

Polyphonic Lead Playing: The Lost Etude

You are gonna wish this one was lost by time you finish with it! It's not going away, so DEAL WITH IT!

The passage in "The Ministry of Lost Souls" that inspired this etude is a special point for me in every Dream Theater performance. I can always tell my level of preparedness by the way I pull this off. It combines quick playing of thirds and sixths as well as a technique I refer to as the "lazy pinky" technique, although there is not much "lazy" about it!

The "lazy pinky" idea started as a blues piano riff concept, and basically refers to the idea of letting the fifth finger of the right hand fall along with other lower notes while playing passages. The important goal here is to develop your skill for playing a combination of single notes and double notes within the moving line. Look out for some cool syncopation between the right hand and left hand at measure 6. I love bouncing rhythmically between the two hands.

The inspiration for this etude (page 190) is from measure 181 (page 203) of "The Ministry of Lost Souls" from *Systematic Chaos*.

Photo © Atsushi Sato