. AND OTHER PEOPLE DO TOO"

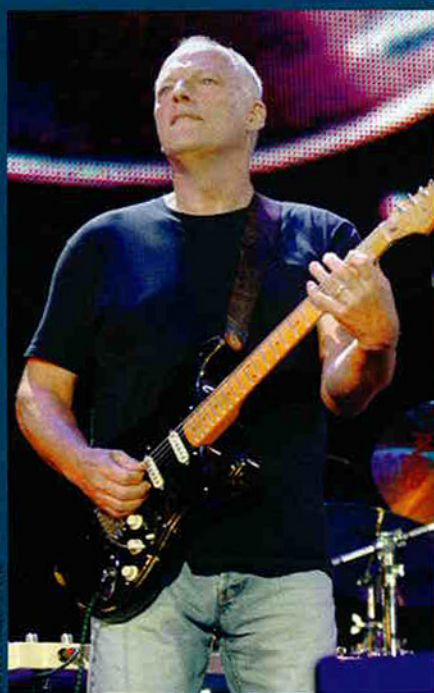
I contacted Gibson and asked if they had any left and they said they only made 99 of them and none were left. I said, Oh never mind. They rang back about a month later and said they were looking in their storeroom and they found one that had somehow never reached its destination. And they let me have it."

THE DVD VERSION of 1994's *Pulse* is coming out in September; that was a significant tour because it was the first time you'd done *Dark Side Of The Moon* all the way through in many years. So how did the experience of doing those classic Floyd songs on that tour, without Roger, differ from playing them with him more recently at *Live8*?

"Lyrically, *Dark Side Of The Moon* is really Roger's baby. [Waters has since announced shows

dedicated to recreating the album live – Ed.] So sometimes I'd get a slight feeling of minor discomfort doing it without him. But not sufficient to make me think we shouldn't do it. It's part of our oeuvre. I spent a lot of time and sweated blood making that record, and doing it again live was always my ambition. Some people may already have *Pulse* on VHS, but the DVD has a good 5.1 Surround mix and hopefully with the picture enhanced it'll look pretty good. But it's old stuff. And, as I've said, old stuff doesn't interest me too much these days. New stuff is more important..."

Gilmour interview by Alan Di Perna/IFA. A different version of this interview also appears in the May 2006 edition of *Guitarist's* sister title *Guitar World* (USA).



GILMOUR STYLE FILE



Learn the licks of the man you voted the greatest Fender player of all time

Of all the great British guitar heroes, David Gilmour is perhaps best known for finely crafted melodic playing. In complete contrast to a lot of the aimless blues-rock widdling fashionable during the 1970s, Gilmour's unpretentious solos on the classic Pink Floyd albums were always designed to complement the songs.

There's quite a wide stylistic range, too: compare the serenity of the Shine On You Crazy Diamond intro with the ferocious solo in Money. Throughout all of his solos, though, the blues is a common

thread. Gilmour might be the biggest guitar hero of the prog years, but he can match Clapton and Page for blues authenticity.

GEAR

The 'classic' Gilmour sound generally involved a Strat of some sort (employing EMG pickups for a time – see page 42) plugged into 100-watt HiWatt amps. He's made regular use of Yamaha rotary speakers for modulated sounds.

David Gilmour

Tracks 12-14

Ex1

Gilmour makes great melodic use from minimal note choices. In this part, based around E minor pentatonic (EGABD) with the occasional F#, you'll see certain pairs of notes several times, with bends, pull-offs and different rhythms adding variety.

♩. = 50

clean tone

Em

RP RP

BU BD

12-14 14-(16) (16) (16)(14) 12-14 14

11-12 11-11 12-12 12-14 14

12 15-12

Am C

BU PB15 RP BD

15(17) 15(17) (17)(15) 12

BU BD

14(16) 12-11 12-15 15(17) (15) 15 BU BD

14(16) (14) 12

9-9(12) 9

3

Ex2

There are three important 'Gilmourisms' here. The choppy partial chords and stacked bends in bars 2-3 should be familiar, while the long lick in bar 4 demonstrates an approach he uses a lot... build the tension with fast notes, then land squarely on the next downbeat.

8va

Em C

overdriven tone

BU BD

17(19) (17) 15-17 17

BU 12-12 15 BU 12

14(16) 14(16)

12-14 14

12-12 12-12 14

0 1

David Gilmour

Tracks 12-14

Em C

BU BU

12 12 14

15 (17) (19)

15 12 14 (16)

BU 12 12 12 15 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 13 12

Ex3

David Gilmour's playing isn't all gentle melodicism – he knows how to dig in and play the blues. The F# reappears in bar 2, implying the E natural minor scale (EF#GABCD), and there's another tightly packed 'box pattern' lick at the end.

Em C

BU BU

12 12 4 3

5 2 (4) 2 (4) (2) 0

BU BU 14 (15) 14 (15) 14

BU 15 12 15 (17) 15 12 15 14 16 16

C (8va) Em

BU BD

15 17 17 (20)

(17) 15 17 15

BU 12 12 12 15 14 (16)

BU 14 (16) 14 12 14

etc

Ex4

Just in case you wondered what was going on underneath the solo, here's the part...

Em C G5 A5

Let ring

12 12 12 0

2 0 3

5 5 5 5 5 5 7 5