

Solo Arrangements for Electric Bass - Bonus Materials

metallica ☆ nothing else matters

Of all the pieces that I arranged for my solo performances project, this song was probably the one that took the longest to finish, purely because I had so many ideas for it! All these ideas had to be condensed down into a cohesive arrangement - hopefully this is what you'll find in the following pages.

I decided to arrange this song as I have been something of a closet Metallica fan for many years. I had also learnt the Intro on the guitar several years ago. While fooling around with the Intro section on the bass, I found that it translated well and realised that it would make an interesting addition to my solo arrangements project.

Arranging 'Nothing Else Matters'

The Intro was easy enough to perform using the chordal fingerstyle technique and this enabled me to retain the phrasing and feel of the original song. I needed to use two handed tapping to execute some of the parts of the section at letter B, but these were quite simple to arrange. Once the first Verse began I decided to continue using chordal fingerstyle and consequently put together what I believe to be a simple, but pleasing arrangement of the melody and harmony. On the original version of the song the second Verse is almost exactly the same as the first, but at this point I was keen to keep the arrangement moving and not repeat myself. I decided therefore to move straight to the third Verse, which begins at letter D. This Verse was trickier to put together as the melody began to reach higher up the neck, meaning that some of the stretches and chord shapes were less comfortable to play.

I wanted the first Chorus to enter with a bang and so enlisted the slap technique combined with some strummed chords. Fortunately, thanks to the E minor key centre, a lot of the chords for the Chorus involved open strings, meaning that I had a lot more options for creating 'big' sounding chords: being able to fret notes in combination with open strings can be very useful when arranging chord progressions. Open string tenths are a good example of this, and I was able to use them on the Am and D chords.

As the Chorus ends, the song moves briefly back to the opening arpeggio figure in bars 47 and 48. In bar 48 I incorporated the melodic brass figure that is audible on the original version of the song. This is played with the two handed tapping technique and leads directly into the third verse, also played with the tapping technique.

I knew that the piece had to continue developing and so decided to arrange the third verse to be played as a tapping piece. This meant that the dynamic would be different and there would be a sense of development. This leads directly to another Chorus, performed in the same manner as before. In order to transition neatly into the Middle 8, I decided to take a few artistic liberties with the ending of this Chorus: the strummed figure, harmonics and chord that lead into the Middle 8 at letter H are all figures that I wrote to create a smooth and interesting transition.

The Middle 8 was something that I originally envisioned would be played with the chordal fingerstyle technique, much like the Intro. However, when I came to arrange it, I found that it did not lend itself to this technique well at all and so I rearranged it using the two handed tapping technique. As this section ended I decided to temporarily abandon the arrangement and add in a section that incorporated some more complex tapping and slapping. The inspiration for doing so was most likely Victor Wooten's playing on his arrangement of the Beatle's song 'Norwegian Wood', which is also in 6/8 time. I first developed the tapped motif in bars 84 and 85 after much experimentation, then applied the same concepts to the other chords in the progression. This worked well, and seemed to move seamlessly into the tapped section at letter J. This section is in 4/4 time and has a tempo change as well. This part is composed of some tapping ideas that developed out of many hours of improvising and playing with the simple chord changes.

The final Chorus at letter K is a development of the previous Choruses and features some inversions of the chords. These gradually ascend the neck, building towards the 'Guitar Solo' section.

Kirk Hammett's guitar solo on the original version of the song is one of the highlights for me and I was keen to attempt to arrange it for the bass. In order to do so I knew I would have to play not just the solo, but also some kind of accompaniment in the form of bass notes in order that the solo made sense. Because of the wide spread of notes, the two handed tapping techniques was clearly the way to go with this section.

The guitar solo section leads back to the main arpeggio figure and a final Verse which is identical to the very first. The piece closes with an original melodic idea that I came up with while improvising around the chord progression.

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Because the chords lend themselves well to being played as tenths (with open strings where possible), I found that melodic ideas came easily for this section.

'Nothing Else Matters' is one of my favourite arrangements. This is because it is close enough to the Metallica version to be recognisable, but also because it includes original material that represents my playing and arranging ideas as well.

Performing 'Nothing Else Matters'

Throughout the Intro and Verse sections of this piece, you should allow the notes to ring into each other where possible. This enhances the polyphonic nature of the chordal fingerstyle technique. You'll need to be careful not to play the low E's in the Intro too loudly as these can dominate the bar if you're not careful. Note the two different positions of the same note, G, in bar 4: the second one, found at the fifteenth fret of the E-string was the only logical place to play the note at this point.

In bar 9 you'll need to play the C and E at the tenth and ninth frets respectively with the third and fourth fingers of the left hand. This will ensure that your first finger is available to play the low B of the ascending bass figure at the end of the bar, and the C at the beginning of the next one. Be sure to play the hammer-on/pull-off figure in bar 11 as smoothly as you can.

