

“Judith” A Perfect Circle

By Andrew DuBrock

The seeds for supergroup A Perfect Circle were planted when Tool frontman Maynard James Keenan met guitarist Billy Howerdel in 1992. Howerdel was working as a guitar tech for Fishbone at the time, and Fishbone opened a set of shows that Tool was headlining. The two later became friends, and after Howerdel played Keenan a few songs that he'd written, they decided to form a band. A Perfect Circle was filled out with respected session drummer Josh Freese (who was also a former member of the Vandals and Guns N' Roses), former Failure and Enemy guitarist Troy Van Leeuwen, and bassist Paz Lenchantin. (Later incarnations of the band would include former Smashing Pumpkins guitarist James Iha and former Marilyn Manson and Nine Inch Nails bassist, Jeordie White). A Perfect Circle's debut record, *Mer de Noms*, came out in 2000, and featured three singles. The top-charting single, “Judith,” cracked the top 5 of both *Billboard's* Mainstream Rock and Modern Rock Tracks charts.

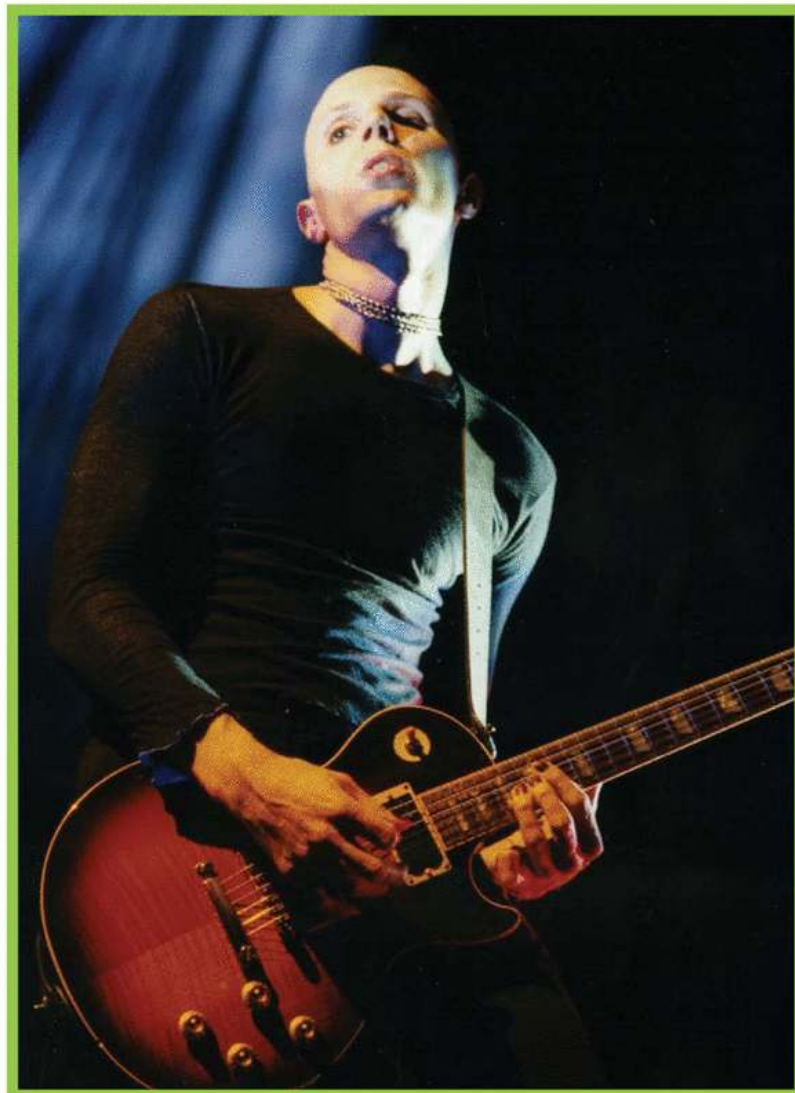


Photo by Frank White

TUNE DOWN AND COUNT OFF

As is requisite for most rock tunes these days, make sure to tune your guitar down to match the recording. For this song, Howerdel tunes down a full 1 1/2 steps to C \sharp -F \sharp -B-E-G \sharp -C \sharp . Remember that the other members in your band must tune down as well (or else transpose the chord symbols down 1 1/2 steps) or you'll have a major train wreck on your hands!

