

ISSUE 7



Interactive

# Guitar



**JOHNNY'S NEW  
JAGUAR IN HIS  
OWN WORDS**

**+ STYLE ANALYSIS,  
PROFILE & JAZZ-  
MASTER/JAGUAR -  
THE FULL STORY**

## **HARMONY GUITAR**

Jamie Humphries  
shows you how

## **ACOUSTICS**

Voyage-Air's folding  
acoustic, Yamaha  
A-Series, Freshman  
FA600 + new column-  
ist - Maneli Jamal

## **WISHBONE ASH**

Exclusive Andy Powell  
interview + live gig  
footage!

## **REVIEWS**

Diezel Hagen head, Suhr Standard, TC  
Voiceprint pedals, Ibanez RG, Blackstar FX,  
Burns 12 string, ZT Lunchbox, Carvin V3M



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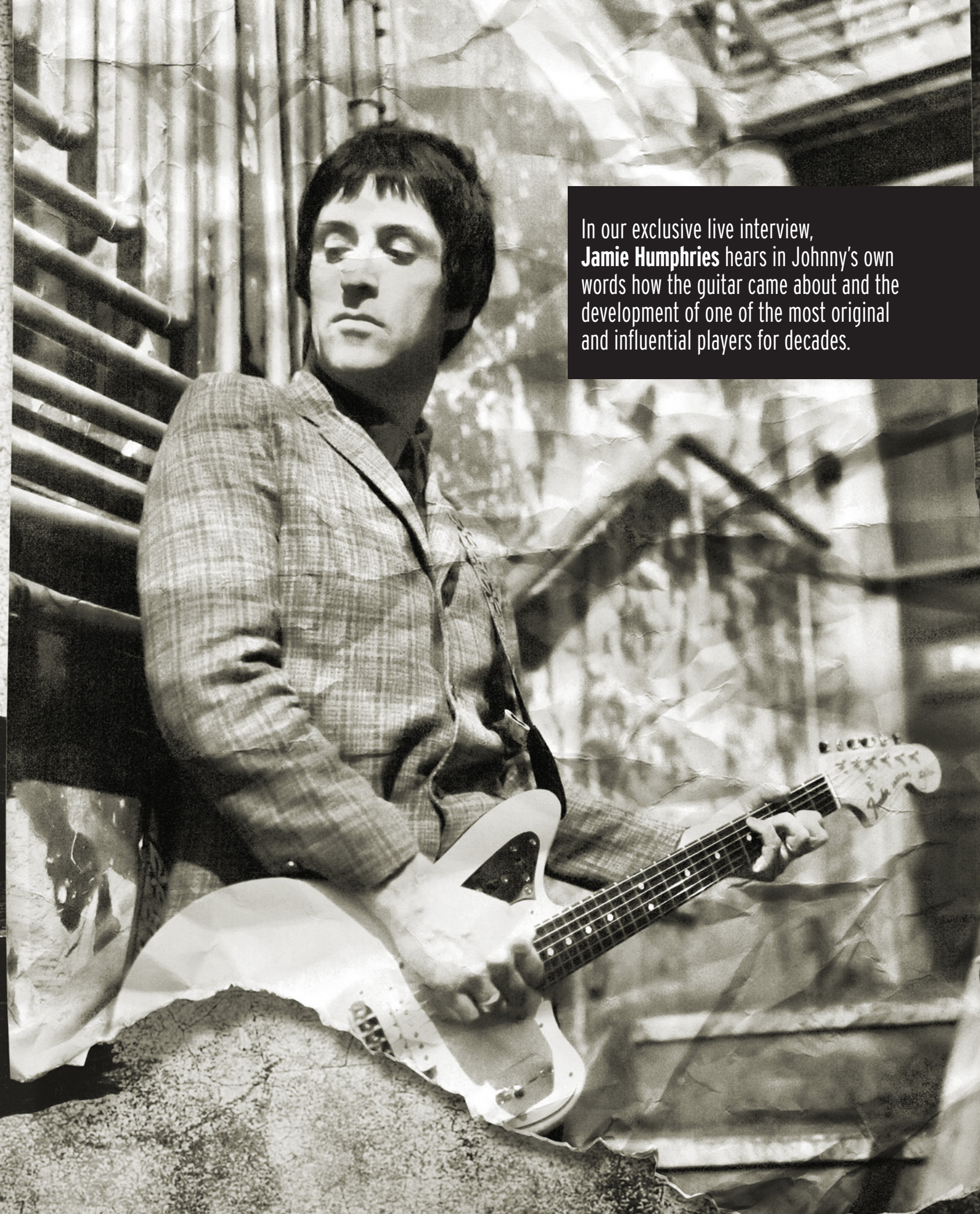
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# JOHNNY AND THE JAGUAR

Johnny Marr - one of Indie's few guitar heroes  
- has a new signature Fender Jaguar.



In our exclusive live interview, **Jamie Humphries** hears in Johnny's own words how the guitar came about and the development of one of the most original and influential players for decades.







# JOHNNY AND THE JAGUAR

**Gary Cooper**  
looks at the  
genesis  
of Johnny's  
new Fender.

Fender's Jaguar has led a troubled 50 year lifespan. Launched as a rockier younger brother to the even more troubled Jazzmaster, it briefly tasted fame and fortune with a handful of Surf bands in the 1960s, before sinking beneath the waves. It bobbed to the surface again during the 1970s Punk era, then rose-up once more in the 1980s and '90s, a little more convincingly this time, when it was adopted - almost as an act of rebellion against the perceived 'establishment' Stratocasters and Telecasters - by the '90s Grunge generation. Even so, it can never have troubled Fender's accountants overmuch, when put alongside the astronomical sales figures of the Strat and the Tele.

Always a left-field choice, it was perhaps inevitable that Manchester's Johnny Marr - ever his own man and always a unique voice - would try one and like it. Never one for the obvious choices, he had previously reintroduced Rickenbacker's unique jangle to Pop and it was never on the cards that he was one day going to be seen on stage with a Charvel or a Dean!

But even its greatest admirers will admit the original Jag has problems. Bridge problems, pickup problems, vibrato problems and control gear problems, to name just a few!

Johnny Marr, working with his guitar tech, Bill Puplett over a four year period, put his mind to resolving some of the Jag's 'issues'. Could the result be the guitar to show us what the Jaguar's potential was all along?

For reasons unknown, Fender decided to launch the Marr signature Jag long before it was able to provide review samples, so none of the world's press has been able to do much more than peer at one on Fender's stand at the NAMM show in January. Review models, we are told, will follow later.



[...>]



What we can tell you, however, is what Fender is saying about Johnny's Jag and, most importantly, we can bring you his own words in our interview.

So what do we know about this revised Fender feline?

The first thing is that Johnny has ditched Fender's own pickups, in favour of a pair of custom-wound Bare Knuckle Johnny Marr single-coil neck and bridge pickups.

We know that the guitar has a custom-shaped maple neck, based on Marr's original 1965 Jaguar, which has been fitted with a vintage-style truss rod, a lacquer finish and that it bears Marr's signature on the front of the headstock.

While the pickups were always a question mark hanging over the big cat's cage - so too was the original's chaotic switch gear. Designed to make life easier, they tended to confuse on stage, and Marr has opted instead for a four-position Telecaster-style pickup switch mounted to the lower-horn chrome plate,

[...>]

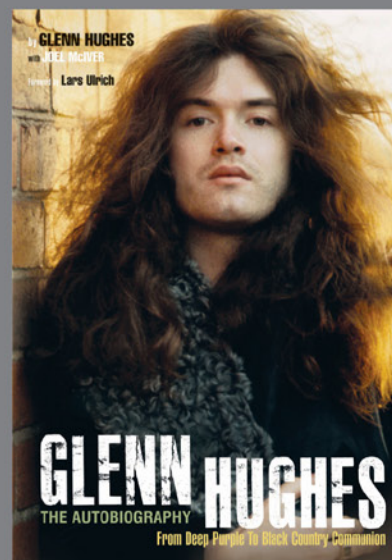
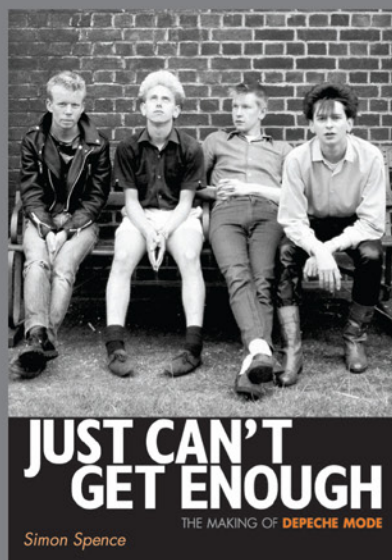
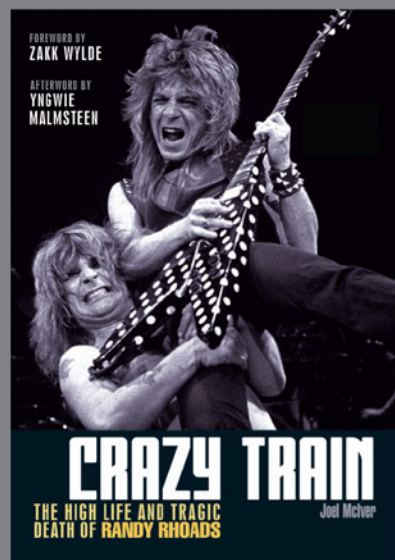
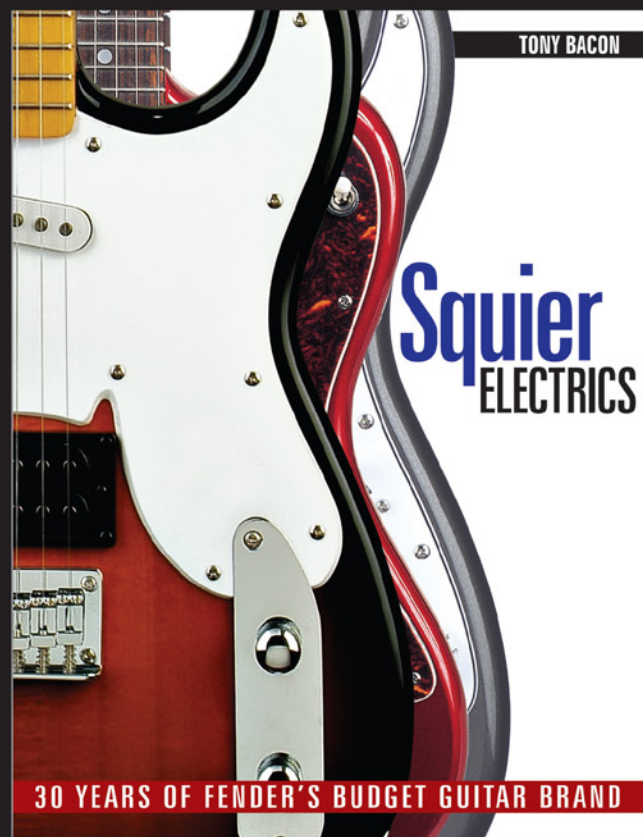
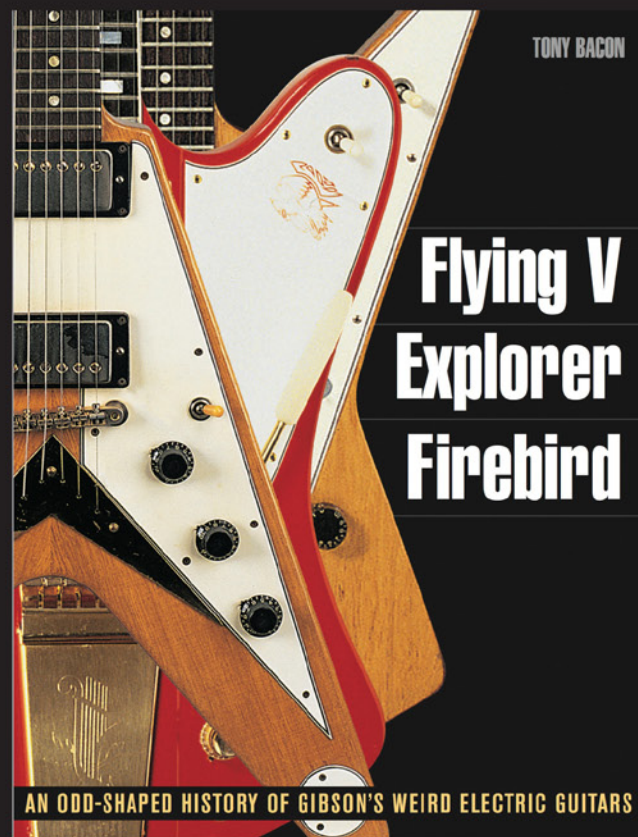


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offering : bridge, bridge and neck in parallel, neck, bridge and neck in series wiring. See Tony Bacon's Jazzmaster/Jaguar history in this issue for a full discussion of the original Jag's 'little foibles'!

Two upper-horn slide switches offer what Fender describes as: "universal bright and pickup switch position four bright" and then we get to that other perennial source of irritation - the Jaguar's bridge. As Johnny explains, the answer was to fit it with Fender Mustang saddles with nylon bridge post inserts "for improved stability", plus a chrome cover and a vintage-style floating tremolo tailpiece. There's also a taller 'tremolo' arm with an arm-sleeve nylon insert to prevent arm swing and give a generally better feel. Mercifully, the sprung 'string mute' is no more!

Though Fender doesn't say it, the Marr Jag's body has been recontoured, too. That aside, the guitar features the classic Jaguar 24" scale length, a lacquer-finished alder body, 7.25" radius rosewood fingerboard with 22 vintage-style frets, master volume and tone controls, three-ply pickguard (white-black-white) and chrome hardware.

As you would expect from a signature guitar, the Marr Jaguar comes with a custom case with blue crushed velvet interior, strap, cable and flatwound strings (!). There are two colours offered - Olympic White and what Fender is calling 'Metallic KO'.

No pictures of this latter finish have been released yet but the company tells us it is: "A distinctive orange tint derived from the heavily faded Candy Apple Red finish of one of Marr's favourite '60s-era Fender models."



There are two colours offered - Olympic White and what Fender is calling 'Metallic KO'.

[...>]



# JOHNNY AND THE JAGUAR

**Jamie Humphries** pays tribute to **Johnny Marr** - the legendary UK guitarist, and unlikely guitar hero.

Often when we hear the term 'guitar hero' it calls to mind the flash and technique of the archetypal Rock lead guitarist, hurling blistering solos into the ether. But there are other players with their own distinct voices on the instrument that fall into other musical categories. Nile Rodgers, The Edge, Andy Summers, Mick Ronson, Steve Cropper, Jonny Greenwood, Bernard Butler, and Noel Gallagher - all carved their own sound in guitar history. Another candidate for Guitar Hero status - often given the label of 'Indie's first Guitar Hero' - is Johnny Marr.

Marr's multi-layered guitar parts on his '80s recordings with the Smiths influenced and inspired a new generation of guitarist that fell slightly left-field with their styles. He is also said to be one of the guitarist that helped start the 'Manchester' sound. Johnny's blend of Bo Diddley and Marc Bolan inspired riffs, Roger McGuinn's jangly chords (from the Byrds), plus his use of layering and effects, have been hailed as some of the most important and influential guitar recordings of the 80's and although Johnny's career with the Smiths was over by the late 80's, his legendary guitar playing has made

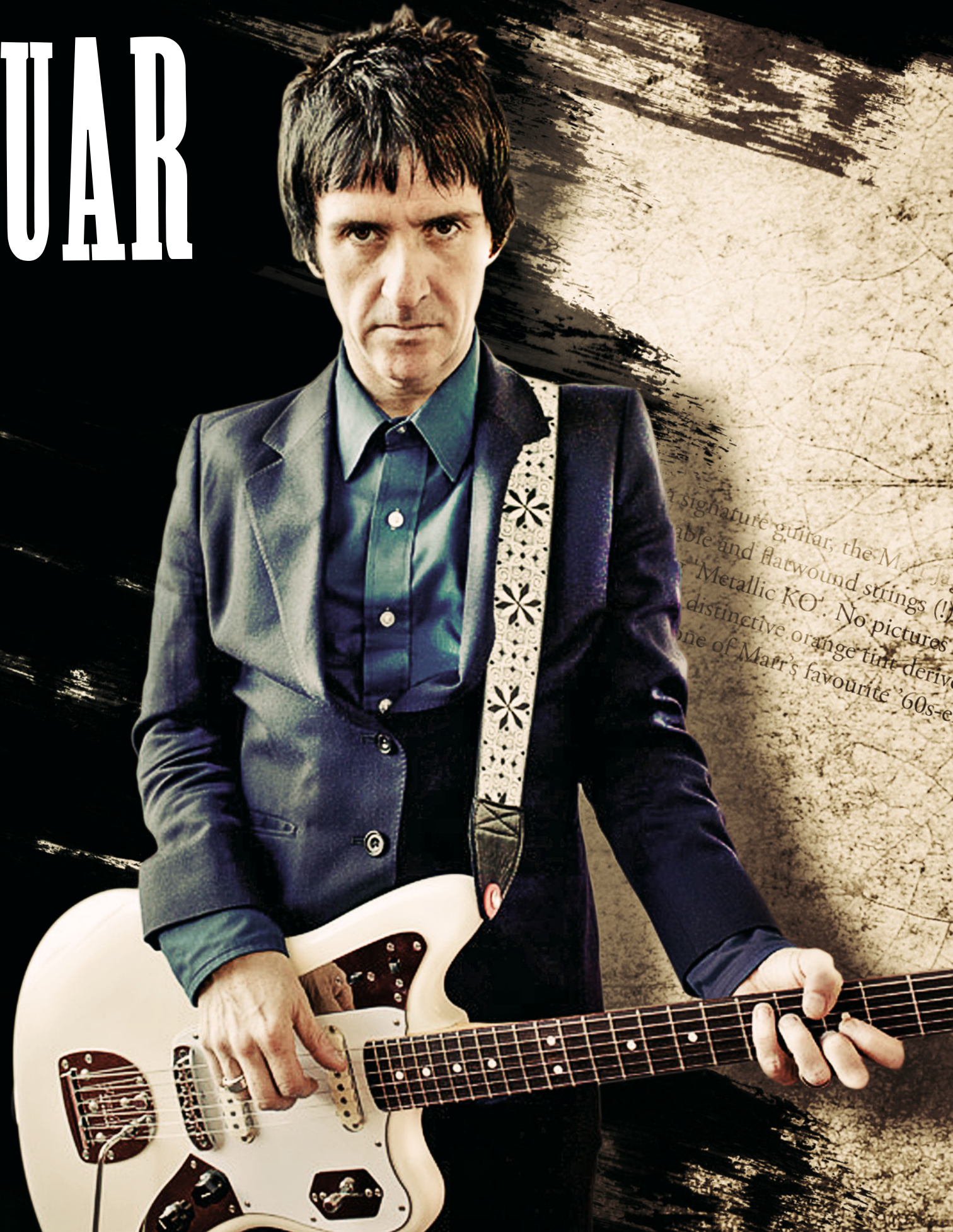
him an in-demand session guitar celebrity, as well as him embarking on new musical projects, ever since.

Born in Manchester, England, in 1963, the young Johnny was mesmerised by the songs of Del Shannon, T Rex, Johnny Cash, as well as the anthemic sounds of Phil Spector's galaxy of artists. Even from an early age, he recalls having a wooden guitar-shaped toy that he painted to look like a guitar and stuck beer bottle caps on to look like the controls!

Coming from an extended Irish family, there were often parties, weddings and birthdays, and at these family events the same band would play. The guitarist has a red Fender Strat and from the moment he took the guitar out of its case Johnny was transfixed. He felt a calling to play guitar, he had no thoughts of fame or making money, just a drive and passion to play, he says.

This passion blossomed in the summer of 1982, when an 18 year old Marr sought out reclusive poet Morrissey and formed the Smiths. Although they only released four albums

[...>]





## Following the break up of the Smiths, Marr went on to become a high-profile session guitarist

in their five year life span, the partnership of Marr and Morrissey forged some of the most influential and important material of the '80s. Although critics were quick to label Marr's style as 'Jingle Jangle', guitarists knew better, instantly recognising that the complex layering of intricate parts was like the work of an artist painting a picture.

It's not stretching the truth to say that Marr renewed the electric guitar in popular music, in a time of synth-dominated, synthetic Pop. Calling on an astonishingly wide range of unusual influences, like Bert Jansch, Marc Bolan, George Harrison, Keith Richards, and Iggy and the Stooges, Marr single handily re-invented British guitar based pop music, at a time when it was near expiry, influencing such artists as The Stone Roses, Oasis, Radiohead, The Arctic Monkeys, The Libertines, Suede, and

Blur - all of whom cite Marr and the Smiths as a major influence, and in all of whom you can hear touches of Marr's style.

Following the break up of the Smiths, Marr went on to become a high-profile session guitarist, although in many cases he actually joined the groups he was working for, including healthy stints with The Pretenders and The The. Marr also formed a long term partnership with Bernard Sumner of The Joy Division and New Order, two other seminal Manchester bands. Sumner and Marr formed Electronic in 1988, blending guitars with sequencers. The duo occasionally even added the vocal talents of The Pet Shop Boys' Neil Tennant. Other more recent projects have included Modest Mouse and the Cribs. Johnny was also involved with Neil Finn's '7 Worlds Collide' recording

and live performance that raised money for Oxfam and was also recruited by composer Hans Zimmer for the movie soundtrack to the film 'Inception'. Johnny also performed live with an orchestra performing the movie soundtrack.

Johnny Marr is a real working guitar hero, who continues to create and inspire, treating Rock 'n Roll as an art form. Above all, he is a lesson to those who think guitar playing is solely about technique and, in particular, playing as many notes per minute as you can before your fingers catch fire. What Johnny Marr has proved is that, really, what it's all about is the music and the feel. That and developing what Johnny has in spades - an instantly recognisable, unique guitar voice.



Born in Manchester, England in 1962, Johnny Marr, T Rex, Johnny Cash - at an early age, he recalls having



# The Jaguar Bites Back!

For decades one of Leo Fender's Cinderella designs, recently the Jaguar has received a new lease of life with two signature models - the Kurt Cobain and Johnny Marr Jaguars. Guitar historian, **Tony Bacon**, takes us through the Jaguar's troubled history and that of its even more troubled sibling, the unloved Jazzmaster.

Why would Leo Fender bring out more new guitars once he'd got the Stratocaster and the Telecaster on the go? From our advantageous position today, it seems obvious. Don't bother, Leo! Everyone loves the Strat and the Tele! We don't need anything else! Yes, well, you know what they say about hindsight. Back in the 1950s, when all this was happening, it must have looked very different.

Leo had made sure there were people around him at the Fender HQ in Fullerton, California, so that ideas became instruments and a lot of musicians could play Fender guitars. Don Randall headed up the Fender sales operation, although he'd started out back in the 1940s selling products made by Leo's first guitar company, K&F, through

Randall's Radio-Tel wholesale firm based in nearby Santa Ana. Radio-Tel became Fender's exclusive distributor and soon turned into the official Fender Sales company.

Leo hired Forrest White as his factory manager in 1954, and White set to work organising and streamlining a chaotic and sometimes threadbare firm. A musician, Freddie Tavares, was Leo's main ideas man, designing new guitars and amplifiers and quickly becoming an invaluable member of the team. By the late 1950s the factory hummed with activity, and work would sometimes spill out into the alleyways, a distinct advantage of the Californian climate. But Leo was almost always inside, often burning the midnight lamp.

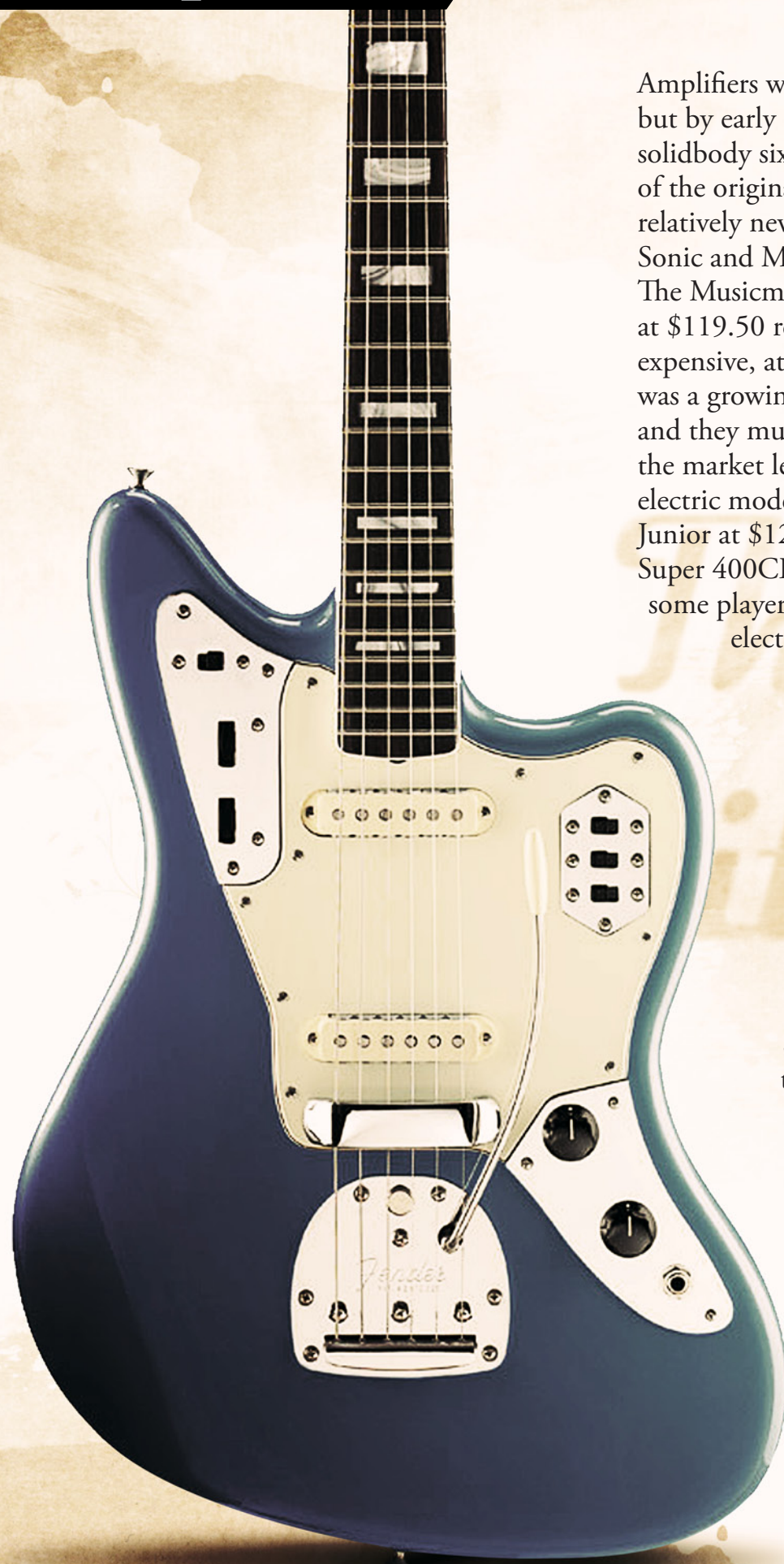
**Tony Bacon** is the international best-selling author of a series of definitive guitar history books, including: 60 Years Of Fender, The Stratocaster Guitar Book, Six Decades of The Fender Telecaster and his most recent title - Squier Electrics - 30 Years of Fender's Budget Guitar Brand

[...>]



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Amplifiers were still important to Fender, but by early 1958 they had a strong solidbody six-string electric line consisting of the original Esquire and Telecaster, the relatively new Stratocaster, and the Duo-Sonic and Musicmaster 'student models'. The Musicmaster was the cheapest, at \$119.50 retail, the Strat the most expensive, at \$274.50 with vibrato. Fender was a growing, ambitious operation, and they must have looked enviously at the market leader, Gibson, whose list of electric models ran from the Les Paul Junior at \$120 right up to a natural-finish Super 400CES at a dizzying \$700. Clearly, some players would buy expensive electrics. The models at the head of the Gibson list were luxurious hollow-bodies, aimed at and played by the top Jazz guitarists. Fender decided they would make a solidbody instrument for these well-heeled Jazzmen.

So along came the Fender Jazzmaster, launched towards the end of 1958 at \$329.50 as the company's top-of-the-line model. Some prototypes have survived that lend a little insight into the design process: one has Fender's regular fretted maple neck of the period, rather than the (for Fender) brand new rosewood fingerboard that graced the production model; another one, which I was lucky enough to

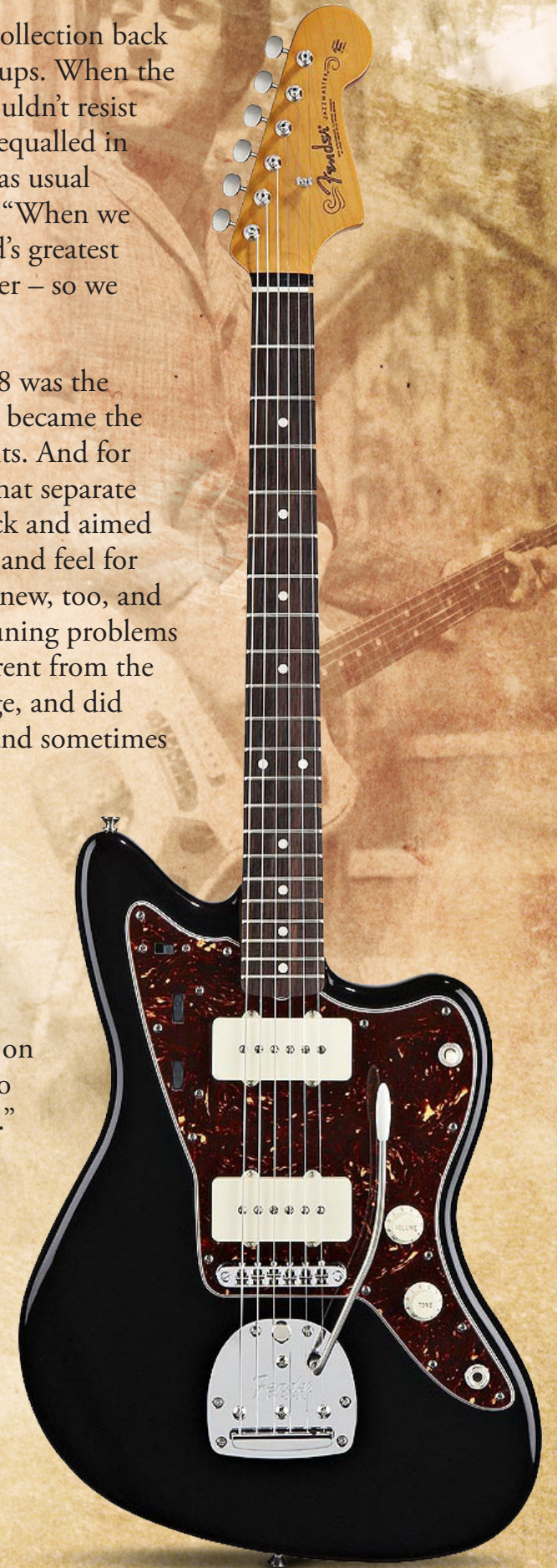
look over when I wrote a book on Scott Chinery's collection back in the 1990s, had a Strat neck and black-cover pickups. When the production Jazzmaster appeared in 1958, Fender couldn't resist plugging it as "America's finest electric guitar ... unequalled in performance and design features". Freddie Tavares, as usual responsible for some of the design input, said later: "When we built the Stratocaster we thought that was the world's greatest guitar. Then we said let's make something even better – so we built the Jazzmaster."

Immediately striking to the electric guitarist of 1958 was the Jazzmaster's unusual offset-waist body shape, which became the subject of one of Fender's growing number of patents. And for the first time on a Fender, the Jazzmaster featured that separate rosewood 'board, glued to the customary maple neck and aimed to provide a comfortably conventional appearance and feel for the Jazzers. The guitar's floating vibrato system was new, too, and had a tricky 'lock-off' facility designed to prevent tuning problems if a string should break. The vibrato was quite different from the earlier Strat unit, with a separate tailpiece and bridge, and did not succeed nearly as well. It can prove a difficult (and sometimes buzzy) beast.

The pickups were a couple of large, flat things, unlike any of Fender's usual units and with a smooth, thick sound, still quite cutting at the bridge but suitably jazzy at the neck. Fender's Don Randall recalled a major criticism of the Jazzmaster. "It never met with very much favour because those big, wide pickups were not shielded, so you'd come on stage among all the wires and cables and pick up too much hum and noise from the lights, static, and all."

The pickguard was at first one of Fender's gold-coloured types, generally referred to as 'anodized' (although that's not a technically accurate term). These nine-screw 'gold' guards gave way in 1959 to 13-screw white or tortoiseshell plastic. The Jazzmaster's controls were certainly elaborate for the time. The idea was that you could flick a small slide-switch to select between two individual circuits that you had preset: one for rhythm; the other for lead. The idea was a good one: set up a rhythm sound and a lead

[...>]





sound, and then switch between them. But the system was over-complicated for players brought up on straightforward volume and tone controls (in other words, pretty much everyone).

The dual-circuit idea was adapted from a layout that Forrest White had devised way back in the 1940s when he built guitars as a hobby. He'd put a switch into his steel guitar to flip between preset rhythm and lead tones. "I saw Alvino Rey at the Paramount Theater in Akron, Ohio, and he had to keep fiddling with his guitar when he wanted to change from rhythm to lead," White told me. "I thought well, there's no reason he should have to do that. Later, I said to Leo: 'What you need is a guitar where you can preset the rhythm and lead.' Leo didn't play guitar, he couldn't even tune a guitar, so he didn't think this was important. Rey came in the plant one day, and I said: 'How would you like not to have to mess around with the controls, just flip a switch?' He says, can that be done? I says well sure, I already did it. So Leo brought the Jazzmaster out, and that guitar was the first where you could switch between rhythm and lead."

So, the sound of the Jazzmaster was generally richer and warmer than players were used to from Fender. "Leo was trying to get more of a Jazz sound than the high, piercing Telecaster sound," explained White. The new model certainly marked a change for the company and constituted a real effort to extend the scope and appeal of their guitar line. Ironically, this has been partly responsible for the Jazzmaster's lack of long-term popularity relative to the Strat and Tele, mainly because many of us aren't struck by the guitar's sounds and playability.

*Playing-wise and operationally the Jazz and Jag may have been a bit of a handful, but they've always looked great.*

Jazz guitarists found little appeal in this new, rather awkward solidbody guitar, and mainstream Fender fans largely stayed with their Stratocasters and Telecasters. Bob Bogle in The Ventures played a Jazzmaster for a while in the early 1960s, and a few surfers, including The Surfaris of 'Wipe Out' fame, seemed to like the way you could switch from snap to smooth with the presets. Accomplished American instrumentalist Roy Lanham favoured a Jazzmaster for a while too. About the only 'real' Jazzers who ever gave the new Fender a go were top man Joe Pass and the lesser-known Eddie Duran, but these too proved to be brief flirtations. Jazzmen kept hold of their hollow-body electrics, and Fender had to come to terms with what seemed like their first dud.

