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ISSUE Interactive Magazine **GODSMACK** Tony Rombola talks style and gear **RODNEY BRANIGAN** Exclusive live performance + interview INTERVIEW - STYLE ANALYSIS - GEAR REVIEWS WIN!

REVIEWS

Marshall Slash head, Seymour Duncan Slash pickups, AmpliTube Slash Rig, Vintage AFD, Ibanez PM35, Charvel, DBZ, Caparison, Orange Micro Terror, Dr No & Source Audio FX

Matrix GT1000 FX guitar power amp!







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Garu

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After a rather rough couple of years which saw sex, drugs, music and fighting, the young Slash was encouraged to pick up the bass in order to start a band with a hopeful Steven Adler at the ripe age of 13. Unfortunately for Steve (and fortunately for the world of Rock) the only instrument Slash could get his hands on was a battered old classical guitar with one nylon string and of which he says: "I had no idea that what I was holding wasn't necessarily a bass." After a summer of lessons learning tunes by the Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix, Slash borrowed \$100 and got himself a cheap Memphis Guitars Les Paul copy. The icon had landed.

As most iGuitar readers will know, once you start playing guitar, it starts to take over your life, and Slash was no exception.

As soon as he could string three chords together and improvise a solo, he wanted to start a band and over the next few years he would be found in several outfits, including Tidus Sloan and Black Sheep (which even included guitar wizard Paul Gilbert at one point). This gave Slash an outlet to go out and be a Rock star, play music, drink and destroy dressing rooms, but really this was just Slash biding time while he worked a day job and looked for a good singer and a band that could take him where he needed to be.

As we all know, that band was Guns n' Roses; and after several chance encounters and adverts, the line up of Axl Rose, Izzy Stradlin, Duff McKagan, Steven Adler and Slash were ready to take over the world with 1987's "Appetite for Destruction".



[...>]



The story of Gruns n' Roses is a sig one, and one you're not likely to orget in a nurry

There is a lot of legend and lore on the history of Appetite, over the songs, the guitars, the amp, the overall message, and I still consider it to be the greatest hard Rock album ever recorded, for me it has everything you could want; from the raw punky feel of songs like It's So Easy and Mr Brownstone, along with the great Rock tunes like Nightrain and You're Crazy and the overblown arrangements of epics like Paradise City, Rocket Queen and Sweet Child O' Mine. I can't be alone in that opinion as the sales have reflected this and the album is certified 18 times platinum in the US alone!

The real hotly debated topic over this album is the exact gear that Slash used to record it, but unfortunately, the truth seems to have been lost in the annals of time. Although Slash is obviously a Gibson man, the guitar used on that record was actually a Les Paul replica (made by either Max or Derrig), but fortunately for us, Gibson has gone through a lot of hard work to recreate that exact instrument, and it's definitely worth a look though it comes at a price. However, for me, it's the amp that really deserves attention as that was a constant on the album and many

elements on the record weren't recorded on a Les Paul at all (listen for subtle tremolo vibrato in the final solo of nightrain!). That faithful amp in question was a Frank Levi modified 100 Watt Marshall 1959 super lead, rented from S.I.R. Studios. It's widely believed that this famous amp was stock "#39" which was a Tim Caswell modded super tremolo. According to Glenn Buckley, the long lost S.I.R repairman, #36 was modified to replicate #39 as another client had already requested the amp when Geffen records wanted it. It's also well documented that after the session Slash actually stole #36 when SIR refused to sell it to him, but the amp eventually ended up back at SIR, though 25 years later, the exact whereabouts of either #36 or #39 is unknown. Marshall has come to the rescue though by really putting in the work to recreate this incredible tone as you can see from our review in this issue, and I can't recommend checking this amp out enough if you want to get a little closer to that Slash

As for effects Slash tends to use very little in this area and you can certainly get by with just a delay (Boss DD3) and wah (Slash signature Crybaby). If you want to dig a little deeper then check out the Signature MXR octave fuzz pedal, an MXR 10 band EQ (set as a frown for a mid boost) and possibly a talkbox.

Slash went on to record five more massively popular albums with Guns n' Roses, including the two popular Use Your Illusion albums, but unfortunately tensions mounted over the years and the combination of sex, sex and sex along with drugs, drugs and even more drugs combined with some of the



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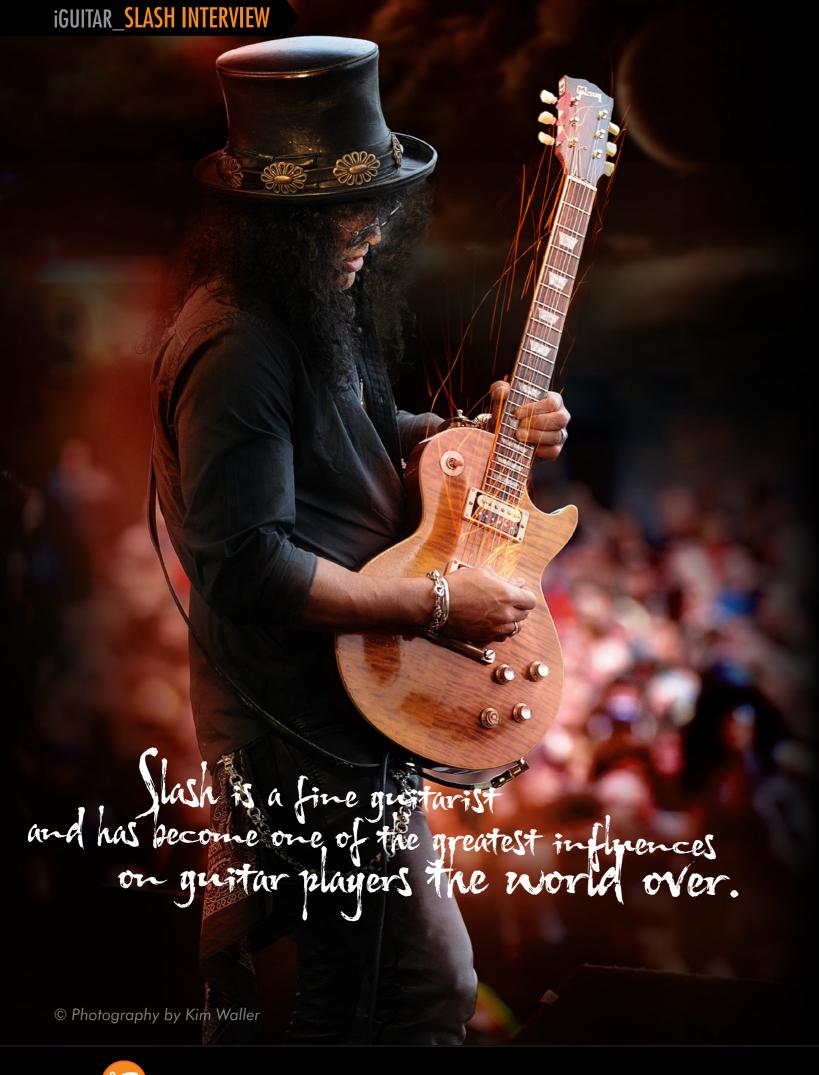


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[...>]





most monumental personalities, led to Slash quitting the band in 1996. This is one of the greatest falling outs in Rock history, and it's one which is still going on strong today. The story of Guns n' Roses is a big one, and one you're not likely to forget in a hurry, so definitely consider going out and picking up a copy of the Slash autobiography for the full gory details!

Over the following years Slash was comparatively quiet, only putting out a couple of records with his side project, Slash's Snakepit. These are both worth a listen as they sound like Guns n' Roses early records, before Axl began to bring in all of the softer influences. 2000's Ain't Life Grand is a must have in my book, really nailing that darker punky Rock vibe perfectly and it features some tasty guitar playing.

In 2003, thanks to a song making its way onto the soundtrack for The Hulk, hype began to grow around Slash's new band, a supergroup featuring ex GnR members with a new vocalist and rhythm guitarist, that line-up went on to become Velvet Revolver. The band's first record, Contraband, was released in 2004 to generally good reviews. The first single, Slither, felt like a great step forward for Slash, but in my opinion the follow up, Fall to Pieces, felt too much like a stab at recreating the popularity of Sweet Child. This isn't a slate on the band, it was great to put this record on and enjoy some good old fashioned hard Rock again and is really worth the time. This album was followed by Libertad, in 2007, which was more of the same and received good reviews, but unfortunately it just didn't seem to be picked up by the public

and sales were pretty poor. While touring the album, singer Scott Weiland's substance abuse got the better of him and once again Slash found himself in a situation where he was stranded because of a singer's inability to get on with his band mates.

The solution for Slash was to launch a proper solo album, which came in 2010. It definitely wasn't quite what we expected, as Slash wrote a series of songs for different singers and the resulting album features everyone from Ozzy and Lemmy to Kid Rock and Fergie. I can't say this is an essential purchase, despite the cover of Paradise City featuring Fergie and Cyprus Hill. The stroke of genius came when Slash decided to take the show on the road with Alter Bridge vocalist Miles Kennedy. Although the album received mixed reviews, the live shows were a huge hit so the only sensible thing to do next was to re-enter the studio and cut another record with Miles handling lead vocals. The resulting album, Apocalyptic Love was released in May 2012 and is exactly what we know and love Slash for. Unlike the eponymous Slash album, the new recording is an absolute must own for any fan of the top hat wearing icon!

With Slash currently flying around the world touring this album to adoring fans, it's pretty safe to say that the now non-smoking, teetotal, clean as a whistle Slash won't stop any time soon. Despite all the talk of 'icons' and 'images', the simple fact is that Slash is a fine guitarist and has become one of the greatest influences on guitar players the world over.





iGUITAR_GODSMACK/TONY ROMBOLA

Formed in 1995 in Massachusetts by singer and guitarist Sully Erna, Godsmack started life as, frankly, a slightly more modern take on Alice in Chains. However, things really got the twist they needed in 1996, when axe master Tony Rombola joined the fray.

The band's first, eponymous, album was released in 1998, but there's no escaping the view that it didn't deliver what might have been expected. This was due to the recordings being funded by the band, then, when their popularity spiked and they were signed, the album was remastered. All the same, despite the production issues, the band's classic metal influences and controversial language resulted in it going

multi-platinum in the United States. It spawned some really popular hits, too, like Whatever and the grinding metal anthem, Keep Away.

Now Godsmack really got to show what they did best: going out and playing live music. They quickly became an "Ozzfest band" and were a mainstay for the hugely successful metal festival. And it wasn't long before Godsmack would be back in the studio, the result being 2000's Awake which, again, went platinum and even earned the band their first Grammy nomination, unusually for an instrumental tune, Vampires.



[...>]



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There's a curious thing about Godsmack, which is hard to account for: they don't sound dated.

Perhaps the band's best effort came in 2003 with the release of Faceless, which is a nice metaphor for Godsmack's public image at the time. Despite outselling Linkin Park's Meteora on its week of release and debuting at the number one spot on the Billboard 200 album chart, Godsmack were still, somehow, relatively under the radar. Maybe a contributory factor in this was down to having their tracks synched for films (The Scorpion King, Pirates of the Caribbean), games (Prince of Persia, WWE Smackdown vs Raw) and TV (ECW wrestling and UFC). Nonetheless, tracks like I Stand Alone and Straight Out of Line were just awesome tunes that showcased just how much of a metal band Godsmack could be.



One of the defining elements of Godsmack is undoubtedly Tony Rombola. Take listen to Trippin' from Godsmack's fourth album, IV, to hear for yourself. For the nu metal fan generation, you could consider it a great thing that Tony was around delivering his unique brand of heavy metal, keeping the guitar hero torch alight.

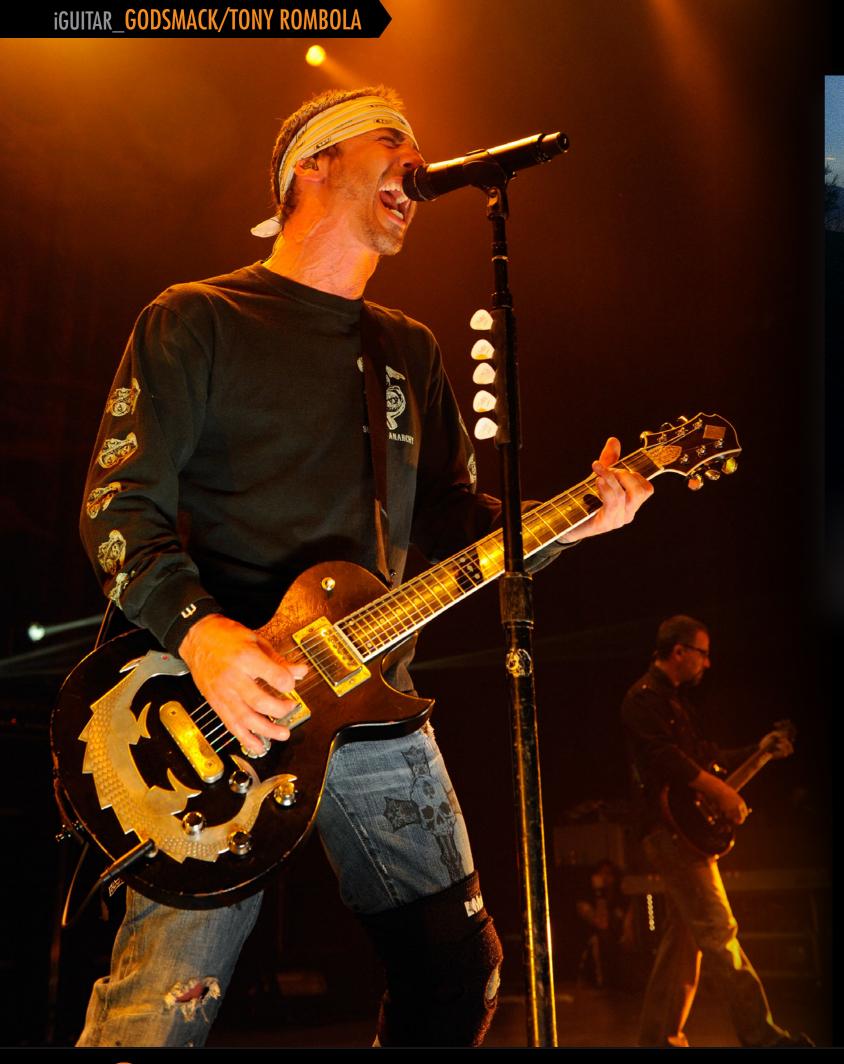
Rombola's gear is quite a hotly debated topic on the interwebs and a quick search will reveal lots of people talking about just how he got his tone on various gear forums. Guitarists care and it's not surprising - he definitely has a desirable sound and he has worked hard to get it. Although he is known as being a Les Paul player, and has played a variety of Les Paul style guitars (most notably his McNaught), he has a collection of instruments, actually considers himself more of a Strat man and has revealed that he loves his Suhr Classic, as it's just a real comfortable "couch guitar".

All the same, if you want to come close to Tony's signature tone, you're going to really want a heavy guitar with two humbukers. You're aiming for the Gibson scale length of 24.3/4" with 11s tuned to CGCFAD (although some are strung with 10s to drop D - GHS Boomers, in case you were wondering). You're also going to want a high quality tube amplifier. Until recently, Tony didn't have any major allegiance, but he has recently been seen fronting some of the superb EVH 5150 III heads (as reviewed in Gi 10) and has also used Mesa, Diezel or Splawn, so any of those should get you in the ballpark - always assuming you have that sort of money, of course! The only essential pedals for this style of playing is a noise suppressor, but Rombola is definitely fond of a wah for



[...>]







solos. Which isn't to say he's not a fan of pedals - just none seems to stand out as 'his'.

Although the band split briefly, 2010 saw the release of album number five, entitled The Oracle, which featured the serious head banging anthem Cryin' Like a Bitch. The album was generally well received in comparison to the previous IV, and marks a return to a heavier sound. The band came back and took the opportunity to get out on the road again, playing to packed venues wherever they went.

The October 2010 show in Detroit was recorded for a future release and was packaged

with a second disc containing cover tunes: Live & Inspired was released in May 2012.

There's a curious thing about Godsmack, which is hard to account for: they don't sound dated. When you listen to Korn or Limp Bizkit, it's hard to not suddenly be transported straight back to the late '90s but, although Godsmack rose through that era, listening to them now feels fresh, like you're just listening to a really good metal band - and that's one thing you can always count on Godsmack to be.

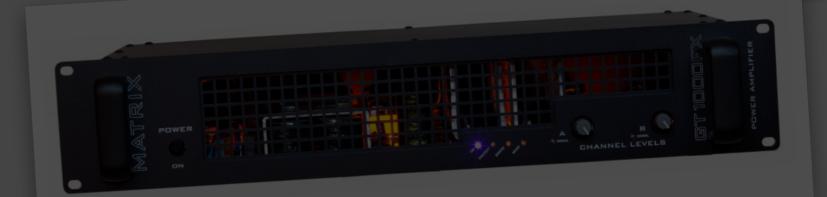




Win the fantastic Matrix GT1000FX guitar power amp in our free entry competition!



The British-made Matrix GT1000FX guitar power amp won a rave review in iGuitar 10. It's a sturdily built, but lightweight (3.7 kg), 1U, rack mountable power amp designed by amp guru Andy Hunt to work with a wide range of guitar products, from digital modellers to valve pre-amps, pre-amp pedals, 'slaving' traditional amplifiers and newer mini-amps with line outputs and can power either full-range or guitar cab speaker systems.



As Tom Quayle sa admit I was blown on offer and the fe combination. The Axe FX II perfectly a I'd never have known I was using a digital and solid-state pairing. Matrix has managed to achieve a very impressive level of dynamic response and clarity in the GT1000FX whilst retaining a valve-like warmth of character and

Delivering 500 Watts per channel into 4 Ohms (bridged it will deliver 1,000 Watts mono into 8 Ohms) the twin channel GT1000FX is available worldwide direct from the manufacturer and is part of a growing

punch that never reveals the downsides that

many feel exist in solid-state circuitry."

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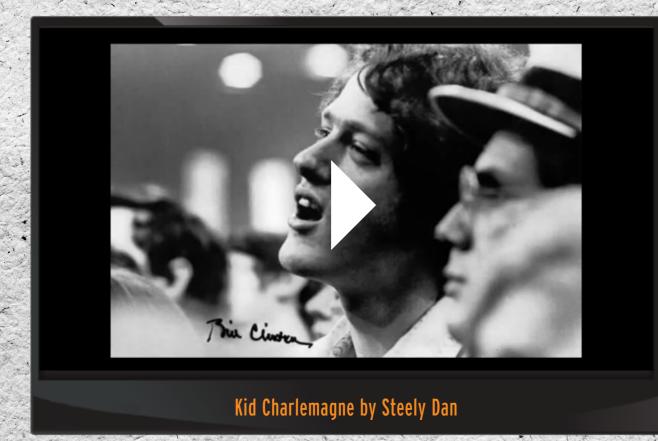
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THE LISTENING ROOM

John Stix listens as top players discuss their influences.

Steve Lukather discusses Larry Carlton and Steely Dan's Kid Charlemagne



Live performance of Carlton s famous solos. Kid Charlemapne starts at 1:34



Kid Charlemagne

"I remember Carlos Rios came over to my house when The Royal Scam came out and he showed me the solo to "Charlemagne". When I heard that album and Carlton playing bebop with a burn sound, something clicked in my mind. I thought this is it. You can play bebop through a Marshall but retain your Blues roots and play real out there stuff. The way Carlton sneaks through the changes can only be thought of as a

FEATURES_JOHN STIX

gift. You either have it or you don't. Everything he played on Royal Scam is brilliant. The changes that Fagen and Becker wrote and the way he plays over them is magic. I sat in my house and thought, how do I do this? I was studying at the time. I wasn't a bebop player. I was much more a rock 'n' roll player, but I heard more than pentatonic scales. By learning Carlton's solos on this album it opened up a whole new vocabulary. I thought, wow, this is what he was thinking about when he played through these changes. This is the joy of learning other people's solos. You get into their head without analyzing it. The guy playing wasn't analyzing it; he was just going for it, which makes it even better." Steve Lukather





John Stix was the Founding Editor-In-Chief of Guitar For the Practicing Musician Magazine and a principal architect for the creation of Guitar World and Guitar One Magazines. He started Guitar Recordings where he signed Blues Saraceno, Mike Keneally, Mark Bonilla, Randy Coven, and Brad Gillis Currently he runs the print dept. at Cherry Lane Music.

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VIDEO GEMS

John Stix searches the web for choice guitar gems that you may have overlooked in the vast universe of Internet videos.

Paul Simon plays Surfer Girl by The Beach Boys



Playing Covers

If you've played guitar in a band, somewhere sometime, you've played a cover song. The Beatles started out as a cover band. People like the familiar and playing something they know is an easy way to get their attention. When I ran Guitar Recordings I wanted every record to have one cover on it. These were mostly instrumental records and titles like Never Look Back and Trees meant nothing to the potential audience. But Funk 49 and I Want to Take You Higher/Stand were like putting out a welcome mat for the listener.

