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Guitar ^{Interactive} 71

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SESSION



STEVE
VAIL

HIS REACTION TO THE
FIRST LIVE PERFORMANCE
WITH THE IBANEZ PIA & MORE.

INTERVIEWS, NEWS &
WALKTHROUGHS FROM

The NAMM Show
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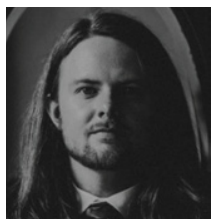
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Welcome to ISSUE

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Hello and welcome to issue 71 of Guitar Interactive Magazine!



In January this year, Steve Vai set tongues wagging as he introduced a brand new signature model

with Ibanez guitars named PIA. Touted as the “evolution” of the iconic JEM line of electric guitars, PIA marks the latest step in Vai’s near 35 years and counting journey with the Japanese brand. Following his first live performance using PIA, Steve spoke with Guitar Interactive Magazine editor Jonathan Graham about the process of designing and perfecting the

new model, his thoughts after taking it to the stage, the legacy of the instrument, and much more.

Also in this issue, the Guitar Interactive team were once again on site in Anaheim, California to bring you our highlights from this year’s NAMM Show, including booth walk-throughs, the latest releases and announcements. Plus, interviews with some of guitar’s biggest names including; Andy Timmons, Steve Morse, Doug Aldrich, Jared James Nichols and more.

If that’s not enough, as with every issue, we have a fantastic Tech

Session from Jamie Humphries on one of the finest guitarists to ever pick up a Gibson SG: Angus Young

As usual, with every issue, we have a whole host of the latest and best gear reviews from around the world of guitar, with our team of world-class gear reviewers offering their unique insight, expertise, and personality which as always, I hope you will enjoy. However, if that’s not enough, don’t forget all of our exclusive lessons from Tom Quayle, Nick Jennison, Giorgio Serci and Shauna Tohill.

Guitar

Interactive

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Welcome to Guitar Interactive Issue 71

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The Guitar Interactive team were once again on site in Anaheim, California to bring you our highlights from this year's NAMM Show, including booth walk-throughs, the latest releases and announcements. Plus, interviews with some of guitar's biggest names.



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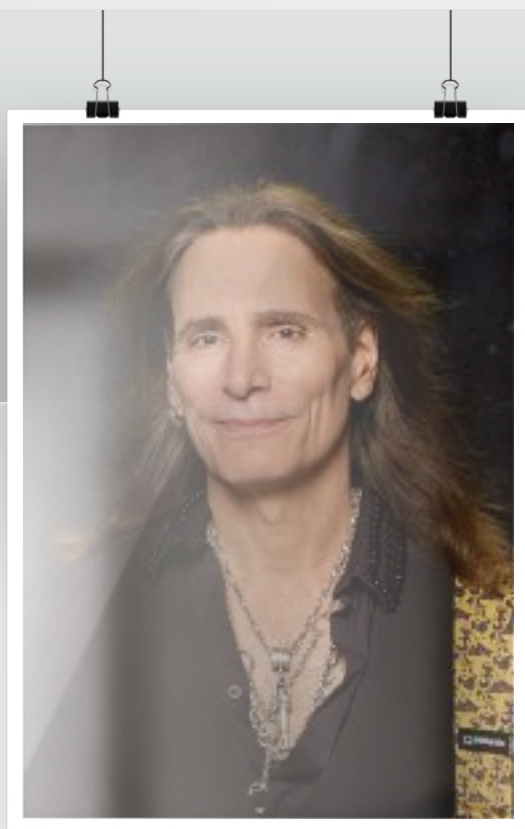
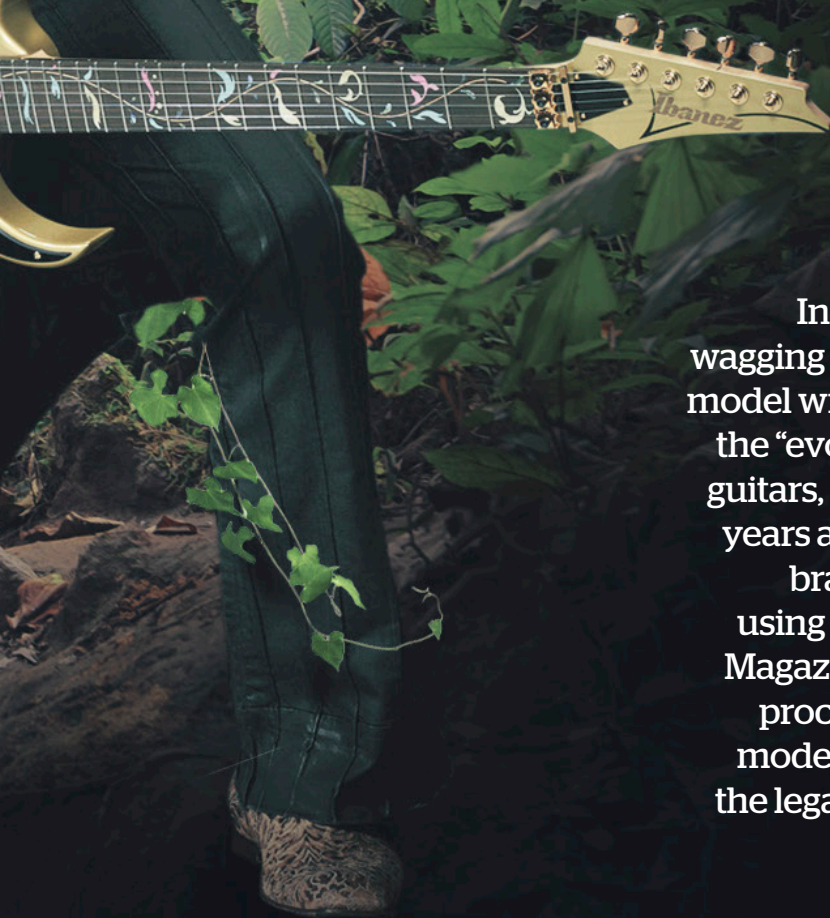