Nonetheless, the Jazzmaster stayed in the catalogue, and Fender didn't give up on the idea of an upmarket electric. By the early 1960s they'd decided to give it another try and introduced a new high-end model in 1962, the Jaguar. (It listed at \$379.50; a similar-finish Jazzmaster was by then pegged at \$349.50, and a sunburst Strat with vibrato would set you back \$289.50.)

Like the Jazzmaster, the similar Jaguar was an offset-waist multi-control instrument and had a separate bridge and vibrato unit, although the Jaguar added a spring-loaded 'string mute'

at the bridge. Fender rather optimistically believed that players would prefer a mechanical string mute to the natural edge-of-the-hand method. Some did; most did not. Feel-related playing techniques simply cannot be replaced by an on-or-off gadget.

There were some notable differences between the Jaguar and Jazzmaster. Visually, the Jag had distinctive chromed control panels, and was the first Fender with 22 frets, not 21 like the rest. Its 24-inch scale-length ("faster, more comfortable" said Fender) was shorter than the Fender standard of 25½ inches and closer to Gibson's 24¾. It meant an easier playing feel for the Jag compared to other Fenders. The model was offered from the start in four different neck widths, one a size narrower and two wider than normal (coded A, B, C or D, from narrowest to widest, with 'normal' B the most common). These neck options were also offered from 1962 on the Jazzmaster, as well as the Strat.

The Jag's pickups looked much like Strat units but had metal shielding added at the base and sides, probably as a response to the criticisms of the Jazzmaster's tendency to noisiness. The controls were yet more complex than the Jazzmaster's, using the same rhythm circuit but adding a trio of lead-circuit switches for selecting the pickups or a 'strangle' low-end filter.

The company's new model was the first regular electric guitar to carry the new Fender logo on its headstock. Around 1960 Fender's print ads had started to feature a chunky new logo drawn up by Bob Perine, the man responsible for the stylish look of Fender's advertising from the late 1950s to the end of the next decade. During the following years Fender gradually applied the new logo to headstock decals too. It's since become known

to collectors as the 'transition' logo because it leads from the original thin 'spaghetti' style to a bolder black one brought in at the end of the 1960s.

Like the Jazzmaster, the Jaguar enjoyed a small burst of popularity soon after it was introduced. Carl Wilson of The Beach Boys was one of the most prominent Jaguar players in the 1960s, probably influencing lesser surf outfits to pick up a Jag such as The Trashmen, whose 'Surfin' Bird' was a big US hit. But this new top-of-the-line guitar, "one of the finest solidbody electric guitars that has ever been offered to the public" in Fender's original sales hype, never enjoyed sustained success, and again like the Jazzmaster has been marked down by many players since as a Fender also-ran.

Playing-wise and operationally the Jazz and Jag may have been a bit of a handful, but they've always looked great. They seemed to benefit particularly well from Fender's 1960s custom colour options, which added a gleaming throb of colour to an already cool object. Back in 1963, for just \$17.47 extra on a \$349.50 sunburst Jazzmaster, or \$18.99 on a \$379.50 Jaguar, you could choose from black, burgundy mist metallic, candy apple red metallic, dakota red, daphne blue, fiesta red, foam green, inca silver metallic, lake placid blue metallic, olympic white, sherwood green metallic, shoreline gold metallic, sonic blue, or surf green. A few more options soon followed, including blue ice, charcoal frost, firemist gold, firemist silver, ocean turquoise, and teal green. Suddenly, blond or sunburst seemed fit only for old-hat Tele and Strat men.

Famously, Fender was sold to CBS at the start of 1965. At first the prospects seemed good as the new owner pumped money and enthusiasm into their impressive purchase. But in years to come the relationship soured.

[...>]





Some cosmetic changes at the time included the Strat gaining a broader headstock to match that of the Jazzmaster and Jaguar in 1965. Also that year, binding was added to the fingerboards of the Jag and Jazz, and in 1966 they were given block-shaped fingerboard inlays in place of dot markers.

Who knows how it might have been had a big name picked up on one of these secondary Fenders at the time? According to Nashville-based guitar dealer George Gruhn, it almost happened at the end of 1970. "Eric Clapton began buying and playing vintage Strats and their popularity consequently grew," Gruhn said of this era, when EC acquired his famous 'Blackie' and shifted from Les Pauls to Strats. "Clapton bought quite a few Strats from me during this period, and when he asked one day that I find a good Jazzmaster for him, I had hopes that his use of the model would do comparable things for its collectability. However, circumstances intervened, Clapton decided he didn't want a Jazzmaster after all, and nothing further developed." I'm guessing, but let's assume the fashion-conscious Clapton was drawn to the look of a Jazzmaster ... and then tried playing the thing.

During the 1970s, Fender's CBS management cut back on the existing product lines and offered hardly any new models. The Jaguar disappeared from the catalogue around 1975, and by 1980 the Jazzmaster (by then boasting black pickups and pickguard) was phased out of production. Neither would reappear for many years. But the boardroom doubts in California coincided with a new popularity of the models among punk and new-wave guitarists. This was partly due to the punk ethic of visible notice of having little money (at least theoretically). Jazzes and Jags were relatively unloved and therefore relatively cheap on the secondhand market

compared to the burgeoning prices of what were now being tagged 'vintage' Strats and Teles.

One of the best of the new breed of so-called punks was Tom Verlaine in the New York group Television. Verlaine played a Jazzmaster and showed its versatility on the classic Marquee Moon album, which you ought to go and get immediately if you haven't heard it. Back in Britain, it was necessary to listen no further than Robert Smith in The Cure and Elvis Costello, fronting his mob The Attractions, as Smith and Costello both selected a Jazzmaster as their six-string of choice.

Back in California, Fender had business troubles during the 1970s, and in 1981 new management was installed by Fender's owners, CBS, who were rattled by Fender's uncharacteristic tendency lately to follow rather than lead instrument fashions. New men from Yamaha US were hired, revisions were made to the primary Strat and Tele models, and a modernisation programme at the factory meant that production was virtually stopped while new machinery was brought in and staff re-trained.

As a result, Japanese production of Fenders began in 1982, and the first Vintage reissues came out, recreating classic Strat and Tele models with 1950s and 1960s period styling. In 1985, almost exactly 20 years after acquiring it, CBS sold Fender to the company's new management. Probably the most immediate problem for the new owners was that the Fullerton factories were not included in the deal, and so US production stopped in February 1985 until a new factory – in Corona, CA – was established the following year. The Japanese operation became Fender's lifeline, providing much-needed product while the US factory was quiet. All the guitars in Fender's 1985

[...>]



catalogue were made in Japan. New Japanese-made Jazzmaster and Jaguar models for the Japanese market appeared in 1986, and while they were also sold in Britain from that time, they didn't appear in American shops until the mid 1990s.

Around the 1990s, grunge emerged as the overarching style that some felt defined an era of guitar playing. As with punk before, it was never that simple, and talented players made their own marks within and around the fashionable label. Also like punk, the attraction of relatively cheap instruments - and of being seen NOT to play the old-school favourites - meant that Jags and Jazzes had another good showing among some of the leading lights of the time. There was J. Mascis in Dinosaur Jr., an inventive guitarist seen with various Jazzmasters (primarily a modded '63), Thurston Moore in Sonic Youth who favoured Jazzes but didn't say no to a Jag, and Stone Gossard with the occasional Jag in Pearl Jam. And that's not to forget a few cheers for a couple more notable Jag-men, Brian Molko of Placebo and John Frusciante in the Chili Peppers.

In Nirvana, Kurt Cobain played his favoured left-hand Fender Jaguar (a '65 sunburst with humbuckers added and some of the switches removed and taped over) as well as a Mustang. Probably early in 1993, Cobain cut up some photos of his Fenders and stuck them together this way and that, trying out different combinations to see what they looked like. Larry Brooks in Fender's Custom Shop was given the paste-ups and created a design for a new instrument.

Kurt received the resulting red custom guitar from Fender, although he never saw the second (blue) one. Following his untimely

*Around the 1990s, grunge emerged as the overarching style that some felt defined an era of guitar playing.*

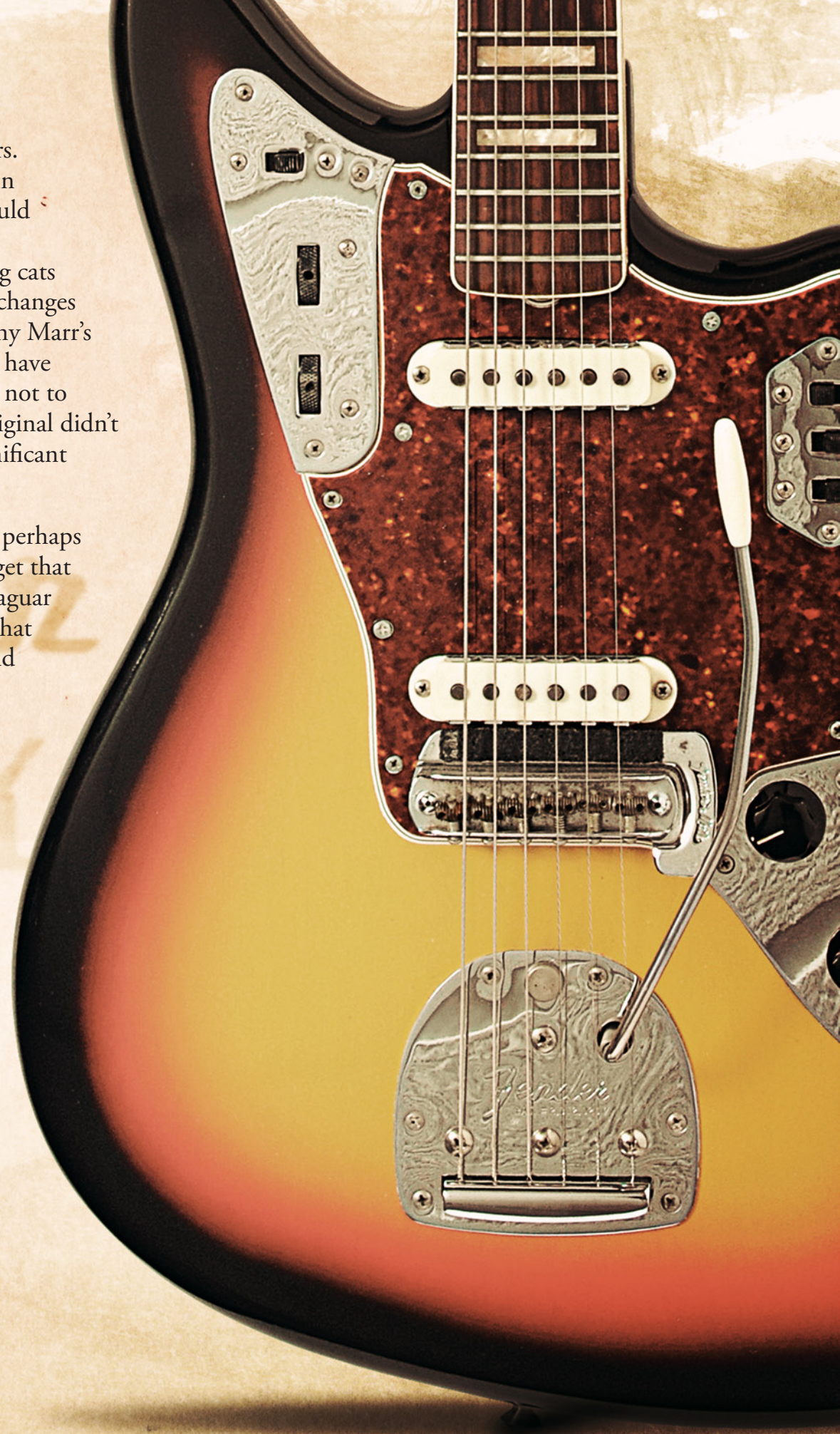
death in 1994, Cobain's family collaborated with Fender to release a Japanese-made production version of the instrument, by now named the Fender Jag-Stang. The model hit the market in 1996 and stayed in the catalogue for a couple of years. It was back in the line in 2003, still from Japan and described by Fender as "a collision of contemporary features fused together to create a combination of Jaguar and Mustang", but again the oddity was only on sale for a couple of years.

Cobain's experiment was never a 'signature' model at that time: that series had begun for Fender with the Clapton Strat back in 1988, but again the Jazzmaster and Jaguar hardly got a look in. One exception was the Ventures Jazzmaster of 1996, harking back to that American always-big-in-Japan instro group. The short-lived model was a Japan-made late-60s-style bound-neck guitar but with simplified controls and several Ventures logos on-board. Fender Japan have made other non-signature versions of the late-60s style Jaguar and Jazzmaster in addition to early-60s dot-neck types.

Since those days, the monster has awoken as Fender has raided its heritage larder for every last scrap of advantage. The current line-up boasts 11 Jaguars (including a 'vintage

modified' Squier) and seven Jazzmasters. The launch of Cobain and Marr Jaguars could be seen as the final vindication of the big cats - but looking at the changes made to create Johnny Marr's ideal Jag, you would have to be a real Leophile not to conclude that the original didn't have some quite significant design faults.

As for the rest of us, perhaps we should try to forget that the Jazzmaster and Jaguar are Fenders. Forget that they're not a Strat and not a Tele, and try thinking of each of them simply as a different guitar worth a try. Who knows where you might end up?



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# Road Warrior

Wishbone Ash's ambassador for the Flying V, Andy Powell, has been leading the band for 40 years. **Michael Casswell**, interviews, **Gary Cooper** profiles and Guitar Interactive brings you a world exclusive - **Wishbone Ash live on stage!**

He may not sport the tattoos now more or less mandatory for a guitar super hero - particularly for a road-hardened warrior of a lifetime's gigging - but Wishbone Ash's Andy Powell has the better alternative: heritage. Wishbone Ash was formed in 1969 and Powell is, today, the sole original member in the band - roaming the world, always on tour somewhere, delivering a unique brand of guitar-based Rock with a trademark ingredient: melodic harmony guitar.

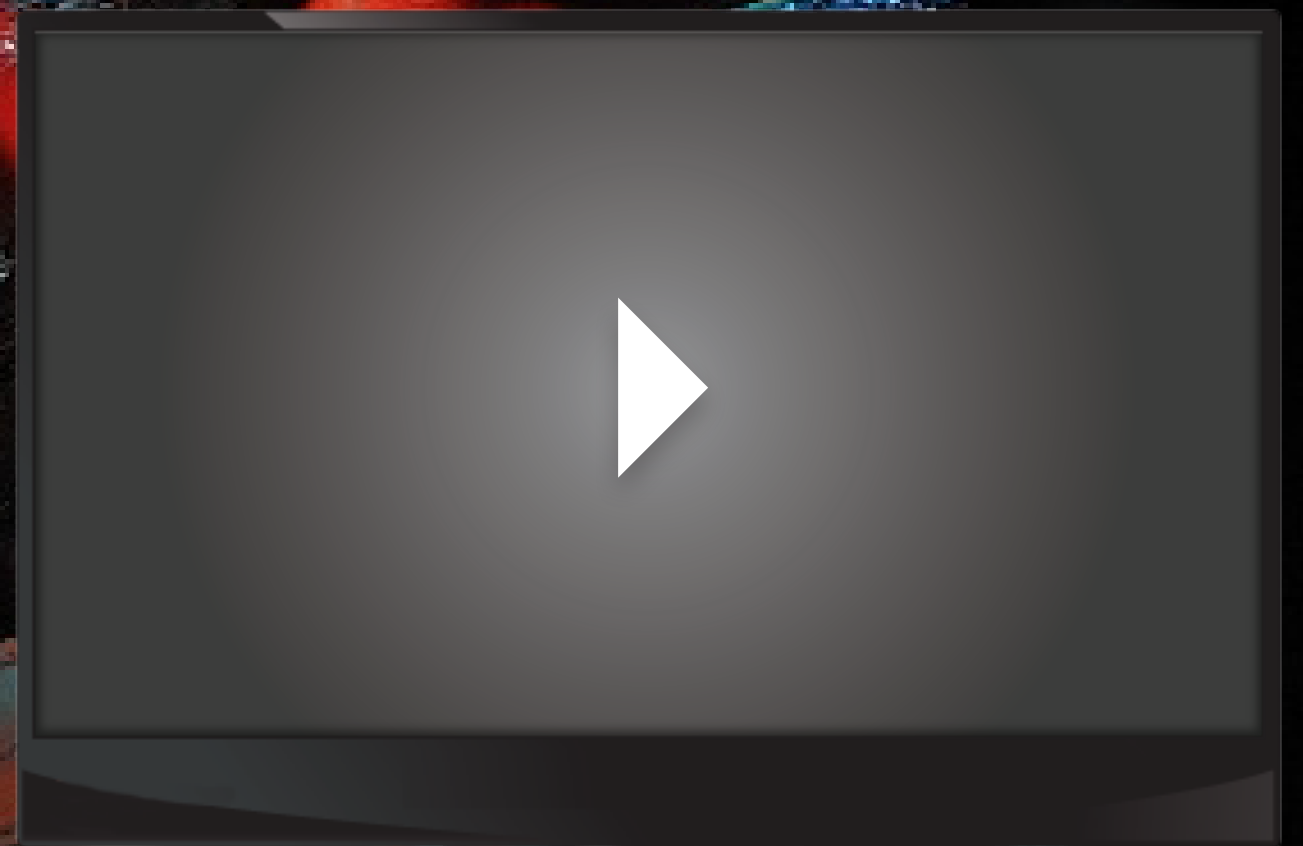
Ash may not have been the first band to use two lead guitars (in our video interview, Powell mentions the 1960s UK band Blossom Toes as having tried it first) but when he and Ted Turner were auditioned for a new band being formed by bassist Martin Turner (no relation, whatever the web might say) the two hit it off musically and instantly began trading licks. At which point, something special happened: Powell and Turner didn't just play solos in harmony, they created melodies and harmonised those. This wasn't two BB King impersonators playing Blues scales in interesting

intervals - it was serious melodic invention.

The band met with almost immediate success - aided by the fledgling acumen of Miles (brother of Stuart 'Police' Copeland) who was their manager. With cool album covers, extended, intricate solos, lyrics open to endless interpretations, Wishbone Ash was the perfect 'do not inhale' guitar band of the era. And, of course, millions did inhale - especially when the third album, *Argus*, was released, in 1972. It was the album that sealed the band's reputation. Moreover, it was album of the year around the world - the twin lead style of Powell and Turner became the 'must hear' for countless guitarists (among them Thin Lizzy and Judas Priest) and the open road with boundless success seemed to beckon.

What students of Rock history often miss, though, is that Wishbone Ash's twin lead style was different. Plenty of other bands tried the same thing (some even had three or more guitarists) but that usually descended into stoned widdling.

[...>]



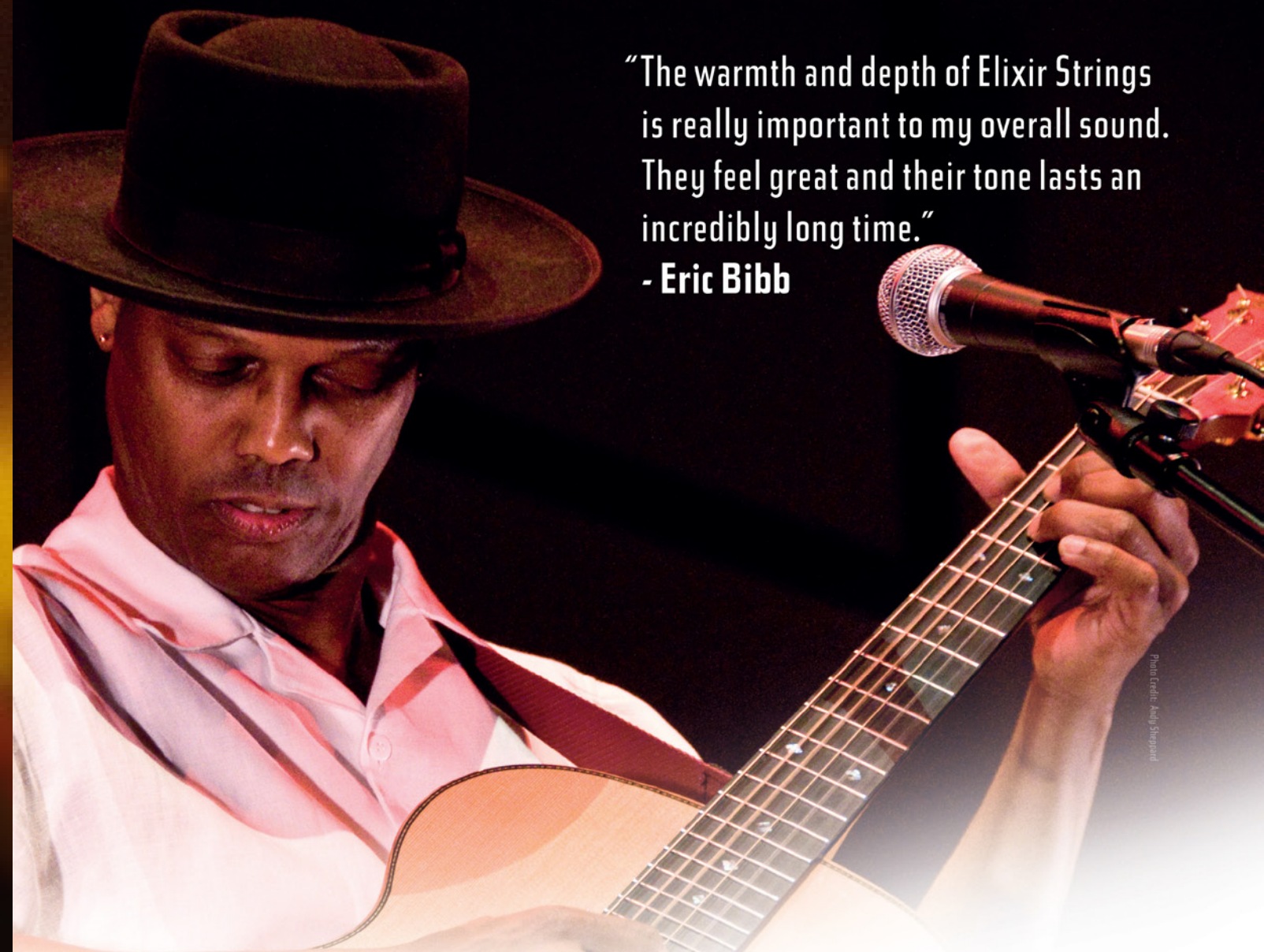


# What students of Rock history often miss, though, is that Wishbone Ash's twin lead style was different.

What Ash had was melody. You can actually whistle some of Andy Powell and Ted Turner's solos if you're so inclined.

Behind that lay the obvious influence of Hank B. Marvin (inescapable for any British guitarist of Powell and Turner's

generation) but there were also other, less conventional, musical tributaries flowing into Wishbone Ash. The band's exceptionally talented bassist, West Country born Martin Turner, brought with him a Folk influence, more usually found in the likes of Fairport Convention and there are moments on the albums 'Argus' and 'There's The Rub' that sound more 17th Century anthems from the English Civil War, than the Scotty Moore and Albert King licks that most of their contemporaries were reinterpreting. Unlike the Folk Rock bands of the era, however, this music was delivered via wailing Strats, Teles, a growling Thunderbird, Orange stacks, vintage Fender combos and, of course, Powell's trademark Flying V.



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And then there were the moments when Wishbone Ash turned heavy. Unlike contemporaries, Deep Purple and Black Sabbath, however, that wasn't all they did. If they had, their status as a Heavy Metal band might have been assured. As it was, Wishbone Ash went their own way, refusing to be pinned in any genre.

It's a sad truth that Wishbone Ash were one of the casualties of the 'punk revolution' so idolised by establishment Rock critics, who, surely, value the movement's social politics, more than its music. By the mid-seventies, after Ted Turner had left to be replaced by the phenomenally talented Laurie Wisefield, and despite the fact that Ash were firing better than ever on albums like *New England*, the British media decided overnight that guitar solos were 'uncool' and that virtuosity was a dirty word. As the reviews editor of a leading British weekly music paper once put it to me: 'We can't be seen to be giving a Wishbone Ash album a good review - what would that do to our street cred?!'.

Suddenly dropped by the same music press that had been their champions just a few years before, things began to go wrong elsewhere, too. Financial success waned after the band failed to find a new record deal with a major label - though they did have a fine creative period with Miles Copeland's IRS and 'No Speak' projects in the late 1980s. Sadly, the sales weren't great, personnel began to change and Wishbone Ash settled into a new role as a hard working festivals and tours band, releasing great, but sadly neglected, CDs, though they were lapped-up by a large tribe of dedicated fans.

Today, many albums and countless tours later, Andy Powell remains the sole original member (though there is a ghostly, mirror image alternative - and hotly contested - Wishbone Ash, run by founder and bassist Martin Turner).

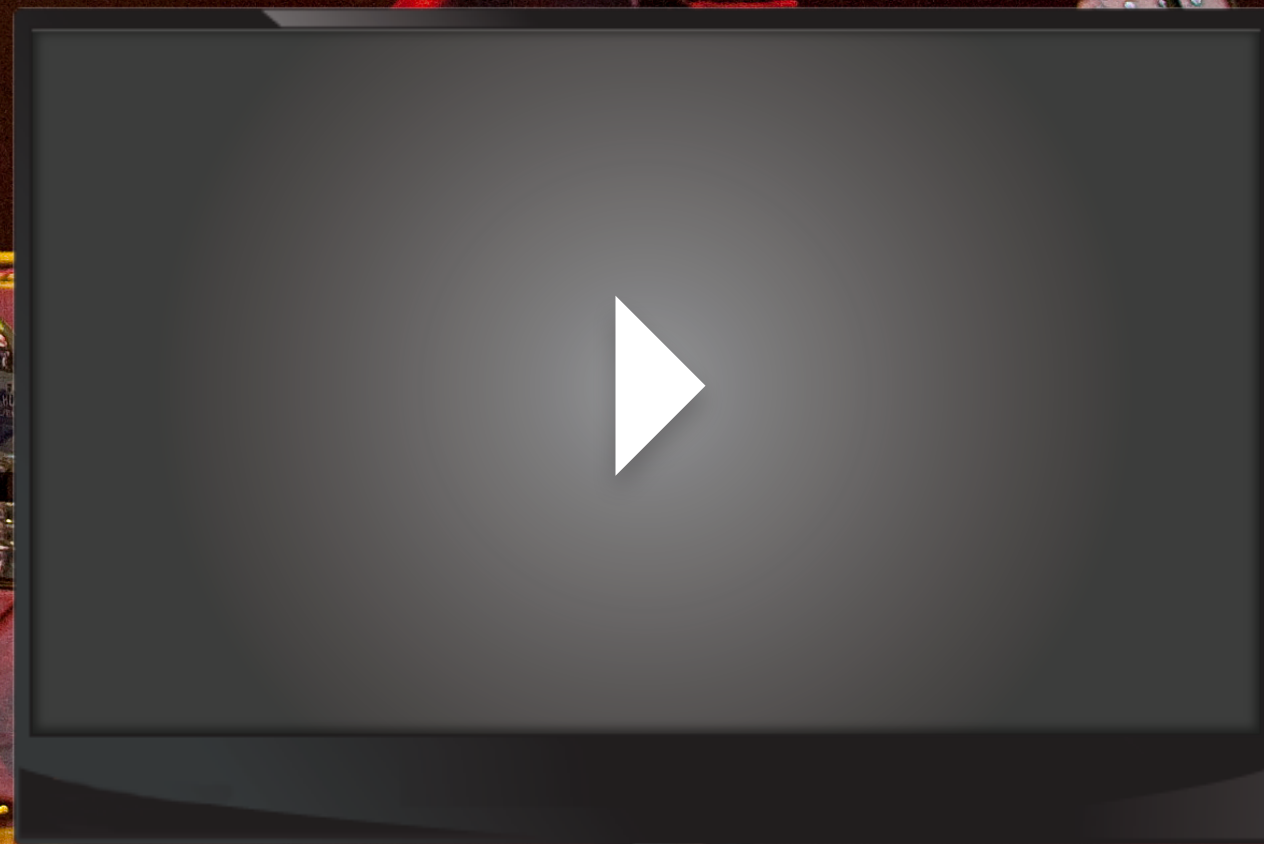
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The band, with its second Finnish-born guitarist in succession (Muddy Manninen) is still capable of blistering performances (see our exclusive live footage for the proof!) and has a fine new CD out, *Elegant Stealth*. Ash still rocks - but always with class and the gift of guitar melody, unequalled to this day.

Andy Powell is no Guthrie Govan and if you are looking for blistering fretboard gymnastics - naked technique - you are looking in the wrong place. What he is, though, is a masterful guitarist with his own style and voice - something no amount of flash can ever replace. Rolling Stone lauded Powell and Ted Turner as among the Top 20 Guitarists of All Time

and similar accolades have been showered on Powell down the years. He is also a generous player, allowing room for others to shine, as he has done right throughout the band's career, where he has habitually left acres of room for his co-guitarists to take flight, clearly content to return to his rhythmic roots.

Ironically, though Powell is one of the world's most famous Flying V users, his main guitar isn't a Gibson - it's an improved V built by the (retired) English maker Kevin Chilcott. Powell uses genuine Gibson Vs as well, of course, and takes to the stage these days (as our interview reveals) with an array of succulent guitars, including a modern Burns Double Six





(reviewed in this issue) a Duesenberg and a 1952 Fender Telecaster, reputedly once owned by the master, Roy Buchanan!

Though almost an icon because of his Vs (the band even once recorded a track titled 'Real Guitars Have Wings' - the illustration for which showed a V in a wind tunnel) many of Powell's finest solos have been recorded using old Fender guitars and amps. The V just happened to become his trademark, as he explained to Michael Casswell.

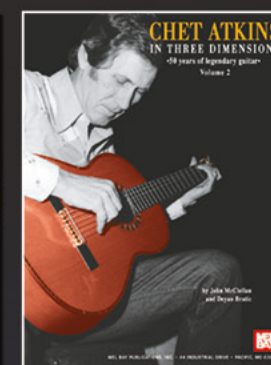
Had Punk and personalities not got in the way, Wishbone Ash's melodic, adult, Rock might have seen them reckoned today

alongside the likes of Fleetwood Mac and others of that era. As it turned out, they have still produced a wide range of work - always characterised by the sound of two great guitarists developing and exploring melodic themes and inventions.

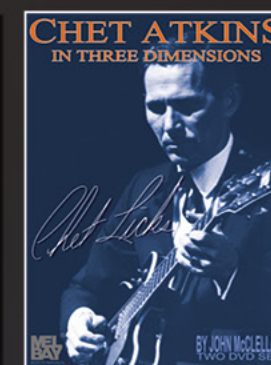
Consistently a regular in 'most influential guitarist' polls, Andy Powell is also a Rock and Roll survivor - a fine, unique, guitarist who has played a significant role in shaping the very essence of Rock guitar.



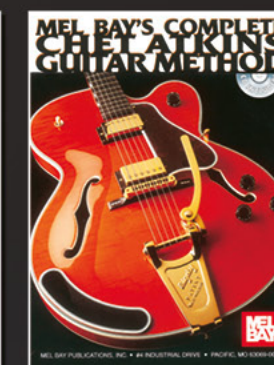
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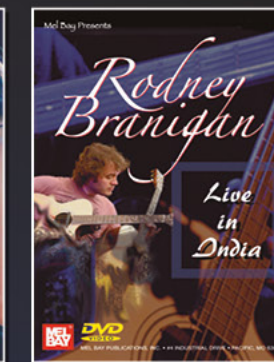
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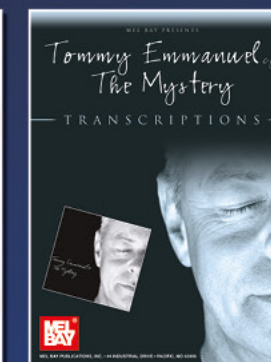


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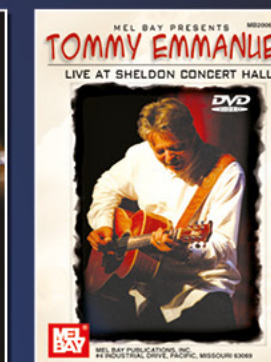
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# LITA LIVE

Stuart Bull meets The Queen of Metal, Lita Ford and guitarist Gary Hoey, in advance of the forthcoming album *Living Like A Runaway*. And what's that acoustic Lita's playing? It was love at first sight with a Taylor GS8e, she reveals.