Great songs that become great covers come to be owned by both artists. Bob Dylan and Jimi Hendrix both own All Along the Watchtower. Dylan wrote it but who would argue that Hendrix doesn't have the more popular and influential version? Even Dylan recorded his live version with the Band using the Hendrix arrangement. Jimi Hendrix bathed this song in a new light by both staying true to the original and by adding those elements that are uniquely his own.

So there's our formula for a great cover. It begs you not to just play a great song but add the greatest part of what you can bring to the table.

I love this version of the Beach Boys Surfer Girl that Paul Simon performed at the Beacon Theater in NYC for a Brian Wilson Tribute Concert. The original is a classic Wilson song (the first he ever wrote) about longing, desire and the pursuit of love. I believe the conversation in the lyric is all going on in the guy's head and he is not actually speaking to the girl. Paul Simon honors the melody and the lyric and then adds his distinctive personal ornaments on both the acoustic guitar and in the vocal melody. In fact, if you had never heard the song before, there is no reason not to think Paul Simon hadn't written it as piece for his solo guitar and voice. And that's how you own rather than just play a cover tune.



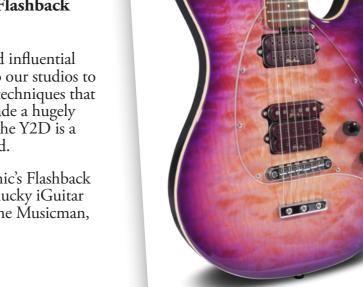
IGUITAR'S ISSUE 9 MUSICMAN STEVE MORSE GUITAR AND TC PEDAL COMPETITION - THE RESULT!



Our competition in iGuitar 9 was easily the most hotly contested yet - no wonder as we were giving away two amazing prizes: a USA handmade Musicman signature Steve Morse Y2D guitar and a TC Electronic Flashback delay pedal, also as used by Steve!

Steve Morse is one of the world's most respected and influential guitarists and we were honoured when he came into our studios to film a long interview and demonstrate some of the techniques that have made him so revered. That Musicman have made a hugely successful signature guitar for Steve is no surprise - the Y2D is a superb instrument as our review in iGuitar 9 showed.

Also a piece of soldily professional gear, TC Electronic's Flashback pedal is Steve's choice of delay - and one incredibly lucky iGuitar reader is exploring that magical combination with the Musicman, right now!



AND THE WINNER IS....



iGuitar Magazine Issue 11



So who was our lucky winner? Out of an unprecedented number of entries from right around the world, our winner, chosen at random, was Mr Mark Badham of Cornwall, UK



Congratulations to Mark and our thanks to Musicman, Strings & Things and TC Electronic!









These can be purchased separately, or as the complete 6 DVD set.





Paul Brett's

VINTAGE GUITAR HEAVEN

iGuitar welcomes
back the noted
guitar collector and
historian Paul Brett
with his unique take
on vintage guitars.
Just what's left that
is affordable and most importantly
fun to play?

THIS ISSUE -

This issue - 1956 Magnatone Mark III (selling June 2012 for \$4,000 to \$6,000*)

Magnatone Guitars - True Rarities of the American Electric Guitar

Rarity and Condition are the threads that run through all forms of collecting. If you remember this and keep your feet on the ground when parting with your hard earned cash, you should steer a safe channel through the highs and lows of stormy and calm seas. What is worth very little today could well be tomorrow's gold mine!

It is also worth noting who designed and made the instruments, who played them and what musical trends they were associated with. For example, if you were to actually find a guitar made by Paul Bigsby, the inventor of the famous Bigsby Tremolo unit, it would probably set you back a cool \$250K. However, Bigsby also designed several guitars for the Magnatone Company in the 1950s. Whilst these guitars are nowhere near the price of Bigsby's own creation, they are still a very good investment that have risen in value quite considerably over the years. They are also extremely rare to source in original condition.



The first model he designed was the Mark III in 1956. This was offered in both Standard and Deluxe models. The main difference being the former has one pick up and the latter, two p/ups with controls to match requirements. This was followed by the Mark IV and V. All these models are extremely rare and sell for between \$4,000 and \$10,000.

The one featured in the accompanying video to this article is a 1956 Mark III in perfect condition. It even has its original white case which adds to the value, much like a book does when it has its dust jacket present. It is a semi-cutaway, neck-through model and the body whilst looking solid, actually has acoustic chambers. The pick up is a large, single coil one using Alnico VI magnets, that really produces a very full sound, especially when driven through an amp like an original Gemini Twin Reverb, it really gives you that early sound to a tee. There are volume and tone controls and the bridge is Magnatone's exclusive: "Perfecto-Tuned Offset Bridge for perfect intonation and harmonics, made from beryllium copper. The fully enclosed bridge is completely adjustable four ways to suit the individual player's demands."

The Mark III has 20 frets and a rosewood fingerboard with a scale length of 25". The body is 11" wide at the lower bout and approximately 134" deep. It is really a 3/4 size, coming in at just under 36"in length and weighs around the 6 pound mark. It's a real little dynamo and very few are to be found, especially in vgc and with case, so if you happen to come across one in a yard sale, pounce on it with verve as you may well pick up a great bargain that many people haven't seen or are unaware of its value! Everyone with a





However, it's the Mark VI's that seem to be the most elusive in terms of sourcing and rarity. These were not designed by Paul Bigsby, but by another legendary name, Paul Barth (ex National Executive of Rickenbaker) and accredited with an association with the first guitar pick up named the "Frying Pan". The Mark VI has a single coil pick up which again produces a powerful sound. It's basic in design and concept and is less alluring in aesthetics than the Bigsby models, but it does have a lot going for it in a different way. Again it's a small, semi-cutaway, lightweight guitar that punches above its weight and is as rare as Dodo droppings to find. You can view a couple of clips on the accompanying video to this article.

Magnatone is also famous for producing some great amplifiers that are also in demand with collectors and players alike. The great Rock 'n Roll icon Buddy Holly had a Magnatone Custom 280 High Fidelity amplifier which was a recent acquisition.



He even put his name on the front and signed the back panel. Sadly, he never actually had it for long because he died in that fateful plane crash in February 1959. He did record a few demos through it and it was offered for sale at a reduced price of \$87,000. This reflected its owners fame, not the actual value. You can hear an original one of these amps on this <u>link</u>

Alternatively, I'm demoing on a Vox modeling amp which gives many options for many different styles, two of which you can hear on the video.

Of course guitars and amplifiers have changed technically over the years beyond all recognition from those early days, but you notice I use the word 'changed'.

That does not necessarily mean they are better, merely different from the simple valve-based technology that was used back then. These old icons are an integral part of the history of electric guitars and amplifiers and as such are not only valuable assets to preserve for future generations, but are also tools that can still be enjoyed in modern music. They offer a different dimension in both construction and sound to their modern day counterparts and are testament to the innovative skills of the American pioneers who brought them into being for the benefit of us all.

In future issues I shall be looking at many different makes of guitar that are, or could well be, collectables of the future.

FEATURES_PAUL BRETT VINTAGE GUITAR HEAVEN

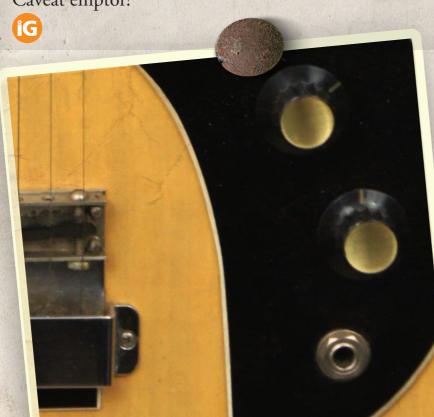
Many of these are not in the top flight of guitar names which to me, have reached their zenith and are now in free-fall by comparison to the money they were fetching prior to the global financial meltdown. The old adage "Don't put all your eggs in one basket" is a good rule of thumb to follow when building up a collection. Never do today what you can do tomorrow with more information and don't rush blindly into something you know nothing about. Collect for the joy of it and the pleasure of preserving and playing these vintage lovelies, and if you can make a few bucks later on down the line, that's a bonus. In the meantime, good hunting and I hope you enjoy the brief look at the Magnatones in the video clips!

www.paulbrettguitarist.co.uk

* Important note about our guide prices:

The prices quoted are US-based (prices in the EU tend to be higher) and represent a spread between private and dealer figures at the time the article was written, as shown in the text. They are not meant to be any more than a very approximate guide and are subject to change on a weekly basis!

Caveat emptor!





By Laney



www.laney.co.uk From The Black Country, United Kingdom











[...>]

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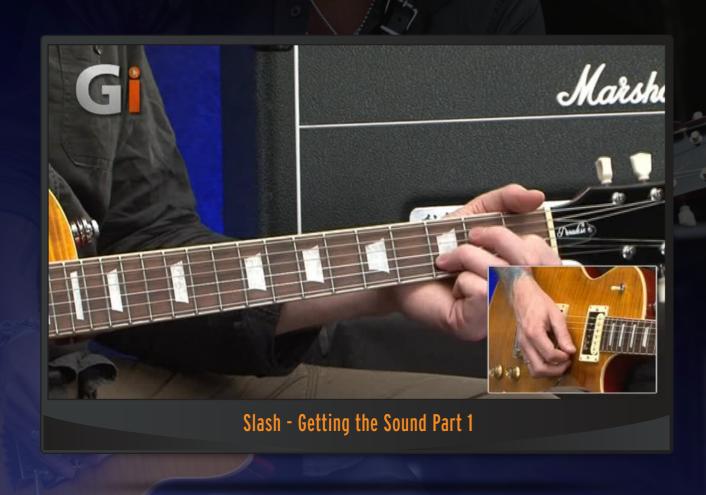
© Photography by Kim Wa

Before we kick into our track, it's worth mentioning that Slash tunes his guitars to Eb, but to keep things a little more simple for those of you that have floating bridges, and also so that tuning is consistent in the magazine, I've presented this track in standard tuning. This track should also be performed with drop D tuning, with the low E string, the 6th string, being lowered by a whole tone.

The track kicks off with an intro section that features the chords of Dsus2, and Dsus2/#4 performed as chord arpeggios against the tom fill intro. The verse kicks in and features a driving power chord riff that is performed

on the bottom 3 strings. This riff is based on a similar riff heard in the track Slither. Due to the drop tuning it's possible to perform the riff with just one finger. The verse concludes with a descending figure on the D string that follows the riff.

Now we have our main verse progression, which uses the same power chords found in the previous section, but this time we perform it with a tight palm muting. Pay attention to the video lesson and be sure to remove the palm mutes at specific points to make the riff more aggressive.



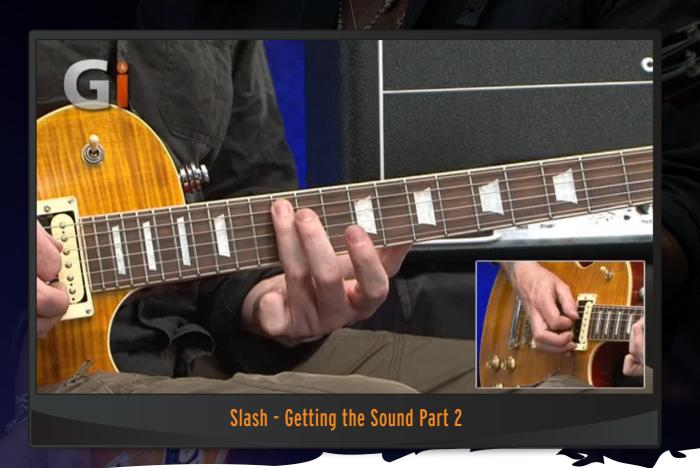
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Now we have our chorus progression, with this being based around a similar progression to Fall to Pieces, and with the main guitar performing one of Slash's signatures melody lines that outlines the chords. Make sure you back off the tone control to produce a smooth creamy tone for the lead melody. The chord progression is as follows: D5, Csus2, G/B, A5, G5, Bb5, and C5.

Now it's time for our middle eight section which is based on the clean chords G, C, Am and D. This section

should be performed in the same style as the verse chords to Knocking on Heaven's Door and the intro to Fall to Pieces. This section is performed with clean chord arpeggios, a rich clean tone and a subtle chorus effect. The second half of the middle eight includes some high register triad chords that are performed on the top three strings. These triads follow the verse progression, and are based to the high register triads heard in the verses of Sweet Child O' Mine. This middle eight is followed by a short intro section.





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We conclude our track with a solo that uses notes from the D minor pentatonic and D blues scale. The D minor pentatonic is embellished with the addition of the E note, the 2nd of E. The solo includes many Slash style licks, including ascending pentatonic phrases, and fast repetition and bending licks. There are also some pre

bends included, so make sure you pay attention to the pitch of the bends.

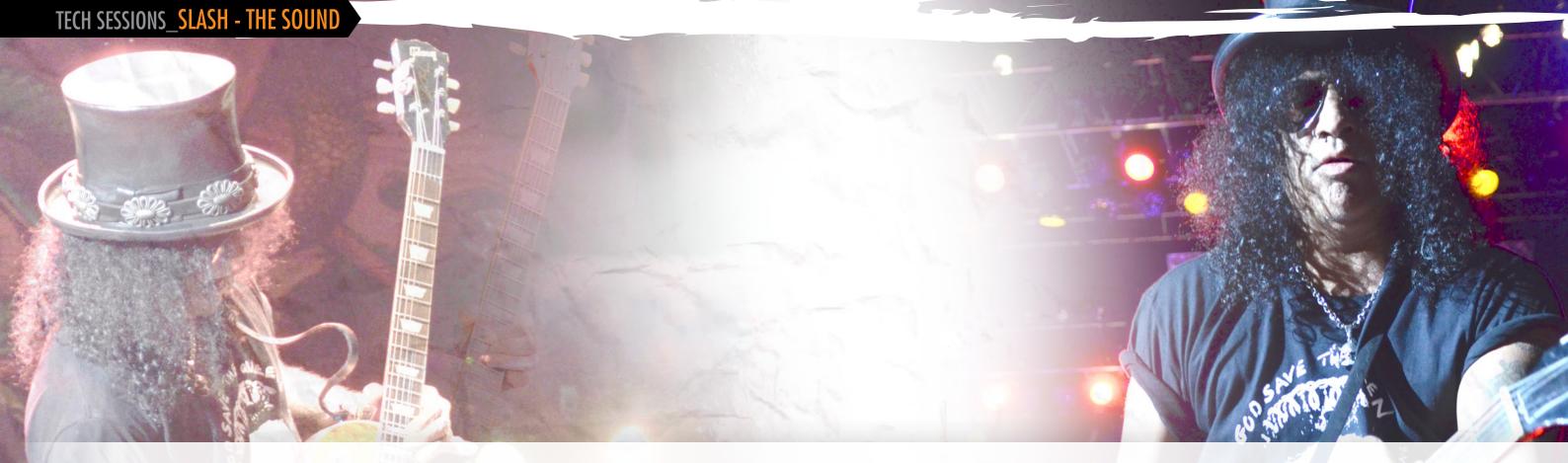
There are plenty of cool riffs and Slash inspired ideas for you to try in this Tech Session. Be sure to watch the accompanying video so that you nail the correct tone. Good luck!











We've put together a very affordable rig, which Jamie Humphries is using to show how close you can get without spending megabucks. I should add that we've decided to settle on the Peavey Vypyr 60 as our bedrock test amp for these 'on a budget' features. We initially reviewed the Peavey combo way back in the very first issue of iGuitar, when, on reflection, we were a bit less than generous with its star rating (the offending reviewer has, of course, been shot). Since then, the Vypyr has continued to grow on us and we now consider it to be a very fine all-purpose, all-rounder indeed - not least because of its extremely useful modelling facilities, which shone in issue 10's Eddie Van Halen 'budget' feature. In fact we are so impressed with it as an ideal 'gigging man's amp' - particularly for someone working in a covers band, as most semi-pros are at one time or another - that

we've asked Peavey if we can hold onto it for a while longer as our benchmark test combo. Peavey has graciously said yes, so expect to see more of it over the coming months.

For a guitar in this test, we simply had no choice but to use the phenomenally good Vintage AFD Paradise that Jamie looks at in our review section. There are plenty of twin humbucker driven guitars on the market, many quite close in appearance to a real Gibson Les Paul - and some of them bearing Gibson's sister brand's Epiphone label. However, in a direct shoot-out last year between a Vintage and an Epiphone, we found we preferred the former, so it was to Vintage that we turned again for a review model this time around for our budget test. And if we thought we liked the previous Vintage...!

So, over to Jamie.

Slash's Rig

Let's start with guitars. Slash is probably one of the most famous Les Paul players in Rock. He has a huge collection of Les Pauls, but probably his best known and best loved is actually a 1959 replica, built by Kris Derrig. The guitar was bought for Slash by his manager for the recording of Appetite, due to the fact that Slash was struggling to get a good tone. The guitar came with Seymour Duncan Alnico II pickups and quickly became Slash's main guitar. Another Les Paul that Slash is famous for using is his '87 Les Paul, bought just prior to the Appetite sessions. This guitar has been used on countless tours and recordings and is also loaded with Duncan Alnico Pro

II pickups. There have also been various Gibson Les Paul Slash signature models, dating back as early as the late '80s, with a limited run of Slash models sporting black hardware. In 1997 Gibson released the "Snakepit" Les Paul, which featured Slash's Snakepit graphic on the body, and a stunning snake motif on the fingerboard. Other popular models include the 2008 VOS Aged Les Paul, a perfect replica of Slash's '87 Les Paul that came ready 'aged'. The most recent addition to the long line is the stunning "Appetite" Les Paul, which is also available with an aged finish. Slash also tours with various prototype Appetite signature Les Pauls, all of which include the Duncan Alnico II slash Signature pickups, which we have tested elsewhere in this issue.

[...>]

Amplifiers

Slash has always been associated with Marshall amps and has used various models over the years, including various signature models, including the original 90's version with "Snakepit" logo, and the current Marshall "AFD" model, reviewed in this issue, which captures the perfect tone from the Appetite era. There is endless of speculation about the exact Marshall that was used for the Appetite session, but whatever it was, it is seen as producing

his classic tone and Slash himself has tried to reproduce that tone with his current signature head.

Most probably, the amp in question was a modified Marshall 100 Watt 1959 Super Tremolo, owned by S.I.R, a rental company in LA, and it was known as "Stock #39". The amp had previously been rented by George Lynch for the Under Lock and Key album, and had been modded by Tim Caswell, who basically used the amp's unused tremolo circuit, with its additional





Effects

Slash isn't renowned for using too many effects, although he does have his own signature Dunlop Crybaby wah, and an octave fuzz pedal. He also uses delay, which splits his live rig in stereo. Slash also uses and MXR EQ pedal to boost his mids and also various other modulations, including tremolo and phaser.

The Budget Rig

To get our version of Slash's sound I used the Vintage AFD Paradise guitar and a Marshall style amp model on the Peavey Vypyr 60 for both the clean and dirty tones.

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[...>]





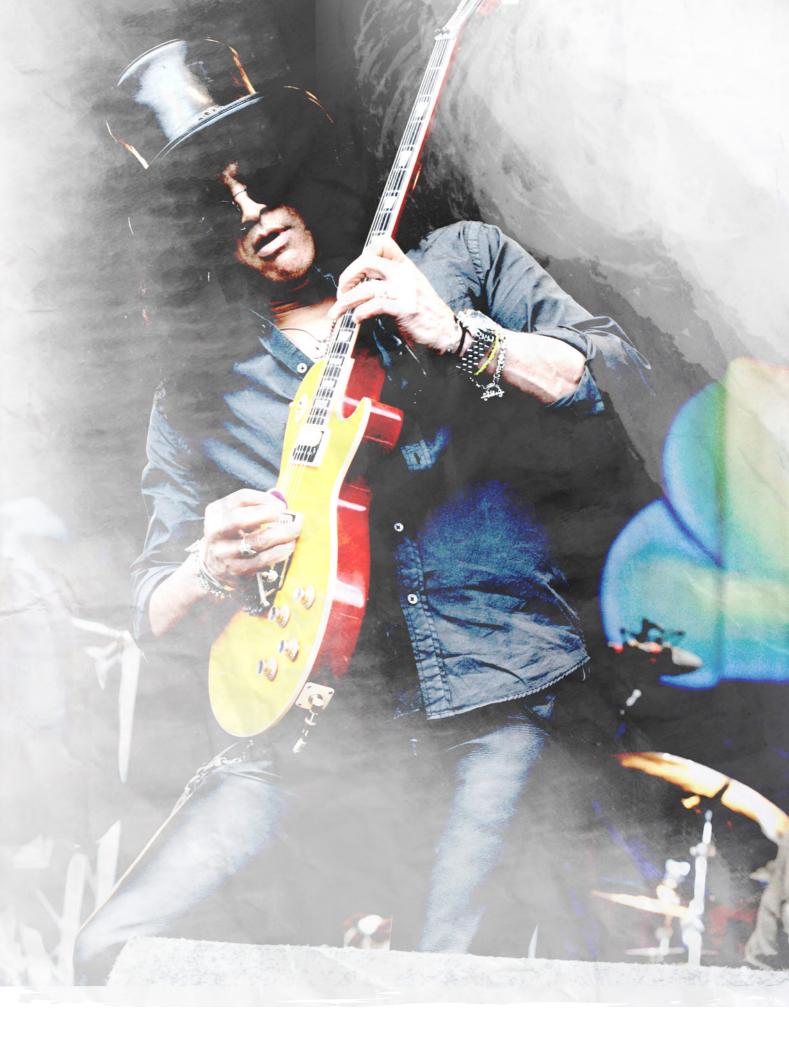
I based the clean tones on Knocking on Heaven's Door, and Fall to Pieces. The clean should be rich and full, using the neck pickup on the guitar, with the volume backed off slightly. Also try adding some chorus, as well as some subtle delay. I also used some digital reverb, which should be dialled in to taste and choice.