Photo © Larry DiMarzio

PARADISE IN ART



In January this year, Steve Vai set tongues wagging as he introduced a brand new signature model with Ibanez guitars named PIA. Touted as the “evolution” of the iconic JEM line of electric guitars, PIA marks the latest step in Vai’s near 35 years and counting journey with the Japanese brand. Following his first live performance using PIA, Steve spoke with Guitar Interactive Magazine editor **Jonathan Graham** about the process of designing and perfecting the new model, his thoughts after taking it to the stage, the legacy of the instrument, and much more. »

THERE are few greater partnerships in the world of guitar than that of Steve Vai and the Ibanez JEM. Unveiled at the Summer NAMM show in Chicago in June 1987 as the JEM777, the solid-body electric guitar model launched in three different and, at the time, unique finishes. The Loch Ness Green version (a tribute to Vai's "Green Meanie" which was his favourite guitar prior to working with Ibanez) was produced only in 1987 and 1988 with only 777 guitars made, with all hand-numbered and signed by Steve Vai. Over the near 35 year collaboration, the JEM has birthed five sub-models: the JEM7, JEM77, JEM777, JEM555, JEM333, and JEM70V, as well as anniversary and 7-String offshoots

(technically a Universe, but come on, they are related) each with their own unique innovation and flair.

Continuing that tradition is the Ibanez PIA (an abbreviation of Paradise In Art). Evolving the most distinctive elements of the JEM, PIA boasts a uniquely contoured alder body featuring the brand new 'Petal Grip', five-piece maple and walnut neck, and a rosewood fretboard with stunning PIABlossom inlay. Loaded with the gorgeous DiMarzio UtoPIA HSH pickup set, gold hardware and Prestige Edge tremolo bridge, the PIA also comes in four suitably eye-catching finishes—Envy Green, Panther Pink, Sun Dew Gold & Stallion White. »

A photograph of Steve Vai at a launch event. He is standing behind a table, gesturing with his hands. In the background, there is a wall with the Ibanez logo repeated. Several Ibanez guitars are visible on stands. The image is framed by an orange banner at the top and bottom.