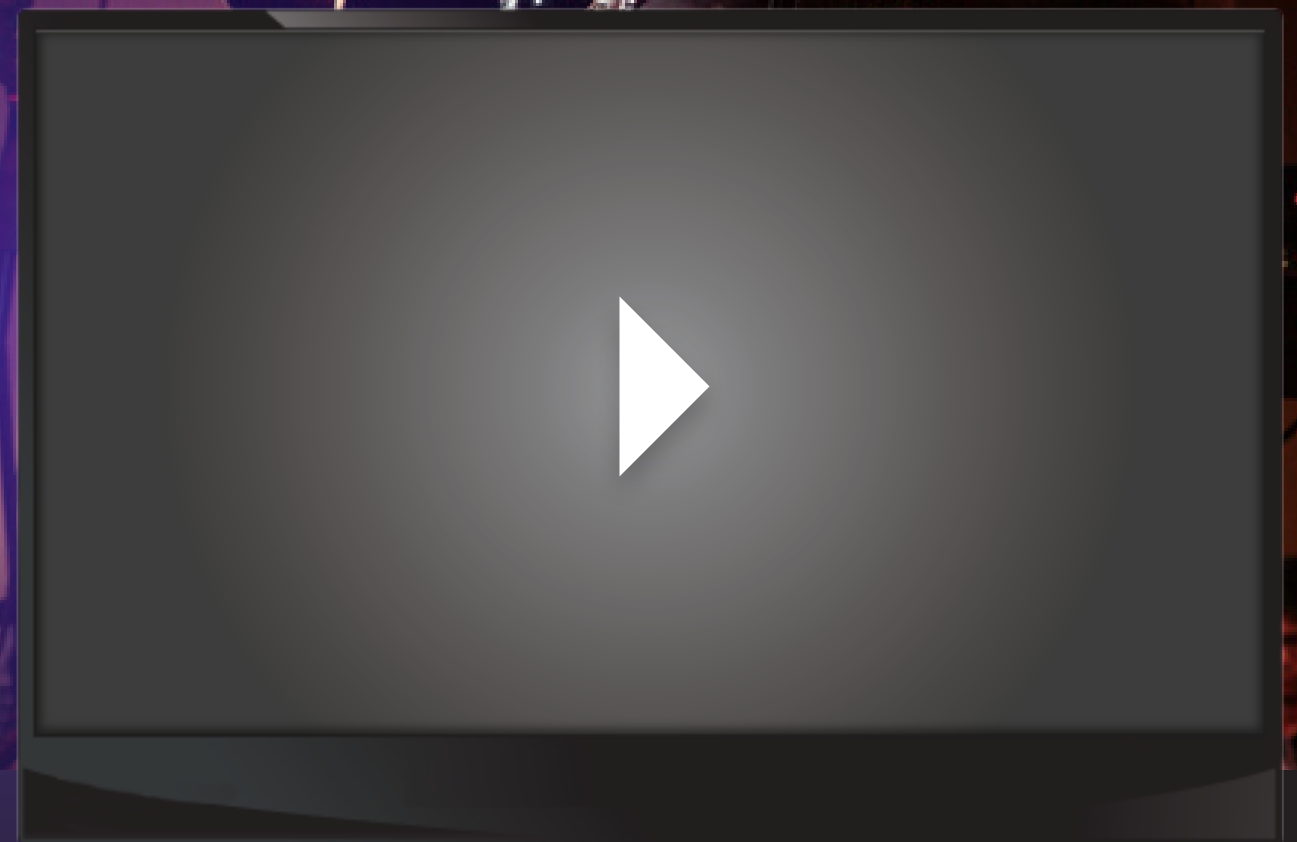
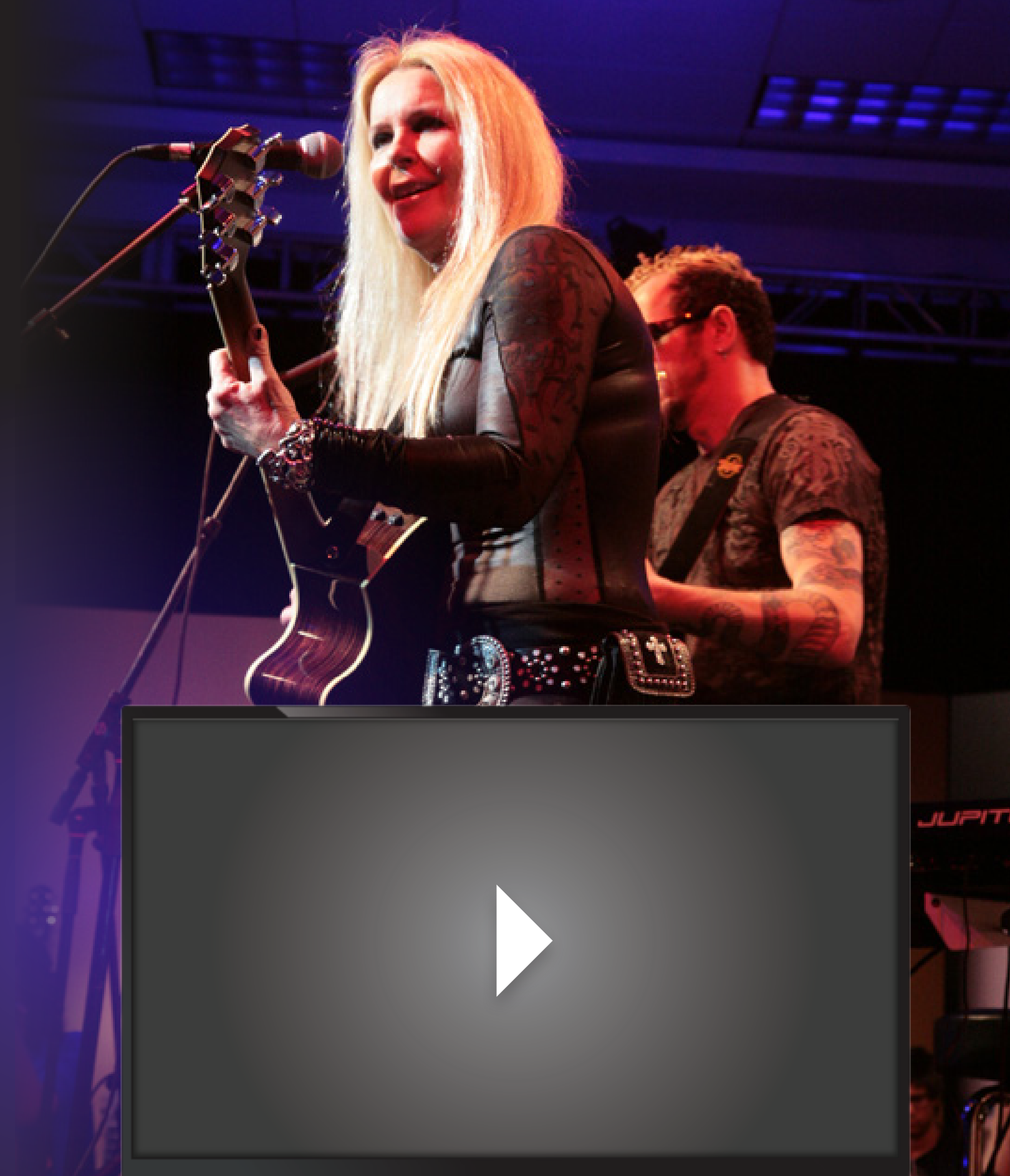
Lita Ford is one of Rock's true survivors - a female guitar player who has made a career in hard Rock, both in her first band, The Runaways, and since 1979 as a successful solo artist. In fact that hard Rock edge turned positively Metallic back in the 1980s when she had several hit singles, including a duet with Ozzy himself, earning herself the title The Queen of Metal.

Best known to gear heads for her long standing endorsement of Seymour Duncan-powered BC Rich guitars (most recently A Warlock NJ Deluxe and a Bitch Doubleneck), Lita has recently reinforced the reputation of Taylor guitars for being the Rock guitarist's acoustic of choice, by adopting a Taylor GS8e which, as she reveals in her interview with Stuart Bull, she discovered thanks to Def Leppard's Vivian Campbell.

The Taylor will be getting a serious work-out on Ford's long-awaited new album, due for release early this year, titled *Living Like A Runaway*.

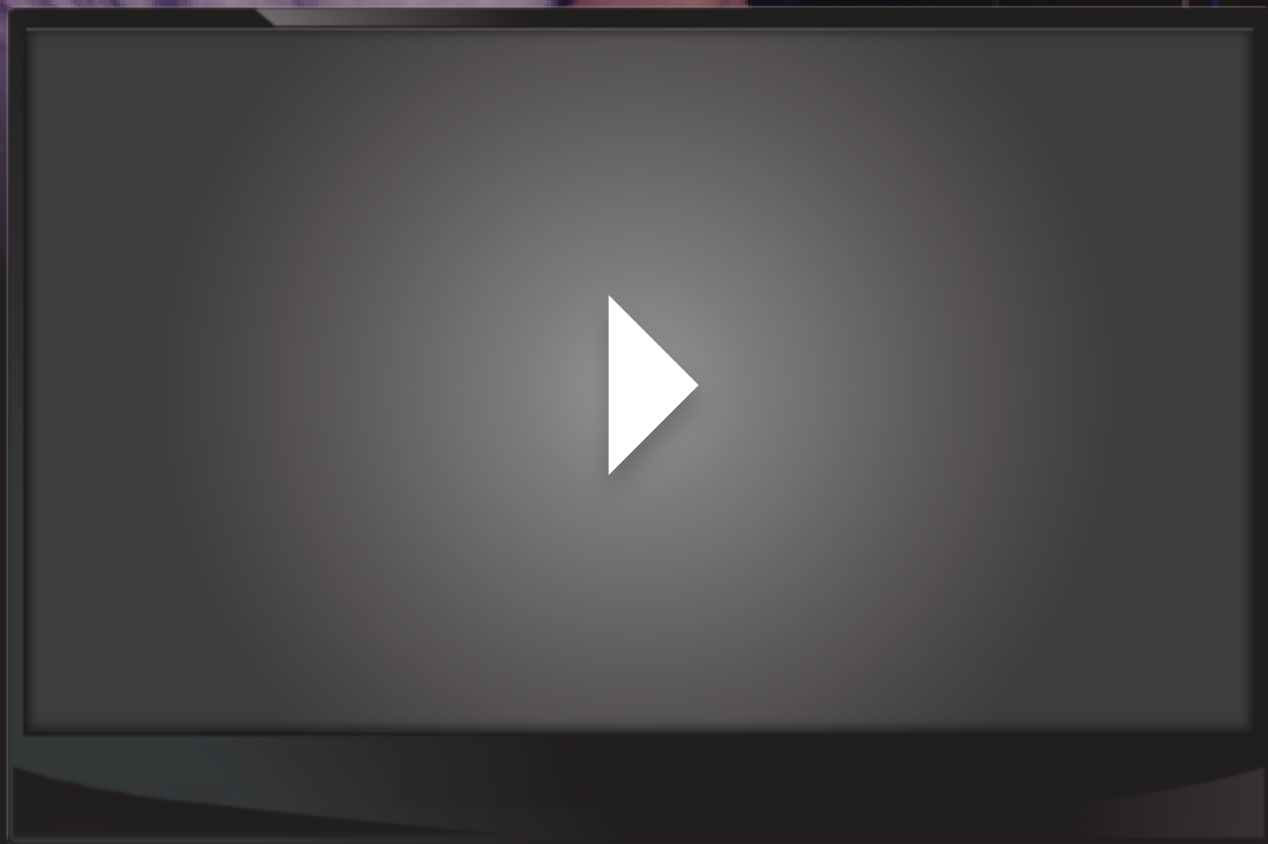
Joining The Queen of Metal on stage at the recent NAMM show in California, was fellow band member - and noted solo shredder - Gary Hoey, who also spoke with Stuart Bull, revealing that he and Lita Ford have been working on a lot of harmony lead guitar for the forthcoming album (spooky coincidence time, given this issue's harmony guitar tech feature!).

There's plenty more NAMM 2012 coverage on our website [iguitarmag.com](http://iguitarmag.com) - but we couldn't resist the temptation to run this footage as soon as we got back from the show!



[...>]







# The King of Indie Guitar

To accompany our **Johnny Marr** interview and player profile, **Jamie Humphries** gets all indie and offers a brief insight into some of the classic rhythm guitar and riffing techniques of the Manchester guitar legend...

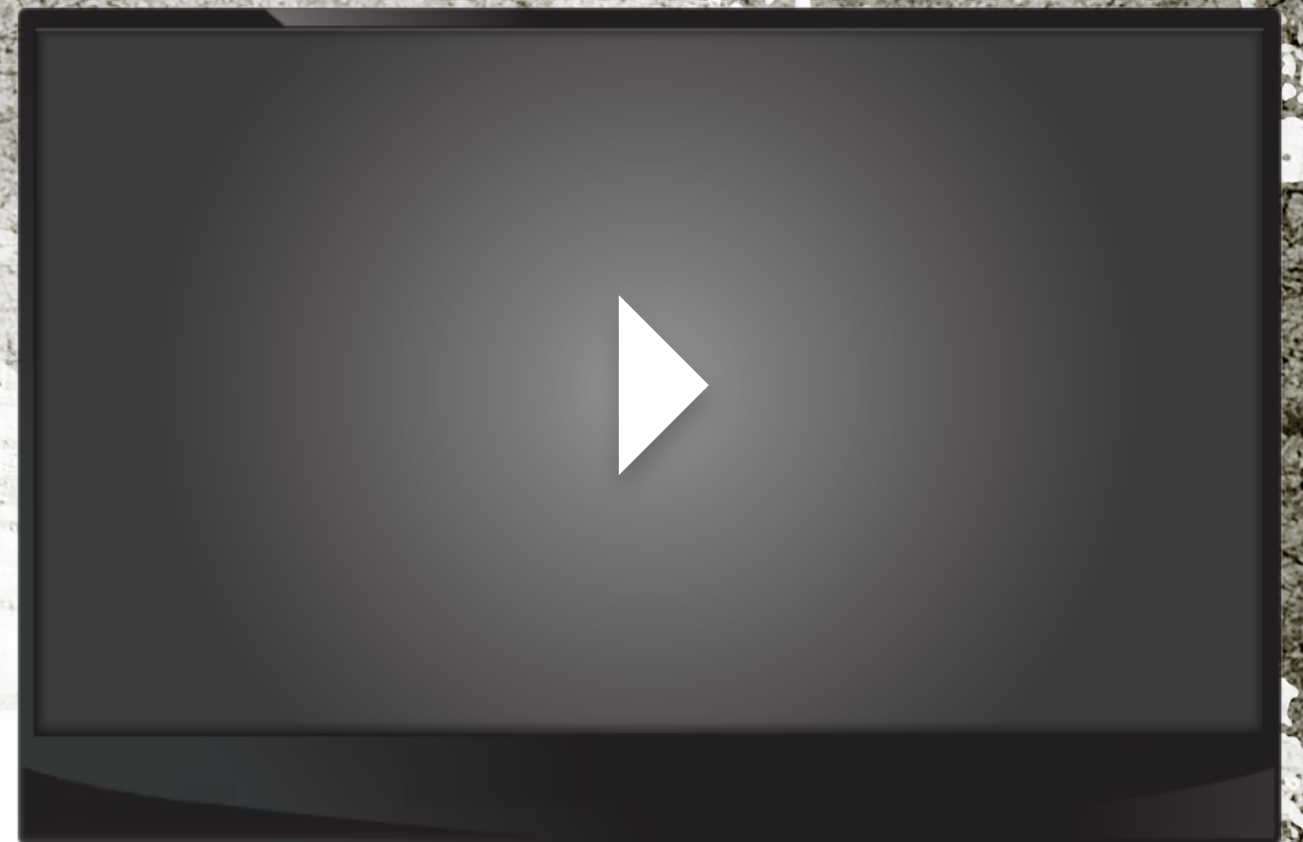
With the Smiths, Johnny Marr crafted some of the most beautiful and haunting guitar parts in '80s pop/rock history. From the jangling chords of 'This Charming Man' to the dark and sinister tremolo driven riffs of 'How Soon is Now?', Marr helped re-launch the electric guitar, in a time of synth-driven pop, inspired a generation, and defined the Manchester genre.

Like Johnny's heroes before him, he stood true to his beliefs and love and passion of the guitar, with no thoughts or concerns for fame and money, just a passion and drive to be creative. In this short stylistic tech session, I have put together a short Smiths inspired track that looks at some of

Johnny's favourite and most famous ideas. Obviously there is a lot more to Johnny than these ideas presented, just listen to his 'textural loops' performed on the Hans Zimmer Orchestral/electronic score for the Hollywood sci-fi thriller 'Inception'. You will hear a different side to Johnny's playing - using the guitar to create more soundscape ideas. But for this lesson we have looked at his chord and riff driven Indie Pop style

For our verse progression or A section I have chosen to look at the jangly very 'Manchester sounding' approach to Johnny's playing. The chord progression is based around the chords of A major, C# minor, B minor, D and E major.

[...>]



[...>]





This is the basic outline of the progression, because, when it comes to the actual chords, Johnny will extend them to create more interesting chord harmony and also as a way of joining the chords, and creating repeating melodic hooks through out a chord progression, which is a trademark of Johnny's style and sound.

The opening chord of A major is extended to an Add9 chord, as the B note added in the top of the chords is then added in the top of the C# minor chord to produced a C# minor 7th chord. We then keep this idea and extend our B minor chord to a B minor 7th. For the second half of the verse we shift up to some higher register chords, and play a chord arpeggio figure that is based around the same progression but using different voicings of the chords. Once again we see the idea of adding extension to the chords to act as links between them, but more importantly to provide melodic hooks within the progression.

This time over the E major chord we have a shifting diatonic 3rd idea that is performed on the 3rd and 2nd strings - very Steve Cropper! For the verse section I have used a bright clean sound on our studio amp, and although I am using my main humbucker loaded Musicman, I have switched to a single coil tone to give me a bright Tele/Jag tone.

Now for our chorus, and I couldn't pay homage to Johnny Marr with out including that fabled tremolo driven tone! For this, I have switched to a very light overdriven tone, with the gain hardly on.

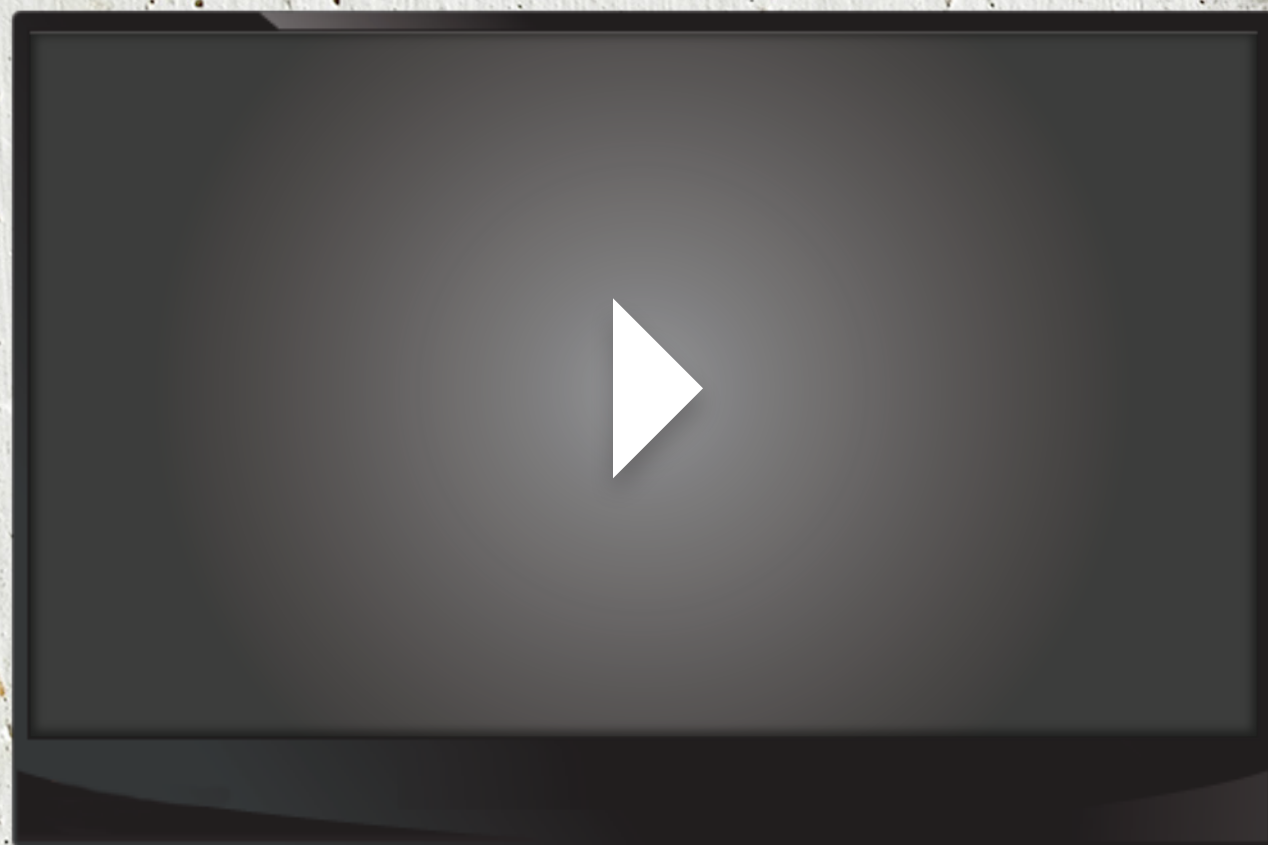
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I am using a tremolo tone from an old Line 6 Modulation Pro rack unit, which actually allows me to input the tempo of the track to make sure that I get the tremolo in time. For the rhythm of the chord progression I simply emulated one of Johnny's hero's, Bo Diddley, and made sure that the rhythm of the tremolo was set in time. Once again check out the video for a more in depth analysis of this tone.

We then head back to our verse progression one final time to conclude our track. I should also point out that the feel of this track isn't straight, and it makes use of a swung 16th-note rhythm, so pay attention to this when working on the groove of both of the sections.

Enjoy!



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# Sweet Harmony!

To tie in with this month's interview with Wishbone Ash's Andy Powell - acknowledged as one of the men who brought harmony lead guitar to Rock - we delve into the world of harmony guitar, and look at some licks and lead approaches used by masters of the genre. **Jamie Humphries** grows extra arms and takes you through crafting your own harmony ideas with this exclusive Tech Session track.

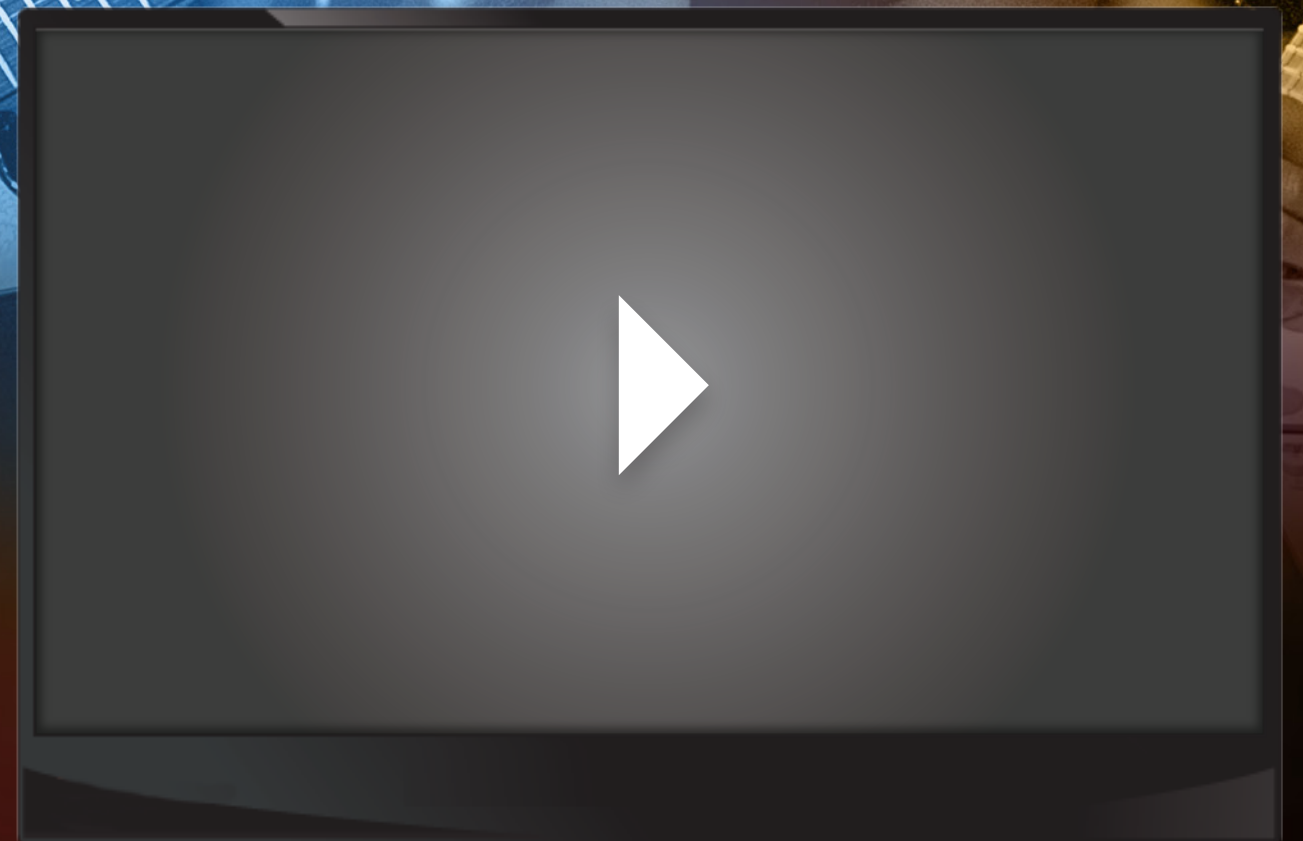
Harmony guitar parts always have the ability to uplift a track and over the course of rock history there have been many pioneers and revered guitarists associated with harmony parts, not to mention a number of classic songs that feature harmony melodies and lines. Such artists as Wishbone Ash, Thin Lizzy, Steve Vai, The Eagles, Iron Maiden and Brian May are famous for their use of harmony as a creative tool. Listen to such classic tracks as 'Boys are Back in Town', 'Waiting for an Alibi', 'The Trooper', 'Blue Powder', 'Killer Queen' or 'Hotel California' to hear harmony guitar at its best. Obviously there are dozens of other examples, but from my short list you can see the different genres of Rock that use harmony guitar, whether to create euphoric majestic uplifting lines, or create more sinister and haunting melodies and riffs.

We use harmony every time we pick up the guitar and play a chord, as basic major and minor chords make use of 3 part harmony, which is the most fundamental approach to using harmony. The difference, is that

when creating harmony melodies or lead lines, we play the notes separately, giving a much smoother and sweeter sound. Before we discuss the track I have composed for this month's feature, let's take a few moments to understand harmony.

The basic concept of harmony is that when playing a melody or solo, we use specific notes a certain distance from the main melody line from within the same key, thus producing a harmony. There are obviously seven potential harmony notes to choose from, including an octave. The most common and musical is the 3rd. when producing harmonies a 3rd apart, you must make sure that your harmony notes is exactly a diatonic 3rd above each of the main melody notes you play. When I say diatonic, I mean with in the same key.

Depending on what degree or note of the scale you are playing, you may use either a major or minor 3rd interval from your main melody note. A simply way to experiment with this is to record yourself playing a major



[...&gt;]

[...&gt;]





scale. Play the notes slowly ascending and then descending. Once you have recorded this, record another pass but this time starting from a note a 3rd above your original starting note. If you for instance played the C major scale, for your second pass start from the note of E. Continue to play up the scale making sure that you are always a diatonic 3rd above, so when you play the note of D, your harmony note is F, when you play the note of E your harmony note is G and so on. Listen to it back and you will hear a sweet ascending and descending harmony line in diatonic 3rds. If you want to go a step further, try a third pass starting a 5th above your original note, so from C that would be the note of G. You will now create a full and very uplifting three part harmony - instant Brian May!

Of course you can use other types of harmony to produce different moods and feels. Another very ambiguous harmony to try would be 4th's or 5th's, which have a very neutral and modern sound. Steve Vai is a big fan of these types of harmony when building riffs. You can also mix all of these harmonies up, using 3rd,s 4th,s and 5ths, to create what ever sound you hear in your head.

Now let's look at our track, but be sure to watch the video for a full breakdown.

The track kicks off with a Wishbone Ash inspired harmony riff that is based around diatonic 4th's and 5ths in the Key of A Dorian. We then shift to A natural minor for our main verse and here we have a harmony melody line inspired by Thin Lizzy, which makes use of diatonic 3rds from A

[...&gt;]

[...&gt;]





Aeolian. Be careful with the space between the phrases, you want to be sure that any harmonies played are spot on together. Also take care with the fast ascending figure that leads to the chorus section.

The chorus modulates to the IV chord of the parent key of C major, the chord of F major, giving us a strong uplifting Lydian sound. We kick things off in this section with a descending line that makes use of a very euphoric Brian May-esque three part harmony using 3rd's and 5th's. After a simple blues fill to catch our breath we play an arpeggio figure with a triplet rhythm that is harmonizes a diatonic 3rd higher. This is followed by some Brian May style major scale runs using a 3rd harmony, plus more three part harmony lines. The solo concludes

with a Harmonic minor feel over a B/D# chord, using Diminished 7th arpeggios performed a minor 3rd apart. The track concludes with our intro harmony riff.

As you can see there is a lot crammed in this track, everything from singing classic Rock lines, to fast scale runs, uplifting three part harmonies, to harmony shred arpeggios. Just pay attention to the transcription and video, and as always practise things slowly to start with and speed them up once you are confident and have the lines clean under your fingers. Good Luck!



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# MAB to the Max!

## This issue - MAB on Odd Meters

I love to incorporate mixed meters, sometimes referred to as “odd” meters or what I affectionately term “Math” Rock into my music. I am frequently asked how I am able to write compositions using numerous different time signatures in a single song. My answer is simply - that is the way I hear the music. I never consciously try to write a song in 5/4, 7/4 or 15/8. I prefer to just write the music as I hear it and then analyze it afterwards. Many times people are confused with mixed or “odd” meters in music. This is especially true because at a first listen, music using anything other than a straight 4/4 or 3/4 time signature seems hard to comprehend or understand.

What I learned very early in my musical training is that there are only two kinds of meters - duple (2 beats) and triple (3 beats.)

The best way to understand odd meters in music is to simplify the counting and divide the musical riff or passage into groups of two's and three's. For example, the Pink Floyd song “Money” is in the time signature of 7/4. I first listened to the main riff of “Money” and immediately knew it was 7/4, but I felt the music in terms of the counts 1,2,1,2,1,2,3. If a riff like “Money” is repetitive, another way I comprehend odd meters is to keep counting until the riff ends. My song “Hands Without Shadows” (the title track from my “Hands Without Shadows” record) is written using many different odd meter groupings. The main riff is in 15/8. When I first wrote the riff, I had no idea what time signature it was in. But, I used the technique of counting until the riff repeated itself and came up with 15 beats. That is where I derived the 15/8 time signature from.

I could have also written the riff using three measures of 4/4 and one measure of 3/4.

This is the subjective part. When a riff exceeds an odd meter of 7/4, 9/4 or 9/8, one can divide the riff into its duple and triple meter components instead of just calling it 15/8 or 7/8. There is no right or wrong way as long as the counts are equal. Is the “Hands Without Shadows” riff in 15/8 or 4/4, 4/4, 4/4 and 3/4? The answer is - both are correct. A good exercise would be to try doing what I did to the “Crazy Train” main riff and delete one count from the riff. It is a great example of using odd meters and gaining an understanding on how you might incorporate this use of asymmetrical note groupings and odd meters into your music. I sincerely hope this helps!



Guitar Interactive is thrilled to welcome back one of the crowned kings of shredding and metal guitar - **Michael Angelo Batio!**



# THE RHYTHM METHOD

Welcome to another instalment of the Rhythm Method. Over the past few issues we have looked at different feels, chord types, and approaches to playing rhythm guitar. In this issue we are going to look at sparse chord voicings, and the use of space.

Often you'll hear your favourite guitarist playing very minimal chord voicings, and often playing very little, and making use of space within a track. One of the biggest mistakes that I have found over the years of teaching guitar is that the novice always feels the need to play, and often doesn't realise that using space is much more effective than simply strumming all the way through a part. I always tell students to check out the rhythm playing of Steve Cropper on the Booker T and the MG's track 'Green Onions' for a great example of using space, and keeping voicings sparse. Another reason why I urge students to practise rhythm parts like this is to also improve timing. You will find it much more difficult to keep things in time when there is more space between the times that you strike the chords, which will

ultimately improve timing.

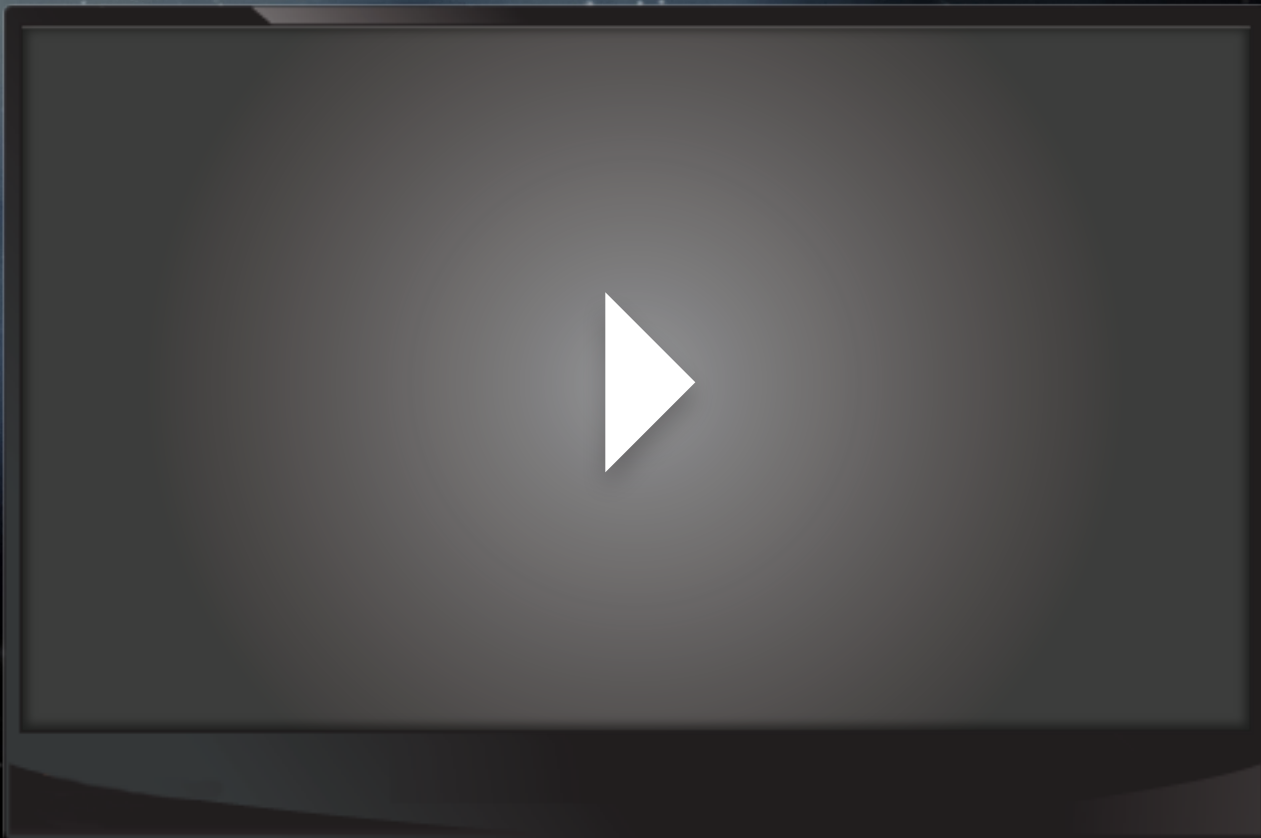
To keep things in a familiar genre, this month's track is still based around a blues style track, and borrows ideas from the classic BB King track 'The Thrill Has Gone'. The track is based around the key of B minor, and consists of an A and B section, with the form of the track being A,A,B,A. The feel of this month's track is straight and the tempo is slow so be sure that you count in time when playing the stabs on the chords.

Let's now break the track down and kick things off with the A section. The progression is based around B minor 7th, E minor 7th, F# minor 7th, G major 7th, and F# altered. The rhythm part is based around these chords and relies more on partial chords or chord fragments to outline the progression. Also, as I have mentioned before, the rhythm for this track is very sparse with a single chord hit on beats two and four, where the snare drum falls. This makes a great exercise in counting, and some of you may find the long gaps between

[...>]

In recent issues **Jamie Humphries** has told you what to play - in this instalment he tells you when not to play! Confused? Read on and all will be revealed about 'Playing with Space'





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# "The chords make use of common or shared tones..."

chords quite hard to count and get in time. On the 1st bar of the rhythm part our partial chord/triad is slid up by a tone, adding extra chordal and tonal colour. Another technique to pay attention to here is how the chords are linked together, and this is demonstrated in the video lesson.

The chords make use of common or shared tones, which is a compositional technique that tries where possible to leave static notes between chords when changing from one chord to the next. Another technique used here is close voice leading. Again this is a compositional technique that tries to shift notes as little as possible when changing from one chord to the next, give a smooth and musical change. You will notice with many classical composer and arrangers that the movement from one chord to the next is often very slight, moving notes from one chord the minimal amount to be able to change to the next chord in the progression. I have tried to employ this technique throughout this piece, and I would urge you to expand on it when trying to come up with your own variations on the chords found in this study piece.

The B section uses all of the chords already used, with a slight alteration in order, but also includes the D major chord. Once again the same techniques apply as in our previous section, with minimalistic rhythm approaches

and small shifts between chords to keep the changes musical.