For the crunch tone I used the same Marshall style model, but set to crunch, with the addition of a boost to add more saturation and also exaggerate the upper mids and presence of the tone. Don't use too much gain, but remember it is a hard rock tone.

Also make sure you boost the mids and try to keep the low end rich and full. For effects I used more delay and reverb. I dialled in a little extra delay for ambience. Be sure to study the accompanying video, and also check out my suggested tracks that I used to base the tones on. I think we got pretty close. You could do much the same with many twin humbucker equipped guitars and a few tube amps (Marshalls being the obvious choice) - but not a lot closer than we got on this sort of budget. Good Luck!







GUITAR ROADMAPS

Picking Mechanics

In this issue I'd take a look at the role of the right hand with particular emphasis on picking mechanics so that we can improve our general picking technique.

One of the main stumbling blocks for guitarists when picking is when crossing from one string to another. The majority of players always mention similar problems when doing this and the main two always seem to be the same: too much right hand movement and poor accuracy. In order to alleviate these issues, we need to look more closely at the actual right hand movement.

Essentially, there are three ways to negotiate crossing strings when playing with a pick only. These are (when ascending):

- 1. Downstroke to upstroke = Outside picking
- **2.** Upstroke to downstroke = Inside picking
- **3**. Downstroke to downstroke = Economy picking

If you are descending simply reverse them:

- 1. Upstroke to downstroke = Outside picking
- 2. Downstroke to upstroke = Inside picking
- **3.** Upstroke to upstroke = Economy picking

'Outside picking' is when your pick travels outside the two adjacent strings. 'Inside picking' is when your pick travels from one string to the next inside the strings. Alternate picking utilizes both of these methods. 'Economy picking' is when your pick travels from one string to the next inside the strings however, the difference between economy picking and inside picking is that with economy picking, your pick moves in the same direction between strokes.



Now that we have worked out the available methods of crossing strings, I'd like to turn our attention to the actual movement of the right hand when doing so.

PLANTING TECHNIQUE

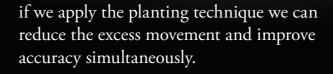
A common issue among guitarists is too much movement of the right hand when picking. One of the most effective ways that we can improve picking technique is to use 'Planting' technique. Planting is a technique that enables us to pre-prepare by placing the pick on the string before we play it. By doing this, we can train the right hand to make the minimum possible movement when

moving from one string to another. One of the main benefits for employing planting as a practice method is accuracy. When the pick is already in contact with the string it drastically reduces the possibility of missing it! Planting can be applied to both alternate and economy techniques.

ALTERNATE PICKING

This method of picking only involves the use of outside and inside picking as discussed previously. We never include moving from one string to another with the same stroke in alternate picking. The main issue with this technique is excess right hand movement so





ECONOMY PICKING

The very principle of economy picking is to make the minimum movement with the right hand by going to the next string with the same stroke. By doing this, it's clear that the planting technique is already in place. However, in some instances inside picking is used to negotiate crossing strings so when we use inside picking we have to remember to apply the planting technique to keep the right hand movement to its minimum, which will improve accuracy.

Of all three right hand movements the most awkward will usually be the inside picking movement. This is because once the last note on a string is struck, the right hand is travelling in the opposite direction to where we need it to go. Again, if we apply planting technique we can drastically reduce that movement and by doing so, improve accuracy. A great exercise for practising planting technique is to use the classical piece that we looked at in the last issue: Study No.1 by Villa Lobos. It is a great way to really work on that right hand to take our playing to a higher level. Best of luck and practice hard!









Tom Quayle

COLUMN

Expanding your chord Vocabulary – Using Triad Slash Chords

Welcome back to my column - I hope your chord vocabulary is slowly expanding and providing you with some new sounds. For this issue we're going to raise the theory bar quite a bit before returning back to normal for next issue. Previously we looked at taking a static melody note and harmonising it using a chord built from all twelve available root notes, finding a relevant chord structure and possibly trying to match it with a scale that will allow us to construct melodies over the top. For this issue we'll be taking a similar approach but instead of using a single melody note we'll be using a major triad for the top part of our chord voicing, changing the bass note to all twelve possible root notes. By doing this we'll end up with twelve different triad and bass note combinations that will give us a series of new sounds to use within out chordal playing. As usual I'll also be outlining a scale choice that you can use for each of the chords so that you can start to construct not only chord progressions but melodic ideas too.

Some of the chords and scales here may seem frightening or overwhelming to some of you guys who aren't into theory in a big way. Don't worry, simply find the

sounds that you like and disregard the ones that you don't. Some of these sounds are certainly dissonant but in the right context they can sound stunning.

We'll be starting with a basic D major triad containing the notes D, F# and A, played with the root note on the A string as a simple barre chord. From here we'll be keeping the top three notes of the chord static and moving the bass note down from D to C#, C, B, A# etc, allowing us to play all twelve bass notes against this D major triad. When we do this we produce a type of chord known as a 'Slash Chord' - very appropriate for this issue! Whilst they have very little to do with the big man himself, they are actually just a simple way of writing a triad with a different bass note underneath. The triad is written on the left and the bass note on the right, separated by a slash mark. So, D/C would be played as a D major triad with a C bass note.

By using this approach to finding chord voicings you can easily create new sounds by taking an existing triad and moving its bass note to another note - you have twelve to choose from so a lot of combinations can be achieved when you consider that you can also use any inversion of the triad.

[...>]



In the video I play each combination of the D triad with each bass note and explain how I visualise that chord and which scale I would play over the top of them. A *very* important point to make here is that I'm not thinking in a particular key whilst doing this. I chose the D major triad purely at random - you could do this with any triad and produce chord progressions using different triads and bass notes or using the same triad as a static structure and simply moving the bass note around. The choice is yours. At the end of the video I produce a simple chord progression using the latter method.

In the included tablature/notation you'll find each of the shapes written in standard tuning with the associated scale through one octave. I'm not really outlining the theory behind each of these chords - that would require many lessons in of itself. I'm simply presenting another method that you can use to expand your existing chord vocabulary in a simple manner.

Good luck and I'll see you in the next issue!





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WHAMMY BAR

Jeff Beck Style

Hi all. We are going to be carrying from last issue, with our look at some whammy bar ideas that may be challenging at first, but the sound and vibe it gives is worth the effort! This style definitely has Jeff Beck written all over it. Part of the respect we all give Jeff Beck is his ability to inject so much feeling tone and passion in his playing, often with only a few notes. A big part of that equation is the whammy bar, and what you can do with.

Last issue, I went easy on you, sticking to ideas where you simply push the bar down to give any chords, single notes or a groups of notes a nice vibrato or shimmer whenever you land a phrase or an idea. This issue we are looking at ideas where we pull the bar up, which is a much harder technique, but once you get the concept, the possibilities are endless. There are a couple of small obstacles you may have to navigate before anything else. Firstly, you need a trem system on your guitar!

If you own a hard-tail like a Les Paul or a Tele, you can still join the party if consider retro fitting a trem such as the 'Stetsbar', which is a great unit that requires NO modification to your precious guitar, and it works fantastically well. You can check out my review in iGuitar issue 6. If you ever want sell the guitar, you can put it all back to original with no harm done.



COLUMNS_MICHAEL CASSWELL

If, on the other hand, you do have a guitar that comes with a trem, then to get the sound that we are going for, you do need the trem to be floating, which is term used to describe the fact that the bar has upward movement to raise the pitch, as well as downward to obviously lower the pitch.

The fact that a trem floats, opens a whole world of possibilities, and sometimes some tuning issues, which I bet is why a lot of you

never bother even putting the arm on your trem! Well, if there is a tuning issue with your guitar then there will be a reason for it, and that makes it fixable. Problems can involve, rubbish string winding, worn tuning pegs, strings snagging in the nut, strings snagging in string guides, worn trem base plate knife edges, worn trem posts, strings not stretched properly, vintage bridges screwed down too tight and probably a couple problems more I can't think

Michael Casswell - Whammy Bar Jeff Beck Style

of right now! My point being, it's all fixable, but it does require your guitar, and all its components to be working at its very best.

I have many guitars with different styles and brands of tremolo on them, but I can pretty much do most of the whammy bar stuff on any of them and all the guitars will hold the tuning, because I have isolated any potential problems that need sorting and because I guess I know what to look for in a great guitar.

For this column I chose to use my graffiti yellow '87 Strat plus with its two post trem system, which is exactly what Jeff has been using since the '80s, but I could have chosen to use the Vintage style six screw Fender, or PRS trem, or the Floyd Rose, Wilkinson and Music Man trem systems on my other guitars and demonstrated the same techniques. I would draw the line at a Bigsby trem, which is OK for a polite waggle but not for what we are going for in this tutorial!

My yellow Strat originally had the original three over, three under Wilkinson roller nut, which works fantastically well for Jeff's main white Strat, and my purple and cream '91 Strats, but on this guitar it was hopeless tuning wise, so my guitar guy replaced it with the more modern LSR nut, which cured all tuning issues. If anyone has a three over, three under Wilky roller nut, get in touch, because I would like another good one and when they work

they are awesome, and I would like one back on the yellow Strat, just like it left the factory!

I would always suggest an LSR nut and Sperzel locking machine heads for an instant upgrade on any modern Strat type guitar if you are serious about pushing your whammy bar to the limit. It cures most headaches tuning wise at the headstock end of things.

So you can treat the piece I play here as a series of exercises in bar control, which when placed together in any order makes a cool moody Beck-esque style tune. It definitely has something about it, and I may develop it for use on my album, but it is deceptively tricky, especially when the other component to compliment the sound we are going for here is using your fingers instead of a pick. The best tone you get is flesh on the string, so if this trem demonstration is beyond you at the moment, you might want to just check the finger action, to see if it's something you want to explore.

I have filmed some very popular LickLibrary DVDs involving Tremolo Techniques, Jeff Beck learn to play and Quick Licks, and these DVDs pretty much wring-out the whammy bar for all its worth, so you might want to check those out if you are into this approach to using that much forgotten tool which is the whammy bar.





www.licklibrary.com/contributors/mike-casswell





problems for the aspiring guitarist once you've learnt all of your shapes and techniques is just how to stick them all together in your licks. We're going to look at three licks all in the key of Em, but do your best to put these into as many keys as possible.

As I demonstrate towards the end of the video, the licks we are going to tackle here all come from the minor pentatonic framework. If you skip to the pdf resources for the issue you'll find tabs for the licks and also diagrams of the five minor pentatonic shapes. If you haven't learnt these yet, it's absolutely paramount that you get these together as soon as possible. When I play like this, I'm adding additional notes found in the three note per string system (see iG 9 for charts), but I'm always coming back to the minor pentatonic, so I know how to end a lick.

Lick 1 starts right up the top end of the neck utilising a series of rapid fire pull-offs and sliding position shifts. Note that although I start the lick on fret 24, it will work well if you play fret 22 due to lack of frets. The first technical demand on this lick is strong pulloffs, so remember that a pull-off should lift off the

to my pentatonic shapes. I end this lick on a D which is the b7, but if you put some aggressive tone wide vibrato on it it's going to sound great, alternatively you could choose to continue the lick on from here.

Lick 2 takes a simple melodic cell and then moves it up the neck in octaves. The idea revolves around the pattern played starting on the ninth fret of the E string; we hammer from the first finger to the second, then instead of playing the third note from that three note per string shape, we play the third note on the adjacent string. This idea is then moved up in string sets and shifted up the neck, never underestimate the effectiveness of utilising octaves - it allows you to extend a line but giving the audience something they already know. As before, we're going to apply an aggressive vibrato to our final note, but as we're landing on the root you can go for either a tone wide vibrato, or a more Zakk Wylde-esq b3rd.

Lick 3 really ups the bar by dramatically increasing the size of our stretches and adding some wide interval tapping. As before, if you look closely you'll realise we're just taking one melodic cell and moving

[...>]



it up in octaves. We finish the lick in a very Steve Vai-esq tapping fashion where the left hand just outlines the minor pentatonic in shape one while the right hand taps on the 24th fret. If you're without 24 frets, try tapping the lower part of shape five (starting on fret 22). Be careful, utilise a left hand tap when moving from string to string here. It's also important to note that this part of the lick moves up to six notes per click. I'm really fond of ideas like this and use them quite often, so toy around with possible variations

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on the idea and see if you can come up with any additional ways to get this sort of thing into your solos.

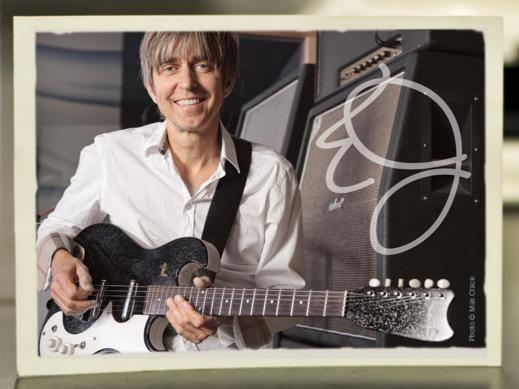
As I always say, there's no better way than to go out and play this stuff with people or in your band. You can use them and adapt them to suit your own means, but the more you use them, the easier they'll be to string together. So until next month, stay metal!





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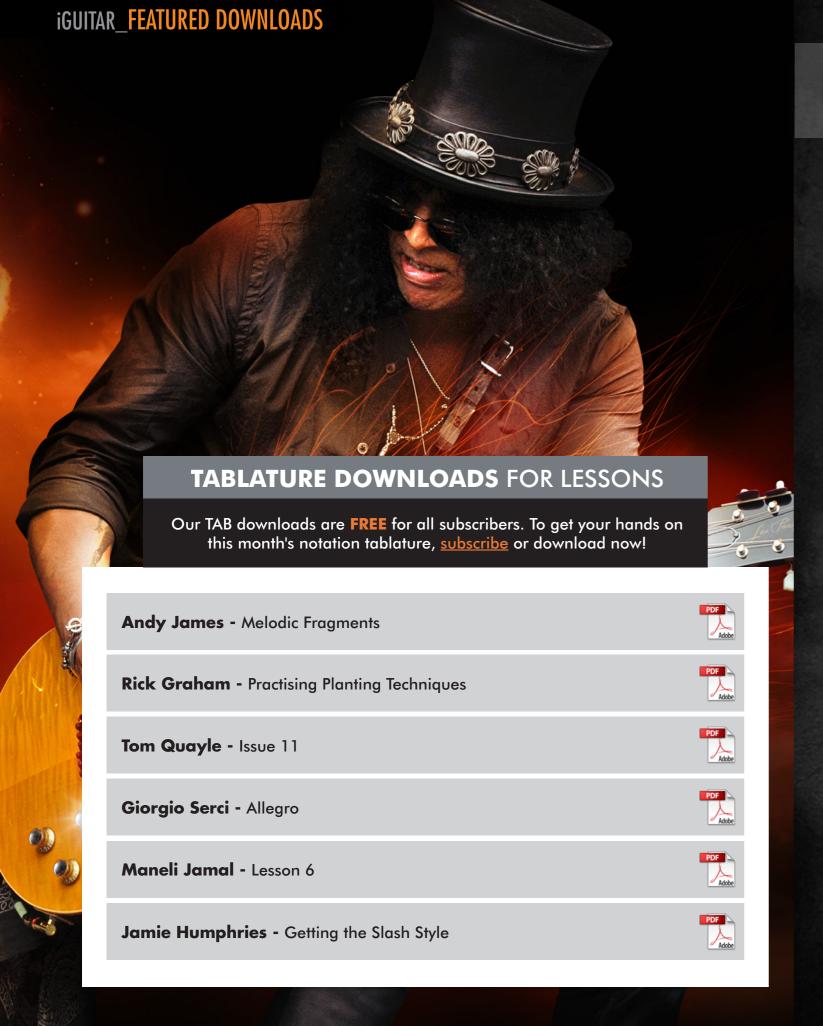
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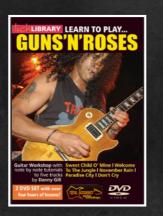


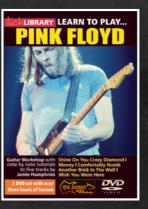


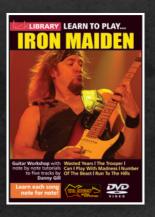
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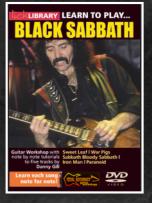
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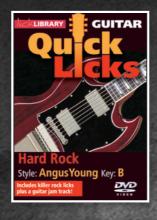
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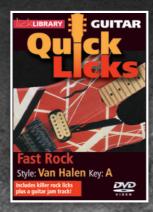


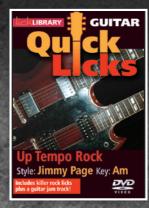


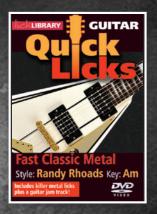




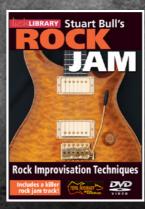


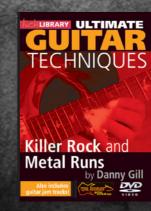














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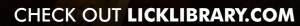


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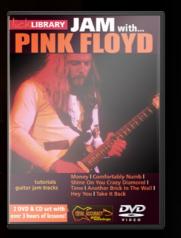


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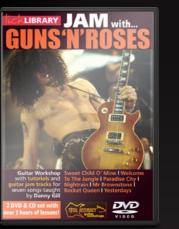




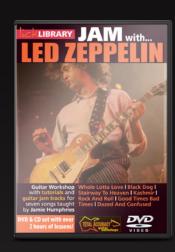














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Slash presented an obvious source of reviews for this issue but we wanted to look beyond the obvious choices. That said, we couldn't believe our luck when Marshall managed to find one of its rare Slash Signature heads and said we could borrow it for review. Made in strictly limited numbers, it's almost certain that you will only find one of these secondhand now. But if our review is anything to go by, it's certainly worth tracking down! What it proves is that Marshall today is as good as it has ever been at producing perfect tone machines.

Beyond the Marshall, we also wanted to look at a set of Slash's signature Seymour Duncan pickups, which you could use as replacements on any Les Paul or LP type guitar - and how could we say no to AmpliTube's Slash rig - yet another example of Apple's iOS proving you can do things with a mere phone that once took an entire studio!

And then there was the astonishing Vintage AFD Paradise! I'm not going to say anything more than read this review. We already knew than Vintage was capable of making guitars that are astonishing value for money, but this one was stunning!

Away from Slash, we have guitars from Charvel (a pair, no less!), a long-awaited DBZ, Japan's exotic Caparison and our first look at a Jazz guitar - an Ibanez Pat Metheny model. Add Orange's mighty new Micro Terror and brand new pedal ranges from Holland's Dr No and the USA's Source Audio and we think we have a pretty varied offering for you!

Is there something you'd like to see the iGuitar team review?. Why not email and tell us what you'd like us to look at? Just email gary@iguitarmag.com













P104 Charvel Desolation Pickups and Liberator system Series Guitars

P082 Marshall Slash Head

P088 Vintage AFD Guitar

P094 Ampli Tube Slash System









P110 Ibanez Pat Metheny

P114 DBZ Royale guitar

0

P118 Orange micro terror cab and head

P122 Dr No FX Pedals

P132 Source Audio FX Pedals

P138 Caparison Guitar

guitar

Marshall AFD Signature 100 Watt head

How could we run a Slash interview without reviewing some of the great man's gear? Well, we couldn't! A quick phonecall to Marshall revealed that though it has now officially sold out (only 2300 were made) they would lend us one of the handful of samples they are holding onto. 24 hours later it was sitting in our studio, bottles gleaming, ready to rock. Which old rocker did we give it to? Step forward **Michael Casswell**, with **Gary Cooper** on hand to provide additional details.

For all you Slash fans out there, I have for your delight the rather marvellous Slash AFD signature Marshall 100 Watt head. For my video review I've avoided playing any Slash riffs or licks, because I'm approaching this amp as a Marshall product, rather than something that makes you sound like the man himself. Slash could plug into any amp with ample gain, and still sound like Slash! So even if you are lucky enough to find one of these beauties, it still doesn't mean you are going to nail his vibe, because a large percentage of any good players sound is in the hands, rather than the amp or guitar. I did grab a Les Paul for this review though, so all is not lost Slash tone wise!









