

Can't You Hear Me Knocking – The Rolling Stones

Guitar 1 – Rhythm Guitar

Notes: Wow. This song is freaking hard. Now, I did NOT do the middle theme, which ultimately is a sax solo, and then moves into Mick Taylor's solo. I barely made it through the basic version. I DID include the chords used for this part as a secondary guide. I, however, couldn't cover it. It was just too much to decipher. Considering this song is anywhere from 9 – 17 minutes (that I've seen in researching it) I find this to be one of those songs where you get the main concept and stick to that. After all, we're not looking for a big band experience. We're looking for the core concept.

There's a spot in the video that shows a C* - well, this is a little strange to explain. It's "actually" a G5 power chord (x55xxx) that's being played, but you don't use the low E string in it. This has to do with both guitars playing at the same time, and the relationship between the original Keith Richards part, which is technically in open G. When you see the Richards part you'll understand why this song can be a little tricky to figure out in terms of who is playing what. So, what I did here was combine both parts together, so that the D (5th fret A string note) and the G (5th fret D string note) created an "overall" G here. Again, Richards part will help you there.

Here's the basic tab that will explain what's being played for the main rhythm, which is:

The image shows musical notation and guitar tablature for the main rhythm. At the top, four chords are listed: C, C#, D, and C#. Below this is a staff of music with four measures, each containing a chord. The first measure is C, the second is C#, the third is D, and the fourth is C#. Below the staff is a guitar tablature with three lines. The top line has fret numbers 5, 6, 7, 6. The middle line has fret numbers 5, 6, 7, 6. The bottom line has fret numbers 3, 4, 5, 4. There are slurs over the top two lines for each measure. Below the tablature, there are three 'sl.' (slide) markings under the first, second, and third measures.

It's VERY hard to put what's basically being played into a "strumming song" version, but that's what's happening here. Furthermore, it's REALLY hard to sing this song and play it at the same time for either part. I barely made it through it, and this may be one of the first times that I truly smacked myself for even attempting this. It wasn't too hard on paper, but wow.

Anyway, it's my best shot. I wouldn't choose to play this live unless I knew I had a full band (and someone who could sing this dang song) WITH backup singers. The "can't you hear me knocking" part is actually from the backup singers, and it is much higher in pitch than I could really get to, but the overall essence is there.

Chords Used:

C* : x55xxx (this is really a "G5" in essence)
C : x355xx (also x32010)
C# : x466xx
D : x577xx
G : 355xxx (also 320033)
F : 133211

Strumming Pattern: This is really hard to explain, but ultimately the entire song for the rhythm part is just a combination of sliding from C – C# - D, and then tossing a G in there. When we aren't sliding a chord and/or chord progression the strumming is just all downstrokes.

When you get to the overall sliding part of this progression (with the tab shown above) you're basically just playing D, DDDD (where the comma indicates the slide) and then sparsely adding in a few downstrokes. This is one where the strumming is intended to be rather muted.

Tempo: 140 bpm

Intro: Nothing is really played during the intro for the rhythm theme. It's the Keith Richards part. In the video for the rhythm part you'll see me "pretending" for the intro part, so once you see the C* you start there (where you actually play the x55xxx)

Verse 1:

(C) -----C# D C# - C
Yeah, you got - satin shoes
(C) ----- G D C# - C
Yeah, you got - plastic boots
(C) -----C# D C# - C
Y'all (you all) - got cocaine eyes
(C) ----- G D C# - C
Yeah, you got speed-freak jive
(C) -----C# D C#
Can't you hear me knockin' - on your window
C ----- G - D
Can't you hear me knockin' - on your door
C -----C# D C# - C
Can't you hear me knockin' - throw me down the keys!

G F C G
Help me baby, ain't no stranger (x3)

C* (this is "really" the G5, remember: x55xxx) <THEN>

C – C# - D – C# <THEN back to the verse theme>

<this is the “main concept” above, which looks trickier than it really is. Just think of the “yeah you got, satin shoes” part>

(C) -----C# D C#
Can't you hear me knockin' - (OR) are you safe asleep?
C ----- G D - C#
Can't you hear me knockin' - (YEAH) down the gas light street....

C -----C# D C# C
Can't you hear me knockin' - (YEAH!) throw me down the keys!

G F C G
Hear me ringin' big bell tolls (tones) <----*this was an error – it's supposed to say “tolls”*
G F C G
Hear me singin' soft and low!
G F C G
I've been beggin' on my knees
G F C G
I've been kickin' help me please.
G F C G
Hear me prowlin' gonna take you down.
G F C G
Hear me growlin' gotta fight it now! <---*alternate lyrics are “gone flat-footed now”*

C* (it's this part again, which translates to G5: x55xxx)

*****Note: there is a quick break here on both parts, because of the slight time change on the drums. It's not really transcribed as such, but since my metronome has to play through there IS a slight pause here. I doubled up the Keith Richards part here for a second to get back in to the overall concept. When you hear/watch the other part (the lead file) you'll see what I did there. Next.....

This is just the overall theme played over and over at this point. Remember, I didn't do the crazy weird sax part. So, you can just recap the song with the same theme, which is:

C – C# - D | D – C# - C | (C) – G – D – C# | C – C# - D | D – C# - C <then>

(C) – C# - D | D – C# - C ----- G

Final Thoughts: Yeah, this was crazy hard to even attempt to play or explain. At least in the way I try to provide “ez” versions. Feel free to experiment with this song, as I just had to let it go as is. I'm not too awfully proud of this version, but I suppose it works for 2 guitars in a basic sense.

