Wild Horses

Words and music by Mick Jagger and Keith Richards



Like many of the events of the late '60s and early '70s, the origin of the Rolling Stones' classic "Wild Horses" has become the stuff of legend. Some claim the song's immortal chorus, "Wild horses couldn't drag me away," was first uttered by Marianne Faithfull, onetime girlfriend to Mick Jagger. Others claim that Keith Richards penned the song's initial draft, frustrated with

the prospect of leaving his newborn son to get back on tour. One curious story—told by the song's session keyboardist Jim Dickinson—even claims that the Stones' regular pianist, Ian Stewart, didn't play on the track because of his refusal to play minor chords.

"Wild Horses" appears on the band's 1971 effort, Sticky Fingers, and features an acoustic guitar in "Nashville tuning," in which a guitar's four lowest strings are replaced with lighter gauges and tuned an octave above their normal pitches. If you

don't want to go to the trouble of rigging one of your axes this way, the effect can be simulated on a 12-string (and also translates just as well to standard tuning).

If you prefer to keep things simple, the song's intro strum pattern, transcribed here, can be used throughout the entire tune. The Stones included short fills and suspensions between most of the chords (see the Verse Fills example below), which you can pick up from listening to the recording. The chords notated in parentheses are all played in single beats, as the guitar prepares to move from one chord to the next—if you have a hard time switching chords that quickly, you can just as easily omit them. Just watch out for all of those minor chords.

-DAN APCZYNSKI