To conclude this lesson, I want to close with this thought. Just because we have six strings - seven in some cases - on our guitar, it doesn't mean that we have to use all of them at one time! To my ears, full barre chords that cover lots of string are both ugly and cluttered. I very rarely use these shapes, although I obviously know them, because to my ears they fill too much space. Remember the bassist will cover the low end, and we can have a much more musically satisfying performance by implying other types of chord extension and harmony with more minimal chords, that are much more musical and proguitar sounding.

Listen to the rhythm chops on 'Walking on the Moon' by The Police. You don't hear Andy Summers playing huge six string barre shapes. Instead he crafts his memorable rhythm part with chords that use just two or three strings.

This month's track is a pretty basic example of these techniques, but when practising strip this back and try playing the rhythm part against a metronome, to see if you are bang in time; I think some of you may be surprised! Practise this well, and you will improve your sense of rhythm and play much tighter rhythm parts!

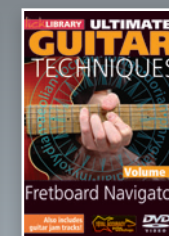
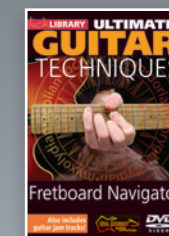


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BY RICK GRAHAM

# GUITAR ROADMAPS

## PART 5 - Creative Pentatonics

Let's continue with our exploration of the Pentatonic scale by looking at the extended pentatonic scale.

The extended pentatonic scale is formed simply by taking two of the standard

pentatonic 'box' shapes and applying a kind of 'cut and paste' approach so that we can play two adjacent scale shapes at the same time. For instance, rather than playing just the 1st position in A minor Pentatonic, we can take both the 1st and 2nd positions of

the scale and play them together to form 1 position. We can then apply this to each position of the pentatonic scale so we would end up with the following:

**POSITIONS 1 & 2 = POSITION 1**

**POSITIONS 2 & 3 = POSITION 2**

**POSITIONS 3 & 4 = POSITION 3**

**POSITIONS 4 & 5 = POSITION 4**

**POSITIONS 5 & 1 = POSITION 5**

The first thing that you will notice is that these new positions are a little demanding on the left hand, especially when we are in the lower area of the fingerboard. The most

efficient way to tackle this is to have the left hand in an 'open' or 'extended' position. Generally, there are two hand positions that most guitarists use and they are the 'closed' or 'contracted' hand position or the 'open' or 'extended' hand position. The 'closed' or 'contracted' hand position is generally used when we have the thumb in an 'over the neck' position. 'Open' or 'extended' means the thumb is usually central or lower at the rear of the neck. This latter positioning enables a much greater span of frets for the left hand and is ideal for these type of extended scales. Be sure to take it steady if you are not used to such wide stretches and make sure you give yourself regular breaks when practising them.

I remember discovering this many years ago when I stumbled across it by doing it on the top e string only. I initially thought that I



[...&gt;]



had discovered it but quickly realised that players had been doing this for years!

The second thing that you will notice is that the last note on every string is doubled on the adjacent higher string. Sometimes this can be a very useful and cool sounding effect if used in a creative way, however, it's a good idea not to tie yourself in to that.

By applying a few simple changes we can create a fingering that enables us to play the scale without the doubling effect. All we have to do is change the number of notes we play on each string to the following:

**E = 2 notes**

**A = 3 notes**

**D = 1 note**

**G = 3 notes**

**B = 1 note**

**E = 3 notes**



Et Voila! Now we have the scale with the correct sequence of notes. This shape also has an extra bonus in that the number of notes on each string lends itself perfectly to the use of economy picking.

Amazing players such as Frank Gambale and Derryl Gabel use this approach in their playing all the time. Now that we have the sequence of notes per string we can apply it to each of our new positions.

One of the most effective ways to incorporate this into your playing is to take smaller fragments of these new positions. I use these in my soloing all the time. For instance you could take the 1st position and just play the notes on the E and A strings. Or you could take the notes on the G, B and E strings. The possibilities really are limitless so be creative and try to come up with your own ideas with these shapes.

Have fun and see you next issue!



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# USING MODES TO EXPAND OUR CHORD VOICINGS

In Gi 6 we looked at formulas for modes in terms of playing over changes in a soloing context. This month we're going to start a series of lessons on expanding our chord vocabulary by using modes in a diatonic context, eventually expanding our ideas to non-diatonic, modal harmony.

So what do we mean by diatonic? In the majority of musical situations we talk about being in a key - for example the key of C major or the key of Eb major. What we're really referring to here is the idea that pretty much everything in the music is coming from a particular major scale, in other words the seven notes contained within that scale played in many different octaves and positions on the guitar, bass, saxophone, voice or whatever instruments we're using. If we only use those seven notes then we are said to be using the notes that are diatonic to the key - so diatonic means within a key. If you've studied harmony to a reasonable level you'll already know that the diatonic 7<sup>th</sup> chords (in fusion and jazz we use 7<sup>th</sup>'s as our basic chord form) in the key of C major are: - Cmaj7, Dm7, Em7, Fmaj7, G7, Am7 and Bm7b5.

These basic 7<sup>th</sup> chords are each numbered using Roman numerals from I to VII giving us the following sequence.

|            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| I – Cmaj7  | V – G7      |
| II – Dm7   | VI – Am7    |
| III – Em7  | VII – Bm7b5 |
| IV – Fmaj7 |             |

You'll find these basic 7<sup>th</sup> chords in the TAB section at the end of the magazine. Many guitar players can play these chords but tend to get a bit more confused when we start to add 9<sup>th</sup>'s, 11<sup>th</sup>s and 13<sup>th</sup>s into the chord, often adding the wrong extensions in and wondering why their chords sound weird. We're going to learn to use our modal formulas from last month to work out which 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>'s we can add into our existing 7<sup>th</sup> chords to remain diatonic to the key and eventually expand this idea to more complex harmonic ideas. This time we'll concentrate on 9<sup>th</sup> chords.

We're going to associate a particular mode with each chord in the key as follows.

[...>]

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I – Cmaj7 – Major/Ionian  
– 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

II – Dm7 – Dorian  
– 1 2 b3 4 5 6 b7

III – Em7 – Phrygian  
– 1 b2 b3 4 5 b6 b7

IV – Fmaj7 – Lydian  
– 1 2 3 #4 5 6 7

V – G7 – Mixolydian  
– 1 2 3 4 5 6 b7

VI – Am7 – Aeolian  
– 1 2 b3 4 5 b6 b7

VII – Bm7b5 – Locrian  
– 1 b2 b3 4 b5 b6 b7

Try playing each chord followed by its mode through one octave as outlined in the TAB and you'll hear how the two fit together so well. The 2<sup>nd</sup> degree of each scale is the same note as the 9<sup>th</sup> – if we play through each octave and count the notes we'll find that the 9<sup>th</sup> note is the same as the 2<sup>nd</sup> but up one octave so rather than count up 9 notes we can simply count up 2 and save some time. If we do this for Cmaj7 and use the C Major/Ionian scale our 2<sup>nd</sup> degree is the note D so we need to add this D into our basic 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The easiest way to do this would be to take the 3<sup>rd</sup> back two frets giving us the

9<sup>th</sup>. This causes a problem in that the 3<sup>rd</sup> is no longer present in the chord and it's the 3<sup>rd</sup> that makes the chord sound major or minor. To solve this problem we'll rearrange the intervals within the chord and drop the 5<sup>th</sup> as this note is neutral sounding and dropping it doesn't affect the tonality of the chord at all. By adding this 9<sup>th</sup> we get a Cmaj9 chord. When we do this for chord II – Dm7 – we use the Dorian mode and repeat the process from D adding the note E into the chord. The mode associated with each chord is informing us as to which note the 9<sup>th</sup> is going to be for each chord. Both the III and VII chord's modes contain a b2 (same as a b9). The b9 interval is the most dissonant sound in music so we avoid playing 9<sup>th</sup> chords on the III and VII chords and play straight 7<sup>th</sup>s instead. Once you have this down in the key of C, move on and try it in other keys using the modes to help you figure out the 9<sup>ths</sup> for each chord.

Any time you have a diatonic chord progression containing 7<sup>th</sup> chords you can try using these 9<sup>th</sup> chords in their place. Use your ears as a guide.

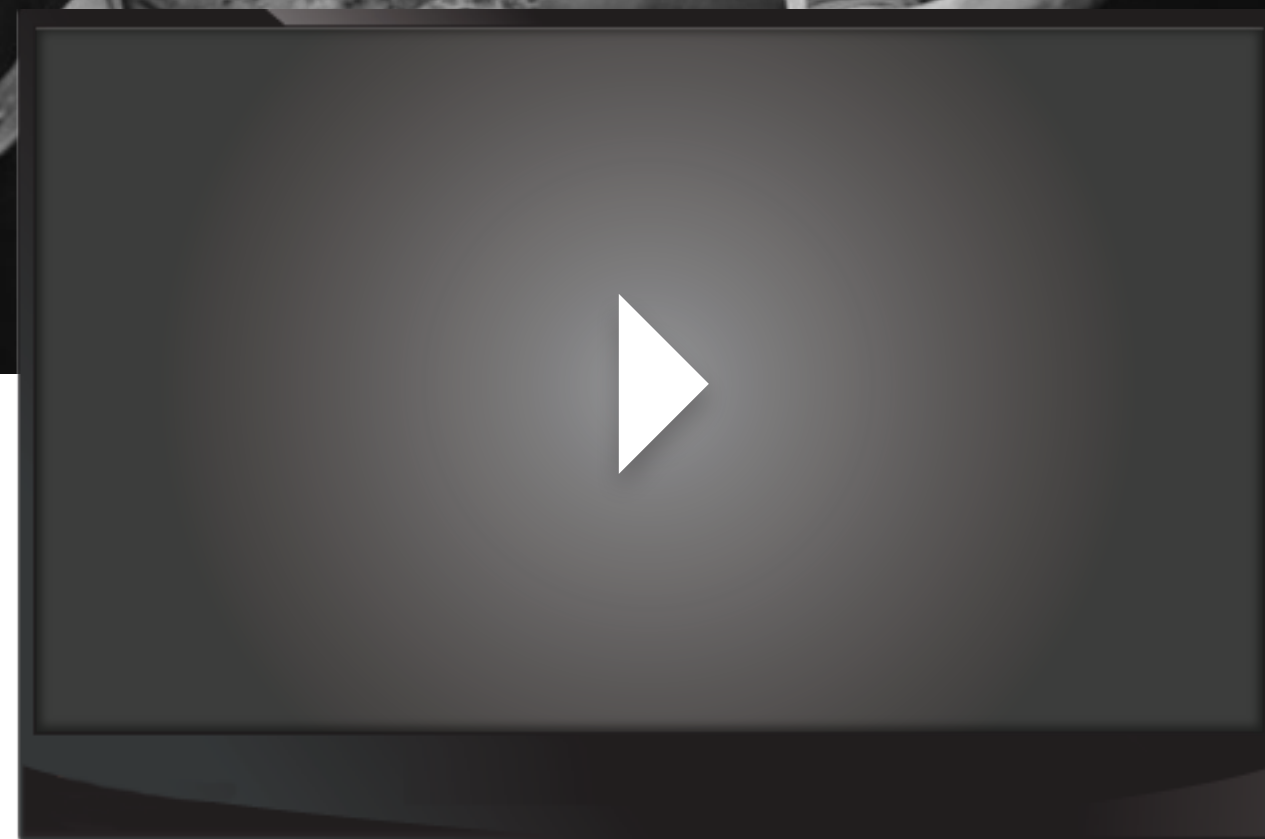
You'll find all the chord voicings and scales from the video in the TAB section at the end of the magazine.

Next time we'll delve into 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> chords before expanding into modal harmony and more complex progressions.



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# Michael Casswell

## PRO CONCEPTS

### Chromatics and Passing Tones'

Hi everyone. Here we are again talking about ways to think, play, and sound better. This issue I would like to talk and demonstrate the beauty of passing notes and chromatics. So what's a passing note? Well, in my world, it's a note that doesn't always belong to the key centre, chord, or scale, but you use it anyway to get to a note that does. I'm sure there are better definitions but hey, it's my column! What about 'Chromaticism'? I would say that is the use, or partial use, of all the notes you have at your disposal in a chromatic scale, of which there are 12 in one octave, and note 13 being the note you started on, so you could say that is note 1 again. Makes sense. If not, play your open E string, and play all the notes on that string,

on every fret, until you reach the octave at the 12th fret. That will be 12 different notes until you reach your E octave, and that is a chromatic scale. Easy! What isn't so easy, is including some chromatic phrasing in your improvisations, licks and runs.

I can't count how many times I have had students say to me that their playing is 'stuck in a rut', or how they always play the 'same old licks', and how they find it hard to actually feel like they are improving as players. Well, use of notes that shouldn't be there is a good road to explore and is a sure fire way of injecting some life into some tired improvisations and licks. There is a bit of an art to making it sound convincing, because you are always in danger of sounding like

[...>]



you have got lost, or are simply playing wrong notes, but unless you dive in and try, you will never develop your own little route planners that take you in and out (and hopefully back in) of the key centre.

There is an old muso saying that states that the best way to disguise a wrong note, is to play it again, and then again. As long as you are always aware of the root, thirds and sevenths of what you are playing over, then to a certain extent, you can play any combination of notes anywhere on the fretboard, as long as you start and end the run on notes that really belong, such as your root, third, fifth and seventh. The Jazz term for this is 'playing out'. The Blues term would be 'tension and release'. It really does get back to what I was talking about in my first bunch of columns for Guitar Interactive, which was 'creative thinking'. Being creative with the knowledge you already have and taking some risks, exploring, pushing yourself to make things sweeter, more exciting, more expressive, more interesting. It really doesn't follow that the more scales, theory, and technique you get under your belt, the better you sound. There are plenty of players out there who know everything there is to know about music theory and

**YOU MAY GET WHAT I'M GOING FOR STRAIGHT AWAY, AND ALREADY BE A MASTER OF IT, OR YOU MAY SIMPLY NOT UNDERSTAND IT OR LIKE IT, WHICH IS OK TOO.**



[...>]



technique, but when they play, it lacks excitement, passion, soul and falls into the category of 'generic' at best. Unfortunately there is no 'excitement' arpeggio, 'soul' scale, or 'passion' mode for us to learn, that all has to come from somewhere inside you!

So with my big motivational speech over with, I have tried to put four runs together for you, using an A minor pentatonic as a framework, but short of throwing the rule book out of the window (I hate rule books), and getting some passing tones and chromatics in there to spice it all up. The Pentatonic is the framework, but you can link a lot of these notes to the modes, or even the Melodic Minor, but for a simple framework and getting the idea across, the A minor pentatonic is easiest to see.

You may get what I'm going for straight away, and already be a master of it, or you may simply not understand it or like it, which is OK too. That is the beauty of guitar, everyone has their own viewpoint of what's cool and what's not. One thing is for sure though, simply copying note for note solos of your favourite player may not

be the quickest way to mature as a potential professional. It has its place, but you need to back it up with your own ideas and creativity.

Masters of this technique would be Larry Carlton, Steve Lukather, Scott Henderson, John Petrucci, Pat Metheny, Mike Landau, Brent Mason to name a tiny few. Hope you enjoy the demonstrations, and as always you can speak to me via my Lick Library forum, or the Michael Casswell musician page on facebook. Or I will see you here next issue. MC



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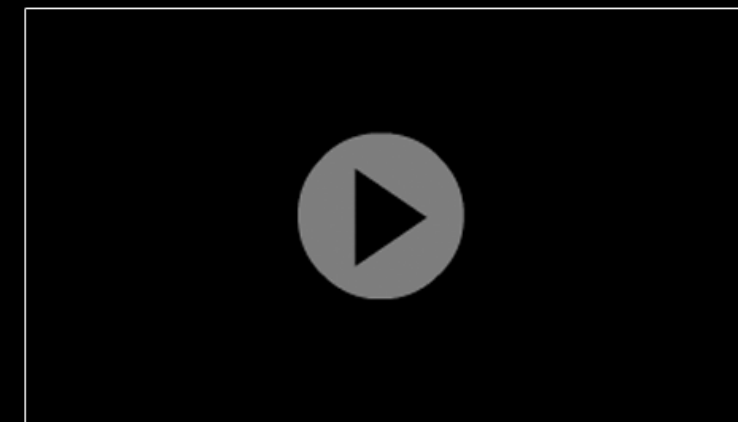
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# METAL EDGE

By Andy James

Andy James continues his blistering new series -

## HOW TO PLAY FAST.

Hello and welcome to this issue where we are going to take a look at the second instalment of "How to play fast".

Hopefully, those of you who have taken a look and gone through the examples in the first lesson, should now be ready to extend your playing into using two strings. These next four examples are using the high E and the B string and predominantly using the alternate picking technique in the right hand. For me this is a preferred technique for playing fast, as it is more accurate and places less strain on your left hand than using, say, purely legato technique, which requires a lot more left hand strength.

The aim of these exercises is to build up strength, accuracy and co-ordination which are the three most important aspects to developing a clean and consistent overall technique on guitar. They are not the most musically exciting examples but, never the less, boredom often sets in with repetition, but as the old adage states "No pain, No gain!". If you stick with this kind of thing, you will see results, it's only a matter of time before your body gets used to this type of

playing and should feel easier the more you do it. Ironically the better you get, the less you have to practice as it becomes just like riding a bike and even if you don't play for a week, you could still consistently pull these kind of licks off without breaking a sweat.

Don't get me wrong, practice is the key! But, when the technique side of things doesn't hinder you as much, you can spend more time working on your expression and musicality, which ultimately makes you into a musician and not just a guitarist. This is important if you want people to enjoy your playing overall, rather than just having short-lived interest in your playing by others just for being a fast guitarist.

Let's take a look at the exercises that will hopefully develop your speed.

### LUCK 1:

This is a pentatonic lick in the key of E minor. it's a lick that alternates two notes moving - the top two notes in fact. The 17th fret then changes to the 15th fret and alternates. The key to this lick is the pull-off after picking the first note, which will make

[...>]

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this lick flow a lot better and allow you to build speed relatively easily. Always take the time to practice this slow and pay attention to keeping the notes clean and even. Then this should remain as you speed the lick up to the maximum speed you can manage.

### LICK 2:

Now we are venturing into three note per string territory which is a very common way of playing fast on the guitar. Quite often this is used over all six strings, either using positions of the major scale, playing six note groupings in octaves, or playing string skipped pentatonic ideas. All of which can utilize the pattern which we are about

to look at. Sometimes knowing a few well practised sequences allows you to extend them over much greater distances and gives you a lot of mileage. Again practice this sequence slow paying attention to the accents that help you keep time with this kind of lick.

### LICK 3:

This is an extension of lick 2 but is going to train you to shift between positions which is important because you need to be able to move through scale shapes so you don't get stuck playing in the same position all the time. Again, this is a sequence that can be used across more than just two

strings but with guitar it's better to start small with a pattern then just see how far you can extend it until you run out of fretboard. Trial and error is a very good way of building vocabulary, and also application helps for these new ideas to stay in your brain. Often when I learn a new lick or technique, it will creep into everything I play so it sticks. Also new techniques can inspire whole songs though that isn't always the case.

### LICK 4:

A few years ago I decided that using sweep picking as a primary technique for playing arpeggios wasn't proving to be the best technique for me. There are certain things I like to sweep but there are always things you wish you could really nail in this world, but just can't quite get. I think it's very rare, with the exception of a few, to be able to completely nail every technique in the book. I decided that this more simplified way of playing arpeggios was going to work better for me, along with string skipping. Quite often I will re-arrange things to fit my own technique especially when playing other people's stuff, but that is the beauty of the guitar, that this can be done. Emphasis on playing this slow is a must to get the shifts under your fingers then gradually speed it up.

All these licks can be practised to a metronome or drum machine just to help you with your inner clock, then when you come to using this stuff with a band it makes rhythmical sense.

That's it for part 2 of "How to play fast", until next time, rock on!



### USEFUL LINKS

[www.andyjamesguitarist.com/](http://www.andyjamesguitarist.com/)



## Hi folks and welcome to my latest column for Guitar Interactive.

So far we have looked at some hybrid picking ideas for pentatonic scales, runs, position shifts etc. This month we are going to go a little further and look at some other licks where we can use hybrid picking. The legato technique has been used for many years by many players as a way of creating smooth lines for soloing. The greatest exponent of this technique is arguably Allan Holdsworth, who originally tried to emulate the sound of a saxophone on the guitar.

The world of Rock guitar has also had its exponents of legato such as Ritchie Kotzen, Marty Friedman, Vinnie Moore and countless others. Brett Garsed is an amazing guitar player and uses the legato technique

extensively. Brett is a guy who has a foot in the Rock camp and a foot in the fusion camp and bridges the gap very nicely. I mention him because he uses hybrid picking along with legato. We are going to look at some hybrid picking ideas that use both legato and arpeggios.

Let's take a look at lick no 1. This lick kicks off with a c maj 7 arpeggio immediately using the hybrid picking. We hammer from the major 7th to the root using one pick stroke then the 3rd is played with the middle finger the 5th is then played with a down stroke from the pick. You may be thinking to yourself, "why not sweep the second and third notes of the arpeggio" and the answer is, you can. I find using the hybrid picking helps me to really "nail" the timing of these arpeggios and also some people find this method easier than sweeping especially at varied tempos.



[...>]

# Stuart Bull's

## GUITAR WORLD

### hybrid picking





The next part of the lick runs straight up a C major scale three notes per string eventually sliding from the 8th fret 1st string to the 10th fret first string. At this point we have a descending lick using hybrid picking completing the phrase.

Lick no 2 starts out life the same as lick no 1 but we add a legato twist as we reach the G string. We add a group of seven which throws the timing off nicely and stops our licks from being too didley, didley, didley. We use our original 3 note per string pattern

for the second and first strings finishing the phrase with a nice simple pull off idea.

Lick no 3 starts to mix up our legato groupings. We have a group of 3 followed by a group of 5 then 2, 2, 1, 3, 6, 2, 1. Using these different groups of notes helps our licks to sound interesting and breaks us out of the regular "Lick goes up lick goes down" type of thing.

See you next time. Regards Stuart.



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## MICHAEL ANGELO BATIO'S "HANDS WITHOUT SHADOW'S - A TRIBUTE TO ROCK GUITAR"

IS A MULTI-MEDIA SHOW COMPLETE WITH MULTIPLE VIDEO SCREENS, LASERS, INCREDIBLE LIGHTING, ON STAGE THEATRICS AND OF COURSE THE AMAZING GUITAR WORK OF THE "#1 SHREDDER OF ALL TIME" (GUITAR ONE MAGAZINE) MICHAEL ANGELO BATIO. FOR INFORMATION ON BOOKING THE "HWS" SHOW CONTACT:  
**CHRISTY CATLEY - VENUEPRODUCTIONS.ORG PHONE: 1 216 407-3872**  
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North London on a chilly Sunday evening in December may not be the world's most glamorous location - but when you're hoping to win Guitar Idol III, or if you simply want to hear some of the world's best young guitarists, it suddenly develops an irresistible appeal!

Started in 2008, the Guitar Idol competition has become the coolest and largest guitar competition on the planet, the organisers claim - and it's hard to disagree with them.

The success of Guitar Idol 2008 was unprecedented, with more than 250,000 unique visitors and contestants from all over the world. 12 Finalists flew into the UK to compete in a stunning live final at the London International Music Show 2008, with the winner opening for Shred legend Yngwie J Malmsteen. Guitar Idol 2009 was even bigger with over one million unique visitors watching the heats and 160,000 people registered to vote for the online finalists, and the Live Show Finalists coming from South America, Europe and the Far East. The celebrity judge for this event was none other than Steve Vai who chose his own favourite shredder, Daniel Gottardo, who went on to record an album on Steve's label.

Now in its third incarnation, Guitar Idol this time had the backing not just of the World's largest online guitar community Licklibrary.com, but also Marshall, PRS, Blackstar, Faith Guitars, The Guitar Institute and Jaden Rose Guitars.

The playing was tight - the judging close - and the winner on the big night of 4th December came as a welcome surprise. Despite the domination of the evening by electric guitarists, it was the stunningly good Canadian acoustic player Don Alder who was judged Guitar Idol by the organisers' panel of professionals. Click on the video and find out why Don was awarded the Marshall stack!





WINNER 2011

# Don Alder

THE PLAYING WAS TIGHT - THE JUDGING CLOSE - AND THE WINNER ON THE BIG NIGHT OF 4TH DECEMBER CAME AS A WELCOME SURPRISE. DESPITE THE DOMINATION OF THE EVENING BY ELECTRIC GUITARISTS, IT WAS THE STUNNINGLY GOOD CANADIAN ACOUSTIC PLAYER DON ALDER WHO WAS JUDGED GUITAR IDOL BY THE ORGANISERS' PANEL OF PROFESSIONALS.

DON WAS GIVEN A CLOSE RUN FOR HIS MONEY, THOUGH, BY ROMANIAN GUITARIST MARIUS POP, WHO WON A HANDMADE JADEN ROSE GUITAR AND TREMENDOUS APPLAUSE.

**PUSHED CLOSE ALL THE WAY**

Marius Pop





## LICK LIBRARY'S OWN JAMIE HUMPHRIES

Don was given a close run for his money, though, by Romanian guitarist Marius Pop, who won a handmade Jaden Rose guitar and tremendous applause.

But there's always more to Guitar Idol than a night on the town - even a great one like that. After the show was over, voting was thrown over to the world's guitarists via Guitar Idol website. And did the world's guitar players agree with the professional judges?

Yes they did - but there were still more prizes up for grabs. Italy's Franco Perla won a huge number of votes and scooped the star prize - a \$2,500 Paul Reed Smith guitar. Iranian

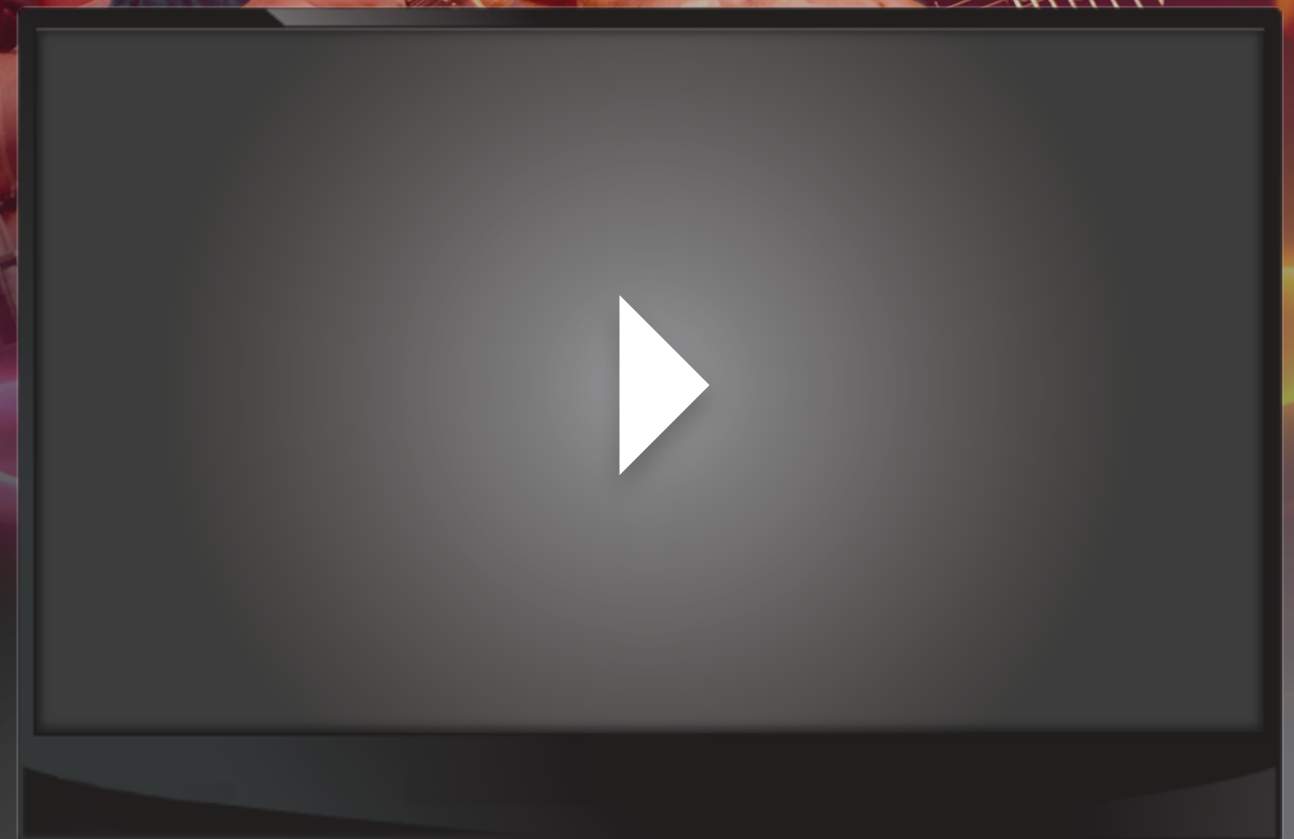
born Maneli Jamal - another acoustic player, now based in Canada - not only found himself immediately signed-up as a columnist for Guitar Interactive but also won a Faith acoustic guitar. Eugene Berger, from Israel, walked off with the Blackstar prize, while Germany's Nico Schliemann won a Roland recording package, donated by The Guitar Institute.

Check out the performances for yourself - and prepare to be amazed! Then get ready for Guitar Idol IV: you are going to enter, aren't you?



## LICK LIBRARY'S OWN STUART BULL

"View all 12 Guitar Idol Finalists [Here On Youtube](#)"



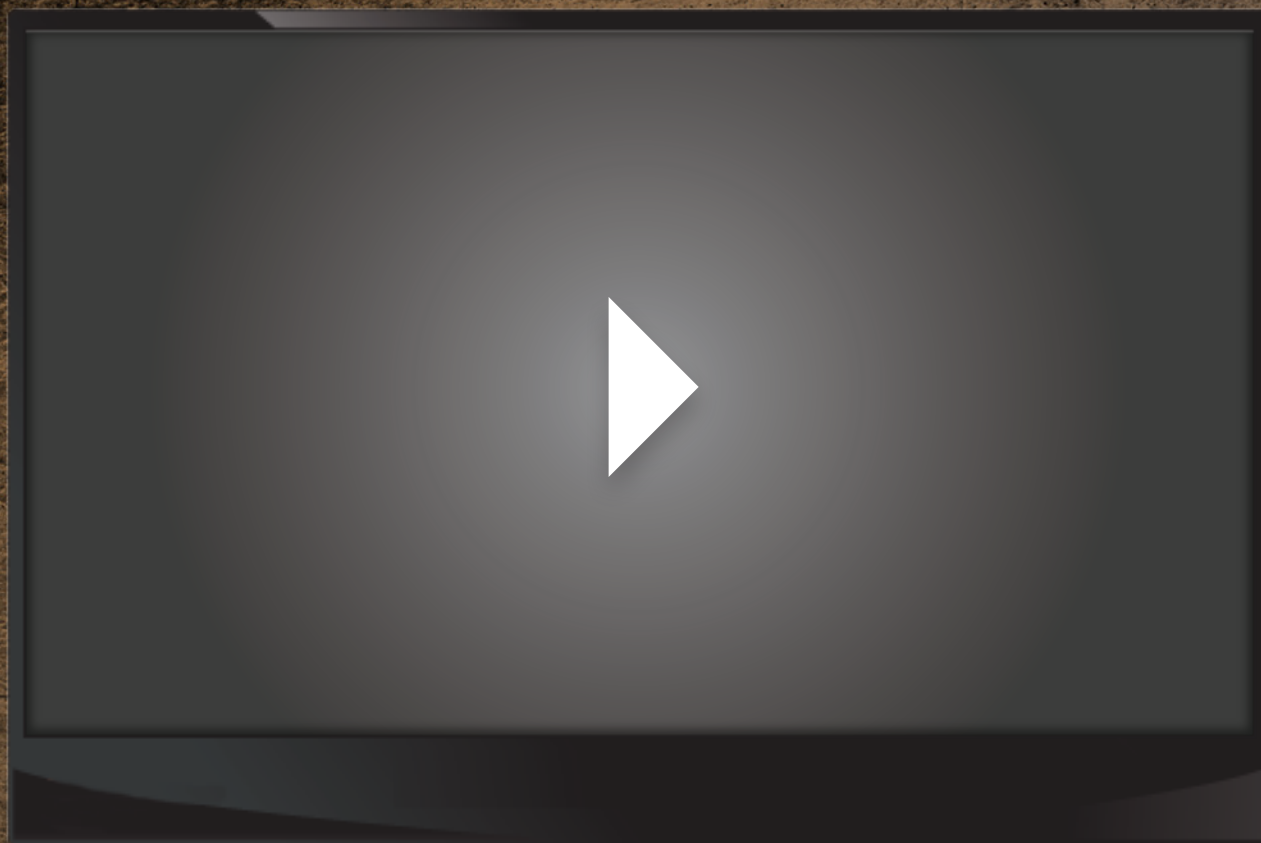


# THE LISTENING ROOM

**John Stix** listens as top players discuss their influences.

*Alex Lifeson & Carlos Santana on Nostalgic Lady*

by Jean- Luc Ponty and Allan Holdsworth from Enigmatic Ocean (guitar solo starts 3:00 in )



“What record is this? It’s beautiful. I never knew that Ponty and Holdsworth recorded together. Holdsworth is fantastic. I saw him with Bruford live in London, and thought he had such a great sound that I had to use the same amps – Marshall combos. Then I got the vibrato arm on the guitar and it became almost scary. I started to pick up a lot of what he does with the arm. I have to be careful about this. His mastery of the fretboard, the way he moves across it is quite unique. Ponty and Holdsworth are really well matched. I like their selection of notes, the harmonies they develop and the way the bass covers the whole thing so there’s constant movement between all the instruments. Holdsworth’s playing sometimes borders on a violin sound. He’s got a really good sense of what instruments can achieve and applies that very well in this song. Here I think he’s playing more as a guitar player, but other

times he sounds almost exactly like a sax or violin. I’m going to buy this record.” – Alex Lifeson

“That’s Allan Holdsworth and he’s probably the best of the best right now, as far as putting all these elements of Charlie Parker’s inspired and burning like crazy and B.B. King’s, the summit of feeling, together. Yet he sounds totally like himself. I give him more credit than anyone else on just pure expression in soloing. I love his compositions on the Tony Williams albums. You put somebody like him together with the guitar player in the Police (Andy Summers) and you have something totally beautiful. I give this solo all the stars in the world. They way he put it together was brilliant”. – Carlos Santana

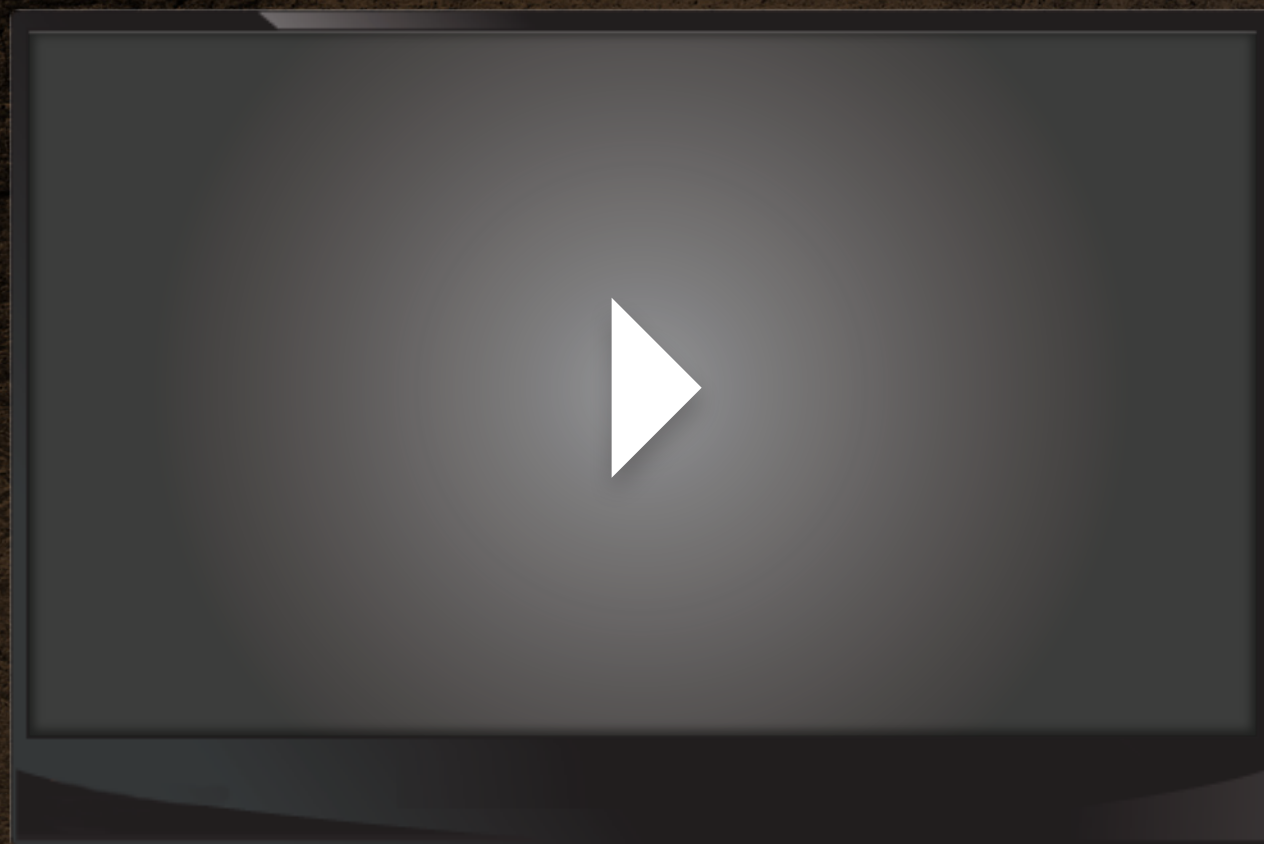


**John Stix** was the Founding Editor-In-Chief of Guitar For the Practicing Musician Magazine and a principal architect for the creation of Guitar World and Guitar One Magazines. He started Guitar Recordings where he signed Blues Saraceno, Mike Keneally, Mark Bonilla, Randy Coven, and Brad Gillis. Currently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



# VIDEO GEMS

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



“Music is like a virus that spreads from person to person”

They are all over the place and you can see them and hear them on just about any night of the week in any corner of the world. Where I live we go to the Lazy Lounge in White Plains or Pete's Saloon in Elmsford and there they'll be. We're talking great musicians killing it for a small but enthusiastic audience. The band is wailing and the audience has it all, the girl out front dancing by herself, the standing listeners nearby, and the guitarist with this arms crossed saying show me to the soloist. And he is being shown. We've got the drinking buddies bobbing their heads and the music geeks, like me, blown away because they are hearing great music in a club or a bar and wondering how this could be happening at such an intimate venue so close to my home.