Also note the 6/8 time signature, which has six beats in the measure, and uses eighth notes for each beat. As is common in 6/8 time, “Judith” actually groups these six beats into two larger beat groupings. That essentially means that the song feels like it has two beats per measure, and each of those two beats has three eighth notes in it. Because of this, you can count it two ways: “One-two-three, Four-five-six” or “One-and-ah,

Two-and-ah.” Notice how both of these ways feature two strong beats—each followed by two weak beats. The 55 beats-per-minute pulse shown at the beginning of the song is for each of these strong beats (which equal a dotted quarter note).

MODAL MADNESS

The following transcription of “Judith” uses the key of E minor (one sharp—F \sharp), but the song snakes through quite a few darker modes, as well. For instance, the F naturals used throughout suggest an E Phrygian sound (E-F-G-A-B-C-D)—the third mode of the C major scale—while the added B \flat at the beginning of the Chorus hints at E Locrian (E-F-G-A-B \flat -C-D). Later in the Chorus, the guitar and vocals land on a G \sharp , giving the song an E Phrygian Dominant feel (E-F-G \sharp -A-B-C-D) and a Middle-Eastern flavor (the Phrygian

Dominant scale is built from the fifth mode of the A harmonic minor scale). At other times, the combination of B \flat , C \sharp , and F natural hint at A Phrygian Dominant (A-B \flat -C \sharp -D-E-F-G). For a handy comparison of all these heavy scales, see **Fig. 1A-E**. However you look at it, the songs riffs are built around 5ths and octaves, which leaves a lot of open space for Howerdel to surf between modes and to use notes that don't fit within any particular key.

Check out Howerdel's crafty composing techniques throughout the tune. That octave riff in the first two measures crops up all over the place in different forms: Gtr. 2 enters with a nearly identical single-note version in measure 3, and Rhy. Figs. 1 & 2 behind the Verse feature another twist on this riff—this time harmonized as a power chord with the 4th below the melody. This



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What They Use

Billy Howerdel reportedly played a Gibson Les Paul Classic guitar and used a Naked amp head with two VHT 4X12 cabinets around the time A Perfect Circle recorded "Judith." Effects in his chain include two TC Electronic G-Force effects units, a Lexicon MPX G2 multi-effect processor, and a Lexicon MPX-R1 MIDI-controller.

How to Get the Sound

To get the thick sound Howerdel gets on "Judith," use a Les Paul-type guitar (or something else equipped with humbuckers), run that through a Marshall or Mesa/Boogie rig, turn up the gain, and boost the treble and bass, leaving the mids flat. Chug through some of the licks, and adjust the knobs further until it works with your particular amp and rig.

FIG. 1A-1E

E minor scale E Phrygian mode (3rd mode of C major) E Locrian mode (7th mode of F major)

E Phrygian Dominant mode (5th mode of A harmonic minor) A Phrygian Dominant mode (5th mode of D harmonic minor)

slick power-chord shape has the 5th *below* the root of the chord, allowing you to play it in a one-fingered shape similar to the one-fingered power chords you can play in Drop-D tuning.

Make sure you dampen the fourth string on the octave lines in the main riff and the Chorus by rolling your index finger down enough to touch that string while fretting the fifth-string note. For the double bend on an octave in the Chorus, you'll likely find it easier to pull the strings down (towards the floor), instead of pushing up on the strings, like you'd do on high-string bends.

SLIPPERY SLIDES

Near the end of the Chorus, Gtr. 3 enters with a screaming slide lick. Most slide players put the slide on their ring finger (and sometimes their pinky). This allows you to dampen the strings *behind* the slide with your index and middle fingers for a smoother sound. And, while we're at it, make sure you dampen any other unwanted string noise by using your picking-hand fingers or the palm of your picking hand to dampen the strings you're not playing. Otherwise, you'll hear a ton

of ghost notes and general strangeness that doesn't sound too hot on an electric slide part (though that string noise does give acoustic slide parts an "authentic," down-home sound).