REVIEWS_HEAD REVIEW

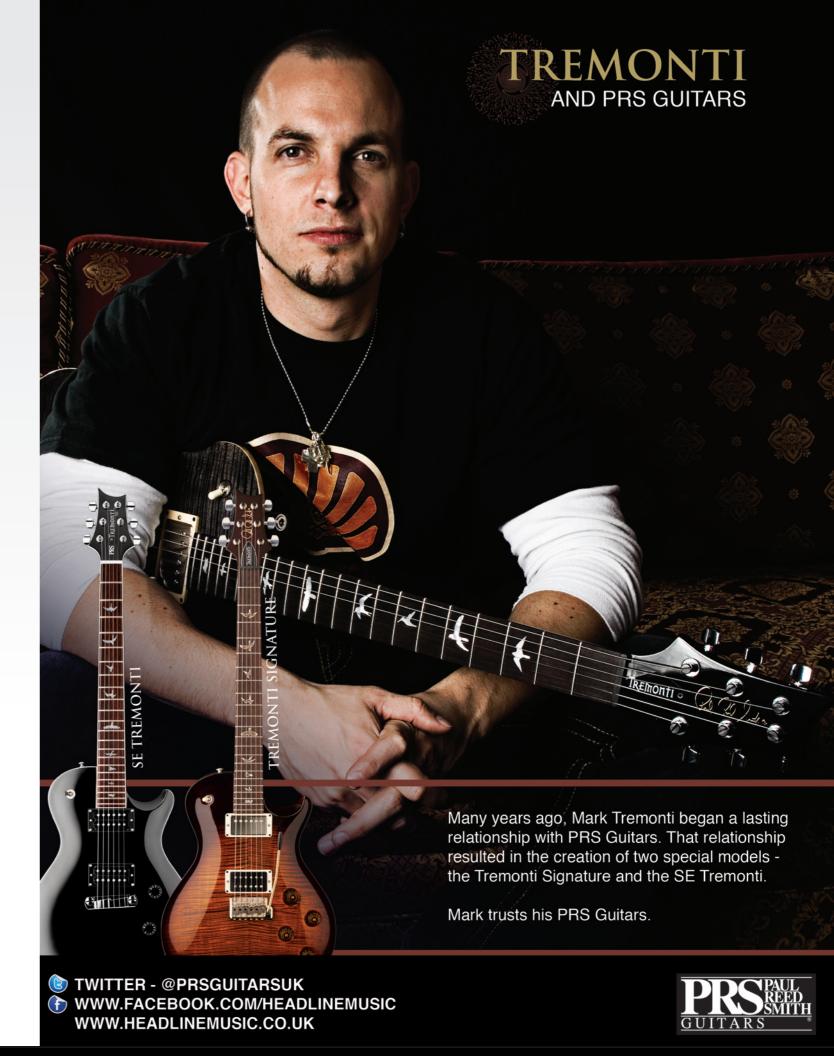
We put the amp through a Marshall 4x12 cab loaded with V30 Celestions and we ran the onboard power attenuator at about 10 or 11 o'clock. This is a great feature on this amp, newly developed by Marshall, and it works really well. It basically means you can run the amp anywhere from the super loud 100 Watts right down to a whisper at 0.01% of a Watt. Very cool indeed, because you could happily practice your Slash licks and bends at home without disturbing the neighbours, or even waking the cat. Power attenuators usually seem to impose some compromises on your sound - this one didn't, so full marks again to the Marshall team for some very skilled design work!

Another cool feature is the use of 6550 output valves. Personally, I prefer the

smoother, fatter, wider tone they give over an EL34 valve and my two main Marshalls, the 6100 and 4100 from 1994 are from when Marshall were having EL34 supply problems, and therefore briefly used the 6550/6L6 valve. This resulted in the British Marshall amp sounding a bit more American, which though it was something I was into, the purists didn't warm to the idea, and EL34s were back on the menu soon after. Slash obviously is with me on the valve front, however, because 6550s it is!

The amp is self-biasing as well, so when you used-up all the goodness in your four output valves and the time comes for a fresh bunch, it's a quick easy job. Even more impressively, you can choose between a range of possible alternative valves, effectively turning Slash's







REVIEWS HEAD REVIEW

signature amp into your own! Owners can choose from a range of output tubes including EL34s, KT66s, 77s and 88s, 6l6s and 5881s!

You also get two voicings on this single channel twin input amp, the first dubbed #34. This is based on the sound of the JCM800 that Slash has used since the late 1980s. The is based on that of the legendary amp used on the Appetite For Destruction album, believed to have been a modded '70s vintage 1959 Tremolo head. These two fundamentals are switchable via the back panel, using the supplied footswitch. Both are extremely usable and sound fantastic. I think I prefer the darker and fatter AFD voicing, but if you dared plug something called a Fender Stratocaster into this amp, and experimented between the #34 voicings, then a whole new world of Hendrix, Trower, Clapton and Beck tones can be had, because, essentially, this amp is a really nicely voiced Marshall that is as versatile as you are as a player.

Backing the gain down also opens up a lot of tones too, especially when you get into thinking about boosting your front end with compressors, overdrives and EQ or boost pedals. It also has a series effects send and return, so get your volume pedal delay, modulation and reverb in there and you and this amp could cater for most musical situations. So although this is a single channel amp, with careful guitar volume control and the right guitar, all the clean to in-between tones are there. Then again, you



can do what this and any Marshall is really good at, plug in, turn it up and rock out!

Only 2,300 of these AFDs were made, so they are going to be rare. When you could still find them new, they might have seemed a bit expensive - until you worked out what other manufacturers are charging for their amps on the grounds that they are 'boutique'. Well, this AFD is pretty 'boutique' too, if you consider how beautifully it's made and how rare it's likely

to be! In fact at the asking price when it was new, it was a steal. Probably by now these are selling for silly money, so if you stumble across one buy it now. We'll say that again. Buy it now!

I have respect for both Slash and Marshall. Slash for what he has accomplished in his career, and Marshall for consistently making quality, industry standard, reliable, well built, great sounding amplifiers. This is one of their very best. Yes, you can get the

Slash sound out of it (if you play like him), but really you should also look for what this or any signature product is able to give you, so that you develop as a player, finding your own sound and being able to get your money's worth by using the product beyond what it was originally designed for. If you are a Slash devotee, then this is for you. If you can take or leave Slash, then this is still one of the best Marshalls ever.



Vintage V100 AFD Paradise Guitar

To tie in with our special Slash-centric issue, we wanted to look at a cheaper alternative to the obvious Slash Les Paul. Back in Issue 4, we'd been bowled-over by a Vintage 'Single Cut' style guitar, which got us very close to Joe Bonamassa's sound, at a budget price. So what could Vintage offer if we were after the Slash sound, we asked? The company offered us the "V100AFD Paradise" Whatever could that stand for, we wondered? **Jamie Humphries** investigates.

For many a classic and hard rock fan, the "LP" classic single cut style guitar has long been the favoured choice - in fact it's pretty much the Holy Grail guitar. The likes of Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck, Eric Clapton, Zakk Wylde, Paul Kossoff and, of course, Slash, have all made this style of guitar their number one choice at one stage or another. But for many of us, particularly guitarists on a budget, the prices of genuine Gibson Les Pauls - however good they may be - are just unattainable.

Obviously, to some, only the original will do, but if you're looking for something that is like that classic body styling, without being exactly the same, yet still offers killer looks, great tone and feel, but at a pocket friendly price tag, then this guitar may just be what you are looking for.

For a number of years Vintage guitars have been producing approximations of a variety of classic instruments. They have also enlisted the design skills of Trevor Wilkinson, who is renowned for producing high quality hardware. The AFD Paradise model is a slightly "pimped" version of the standard V100 Series, which is even cheaper in price than the AFD - something, frankly, we find quite amazing, considering how good this one turned out to be!

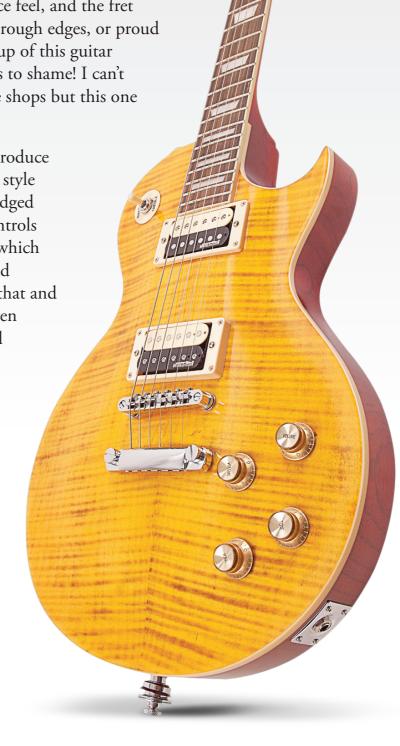
Before the lawyers start to take too much interest in this review, let's get down to basics. The AFD Paradise's body is made from mahogany, with a set mahogany neck, rosewood fingerboard and 22 medium height frets. So, no surprises there! The machine heads feature classic style Wilkinson "tulip" design tuners and the fingerboard has pearloid crown inlays. The body features a carved maple top, with a stunning amber flamed finish - at this price?! The neck and body also include a very classy vintagelooking edge binding. The control layout is exactly what you would expect too, comprising a three-way toggle switch for pickup selection plus two volume and two

tone controls. There is a classic Tune-O-Matic style bridge and the guitar also features a pair of Wilkinson Zebra humbucking pickups. Also included are a strap locks - which is a very nice touch for a guitar of this price range.

From the off, this guitar felt great. It isn't too weighty, but has enough body meat to produce a vibrant and resonant tone unamplified, which is always a good sign. The guitar also balances well, so I didn't feel like it was a struggle when I was sitting down with it. The neck had a nice feel, and the fret finishing was of a high quality, with no rough edges, or proud frets. I have to say that the feel and set-up of this guitar would put many more expensive brands to shame! I can't speak for every sample you'll find in the shops but this one was fantastic!

Plugging the Vintage in, I was able to produce a wide variety of tones, from warm Jazz style cleans, to blues/rock crunch to harder edged more high gain sounds. The volume controls had a very nice gradual curve to them, which was great for backing-off the volume and cleaning-up the tone (a nice pro touch that and often missing on cheaper guitars and even a few expensive ones!). The tone control was also matched well to the pickups and when backed off I could produce warm Clapton-style Cream tones.

Although, for my taste, the pickups lacked a little bit of presence and sparkle when using a clean tone (and this really is me being picky) the guitar really shot to life when I kicked in the crunch channel on our test Marshall. The bridge pickup had plenty of bite and harmonics jumped out, while the neck was warm and rich.



iG STAR RATING ★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC 🌣





I have to say that this guitar really surprised me and that I was pretty blown away that an instrument in this price bracket could look so stunning, feel so comfortable, and sound so authentic. If I didn't know any better, if were to see and hear the guitar without a price ticket hanging from a tuner, I would honestly think it would cost four figures. As I have already mentioned, this guitar is from the V100 series, so if the AFD is slightly out of your price band, the standard V100 would do the job almost as well. But to my mind, the additional



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MARK HOLCOMB Periphery

The Axe-Fx



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cosmetic styling, and of course the influence of a certain long haired, top hat wearing guitarist, makes this a very attractive and great choice for an alternative to the classic "LP" style guitar. I loved it so much, I even used it on my tech session this month, so check it out in action in both video!

To sum-up? This is the best value for money instrument iGuitar has yet seen. It's simply stunning!





AmpliTube Slash

Apple's iOS goes where even some amp makers fear to tread with IK Multimedia's AmpliTube Slash App. But, **Tom Quayle** asks, can you really get cranked Marshall tones from an iPhone?

The original AmpliTube app has been out for quite a while now for iOS devices, becoming the standard by which all other modellers on the platform are judged. AmpliTube offers a lot of flexibility and models along with a multitude of effect models and even a multi-track recording environment. Product designers, IK Multimedia, have now teamed up with Rock legend, Slash, to produce the first artist package for AmpliTube, modelling his signature Marshall amps and effects chain allowing you to achieve Rock god tone within a mobile operating system. But does it work? Well, yes in the main. Let's check out what's on offer in the package.

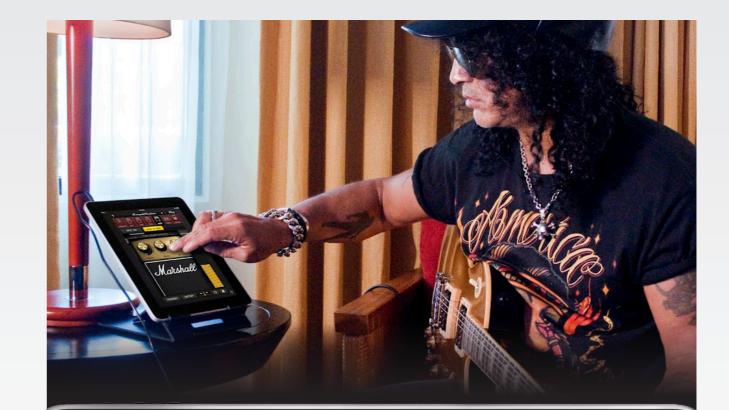
The first thing you'll find upon opening the app is the large and very attractive amp section filling the bottom half of the screen. (The iPad and iPhone/iPod versions differ slightly in their interfaces but are essentially the same in operation – for this review we'll be dealing with the iPad version). Two amp models are on offer, the original JCM Slash Edition Silver Jubilee 2555SL plus the newer AFD 100 and are displayed in photo-realistic glory with all of the original

controls available. A single Marshall 1960 4x12 cab is included (can you imagine Slash using anything else?) plus five effects in the form of a noise gate, Octo Blue octave pedal, booster, X-Chorus and /Delay pedal. A free Distortion Wah can also be downloaded once you register the app. The effects are also represented in great detail allowing four effects to be arranged simultaneously in any order, resulting in a very impressive interface indeed.

All amp and effect parameters are edited using the controls directly on each pedal/ amp thanks to the touch screen technology, making editing a breeze and essentially exactly the same as controlling the real thing.

A series of pre-sets get you started, with favourites and user pre-sets available too for storing your own sounds. An onboard tuner and metronome make for a great practice tool and a series of audio demos are built in to demo the sounds. Songs can be loaded into a dedicated player, allowing the user to alter the speed, create looped sections and remove vocals/lead guitar.









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Full MIDI functionality is built-in, allowing the user to control all elements of the app via a MIDI controller.

The icing on the cake comes in the form of an extensive 8-track recording suite complete with master effects such as EQ, reverbs, delays and choruses. This, in a growing trend for apps, must be purchased from within the app and is pretty expensive, so must be factored into the original cost if it's something you'll require. A single track version is included as standard however.

In use the tones are pretty authentic considering the processing power on offer from mobile devices. We're not dealing with high-end audio computers here so your expectations need to be reigned-in accordingly but I was pretty impressed all the same. The amp models responded to playing well and gave the impression of a cranked Marshall

[...>]



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overdriven tone faithfully. The tones are quite grainy though and I'd suggest they are more of a practice aid rather than a serious tone tool (for which you may want to try the PC/MAC version of the same software).

The effects sound good and, combined with the amp models, do offer pretty good representations of classic Slash tones with presets designed to model specific songs, allowing you to easily hone in on sounds that are appropriate for your favourite riffs. The app will also work with the 30-pin connector allowing you to use high quality iOS or class compliant audio interfaces for much better sound

quality. Recordings can be exported via email, soundcloud, ftp or file sharing so you can get your version of Sweet Child O' Mine out to the masses!

Overall, this is an impressive package that sounds as authentic as you can get given the limitations of the hardware. I'm marking it down due to the expensive in-app purchases required to get full functionality, but other than that, for the Slash fan it's a no-brainer. For everyone else this makes for a useful practice tool with higher gain modelled sounds at a reasonable price, providing you don't need the 8-track recording functionality.







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Seymour Duncan Alnico II Pro Slash APH-2 pickups

Celebrating Rock guitar icon Slash with our exclusive interview, iGuitar also decided to take a look at one of the key components in the great man's sound - his signature Seymour Duncan pickup set. Will they work for you?

Jamie Humphries checks them out.

When Appetite for Destruction came out in 1987, Slash's tone inspired generations, and still continues to do so. To many, this fabulous tone was the magical combination of a classic Gibson Les Paul and a Marshall. But there was also another vital ingredient to that sound, the Seymour Duncan Alnico II pickups that were in the guitar that Slash used to record that genre defining album. As Slash states in an interview, the pickups chose him. After hearing them, he set about replacing all of the pickups in his Les Pauls with the Duncan Alnico II's!

There are a couple of different ways to produce a distorted tone. The first is to use high output pickups that drive the amp harder and the second is to use lower output pickups and push the amp itself harder to produce more distortion and saturation. The second is the more classic and, to many, the more organic way producing a natural and controllable tone, giving the ability to be able to back off the guitar's volume to clean up the sound. Slash falls into the second

category, with his pickup choice being more classic and controllable.

The idea behind the signature Slash pickup was to faithfully replicate the tone of Slash's favourite studio and touring guitar. The tone description of the pickups is a 'warm moderate output pickup, which is ideal for blues, rock and hard rock'. The pickups use an Alnico 2 magnet, Alnico being comprised of aluminium, (Al), nickel, (Ni), and Cobalt, (Co). These pickups include a little extra winding just to boost the output of the guitar slightly and send it into the sweet overdriven lead tone, characteristic of Slash's sound. These pickups also feature a single conductor cable, long-legged bottom plate, wooden spacer, and even a custom Slash graphic on the underside of the pickup! They are a vital part of creating the Slash tone, and are also included as standard with the latest signature Gibson Slash Les Paul.

For our review and test we had to decide how to go about fitting a set of these pickups



and in consultation with Seymour Duncan's UK distributors, Rosetti, came up with A Cunning Plan, hatched by our editor and Rosetti's MD. We have borrowed a single cutaway Hagstrom, which has been fitted with Seymour Duncan's brilliant Liberator system, which, when installed, allows you to change the pickups in your guitar with ease.

It worked so well that we are going to be using this system again the future as a testbed for various Seymour Duncans that we are also itching to get our sweaty paws on!

All set-up, I began clean and I could tell straight away that these were a quality set of pickups. The tone of the bridge pickup was clean and bright, but at the same time well balanced, not too bright or harsh. The neck pickup was warm and round, and was perfect for producing a rich, warm, clean Jazz feel.

The Duncans really came to life when I kicked in the crunch channel on our Marshall, with the bridge pickup starting to sound slightly more aggressive, with some boosted upper mids. I blasted through a few Slash-inspired riffs and could instantly start to hear 'that tone' starting to take shape. Switch to the neck pick and that "woody" Slash sound was at my fingertips. I backed-off the tone control and was instantly inspired to play a little bit of the Sweet Child O' Mine riff.

These pickups are obviously perfectly matched, and exquisitely crafted, with every detail taken into account. The tone is classic, with a little more output and bite but not so much power that they produce a compressed metal effect. Check out the video! This is a more controllable classic/hard rock tone and

ig star rating ★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC 🧿







if you are a Slash fan than these pickups are a vital piece of that sound puzzle. But if you're not? Don't be put off by the signature. This is a fabulous set of replacement pickups, built to the highest specifications and producing a really musical, inspiring tone. It must be said, they don't come cheap and you can't help feeling that they'd be wasted on a low quality Les Paul clone. But on a fine guitar, they will only ever enhance the sound!







Charvel Desolation DST-1 FR & DX-1 ST Soloist

Charvel is back with a bang - but without the big bucks. **Tom Quayle** gets his pointy head round the pointy headstocks of two new Desolation models.

Since Fender took over Charvel in 2002, the Arizona-based guitar giant has slowly been diversifying the Charvel range to expand on the brand's classic shapes. The Desolation series sees Charvel strengthening its historic association with hard Rock and Metal instruments, bringing some new ideas into the mix, as well as reinvigorating some of its classics.

Two such classic shapes are the 'Star' DST model and the 'Soloist' DX that have been sleekly modernised in this new range. With a reputation for superb quality Rock and Metal guitars, stemming from the legendary San Dimas 'super-strat' models of the '80s, I had high hopes for the Desolation series.

Both review models shared the same basic construction, featuring mahogany bodies, maple through-body necks and rosewood fingerboards. The DX-1 ST had a very pretty flame maple top to boot and very detailed, multi-ply binding running all the way around the body, neck and headstock. Abalam shark tooth inlays adorn the fretboards and a compound 12-16" radius ensures easy chordal playing in the lower register and screaming bends in the upper register with no fretting out. A compound

radius is impressive at this price point and really aids playability, helped further by the jumbo frets.

Hardware is also high quality, with active EMG 81 and 85 humbucker pickups and either a Floyd Rose, or a fixed bridge with string-through construction for better sustain. Our sample DX-1 ST had a fixed bridge and locking tuners for greater tuning stability, while the DST-1 FR had an authentic Floyd Rose bridge and locking nut with standard nickel tuners. Each model can be bought with either configuration and in a number of different finishes with flame tops or opaque paint jobs. Your choice in which model to go for will be determined by your taste and bridge requirements, as the basic construction is the same throughout the range. A single volume knob and three-way switch completes the set-up.