Music is like a virus that spreads from person to person. Did you hear, did you see, did you catch this guy? You gotta go. My buddy reminds me at least once a year how I turned down his ride to go into the city and check out this double bill at Max's Kansas City. There were ten people there and he was one of them witnessing Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band opening for Bob Marley and the Wailers. There is also the time I was too lazy to see the debut performance of the original Mahavishnu Orchestra open up for John Lee Hooker at the Gaslight in NYC's Greenwich Village. These are among my biggest musical mistakes.

So now I drag my guitar buddies to hear Gil

Parris. I don't know that Gil will reach the heights of Springsteen or McLaughlin, but I do know his live performance has given me the same “in the moment” highs and physical goose bumps that I experienced with these other guys. He is a wonderful guitarist, whose playing can reach inside you and convey true feeling. Like a young Larry Carlton, Gil Parris is beyond being a guitarist's guitarist. With the requisite chops, ideas, tone, ideas, feel etc. he is an everyman's guitarist. Simply put, girls like his playing too.

Like Santana or Dickie Betts, Gil knows how to construct guitar lines that are easy to follow. He plays catchy melodies; he repeats phrases so you know where you are and then continues on in a path that is clear and fun to follow. He invites you along as he solos and has the ability to make you feel what he is feeling.

On this ballad he plays live to a track on a Voice of America performance. It's got everything I tried to express above. Gil Parris is a killer player in my neighborhood. You've got them in yours too. So you gotta go out and see them live. That thrill you feel in your neighborhood club is the same thing you feel at the arena, if you're lucky. So do yourself a favor and take advantage of the convenience, for all you know the next Jeff Beck might be playing just around your corner.



[...>]



# GUITAR INTERACTIVE'S ISSUE 5 FUSION F1 GIG BAG COMPETITION!

## AND THE WINNER IS.....

We had a fantastic number of entries to Gi Issue 5's 'win a Fusion F1 Gig bag' competition - hardly surprising as Fusion is fast becoming the top international brand in advanced instrument protection bags!

Fusion bags not only combine the latest high-tech materials, offering tough water resistant protection for your guitar, but they also use the unique fuse-on system, which enables you to choose from five different add-on bags that can expand and customise your choice to make a unique bag for your gigging style.

With a Fusion bag you can custom-specify a package that will provide safe and secure storage for your laptop, cables, phone, accessories - even your clothes! - making it the perfect product for the gigging guitarist.

Fusion bags are available for just about any guitar style - models include standard electrics, dreadnought and classical acoustics, basses, Explorers, two basses in one bag (!), plus a complete range for brass and woodwind instruments. There are even Fusion bags for ukuleles and cellos!

We had one Fusion F1 Premium guitar gig bag, worth £119.95 (US\$ 179.90) to give away and our lucky winner, chosen at random from the entries received from registered Guitar Interactive readers was Andy Paraskevas, from London, England - congratulations, Andy!



**Vintage**

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*Dave 'Bucket' Colwell*

Dave 'Bucket' Colwell  
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**Paul Guerin**  
The Quireboys

**Paul Raymond**  
UFO

**Gary Sanford**  
Joe Jackson, Aztec Camera.

**John Parr**

**Jim Cregan**  
Steve Harley, Rod Stewart, Kate Melua

**Geoff Whitehorn**  
Procol Harum

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WIN!

## WIN A YEAR'S WORTH OF ERNIE BALL SLINKY STRINGS + GREAT EXTRAS IN OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY ERNIE BALL COMPETITION!

Ernie Ball, the US company that invented custom and light gauge guitar strings, is celebrating its 50th birthday this year.

To help kick-off the party atmosphere, Guitar Interactive teamed up with Ernie Ball and U.S. distributor Strings and Things to offer the lucky reader 12 sets of their choice from the fabulous Ernie Ball Slinky range. It's a year's worth of strings for free! All you have to do is enter our competition and email the answers!

In addition to 12 sets of Slinky strings, the three winners will each receive a unique

Ernie Ball/Strings and Things T-shirt, a Power Peg - the self-contained tuner that allows you to tune your instrument up to 10% faster than the traditional manual pegwinder! Featuring a proprietary Power Peg head which fits virtually all bass, acoustic, and electric guitars, you don't even need mains power as the Power Peg runs off four AA batteries!

Our Ernie Ball Slinky competition is completely free to enter but you must be a registered Guitar Interactive reader (it's easy - if you haven't already, just sign-up today - it costs nothing). All you have to do then is answer the following three questions by e-mail.

TO ENTER

Email your answers (e.g. Q1 - C) along with your name, email address and daytime phone number, marked 'Ernie Ball Competition' to [competitions@iguitarmag.com](mailto:competitions@iguitarmag.com)

1/ All entries must be received by 16th March 2012. 2/ No cash alternative is offered instead of the stated prize. 3/ All entries must be submitted via e-mail. 4/ Employees of Guitar Interactive, Licklibrary, Ernie Ball, Strings and Things and their immediate families are ineligible for this competition. 5/ The winner will be chosen, at random, from registered readers of Guitar Interactive who provide the correct answers. 6/ The judges' decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into regarding this competition. 7/ Entrants must provide a contact telephone number and valid email address 8/ Prizewinners must consent to having their name and city/country (e.g. 'Andres Segovia, Madrid, Spain') published in a future issue.

iG





Guitar Interactive 5 REVIEWS SECTION British Rock Guitar  
Books Gary Cooper  
REVIEWS

## BRITISH ROCK GUITAR THE FIRST 50 YEARS - THE WINNER!

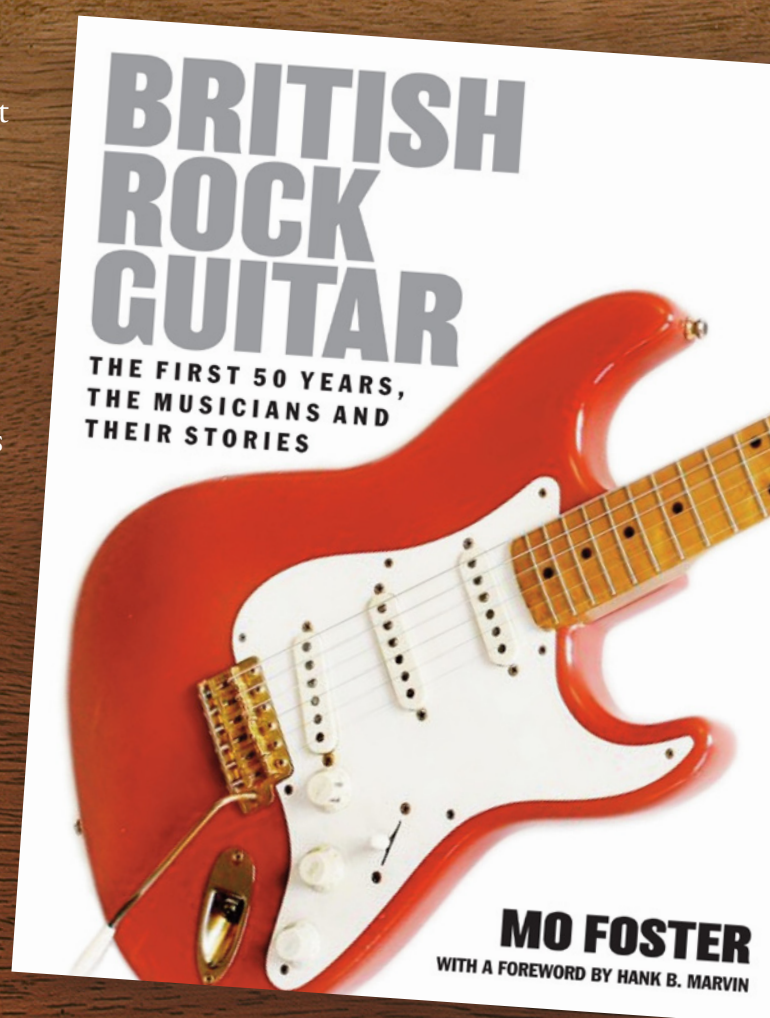
Back in Guitar Interactive Issue 5 we reviewed session bassist Mo Foster's fabulous new book, *British Rock Guitar, The First 50 Years*. As a first hand guide to what the early days of Rock and Roll were like in the UK - let alone as a source of some of the funniest musicians' stories - it's without equal.

As we said in our review: "This isn't a book to sit and read at one session: it's to be enjoyed - indulged in! - by dipping into as the mood takes you. Younger readers may shake their heads in disbelief that things really were that primitive when Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck and Brian May began to play - but those of us who were there at the time will know that every word in this book is true. Especially the exaggerations!"

We had one copy to give away and our lucky winner, chosen at random from the entries received from registered Gi readers was Konstantin Dneprov, from Moscow, Russia!

Congratulations, Konstantin!

Thank you for all your entries - and if you didn't win, buy Mo's wonderful book anyway. You won't regret it!



STUART BULL'S

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**Jamie Humphries** - Johnny Marr Tech Session



**Tom Quayle** - Using Modes to expand our chord vocabulary



**Andy James** - How to play fast Part 2



**Giorgio Serci** - Spanish Romance Part 2



**Rick Graham** - Extended Pentatonics



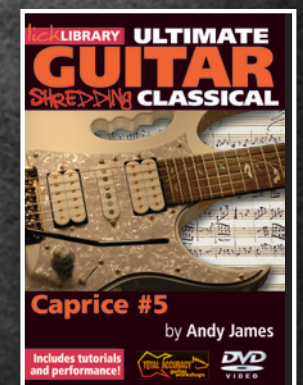
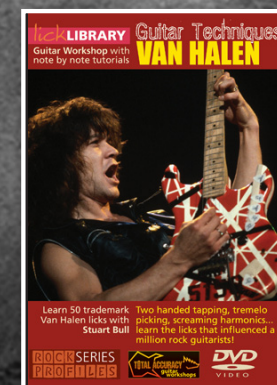
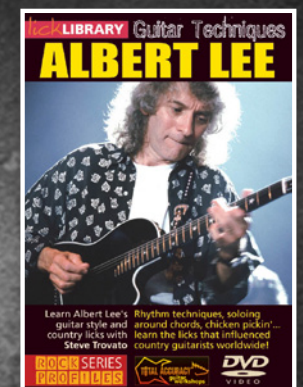
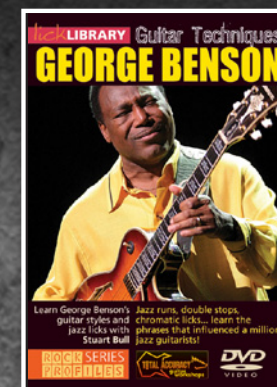
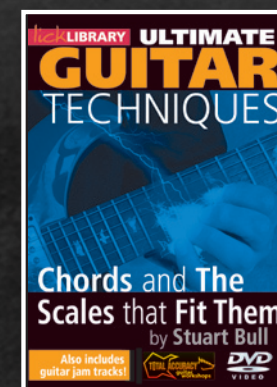
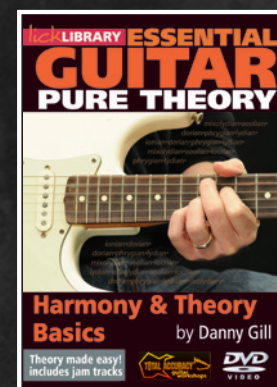
**Maneli Jamal** - Lesson 1



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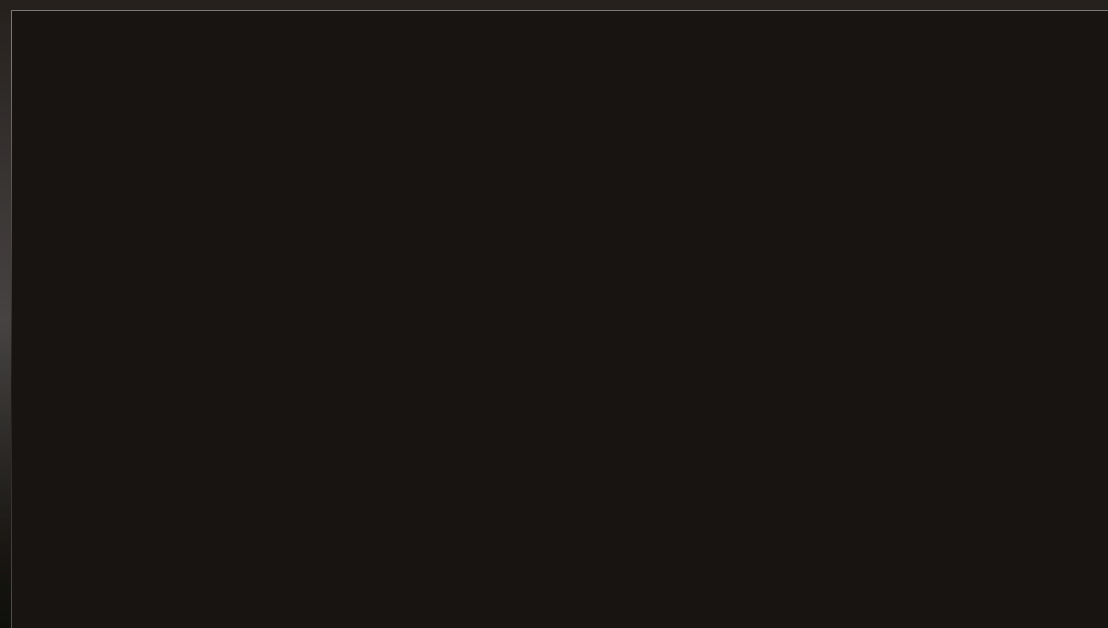
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# Reviews

Welcome to Guitar Interactive's  
reviews section.

There's a distinctly international feel to this issue's reviews with products from right around the world. Germany contributes the Diezel Hagen head - one of the fast-growing breed of handbuilt German valve amps that are starting to make serious inroads into the professional market.

The USA is represented by a guitar we've wanted to get our paws on since issue one - a Suhr, the near-legendary Californian brand that has gained so many followers in recent years, as well as a Carvin V3M tube head. From Korea (via Nashville, Tennessee) we have a Samick-built guitar designed by a former Gibson luminary - the JTR Linda, while from Austria we have the unique - not to say idiosyncratic - Deeflexx sound deflector, which caused so much interest when it was chosen as one of our star products in Gi 6's 2011 roundup!

Gary Cooper - Editor

From the UK (OK, via China!) we have a Burns Double 6 12 string, as used by one of this issue's interview stars, Wishbone Ash's Andy Powell, and some of Blackstar's latest tube-driven pedals. From Denmark we have the stunning TC Electronic Voiceprint FX and from Japan (also via China) an Ibanez RG. That last is by reader demand, let me add - so thanks for the feedback and please keep it coming: we want to know what you want to hear and read about.





# Burns Double Six

Said to be the most user-friendly electric 12-string on the market, the Burns Double Six is also a piece of guitar history. Elvis had one and so does this issue's interviewee, Wishbone Ash's Andy Powell! So how does the Burns stack up in the world of electric twelves? **Tom Quayle** finds out.

If you judge these things by the number of guitars sold, Burns probably remains the single most successful British guitar maker in history. The company, the brainchild of Jim Burns, began life back in the 1960s, rapidly achieved huge success and looked set to make the transition to international fame and fortune, when it was sold to the (then) US giant, Baldwin, back in 1965. Not to mince our words, Baldwin might as well have dug a big hole and dropped Burns in it. But by the 1980s, Jim was back, with the first of what was to prove, sadly, a succession of failed attempts to revive his reputation as a guitar maker, before his death in 1989.

Despite this sad end, for a generation of 1960s British guitarists, the Burns name is evocative of a golden era, when even the Shadows sported Burns guitars, having abandoned Fender, and almost every aspiring British Rock guitarist either had a Burns at one stage, or really wanted one.

Today, Burns exists in two forms. There are handmade models, selling for very serious money, and a range of far more accessible versions, formerly made in Korea, now in China. So when our Editor spotted a

Burns Double Six 12-string in the hands of Wishbone Ash's Andy Powell (no stranger to fine guitars!) he whistled one up from the UK distributor and, as the man who recently took on the equally legendary Rickenbacker 12-string, back in *Gi Issue Four*, guess who got to review it?

The Double Six features a basswood body and bolt-on hardrock maple neck, finished in a very nice green burst with a classic polyester finish. You can have red if you prefer and there are rumours of some white ones, recently. A rosewood fretboard is complemented by vintage sized frets and a brass nut, with a wider string spacing than other 12 strings, allowing for easier playability and fewer fretting errors. Tones are supplied by three vintage Burns Trisonic pickups finished in chrome to match the other hardware and a Gotoh bridge gives a great upgrade from the original '63 model, allowing for individual saddle adjustments for each string.

This model features smaller, more accurate tuners than the original, though their size does make the headstock look enormous, but it's certainly not an ugly design and tuning

The finish and build quality belie the low price tag, with no obvious construction issues and good quality hardware.

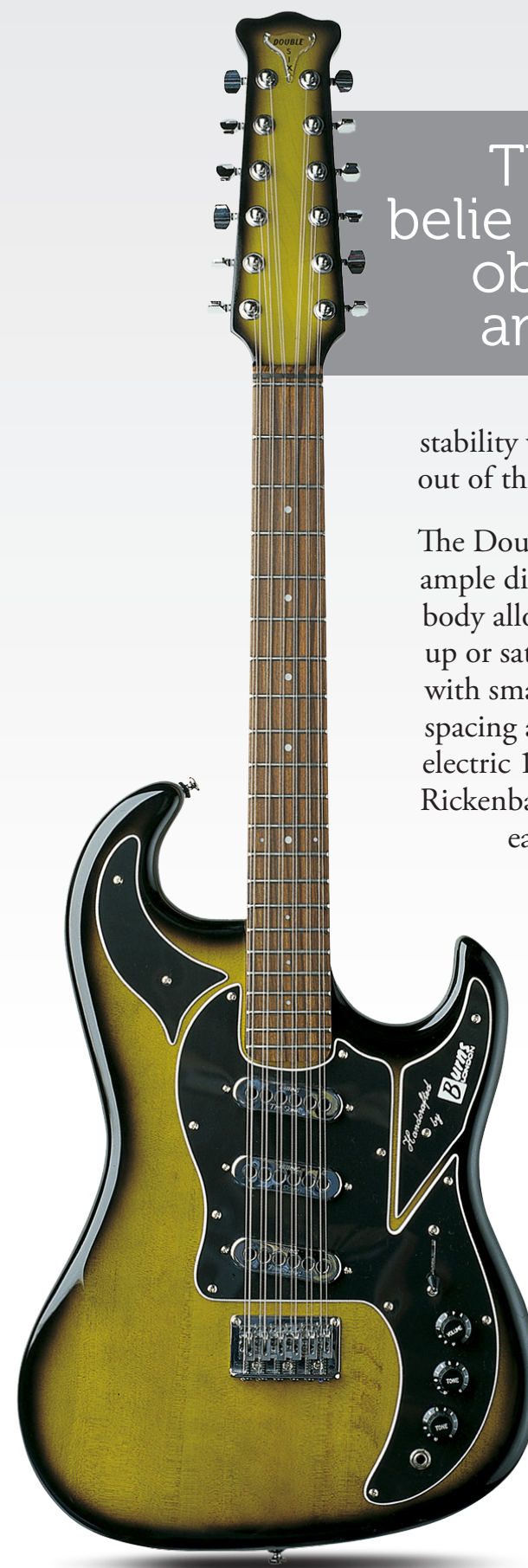
stability was very solid with the guitar arriving perfectly in tune out of the case.

The Double six is a surprisingly light guitar considering its ample dimensions and the contours fit very snugly into the body allowing for comfortable playing positions whether stood up or sat down. The wider neck may cause problems for those with smaller hands but I very much appreciated the extra string spacing and found this to be one of the most comfortable electric 12-strings I've tried. Yes, even simpler to play than the Rickenbacker 330-12 I recently looked at. Chordal playing was easy and accurate and right hand picking was less 'hit and miss'.

The finish and build quality belie the low price tag, with no obvious construction issues and good quality hardware. In fact, the guitar feels like it comes from a much higher price bracket and is all round a delight to play. To be blunt, the somewhat angular design won't be to everyone's taste and I don't think I would describe this as a beautiful guitar, but it will appeal to players after a vintage, British instrument. Burns has some very serious fans and collectors and if that is the kind of thing they like, they'll love this very affordable incarnation!

Tonally, the Double Six is a delight, with every combination of pickups sounding highly musical and inspiring. Whilst 12-strings will never be the most versatile guitars on the market, the Double Six is more so than most,

[...>]



MSRP £719.99/\$Unknown

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC 



with the multitude of pickup configurations derived from its 5-way switch and push/pull tone control allowing for a further three sounds. The volume and tone controls were smoothly tapered and with a chorus and delay pedal put through the loop of our studio amp we were in tonal nirvana! Combined with the great playability this presents a very inspirational package that is hard to put down.

The Double Six is supplied in a high quality hard case with a rather garish grey snake-skin type design. The sheer fact that a case is included is fantastic at this price - even if the finish is very much a matter of taste. Within the case you'll find a nice padded Burns strap and all the tools you'll need for set-up and maintenance. These extra touches are very much

appreciated and make the package feel superb value for money.

I think the 12-string market has limited appeal so it's unlikely that this guitar will set the world on fire. They aren't the most versatile instruments but the Burns certainly stacks-up very well next to the other 12 strings on the market, and with greater playability. Whilst there are certainly prettier guitars out there, the Double Six deserves your attention simply because it represents such great value and feels and sounds superb to play. Frankly - it's a bargain!



# BILL KELLIHER

MASTODON

SG1820



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**YAMAHA**



# Carvin Micro Series VCM

Micro amps have taken the bass market by storm but do they have the same appeal for guitarists? US maker Carvin thinks so and wowed last year's NAMM show with its all-valve micro series. **Rick Graham** gets down to business with a Micro series V3M.

Despite great success in the USA, where it has a star-studded list of endorsers, including Joe Walsh, Steve Vai and Allan Holdsworth, Carvin has remained a bit of an enigma outside its homeland. Though available - at least in the UK - it has tended to be the preserve of a handful of specialist retailers - not uncommon for a boutique brand, of course, but Carvin is far more mainstream in its native North America. A recent change in UK distribution means that its amps, at least, are now receiving wider attention here, so we arranged to borrow one of Carvin's Micro Series valve amps - the all-valve V3M to see what had made such an impact on its launch.

Unboxing the V3 was a very easy affair, especially when it came to actually lifting it, due to its rather remarkable weight of just 19lbs (8.6kg)! I'm often surprised by the sheer weight of some of the small amps that arrive in the office for review, so this was a big plus point. If lugging gear around is a headache to you, this is certainly a good reason to look at the Carvin!

Aesthetically, I personally found it to be a little on the unusual side and although this has no bearing on the most important

factor - its sound - a classy design goes a long way in my book and the Carvin is... well, it's different, so I'll leave the wow-factor judgements to you! Having said that, one of the coolest features on the Carvin is the LED light switch at the rear of the amp. Choose from red or blue LEDs which light from inside the head itself. Very cool!

Businesswise, four EL84 tubes can be found in the amp's power section, while four 12AX7 tubes reside in the pre-amp. This amp is only designed to take EL84's so if you were thinking about swapping to 6L6's, you'd have to think again. At full power the V3 is capable of belting out 50 Watts but thanks to an onboard attenuator that can be reduced to 22 Watts, or even further down to seven Watts, which is a bit more suitable for those who don't want to make their neighbours' lives a misery!

The effects loop can be found at the rear of the amplifier, alongside the variable impedance switch to match your cabinet, footswitch connections and a very useful variable boost which can add up to 6dB of volume boost for solos, activated via a footswitch.



MSRP £749/\$1,299

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC





The V3 is essentially a three channel amplifier, offering a clean and two overdrive channels. However, it is within each of these channels that the fun really starts! All three channels offer the same rotary controls: Drive, Volume, Presence and a three band EQ. In addition, each channel comes equipped with a three-way switch which gives you access to three different 'drive modes' within each channel. Each of these 'drive modes' changes the gain structure of that channel thereby placing a huge range of tonal possibilities at your fingertips.

On the clean channel (ch3) I found that the actual setting should be set at five or above to get the best out of the drive modes, although it works fine for settings below that. For a more clean sound, I set the drive to below five.

However, not only are there lots of tonal possibilities with the drive modes alone, Carvin has also added an 'EQX' switch for each channel. This switch is an 'equaliser expansion' facility which gives access to a wider frequency range for the three band

treble, middle and bass rotary controls found in each channel. Very nice indeed!

In action, the V3M delivers some very nice tones even with all the settings on flat. The cleans, whilst not mind-shattering, were very nice and the gains from light crunch through to heavily saturated, were tight and responsive all the way. It's not hard to see why the Carvin was so well received at its launch.

The sheer amount of features contained within this micro package is staggering. If you're looking for an elusive sound it might very well be here but you also might also have to dig around for it - a factor which you can look at as either a positive, or negative, of today's highly versatile amplifiers.

If you are looking for a very versatile micro amp that is jam-packed full of features and easy to transport, you owe it to yourself to check-out Carvin's V3M.



[...>]

[...>]



# Blackstar HT Delay, Modulation and Reverb FX

Blackstar exploded onto the amp scene just a few years ago. But before the amps, its reputation was made with a clutch of tube-driven overdrives. Slightly overshadowed by the amps' success, the company has since expanded its pedal range to include three models that do more than boost your signal.

**Michael Casswell** investigates.

If I can offer any advice when it comes to buying guitar effects pedals, it would be that they are there to enhance your sound - not to replace it. Which, roughly translated, means that you should ideally spend your money on the best possible guitar you can afford, followed by the best possible amp. Only then should you consider how you can expand your sound with a few choice pedals, because - let's face it - if your core tone isn't happening, and you spend a chunk of money on a delay pedal, then it still won't be happening when you delay it....it....it....it.

The market is saturated with choice when it comes to pedals and we often base our selection on price, word of mouth, who is using what, true bypass or buffered, analogue or digital, etc. So for a pedal to stand out amongst the crowd, it sometimes needs a unique selling point. Blackstar has the HT range of pedals which all come equipped with an onboard ECC83 (aka 12AX7) valve that you dial in to taste, turning a state of the art digital effect into a real retro-sounding pedal that recreates the vintage vibe of effects used 30 or 40 years ago, but without the vin-

tage problems, such as hiss, signal loss, dead batteries and general moodiness just when you want it to work!

The valve isn't the only cool thing about these pedals. In effect (!) you get eight basic sounds with each, plus the ability to modify them and, importantly, an extra button next to the on/off which will give you an option on whichever of the available presets you have chosen.

So, for instance, if you are using the HT Reverb pedal, with the plate setting dialed-in to just how you like it, the other button can give you two modes of that plate reverb: short or long. In real world live use, this is a great versatile asset to have, and not just a gimmick to sell the pedal. Why, it's almost like these pedals have been designed by guitarists!

What you have here - and you can check them out in detail on our video - are three pedals delivering, as the name suggests, reverb, delay and modulation. We all know what the first two are, but 'modulation' is



[...>]



SRP £199/\$375.99

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC



described by Blackstar thus: “From gentle tremolo to roaring jet engine flange, the HT-Modulation brings you all the musicality of classic vintage effects pedals. For ease of use the Slow/Fast feature lets you adjust the modulation time of the eight different modulation effects while you are playing. The unique Saturation control then lets you add real valve compression and harmonics.”

That’s really the essence of these pedals. You get a good quality digital effect plus the benefits of ‘vintage’ sounds, courtesy of the ECC83 and that extra, highly useful, switching facility.

Obviously, the short/long button on the HT delay will give a shorter or longer delay with whichever preset you have selected, but where I think this feature really shines is on the HT Modulation, which on preset seven and eight has a tremolo and a rotary setting. Both are great sounds in themselves, but with our extra button this time giving a fast slow option, the effect is fantastic on the tremolo and very inspiring on the rotary setting, simulating the speeding up and slowing down of a spinning Lesley cabinet. If you also start dialling in the valve with the saturation control, you then get the added harmonic distortion and compression that a driven Lesley cab would give you. The fast/slow button works on all the other

The HT reverb, delay and modulation pedals all come with 8 presets to choose from



[...>]





presets, which feature some great warm vintage style chorus, phaser and flanger settings.

The HT delay, meanwhile, had a great seven second sound on sound looping device, which again gives great live possibilities, and if layering isn't your thing, then preset seven gives you the facility to record a 7.2 second phrase and trigger it when you stamp on the pedal. Again, great live potential. You can also get very convincing vintage tape echo sounds when you wind up that valve!

If you consider the option to push each preset with the onboard valve, plus the added short/long and fast/slow switches, you can see how versatile these pedals are. And I only scratched the surface, due to time constraints!

If I had to play devil's advocate and search around for something to say against these Blackstar pedals - which I don't want to because they are great - then it would be that each pedal is fairly large and heavy and



would quickly swallow up real estate on your already crowded and way-too-heavy pedal board. Although saying that, they look tough and because they are physically tall, you can stick them at the back of your board and the switches would probably stand proud enough to be easily reachable. I should also add that these all feature fully buffered bypass operation and come complete with power supplies - a welcome touch!

The Blackstar guys make great products all round, and these HT series pedals cover a lot of sonic areas very well and definitely have some great, well thought-out features. If you're in the market for a new pedal (and who isn't?) you should definitely give these three some serious consideration.





# Suhr Standard

We've wanted to get our hands on one of John Suhr's guitars for a while now. But how do you review a guitar when every one is different? Fortunately, a few ready-made models make their ways to selected retailers, so we asked ever-so-nicely and a kindly guitar shop loaned us one. We promised **Tim Slater** wouldn't drool over it... too much.

OK, hands-up who hasn't dreamed of owning an exquisite custom guitar? The idea of owning a great instrument built to your own specification definitely appeals but where do you start? The Suhr Standard offers a great way to follow this path, combining the security of placing your trust in a highly respected brand along with a mouth watering selection of woods, pickups, hardware and finish options, including a pre-aged relic-style finish if you prefer.

Suhr Guitars hardly needs any introduction, its reputation for excellence is demonstrated by its raft of high calibre endorsers: fusion players Guthrie Govan, Scott Henderson and our very own Tom Quayle, sit alongside rockers Reb Beach and Doug Aldrich in the Suhr cannon. Players of this calibre could endorse any guitar manufacturer that they wanted but their endorsement of Suhr seems to be driven by a deep enthusiasm for the brand, which is evident whenever you talk to them about Suhr guitars.

We've wanted to get our hands on a Suhr for a long while but the problem has always

been how. Fortunately, some more or less 'standard' models do escape John Suhr's Lake Elsinore Californian factory and we were able to borrow one from the UK's new Tone World store in Manchester - to whom we owe deepest thanks for lending us an item of their precious stock!

The guitar in question represents an example of the flexibility offered by John Suhr's custom options. It's based on Suhr's Standard template, which uses the distinctive and most widely known double cutaway body shape. Mahogany forms the main part of the solid body, which features standard front and rear body contouring but whose upper and lower horns are sharper and slightly more aggressive looking than a standard Stratocaster body profile. Overall, whilst the final impression falls just short of the 'pointy' look of the classic superstrat, it still adds a nice racy-looking twist to the immortal double cutaway style.

The top, in the case of our sample was finished in a strong orange/red sunburst and was fashioned from a high quality piece of



MSRP £2,975/US N/A

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC





quilted maple, serving as a great example of what I call a 'furniture' guitar: in other words, it looks just as impressive sat on a guitar stand in a carefully lit corner of your living room as it does slung around the player's neck!