In bars 13 and 14 I embellished the basic arpeggio figure with some artificial harmonics, which are tapped lightly on the frets an octave above where the left hand frets them – the notes that are tapped are written in parentheses.

At letter B, the second part of the Intro, you'll need to keep your right hand fairly close to the neck so that it is close enough to play the tapped doublestops cleanly. Switching from chordal fingerstyle playing to tapping in this manner is tricky, so practise this section slowly. The tapping technique is used exclusively in bars 20 and 21, to outline the chords. You can afford to play this section a little louder, but ensure that you drop back to a lower volume in bars 22 and 23.

Throughout the first Verse, at letter C you need to let the bass notes ring where possible, whilst playing the vocal melody and chordal parts. In bar 26 you'll find it easiest to play the G at the tenth fret of the A-string with your fourth finger and the D at the seventh fret of the G-string with your first. The second Verse, at letter D requires some very creative fingerings in order to get the notes to ring as they should. Most of the fingerings you'll need are self evident when you play the line, but in bar 35 you'll need to use the following: first finger on the B at the fourteenth fret, then the G and B on the D and G-strings with the second and third fingers. You can let go of the B when playing the doublestop that slides downwards. In bar 39, fret the B with your first finger, play the following doublestop with your third and second fingers, then play the triplestop with the first finger fretting the B at the fourteenth fret of the A-string, the third finger fretting the F# at the sixteenth fret of the D-string and the second finger fretting the A at the fourteenth fret of the G-string.

The first Chorus, at letter E should be played loud, so as to be an obvious contrast to the quieter and more sensitive Verse sections. Let all bass notes ring where possible – this is especially important for the D chords in the second and fourth bars.

The third Verse, at letter F is tapped. The fingering patterns between the two hands need to be quite specific here in order for the notes to be able to ring together and so correct fingerings have been notated on the score. Try to perform this section as smoothly as you can – the notes really need to run into each other where possible.

The second Chorus, at letter G is much the same as the first, but has a different ending composed of original material. In bar 64 you should ensure that you accent the first note of each three note grouping and play the notes in between as ghost notes. The following bar, which features a series of harmonics should be an obvious contrast and be played quieter and more delicately. The dynamic should change again in bar 69, getting louder throughout the strummed chord. This takes us neatly into the Middle 8 section at letter H.

The Middle 8 is tapped, with the right hand taking on the lions share of the notes in the first four bars. Once again, let the notes ring into each other here. The slap/tap figure in bar 83 will require careful attention in order to perform it accurately: the two hands should cross in this bar, with the left hand moving up the fretboard to play the upper register doublestops while the right hand thumb slaps the open E-string in between them.

The slap/tap passage at letter I is a challenging piece to get together. You'll need to become adept at hammering-on notes with your left hand, as well as popping with both the first and second fingers of your right hand. It's easy to let some of the notes become indistinct during this section, but you should work on all the individual elements – especially the tapping element – to ensure that each part is performed as cleanly as possible. Once you have cracked the figure in bars 84 and 85 the rest of this section should fall into place quite easily. The sixteenth note tapping passage beginning at letter J should be fairly easy for you to get together if you have gotten this far.

The dynamic should really build during the third Chorus, at letter K. The chords should get bigger and fuller, culminating in a powerful E power chord played in the upper register. This chord sounds even better when you add in

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the low E-string. With the dynamic increasing dramatically here, the transition into the softer, more sensitive guitar solo section is even more effective.

The guitar solo is one of the most challenging aspects of this arrangement. My advice is to study the original solo very carefully, and listen to the way that Kirk Hammett phrased the various parts. This arrangement of the solo is tapped, and you have the added burden of supporting the solo with left hand bass notes and accompaniment figures. Be sure to follow the tapping guides carefully here and allow those bass notes to ring wherever possible.

During the final section of the song – which is a final Verse and Outro – you should bring the volume right back down, allowing the piece to end with the same dynamic as it started with.

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B (Em) (D) (C) (Em) (D) (C) (Em)

mf

t + ⊕ ⊕ + ⊕ ⊕ + t + ⊕ ⊕ + ⊕ ⊕ + t +

9 16 17 11 9 9 16 17 11 9 9 16 17

0 7 9 5 7 12 3 5 10 0 7 9 5 7 12 3 5 10 0 7 9

(D) (C) (G) (B) (Em)

⊕ ⊕ + + ⊕ ⊕ + + ⊕ ⊕ + + ⊕ ⊕ + + w/fingers

14 12 11 9 9 9 9 10 10 0 10 9 9 10 0 10 9 9

10 12 16 12 8 10 14 10 3 5 12 14 7 9 13 9 0 10 9 9 10 0 10 9 9 0 3 2

C (Em) (D) (C) (Em) (D) (C)