Guitar

STEVE VAI IBANEZ PIA OFFICIAL LAUNCH

Steve Vai Ibanez PIA Launch



Photo © Larry DiMarzio



Photo © Larry DiMarzio

Following Steve's first live outing with PIA, at Winter NAMM 2020 in Anaheim, we spoke with the man himself to get his initial reaction and learn more about the inception of this exciting six-string that has taken the world of guitar by storm. Here is the interview in full.

Jonathan Graham:

Congratulations on the launch of this new guitar, Steve. What a success it has been so far. How are you feeling about it?

Steve Vai:

Oh, it's amazing. I'm so thrilled. I mean, the response has been pretty overwhelming. It's always a big risk when you do something like this, but we felt that it was time and also we felt like it was a good

design. It was very attractive, and it ticked off all the boxes for me.

JG:

Absolutely. I was one of the lucky people that got to hear that first performance with the PIA Saturday night at NAMM. Earlier in the day, I'd asked you how did you know without any road testing if you got it right first time? You told me that you didn't know if you did. So, what was the post-match report following the show?

SV:

Good question. Well as far as the body design and the way it felt and plays, I got it far more accurate than I thought I could. It just feels magical to me. I feel so at home with it. I mean, the JEM is like »



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that of course, but this is a new thing, and a little bit of an expansion on that. The way the body felt was much better than I had expected. How it moved around my body and the way my hands moved around the neck. Sonically, it's comparable to my JEMs. That gig was the first time I took all that stuff for a ride. I have the new amplifier from Synergy and the new guitar, so my radar was kind of inspecting all of these things at once, you know what I mean?

JG:

For sure.

SV:

One of the things that ran through my head was, "it's delivering just like a JEM." The way it feels is just spectacular. Sometimes one gig isn't enough though, the different stages and different atmospheres create different sonic impressions, so to speak. I thought that the sound was there, though. Another thought that ran through my mind, as I always like to compare things, was that it would be nice to do a gig on a stage where I have various tweaks to the models so that I could compare, but that's never-ending, you know? I'm listening to it, and I'm very satisfied, but I know at some point I'll want to change it up again.

JG:

That makes perfect sense. I think these guitars very much have their own sound to them. That was even more evident when you brought EVO out for some of

the songs. I felt I could hear the contrast. With the PIAs I'd almost say it's a sweeter tone, with a much softer high-end.

SV:

Thank you. It's interesting for me to hear your perspective too because hearing from the stage and hearing from the audience can be quite varied.

JG:

With PIA having its own sound, but as of yet, it doesn't appear on any records. When you get back on the road, which live tracks are going to get the new PIA sound and which ones are you likely to stick with EVO and FLO for?

SV:

That's a good question. I don't know the answer yet, though. I'm still actually sorting through various PIAs. I received the first four ever made. They're prototypes that don't even have the name on them. We use those to experiment with different pickups, modifications etc. Those are now stored away though, not to be opened until perhaps long after I'm dead. I then got another batch of four for the NAMM gig and I tweaked some of them. The pink PIA is completely stock, so that's more of a replica for the songs I would typically use EVO for as EVO is relatively stock. It doesn't have a sustainer or the scalloped frets.

Over the years I've been enjoying slightly scalloped frets, FLO III, for example, has the scalloped frets. With the green PIA, »

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I had them set up that guitar for doing songs like “Bad Horsie” because with the drop tuning you need different strings, different tension, different springs, everything, you know? That will have a different sound just based on the fact that it’s tuned down and it’s got heavier strings, but that guitar also has a slight scallop and a sustainer. Then there’s the white one which is more of a reflection of FLO, so that’s also slightly scalloped and has a sustainer. The gold one was set up specifically for drop D tuning.

So those were the experimental guitars, and I played them all at the gig along with Evo. I think I may have played FLO too? I’m not sure. I wanted to play them all to compare and continue with my assessment as I start considering recording and tour-

ing. I’m actually getting another batch of four completely stock, and the first ones are going into a museum of sort of thing for Ibanez. I’m taking the next batch though, and they’re going under the stairs. Then we can start tweaking various PIAs for the tour.

JG:

That’s good to know that even though these first few felt pretty special to you, that you’re not too worried about having them replaced with a new batch of PIAs. The production line standard is that high then, consistency wise?