The Standard's mahogany neck features one of many custom neck profiles available - in this instance the 'RB' profile, as specified by the US rock guitarist Reb Beach (of Dokken and Alice Cooper fame). This neck feels very comfortable, suggesting a blend of a modern neck profile gently blended with the comfy rounded 'C' profile of a vintage Fender. There is plenty of meat on the back for the player to rest their hand on but the depth gradually tapers off the further your hand travels up the fingerboard, it isn't noticeable, except that the neck feels consistently comfortable all the way along its length, a

sensation enhanced by the compound radius fingerboard that features Suhr's standard 10-14-inch radius that flattens out to 14-inches once you get into the serious string bending zone beyond the 12<sup>th</sup> fret.

From the moment that you first pick it up, the Standard really seems to come alive in your hands, it has masses of natural sustain and resonance that translates into an ebullient, sparkly sound when the guitar is plugged in. The pickup choice on this particular model sidesteps the humbucker/single/single set-up one might have expected to find in favour of a slightly less compromising humbucker/single/humbucker combo. Suhr also designs all of the pickups for its guitars and its pickup range duly includes several pickups based on the demanding specs of its endorsers.



The Standard reviewed here duly sports a pair of Doug Aldrich high output humbuckers in the bridge and neck positions and a Mike Landau single coil located in the middle.

At 17.5k and 9k respectively, the Aldrich bridge and neck pairing represents the most powerful pickups in Suhr's range, yet they don't sound anywhere as overblown as you might think. Even with plenty of overdrive, the Aldrich set still sounds very 'clean', with very good definition on individual notes. The bridge pickup in particular has plenty of low-end chunk but the bass frequencies still sound amazingly tight and punchy, reflecting the guitar's naturally bright ringing acoustic tone. High output pickups sometimes don't perform too well out of their intended musical genre, once you begin to move out

of the metal zone then raw power doesn't always translate into the crisp versatile performance demanded by well-rounded Rock or Fusion players but the Aldrich pickups feel like an exceptionally well balanced and highly efficient set. They also make an ideal match with the Mike Landau single coil in the middle position (the Landau pickup is available in two types: the vintage style Classic and the slightly hotter Standard, which is used on this particular guitar).

The bladed five way pickup selector grants effortless access to either humbucker plus the single coil in isolation and the two popular hollow sounds available when the outer coil of either humbucker is tapped and combined with the single coil.

[...>]



As an all-round Rock player's guitar the Suhr standard feels like the ideal workhorse, albeit a very upmarket thoroughbred as opposed to a reliable old nag! You can use this guitar in a huge variety of musical situations and it makes its presence felt with an authoritative voice that is nevertheless very easy on the ear. The only thing that will affect the final judgement on this instrument is entirely down to personal taste, if you like the idea of owning one of these but the colour and specs of our review sample aren't quite to your personal taste, pop along to see your friendly local Suhr dealer who will doubtless be happy to help you indulge your every whim when ordering a Suhr Standard to your dream specs!

This is an investment-grade guitar that also doubles as your go-to everyday axe, if you have to boil everything down to one guitar that will do just about everything whilst retaining the 'wow' factor to keep you from straying to another brand, then this Suhr Standard is a very safe bet. It's about as good as the breed gets.

Our thanks to Tone World for the generous loan of this Suhr guitar: [www.toneworld.co.uk](http://www.toneworld.co.uk)



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# Deeflexx Sound Deflection System

The Deeflexx is a high-end sound deflection system designed to even-out the beam of sound produced by loudspeakers in guitar, bass and keyboard cabs. But does it work and do you need one? **Tom Quayle** investigates...

Austrian designer, Hubert Hochleitner, the creator of the Deeflexx Sound Deflection System, says he invented the device to solve a problem that bedevils all loudspeakers - that they produce a beam of sound. You'll have experienced this beam effect if you've ever EQ'd a great tone and then put your ear down at the same level as the speaker and heard a totally different sound. Usually it will appear to be much more shrill, with pronounced high and bottom end frequencies as your ear becomes level with the speaker.

You will also probably have noticed that, as you move around a large enough room, your tone will change depending on where you are relative to the speaker. Again, it happens because the majority of the sound is distributed in one direction as a beam. Conversely, it can often be a problem to hear yourself or be heard by other band members on stage, as all of your sound is being pushed into the audience away from you. You may even have experienced this as an audience member where being stood or sat directly in front of a speaker can be a painful, whereas the guys either side of you are enjoying a much better tonal experience.

The Deeflexx looks to solve these problems by sitting in front of your speaker and distributing the sound around the room in a much more even fashion and removing the harshness of the beam for the musicians and the audience.

The unit certainly looks the part, constructed from very high grade, reassuringly strong plastic. It wouldn't look out of place as a modern sculpture in a New York loft apartment. The foot of the unit slides under the base of your cab, holding the V-shaped structure in front of the speaker to deflect the sound around the room. At the moment the Deeflexx will only work with 1x12 or 2x12 cabs, as the speaker needs to be positioned close to the floor so that the structure can deflect the sound adequately, so if you're lugging a huge 4x12 around then you need not apply. Things are more complicated with oversized or ported cabs but the Deeflexx will still work as long as the speaker is positioned in front of the unit.

Demonstrating this kind of a product on a video, where the sound is picked up with a single or dual microphone set-up is notoriously difficult, as you really need to be in the room to get the full effect, but you can really hear the effect on our review video.



[...>]



MSRP £279.53/\$TBA

STAR RATING ★★★★★ CHECK THE SPEC





I sat to the right hand side of the amp and, once positioned in front of our studio cab, the Deeflexx did a remarkable job of opening up the sound and recapturing the frequencies that were present in the original beam of sound from the speaker but not reaching me in my seated position. Even the film crew sat either side of the stage could hear a marked difference in the tone that was reaching their ears, saying they could experience a warmer sound and less variation around the room.

We tested the deflection capabilities of the unit by positioning a microphone about 1.5 metres above the cab and moving the Deeflexx in and out of position.

The change in the signal picked up by the mic was great with the unit in place and the sound in front of the amplifier was far less harsh and piercing.

The Deeflexx would be really useful in a number of situations. Live, you'll be able to spread your sound around the stage more effectively and hear a better representation of your tone without resorting to tilting the cab or lifting it up on a stool. For recording, I had great results positioning a mic just above the top of the unit where a sweet spot seemed to occur in frequencies and gave me better results than miking-up a single spot on the speaker.



the Deeflexx did a remarkable job of opening up the sound and recapturing the frequencies

This build quality and impressive performance come at a high price tag. However, you are getting a unit that isn't simply a beam blocker. It has been designed very professionally and with care and does its job very well. For the bedroom guitarist and hobbyist I'm not sure this is going to be a necessary purchase but for semi-pro and certainly pro players who value their sound on stage and in the audience this could be a very worthwhile purchase, likewise for mobile studios, film sound crews, hire companies - there's a long list of potential

customers. Just bear in mind that you'll need one Deeflexx for each speaker that you're using.

I know a number of guitarists who won't do a gig without one now and I highly recommend that you check it out.

So far the Deeflexx system is only available in Europe, but the manufacturer is actively looking for distribution in other areas.





# Diezel Hagen

German boutique amp brand Diezel is winning friends among pro players around the world - **Jamie Humphries** finds out why.

Over the past few years there has been a surge in the popularity in boutique amplifiers. Small companies, offering hand built amplifiers with custom features and more “specialist” tones, have started to give some of the larger manufacturers a run for their money, even pushing some of those bigger companies to start offering “boutique” features themselves. Many of these boutique companies have also attracted big name artists and endorsers, chasing exquisite tone and build quality.

German amplifier manufacturers Diezel is the brainchild of Peter Diezel. Like many boutique amp builders, Diezel started out by modifying Marshalls for himself and then for other players around Munich. Peter found the Marshall amps limited in potential for modification and was ready to start work on his own midi switchable four channel amplifier when he met Peter Stapher, a pro guitarist who was experienced also in sales and marketing. The pair went on to start Diezel amplification, with the VH4 going into production in 1994.

Word spread outside Germany with the VH4 quickly finding its way to LA, being used by such artists as Metallica, Neil Schon and now Alter Bridge, as well as by Muse guitarist Matt Bellamy, in the UK. Diezel continued

to grow, with other high quality feature packed amps as the Herbert, the Einstein, plus Diezel’s first class A amp, the Schmidt, aimed at blues, jazz, country and more classic rock guitarist.

At the 2011 Frankfurt show Diezel launched the Hagen, a direct response to the demands of the modern day guitarist, using different tunings, wanting more flexibility tonally, and with switching, all in a single, user-friendly box.

I was very excited to get my hands on the Hagen, having spent some time playing the Schmidt in Frankfurt and loving the rich, full-bodied classic tones. The first thing I noticed about the Hagen was its weight! This amp is heavy, not that I’m complaining, as to me this is a sign of good build quality, implying a sturdy chassis, high quality woods, plus a high quality output transformer. In fact the entire finish of the amp is stunning, with a thick vinyl covering, black metal front fascia, with the “D” of Diezel cut out of the metal, revealing the inside of the amp, tubes and output transformer as well as supplying cooling and ventilation to the head. The amp uses four EL34 power amp tubes, and six 12AX7 pre-amp tubes.



The amp uses four EL34 power amp tubes, and six 12AX7 pre-amp tubes.



MSRP £2749.99/\$3,998

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC

[...>]





At first glance, the control panel may seem rather confusing, as it certainly carries a lot of knobs, but to be honest it's pretty straightforward and simple and you can tell this amp is designed by guitarists for guitarists. The format comprises four independent channels, with the controls running horizontally across the front of the amp. The controls for each channel include volume, gain, bass, middle and treble. The four channels offer Clean, Crunch, Mega and Lead. The master channel includes two master volumes that work globally across

all of the channels, plus a presence and depth control, for low and high end EQ on the power amp stage of the amp. All of the channels can be selected via midi, or by using the switches on the front panel. There is also a mute for tuning-up.

On the rear of the amp we have the speaker outputs, plus three effects loops, one midi switchable, one serial, and one parallel, with a volume control, so there's lots of flexibility when utilizing this amp with effects.

This amp really did sound great out of the box. In fact I think you would have to work pretty hard to make it sound bad! I started off with the clean channel, which was warm and full, spending some time just turning each of the EQ controls fully on and off. Doing so I could really hear how well voiced the amp is, and how the controls work dialled to any position. I have found that with some amps that the controls only work for a certain portion of their turn, but this was not the case with the Hagen. I should also point out that I did the same thing

with the controls on all of the channels, and the results were the same, enabling the user to dial-up a multitude of tones, ranging from warm jazz/funk, to bight spanky Country or jangly Indie. If you push the gain control you can also start to get the clean channel to begin to break up, especially when you hit the guitar harder.

Moving onto the Crunch channel, here I was able to get some great vintage tones, but so much more than just the sound of an old Marshall. The tones were warm and full bodied





and the amp cleaned-up beautifully when I backed off the guitar volume control.

As you start to push the gain you can go from vintage Cream, to Free and AC/DC, and beyond, as the amp starts to get pretty saturated as you push the gain control further.

Now onto the Mega channel, where we start where the crunch channel left off. Here you can push the gain further and get very thick, modern, high gain rhythm and lead tones: great for power riffing!

Finally to the Lead channel and things are really flying now! Plenty of gain and saturation, but not too compressed or fuzzy sounding, just beautiful, expensive high gain! Let's not forget that with the two, switchable,

master volume controls, the flexibility of this amp is pretty amazing.

Check out the video and hear for yourself!

As you can tell, I was really impressed with the Diezel Hagen. The downside, of course, is that it's not cheap, being as well into the upper end of boutique territory pricewise, as it is in terms of its tone. But if you can afford this sort of money, what you are getting in return is superior build quality, the highest grade parts that will stand up to live and studio punishment, amazing flexibility and, the most important factor, the sound: rich, full dynamic and articulate. This is a high end piece of kit for the serious guitarist who demands the best; check it out!



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# Ibanez RG870 QMZ Premium

Some say the Ibanez RG series represents the ultimate in contemporary Rock guitars. Shredders speak its name in hushed tones. We gave an RG870 QMZ Premium to **Tim Slater** and told him to let her rip....

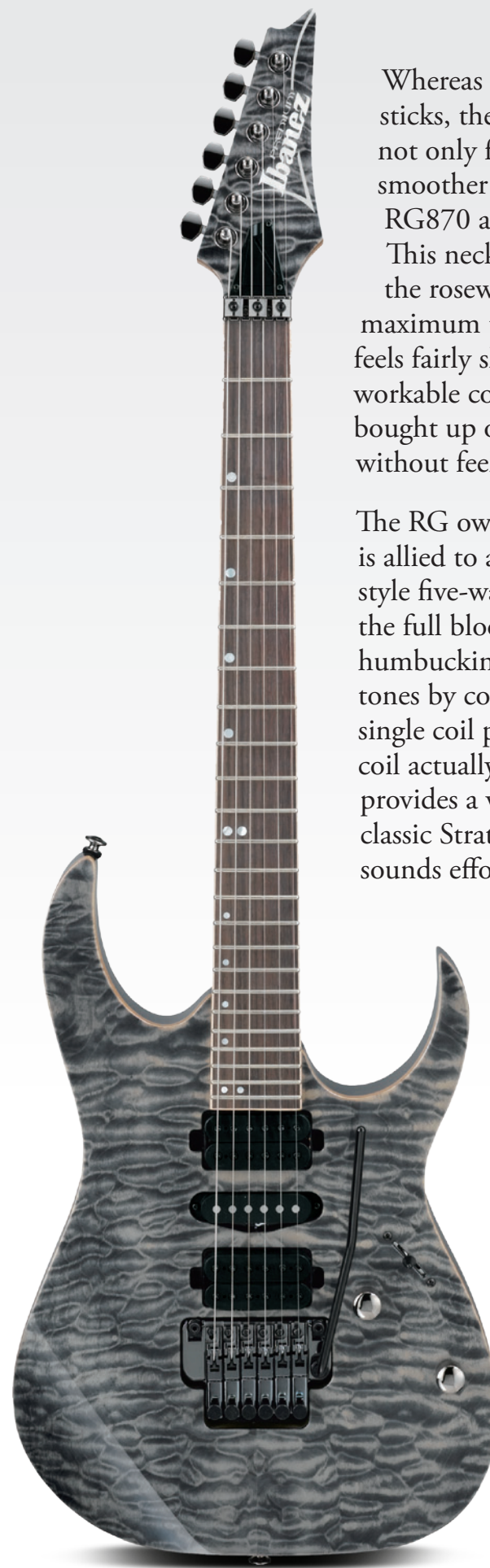
If you were to take a poll among guitarists below the age of 40, asking which guitar brand is the most popular, the chances are that Ibanez would rank very highly indeed. Break down that analysis even further and the Japanese giant's RG models would undoubtedly stand out as one of the world's most widely played guitars. Since the RG series emerged during the mid 1980s shred-boom, it has found a home with a surprisingly diverse range of guitarists. Make no mistake; the RG series' fan base is huge. Besides being appreciated as a reliable workhorse by the legions of professional and semi-professional players, function band guitarists and shredders that form the bulk of its users, the Ibanez RG also enjoys a cult status as an iconic guitar. The Internet is humming with websites, users groups and forums that are totally devoted to this omnipotent totem of all things shred-tastic!

A major reason for this must surely be down to über rock guitar virtuoso Steve Vai – whose original JEM/Universe models gave the RG series its initial impetus - and whose loyalty to the Ibanez brand is duly reflected by the devotion lavished on the RG series by its followers worldwide. Vai's popularity notwithstanding, another reason helping

to sustain the RG's popularity is that it is available in a huge range of models that cover just about every price point, for example, the RG870 QMZ reviewed here is designed to offer similar specifications to Ibanez' top-flight Prestige class models but at a more affordable price.

It duly features the familiar pared-down double cutaway body profile and bolt-on neck with the same double octave fingerboard as its stable-mates in the RG series. The 'Premium' components are both cosmetic and also an integral feature of the guitar's hardware array; the contoured basswood body is capped with a very high-grade quilted maple top (our review model features the transparent Black Ice finish, with Red Desert and High Voltage Violet finishes also available on this particular model). The laminated maple/walnut neck marks the next evolution in Ibanez' popular 'Wizard' neck, named after it's slender profile and virtually flat radius that provides the ideal platform for two-handed tapping, sweep picking and a host of similarly impressive techniques from the modern Rock guitarist's trick bag.

Ibanez has fattened-up the Wizard neck significantly since its inception.



Whereas the original Wizard necks felt as slender as lollypop sticks, the latest version feels chunkier and more rounded, which not only feels more comfortable but it also makes for a much smoother transition for first-timers who are migrating to the RG870 after a lifetime spent playing a Stratocaster, for example. This neck still conveys a very individual feel - especially due to the rosewood 'boards ultra flat 15-inch (400mm) radius - and its maximum thickness of 20mm at the 12<sup>th</sup> fret. The Wizard neck still feels fairly slim but Ibanez has done a very good job of achieving a workable compromise. Guitarists who are not necessarily born and bought up on Ibanez can still literally get to grips with the RG870 without feeling completely at odds with the overall feel.

The RG owes a lot of its superb versatility to its pickup array, which is allied to a very well conceived switching system. A simple Strat-style five-way bladed selector switch enables the player to access the full blood and thunder of the VM1 and VM2 bridge and neck humbucking pickups whilst also obtaining very usable 'in-between' tones by combining either humbucker with the central VM1S single coil pickup located in the middle. In isolation the single coil actually sounds very good, the glassy yet punchy performance provides a very good clean rhythm tone that approximates the classic Stratocaster bite, while the aforementioned 'in between' sounds effortlessly unleashed by positions two and four on the pickup selector delivers the distinctive hollow 'quack' that countless players still prefer as their default rhythm guitar tone.

The VM1 and VM2 humbuckers sound like they are carefully balanced and both sound highly distinctive: The VM1's slightly nasal or scooped character perfectly encapsulates the aggressive modern Rock tone that Ibanez has virtually cornered the market in for so long. This tightly honed performance is tailor made for high-gain overdrive and also works very well with effects processing, the guitar just seems to sit really well in the overall mix and whilst there isn't an over abundance of natural bottom end, a quick adjustment of your amp's EQ will soon beef up the tone and darken things to a very satisfying degree. The neck pickup naturally sounds much smoother and is probably the more forgiving of the two humbuckers when it comes to clean or mildly overdriven tones, sounding more supple

[...>]



SRP £874.80/\$999.99

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC



and sympathetic to the player's touch than its more ferocious neighbour at the bridge. Cranked-up, the VM2 neck pickup still 'hoots' nicely, it won't fool anyone that this is a '59 Les Paul but it nevertheless sounds butter-smooth.

The Edge-Zero locking vibrato featured on the RG870 QMZ is a state-of-the-art system with a removable stop bar that prevents the guitar from going wildly out of tune in the event that the player suffers a string breakage. The stop bar does stiffen the vibrato action somewhat but it can be easily removed to facilitate a softer, more pliable feel from the vibrato if you prefer.

One word about the setup, our review sample felt reasonably OK but it still didn't feel as lush or silky as one would expect from a guitar sporting this apparent level of refinement. I have to stress that it was

still playable, I didn't feel the need to limbo dance under the strings or anything like that, but somehow it didn't grab you like you expect or indeed hope it would. Perhaps this slight feeling of detachment stems from the RG870's pedigree as a thoroughbred.

This is an impressive looking guitar that just oozes refinement from every square centimeter but it isn't a cuddly kind of instrument that you want to snuggle up with, it feels more like a scalpel: sharp, purposeful and yet rather cold. I'm sure that its many fans would prefer to describe the RG870 as 'focused' and that is exactly what this guitar feels like. You know that it will perform to its utmost; it will be up to the player to infuse it with a bit of individual personality.



**Hagstrom**

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REVIEWS: Diezel Riggs head, Sahr Standard, TC Percussion pedals, Ibanez RG Blackstar PA, Burns 12 string, Z1 Launchbox, Carvin VM



# TC Electronic TonePrint Pedals

TC Electronic scored a major first with its TonePrint pedals - the first effects to allow uploadable, artist-created presets or TonePrints, vastly expanding the potential and versatility of each pedal. But are TonePrints of real practical use and how good are they as pedals on their own? **Tom Quayle** got stomping.



TC Electronic certainly hit a winner when it came up with its TonePrint series of pedals. The range has been selling strongly at a very competitive prices since their launch and the ever-growing roster of artists who have created easily downloadable presets is impressive - from Paul Gilbert, Steve Morse, Steve Vai and John Petrucci, to Ron

'Bumblefoot' Thal and Steve Stevens. It reads like a who's who of legendary guitarists! But all of this means nothing if the pedals themselves don't sound and feel great. Luckily they do but before I look at them each individually, let's look at some of the features they have in common.

The first thing you notice when picking up the pedals is the solid construction and very compact footprint. These are small pedals and very roadworthy, clearly able to cope with a great deal of foot-delivered abuse. The knobs and switches are satisfyingly solid and feel expensive. Each pedal has a quick access back plate that only requires the release of one large screw as opposed to four. The inside is similarly solid and tidy with no extraneous wires or components that could be easily damaged during battery changes. Each pedal can be run from a single 9v battery or by a standard 9v power supply. A mini USB port on the back of each pedal allows for TonePrint uploads and firmware updates. True analogue bypass is featured across the range with no analogue to digital conversion happening with the pedals bypassed, thus preserving your tone. You can choose buffered operation for long cable runs if so desired though and that flexibility is a superb addition.

Recently TC announced the addition of bass TonePrints making the range even more versatile and a recent app for iOS and Android allows users to beam TonePrints to the pedals via their guitar pickups for the ultimate in portable preset management!

## Flashback Delay & Looper

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC



The Flashback is the delay pedal in the range and features 11 delay types including a great looping function with 40 seconds of sampling time. Delay times can go up to an insane 6 seconds and range from super clean digital recreations of the famed 2290 to grungy Lo-Fi sounds and modulated

soundscapes. For such a small pedal it's amazing that TC has managed to squeeze so much into the unit. Delay time and feedback are controlled in the usual fashion and can be mixed with the analogue dry signal via the FX Level dial. A small toggle switch selects between a quarter note delay and dotted 8<sup>th</sup> notes for your U2 moments. You can even select a combination of the two



with the switch in the downward position. Stereo ins and outs allow for a stereo set-up, or for studio use and the delays are so clean and noiseless that even pro users should be excited by the options on offer. The looper function is the icing on the cake and allows

[...>]





as many overdubs as you need and very easy operation. TC has included the ability to hold down the pedal switch and physically play a tempo using the audio tap function. It's very effective and probably more accurate than the standard tap tempo approach. There is even a dry kill mode for use with parallel effects loops.

When all of these features combine with the flexibility to download new presets to the TonePrint function, it's a no-brainer. If you're after a delay pedal and don't need a super high-end boutique analogue unit then you'd be mad not to check out the TC. At this price there's very little to touch it.

## Hall of Fame Reverb

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC



The Hall of Fame features ten reverb types plus the TonePrint function, allowing for 11 different reverbs in one tiny unit. Reverb types include the standard Room, Hall and Cathedral affairs but with the additions of more creative sounds such as modulated reverbs, Lo-Fi sounds and gated reverbs to inspire you. Decay time and tone can be controlled via the top two dials and FX level can be adjusted with the dry signal remaining analogue right through the signal chain to preserve your tone.



Reverbs range from short slap back style sounds to infinite decays that are perfect for those ambient moments, especially when using the modulated mode. Pre-delay can be switched between short and long via a toggle switch and the unit features the same kill dry mode as the Flashback. Stereo ins and outs are provided and the sounds are easily good enough for studio use as well as in a guitar rig. Operation is whisper quiet and the Reverbs sound full and very realistic, a particular favourite being the great Lo-Fi mode that had a really gnarly quality for overdriven sounds. Again, the TonePrint mode adds even more flexibility for almost any reverb you could ever desire. Priced very competitively and with high end sounds on board this is a stunning reverb pedal that should be ignored at your peril!



[...>]





## Corona Chorus

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC 

The Corona is the first of the simpler TonePrint pedals, with fewer options than the Flashback and Hall of Fame. The pedal features Speed, Depth, Tone and FX level controls with a toggle switch to select between Chorus, TonePrint and TriChorus operation. Chorus operation (based on TC's own legendary SCF pedal) offers lush, digital choruses ranging from subtle and smooth doubling sounds to warm and round chorusing all the way up to Leslie-type sounds or crazy modulated madness should you desire it. Engaging the TriChorus mode adds two more independent choruses to the signal and thickens things up greatly, allowing for some truly huge sounds. Even at the extremes of the controls things remained very quiet indeed with no loss of tone, thanks

to the dry signal remaining in the analogue domain throughout. It's not the warmest or most analogue sounding unit I've ever tried but for the cost and with the versatility of the TonePrint function, this chorus pedal should rightfully make it onto many pedal boards. If you need a great chorus and value the space on your board then check this pedal out now.

## Shaker Vibrato

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC 

The Shaker Vibrato gives subtle - or not so subtle! - pitch vibrato effects with two modes of operation – Vibrato and Latch. Speed, depth and tone can be dialled in as required, allowing for small pitch changes or larger shifts for Leslie-type sounds at higher speed





settings. Latch mode allows the user to press and hold the pedal allowing the vibrato to activate and let go again to deactivate it. This control allows for the vibrato to be brought in at the end of a note or chord instead of always being on. A rise time control adjusts the time it takes for the effect to swell in after the pedal is depressed. The effect is very high quality and clean, with no degradation of signal due to the analogue-dry-through integration. We also heard no addition of noise, even at extreme settings. This isn't an effect that you're going to use on a regular basis and doesn't represent the pinnacle of versatility but if it is something that you might use in your set-up you should check out the Shaker Vibrato. Don't forget that TonePrint function too. It's superbly built and sounds great.



These are pedals you'll want to own and cherish for years.

## Vortex Flanger

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC



The Vortex is a digital flanger designed to give a range of flange effects from subtle modulations to jet plane extremes. It features Speed, Depth, delay time and Feedback controls with two different modes - Flanger and Tape. Flange mode offers up a through-zero mode allowing for a positive or negative effect for your flanging sounds, whilst tape mode allows for a softer sounding flange. The TonePrint function is available for uploading presets to the pedal too. You can get a huge variety of quality flange sounds from this unit and it whilst they are firmly in the digital domain, the unit costs a third of the price of some boutique analogue units that will take up three times the space on your pedal board.

Again, we heard no extraneous noise being added to the signal and there were no pops or clicks whilst switching the pedal on and off. Stereo operation is provided for studio use or more complex guitar set-ups and the analogue-dry-through operation means no loss of tone even when the pedal is switched

on. If you're looking for a flanger that can recreate all the classic sounds, need quality but don't want to break the bank with boutique gear, then this is the pedal for you!

## THE FINAL VERDICT

Even if TC hadn't invented the TonePrint facility, these are really well made pedals, producing fabulous quality effects, selling at extremely competitive prices. TonePrint, however, elevates them from the merely great to the excellent because it means your purchase isn't going to be outdated - TC is offering its customers not just the chance to copy their favourite artists' settings but to include them inside the box, via a simple download. You can even modify the downloads, making the system even more future-proof and versatile. These are pedals you'll want to own and cherish for years.



[...>]



## JTR Linda LN30

Samick is one of the World's largest guitar makers, while J.T. Riboloff headed Gibson's custom division for 20 years. What happens when they put their heads together? **Rick Graham** finds out.

The JTR series is the culmination of a collaboration between Samick, which is one of the worlds largest instrument manufacturers, with guitar maker J.T. Riboloff, who spent twenty years with Gibson, heading the custom, art and historic division. Together they have come up with the JTR range of guitars which, while it may not have had a lot of publicity, has generally received nods of approval. It's not a big range, comprising (at least in the UK) a 'violin with horns' shaped model for HM fans called (naturally!) the Elvira, a cut-off/asymmetrical V (the Veronica), a Superstrat (the Marie) and a series of single cutaway designs the general shape of which, you can't help reflecting, Mr Riboloff must have been pretty familiar with when he worked for Brand G!

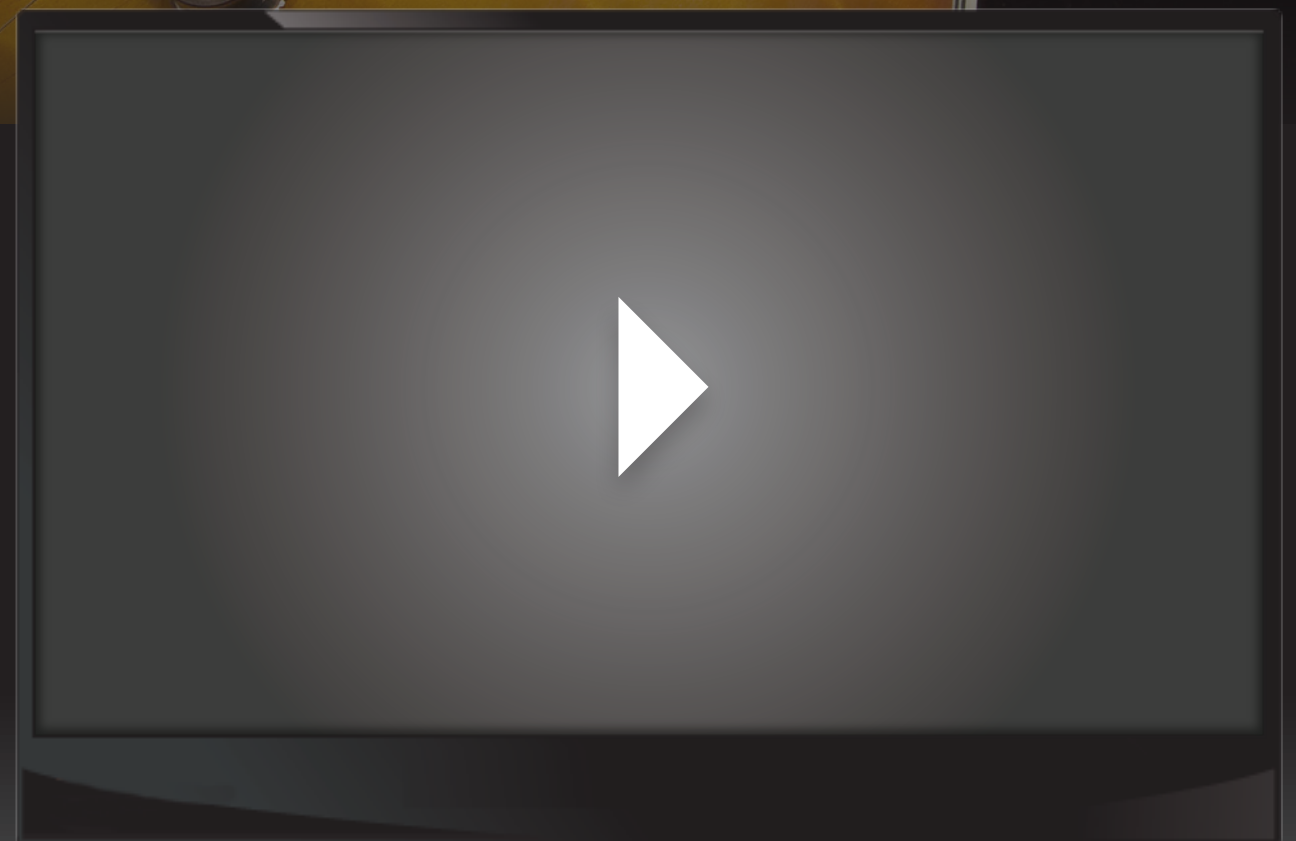
That said, there is no way the Linda is a copy - it's just a new take on a familiar theme and none the worse for that! My first impression was that it is an extremely good looking guitar and certainly one that belies it's rather impressively low price tag. The model that we were provided with was the LN30 in the Trans Lamp Black finish which looks extremely classy and a touch cooler than the its faded burst counterpart.

The Linda is not the lightest of guitars, thanks to a hefty chunk of solid mahogany upon which you'll find a quilted maple laminate top. Again, the Trans Lamp Black finish sets it off perfectly, giving an uber cool modern look.

The carved top looks fantastic too especially when the light catches it. The set neck comes by way of another piece of mahogany upon which you'll find a rosewood fingerboard. The headstock is very nicely finished and is emblazoned with the Samick logo.

Moving on to the electronics, the guitar comes equipped with a standard tone and volume control with a three-way pickup toggle switch. The two Humbuckers are Samick's own 'JTR Hot' design and although they are high output types, they do retain a fair amount of clarity. In addition, this model also comes complete with a blend control and a further five way rotary control which gives you access to a variety of different tones at a turn of the dial. The options are as follows:

Position 1: Low Pass/High Cut Filter,  
Position 2: Compression & Choke Filter -  
Use tone control to modify effect.



MSRP £356.56/US\$839

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC



Position 3: Compression with Nasal Effect - Use tone control to modify effect. Position 4: Single Humbucker Mode - Only master volume is effective in this mode and 3-way pickup selector becomes shunt switch (middle & amp; neck positions) and finally, Position 5: by-pass - all additional effects are off and controls function as normal.

The Blend control, meanwhile, attenuates the neck pickup when the pickup selector is in the middle position. It has no effect when pickup selector is in neck or bridge position.

Although these options are no doubt extremely useful, I personally found this whole system of controls to be very fiddly and a little awkward to dial-in. Not only that, the actual control on the fine-way rotary switch felt a little uncertain in my hands. Let's say that I wouldn't have bet money on its long term future. This may have been a one-off fault on our sample, of course.

Plugging the Linda in was a very enjoyable experience and it was clear that this guitar is capable of producing some very nice tones. From thick Jazz warmth, right through to saturated lead screaming, the Linda performed extremely well. Playability was also very good, although the ends of the fret wire were a little sharp and as such my hands did feel somewhat vulnerable especially when making quick position shifts. Again, this sounds like it may be an issue with the particular review sample that we had but you can only report on what you see. It wouldn't be hard to get something like this fixed, of course, which is why we always recommend getting a set-up included in the price you pay for a new guitar.

These few niggles aside, there's no denying that the JTR Linda represents extremely good

value for money and is capable of producing some fantastic tones. It is well made from quality woods and has a wide range of voices - ideal for the player looking for maximum versatility at a very affordable price.



There's no denying that the JTR Linda represents extremely good value for money



# THE BASSMENT

The trucks have been rolling-up to Gi's Bassment doors, packed with review gear so this issue sees the mighty **Dan Veall** finally get to grips with Hartke's long-delayed Kilo bass head and Orange's beefy-yet-dinky Terror 500 bass amp which we teamed-up with one of the company's fascinating 'isobaric' 2x12 bass cabs. Isobaric? Dan will explain!



Dan also got to practice his chops on an instrument that would set many a bass player's heart racing - one of Yamaha's superlative Hamamatsu craftsman-built Nathan East basses. If you thought the finest basses only came from tiny companies, wait till you check this one out!

Back at the hard Rock end of things we gave Dan an Ibanez ATK200 to get his teeth into but he still found time to pen the final part of his 'All About Bass Strings' feature.

Next time, we're seeing if we can get him to juggle on camera, too!



*Gary Cooper* - Editor





# Strung Out.

AGAIN!

Dan Veall concludes his two-part exploration of the strange world of bass strings.

