

GT145

Brett Garsed

Masterclass 2

In the second of a three-parter, Dario Cortese meets up with Australian guitar virtuoso Brett Garsed for some slide explanation...

Welcome back for the second of a three parter Masterclass with Brett Garsed. Brett is a very unique guitarist and without a doubt he's easily recognizable between many guitarists. He's mainly famous for his incredible hybrid technique (you might remember it from the first part of the Masterclass) but what not many people know about him it's that he's also an amazing slide players. Even using the slide technique he's one of the few players that keep his identity and his trademark sound. Let's see how he got such a distinctive sound and how he got into slide.

Brett started playing slide at the age of 13/14 after he saw Joe Walsh (Eagles) playing 'Rocky Mountain Way'. At that time he didn't know much about slide so when he saw Joe Walsh wearing the slide on the second finger he thought: "That's how you do it!" He made some research and found out about open tunings so he decided to experiment with open E tuning.

After a few months he acquired the basic slide technique so he decided to go back to standard tuning and see what he could get out of it. He quickly realized that the 'magic' minor 3rd interval (so typical of slide) between 3rd and 2nd string was missing. It didn't take too long to figure out that he could still play that interval using the slide diagonally. And he also realized that the only finger that let him do that was luckily the second; it's virtually impossible to play that interval (or even a Major triad as Brett does) with any other finger. Brett said: "That was a good way to start. It would have been really difficult to start in standard tuning and work around the limitations associated with it so when I started with the open tuning I was able to develop facilities and control. Then when I got back to standard tuning I had a bit more of an understanding of what I wanted to do"

During the Masterclass Brett pointed out that playing slide he always a little compromise: if you want to use open tunings you need to re-learn the fretboard but if you want to use standard tuning you lose some of the signature licks of slide guitar; if you want to play slide you need high action and heavier strings but you would need low action and lighter strings for normal playing, etc... Basically he found his way around all these compromises. Now Brett uses 11 to 52 strings with a low action because he figured that would have been better to use heavier strings with a lower action than lighter strings with a higher action.

As you'll see in the video, Brett explained some of the necessary techniques of slide playing: picking hand muting and vibrato. For this month this is it, I'll see you next month for the last part of the Masterclass... get ready for some chromaticism.

Freely (A⁷)

8^{va}

wide

wide

wide

3

4

wide

TAB

15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 17 17 17 15 12 15 14 12 14 6 4 7 7

7 7 5 9 8 7 (7) 5 7 5 5 5 4 0 2 0 2 1 0 2 3 4 0 3 0 2

Ex 2: Another major influence for Brett Garsed is, surprisingly, country pedal steel player. To execute this type of phrase Brett uses a technique that he learnt from another of his influence: Sonny Landreth. This technique consists of using the free fingers of the fretting hand in combination with the slide.

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SLIDE SOLO

Bar 1-3: Brett starts the solo using 6th from the A Mixolydian scale. To perform those intervals in the way Brett does you would need to use the slide on the second finger and get used to play diagonally.

Bar 4: This bar features another Sonny Landreth technique: playing behind the slide. Hold the slide on the 7th fret using the 2nd finger: press a note with the 1st finger keeping the slide down. You'll see that by doing that you're actually lowering the action of that single string so it won't be touched by the slide.

Bar 5-6: These bars feature another slide technique: pull off with the slide. To develop this technique you need to move the slide very quickly away from the strings keeping the picking hand muting the other strings quite.

Bar 7-8: In these couple of bars you can see how naturally Brett incorporates fretted notes into the slide playing.

Bar 9-10: In these two bars you can see Brett playing a major triad across the adjacent strings using the slide diagonally.

Bar 11-12: This is the end of the first chorus and Brett plays his Pedal-Steel-Like lick again featuring slide and fingers.

Bar 13-15: In these bars you can see how Brett controls the open strings especially on the first frets.

Bar 16: This is probably one of the hardest bars in this solo. It features the 'playing-behind-the-slide' technique but this time Brett speeds things up.

Bar 17-18: This is a great example of melodic pattern: Brett takes a simple rhythm figure and repeats it changing note every time. This is a very powerful tool in improvisation (not just for slide).

Bar 19-25: This is the climax of the solo and the consequently ending. Again those bars feature some of his trademark licks: pedal steel imitation, wide interval, wide slide vibrato, incorporating fingers into slide playing and even a quintuplet (so common in his normal playing style).

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9 E⁷ D⁷

T
A
B

11 A⁷ E⁷

T
A
B

13 A⁷

T
A
B

15

T
A
B

17 D⁷

T
A
B

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19 A^7

T
A
B

21 E^7 D^7

T
A
B

23 A^7 E^7 A^7

T
A
B

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