

NEW BAND TIPS...

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LEARN TO PLAY PROPERLY

Sometimes being technically proficient is a good thing



You don't need technical proficiency to write killer tunes but it can help. Francis Seriau, of Tech Music Schools (who provided tuition to members of Radiohead, Basement Jaxx, Massive Attack, The Cure and The Kinks) has some tips:

IS THE IDEA THAT IT'S 'PUNK-ROCK' TO BE SLOPPY A BIT OUTDATED NOW?

Serau: "At the moment, there's a big mix of bands out there that are both musically and technically good... as well as some who are not! The music should be about what you want to say and communicate, as well as the vibe."

WHAT ARE THE MAIN THINGS THAT YOUNG MUSICIANS DO WRONG?

"It very much depends what you mean by 'wrong'. What might be considered wrong today might be completely acceptable in a few years and vice versa! Some young musicians are approaching things in wrong ways in terms of technique, in the way they sing or play their instrument. They will end up with permanent damage, very bad techniques and poor performances. We always assess all our prospective students and rectify all the bad habits."

DO YOU THINK YOU NEED AN IN-DEPTH KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC THEORY TO WRITE GREAT SONGS?

"Some of the greatest songwriters had no knowledge of music theory, they were inspired. It came naturally. Of course you can learn the techniques of songwriting, of composition, of arranging, but you cannot learn talent."

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE MUSICIANS LOOKING TO IMPROVE?

"I am often horrified at the lack of ensemble when I watch some acts. Sometimes they seem to play as if the rest of the band didn't exist! Pay attention to togetherness, ensemble in a big way. Also, cultivate your sound. Having a great individual sound makes such a difference. And sing in tune!"



Radiohead's technically proficient twosome, Thom and Jonny