Construction quality of both our samples was high and the flame topped DX-1 was stunning to look at. The only problem I could find was the where the paint finish stops on the back of the neck there is a significant ridge instead of the smooth taper that you'll usually find on through-necks. It's very easy to feel this as your hand passes





STAR RATING ★★★★

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REVIEWS_GUITAR REVIEW

Tonally, the active EMG pickups are perfect for modern Rock and Metal styles thanks to their high output and aggressive characteristics. Clean tones, often lacking character in active pickups, are attractive and pristine with a roundness and fullness that is equally adept in chordal passages and single note runs. Distorted tones were crisp and accurate, with superb tracking during palm muted riffs and power chords. Lead tones on both guitars were fat and cutting, especially on the bridge pickup of the DX-1 where the added sustain of the fixed bridge really made the guitar scream. I wasn't as impressed by how the pickups cleaned up with the volume control but most of the time you'll be using these







guitars with high gain tones, where they really cut it.

These two Charvels enter a very crowded and popular market with a lot of stiff competition from the many brands aiming at the Metal player but if you're after a through-neck design with great hardware, great pickups and playability, then I think these Charvel Desolations simply have to be checked-out. They may be just a shade highly priced considering their origins, but a quick check around the guitar shops reveals some attractive discounts, so on that basis, and after a lot of thought, we decided to award them four stars each.









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Ibanez PM35 NT

Just starting Jazz guitar or looking to add a lower cost Jazz model to your collection? Ibanez has a brand new, and surprisingly affordable, Pat Metheny signature model on offer, the PM35 NT. **Giorgio Serci** puts it through its paces.

Pat Metheny really needs little introduction. The formidable American Jazz guitarist/ composer has been a signature artist for the Ibanez guitar company since 1996 and has been actively involved in the design of the highly regarded, Japanese-made, PM 120. But the PM 120 is an expensive instrument, probably beyond the range of most beginners or those who would like to add a hollow bodied Jazz guitar to their collection, without spending a small fortune. To satisfy that market, Ibanez has just launched the PM35 NT model, which is considerably less expensive and should appeal to a lot of iGuitar readers who are looking for an affordable Jazz guitar with a great pedigree.

The first thing to note is that this guitar comes with a robust case - and you need to bear that in mind when comparing it with other guitars which might come without a case. It has a beautiful natural look, with contrasting wood colours from the rosewood headstock, fretboard, bridge and volume and tone knobs, to the maple back, top and sides. Its body size is what you would expect from a Jazz guitar, however, it is slimmer for better comfort, projection and feedback rejection.

The rosewood headstock and fingerboard are bound and feature abalone block inlay and Ibanez logo and the truss rod cover features a carved custom logo. This is another feature this guitar has in common with the iconic Gibson L5 Custom.

Its narrow neck (43mm at nut and 57 at last fret) and the hand-rolled fret design to Pat Metheny's exact specification makes this an easy guitar to play, particularly for soloing and playing single-note melodies. This is certainly not a coincidence, but the result of a fruitful collaboration with Metheny, who once claimed: "I have possibly spent more time playing guitar than anybody else on the planet"... Ergonomic characteristics of his guitars are key and a focal point when contributing in the design of his signature models. This resonated to me as I was playing this PM35, which came from the factory with a very good set-up. In addition to that, I managed to tune it up in an instant, straight from its case, thanks to its accurate mother of pearl capped tuning pegs.

The 5-piece set neck on the Ibanez is made of mahogany and walnut and meets its body in a very harmonious manner.









The top and back are both beautifully shaped for a better comfort as well as an elegant silhouette.

Again, like the L5, the PM35 features a single Custom 58 humbucker neck pickup, with its warm, responsive and versatile tonal palette and as a result, only one volume and tone controls are required. They do the job required perfectly.

This is a really well judged guitar for the price. Its sustain is quite good and its tone quality is what you would expect from a great Jazz guitar. It's an ideal instrument to play singing-like melodies as well as rhythm guitar parts and when you take into account all its features - the ergonomic qualities, tone, and looks, plus a sound that would be great for both studio and live work, it amounts to a very welcome addition to the Ibanez range.









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DBZ Royale FM

Bored by the legions of more or less interchangeable singlecut humbucking guitars? Looking for something just a little bit special? **Tom Quayle** would like you to meet the DBZ Royale FM.

DBZ guitars has had an interesting history. Formed in 2008 by the founder of Dean guitars, Dean Zelinsky, along with two partners, DBZ was announced as a major venture and created quite a stir at its launch, with some fine-looking woodwork setting off the strong designs particularly well. The brand had a slow start in the UK, due to distributor problems, but is now being handled by a specialist, GoTo Guitars, and we were relieved to finally be able to bring one into the studio for review. What we got was a Royale FM, one of the newer designs based on the DBZ Imperial model but featuring a smaller body size. The Royale is designed to be a full mahogany style, dual humbucking guitar, with great sustain but much smaller body mass, we were told. We couldn't wait to fire it up!

The Royale FM features a traditional solid mahogany body and set neck design with a flame maple top and very attractive scraped binding. An ebonized rosewood fretboard aids sustain and looks great with its premier series inlays and darker grain. The slimline body is sculpted to match the archtop

designs of old but with a more modern contour into the horns and a remarkable 5/8" thickness at the edges. Hardware comes in the form of two DBZ designed DBZB and DBZ5 humbucker pickups, Grover tuners and a very nice DBZ tail piece. Unlike the Imperial range, this guitar doesn't have a coil tap function for single coil sounds or the extended tail piece design - this is a smaller body shape after all. Single volume and tone knobs and a three-way selector switch finish off proceedings. Hardware is all nickel finished and feels high quality throughout.

Construction is supreme on all of the DBZ guitars I've tried and the Royale is no exception. The neck joint and bodywork are flawless and the flame top with its Amber Tobacco finish, whilst not matching up to boutique AAA tops, looks superb along with its lovely scraped binding. And after all, we're not talking anything like boutique money here, so that's fair enough! In terms of its design I'd say there is a subtlety at play here that allows the DBZ to share that space between modern and traditional, allowing it to appeal to a broad range of potential





CHECK THE SPEC 🧔





mahogany strapped around their neck will really appreciate this slimline guitar!

Played acoustically, the Royale has a very pleasing amount of sustain and a sophisticated tone that suggests everything from light strumming to Jazz chordal explorations. Single notes are clear and the factory set-up was just in that middle ground between playability without incurring fret buzz anywhere on the neck. In other words, it was great and something a lot of other companies should take note of!

Plugged-in the Royale retains a surprising amount of that sustain considering its diminutive width and mass, partly thanks to the great hardware and set-up. The bridge humbucker was biting and throaty giving classic all mahogany, set neck tones. Nothing ground breaking but solid and exactly what you'd want from this set-up but without the super heavy body trade off. The neck position was fat and warm but with good definition and never suffered from muddiness. The pickups seem to be very well matched and offer a good combination





of tones from a simple three-way design. Clean tones were also as expected and offered very solid performance. Often, pickups are the first thing to go on import guitars but in this case they offer great tones and don't fall into that throw away category that others so often do. The Royale would be equally at home in a Rock, Blues or Jazz context and really crosses the boundaries between those genres very adeptly.

Given the superb construction and hardware choices, the DBZ Royale would make a great choice for those needing a traditional all-mahogany twin humbucker guitar, or for players looking for an archtop style design in a smaller package. It's definitely not a design that will appeal to the hardcore traditionalists, but for those whose tastes extend a little further afield, the Royale is a very good instrument and, whilst it's not the cheapest Far Eastern manufactured guitar on the market, thanks to its specs and great playability it still represents good value for money. Check out our video and add it to you 'ones to try' list!



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Orange Micro Terror Head & PPC108 Cab

Orange's reign of terror continues unabated - this time with an assault from the Micro Terror. **Rick Graham** volunteered to go into the studio with one... alone.

With the current amplifier market surely approaching saturation point with diminutive designs you'd be right in thinking that the current trend is towards the ever-more tiny. If that is case, then the subject of this review must surely be the trendiest amp on the market! It's the latest design by the British amplifier manufacturer Orange and is an addition to the company's immensely successful Tiny Terror family.

With genuinely tiny dimensions of 16.5cm width x 13.5cm height x 9.2cm depth you'd be forgiven for not taking the Micro Terror seriously at first glance. But don't be fooled by its size! Housed in the same high-tensile steel as the other members of the Tiny Terror family and built with the same attention to detail Orange is so respected for, this is every bit a classic Orange product - and that goes for the sound, too, as we quickly discovered.

Thanks to a solid state class D power amp, the Micro Terror is capable of producing 20 Watts and with a 4 Ohm minimum output at the rear allowing connection to a variety of different sized cabinets, it enables the user to keep his or her options well and truly open. For its part, Orange has unveiled a matching cabinet (the PPC108) which comes

with an eight inch speaker, allowing users to complete their micro package in a very tidy looking mini stack format, which would most certainly appeal to those using it at home as a practice amp set-up. The two look really great together.

An ECC83/12AX7 valve allows for two gain stages which are apparently based on the front end of the amp that started the 'micro head' revolution, the original Tiny Terror. In addition to the volume, tone and gain controls, the front panel consists of a headphones output (1/4 inch) and an Auxiliary input (1/8 inch) which are great additions for those players wanting to use the amp in a home studio.

While a home studio might seem like the only real use for a tiny amp like this, once you fire it up you soon realise that it is perfectly capable of holding its own in a live environment, too. You'd of course have to hook the little fella up to an appropriate cabinet, such as a 4x12 (an arrangement that does look highly amusing by the way!) but, again, looks can be deceptive.

Starting with some clean tones and the Micro Terror sounded good but, let's face it, Rock



CHECK THE SPEC 🧔







REVIEWS_HEAD & CAB REVIEW

is what this amp really was made for so, me being me, I went straight to the front panel to make some changes. Pushing the volume and gain upwards forced this little beast to really start working hard, resulting in surprisingly loud volume levels with some pretty darn awesome tone to boot. From 'just breaking-up' sounds right through to no nonsense crunch, this cheeky little chap certainly delivered. In fact, after five or so minutes of playing, I found myself having to look back at it to remind myself what I was actually playing through! Check out the video and hear for yourself.

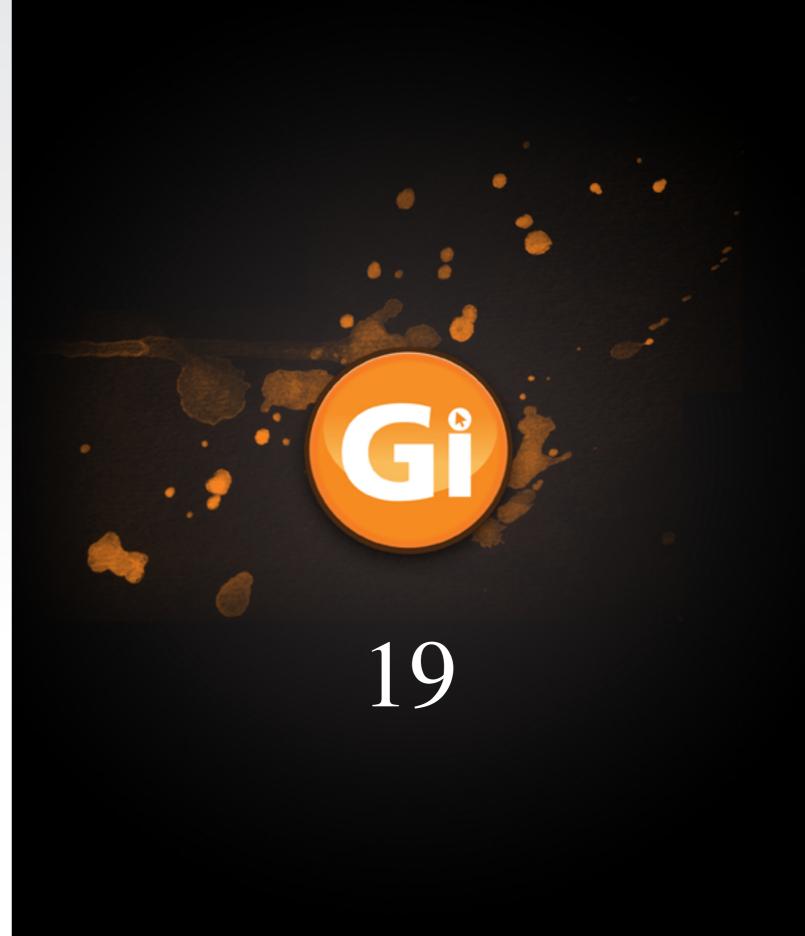
Even though the little PPC108 cabinet sounds great for a practice/studio set-up, I personally think that it would be a crime not to give the amp full reign of terror by hooking it up to a more substantial cabinet if you can. The size of

the Micro Terror makes it easily transportable. You can literally pop this in a rucksack or small bag and you're away! The only thing to be mindful of though, is to make sure that if you are using it for band practice or live use, that you secure it in place. One slightly firm tug of the cable and your Micro Terror could be sent hurtling towards the floor.

There's no question that Orange have hit the mark, again. I've tried hard but I can't find anything to dislike about the Micro Terror. It may initially appear to be a ridiculously cheap little practice amp but delve a little deeper and you'll find all of the characteristics that Orange are gaining worldwide praise for. The Micro Terror is quite simply an exceptional product at an exceptional price.







Dr No Pedals

Is there an evil mastermind intent on taking over the guitar FX market? Agent 007, **Jamie Humphries** goes in seaarch of Dr No. But will he be shaken or stirred?

There are many companies today offering vintage-style boutique effects, all said to be constructed with the highest grade components, some of them offering stunning vintage tones. But with so many claiming the same things, the market place is becoming flooded, so I tend to stick to my 'old faithfuls', simply because the amount of choice is now quite overwhelming.

But now and again you have to sit up and take notice of a newcomer and when our friends at Tone World, who know a thing or two about pedals, told us they had taken on distribution for a new brand called Dr No, we knew we should at least check them out.

Dr No is Roel Aben. Roel started building pedals around six years ago in his attic in the Netherlands, producing pedals for himself and his friends. His goal was to produce pure analogue units, based on designs from the era that had inspired him. As larger companies produced more digital units, Roel went the other way, creating units from a bygone age, instead of what he felt were soulless, modern digital FX.

Visually Dr No pedals are stunning - the first thing you notice being the graphic design and artwork on the pedal casing. I should also mention that each pedal is hand



signed by Roel, giving them a very personal, individual and boutique touch. I should also mention that all Dr No pedals run from a mains power supply only and don't use batteries, which makes them environmentally friendly. Then there is the impressive packaging, that also includes a free key ring! Dr No pedals are very rugged with sturdy metal casings and a high quality true bypass footswitch, designed to withstand plenty of stomping. They also feature very basic controls, making it easy to dial in your favourite vintage tones.

Dr No Octofuzz



The Octofuzz is a very old school pedal that adds a note an octave above the note you are playing. Roel claims on the website that this pedal is his most special and retro-sounding to date, capturing the tones of fuzz pedals from the '60s and '70s. It's impossible to describe an effect in words - which is why we offer video! - but I suppose if pressed, I'd say think Jimmy Page and Jimi Hendrix. The design is stunning, with octopus graphics and a simple three control layout, plus the stomp switch, jewel light to show when the

pedal is activated, plus a small switch on the side to kick in the octave effect.

Although this effect is firmly based on the 'Flower Power' era, it would be equally at home with some of today's more modern alternative Rock bands. As Roel says on the website, if you have a thing for Queens of the Stone Age, then this pedal is for you!

The Octofuzz features a gain control that controls the amount of fuzz saturation, a level control which controls the output of the effect and also interacts well with the gain control when dialling in tones. There is also an intensity control, which intensifies







and increases the effect and also controls the amount of octave being used when the octave switch is kicked in on the side.

I found the tone very authentic. It really did have the feel and character of a vintage fuzz unit, with tone sometimes almost dropping out with the natural compression, which did take a while to get use too. If you're looking for something old, nasty and aggressive then this pedal is well worth a look. Alternatively, there's our editor.... (you're fired! - Ed)

Kafuzz





The Kafuzz pedal is a slightly sweeter and purer sounding fuzz than the Octofuzz. The first thing you notice, again, are the stunning comic book graphics - Batman style in this case. Once again, the layout of the pedal is the same as the Octofuzz, with three control knobs, the jewel light indicator and the true bypass stomp switch. The controls are Kafuzz, which controls the amount of fuzz, plus tone and effect volume.

This is the Dr No pedal for sweet and clean the fuzz. Even with the gain set very high, the pedal produced a warm but saturated tone. I was able to achieve classic Clapton Cream-era, or Eric Johnson fuzz and when I pushed the gain higher, sending the fuzz into almost a distortion, I could also achieve my favourite Black Sabbath vintage metal tones. The pedal also did a great David Gilmour impersonation, from the Dark Side of the Moon era. The tone control covered a very wide tonal spectrum, form dark

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thick tones, to ultra bright Isley Brother's style EQ.

This really is a wonderful fuzz pedal, and I found its tone to be very inspiring. Add to this its tank-like build quality and high grade parts, and you've got a great buy!

Next up was the More Gary. This pedal has the likes of Jeff Beck, Stevie Ray and, of course, Gary Moore in mind, creating full, warm to bright, breaking-up tones.





More Gary



This was the pedal for fat, vintage tube sounds, with a mild overdrive. If I drove the tone control harder, adding brightness, it recreated the sound of an amp being pushed and breaking up. You could also use one of these to drive the front end of a valve amp harder and hotter.





REVIEWS_FX PEDALS REVIEW

I found the More Gary to be a very vibey and exciting drive pedal to play through and the bluesy tones inspired my playing style to lean toward Gary Moore or Stevie Ray. If you are in the market for an alternative to stock sounding overdrives, have a serious look at this one!



Madfly



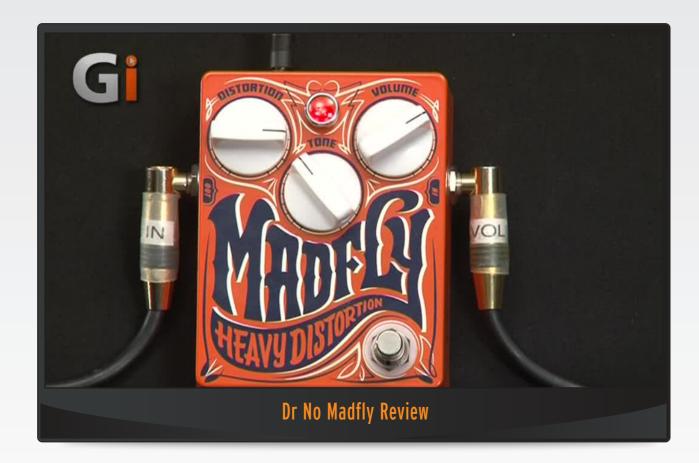
CHECK THE SPEC 📀

There's no mistaking the target here - Black Sabbath and Kyuss. This one is more '70s than '60s - doom Metal, if you like, with a wide control over the EQ with the sweep of the tone. Anything from low, thick dark, to bright, biting fuzz was achievable, especially those early Sabbath tones - dark and fat with plenty of distortion and saturation.

Again I found this to be a very inspiring pedal to play with, and was impressed with how wide was the range of tones I could create with it, and also how organic and dynamic it sounded. If heavy '70s fuzz distortion tones are your thing, then be sure to check one out!







CONCLUSION:

I really enjoyed using these pedals. Not only are they visually stunning, they are built to the highest spec and feel like the sort of units you can happily take on tour. They aren't cheap, so you need to audition the range carefully to decide which one is for you but there is no doubting that Dr No really has captured that old 'organic' feeling and that if you're a vintage tone purist, then I would definitely put Dr No at the top of your list!





Source Audio Soundblox 2 pedals

Source Audio occupies a rarefied place in the FX world. The company's latest, the Soundblox 2 pedals, are anything but simple plug 'n play stomp boxes. We gave two to **Michael Casswell** and waited for the steam to start coming out of his ears....

Usually when trying a pedal, we pretty much like to get it out of the box, plug it up and go. But as soon as I opened the box to these two pedals, I knew it was going to be a bit more involved than that. By the nature of most pedals, that approach is usually all that's needed to get on top of what the they are supposed to do, but both these Source Audio Soundblox 2 pedals have a lot to offer, and you really have to get in there and see what's what, and dare I say it, even look at the manual! Daunted at the fact that this wasn't going to be an easy gig, I accidentally took them home and used them on a couple of gigs, first!

A couple of very cool features common to both pedals is the capability to store two of your favourite settings once you have got in there and tweaked the parameters to your liking. You also have the choice of making the pedals buffered or true bypass. They come straight out of the box in true bypass mode, which is great if you are running a chain of pedals, the first of which should be buffered. But if you want either of these first in your signal chain, then you can programme them to be buffered. Big thumbs up from me on this point, because this is a facility that does not come with your average

stomp box. If you buy a Source Audio Soundblox 2 Midi adapter, then these pedals accept MIDI commands, enabling remote automation, external controllers, firmware updates and more. If you also buy the SA161 Source Audio Dual Expression pedal as well, you have continuous control over any of the parameters. And finally if you buy the Source Audio Hot Hand device, you can morph and mess with the presets by magically waving your hand around (although I thought you need your hands to play the guitar), giving some wild and very visual effects! All these toys and facilities are extra to the purchase of the pedal, but they do come with their own power supplies.

