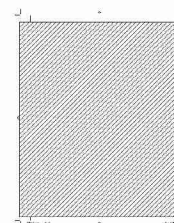
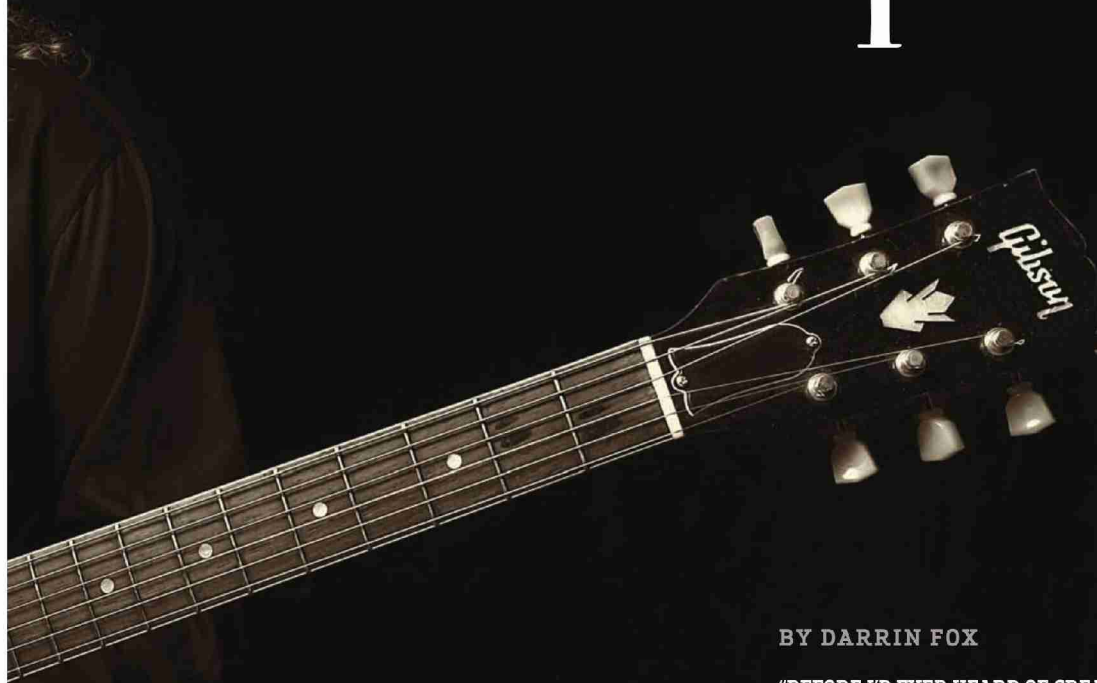


## Artists



# WARREN HAYNES



BY DARRIN FOX

**"BEFORE I'D EVER HEARD OF CREAM OR JIMI Hendrix, I heard soul music,"** exclaims Warren Haynes, whose new album, *Man in Motion* [Concord] is a paean of sorts to his first musical inspirations. "I was a singer before I ever picked up the guitar," continues Haynes, who counts himself as a member of the Allman Brothers, Gov't Mule, and the Dead. "So I was listening to Sam and Dave, the Four Tops, Otis Redding, and the Temptations. For *Man in Motion*, I wanted to merge those formative influences with my blues guitar influences like B.B., Freddie, and Albert King. Plus, I had been writing a lot of tunes that didn't fit with Gov't Mule or the Allman Brothers, but they did seem to have the common thread of soul music. That made me think it was time to do my first solo record since 1993." Tracked at Willie Nelson's Pedernales Studios with a grooving band that includes Ivan Neville on background vocals and organ, Ian McLagan on piano, Ruthie Foster on background vocals, George Porter, Jr. on bass, and Ron Holloway on saxophone, Haynes delivers the

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goods on *Man in Motion*, with his scintillating guitar playing buttressing his soulful vocal delivery and tight songcraft.

#### What can soul music teach a guitar player?

It shows you how to be part of an ensemble, how to play behind a singer appropriately, and how to play songs instead of just solos. There's a big part of guitar playing that doesn't hinge on playing solos. Plus, if you listen to old soul records, if there are guitar solos, they were usually very short, but extremely effective and perfect for the tune.

#### Do you feel you play differently over the type of grooves found on *Man in Motion* than you would, say, on an Allman Brothers record?

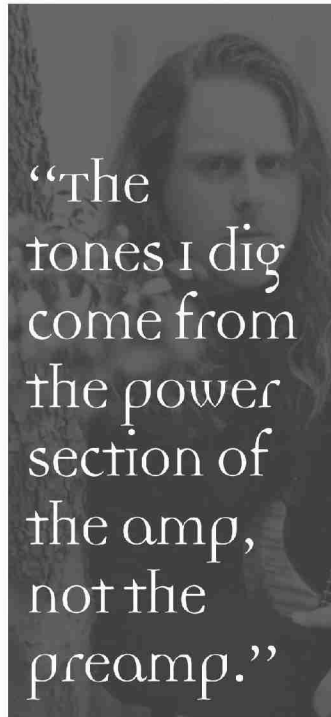
Definitely. But mostly because I went for a cleaner tone on this record and that made me change the way I play. In fact, this album has the cleanest tones I've used on any recording. It fits the music better. It would have been out of place to use the same tone I use in the Allman Brothers or Gov't Mule. Besides, one of the coolest things about music is responding to the tone you have. When you plug in and it sounds cool, you'll play a certain way. And, in some cases, playing with a sound that you're not used to will inspire you to explore and go down different roads.