## "Is it a myth that boiling strings can rejuvenate them? No."

In Gi 6 I took a look at the basics of what every bass player should know about his or her strings. It's a subject worth learning a bit about, too, because strings can make a huge difference, both to your sound and how your instrument feels and handles. Fortunately, thanks to the magic of the innerwebs, if you somehow managed to miss Gi 6 (shame on you!), you can jump straight to [Part One](#) - [here](#).....

OK, so moving on, let's look at the main string type variants:

**Taper Core** - On a more usual bass string, the wraps continue all the way down to the ball end. Some manufacturers also wrap a coloured silk around the end of the wrap to make the finish neater and to help identify

their brand. Taper Core strings (and some of the variant names such as 'contact core') feature a progressive reduction in winding size until just the core itself can be seen before it connects to the ball end. The reason that the name 'contact core' gets used is that it refers to the fact that the actual core of the string sits in the saddle slot on the bridge. This method of manufacture is said to improve sustain and brightness of the string sound and is likened to that of the sound of a piano string as indeed they share the same method of construction.

**Coated** - Not a new method of production by any means but for years musicians have struggled with how to make strings last longer and still retain that bright tone. One method is to pre-coat the outer core wire

before winding in a plasticised or enamel type coating that forms a grease and grime resistant and protective layer. Alternatively, another method is to coat the string after it has been wound. Yet another option is to take a leaf out of the Nylon Tapewound book; wrap a coating in the same way that a string layer would be applied over the top of the final wire coating to ensure a protective and resistant casing.

This is all well and good, however adding any coating to a string stops it from resonating as freely as it would without. So making any wrap as thin as possible will help to restore some of that sustain. The problem with this though is that if the coating is too thin, it can quite literally be scratched off with a pick or nails which can look unsightly. Unfortunately for some brands on the market, bassists have experienced this. You may need to shop around!

**Construction** - The construction of a string, the mass of the core and windings, has a direct correlation with the tension of a string

when it is brought up to its required tuning. It is thus possible to be able to pick the tension of a string for a particular playing style IF you have this information. An example would be someone looking for a heavy string that they could use for a 'drop tuning' but still be able to move up to standard tuning. Tension could be kept in the dropped position yet wouldn't add too much to the mass of the string (so that the nut needn't be re-cut to make way for a larger string on the instrument). Unfortunately not every manufacturer makes this information available, but some do, thankfully!

**Cores** - high tensile steel, sometimes tin-coated.

**Windings** - Wrap wires can be ferritic stainless steel, nickel plated steel, phosphor bronze, brass and other specialist alloys. Some manufacturers have even used gold, tungsten, aluminium and silver in their winding materials too. Silver and gold are said to have hypoallergenic properties, which is helpful as there are musicians who are

[...>]





sensitive to or in some cases allergic to nickel that is often used in string windings.

**Gauge** - Measured in thousandths of an inch, the heavier gauge strings have a larger diameter. Strings with a larger diameter will require a higher tension to bring up to the same pitch and thus will be harder to bend than a lower gauge string. Fitting a Bass with a heavier gauge string (and thus a much higher tension) will have an adverse affect on the set-up of the instrument due to the additional pull on the neck. (The best analogy I have for this is to imagine the bending of an Archery bow when the string is drawn back. A bass neck will do the same when the string tension is raised and thus this will affect the height of the strings to the fretboard (known as the 'action').

And finally - is it a myth that boiling strings can rejuvenate them? No. Many bassists on a budget who've wanted to try to make their strings sound 'new' for as long as possible, have taken their strings off and boiled them in vinegar. The smell is pretty bad, (I used to do this as a teen) but ten minutes in the pot helps to break down and remove dirt, grease and dead skin from the windings of the string that can help with getting a bit of

that 'twang' back. If you are going to do it, I'd recommend boiling sooner rather than later, after the 'zing' of your string has gone. It won't return them to a new sound and it won't actually make them physically last any longer but you will get a bit of zing back for a short time. So why won't it make the string like new again? When a string is on an instrument it is constantly being tensioned and over time will begin to lengthen and stretch. Small amounts indeed, but it's enough to start to make those windings work loose, which is a major contributor to dulling of the tone, tuning and intonation problems in fatigued strings. Boiling is a short term fix, but it can get you out of a hole!

That said, at least one legendary player never changed his flatwound strings at all – the great James Jamerson – and he made a career out of that tone! I bet the string makers didn't rush to sign him up.



"I love these strings. They feel great, and still sound really good after a bunch of shows."  
- Gus G

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# HARTKE KILO

Two years after its tentative launch, the revised version of Hartke's long-awaited flagship Kilo bass amplifier finally hits the streets. **Tim Slater** finds out if it was worth the wait.

The bass playing fraternity has been poised for what seems like an eternity, waiting for Hartke to finally finish developing the Kilo bass head. After an initial public unveiling in January 2009, Hartke withdrew the Kilo more or less immediately, apparently going back to the drawing board to address some issues regarding reducing the amp's weight. During the interim period new technology came along that enabled Hartke to also incorporate more revisions that improved its tonal flexibility whilst also making sure that the amp remained affordable. Hartke also used the opportunity to include the same 'Shape' pre-set EQ curve found on its Bass Attack stomp box.

The Kilo's combination of enormous power and maximum flexibility are major selling points that Hartke has surely developed with an eye on the needs of the professional and busy semi-pro bassist. A switchable 10-band graphic equalizer and conventional three-band passive EQ are included along with a built-in compressor, tube-driven overdrive circuit, a remote selectable effects loop, an adjustable mid-cut Shape control and adjustable DI whose switchable signal path completely bypasses the built-in effects and EQ, or can be configured to allow the user to insert the compressor, graphic EQ and the effects loop into the DI'd signal before it is sent to the front of house.



With all this hardware at their fingertips, it's difficult to imagine what bassist wouldn't be tempted by the Kilo. It may fly in the face of the current vogue for tiny yet super-powerful bass amplifiers, but there is something reassuringly old-school and rugged about this Hartke behemoth - not forgetting that it is also seems very competitively priced given its impressive specs.

Fully enclosed in a 3U-size chassis fronted by a milled aluminium faceplate and flanked by a massive pair of oversize carrying handles

the Kilo feels very solidly constructed. The oversized handles aren't merely for show, either. Weighing in at 40lbs (18 kilos) the Kilo is a bit of a big old lump to lug about but with 1,000 Watts rumbling away under the hood, anything less substantial mightn't pull off the air of indestructible roadworthiness quite so convincingly as the Kilo does!

Hefty though it may be, this is still a very smart looking amp with plenty of nice brightly illuminated push buttons and sliders that will no doubt look very impressive when the amp is set up on a darkened stage. In practical terms, the Kilo's clean

control layout also works well; its array of multiple tone-shaping tools are all laid out readily to hand so that everything feels very logical and easy to navigate whilst the amp is in use. A row of eight illuminated push buttons provides easy access to a pad that compensates for the higher signal level from active basses, preventing the pre-amp from overloading, plus there is also a handy Tuner Mute function that can also be selected remotely via a footswitch for discreet onstage tuning. Independent Deep and Brite switches help to boost the low end and treble frequencies, which could be deemed useful for enhancing the extra frequency range of five or six-string basses, for example.

[...>]



MSRP £799.99 USA: \$1299.99

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC



**The 10-band graphic equalizer isn't essential but it is nonetheless handy when, say, switching between different basses with very distinctive sounds.**

The rear-mounted effects loop send and returns are also footswitchable, with a dedicated push button on the front panel that activates the EFX circuit in the absence of a footswitch.

The Kilo packs a pretty impressive 1,000 Watts in bridge mode, with the further option to run at 500 Watts per side in stereo mode at a minimum of two Ohms per channel, enabling the bassist to harness

the full extent of the Kilo's formidable power, whilst also being able to employ their preferred choice of speaker enclosures. To further help exploit this, the front panel Balance knob allows the bassist to choose which speaker cabinet they want to drive the harder by shifting the emphasis of the output between the left or right channel, or 50/50 if they prefer.



The Kilo is a hybrid design whose solid state output stage is mated to a tube-driven pre-amp loaded with a trio of 12AX7 tubes that help the Kilo deliver a broad range of authentic vintage-style warmth, adjustable over a broad range from a barely perceptible sizzle to a very aggressive overloaded distortion. The overdriven sound can certainly get pretty filthy but a footswitch jack also offers the player the facility to choose the appropriate moment when to kick-in the overdrive circuit.

The onboard compressor uses a pair of rotary knobs to adjust the compression ratio and Gain over a very wide dynamic range, which can have quite a significant bearing on the amp's tone. The compression is quite powerful and the amp can therefore sound very squashy even at fairly modest levels but slap or funk bassists who routinely push their amp's dynamics to the limit by virtue of their hard-hitting technique will be able to really spank their strings with little fear of either their speakers or high-end tweeters being launched across the room!

The Kilo's comprehensive EQ section includes the enigmatically titled 'Shape' control which kicks-in a preset EQ curve with fractionally boosted low and treble frequencies and a subtle degree of midrange cut. Imagine a built-in 'smiley face' EQ curve that can be shifted around to have more emphasis towards either bottom or high-end frequencies and you've basically nailed what the Shape control does. It's not quite 'instant funk' but it nevertheless does still offer a

fairly fast way to nail that 'scooped' EQ curve beloved by slap bassists without having to fiddle with the standard three-way passive EQ.

The 10-band graphic equalizer isn't essential but it is nonetheless handy when, say, switching between different basses with very distinctive sounds. It can also come in useful for helping to balance the amp's EQ in venues with somewhat unruly acoustics; boomy-sounding rooms with low ceilings, or venues with brightly reflective wooden floors should no longer present a problem, for example. Generally, I found that I liked the Hartke Kilo's crisp delivery and user-friendly design. Certainly it should be equally as effective harnessed to a single 1x15 or 4x10 enclosure in a club, as it surely will when coupled to a Mount Rushmore-sized wall of speaker stacks in a major stadium gig.

The Hartke Kilo delivers a very convincing all round performance. Yes, it is big and heavy but this feels like pro-quality gear that delivers precise, well-balanced tones and impressive versatility. In the grand scheme of things – no pun intended – the Kilo isn't even particularly expensive either, especially when you start shopping around and take into account most stores' margins for a slight discount. It's been a long wait but I think you'll find it's been worth it in the long run.



[...>]



# YAMAHA NATHAN EAST BASS BB NE2

Nathan East has been associated with Yamaha for 30 years. What does a manufacturer have to do to maintain a relationship like that with one of the world's top bassists? Simple, says **Dan Veall** - you just build him a bass as good as this.

When I received the review list for this month's gear, I was very interested to see this instrument included. The Yamaha BB series basses over the years have been well received by amateurs and professionals alike, so I knew I was likely to be in for a treat. Given the amount of gear that I've had the pleasure of playing over the years, I do like to wonder at which instrument or amplifier will knock last month's favourite off the 'top spot'. Thankfully everything we have had arrive down at my dungeon of low end, so far, has been pretty great. This example of Yamaha's build quality is no exception.

The BB NE2 celebrates the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Nathan East's relationship with Yamaha and what a way to party! I was first in to the studio, bright and early, so knowing the Bass had arrived, I helped myself to cracking open the well packed box - I thought it'd be the right thing to do (!). Inside was a quality hardcase with all the catches still protected with plastic.

The case is well padded inside too; no signs of cost-cutting! Included with the bass is a nice pile of 'case candy' including a Nathan East embroidered quality leather strap, tools, spare battery, paperwork and Nathan East plectrums.

Also included is a very nice 'picture book' featuring images of Nathan and the various Yamaha basses he has played throughout his career. But the thing that really catches my eye is a large orange hand print in the book! Nathan has individually 'signed' every single book with a print of his palm! There are images of him doing this inside too. A very nice touch and makes the whole package a little more personal, I feel.

Does all this really make the bass itself any better though? Well I couldn't wait to dive in and find out. Straight out of the case, the bass was perfectly in tune. Not bad as it would have been out in the cold then in to our warm offices, then the studio, for the review. I noticed the action was set to 'comfortable low' with no buzzes from the bright sounding, resonant strings. Acoustically, the bass already sounded great. I do judge a bass acoustically and have been known to dismiss an instrument without plugging in if it doesn't sound good before it gets amplified. I'd describe the NE2 as having a very nice piano tone, rich but not 'twangy'. Lots of girth in the low B too!

In the video review I run through each of the sounds and settings available to demonstrate how flexible this instrument is and I have to

**This is attention to detail!  
Great stuff! I am happy!**

say, I am really impressed. We've already had some stonkingly good gear to review in the Bassment but this bass I didn't want to put back down. Indeed it crops up elsewhere in the magazine!

The Yamaha has two Jazz Alnico V stack bass pickups that feature a hum cancelling coil. They are silent even under the studio lighting and electrics. The three band EQ centres were perfect for this instrument. I have found that sometimes a generic EQ system will be popped into a bass and it doesn't really help accentuate the best frequencies for the type of pickups used. In the worst cases a bad choice of preamp can make an 'OK' tone sound incoherent and confusing, leading to ear fatigue. Back to the Yamaha, check out the part of the video where I add bass boost to the bridge pickup. It sounds fat and modern. You could actually play just on the bridge pickup and not feel a loss of low end. Boosting the mid-range instantly adds a bit of those 'Jaco' type growls too.

Speaking of the EQ, The BB NE2 includes a version of Nathan's 'Magic Box' pedal on board, the Yamaha NE1. The two controls on the bass are simple. A switch that engages the function is sited near the bridge above the bass control. Above the switch a knob that as you advance round cuts out an amount of mid frequencies. I pointed out in the video that I have to admit to being a little perplexed as to why the knob has to be a little plastic one when the rest are really nice knurled metal types. The function is really effective at quickly pulling those mids out for an

[...>]



SRP £3,093/\$3,599

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC



instant switch in tone, for slap style or by also pulling back a bit of treble too, some nice dub bass tones. My reservation about the plastic knob is minor, but I do have a little niggle. The position of the switch is really hard to see when you look over. It's small and hides behind the plastic knob when you look down at the bass. I guess you'd get used to finding it by touch, but I'd have preferred to either be able to see it straight away or indeed to have included a knob with a push-push switch integrated instead. One less thing on the 'flight deck' to worry about.

Sitting the alder and maple bodied bass on my lap, it was instantly comfortable - so well balanced and the size of the body itself meant that the height of the playing area from my leg was pretty perfect. Sometimes if the distance from the strings to the lower bout of the body is large or small you end up either having the bass under your chin or feeling

like you can rest your knuckles on your knee!

In playing, the neck is slim - not the slimmest I have played and I am more used to very thin necks on six and seven string bass widths. I'm pleased to report that I felt at home quickly. There's enough mass to get hold of but certainly not feeling like a club. The neck is adorned with an ebony fretboard and tasteful block markers over a maple and mahogany five-piece neck and the fretboard has 24 perfectly dressed frets with not a sharp edge to be felt on the 34" scale. For those who like to geek-out further, the specifications say the fretboard is 19 11/16" radius, which is very comfortable too: not too rounded and not too flat.

I have to say that despite knowing this Bass was a great contender, it was only until we compared it against *another* bass we had nearby that it became obvious just *how* good it was.

And so to our rating. Looking at the Yamaha's price tag you would certainly expect it to be of the very highest quality but I can confidently say that it is actually better than some boutique instruments costing a lot more. And that's how a bass in this high price range gets four and a half stars - it may be expensive, but it's still great value for money in terms of its class. This Yamaha was simply stunning!





# IBANEZ ATK 200 SOB

Ibanez doesn't only make some of the most popular shred guitars - it also has a fine reputation for Rock basses. **Dan Veall** sucks in his cheeks and adopts the pose.

The first time I remember seeing one of the original releases of the Ibanez ATK bass was in the hands of Mark White from The Spin Doctors, back in the mid '90s. Several variants were available including a five string version and in a wide colour choice. In 2012, the range is more concise on the Ibanez website, with just three models shown. The 200 sits between the more budget conscious GIO range and a Prestige version. The GIO model features a flat finish in red with a white pickguard, or black finish with a black pickguard. A single pickup with no switching options and passive electronics top-off the build. The Prestige model on the other hand has a maple fretboard instead of the rosewood of both the GIO and 200 models. The body is an ash slab on both the Prestige and 200 but the Prestige replaces the pickguard with a clear one to show off more of the very nice ash grain. An additional single pickup in the neck position is added for further tonal options but is not included on the 200 series.

Time to crack out the ATK 200. The model in for review was a colour choice that does not appear on the Ibanez website - 'Soda Blue' as you can see from the video.

A rosewood fretboard on a laminated maple neck meets the square edged ash body with a good strong join, no gaps or bad machining to be seen. On the rear, a nice ribcage cut-

out with arm sculpting on the upper front of the body makes for a comfortable playing position. With the white pickguard, I'd have loved to have seen a maple fretboard option. I think that would have looked really nice!

On the subject of the fretboard, the finish of the neck was adequate and not too much like a club, though it did feel a bit square-edged. On the lower edge of the neck, I also felt a couple of sharp edges on some of the 22 medium sized frets, though I won't be writing off the instrument just because of that - it could have been the odd edge that got missed. Maybe a second review sample would have been fine.

Plugged in, the Bass had a strong output, if slightly anaemic sounding when all the controls were set flat. When a bass has a single pick up sited close to the bridge, naturally it will have more bite, top end and less bass end. For me though, bass guitar is about punch, about low end and tonal girth and if a bass doesn't have it then it's just not cutting it. I'd liken it to a kick drum sounding like a hand drum. Sure, it has a nice tone, but if you are holding the foundation of the song down with a tasty groove, you'll get lost if you have no oomph! I'm sliding of topic a little here but hopefully you understand what I mean. A bass should have a great tone out of the box on flat settings *before* you start winding up the EQ.

## Weight? This is a substantial instrument!

So - did the EQ help? Well yes, you can get some good tones out of this Ibanez, especially rolling out the mids a little and boosting the lows. In fact it became noticeably fatter sounding with a nice modern rasp on the 'both coils on' setting.

There is a three way pickup selector for front-both-back coil tone selections. The front coil setting did a convincing 'front pick up of a Jazz bass sound' and the rear coil setting gave me the bite of a pickup situated closer to the bridge - again, though, I would have liked a little more guts out of this coil.

Weight? This is a substantial instrument! This review model is heavy - my technical team remarked on this straight away and I have to say this might put you off if you are young or of a smaller stature.

The tuning keys on the bass are a Wilkinson branded set. Great quality and judging by their cut-down size they are a lightweight set yet having a good sized 'ear' to get hold of to turn. No neck dive to report, so the lighter keys are no doubt a help here.

A huge metal plate comprises the bridge assembly and totally engulfs the dual humbucking pickup. It's just brilliant! It really makes the bass look like it means



[...>]



SRP £269/\$533.90

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC



business. Whether or not it aids sustain any more than a high mass bridge, I can't tell, but it has *got* to be better than those woeful bits of 'bent tin' you find on some instruments! Ooh, is that a bug-bear, Dan? Yes it is!

String spacing is in the conventional 19mm at the bridge so will no doubt feel instantly familiar and the action felt good too straight out the box.

Overall, I'd say this is a great functional bass that I feel would be fine for the beginner to intermediate level player and those looking for a gig spare to their main instrument.



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# ORANGE TERROR BASS AMP & CAB

We let **Dan Veall** - the Bassment's very own 'tiny terror' - run wild with two of Orange's bass newcomers - the Terror 500 head and the revolutionary 'Isobaric' 2x12 cab. Will Romford ever be the same again?



First-up is the diminutive Orange Terror Bass 500, which builds on the reputation of the already established and much-loved 'Terror' guitar range. The Orange Terror 500 head features a full valve pre-amplifier mated to a

Class D power amplifier and boasts an output of 500W RMS into either four or eight Ohms at the flick of a switch, making it an incredibly 'configuration happy' solution for those of us who use different impedance cabinets that we mix and match, depending on playing situations.

The actual head itself is pretty straightforward. A real 'plug and play' design that really requires very little in the way of a 'getting started' manual, but don't be fooled by its simplicity: it's a little beast! Whilst reviewing, I spent some time with the Orange



Terror plugged into other cabinets to see what it was capable of. It is LOUD!

Let's look at the controls. There is, it must be said, a bit of confusion here. According to Internet resources, the Terror Bass features active EQ, but Orange's website suggests that the preamp in the Terror Bass is a copy of the AD200B. The EQ section in that, also according to Orange, is passive. Well, no matter, I'm just being pedantic - use your ears and if it sounds good, then it is good. However, finally struggling to my point, most bass players like to know what

the 'flat' setting is on an amp, so as to have somewhere to start from, before adding or subtracting EQ. Using my powers of deduction, (or Google as it is otherwise known) all controls to noon on the Terror is the answer to achieving a flat EQ.

Moving from the EQ, which is tuned nicely for bass, I'm next heading straight for that gain control! Being a valve pre-amp, I just had to crank up the gain to show you what it sounded like when the valves were cooking on gas! As you would expect, to add a bit of valve 'dirt' you turn up the gain control but

[...>]



SRP SEE SPEC

STAR RATING FOR BOTH ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC





pull the master volume down to the level you require in order to get the preamp section to drive in to distortion - and it works just fine, as you can hear on the video.

We did discover a minor idiosyncrasy that could cause problems for your PA or recording engineer, though. The point of the signal path that the DI is picked off is after the gain and EQ controls and before the effects loop and master volume control. And yes, I checked the manual to be sure. In normal 'clean' operation, the level out of the DI seems to be fine. OK, so time to

crank up the gain to get in a bit of dirt from the Orange Terror's valves - now watch your engineer burst into tears as he sees his level meters melt down! There is no way of taming the signal out of the DI in the same way that you can on the head, by pulling the master volume down. You will get a huge signal out of the DI unless you have means to pad it back somewhat. It's not a major issue, but I did feel it was worth pointing it out.

The input jack socket on the front has an active/passive switch next to it. This is to pad back the input if you are using an active bass with a high output that could overload the input section (well, put it this way, if you want to distort the input section, then having the pad disengaged will actually help! - engaged will keep the signal much cleaner.)

Things are kept nice and simple elsewhere too - the effects loop is pre-master volume but if you DI, you'll hear nothing of those effects in the loop going to the Front Of House - best to plug all of your effects in to the front of the amplifier instead. Curious really - you'd have to use another DI box at the end of your loop of effects if you wanted to make use of the loop in a live or recording situation. On the plus side, the DI has a 'ground lift' switch that can help in alleviating earth loops and noise, also situated on the side of the amplifier. As I mentioned in the video review, I like having those connections on the side of the head. You can get

to them easily and no doubt the house stage engineer will like the ease of access too.

On the rear, the Speakon speaker outputs, of which there are two wired in parallel (allowing a minimum impedance across all cabinets of 4 Ohms) and the IEC mains power input socket. There is no voltage switch for using the head in different countries.

And so to how it sounds! The Orange Terror head has a big full sound that is great for vintage Rock tones! That said, this isn't super deep sub-tone territory. It does kick like a mule in those low E string regions but if you are after serious sub-bass frequencies, a bit of bass boost on an active instrument will help.

So is this head a winner? A resounding yes! My comments may seem a bit fussy, but they

take nothing away from a tiny amp that has a big rock sound straight out of the bag (oh, did I mention the tailored bag included for the head and connection leads?) and which weighs a ridiculous 5kg. The Terror is dead simple to set-up and will reward you with a great Rock tone from the moment you plug-in.

Incidentally, for those who are into 'tube rolling' I am aware of many folk experimenting with different manufacturer's 12AX7/ECC83 valves (and their variants) to change the voicing and gain structure of the pre-amplifier. As with any tinkering, I would suggest checking with your warranty, but there have been varying degrees of success from those wanting to tame the grind a bit for a cleaner sound. Tube rolling is actually great fun, maybe something for a future discussion. It is worth point out, though,



[...>]



that the Orange Terror needs no re-biasing when you switch valves. Nice!

And a final leaving blow? Oh yes, if 500W isn't enough for you, there's a 1000W version out there too, equally small and lightweight!

## Orange SmartPower 212 Cabinet

So Orange joins in the 'lightweight revolution' for new bass amps with a 5Kg valve head that shows no signs of running out of steam and can give the similarly powered competition a good run for its money. Does it then do what so many others do and leave users to choose from conventionally sized speaker cabs? No it does not!

Enter the Orange 'Smart Power' cabinets. The range includes a cabinet with two 10" speakers in, but in the same size box as a more usual 1x10". Similarly there's a half-sized cabinet with four 10" speakers and a cabinet the size of a 1x12" but with two 12" speakers inside. How do they do this magic?

Let's look specifically at the review model, the SP212 that features two 12" speakers. You can see from the front grill, that one of the speakers is mounted directly behind the front inside the cabinet and features its own chamber. The other is directly behind it. By mounting speakers using this method, which is known as an 'isobaric' arrangement, you lower the bass frequency response of the cabinet. Although

two speakers are present, and the cabinet sounds deeper than a similarly sized box with just one 12" speaker in, sadly it won't be any louder in terms of SPL. However having two speakers means you can throw twice as much power at it, in safety!

There's no need to delve too deeply into the physics here. If you are interested in the theory, there's plenty more about isobaric cabinets on the web.

In short, these new Orange bass cabinets offer high power handling from a low footprint - and there's another bonus, too. As well as the unusual speaker configuration, Orange has chosen to use high quality Eminence speakers with Neodymium magnets, which greatly reduces the weight. To prove the point, in total you're looking at a mere 20Kg, which is pretty great considering the cabinets are also made from sturdy 18mm birch ply!



It's clear Orange has gone for the true big Rock sound with this set-up and together with the Terror amp, the combination delivers it well - with plenty of bottom end. There's a middle presence from the speakers too, that will make them ideal for punching through a mix of guitars and drums. For me, I was missing a tweeter, which the SP212 doesn't have. Personally, I like having a quality treble unit in there too, so I get a pristine top end to that lovely 'new string' sound. That might not be your thing, but if it is, you might be missing those extra few kilohertz of response for a bit of 'Hi-Fi' sounding slap or indeed tapping up the 'dusty end' of the fretboard.

On the flip side, this cabinet will love distortion. I'm in no doubt that it will sound

smooth and creamy when pushed hard by a great sounding distortion pedal into an amp and that is where I think this cabinet will shine. Think smooth top end with low end punch. Rated at 600W RMS and an impedance of 8 Ohms, it will be more than happy with the Orange Terror pushing it hard (something we enjoyed doing in the studio).

In total, this is a well constructed cab with a distinctive Rock sound. In fact it left me with a taste for more! What I want to try now is a pair of Orange's 4x10 cabinets with a Terror 1000!





# THE QUIET ROOM

One of the  
greatest pleasures  
we've had in this first  
year of publishing Guitar Interactive has been

**Gary Cooper** - Editor [gary@iguitarmag.com](mailto:gary@iguitarmag.com)

We've a series of treats in store for you this month in the Quiet Room! In addition to being joined by the fabulous Iranian-born percussive-acoustic player **Maneli Jamal**, who will be adding his specialist expertise to **Giorgio's Serci's** invaluable stylistic contributions from this issue, we've a line-up of fascinating reviews on film.

Leading the pack is the latest in Yamaha's long-running line of professional acoustic

guitars - the A-series, with its revolutionary pickup and electronics. We've also the got new Freshman 600: the Scottish manufacturer's first move into the very top-end of pro acoustic instruments and the astonishing Voyage-Air folding acoustic guitar. Yes - it really does fold in half. What's more, it stays in tune! See for yourself in our video review!

[...>]



# PROGRESSIVE FINGERSTYLE GUITAR

Guitar Interactive's Quiet Room welcomes a second great columnist to our ranks - Iranian-born **Maneli Jamal**, whose stunning percussive acoustic style won him a Faith acoustic guitar at the recent Guitar Idol live final in London. **Gary Cooper** talks to Gi's latest contributor.

## INTRODUCING MR MANELI JAMAL!



[...>]



# "I CARRIED IT ON THE PLANE, AND EVERYWHERE I WENT, I HAD IT"

Amid the wall-to-wall fabulousness of Guitar Idol entrants at the recent international Guitar Idol III final in London, two things stood out. The first was that the standard of guitar playing, internationally, has reached astonishingly high standards. On stage trouped a succession of largely unknown players from across the world - any of whom would have stunned professionals just 20 years ago. But perhaps even more astonishing is that, on the night, the two guitarists who drew the most votes were not million note per second electric players, but two acoustic guitarists from Canada - Don Alder and Iranian born, Canadian resident, Maneli Jamal. The Quiet Room will be featuring Don Alder later this year, but for now we have signed-up Maneli Jamal to teach percussive acoustic guitar in The Quiet Room, alongside our resident acoustic guru, Giorgio Serci.

Born in Iran and raised in Germany, Jamal moved to the States in his adolescence, immigrating to Minnesota before relocating to Austin, Texas where he lived through his teens. Sadly, the family fell foul of the US's immigration department, so eventually moved to Toronto, Canada, where Maneli remains based, today.

It was in Toronto that Maneli got his first acoustic guitar. He says he has hardly put it down, since.

"I carried it on the plane, and everywhere I went, I had it", he recalls. "For half a year, we only had what we had in our hands, and I had that cheap acoustic guitar in my hands with no case. Going through something like that, as a teenager especially, you need an outlet that can take you away from life and zone you out. That's what the acoustic guitar did for me."

Jamal has studied classical guitar and played in both punk and metal bands, but the lure of the acoustic instrument finally proved too strong - notably with the new hybrid style he was developing, which blended elements of all these influ-

[...>]





ences with flamenco and percussion into a new, as yet uncategorisable, style. That said, he clearly isn't alone in perusing the possibilities of percussive acoustic and fans of players like Tommy Emmanuel and Antonio Forcione are in for a treat as they follow Maneli's exploration of this new stylistic space for the instrument.

When I spoke with Maneli in Toronto recently, he was full of excitement at having signed a deal with the respected CandyRat records - with a release date of his album, *The Lamaj Movement*, scheduled for release in March 2012.

As Maneli says of his music on his website: "You may think it's not that accessible, and it's kind of not, but when you see it, it becomes more of a visual experience as opposed to a listening experience, Jamal concludes. "I usually describe it as percussive, melodic, and rhythmic. That's very vague. I don't really know how to say it. Just watch me play a song, and maybe you can figure out what to call it."

Welcome to the Guitar Interactive team, Maneli!



## USEFUL LINKS

[www.manelijamal.com](http://www.manelijamal.com) [www.youtube.com/maneli](http://www.youtube.com/maneli) [www.myspace.com/manelijamal](http://www.myspace.com/manelijamal)



# Freshman FA0600 Series DCW

Scottish-based acoustic brand Freshman celebrates its 10th anniversary with a new range of guitars that marks a bold step towards the high-end of the acoustic market. **Tim Slater** checks out Freshman's electro-acoustic FA600 Dreadnought...

Freshman is one of a handful of small, independent guitar brands that realised the untapped potential of the mid-priced acoustic guitar market early on. When it launched back in 2002, the Glasgow-based concern was a refreshing breath of fresh air thanks to its range of carefully spec'd instruments that proved how even a relatively inexpensive acoustic guitar could offer high levels of build quality, playability and tone previously unheard of in this highly competitive price range. It took on some of the big names of the guitar world and, frankly, beat them at their own game. These are qualities that have elevated Freshman to the ranks of the UK's most successful acoustic brands.

The Freshman 600 series on the other hand is an interesting progression for the brand because it marks the company's first venture into the ratified atmosphere of high-end acoustic guitar manufacturing. The 600 series currently comprises three instruments: the FA600 DCE acoustic/electric dreadnought reviewed here, which is accompanied by two electro/acoustic Grand Auditorium models, the non-cutaway FA600GA and the cutaway model FA600GAC.

So why did Freshman feel that it was time to venture into the high-end acoustic guitar market, a sector dominated by prestigious US and Japanese names?

"The 600 series is a deliberate evolution for us," Freshman's owner and designer, Sean Kelly, told me. "We want to prove to people who might be in the market for a high-end boutique acoustic guitar what Freshman is capable of doing in terms of quality and tone. The 600 has come from two years of design, experimenting with different materials. We wanted to do something different that offered a different variety of sounds compared to the more traditional Sitka spruce and mahogany. The 600 series timbers are sourced from the same supplier used by many high-end guitar companies and in this case we have chosen quilted mahogany back and sides married with a Carpathian spruce top; a combination that we believe delivers something quite new and different in terms of tone. It falls somewhere between rosewood and mahogany."

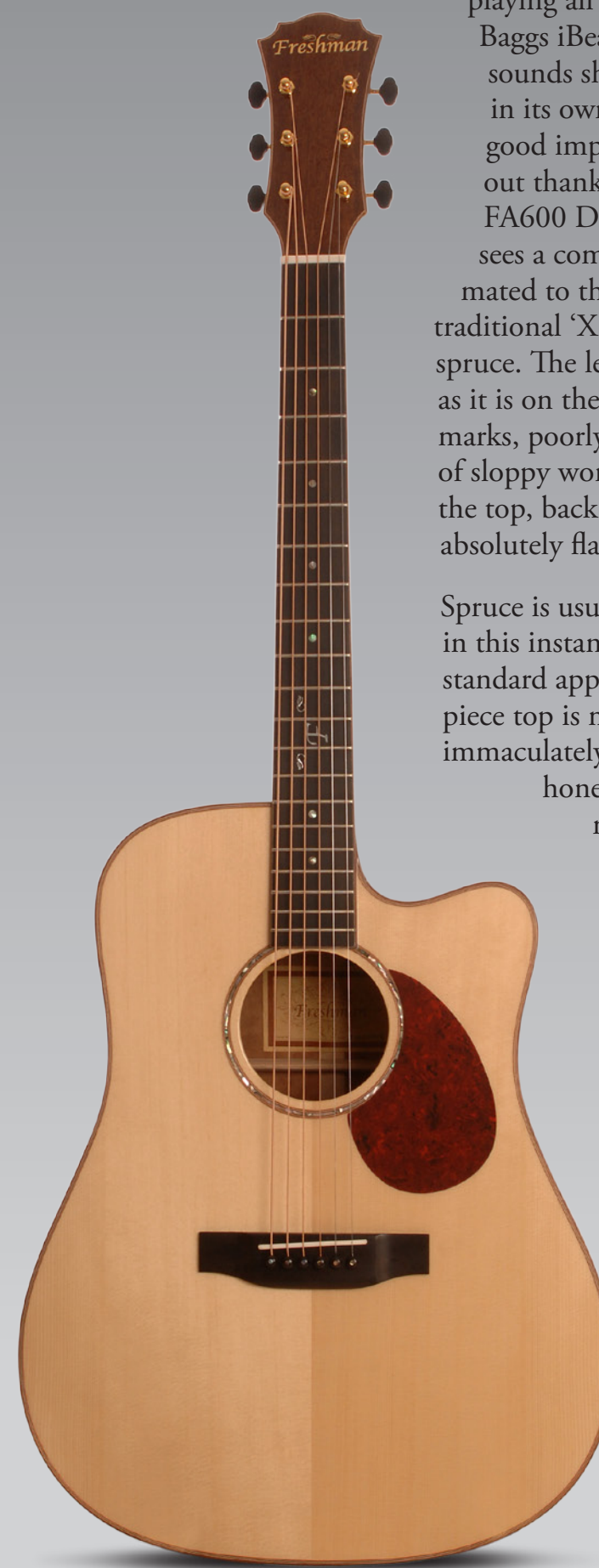
The FA600 DCE is essentially a fairly traditional Dreadnought style guitar that is enhanced by a lower cutaway allowing the player to fully exploit the potential for

playing all over the neck afforded by the built-in LR Baggs iBeam active preamp. We'll get into the amplified sounds shortly but viewed purely as an acoustic guitar in its own right, the FA600 DCE makes a seriously good impression. Freshman guitars have always stood out thanks to their very clean build quality and the FA600 DCE is no exception. The all-solid construction sees a combination of quilted mahogany back and sides mated to that Carpathian spruce top, braced using a traditional 'X' pattern utilising high quality quarter-sawn spruce. The level of craftsmanship is as evident internally as it is on the guitar's exterior; there is no trace of glue marks, poorly secured ties on the bracing or any other signs of sloppy workmanship; even the internal kerfing, where the top, back and sides meet to form the guitar's body, is absolutely flawless.

