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## My Music Q&A: Erik Mongrain

Friday, November 07, 2008, 07:30

THE French/Canadian guitarist was inspired early on by the work of Metallica, Jimi Hendrix, and Kurt Cobain but has since developed a style known as lap-tapping, whereby he lays the guitar on his lap and taps the strings on the fret board with both hands.

He first saw the technique on YouTube, in a video of his guitar hero Michael Hedges.

"I was spellbound," he says.

"The complexity of his playing and his ability to create so many different sounds probably make him, in my opinion, the best guitarist in the world."

Mongrain, who has just released his second album *Equilibrium*, is in Nottingham this weekend.

What was your first record?

Queen's *Sheer Heart Attack*.

What are you currently listening to?

Sigur Ros, Dave Matthews Band, Mogwai and Michael Hedges.

What is your desert island disc?

Aerial Boundaries by Michael Hedges because it is THE greatest acoustic album ever made.

Which song do you wish you'd written?

Aerial Boundaries or Java Man by Michael Hedges.

Which song has had you in tears?

Too many to list really but I remember when I bought the first album by Michael Hedges (*Oracle*). I was in the store listening to it and 20 seconds into *The 2nd Law* I was in tears. It moved me in ways I cannot really put into words.

What is your guilty music pleasure?

None really – sorry to disappoint.

Which music makes you angry?

Any music that sounds like reproduction and that is far too common nowadays than I'd like it to be. There is a huge lack of creativity in the music industry, I think. Almost every band/artist sounds like another one in too many ways. The lack of effort makes me angry.

Who was your first gig?

I am not sure I remember. I think it was a restaurant in Montreal named Le Porte Disapru. We passed the hat at the end and I did make \$100. It was fun. That was ten years ago.

Which musician would you like to be?

Michael Hedges. He simply was a pioneer, the greatest creator that ever lived in my opinion. Much of what he composed makes me very jealous. His music was and still is from beyond the realms of humans. I wouldn't really consider even being close to Elvis or the Beatles as I never really enjoyed their music.

Erik Mongrain plays The Maze in Mansfield Road on Monday November 10. Tickets are £10 from the venue or [www.gigantic.com](http://www.gigantic.com).

SIMON WILSON

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