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- Get complete album transcription books of A Perfect Circle and Tool at musicdispatch.com
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Judith

Words and Music by Maynard James Keenan and Billy Howerdel
from A Perfect Circle - *Mer de Noms*

Guitars: Billy Howerdel
Troy Van Leeuwen

Tune down 1 1/2 steps:
(low to high) C[♯]-F[♯]-B-E-G[♯]-C[♯]

Intro
Moderately fast ♩. = 55

N.C.

*Gtr. 1 (dist.)
(Snare)

f

T
A
B

*Doubled throughout

Gtr. 1 tacet

Gtr. 2 (dist.)

mf
**w/ delay & reverb

P.M. -1

P.M. -1

**Delay set for eighth-note regeneration w/ 1 repeat.

Maynard James Keenan: 1. You're _

grad. bend

grad. release

1/2

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Verse

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5 D5 G5 A5

such an in - spi - ra - tion for the ways that I will

Gtr. 2

Gtr. 1 Rhy. Fig. 1

End Rhy. Fig. 1

Gtr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1 (2 times)

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5 D5 G5 A5

nev - er, ev - er choose to be.

Gtr. 2

Gtr. 2: w/ random fdbk. (next 4 meas.)

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5 D5 G5 A5

Oh, so man - y ways for me to show you how your

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5 D5 G5 A5

Sav - ior has a - ban - doned you.

Billy Howerdel: F**k your God!


Gtr. 1 Rhy. Fig. 2

End Rhy. Fig. 2

JUDITH

Gr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 2 (3 times)

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5 D5 G5 A5 D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5




Your Lord and your Christ. He did this. Took all you

D5 E5 D5 G5 A5 D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5 D5 G5 A5



had and... ..left you this way. Still you pray, nev - er stray, nev - er... Nev - er taste of the

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5 D5 G5



You nev - er thought to ques - tion why? It's

Gr. 1




P.M.-----|

5 7 7 7 7 5 7 8 7 5 7 5 7 7 7 7 5 3 3 6 0

Chorus

Gr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1 (3 times)

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5 D5 G5 A5



not like you killed some - one. It's

Riff A



15 15 15 15 14 14 14 14 14 9 9 9 9 10 9 9 9


X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X

13 13 13 13 12 12 12 12 12 7 7 7 7 8 7 7 7

End Riff A


Gr. 2: w/ Riff A (2 times)

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5 D5 G5 A5



not like you drove a { hate - ful } spear in - to His side.

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5 D5 G5 A5



{ Praise the one who left you bro - ken down and par - a - lyzed. } He

{ Talk to Je - sus Christ as if He knows the rea - sons why. }

D5 E5

D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5

2nd time, Bkgd. Voc.: w/ Voc. Fill 1

D5 E5

D5 G5

did it all for you, _____ oh. _____

Gtr. 3 (dist.)

f
w/ slide
steady gliss.
5

Gtr. 2

14 14 14 14 13 13 13 13 13 16 16 16 16 19 11 11 11
X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X
12 12 12 12 11 11 11 11 11 14 14 14 14 17 9 9 9

Gtr. 1

P.M.-----|

5 7 7 7 7 5 7 8 7 5 7 5 7 7 7 7 5 5 5 5

Gtr. 1 tacet

C5

A5

C5

A5

17 17 17 17 17 15 15 15 15 15 17 17 17 17 17 15 15 15 15 15

Gtr. 2 Riff B

12 12 12 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 12 12 12 9 9 9 9 9 10 9 9 9 9 9 14
X
10 10 10 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 10 10 10 7 7 7 7 7 8 7 7 7 7 7 7 12

Voc. Fill 1

(Oh.) _____

Gtr. 2: w/ Riff C (1 1/2 times)

Gtr. 3

15 15 14 14 14 (14) 9 9 9 9 10 9 9 9 15 15 14 14 14 (14)

D5

Gtr. 4 (dist.)