Spruce is usually a fairly conservative-looking timber and in this instance the Carpathian spruce demonstrates a fairly standard appearance for its particular species. The two-piece top is mirror smooth with an understated but no less immaculately consistent grain pattern, buffed to a lovely honey-toned sheen with a very smart-looking mother of pearl soundhole rosette forming a subtle but nonetheless elegant centrepiece.

What a stark contrast, then, with the stunning quilted mahogany back and sides! Quilted mahogany is a pretty unusual choice of timber for an acoustic guitar but in this instance it looks very bold and highly attractive, neatly offset by some beautiful walnut and maple binding running around the full circumference of the joins between the top, back and sides, plus the neck/body join. The high level of attention to detail continues on the neck heel itself, which features a walnut cap inlaid with a gold Freshman signature 'F', which is echoed by a laser-cut mother of pearl 'F' inlay at the 12<sup>th</sup> fret and mother of pearl dot fingerboard inlays.

The characteristically slender



[...>]



MSRP £1,995/\$Unknown

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC



mahogany neck reflects Freshman's standard neck pattern, which is a fairly slim 'C' profile, and in this instance the ebony fingerboard is trimmed with walnut edge binding that extends all the way to the distinctive Freshman headstock, where a 43mm bone top nut marks the point where a thin strip of maple/walnut trimming helps to finish everything off very neatly. Finally, down at 'tother end we find an ebony bridge which features a bone saddle and ebony bridge pins with precision-cut mother of pearl inlays.

This level of build quality is thankfully reflected in this electro acoustic Dreadnought's tone, which proved to be a very versatile platform for fingerpicking and flatpicking styles. Freshman is understandably excited about the new combination of timbers used on its 600 series guitars and once strummed, you can begin to appreciate why. Sean Kelly claims that the quilted mahogany/Carpathian spruce combo used on this series aims to capture a blend of the warmth and drive of mahogany with the detail and clarity of rosewood and it seems that he is right on target!

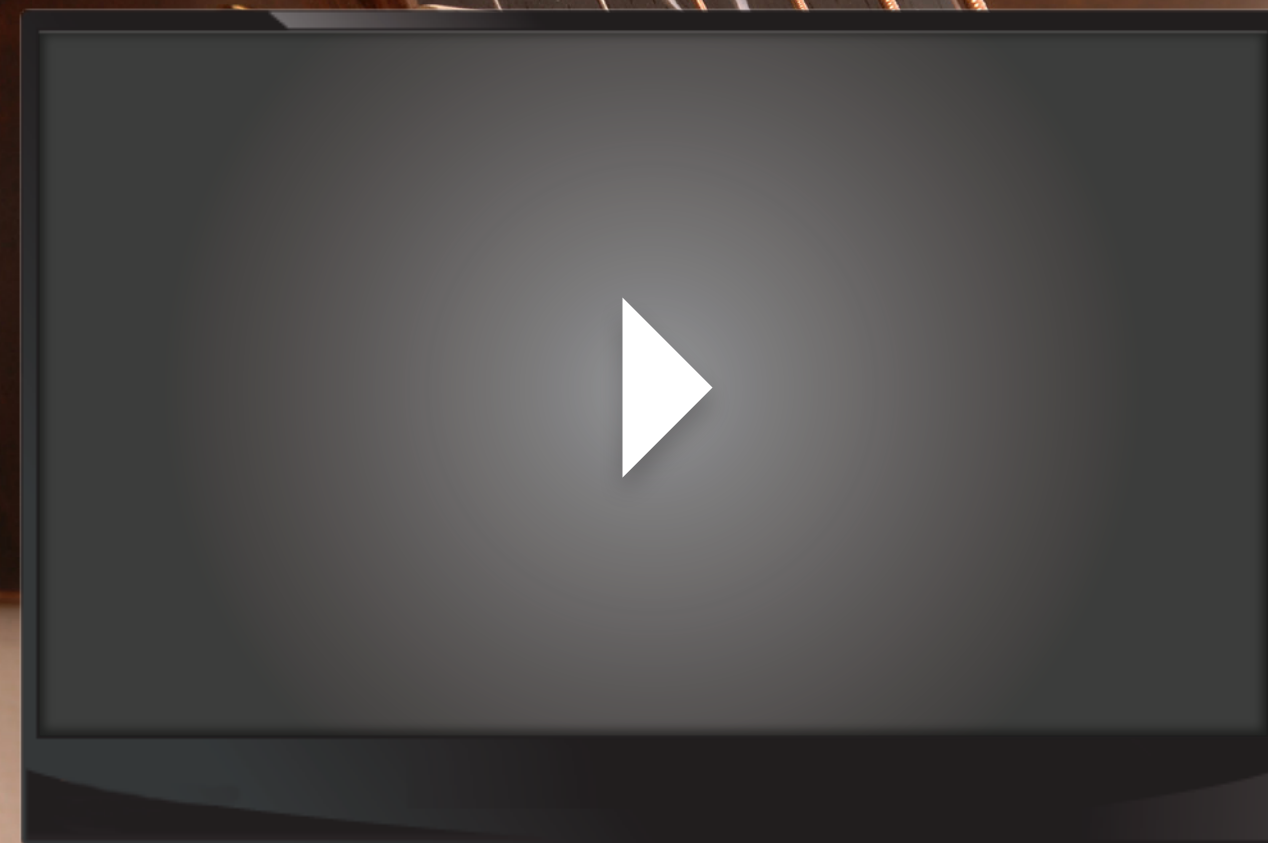
The FA600 immediately delivers the classic 'oomph' and projection that hallmarks the dreadnought design but the low end sounds much tighter and less boomy than you might expect from a typical dread. Indeed, even when strummed fairly vigorously (as on you can see on our video) the FA600 DCE's low end stays very focused with a very well balanced tone that doesn't overpower the upper register. The treble frequencies also sound crisp yet sweet-sounding, there is none of the harshness at the top end that you sometimes get when you play a dreadnought with a flatpick and the FA600 DCE generally feels like a really nice guitar to play, especially

thanks to its slim and very forgiving neck profile.

Plugged in via the onboard LR Baggs active iBeam preamp, the FA600's broad dynamic range allows the player to switch between a flatpick and fingerstyle without any sense that the guitar has suddenly switched personalities. Want a bit more power? Just dig a wee bit deeper and the guitar responds to the player's touch, with the pre-amp providing a virtually seamless reproduction of the guitar's natural acoustic tone. This is certainly one of the most natural-sounding and transparent onboard acoustic pickups that we've heard and while it takes a little while to get used to the single rotary volume control located just inside the soundhole, it nevertheless proves to be a very reliable and great sounding system.

So, has Freshman overreached itself in shooting for the top slot? In a word 'no'. Despite the 600's high price, it is still great value for money. Sean Kelly puts it this way: "The wood we use comes from the same sources as some other manufacturers whose guitars cost over £4,000!" All we can say is: it shows. This is a handbuilt quality guitar at a near mass-market price.

For its sheer build quality and excellent sounds the FA600 DCE definitely makes a successful argument for justifying its price tag, something that is even easier to appreciate from the moment that you pick it up and play. It may not be an investment (at this point in history, it's too early to say what Freshmans will be worth in decades to come) but if what you are after is a fine guitar at this sort of price, this is a good place to start. It may well be where you end-up, too.





# Voyage-Air VAOM-04

An acoustic guitar that folds-up into a rucksack? And it doesn't sound like a shoe box strung with rubber bands? We were sceptical about the Voyage-Air - so we asked **Tim Slater** to investigate. He came back looking slightly unhinged....

The acoustic guitar isn't always the easiest musical instrument to take on the road. Innately fragile yet often impractically unwieldy once packed securely into a decent guitar case, the acoustic guitar presents a major issue for the travelling guitarist - be it the holidaying hobbist who simply can't bear to part with their guitar, or the touring professional.

Purpose-built travel guitars offer a fairly decent solution but the trade-off for their diminutive size is that sound-wise travel guitars don't really do much to inspire; fine for a quick plonk around in the back of the tour bus, maybe, but that's about as far as it goes.

So what can the travelling guitarist do to happily accommodate a full size acoustic guitar on the road, in the air or at sea? Airport baggage handlers in particular must surely undergo some kind of training course where they learn to single out delicate musical instruments for particularly harsh treatment: I have watched in open mouthed dismay as my guitar was hurled onto a luggage trolley like a sack of potatoes, catapulted from baggage carousels like some unwilling six-string missile launcher or else

survived the journey unscathed only to be dumped forlornly in some obscure corner of an airport arrivals lounge. Buying a seat for your guitar on the airplane is an expensive solution but it seems that unless you want to risk inviting the orangutans employed as airport baggage handlers to test the limits of your precious cargo's 'Fragile' label, you have little choice.

Or do you?

Californian based luthier Harvey Leach has come up with an ingenious solution in the shape of the Voyage-Air folding guitar. Leach has some serious pedigree, he has worked as a freelance consultant for Martin Guitars and his inlay work in particular has attracted commissions from the likes of Paul Reed Smith, Collings and D'Angelico; you get the idea.

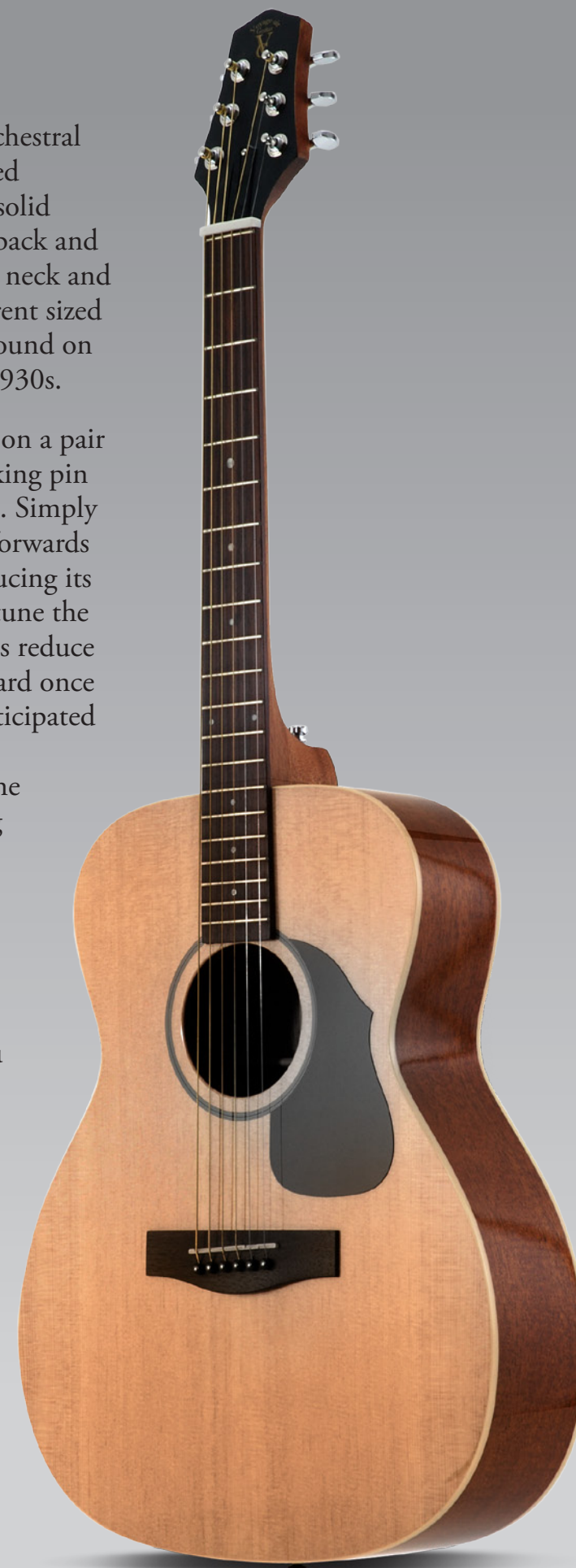
Originally approached to design a travel guitar for medical engineer Jeff Cohen, who wanted a full-sized acoustic guitar that could be taken on board an airplane, Leach started out experimenting with detachable guitar necks before he hit on the novel idea of using a hinged neck that allowed the guitar to fold away during transport but would simply unfold when it was time to play.

The Voyage-Air VAOM-04 is a full sized Orchestral model that belongs to Voyage-Air's mid priced Songwriter series. The VAOM-04 features a solid spruce top mated to a laminated mahogany back and sides, a nicely rounded 'C' profile mahogany neck and a rosewood fingerboard whose unusual different sized dot inlays reflect the traditional inlay work found on original OM-style guitars made during the 1930s.

The Voyage-Air's unique folding neck pivots on a pair of heavy-duty hinges and is secured by a locking pin that also doubles as the forward strap button. Simply unscrew the locking pin and the neck folds forwards towards the face of the guitar, effectively reducing its length by around 50%. It is advisable to de-tune the strings to decrease the string tension and thus reduce the risk of the neck suddenly springing forward once unlocked but to be fair Leach has already anticipated this potential problem and the folding mechanism includes a detent that prevents the unlocked neck from snapping out of its snug niche like a jack-in-a-box and KO'ing the guitarist straight in the face!

Unfolding the guitar and returning it to its playable state is equally swift and painless. As the neck approaches the fully locked position, a slight but audible 'clunk' tells you that the locking mechanism is almost fully engaged, all the player does is snap the neck into the final position and tighten up the locking nut/strap button. Hey presto! You're ready to play! It really is that simple.

In fact, it is even possible to unlock the neck and then return it to the full playing position without needing to de-tune the strings; there is a little more resistance to contend with from the extra string tension but the mechanism still works exactly the same.



[...>]



MSRP £569.99/\$599

STAR RATING ★★★★★

CHECK THE SPEC



Obviously, the guitar needs to be ready to play almost from the moment that the player locks the neck in place so each individual string threads through a corresponding hole drilled in the special top nut that fully encloses the strings instead of traditional nut slots. In use it is virtually impossible to tell the difference between the Voyage-Air's enclosed nut and a conventional nut, which is of course exactly as it should be.

In fact, our test guitar even came back to the playing position almost fully in tune, only requiring a quick tweak to reset the tuning properly - quite amazing!

Once unfolded, it is practically impossible to tell the difference between the Voyage-Air and a regular OM-style guitar. The hinged neck join is practically invisible and the neck feels completely normal. The full size 25.5-inch scale and traditional spruce

and mahogany blend delivers a warm and resonant tone that the OM-style translates into a bright punchy performance and a lively sound that doesn't suggest that there is anything remotely unusual about its construction.

The OM-style is a versatile design that maybe doesn't quite match a dreadnought for the sheer power but in terms of detail and projection it doesn't leave the player wanting. The VAOM-04 could be said to be more of an acoustic 'lead guitarists' guitar; the OM-style was originally developed to allow the guitarist to occupy the lead voice in dance orchestras and so it really suits the type of player who prefers plenty of top end bite. Likewise, finger style guitarists will probably appreciate the sparkly highs and warm dynamic mid-range. There is a slight rawness in the upper register that could be described as a little unsophisticated but it



is nevertheless a quality tone that will only improve with age.

Voyage-Air has succeeded in its goal of delivering a decent quality, good sounding acoustic guitar that folds away neatly into a soft bag that is roughly the equivalent of a good-sized rucksack. You can take it on board an aircraft as hand luggage or even if

you just enjoy the extra space in the back of your regular family hatchback during your regular weekend gig, this guitar does offer great value for money and it really works. To say the Gi team was stunned would be a serious understatement!





# Yamaha A3M Acoustic Guitar

Yamaha's A3 electric-acoustics are winning a reputation as the gigging player's workhorse. **Michael Casswell** saddles-up an A3M.

Yamaha guitars have always been a safe bet when it comes to delivering good products at fair prices. Even the company's entry-level instruments have always been great for the money, both in the electric and acoustic department. I personally own two Yamaha acoustics, an old nylon string APX and a newer Compass steel string, and both have served me well, being completely dependable for those acoustic moments in the studio and live, so I was hoping for good things when the Editor asked me to take a look at one of the company's A-Series electro-acoustics.

Word on the street, he says, is that the A-Series is proving highly successful with hard working, gigging musicians - and that kind of life calls for a different style of guitar than the more delicate stay at home acoustic-only instruments which, though they certainly have their place, may not always be up to the rigours of life on the road - especially having to cope with dodgy sound systems night after night!

The A3M we had in for review is really quite an affordable guitar - particularly once the discounters have got to work on the price! It's made in China, but that is ceasing to matter as Chinese production quality continues to improve and the top makers set standards

that are making the best Chinese guitars as good as factory-made instruments from anywhere else.

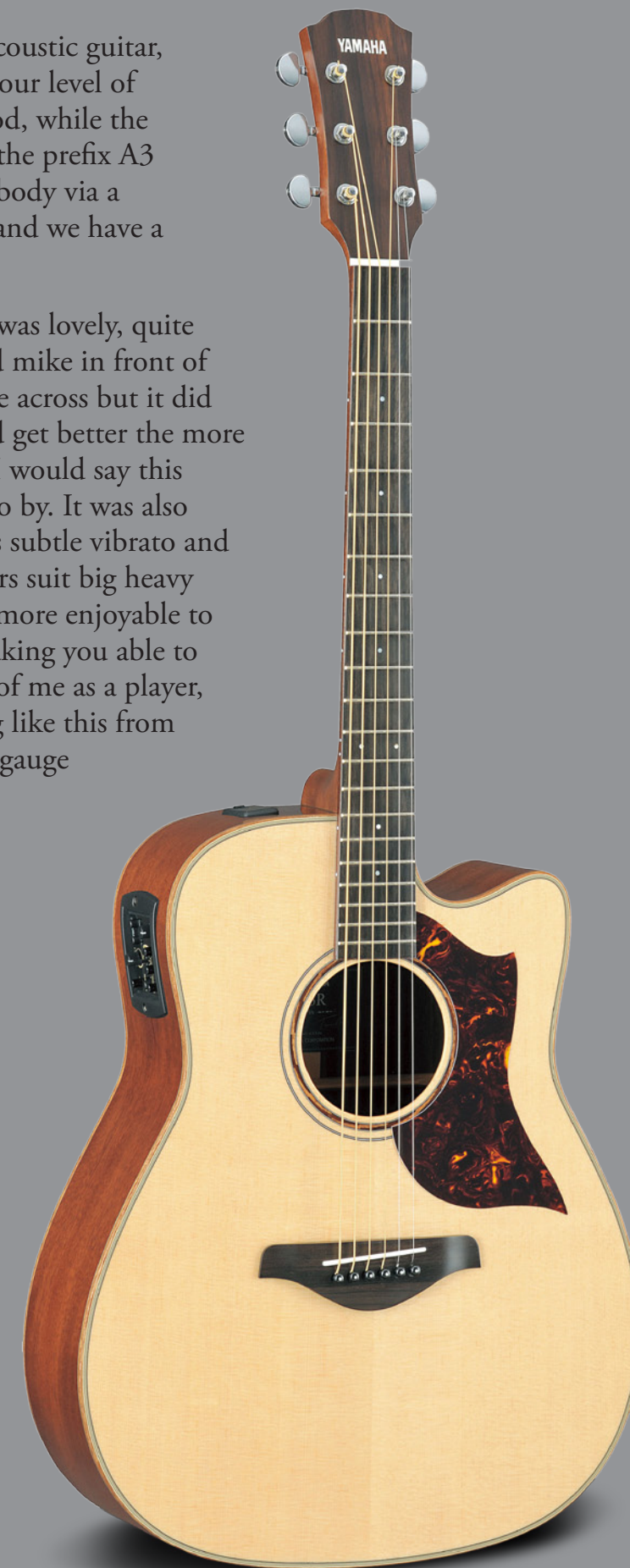
The cutaway A3M feels like a classy piece of work as soon as you pick it up - the first thing to strike me being the neck, which was one of the most comfortable I have come across in quite some time and features a great 'rolled' edge to the fretboard. If you don't know what a rolled edge board is, it's the wear and smoothing-off a guitar neck will naturally collect after a very long, well-used life. My '62 and '63 Strats have this feel - but they're nearly 50 years old and yet here is a similar comfort level from a brand new mid-price guitar! It's not just the worn-in feel on the Yamaha's neck that makes it rather nice, but also the fact that the neck width and size is comparable to your favourite electric guitar neck. The width from top to bottom is almost uniform, in a Gibson Les Paul kind of way, which bridges the gap between electric and acoustic guitar necks really well. This reaffirms the feeling that this is perhaps more of a Rock player's guitar, than a fingerstyle purist's.

The back of the neck has a satin finish to stop any sweaty sticking you might get with a gloss neck and these things combined add

up to a really nice, easy to play feel on an acoustic guitar, which is always welcome, no matter what your level of playing. The actual board is Indian rosewood, while the body, sides and neck are mahogany, giving the prefix A3 'M' to the name. The neck is joined to the body via a dovetail join, for a great overall resonance, and we have a sitka spruce top that adds a nice aged look.

The natural unamplified tone of the guitar was lovely, quite focused, and would record well with a good mike in front of it. It wasn't the loudest acoustic I have come across but it did sound good. Acoustic guitars loosen up and get better the more they are played and the older they get and I would say this particular guitar will improve as the years go by. It was also strung with real heavy strings, which makes subtle vibrato and the odd string bend hard work. Some guitars suit big heavy strings, but this particular guitar would be more enjoyable to use with medium or light gauge strings, making you able to cover more styles. This is more a reflection of me as a player, rather than the guitar, but if they are strung like this from the factory, bear the heaviness of the string gauge in mind if you try one.

So far, so good but where the A3M scores heavily is the on-board Studio Response Technology (S.R.T.) pick up system. When the guitar was in development, it was flown to some of the best studios in the United States and Japan, acoustically recorded with the best mikes and rooms and those recordings were then spectrum analysed and pored over to discover the ingredients that make the best recorded acoustic guitar sound possible. This data was then programmed into the presets on the on-board S.R.T. system by very clever lab men in white coats. They seemed to know what they were doing because the direct to the desk sound was instantly fantastic, on all three presets - and that's without really touching the on-board bass, mid and top pots, which I just left at 12 o'clock!



[...>]



MSRP £569.99/\$599

STAR RATING ★★★★★ CHECK THE SPEC



Preset 1 is the guitar miked with a Neumann U67, 2 is a Neumann KM56, and 3 is a Royer R122. All three settings were great and I found it hard to pick a fave. You also have a 'focus' and 'wide' button which is basically copying a close miked sound or a more distant mic, giving more of the room sound. There is also a 'Resonance pot', to blend in more of the guitar body wood to the miked tone, and a 'AFR' button which will cancel any on stage feedback moments.

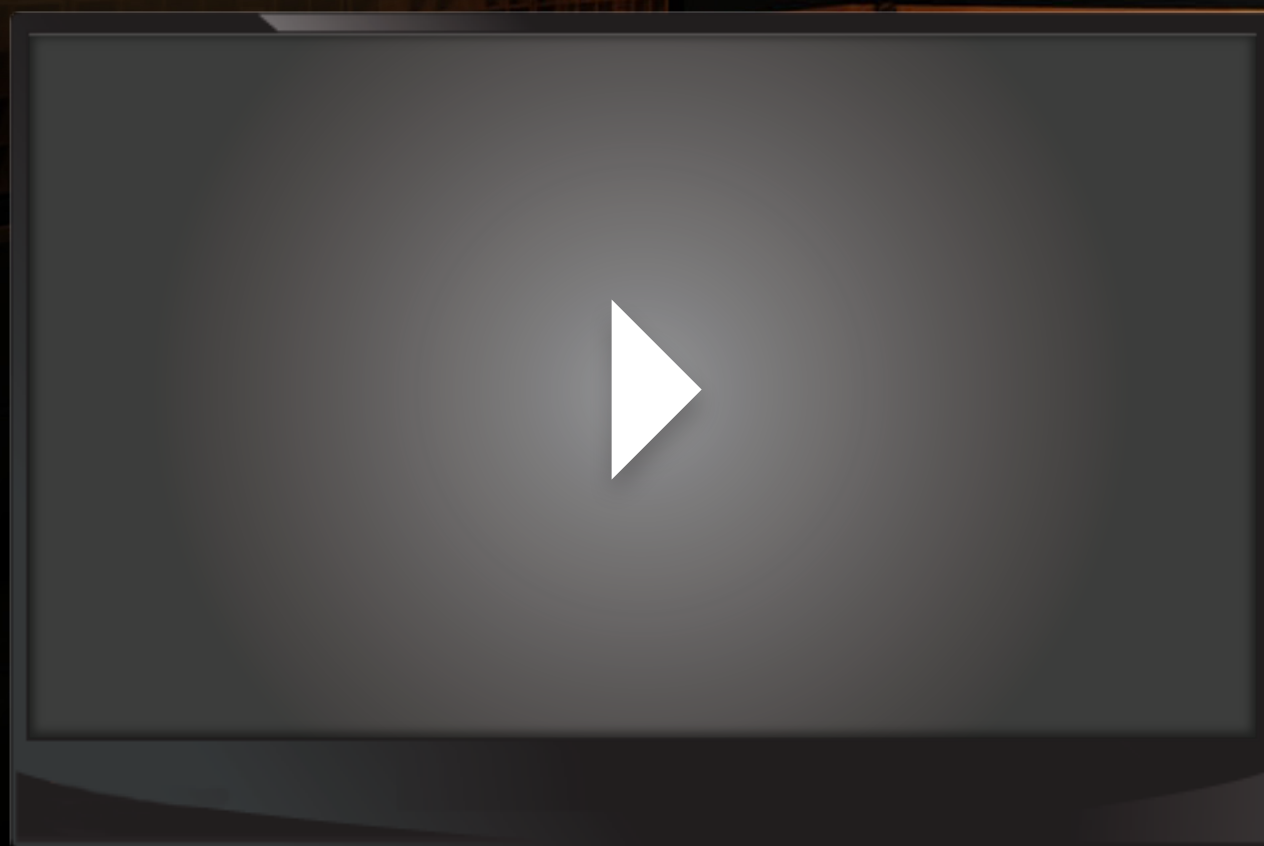
All in all, the S.R.T. system has it covered and really does sound special - probably one of the best direct sounds I have heard in a good while.

Both in the studio and live, this guitar would deliver first class acoustic tones quickly with

no fuss. Straight into the desk in the studio you'd get to enjoy the disappointed look on the face of the engineer, because you have stopped the need for him to play with all his absurdly expensive microphones!

Overall, this is a really great value electro-acoustic guitar for a working musician. It plays very well, sounds good unamplified but comes spectacularly to life in the studio or amplified through a PA.

Anyone want to buy a slightly used Yamaha Compass?



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# FIRST STEPS IN FINGERSTYLE



## Giorgio Serci takes you through the final stage of the fingerstyle guitar piece 'Spanish Romance'

Hello there and welcome to Guitar Interactive's Quiet Room! First of all, I would like to thank all the kind readers who have shared their appreciation of these columns. It's great to have you on board and definitely useful to get your feedback!

In this column we will be looking at the second half of the legendary piece 'Spanish Romance'. The first half was covered in Gi 6 (still available via our website), where, as well as the step-by-step video and written commentary, you will be able to download some background information and a transcription in notation format, as well as in tablature.

This lovely and perfectly crafted composition is an excellent fingerstyle study piece, which, while providing the opportunity to strengthen the picking hand, can help improving our attack and dynamic awareness. The latter, is particularly important in this piece, as we have to

highlight the melody with the appropriate attack, tone and dynamic. In order to do improve on this particular area, I recommend practising the permutation exercise I covered in my previous columns, training each picking-hand finger to play with the chosen dynamic and tone.

While the first half of this piece is in E minor, the second is in the contrasting E major (this is often referred to as its parallel major). Using these contrasting tonalities is a quite common compositional strategy, used in any genre in order to add an element of surprise or harmonic tension and release to the piece. Often-times, interpreters approach these two different sections using contrasting performing techniques by using a type of attack and tonal colour in the Minor section and a different, contrasting one in the major section. For example, the use of sul ponticello (nearer to the bridge) or sul tasto (nearer to the neck) can help differentiating the two romantic and melancholic sections in an effective manner.

Being in E major, this composition makes the most of the resonant qualities of open strings. However, a few barre have to be used, which provide some technical challenges in places.

[...>]





These in fact make the second half, slightly more technically demanding than the first. As a result of this, slow practice is of paramount importance, making sure our posture is correct and that our hands are never over-stressed.

The rhythm of this section doesn't differ from the first half and it equally can be described and notated (as you can see in the downloadable PDF) in  $\frac{3}{4}$ , or in its relative compound time signature,  $\frac{9}{8}$ .

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.

Considering that the melody of this tune is mainly played on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> strings with the annular finger, we should slowly practise arpeggiating the following open strings with the picking hand, trying to play the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> string slightly louder than the other strings.

Here is a recommended hierarchy of dynamics and velocities:

**MELODY:** Loud with the 'a' finger



**BASS:** Quietly with the thumb or 'p' finger

Accompaniment: Moderately loud, with the 'i' and 'm' fingers

As you can see in the attached score, the 'p' finger will play the appropriate notes (mostly the root notes of each chord) every 3 beats or 9 subdivisions.

#### THE PICKING HAND:

Plant, press and release the 'p' and 'a' fingers together respectively on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> string.

Next 'm' and 'i' fingers on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> string.

Finally, twice more a, m, i, to complete one bar.

Practice this pattern for a while with open strings, paying attention to accuracy, consistency of tone, dynamics and emphasizing the 1<sup>st</sup> string, where the melody will be played.

#### FRETTING HAND:

**Bar 1:** Place your little finger on fret 4 of the E (1<sup>st</sup> string) and the index on fret 1 of G and arpeggiate as explained above for 3 beats.

**Bar 2:** As above for the first beat. Next beat: middle finger on fret 2 of E and then open E for beat 3.

**Bar 3:** (The 'p' finger plays an open A string). Beat 1: barre on fret 2. Little finger on the 5<sup>th</sup> fret of B and ring finger on fret 4 of D. Beat 2 and 3: same position, except for the little finger on fret 4 of B.

**Bar 4:** beat 1 as previous beat. Beat 2 middle f. on fret 3 of B. Beat 3: as beat one.

**Bar 5:** (The 'p' finger plays an open E string). Barre on fret 7. Beat 1, 2 & 3: Little finger on fret 9 of E, middle f. fret 8 of G. on beat 1, 2 and 3.

**Bar 6:** Beat 1: As previous beat. Beat 2 & 3: Little finger plays respectively the 11<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> fret. (Please check the video for the alternative fingering often used)

[...>]



**Bar 7:** Beat 1: Little, ring and middle fingers on fret 9 of respectively the E, B and G strings. Beat 2 & 3: Index replaces little finger on fret 7 of E.

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

**Bar 8:** Beat 1: As previous beat. Beat 2 & 3: Little finger to play fret 9 and 11.

**Bar 9:** 3/6 barre on fret 9. Little finger on fret 12 of E for 3 beats.

**Bar 10:** Beat 1 as the previous. Beat 2: ring f. on fret 11. Beat 3 middle f. on fret 10.

**Bar 11:** (The 'p' finger plays an open A string). 2/6 barre on fret 5 and index on fret 6 of G. Little f. on the fret 9 of E for 3 beats. Make sure you are warmed-up for this stretchy position and make sure your wrist, arm and hand are as relaxed as possible.

**Bar 12:** Beat 1 as previous beat. Beat 2 ring f. on fret 7 of E. Beat 3: lift your ring f. and play the A note (fret 5 of E) with the prepared barre.

**Bar 13:** (The 'p' finger plays an open E string). Beat 1,2 & 3: Same shaped used in bar 1. Place your little finger on the 4<sup>th</sup> fret of the 1<sup>st</sup> string and the index on the 1<sup>st</sup> of G.

**Bar 14:** (The 'p' finger plays an open A string). Barre on fret 2. Play a B13 chord by positioning your little f. on fret 4 of E and ring f. on fret 4 of B. Arpeggiate for 1 beat,

then move little f. on fret 4 for beat 2 and lift it for beat 3, to play F# on fret 2 of E.

**Bar 15:** Back to an E major chord, (E shape). Index finger on the 1<sup>st</sup> fret of G, ring f. fret 2 of D and middle f. on fret 2 of A. The arpeggio will be the same as before for the 'a', 'm' and 'i' fingers, however, the 'p' finger will target respectively the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> string to generate a descending E major arpeggio. (E, B, G# played with the little f. on fret 4 of the low E string).

**Bar 16:** Low and high E played simultaneously.

This will complete the second section of Spanish Romance.

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

When executing each Barre remember to use the middle finger together with the index whenever possible, in order to strengthen the Barre as well as using the weight of the fretting hand and the arm to help pressing our index to the fretboard with minimum effort.

I hope you will enjoy playing this piece as much as I did and still do after all these years.

Till the next time, Good-bye!



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# INDEPENDANT TAPPING

Guitar Interactive is proud to host a brand new series of columns from the Guitar Idol finalist, percussive acoustic virtuoso, **Maneli Jamal**.

## My very first acoustic guitar column!

I always enjoy introducing this style of guitar to players of all skill levels and getting your feet wet in the percussive acoustic world can be a bit overwhelming if you've never dabbled with it before. There are a few techniques which are often only used on the acoustic guitar for good reason. The acoustic guitar, in my opinion, has the ability to surpass others simply because there are so many elements to it. For example, we have tapping, slapping and percussive elements which can make the guitar sound like there are two guitars playing at once. This illusion can be used to your advantage if you know how to utilize these techniques together.

This lesson focuses on getting both our hands to work independently with tapping, something that is essential in this style of guitar. We can see how a simple pattern like this can be moved to adjacent strings to create an interesting sound. Tapping with the right hand fingers will take some practice on the acoustic guitar because we will have to push them into the strings a little harder than we would on the electric guitar. Make sure to get a clean sound before attempting these exercises in a faster tempo. Slow and accurate is always more important than fast and sloppy when learning anything.

[...>]



## I ALWAYS KEEP MY RIGHT HAND THUMB PLACED ON THE TOP OF THE GUITAR NECK FOR MORE CONTROL AND STABILITY.

When we're hammering on with fingers, make sure you pull off the string so that open string sounds as if it's plucked. I usually pull it down towards the ground but you can also pull it up towards the sky as well. Also, ensure that you're getting both the hammer-on note to sound as balanced as the pull-off note.

I always keep my right hand thumb placed on the top of the guitar neck for more control and stability. This can even be done

with a thumbpick as you see in the video. Feel free to apply this pattern to any other string sets or other frets. It's more designed as an exercise but can be put into a song as a transition or an interlude. Make it your own!

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