#### Was there ever a time where you thought you were using too much distortion?

Well, getting your tone is an evolving process, and I don't know exactly when it was—but there was a time when I realized that playing with a more distorted tone made everything easier, yet it didn't necessarily sound better. You have to find the fine line where it's dirty, but you're still struggling a bit.

#### How much preproduction did you do for *Man in Motion*?

We didn't do much. The band came, we learned the tunes from scratch, rehearsed them a little bit, and started rolling tape. I always take that kind of approach. It's the same approach we take with the Allman Brothers and Gov't Mule. My favorite way to track is with everyone in the room looking at each other and playing live, solos and all. I much prefer my solos that I track live because there is a subtle give and take with the musicians. When you're overdubbing it's a one-way street—you can respond to



the track but the players can't respond to you. The other way ends up sounding much more dimensional.

#### What did you use to track the album?

We used three amps and combined them in various ways. I borrowed a Trainwreck from a friend and ran it through a Marshall 4x12 loaded with Celestion Vintage 30s. I also used a 1960 Fender Deluxe that belongs to Willie Nelson, and a Fender Pro Junior. I would have the Pro Junior facing me like a monitor, but it's so small it didn't bleed into the other mics. For guitars, I only used my Les Paul on two cuts. On four other tunes I used a 1959 ES-345, and the other four were cut with my D'Angelico New Yorker. This was the first time I recorded with that guitar, which has flatwounds on it for the jazzier solos.

#### What are you using onstage these days?

With the Allman Brothers, I've been using a PRS Dallas head and my Cesar Diaz

CD-100 head that I've used for years. With Gov't Mule I'll use the Diaz and sometimes my modified Soldano SLO head or my old 100-watt Marshall.

#### You use effects, but very sparingly.

Yeah, I'm not a fan of an abundance of effects, but used at the right time they can be really cool. In fact, I've developed a taste for the challenge of picking the right effect at the right time. Growing up I was never a big user of effects, but when we started Gov't Mule, it was a trio and I needed all the ammo I could get. So I started using tremolo, Leslie simulators, and octave dividers—anything to make a three-hour show more exciting rather than having the same guitar sound all night. I have a Bradshaw switching system that I use depending on which band I'm playing with. In the Allmans, I plug straight into the amp. In Mule, I'll use a Boss Octaver, a Hughes & Kettner Rotosphere, a Chandler delay, a Bradshaw stereo tremolo, a Dunlop Cry Baby, and an Emma DiscumBOBulator. Most of my overdrive comes from the amp. If I want more, I'll kick on a Klon Centaur or a Diaz Texas Ranger.

#### What are you using for strings, slides, and picks?

Strings are GHS .010-.046—or .011-.052 depending on if I'm tuned down to *E<sub>b</sub>*—and my picks are Dunlop 0.88mm. For slides I have some Coricidin bottles—I even have a couple that used to belong to Duane Allman that I'll use in the studio. I never take them onstage for two reasons: they have historical value, but they also trap moisture inside and it messes up the callous on that finger. I've been using open-ended Dunlop slides and my tech has been painting the inside so they stick to my finger better and don't roll around.

#### Improvisation is such a huge part of what you do. Surely you have those nights when you're just off of your game, right?

Yeah, everyone has those nights, even the best players in the world. But I have this theory that your "off" night doesn't always come across to the audience that way. To me, a great night is when I'm experimenting, breaking new ground, and doing things I've never done before. But sometimes when you're having an uninspiring gig and you have to rely on your stock licks, you may still connect with the audience because it's your signature thing—your

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  - See Haynes and Paul Reed Smith discuss tone and PRS amps.
  - Watch the Warren Haynes Band performing "Invisible" live in Florida in 2011.
- Get these links and more at [guitarplayer.com/october2011](http://guitarplayer.com/october2011)

bread and butter sound that's very identifiable. I've had nights that I thought I played horribly and people would come up and say it was the best they've ever heard me play. And I've had other nights where I thought I played really good and friends would tell me, "Eh, I've heard you play better." So I don't think what the audience gets from your performance is necessarily the same as what you get from it as a guitar player. That being said, there are definitely nights where there is that undeniable connection between the crowd and the band and everyone knows it.

**You're always playing with so many different people—legends in many cases. Is there something you can glean by actually playing with a person that you don't necessarily get by listening to the records?**

Oh yeah. For example, when I joined the Allman Brothers in 1989, I had been playing those tunes all of my life in bar bands and garage bands. But when I played them *with* the Allmans, I heard what really makes them tick from the inside. Even though I was a huge fan and studied that music, all of a sudden, I was getting insight to what makes them work on a higher level.

**Okay, the million-dollar question is, what makes them tick?**

Well, it's kind of hard to describe. It's the same thing when I started playing with the Dead—you get a better sense of what each individual player's role is and how to separate each personality from a listening perspective, which allows you to respond better to the ensemble as a whole.

**You've said that musicians are continuous students. How do you stay in that learning mode?**

That's the challenge, isn't it? Always being a student will keep you inspired. As musicians, it's our job to find new ways to express ourselves, and new ways to set up a learning environment. That being said, it's easier to do when you're surrounded by great players, which I'm fortunate enough to be. It also helps to have different projects with different players involved, which is also something I always do. Even in the context of Gov't Mule and the Allmans, we have friends coming up on an almost nightly basis, and when that happens something new and interesting is bound to go down. So the learning aspect isn't a tedious thing at all. If you're playing with great players, you're learning how to better express your music through osmosis. ■