9 9 9 9 11 9 9 9 9 7 9 9 9 9 7 9 9 9

0 10 10 0 8 8 10 9 0 10 0 0 7 9 9 8 8 10 9

(Em) (D) (C) (Em) (B) (Em)

11 12 12 12 7 7 9 9 9 12 11 11 12 11 9 9 9 9 9 9 9

0 10 0 0 8 8 10 9 0 10 7 7 0 10 9 9 10 0 10 9 9 10

D (Em) (D) (C) (Em) (D) (C)

12 12 12 12 14 16 12 12 16 16 16 14 12 14 16 17 17

0 10 14 14 0 10 10 10 9 0 14 17 17 17 16 14 0 14 16 17 17 15 15 15 15 14

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37 (Em) (D) (C) (Em) (B) (Em)

12 12 12 11 9 11 12 9 9 16 14 14 16 14 12 9 9
 14 14 14 0 0 0 10 10 10 9 17 16 16 16 16 14 9 9
 0 14 8 8 0 14 14 14 14 0 0 9 10

41 **E** (C) (Am) (D) (C) (Am) (D)

5 5 2/4/5 7 7 9 11 11 12 11 9 X X 5 5 5/7/9 7 7 9 11 12 11 9 X X
 5 5 3 3 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 X X 5 3 3 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 X X
 3 3 3 0 3 3 3 0 3 3 3 0 3 3 3 0 3 3 3 0 3 3 3 0

45 (C) (Am) (D) (Em)

5 5 2/4/5 7 7 X X 12 11 14 12 11 12 14
 5 5 3 3 3 0 0 0 X X 0 10 14 14 14 10 7 7 7 7 7 7
 3 3 3 0 0 0 X X 0 0 10 14 14 14 10 0 7 7 7 7 7 7

49 (Em) (D) (C) (Em)

t ⊕2 ⊕1 ⊕2 ⊕3 ⊕3 ⊕3 ⊕2 ⊕1 ⊕3 ⊕2 ⊕1 ⊕1 ⊕4 ⊕1 ⊕1 ⊕4 ⊕1 ⊕2 ⊕2 t ⊕2 ⊕1 ⊕2 ⊕3 ⊕3 ⊕2 ⊕2 ⊕2 ⊕2 ⊕2
 7 9 9 7 9 7 9 7 9 11 9 9 7 9 5 10 9 9 7 9 9 9 9 9
 0 7 10 7 7 9 5 5 7 3 5 10 3 2 0 7 10 7 7 7 7 7 7

52 (D) (C) (Em) (D) (C)

⊕1 ⊕4 ⊕1 ⊕4 ⊕1 ⊕4 ⊕1 ⊕2 ⊕2 t ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕
 7 9 5 3 5 10 9 7 11 12 12 7 9 5 3 5 10 9 7 9 5 3 5 10
 5 7 5 3 5 10 3 2 0 7 10 9 9 7 11 12 12 5 7 9 5 3 5 10 3 2

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55 (Em) (B) (Em) **G** (C) (Am)

t ⊕ + + + ⊕ ⊕ + + t ⊕ + + + ⊕ ⊕ + ⊕ + str t p t t p

7 10 9 11 12 11 9 12 12 7 9 9 11 12 14 16 5 5 2/4/5

0 7 10 9 7 0 7 10 9 7 7 7 3 3 3 0

58 (D) (C) (Am) (D)

str str str str str str str str t p t t p str str str str str str str

7 7 9 11 12 11 9 X X 5 5 5/7/9 7 7 9 11 12 11 9 X X

0 0 0 0 0 X X 3 3 3 0 0 0 0 11 12 11 0 X X

61 (C) (Am) (D) (C) (Am) (D)

str t p t t p str str str str str str str str t p t t p str str str str str str str str str str

5 5 2/4/5 7 7 9 11 12 11 9 X X 5 5 2/4/5 7 X X 11 X X 14 X X 19 X X

3 3 3 0 0 0 0 0 X X 3 3 3 0 0 X X 0 X X 0 X X 0 X X

65 (Em)

mp Harm----- Harm-----

7 7 0 5 4 5 9 9 9 10 10 9 11 11 11 11 11

5 7 0 5 4 0 10 9 9 10 0 10 9 10 10 10 10 10

H (Em) (Am)

p + + + + + + + + + ⊕ + + + + + ⊕ ⊕ + + + ⊕ + + ⊕

11 12 14 14 14 16 17 14 17 17 14 17 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14

0 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 5 15 15 5 7 15 14 7 14 2

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(C) (D) (Em)

(Em) (Am)

(C) (D) (Em)

I (Em)

(D) (C)

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L (Em) (D) (C) (Em)

(D) (C) (Em)

(D) (C) (Em)

127

M (Em) (D) (C) (Em) (D) (C)

mp

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