



GT129

Session Secrets

Sheryl Crow

Despite the last two months examples, session work is not all about recording on your own; sometimes you get to record as a band! Sheryl Crow is one such artist who is 'old school'.

Sheryl Crow has been a backing vocalist for some of the most respected artists in the world (Michael Jackson, Sting, Rod Stewart, Stevie Wonder, Joe Cocker, and many others) and this background has meant she is very aware of the musician's side of the fence, as well as the stars. She knows exactly what she wants, but she also likes to work in a very relaxed environment.

For this month's song she is looking for a Rolling Stone's vibe, reminiscent of her southern rock roots. This kind of style description is typical in the studio and you should be able to translate it into music. Try using "My Favorite Mistakes" for the Rolling Stone's vibe, and "Light In Your Eyes" for the southern rock-country vibe.

You won't be working against the clock as much as you would in a more 'commercial' session, but of course there's no reason to waste time. First, as ever, discuss your ideas with the artist and with the other musicians, before the "red light" is switched on. Here is the chart:

♩ = 115 F C F C G

6 Am G F C G Am

11 G F C G C

Detailed description: The chart consists of three staves of musical notation in 4/4 time. The first staff starts with a tempo marking of 115 and a key signature of one flat (F major/D minor). It contains four measures of rhythmic notation (diagonal slashes) with chords C, F, C, and G above them. The second staff starts at measure 6 and contains five measures of rhythmic notation with chords Am, G, F, C, G, and Am above them. The third staff starts at measure 11 and contains three measures of rhythmic notation with chords G, F, C, G, and C above them, ending with a double bar line.



Get familiar with the chords and form so you can cross reference it to the following guitar parts.

Always keep in mind the vibe she's asked for; Rolling Stone's and southern rock roots. For the Stone's, you may have in mind a very simple, pure classic rock sound. Maybe that means a valve amp, Tele or Les Paul without any kind of effects. The sound should be the kind of light overdrive typical of a valve amp with the volume up to the max (no pedals please!). The guitar part should work around block chords and triads.

At the same time you need to think of the intro in the same vein. For southern rock you maybe think of the Allman Brothers and Lynyrd Skynyrd. Both of them use lots of rocky riffs and, very often, slide parts. For the intro you may want to try a slide part (or two parts harmonized) with the same kind of classic rock sound.

Finally, don't forget that the track should sound like a live band; quite spontaneous and not over-worked. The balancing act is to create parts that are thought through, but perform them so they don't sound it! See you next month!

STONE SETTINGS

I used an old Les Paul equipped with Seymour Duncan humbuckers through the POD XT's 1968 Marshall Plexi 100 Jump Lead patch. Any classic style guitar will do though; simply make sure that you select the loudest volume the room will take, allowing the amp to provide natural gain. No effects please, other than a minimum amount of reverb or delay.

THE SLIDE

There are many types of slide: steel, glass, porcelain, brass, ceramic coming in many different shapes and sizes, and they all sound slightly different! There are no rules about which finger you should use for the slide. Basically it depends on what you are going to play with the 'free' fingers. Slide guitar is most often played using open tuning (G, D and E being the most common) in order to play more 'vertically' instead of 'horizontally'.



Electric 1 & 2:

In the intro both guitars play exactly the same thing; the challenge being to get the parts closely sync'ed.

At the beginning of the verse gtr 1 moves to higher voicings whereas gtr 2 plays octaves in the lower register. Gtr 1 also has a very short (115ms) delay.

Slide 1 & 2:

For these two parts I used the same set-up. I've used a Jim Dunlop 220 steel slide on the forth finger in order to have the first three fingers free to fret notes in the normal way.

Both guitars play the intro and the gtr 1 plays also a couple of fills in the verse, answering the vocal.

♩ = 115

El.Gtr 1

El.Gtr 2

El.Gtr Slide 1

El.Gtr Slide 2

F C F C G

w/slide

w/slide

T A B

T A B

T A B

T A B

3 3 4

5/7 5/8 5/7 5/10 8 5-3

5/8 5/8 5/8 8 8-6

All content is © Dario Cortese - www.dariocortese.com

Dario Cortese

6 Am G F C G/B

let ring-----|

T
A
B

7 5 7 5 5 3 5 4 5 4 5 4 5 3 2 3 0 2 5 3 5 3 0 0 5 3 2

5 5 5 3 3 3 3 3 1 1 1 3 8 8 7 3 4

w/slide- | w/fingers -----| w/slide--

T
A
B

5 5 7 7/9 8 10

w/slide- |

T
A
B

5

10 Am G F C G/B C

let ring-----|

T
A
B

7 5 7 5 5 3 5 4 5 4 5 4 5 3 2 3 0 2 5 3 0 5 3 0 0 5 5 5 3 3 3

5 5 5 3 3 3 3 3 1 1 1 3 8 8 7 7 10 9 10 10 8 8

w/slide-----| w/slide-----|

T
A
B

5 3 5 3 5 5

All content is © Dario Cortese - www.dariocortese.com

All content is © Dario Cortese - www.dariocortese.com