Soundblox 2 Multiwave Distortion



This pedal gives you 23 varieties of distortion algorithms, plus a nice clean boost mode, which was one of my favourites, so I stored it to the footswitch when I gigged this in



front of my Marshall. I found it lets you add some grit and compression in there, plus eq, making it do nice things in front of a crunchy valve amp. This pedal also has a compressor pot marked Sustain, which is a fantastic addition, opening up a whole world of tones with each of the distortion presets.

A big selling point for the Soundblox 2 are the Multiband distortion presets, which in theory separates your guitar into low, mid, and high frequency bands. Each band is separately distorted, and then recombined, which gives a clarity with chords with complex harmony. A normal distortion would turn to mush with this much gain, but this pedal manages to stay articulate with silly amounts of distortion.

You also get an octave distortion, which is sensitive to your pick attack, input gain, and guitar volume, very reminiscent of the old Fuzz Face, with some nice Hendrix and almost ring mod tones. I wasn't sure what the







'foldback' presets did but having re-read the manual, I think it re-introduces the craziness that the multiband presets control. My brain works in simple ways (food, wine, sleep), and the manual is not light bedtime reading. You also have some stock overdrive presets in there too, plus hi, mid and lo programmable eq, and a low, medium, high noisegate to combat the hiss generated by extreme distorted tones, especially if you amp is set crunch and generating its own hiss as well.

The Multiwave distortion seems a complicated pedal but it's really not once you know what's what. What it does do is blow you away with how many variables you have at your disposal. Options can scare guitarists, but with a little common sense, and an ear

for tone, this pedal can pretty much cover it all. I'd recommend a long test drive so you can get to grips with it.

Soundblox 2 Dimension Reverb



I do like a nice reverb and used this pedal on my Pro Concepts column on the whammy bar stuff. The actual preset was the modverb, but all the usual suspects are here plus a few extras, such as E-dome, Metal Box, Stage and Club.



Most reverbs should be felt and not heard on guitar, but the ones that should be heard must be good and these are. In total you have 12 reverb types based on physical spaces and mechanical reverb sounds.

This pedal uses Source Audio's own 56-bit digital signal processor and crystal clear 24-bit converters, which is the long way round of saying it's very capable and sounds good. As usual you can save your two favourites tweaked presets to the two footswitches, so it

might be nice to have a subtle warm reverb on one, and an over the top moody long one on the other (as I did when using it myself).

All aspects of any of the presets are tweakable via option select buttons, mix, time pots, and once you get your head round what everything does, it's all pretty straight forward.

One thing I am surprised about is the lack of stereo out. I sometimes use a stereo set up live and one thing better than a nice reverb is





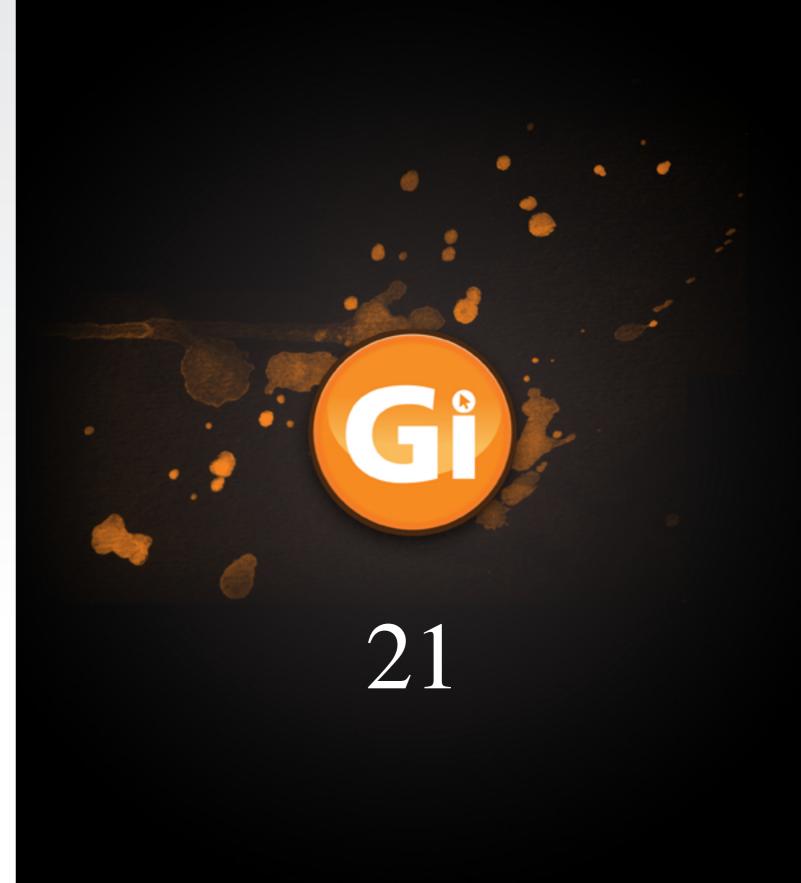
a nice reverb in stereo. I'm sure Source Audio have its reasons, but most of the competition do cater for this, which puts a slight dent in to a pedal that covers most other aspects when it comes reverb.

If you really want to hear this pedal in use, rather than me just flying through the demo on here, check out my Pro Concepts column

in this issue on the whammy Beck-style, and hopefully you will hear a long moody verb for the performance, and a shorter plate verb for the teaching.

Good, well made, not as hard to grasp as it might seem, but I would have liked a stereo out.





Caparison Horus M3 guitar

Handmade in Nagoya, Japan by a former Charvel/Jackson creative team, Metal legend Caparison is under new ownership. Rick Graham tried the stunning-looking Horus M3 model - it was love at first sight.

Founded in 1995 by former Charvel/ Jackson creative division staff, Caparison rapidly gained attention from lovers of finely crafted, handmade Japanese guitars and the then owners of the brand, Kyowa Shokai Ltd, enjoyed great success, that is until the company came unstuck in mid-2011. Not long after, the brand was taken over by a UK-based partnership and production was able to be resumed under the name Caparison Guitar Co Ltd in the original factory in Nagoya, Japan, whilst retaining all of the original staff involved in the building process, including the well-known and well respected Itaru Kanno as the company's lead designer.

This year (2012) signals a brand new start for the company and with that brand new start have come brand new models and brand new upgrades, of which the subject of our review, the 'Horus M3', is one. The 'Horus' model was originally introduced in 1995 and was developed in collaboration with the Japanese guitarist Chacha Maru and remains one of Caparison's best-selling models to date. The new M3 receives a new body construction which now incorporates composite tone

woods that feature a maple centerpiece, which helps to enhance note definition, and mahogany wings that add a rich tone and sustain. Also new for this model are two choices of finish: 'Snow Storm' and 'Black Rose', our review guitar being of the latter type. These are hand-applied sponge finishes and the finishing technique required results in each production model being aesthetically attractive and completely unique.

The neck construction on the Horus is hard maple, with a beautifully finished ivory binding between the neck wood and fingerboard itself which sports 'left hand friendly' jumbo frets. Fret markers come in the form of a very unique and rather quirky looking clock design, which I find is very in-keeping with the overall curious design of the guitar itself. Looking a little closer reveals that the time displayed on each clock indicates the fret number i.e. three o'clock for fret three, five o'clock for fret five etc, which I found to be very cool indeed! The unusual 'Devils Tail' headstock design looks equally unique and the gorgeous ivory binding, matt black finish and the Horus logo emblazoned in gold across the middle

of the headstock add a dash of class into the bargain. The Schaller S-FRT II bridge and locking nut come in a cool black finish as do the Gotoh SG381-07 H.A.P. machine heads and single volume control. This is really very high class stuff indeed!

As always with any guitar I manage to get my hands on, one of the important tests for me and one that I invariably perform first, is playing the guitar unamplified. The Horus proved itself to be beautifully resonant with an exceptional clarity. Even when playing high up the fretboard, those notes just seemed to 'pop' out with confidence. Any players out there familiar with the original Horus guitar will know that it is a 27 fret instrument and in addition, comes with standard scale length thus allowing the player total creative freedom without the need for a compromise in technique, which is always useful! Being a humble 22 fret player myself, venturing that high up the fretboard felt a little unusual at first but it didn't take too long to get used to.

Amplified, the tones were superb. The neck position dual rail Caparison SH-27F pickup sounded beautifully smooth, producing some stunning creamy lead tones and the Caparison PH-R in the bridge position just screamed in the way a truly great Rock guitar should do. It is such an easy guitar to play too, thanks to a superb set-up - each one of which is inspected by the lead designer himself.



STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC !



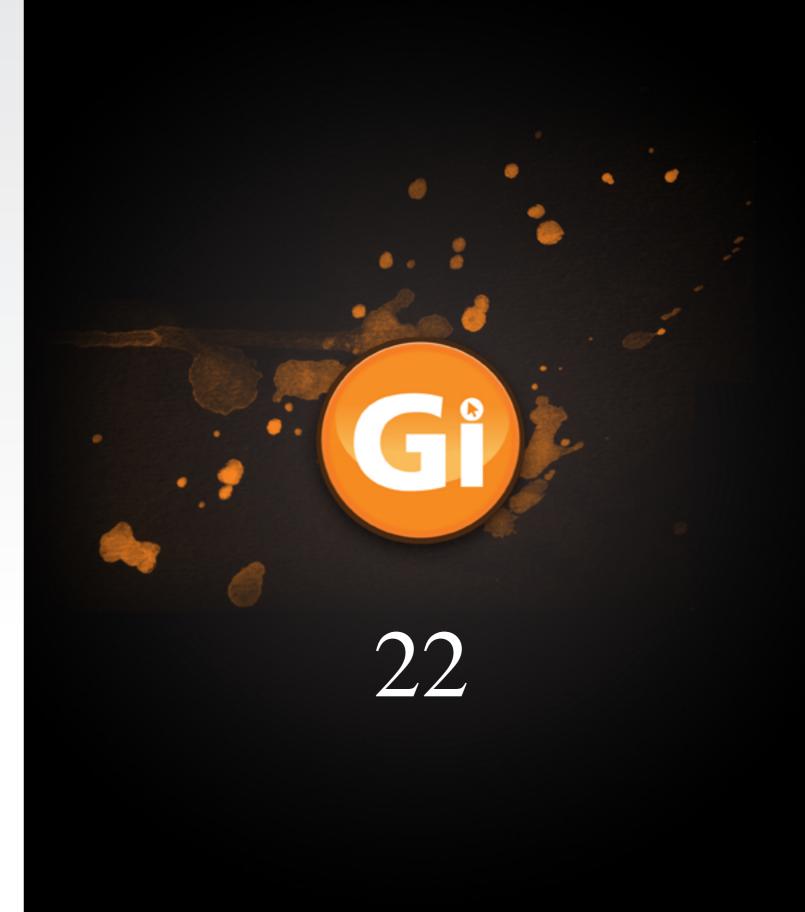


The Horus M3 is a beautifully made instrument and is most certainly geared toward the more modern day virtuoso player. This fact alone may limit its appeal somewhat and the high price tag may be a little rich for some. However, there is no doubting that this guitar is an instrument of the very highest build and sound quality and the true comparison for a guitar of this

class is with handmade instruments from the USA, UK and Europe - not mass-produced guitars. Judged by that standard (and bearing in mind that the price includes a hard case) we actually think it's good value for money as well as being a fabulous and distinctive guitar.







France's Patrice Vigier is among the world's most successful specialist guitar makers but he also produces fabulous basses, too, attracting a diverse range of users including Geezer Butler, Adam Clayton, Glenn Hughes, Alphonso Johnson and Roger Glover - and they are just some of the names that immediately came to mind! We have two Vigier basses on review in this issue - a four string and a five string - both pretty much Rock-friendly. And while we were encouraging Dan Veall to rock-out, we also introduced him to the titanic 400 Watt Laney Nexus Tube head and 8x10 cab. No prizes for guessing which iconic bass rig this is aimed at showing a clean pair of heels to! Britain's Laney has long been a stalwart of heavy metal guitar amplification but this

is an unashamedly professional Rock bass system. It's a far cry from Dan's beloved low weight, digital systems - how would he get on with an amp sporting eight KT 880 Valves and built like a house?

Finally, we look at a new and incredibly versatile effects pedal from the USA's Source Audio - a fully fledged bass distortion and about as far away from a mere fuzz box as you could hope to get!

Remember that we're always keen to hear your suggestions about what you'd like us to look at.

Just email your editor@iguitarmag.com.

Gary Cooper - Editor



LANEY NEXUS TUBE HEAD AND NX810 CABINET

Heavy Metal was born in the engineering heartland of the English West Midlands - and so was Laney Amplification. Now the maker of generations of searing valve guitar amps has decided to produce an ultimate valve bass rig. But how will it appeal to our master of all things lightweight, digital and modern, **Dan Veal!?**

Here's a welcome entry to iGuitar towers! As you may already be well aware I am a huge fan of technology and think that the current influx of lightweight amps and boutique designed cabinets are fantastic and are paving the way forward. But you know, sometimes, you just want something spectacular and massive to come along to surprise you. When I say surprise, I of course mean rattle you off your feet.....

I walked in to the iGuitar studio to only to be stopped in my tracks by several large boxes marked 'Laney' in the doorway. In front of me stood the largest: a huge brown box, like the massive black monolith in the film '2001 – A Space Odyssey'. This was to be the NX810



iG STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC 📀

cabinet we are reviewing here and next to it the not so massive box for the Nexus Tube head!

So, lets not mess about. Is this beast about to blow our minds?

We have here an all-tube British designed and built monster bass head capable of 400W RMS at 8, 4 or 2 Ohms. This amp is not for the timid! I only wish that it were possible to feel the recording we did, as well as hear it in the video clips, as the amp had gobs of endless power, really shifting the eight custom Celestion neodymium speakers in the sealed NX810 cabinet.

Looking closer at the Nexus head, eight TAD labelled KT88 valves are neatly arranged in the back half of the amplifier head shell. Eight!!!

I'm so happy to see a full valve amplifier using high quality valves! Cheap clone valves thrown in to keep prices



THE BASSMENT_HEAD AND CABINET REVIEWS

down is really just cheating customers in my opinion. Why spend all that money in R&D to make a great sounding amplifier then drop some bog standard valves in it that make it sound flat and lifeless? - keeping costs down ultimately, I guess. But not here - this is serious engineering!

Anyway, I digress. One thing that wasn't obvious in the video review is that the Nexus head features sets of LEDs next to the valves to keep you informed of current amplifier status, including that of a possible failed valve. Nice! I'm all for these kind of indicators.

Setting up was a total breeze. I'll say this now - the front panel is so easy to use despite all the different switchable functions. It was quite obvious even without the manual that each switchable section had a button to enable it. If for any reason there was the slightest doubt, stomping on the all metal cased foot switch with its corresponding LEDs for each function clearly identified active modules.

I actually loved the amplifier without any tonal shaping options enabled and with just a bit of shelving bass boost. It's just a great sounding clean amplifier. However, the real fun came in turning on the valve stage and adding a bit of dirt. Wow! What a great, great, great drive sound! No stodgy

bottom or fizzy treble. This tube circuit makes a complete mockery of many alleged 'drive' circuits I have heard in so many other amplifiers yet the low end stays tight. Especially as you have the option of running the clean FET channel at the same time!

The front panel of the amplifier features bass and treble shelving controls that are not switchable along with a master presence control on the far right hand side near the master volume. Everything in between can be controlled by the footswitch. The FET transistor channel and Tube channels can be operated either separately or together in parallel. Tone shaping comes in the form of a parametric midrange EQ covering low-mid frequencies and high-mid frequencies over four knobs, two per EQ range. If that's really not enough, there is also a graphic equaliser too!

Round the back of the Nexus Tube it's also a great show of features. An effects loop, a D.I. output, pre-amp/ power amp patch

points as well as a tuner output jack. Laney also chose a selection of output Speakon sockets for connecting cabinets, instead of a switch for impedance matching. You have a 4 Ohm cabinet, you plug it in to the 4 Ohms socket for example. Simple! You do need to pay attention to the correct impedance with valve amplification, so spend some time understanding this amplifier's manual as it describes what you can and can't hook up to the head!











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The NX810 is a sealed cabinet (having no ports) for a super tight and punchy bass sound. The beast is split in to two sets of four Celestion speakers, essentially giving you two 4x10 cabinets. You can run the two completely independently in 'stereo' or 'dual-mono' if you use another amplifier in conjunction. The configuration gives you two cabinets rated at 8 Ohms each and a power handling of 800W RMS. Flick the switch from 'stereo' to 'mono' on the rear of the

[...>]

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THE BASSMENT_HEAD AND CABINET REVIEWS



cabinet and the configuration changes to one mono 8x10 with a rating of 1,600W RMS at 4 Ohms. Again, with reference to the Laney Nexus Tube head, you'd connect the cabinet in mono to the 4 Ohm Speakon connector on the back of the amplifier.

So what's the bad news? Well I have to say there's only one. This rig isn't for the faint hearted. The head itself weighs in at 34Kg. I have to say that thanks to the huge handles on the top of the marine ply, wooden shell, it's much easier to lift than a certain other well known all valve classic bass head that I shan't name! It's still not amplifier-on-a-diet though as it's substantial in size and weight. You might wanna book a roadie if you suffer from a bad back!

You'll be pleased to know that the NX810 is a much easier schlep than cabinets that have speakers with ceramic magnets, weighing a mere 46Kg thanks to Neodymium speakers and thoughtful cabinet construction. I have to say Laney have done very well as there's another 8x10 cabinet I can think of that weighs in at well over 60Kg. OUCH!

So after looking at all the features it was time to give the head a good run for its money. Yes, we turned it up! I chose to drive both

pre-amps quite hard in turn and could really feel a bit of that lovely valve compression start to make my playing rounded and fat in tone. Slap parts beefed out with a low kick and lighter passages seemed to ping from the speakers in comparison. Oh and that distortion break up - absolutely wonderful! I think if I were allowed to take the rig home, I'd have wanted to have gigged it a few times to really hear it shine. However, even with the amount of time we spent with the stack, I have to say it was brilliant. I'm thoroughly impressed with the attention to features and usable functions. Mainly though, how great this piece of serious quality engineering sounded when we pushed it up to 'gig volume'. Expensive? Not really, no - not for a British, handmade, professional class tube rig of awesome power and impeccable sound. Top marks!

Well done Laney, we liked this one so much we immediately called the company and asked to try the Nexus FET, NX410 and NX115 cabinets. Stay tuned for our next issue!





VIGIER ARPEGE IV/ VIGIER PASSION V

Patrice Vigier is unquestionably one of the world's great guitar makers - and his basses? Many consider them equally as good and maybe even better. Dan Veall samples Vigier's Arpege IV and Passion V. Did they rock his world?

Top French luthier Patrice Vigier has been making guitars and basses since 1978 from his company head quarters in Grigny, France and has amassed a huge following of fans of his basses. We have two wonderful basses from Vigier's workshop in this issue for review. They are both stunning instruments that not only look the part but sound great too. Both the Arpege 4 and Passion 5 models feature premium tonewoods and electronics that really help each shine with their own musical character. They differ tonally, so I think a closer look is needed to help you choose the right model.

First up, the Arpege IV with its beautiful amberburst finish is a visually stunning instrument. The front facings of the body and headstock are flame maple. This top quality wood has been allowed to dry and settle for three years. The top and maple back wood sandwiches a large slice of alder, which looks great through the translucent and clear finishes typical of Vigier. The amberburst colour is coated with a glossy and hard wearing finish making the bass look every bit as tasty as it sounds.

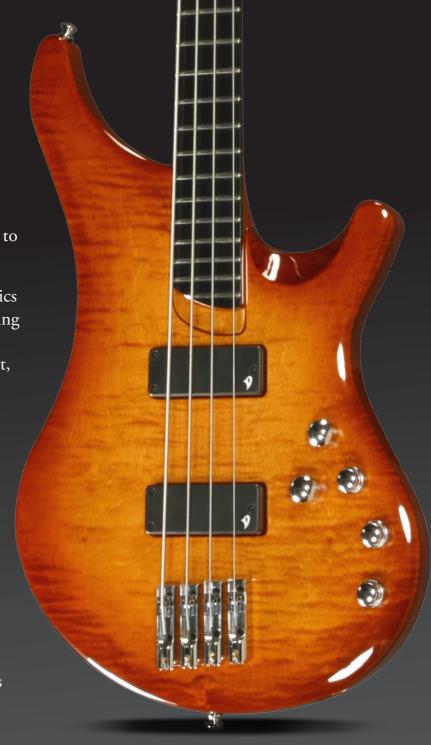
I've been lucky enough to play a few Vigier basses and I have always been enticed by the

feel of the neck. It's described as a 'D' shape, yet it is quite a small 'D' in comparison to some instruments that would feel clubby in comparison. The neck really is slim, I'd liken it to a Jazz neck width but a bit more substance to it. Taking a look at the documented specifications, 40mm width at the nut and a mere 56mm right up the dusty end seems to bear this out. Whatever, it's a great feeling neck with a tidy and expertly finished fret job on both models. The neck construction is a multi-laminate of maple and graphite bringing rigidity and stabilisation to the neck as well as sustain and resonance.

