

Finding inspiration and meaning for your melodies

I want to focus on something that is sometimes overlooked in our quest to become better players. So often we get caught up in focusing on our technique and forget why we write music in the first place. These are some of the things that I do to help me get in touch with my inspiration.

I've drawn inspiration from relationships with other people, movies that have made me feel a certain way, dreams (and nightmares) I've had, and even books I've read, which is what I want to focus on. This is a difficult and abstract concept to explain, but I believe that understanding it can bring greater meaning to your own compositions.

When I read Anne Rice's Interview with the Vampire I was struck by the longing for companionship of the character Lestat. I tried to connect the loneliness and disconnection that Lestat experiences to my own life experience. I resonated with his attempts to find a companion and the difficulties of sustaining relationships as people change. The melody of "Of the Earth" reflects that, especially in the introduction (example 1). As the arrangement of the song develops, the melody is played in a few different forms, but still retains that emotional character.

Here are some steps you can take to connect your inspiration to your own writing. First of all, it's very important to free yourself from distraction as much as possible (turn off all phones, computers, TV's etc). Set up a comfortable playing environment. Put all of your focus on something that you have a strong emotional reaction to. Try to imagine a melody in your head that expresses some of what you are feeling, and then find the notes on the guitar. Try to focus just on how it feels. Try not to get caught up in judging what you are playing. Develop this idea in the purest and simplest way that you can by editing your melody to the least amount of notes that still convey your original idea. This is a lot harder than it sounds. Writing from this place can add depth and meaning to your composition.

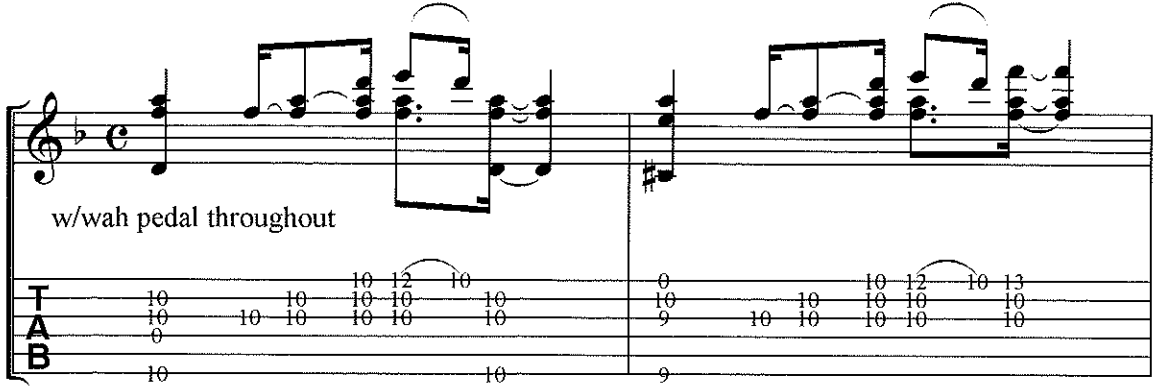
I also suggest a very cool exercise to try and convey what you feel about certain things or people or anything for that matter and bring in into your music. The exercise is for you to come up with guitar chord that reminds you of your mom or dad or best friend. Think of the person and write the chord down. Do the same thing but use an emotion, angry, sad, happy, horny lol!! Come up with the chord and write it down. Once you have done this, do the same exercise but this time come up with a melody that represents these people or feelings. The more you do this the better you will become at bringing person feelings and expressions into you music, playing and song writing.

Of the Earth

Taken from "The Color of Light"
on Favored Nations Entertainment

Rob Balducci
Transcribed by Ethan Meixsell

Guitar

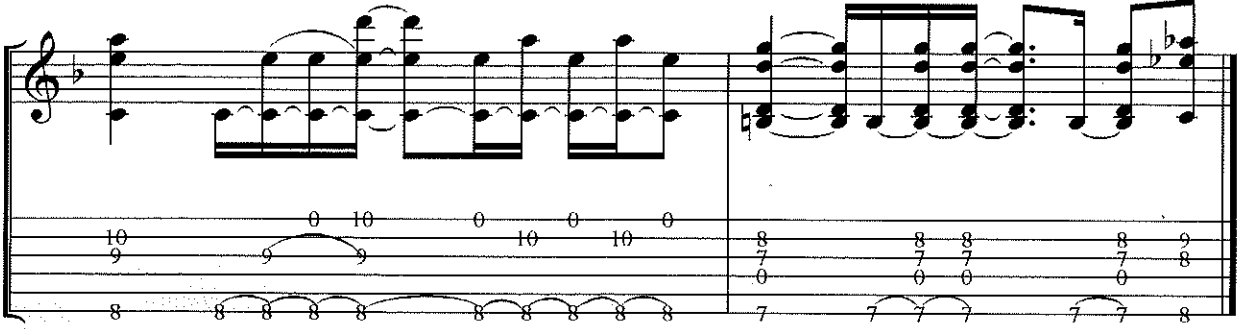


w/wah pedal throughout

TAB

	10		10	12	10		0		10	12	10	13
	10		10	10	10		10		10	10	10	10
	6						9		10	10	10	10
	10				10		9					

Gtr.



	10		0	10		0	10		0	10		0
	9		9	9			10		10			
	8		8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8

	8		8	8		8		8	9
	7		7	7		7		7	8
	0		0	0		0		0	0
	7		7	7		7		7	8