



# GT132

## Session Secrets

### *The Prodigy*

In his last appointment with session secrets, Dario Cortese takes us to a session with The Prodigy...

This month's scenario is the most whacky so far! We've got a call for a session with The Prodigy. The band came out in the early 90s and it's famous for blending techno, trance, jungle with punk and rock'n'roll. The band's original members were Liam Howlett, Keith Flint, Leeroy Thornill and Maxim Reality, later to be joined by guitarists Jim Davis and Gizz Butt.

The band's always sought to create original sounds that couldn't be described simply as, techno or punk. So this month we're going to use the weirdest effects ever and try to help the band in its research! Liam Howlett is a big fan of using old synths to get his sounds, so we'll need to bring all our old envelope filters.

There's no reference track this month, as well as no chart, and they are looking for an intro and a static groove; something very heavy, dark and 'weird'. It's very common in this genre to have only one or two sections that can be 'dressed' in different ways within the arrangement. Also, you get to choose the key as the starting point is only a drum groove! As often happens in the studio, you lay down your tracks and leave the producer total freedom to do whatever s/he wants with your work.

For the intro, the general idea is to create something that's all about 'noise' and rhythm. Try experimenting with effects and all the weird sounds you can make on a guitar (eg: slowly scratching the pick on the strings). All three guitar parts that I created work as question and answer and build up to a climax just before the main groove starts.

For the static groove (it's called static because it's only one chord and not a sequence), the first guitar part is the 'motif', a repetitive melody; it's a single note line only, but with a strange envelope filter like the Korg X911 or the Roland GT700 guitar synth. For the melody, try to use the 'dark modes' like Phrygian or Aeolian.



The producer wants to get some distorted guitar into the track, so grab your heavy guitar equipped with humbuckers (active if you have them, as they are quieter) and set up a heavy sound. A high gain amp (like a Soldano or Mesa Boogie) with a 4x12 speakers would be ideal for this one. You will need a good noise gate to cut the sound off very quickly. Try to find something powerful and weighty (power chords, palm muting, etc.) that fits in the rhythm; remember this is dance music so you must be really focused on the groove.

The last guitar to be recorded would be a crunch guitar that plays an arpeggio. All the guitars we've recorded so far are quite dry and they don't fill the bars entirely. An arpeggio is a cool idea to keep the tension up and to give the musical idea of 'moving' or 'going somewhere'.

Remember that, most of the time, you'll leave the studio without hearing the final product. It can take anywhere from a week to a year to hear to final mix: it basically depends on the production and sometimes it would be a surprise even for you!

Once again, a special thanks to Dave Marks for recording his bass and see you next month!



### **Electric 1:**

For the intro I've used a Les Paul through a high gain amp with the Line6 FM4 pedal set on Synth-O-Matic. I also used the toggle switch to get the on-off effect (check out Tom Morello, amongst many others).

Set one pickups volume fully on and the other fully off, and jiggle the pickup selector! For the main motif I've used a clean amp with the Line6 FM4 'Growler' (Korg X911 meets Mu-Tron III; sounds like a Japanese comic...).

### **Electric 2:**

Again, I've used the Les Paul and the high gain amp. In the intro this guitar has a slow heavy flanger and I've used the same 'on-off' technique.

I've hammered on the power chords while the right hand was working the pickup selector. For the main groove try to be as nasty as possible!

### **Electric 3:**

This is the same guitar/amp combo. I've used the FM4 again, this time set on 'Attack Synth'.

For the arpeggio you need a more crunchy sound than guitar 2. Try to keep the volume of each note even.

## **STONE SETTINGS**

### *The Envelope Filter*

In the 70's, the guitar pedal market exploded with lots of exciting new brands of envelope filter. The technology they utilized varied, with some working like a wah-wah whilst others were closer to a synth. The great thing about all of them was their warm, organic and very unique sound. The down side being the high levels of noise! If you're looking for a bit of modern filtering, check out the Zvex and Xotic pedal as well as the Line6 FM4.



♩ = 120

Gtr 1

1.2. 4 | 3.

TAB

12 12 | 12 9

Gtr 2

TAB

2 2 | 3 3 | 0 0 | 1

Gtr 3

TAB

12 12

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