Up at the headstock end of the bass, Schaller tuners with a very smooth response anchor the strings in place as they pass through the perfectly cut teflon nut. A zero fret maintains optimum string height as well as being hardened to reduce string wear. These are all nice touches that really show an attention to detail missed on instruments made to a budget and which will in the long term save you money as parts are less likely to wear out or break. 24 Frets are mounted on a Phenowood fretboard. Phenowood is 'phenolic resin impregnated with cellulose' - a product that Vigier developed for fretboard material themselves.

Down at the body end of business, the bridge pieces are of the individual mono rail 'quick release' type set at a spacing of 19mm. I really like these and they are certainly favoured amongst many luthiers as well as being used on some production instruments. They are said to improve sustain and harmonic response; not that this bass is in any way lacking in that department, but it's still an added bonus to see quality hardware on board.

On the subject of hardware, the electronics that come with the Arpege 4 are interesting and a great idea that you don't see that often. I'll come back to that in a moment, but first, let's start with the pickups. The specification for the Arpege IV on the Vigier website (which I have to say is very detailed!) describes that this model features a pair of Delano 'single, twin coil inline' pickups. These are passive and have a really lovely open sound to them. A single coil tone, but no noise at all under our studio lights and equipment. Panning between the pickups with a flat EQ setting shows up a nice variety of tones without and undue thinness from the bridge or woolliness in the lows from the neck position in comparison. A great place to start before adding



STAR RATING $\star\star\star\star$ BOTH INSTRUMENTS

iGuitar Magazine Issue 11

CHECK THE SPEC !





some of that super EQ. Yes the preamp is a little special on this model: two three band equaliser systems! There's a Bass, Mid and Treble control per pickup and they work independently of each other. This is a great idea! I mean, how many times have we wanted to boost the bass on the bridge pickup because it doesn't carry the same low end weight as a neck mounted counterpart? Or drive the mids and upper frequencies on the front pickup to make it cut through more? Seems a perfect way to alleviate tonal limitations of pickup positioning without making the other pickup suffer when using a single EQ system. It's a little unusual and something I wasn't sure was totally necessary when I first took a look at the bass but after

playing them for a while, I have to say that it's a brilliant idea and makes a great deal of sense.

In playing the instrument sat on my lap, the Arpege is well balanced and doesn't neck-dive – indeed it was effortless and a joy to play in the seated position. At 3.8Kg (average) for the Arpege 4, it is not the lightest instrument on the market, but isn't going to cause any problems at all for most.

So now let's take a look at the Vigier Passion 5 string and see what sets it apart from the 4 string Arpege model we have just been looking at.



The main differences are subtle, but enough to make either instrument stand alone tonally. Once again the bass features the same wonderful multilaminate maple neck, secured to the body with five inset screws. The body shares the maple facings and alder sandwich, but in this review model bore a clear lacquer finish so that the wood grains are clearly visible and uncoloured.

Obviously, this instrument has the extra string - a Low B that feels solid and well defined. Certainly that's the result of the beautiful construction and quality hardware, as the bass is still only a 34" scale. A lot of manufacturers and luthiers seem to favour a longer scale lengths as it can improve the tone of the lower strings. In the Vigier's case though, it shows that you can still use a 34" scale length and maintain a good sounding B string. Personally, I like the 34" scale length and would naturally include that as a specification on any bass shopping list and I am sure many others would too. It could be helpful for those making the step from four to five strings for the first time.

The Vigier Passion bass neck carve and string spacing would also be comfortable for those wanting to make the switch, too. The 'D' shaped neck carve is used on this model also and once again, certainly in my huge hands, it feels quick and very easy to navigate!

The Passion model features the same soapbar pickups as found in the Arpege 4. This time however, for a different



THE BASSMENT_BASS GUITAR REVIEWS

tone completely, Vigier favours a position closer to the bridge for both soapbars. Overall I think this gives the instrument a bit more bite and less 'plummy' lows. Enter the EQ system to add some low end girth in and there are no complaints here whatsoever. The Passion basses don't feature the same dual three band EQ system but I feel that with the pickups being closer together at the bridge, it might not be necessary.

Like the Arpege, the Passion 5 is not heavy though it does feel substantial. The Arpege on paper weighs in at 3.8Kg, the Passion 5 in at 3.9Kg. Not much between the two in fact.

Plus points of both instruments would certainly be that they are well balanced and deliver a good strong bass tone straight out of the box thanks to the use of premium materials and electronics coupled with flawless construction. I really enjoyed getting used to the dual three band EQ system too.

It's great to play basses that aren't just following the rest of the pack with endless 'P' and 'J' clones and to see a luthier extending the art by using interesting construction techniques. These two Vigiers both carry premium price tags, so you would expect a very level of attention to detail and flawless performance. And that's exactly what you get!







SOURCE AUDIO SOUNDBLOX 2 MULTIWAVE BASS DISTORTION PEDAL

With Michael Casswell busily reviewing Source Audio's brand new Soundblox 2 guitar effects elsewhere in this issue, we asked **Dan Veall** to give his thoughts on the bass version. After all, bass players get to use effects too these days!

I've been aware of Source Audio since the very first versions of the SoundBlox pedals and being a bit of a geek (a bit!? - Ed), I've watched their progress with each revision or new product, especially as Source Audio are using the latest digital signal processing hardware in tandem with fresh thinking to bring us exciting new pedal products.

This unit in particular features an all metal casing that has been downsized from the previous versions. Pedal board friendly! The key features have been carried straight over from the original Multiwave Bass Distortion with the inclusion of additional functionality that I touched on in the video review. Somehow they managed to squeeze all this in to the small footprint for some truly incredible real-time tonal processing.

In the video I ran through the basic sound feature set as it would be impossible to have demonstrated every single feature without a full length movie! Thankfully, something Source Audio paid attention to in the design stages was having great 'preset' sounds on each of the 22 positions on the centre dial (the 23rd being a clean boost setting with equaliser control) . It has to be said that some of the presets we ran through in the video were similar.

However, when you start adjusting the drive and tone controls whilst experimenting with instrument dynamics, it was easier to hear how each differed.

I loved the multiband effects. They remind me of the discontinued Akai Hexacomp pedal - a six band multiband compressor. The Multiwave Bass Distortion goes one... nay, several steps further, by adding distortion and clever DSP in to the mix to give us a wide range of Synth, Octave and drive settings. Brilliant for so many styles of music including funk and '70s disco where the likes of those famous synth pedals we know so well were used often - then bang up to date with Dubstep. The pedal isn't just limited to those genres though, I recently watched a 'gear video' discussing the bass rig for Def Leppard's Rick Savage. There in his rack system taking on drive duties in some of the band's live set was a Multiwave Bass Distortion!

So what other features does the pedal offer that we didn't cram into our video? On the rear of the pedal, either side of the Guitar







CHECK THE SPEC 💽

[...>]



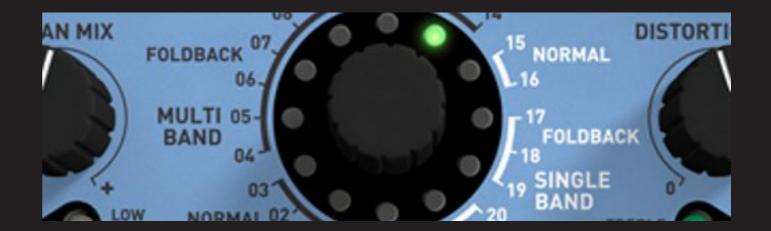
input and output jacks are two connections for Source Audio accessories. Currently, there is an expression pedal that will allow manipulation of the pedal's parameters when it is pushed back and forth.

The best way to describe this would be to use a wah pedal comparison. Though with this pedal, it'd have to be a wah on steroids!! Without the expression pedal, manipulating the drive control alone in the multiband settings whilst playing sounds fantastic through our studio rig! Next up, there is the Source audio 'Hot Hand' device available in both wired and wireless versions. The Hot Hand attaches to your picking hand and once again you are able to program

the pedal, this time to be controlled by the movement of your hand that the Hot Hand is attached to. Huge effect swells are possible just by moving your hand in mid air! This is a great piece of kit! I'd have loved to have had one in for this review. Finally, in reference to the Source Audio website, a MIDI controller will be available in the later part of this year for further external control of the pedal. I'd expect this to include the ability to sequence up filter effects changes or to allow for full MIDI implemented rack set ups to take the pedal from the floor to rack rig for example.

Speaking of manipulating the parameters of the MBD, it is possible to use an external device to morph between two presets.





Very handy for some added extra real time expression!

Three items I didn't spend too much time with on the video are the Noisegate on the bottom left hand side of the front panel – this is a handy feature should you be using high gain distortion settings and are picking up mains hum from lights or poor room electrics nearby. The three settings on the pedal give you access to different levels of threshold so you can tailor the gating of the function optimally.

Bottom right hand side of the pedal is the tone shape button that works in conjunction with the knob marked 'Tone'. By pressing the button repeatedly, you can switch between three bands of active equaliser. High, Mid and Low. Boost and cut of each band is made using the Tone knob. It is possible to reset the EQ flat again at the touch of a button too. Once your sound is set, it's then just a case of holding down one of the patch selector foot switches for a couple of seconds and that patch is then saved along with the effect type, and gain settings. Easy!

Finally, the pedal features a really useful 'Universal Bypass'. Yes, you can select between either true bypass or buffered bypass switching to really configure the pedal for best performance in the signal chain.

Final thoughts then: Is this pedal useful? Will us bass players welcome it? Yes, I think we will! My only caveat to this is that to get the best out of the Multiwave Bass Distortion, you really need to spend some time getting to know how it works properly. There is a great deal of functionality in various modes and settings to configure. I'd recommend getting one, but would also advise spending some real time with it finding which settings work best for you. You don't have to have the hot hand or expression pedal with the unit, but having seen what other musicians are doing with these devices, it's hard not to want to do the same! I do love technology in music and this is just another pedal that I'm going to have to make room for on my pedal board!



THE QUETROOM

As I hinted in last issue's intro, we had something impressive up our sleeve for iGuitar 11's Quie Room! Texan Rodney Branigan has become a stalwart of the UK acoustic scene over the past few years and has achieved enormous recognition from audiences and players alike. Rodney kindly came into iGuitar's studios to film an interview with our own acoustic star, Giorgio Serci, and then delivered a fantastic live performance which is captured in this issue. Enjoy!

On the review side, we have what we consider to be quite a find in the latest from Washburn. We're used to seeing acoustic guitar prices dropping but what you often get for less money is less guitar! Washburn set-out to reverse that trend and deliver a solid topped dreadnought at a price almost anyone can afford. Could they succeed?

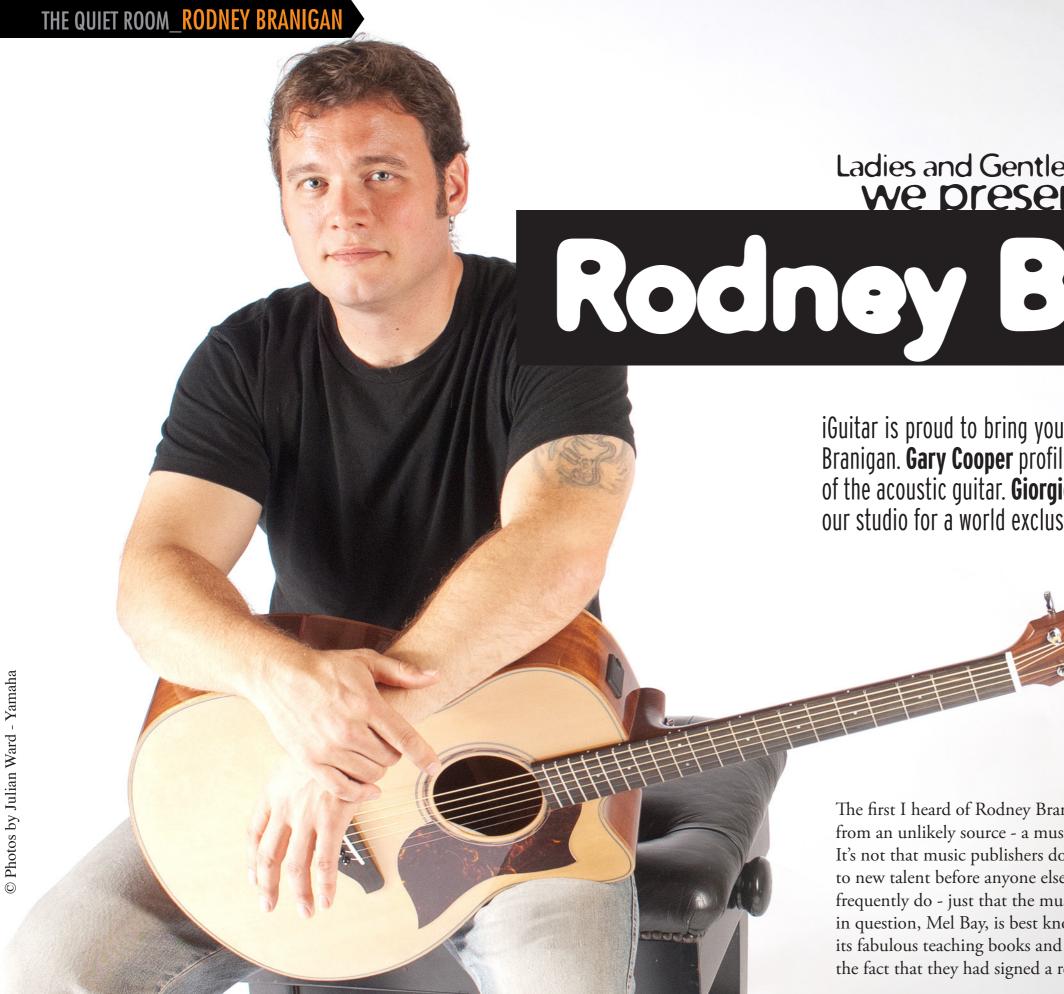
Travel guitars, meanwhile, have a patchy history, as Michael Casswell points out in his review of a Crafter so new that it isn't even on the manufacturer's website yet. But Crafter has a reputation for making strong contenders in the mid-market and the new Castaway promised to be anything but a throw away guitar for beginners who are hard travelling.

Finally, we say farewell to Maneli Jamal, whose series of lessons has come to an end. We would like to thank him for a fascinating series on percussive acoustic playing and wish him continued success in his career. Perhaps one day we'll be able to tempt him back again but for now, Maneli, thank you for opening our eyes to so much musical potential!



Gary Cooper - Editor

gary@iguitarmag.com



Ladies and Gentlemen...
we present: the extraordinary

Rodney Branigan!

iGuitar is proud to bring you a Quiet Room special with the truly unique Rodney Branigan. **Gary Cooper** profiles the career so far of one of the fastest-rising stars of the acoustic guitar. Giorgio Serci interviews Rodney, who also performs live in our studio for a world exclusive iGuitar session

So who is this Rodney Branigan guy?

The first I heard of Rodney Branigan was from an unlikely source - a music publisher. It's not that music publishers don't often get to new talent before anyone else - in fact they frequently do - just that the music publisher in question, Mel Bay, is best known for its fabulous teaching books and CDs and the fact that they had signed a relatively

unknown Texan guitarist called Rodney Branigan seemed a bit strange. Even stranger was when the MD of Mel Bay's UK arm started telling me, with great enthusiasm, how Branigan frequently played two acoustic guitars simultaneously. Call me a cynical old hack, but my initial reaction was 'circus act'. And I couldn't have been more wrong.

[...>]



Since that recommendation, Branigan's name has been cropping-up at ever more frequent intervals. Industry greats like Yamaha, D'Addario and TC Electronic have both eagerly signed Rodney to their rosters and his frequent BBC and live appearances have started winning rave reviews. So who is Rodney Branigan - and why isn't a man who playing two acoustic guitars simultaneously not just trading on a gimmick?

Raised in Amarillo, Texas but resident in the UK, Branigan grew-up surrounded by fine music - notably, he remembers, Stevie Ray Vaughan and Jimi Hendrix, and the sounds he heard on the Blues Radio program on community radio every Saturday in Amarillo.

He started learning the guitar and drums from his father, when he was eight, was studying classical and folk fingerstyle by 11 (though he was a Strat shredder in private) and by 19 he was giving lessons in a local music shop.

By 2001 Rodney had started gigging - though that rather understates the energy of a man who played over 300 days per year between 2001 and 2005! It was valuable training, though, as Branigan has become a master of Zen minimalist touring and has some great hints and tips on how to stay alive on the road. These include: hand sanitizer sorts out odoriferous bass players more effectively than underarm deodorant alone. Mobility is the key to success on the road, everything should be the smallest you can get away with (gear, venues, luggage). The engine block of a car can be an effective way to cook a dinner for the band if you know what you are doing. Never open a hot can of soup towards the engine block of the tour vehicle. White German shepherds are not very effective theft deterrents for crack heads. Car windows are expensive. Oh, and The Furrs Restaurant in Albuquerque, New Mexico is not some place you want to leave a vehicle full of guitars.



[...>]

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Arriving in London in 2007 after a two year stay in Nashville, Rodney hit the thriving UK festival scene with a vengeance. He has played extensively around the UK, notably at the Glastonbury Festival, where he has appeared both as a performer and a deliverer of masterclasses for four successive years.

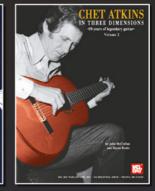
Not by any means confined to his UK base, Rodney has toured the US coast to coast in recent years and has presented masterclasses or lectured on music at the University of New Mexico, University of Virginia Arlington, Guitar Institute of Technology in Hollywood, University of Southern California, University of Nevada Reno, UK Access to Music, Solent University, City of Westminster College, Guitar X, China

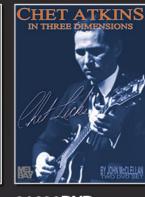
Tian Jian Conservatory of Music, Cathay Future School, MIDI Music School, Beijing Conservatory of Music and, in India, at The Kolkata School of Classical Music and The Blue Frog in Mumbai.

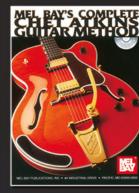
Back in his current home, he regularly hosts workshops around the UK teaching fingerstyle technical courses and in 2011 he hosted the Progressive Fingerstyle Course at the International Guitar Foundation's Festival and Summer School in Cheltenham, UK.

I'm not going to try to categorise Rodney's music, though he describes it as 'Progressive Folk Fusion'. Giorgio Serci's interview gives a musician's eye introduction - and then there is Rodney's performance for iGuitar readers. It speaks, eloquently, for itself.







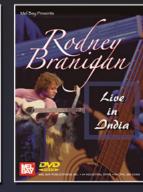


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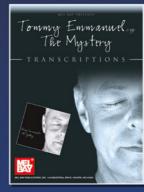
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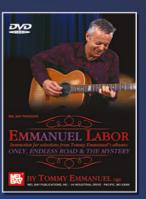
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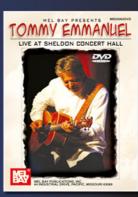
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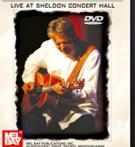




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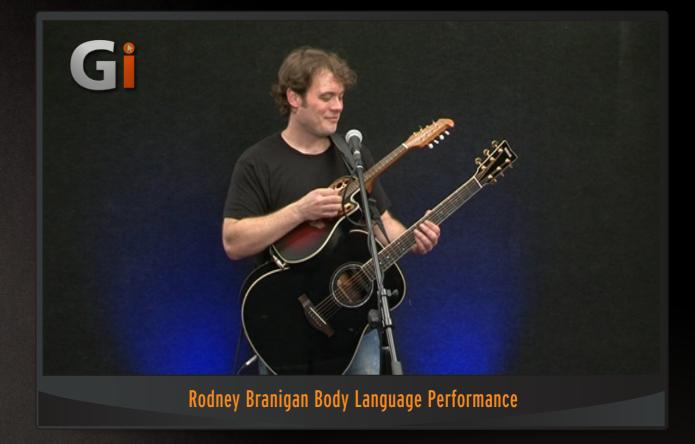




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Then again, there's a lot more to the man than just his guitar gymnastics. Recent videos suggest his songwriting is starting to take the lead in his career - enhanced by the fact that he's is also a fine singer.

Either way, Rodney is part of the movement that is seeing the acoustic instrument evolving and evolving fast. Following the lead set by players like the late John Martyn and the wonderful Tommy Emmanuel (featured in iGuitar issue 3), percussive guitar has come on in leaps and bounds (almost literally). We've just concluded a six part series of lessons with the Iranian born percussive stylist Maneli Jamal in this issue and along with the fellow percussive player, the Canadian, Don Alder, the pair scooped last year's international Guitar Idol contest, each displaying facets of this new direction in guitar playing.