10 12 12 12 12 10 12 18 12 10 12 10 12 12 12 12 10 12 12 12

*Set to harmonize one octave above. Only effect signal audible.

Gtr. 3

9 9 9 9 10 9 7 9 7 7 (7) 6

slow & steady gliss.

Gtr. 2

9 9 9 9 10 9 7 9 7 7 7 7 5

dim.

10 12 12 12 12 10 12 18 12 10 12 10 12 12 12 12 10 12 12 12

5 4 3 2 1

(7/5) (7/5)

fdbk.

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Verse

Gtr. 3 tacet

E5

2. Oh, so man - y ways for me to show you how your

Gtr. 4

9 10 (10)

Gtr. 2

9
X
7

11
X
9

Gtr. 1

P.M.-----| P.M.-----|

0 0 0 0 5 7 5 7 5 7 | 0 0 0 0 5 7 5 7 5 7

D5 E5 A5 B5

dog - ma has a - ban - doned - you.

9 10 (10) 0 2 10 10 10 10 12 10 10 10 12

9
X
7

11
X
9

12
X
10

(12)
10

P.M.-----| P.M.-----| P.M.-----|

0 0 0 0 5 7 5 7 5 7 | 5 5 5 5 7 9 5 5 5 5 7 9

Gtrs. 2 & 4 tacet

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5

D5 G5

Musical staff with lyrics: Pray to your Christ, to your God. Nev - er taste of the

Pray to your Christ, to your God. Nev - er taste of the

Pray to your Christ, to your God. Nev - er taste of the

Gtr. 1 Rhy. Fig. 3

Guitar staff for Gtr. 1 with rhythmic figures and P.M. marking

P.M. --- -1

End Rhy. Fig. 3

Fingerings for Gtr. 1

Gtr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 3

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5

D5 G5

Musical staff with lyrics: You nev - er strain, nev - er break, nev - er. They choke on a

You nev - er strain, nev - er break, nev - er. They choke on a

You nev - er strain, nev - er break, nev - er. They choke on a

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5

D5 G5

A5

Musical staff with lyrics: lie, ...e - ven ah. though He's the one who... ..who did this to

lie, ...e - ven ah. though He's the one who... ..who did this to

Gtr. 1

Guitar staff for Gtr. 1 with rhythmic figures and P.M. marking

P.M. --- -1

Fingerings for Gtr. 1

D5 E5 D5 E5 F5 E5 D5 E5 D5 E5

D5 G5

D.S. at Coda

Musical staff with lyrics: you. You nev - er thought to ques - tion why?

you. You nev - er thought to ques - tion why?

Gtr. 3

Guitar staff for Gtr. 3 with notes and 'don't pick' instruction

don't pick

15 (15) (15)

Gtr. 1

Guitar staff for Gtr. 1 with rhythmic figures and P.M. marking

P.M. --- -1

Fingerings for Gtr. 1

JUDITH

♣ Coda

Gr. 2: w/ Riff B

A5 C5

Gr. 3

17 17 17 17 17 15 15 19 (19) 20 17 (17) 17 17 17 17 17 15 15 15 15

A5 C5 D5 G5

Did it all for

steady gliss.

19 12 12 12 12 10 10 10 10 17 17 17 17 17 15 15 15 15 19 (19)

E C5 A5

you,

(Ah.)

Gr. 3

Gr. 2

w/ slide

12 12 12 12 15 10 10 10 9 9 9 9 10 9 9 17 17 17 17 15 15 15 15 15 15 16 16 16 16 19 14 14 13 13 13 13 15 9 9 9 12 12 14 14 14 14 17 12 12 11 11 11 11 13 7 7 7 9 9

C5

A5

C5

D5

G5

oh.

steady gliss.

steady gliss.

1., 2., 3.

4.

Outro

E

Em7

rit.

w/o slide

rit.

w/ slide

*w/ random fdbk.