

SHREDDDED METAL

INITIATION... ADDICTION

For this column, I thought it would be cool to take a look at a one of my own songs and examine how I like to combine different techniques to create interesting lead guitar parts. The track I'll be looking at is called "Initiation... Addiction" and it's from my debut instrumental album titled *Amelioration*. I'm going to focus on a short excerpt from what I think of as the 'chorus' section of the song. This occurs from 01:52-02:00, and again at 02:24 and 04:48. It's an eight bar passage featuring a twin guitar harmony and it employs sweep picking and right hand tapping techniques.

EXERCISE 1

The first thing to note here is the tempo. Consistent with the overall thrash metal style of the piece, it's performed at a very fast 230 beats per minute. Secondly, while the overall key of the song is E minor, for this short excerpt it briefly modulates to D minor for four bars, and then C minor for four bars. This is done via two I_m-V chord progressions – D_m-A/C# and C_m-G/B (played as power chords). For space reasons, I'm only able to include the first four bars of this eight bar section. However, since the following four bars just move down a tone to C minor, all you have to do is play the exact same thing but two frets below. This should be pretty easy to work out for yourself (admittedly, there is a slight variation in the last bar).

As you can see in Exercise 1, the lead part involves two guitars playing a harmonised phrase. Melodically, this phrase is built on two arpeggios – D minor and C# diminished seventh (as a substitution over the A/C# chord). I considered Guitar 1 to be the 'main' part, and Guitar 2 to be the harmony. As such, Guitar 2 can be thought of as a harmony using diatonic sixths (or in other words, down a major/minor third). Essentially, both guitars are just playing the same arpeggio licks in different inversions. For example, with the D minor arpeggio, Guitar 1 is second inversion (starting on the fifth) and Guitar 2 is first inversion (starting on the third). Since you're playing different notes of the same chord, it harmonises nicely.

The two main techniques used in this excerpt are sweep picking and right hand tapping (performed in the one fluid movement). It starts with a downward sweep on beat four of the previous bar. From there, the techniques used are as follows: pull-off and then sweep up to the third string, sweep down and then hammer-on to the first string, tap then pull-off with your right hand and left hand, and then sweep up to the third string. This process is then repeated, only when tapping next, you quickly slide your right hand finger up and down on the first string before continuing the pull-offs and upward sweep. These techniques are used for all the subsequent arpeggio licks.

Fast Thrash ♩ = 230
 Tuning: E Flat Standard

Dm

Gtr.1
 TAB
 14 15 13 | 17 13 15 14 15 13 17 20 17 13 | 15 14 15 13 17 | 20 22 20 17 13 | 15 14 12 14 12

Gtr.2
 TAB
 10 10 10 | 13 10 10 10 10 13 17 13 10 | 10 10 10 13 | 17 18 17 13 10 | 10 10 9 11 9

A/C#

Gtr.1
 TAB
 15 12 14 12 14 12 15 18 15 12 | 14 12 14 12 15 18 21 18 15 12 | 14 12 12 13 11

Gtr.2
 TAB
 12 9 11 9 11 9 12 15 12 9 | 11 9 11 9 12 15 18 15 12 9 | 11 9 8 8 8

I felt that for a fast, aggressive thrash song like “Initiation... Addiction”, an equally crazy guitar melody is what was needed. I’ve included the excerpt, the excerpt slowed down, as well as the full track (so you can hear it in context). Check it out!