For the gear nuts among our readers, I can tell you that Rodney is now an active 'Face of Yamaha', endorsing the company's LL guitar series. He regularly uses an LLX16 and represents Yamaha at music industry events across Europe. He is also a user and endorser of TC Electronic, D'Addario strings, Wide Ride straps, and Logarhythm stompboxes.

There is a clue here. When an artist gets major brands beating a path to his door, even if the majority of the public haven't heard of him, he is going somewhere.

I'll leave you with a few facts about Rodney contributed by his team and with the inside information that the day he came into our studio, the entire iGuitar team was full of praise for his friendliness, professionalism, musicality and downright

THE QUIET ROOM_RODNEY BRANIGAN

decenthumanbeingness. And yes, there is such a word. If Rodney Branigan can create 'Progressive Folk Fusion' I can make words up if I need to.

Oh yes. Those facts. I offer them verbatim: "He's notoriously cheap. To save on checked luggage charges on long haul flights, he packs all socks, underwear, and T-shirts inside the guitars under the strings. So he has to take the strings off and unpack the guitar when he arrives at the first destination of a tour. He had a white German shepherd that was trained to sit on stage during performances and then collect tips from the audience afterwards and the two guitar video on

YouTube is played with guitars that he had to buy last minute because his guitars had been stolen the month before."

Ladies and gentlemen - I give you, the unique Rodney Branigan.



Click the links below to watch his performances

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Rodney Branigan - One Man, Two Guitars

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Rodney Branigan

www.brokenguitars.com





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Washburn WD7S ATBM Acoustic

Washburn is aiming to set the low cost acoustic market on fire with the WD7S. It's one of the lowest priced guitars to feature a solid spruce top. But can an acoustic guitar selling for so little really be any good? We set **Tom Quayle** to sceptical and let him loose.

One of the first guitars I was allowed to play as a teenager was my Dad's solid top Washburn acoustic built in the 1980s - a guitar that I still own to this day - and as such I have a bit of a soft spot for this particular manufacturer. When I was told that I'd be reviewing a solid top acoustic, retailing at less than the price of the average starter guitar, I was mildly dubious and assumed that I'd have a bit of a dog on my hands. What a surprise I had as I pulled the WD7S out of its box and gave it an initial strum, revealing a tone that belied its unbelievably low price tag!

The WD7S is a dreadnought style acoustic featuring satin finished mahogany back and sides, mahogany neck, rosewood fingerboard and most importantly a solid spruce top. Our review model was finished in an attractive antique tobacco sunburst with cream, multi-laminate binding, a custom wood inlay rosette, rosewood bridge and chrome die-cast tuners. Washburn have kept the cost down by omitting a preamp

of any sort but it would be very simple to add one if required and there is a very well priced version that comes ready-fitted with electronics should that be what you would rather have. I should add that there seems to be a small controversy over the body woods used! Some sources insist the sides and backs are Catalpa (a tree native to the USA and uncommon in instrument making - not that this matters) which Washburn's own website insists it is made of Mahogany. Frankly, at this price, it is completely academic, in either case - we're lucky it's wood at all!

My initial inspections of the guitar revealed an instrument that is very well constructed with no obvious flaws internally or externally - so my initial reaction of surprise at how good it sounded was reinforced. This doesn't just sound like a much more expensive guitar, it's a very nicely made one, too!

With my confidence firmly assured I found that the expensive feeling continued once I sat down with the WD7S, as the matte satin finish gives a wonderful feel to the neck







STAR RATING ★★★★★



I'm amazed at quality Washburn have managed to achieve with their Harvest range. The inclusion of a solid spruce top at this price point, combined with high quality construction and finish make for a package that represents incredible value for money and I really wish that guitars of this quality had been around when I was starting out.

Whilst I hesitate to call this a starter or student guitar, it would make a superb

instrument for a new guitar player and would be equally adept in the hands of a skilled amateur or professional player as a second or backup acoustic. Stick a great pickup in there and you'll have an amazingly good value gigging guitar. I'd be very happy to own a WD7S and thoroughly recommend that you check them out at your first opportunity. I think you'll be very impressed!



and body, allowing the woods to breath and vibrate naturally. Washburn produce a gloss finish version if you require a bit more shine to your acoustic but personally I prefer the feel and look of natural wood and it certainly lends a classy edge to the WD7S in my book.

The only real flaw I could find with our review model was the set-up. The guitar was strung with pretty heavy strings and quite a high action, making the playing experience a little trickier on the left hand than I'd have liked. A quick truss rod adjustment would have ironed this out though, so it's certainly not a deal breaker but I think less experienced players might be put off by the

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initial playing difficulty without realising how simple it is to sort out. Putting the high action aside, the WD7S was a great playing experience with an impressive and highly responsive tone thanks to that solid spruce top. Compared to some of the lower priced acoustics I've tried in the past, the WD7S sounded like a professional product with plenty of bottom end and percussive, belllike highs. The guitar responded well to all playing styles, being particularly adept with strumming and plectrum lead work, where the dynamic range could really be exploited. The tone is rich and full without any of the 'plasticky' quality that is often the curse of lesser instruments.



Crafter Castaway

Korea's Crafter has been one of the mainstays of mid-market acoustic guitars for several decades. Brand new to the range at this year's NAMM show was an unusual introduction - a hybrid travel acoustic, which also offers something for players who like a shorter scale. **Michael Casswell** took one of the first samples for a test drive.

Crafter has been with us since the early '70s, offering really usable, well made guitars at an affordable price that have carved-out a good chunk of the mid-market acoustic business. I have to confess that I'd never played one before this review, so really didn't know what to expect, but I have to say I came away really impressed by a model so new it isn't even featured on Crafter's own website yet!

I've been handed some travel guitars in the past and been left fairly cold by them. They serve a purpose, but are usually quite basic, designed partly with the idea of different world climates - beach parties and alcohol, ruck sacks and camp fires and the whole student 'year out, travel the world' vibe. But this Crafter Castaway is a whole different bag. For a start, before you even pick it up, it looks aesthetically great, and gives the appearance of a high end parlour guitar. It sort of plays visual tricks on you because it looks all there, but is smaller than you are used to.

This guitar came in a rather nice Crafter gig bag, which is included in the price. It was also in perfect tune, straight out of a box that had been kicked around in a delivery van for several hundred miles - which is always a good sign!

I got a really good feeling from the Castaway from the moment I extracted it from that gig bag. Before the cameras started whirring, I had a good noodle, pick and strum and everything I threw at this cute little guitar was handled really well and sounded surprisingly big and professional. On this version, there is no onboard pickup and preamp but Crafter is bringing out this guitar with an onboard system in September 2012 and the additional cost involved is very reasonable. If I was going to play live or use this for the studio, I would probably hold out for the electro-acoustic version. Then again, if I was off on an adventure to far off lands with a back pack and an itch to see what the meaning of life is, I would happily take this guitar as my travel companion!

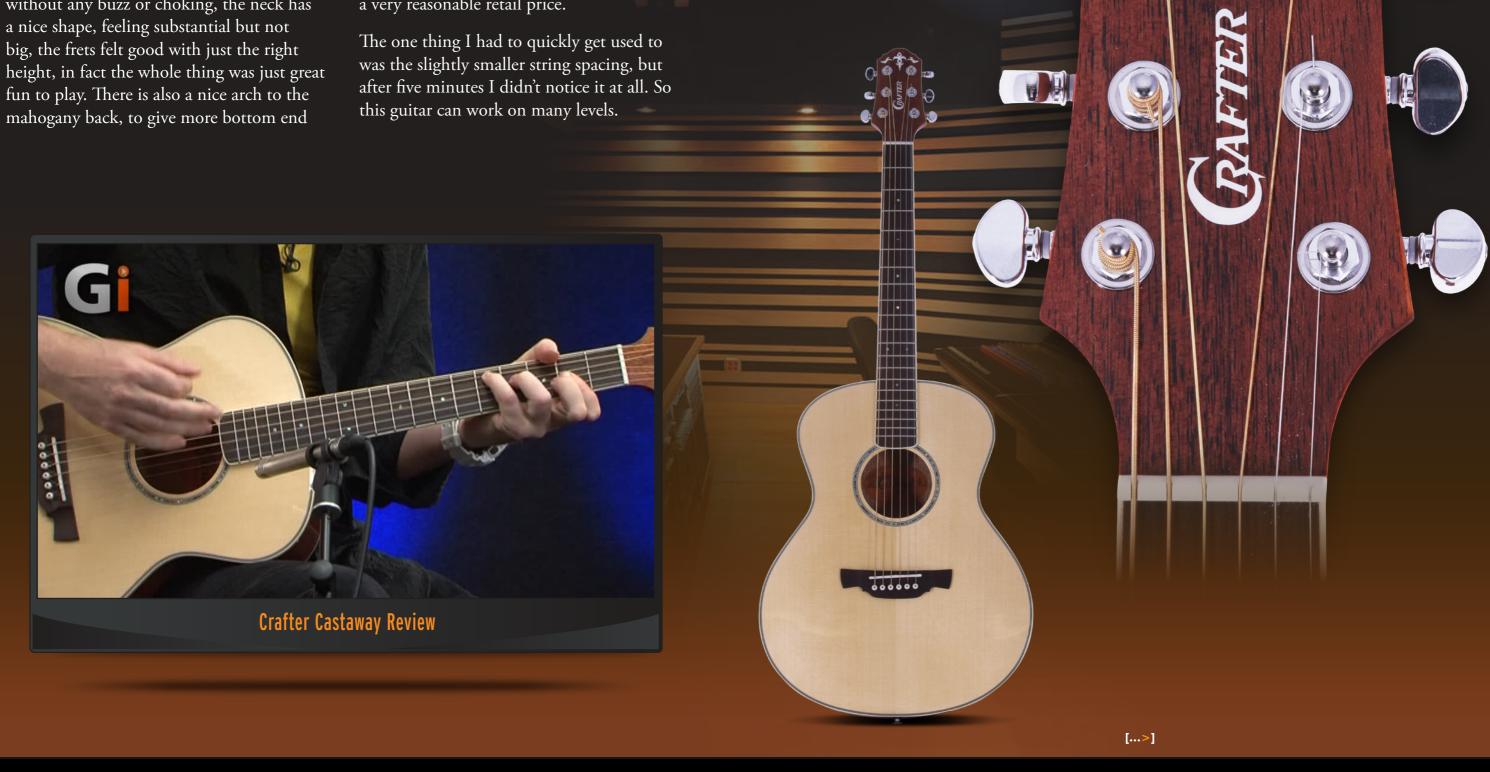




CHECK THE SPEC 🧔

Because the Castaway features a smaller scale, it has a nice string tension, making the strings stiff enough to really spank-out big strummy chords, yet soft enough to play Blues string bends, which gives a nice easy feel to whole thing. The sound is very good, projecting well. The action was low without any buzz or choking, the neck has a nice shape, feeling substantial but not big, the frets felt good with just the right height, in fact the whole thing was just great fun to play. There is also a nice arch to the mahogany back, to give more bottom end

and volume to the obviously smaller body, which looks very tasteful and adds to the overall quality feel. Even the rosewood board looks like a nice dark quality piece of wood, set off by the dot abalone type inlays. It is hard to see where any compromise has been made to bring in a really nice instrument for a very reasonable retail price.





It is certainly good enough for professional use, giving a bluesy parlour type acoustic tone which is very cool. It could also be a great instrument for younger, smaller hands to learn on, helping create guitar gods of the future. Lastly, if you do need a travel guitar, then this would be a great friend to have around, as you travel the world, just you

and a tent, enriching your soul and outlook on life. Personally I prefer big hotel rooms, hot showers, clean en-suite toilets and room service, with this guitar on hand and close to the TV remote, but each to their own!

I really liked this guitar.









Debut solo record "All I Was" available July 2012. Visit Fret12.com for more on the Tremonti Project

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download on itunes now!

George Jacobs.



First Steps In Fingerstyle

Hello there and welcome again to **Guitar Interactive's Quiet Room!**

In this column we will be looking at the lovely piece 'Allegro' written by the Italian composer Mauro Giuliani, who lived from 1781 till 1829 and who has been one of the most prolific guitar composers of his time.

This composition consists of a repeated eight-bar section and final tag, with the theme played in the lower register. In fact the 4th, 5th and 6th strings as well as the 'p' finger, will be used to generate the main theme as well as supporting the harmony with its root movement.

One of the most challenging aspects of this composition is the use of rests added by Giuliani in certain parts, to help the performer generating different shades of light in the delivery. This may feel counter-intuitive in places, particularly as it is tempting to want to learn the piece as quickly as possible, without paying the necessary attention to similar details (dynamics, texture, tone etc). I made the same mistake in my first efforts with fingerstyle guitar, as I literally couldn't wait to be able to play any piece in its entirety and as fast as possible! Eventually, I realized that I was cutting corners, with obvious unmusical repercussions.

With hindsight, I strongly recommend learning with patience and dedication, as this is indeed the fastest and most effective way to learn any subject matter. Since we are on the subject of learning, I would also like to suggest refining our technique but continuously self-evaluating our progress, or the lack thereof, comparing what we do now with what we did six months before as well as with what the leading exponents of that particular technique do.

A recurrent issue when learning a new piece, is to memorise mistakes or uncomfortable fingerings and carry-on practising regardless. Recording ourselves can be useful, as recordings don't lie!

With all these tips in mind, let's venture the meanders of this 200 years old composition.

The picking pattern is as follows:

(p, i, m, i, a, i, m, i, p, i, p, i, p, i, p, i) this is repeated three times and then:

(p, i, m, i, a, i, m, i - p, i, m, i, a, i, m, i) Once

(p, i, m, i, a, i, m, i, p, i, p, i, p, i, p, i) Twice

(p, i, m, i, a, i, m, i - p, i, m, i, a, i, m, i) Twice

(p, i, m, a, p, i, m, a, pi, pima, pima)



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[...>]

Practise the above picking-hand patterns using open strings to start with, using the planting technique explained in the previous issues with the 'p' finger on the low E, A and D strings, the 'i' on the G string, 'm' on the B and 'a' on the high E string.

The fretting hand: (Please see the included transcription for a graphic representation)

Bar 1: Beat 1 and 2: Place your middle finger on fret 2 of the G (3rd string) and the index on fret 1 of B and open E. Arpeggiate as explained above for 2 beats.

Beat 3 & 4: alternate open A string, index f. on the 2nd fret of A and ring f. on the 3rd fret of A, with 2nd fret of G.

Bar 2: Similar to Bar 1: Beat 1 & 2: Place your middle finger on fret 2 of the G (3rd string) the little f. on fret 3 of B and the index f. on fret 1 of E. Arpeggiate as explained above for 2 beats.

Beat 3 & 4: alternate open D string, index f. on the 2nd fret of D and ring f. on the 3rd fret of D, with 2nd fret of G.

Bar 3: Similar to Bar 1: Beat 1 & 2: Place your middle finger on fret 2 of D (4th string) the index f. on fret 3 of G, open B and E. Arpeggiate as explained above for 2 beats.

Beat 3 & 4: alternate middle f. on the 2nd fret of D, ring f. on the 3rd fret of D and open D with the 1st fret of G.





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Bar 4: Beat 1 & 2: Place your ring f. on fret 3 of A, middle finger on fret 2 of the G, index f. on fret 1 of B and open E. Arpeggiate as explained above for 2 beats.

Beat 3 & 4: Similar to beat 1 & 2: Place your middle f. on fret 2 of A, index finger on fret 1 of the G, little f. on fret 3 of B and open E. Arpeggiate as explained above for 2 beats.

Bar 5: as Bar 1

Bar 6: as Bar 2

Bar 7: Beat 1 & 2: Place your middle f. on fret 2 of D, ring finger on fret 2 of the G, index f. on fret 1 of B and open E. Arpeggiate as explained above for 2 beats.

Beat 3 & 4: as previous 2 beats but replace first note with low E.

Bar 8: Similar to Bar 7: Beat 1 & 2: Place





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your middle f. on fret 2 of D, ring finger on fret 2 of the G, open B and E. Arpeggiate as explained above for 2 beats.

Beat 3 & 4: as previous 2 beats but replace first note with low E.

The first 8 bars can be repeated, perhaps using different dynamics and tonal colours like for example playing 'sul ponticello', (closer to the bridge) or 'sul tasto' (over the frets).

Bar 17: Beat 1: Open A, middle f. on fret 2 of G, index f. on fre 1 of B and open E.

Beat 2: Open E, index f. fret 1 of G, open B and E.

Beat 3: Open A and another A one octave higher, fret 2 of G.

Beat 4: Simultaneously, open low E, ring f. on fret 4 of G, middle f. on fret 3 of B, and little f. on fret 4 of E.

Bar: 18: Simultaneously, open A, and half barre of fret 5, to play a final A minor.

Congratulations! You've completed this tune.

As always, tonal and dynamic awareness is what makes our playing sound 'expensive' or 'cheap'. To meet the former objective, slow practice is key, as we certainly don't want memorise wrong parts or develop bad technical habits.

Take one beat at a time, memorising the fretting hand shapes and pattern.

It is wise to follow the recommended fingering and muting techniques, as per the video and the transcription included. Practise singing the melody in the low

register played with the 'p' finger while playing the piece. This strategy can help performing the tune in a more 'cantabile' (singing like) manner.

As recommended in the previous columns, where we mainly focused on the picking hand, we ought to focus most of all on accuracy and consistency of tone. Strategies to further improvement include the use of the planting technique described in the previous columns, resting our fingers onto the chosen strings, and executing each stroke with a controlled and even pressure and with tonal and dynamic awareness. Each note we play should sound as full-bodied and as good as the previous one.

Please focus on minimum-movement approach, as this will help delivering the piece in a more accurate and consistent manner, while saving energy.

This will complete 'Allegro' by Mauro Giuliani.

Whether you will play this composition on a steel strung or a nylon strung guitar, this will provide a great opportunity to improve your muting techniques as well as co-ordination skills of the picking and fretting hand.

I hope you will enjoy playing this study piece and that this will give you some ideas on how to write your own solo guitar compositions. I will be pleased to get your feedback on facebook.com/giorgiosercimusic or www. giorgioserci.com

Till the next time, Goodbye!







EARN PERCUSSIVE ACOUSTIC PARTS

with Maneli Jamal

In this, the final part of my series of columns for iGuitar, we will now be looking at one section of my piece Lucid Drawl, which is in the open Dsus4 tuning or also called DADGAD. Whenever we're using open tunings we have the ability to really expand our sounds on the guitar. Although you may be limited to one key, it is an effective tool for making arrangements of pieces as well as incorporating two hand tap/percussive sounds to get a rich and open sound. This was my first alternate tuning composition to get into so it was of no surprise that I had to write a song in it.

You may need to relearn the fret board with each tuning you get into or just trust your ears.

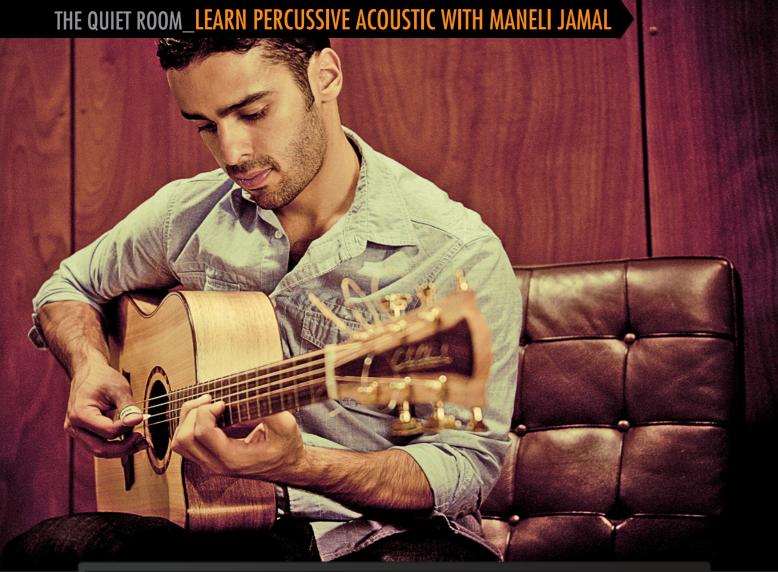
In this section we can see that we are using some slides when we're tapping with the right hand fingers. It gives it a really cool effect and the illusion of there being two guitars. An important thing to note is to ensure you keep pressure on the strings when sliding your right hand fingers so the sound doesn't deaden. This will take some practice and may hurt your fingers after a while if you haven't built up the callouses yet. I would suggest you do short practice sessions daily as opposed to running a marathon. If you can tap your foot on every down beat then you've got this one down and it's time to learn the full song if you accept the challenge!

As I say, this will conclude my acoustic guitar column for now and as always, keep an open mind about approaching the guitar as it still has the potential to grow technically. These different tunings will be a crucial step in getting some really interesting voicings. Try these tunings out if you're feeling like exploring: DADGBD, CGCGCE, DGDGCD, EAC#EAE.

If you'd like to hear how I use these techniques in my own compositions you can always find me on youtube.com/maneli or facebook.com/ manelijamalmusic.



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