SV:

Oh yeah, they all fall in the right ballpark. The way they feel doesn’t change for me. Sure, the setup will change, the height

of the action, the strings, these kinds of things.

One thing I haven't spoken much about is the neck dimension. The neck dimension on the PIA is much thicker than the production JEMs, and I'm really enjoying it. I usually gravitate to thin necks on tour, but thin necks can be a big pain in the ass, as they have a tendency to be affected by climate changes easier than thicker necks and by the time it gets from the dressing room to the stage they're out of tune, even during the show. If the room gets hot, everything changes. So I decided to try to wrap my fingers around a fatter neck. I'm considering either keeping that neck dimension because I know it's going to be easier to tour with, but I might have some made with a thin neck just because I like them. It's just a personal thing, really.

JG:

You mentioned before that the sustainer was on a couple of the PIAs that you took out for the show. Is this something that we may finally see introduced into the product line do you think?

SV:

Well, it's something I've wanted to introduce for about a decade now, but the only problem is the sustainer that has been working for me is the Fernandes sustainer. There are basically two games in town. There's the Sustainiac, which is a very consistent, clean sustainer and I've had that in my guitars here and there through the years, but it had a couple of limitations. I

wasn't entirely thrilled with the sound of the pickup itself; it just doesn't feel right to me. So, I've stayed with the Fernandez, but the problem with Fernandez is they're a small company. They don't make a lot, and they're inconsistent. I usually have to buy like four before I can find one I like to put in a guitar. So I don't think we can get the supply we need for an Ibanez production guitar for those reasons.

I don't want to put something in a guitar that even one of them might not be great. The thing is, when they're good, they're really good, and the ones that I have in my guitars are amazing! Now interestingly enough, because of their inconsistency »

“

I just **fell in love** with the instrument and from that moment even to now, whenever I look at it, any guitar, there's a feeling of nostalgic delight...

”

and the fact that they're harder and harder to get; I've decided to switch to Sustainiac. So I'm working with the company right now to tweak some things that would make it more applicable to what I'm looking for.

When I feel as though I have a Sustainiac that checks all the boxes for me, then, assuming that there will be a production guitar, PIA or a JEM that has the Sustainiac in it, then we might do it. But it's got to be pretty much built around the guitar that I actually play and would also need some kind of a Tremsetter, as I always use a Tremsetter. Floating trem systems are just too delicate for me. When you have a true floating trem and you hit a note, that note vibrates a weird way. Also, it's so difficult to tune, you know? So the Tremsetter is perfect for me.

JG:

I've always wondered over the years why it's not something that's a standard option since we see you use it so often. There must be a demand for it? But then again, as you've explained, the demand can be an issue for a smaller company.

SV:

I've read posts where people say, why doesn't he offer a sustainer? Or Tremsetter, or a scalloped neck like the way that he plays them? You've got the answer for the first two. When the sustainer is right, I'll introduce it. When the Tremsetter is applicable and available, I will. As far as the scalloped neck, that's a very personal choice for people. I'm not sure if it's a popular one. So I've never really considered introducing it into a signature guitar. But there's always the potential that I might decide to do a run of "real Steve's" type guitars.

JG:

With all the bench testing regarding the PIA, it's a challenge keeping development under wraps.

SV:

Ha! That wasn't hard. Well, not on my end, certainly not on anybody around here that I talked to about it. I'm interested enough to go and tell other people.

JG:

How did you feel about the photo leak in the weeks leading up to the launch?

SV:

I think that worked out perfectly, to be honest.

JG:

Well, that's the thing. Leaks are almost to be expected these days, and it certainly was the talk of the internet instantly. With that in mind, launching an entirely new model, I'd have guessed that you maybe would have appeared on stage with it and have the audience think "Hey, what is that?" Then launch the instrument at the following NAMM, but to launch it out of nowhere—only to find out it's available in four colour options—feels like a very bold move to be congratulated. Was there any nervousness over the build-up regarding how it would be received?

SV:

Oddly enough, and I can't really explain why, I have a very quirky sense of creativity. When I came out with the JEM in the beginning, just the sheer fact that I approached Ibanez and said "This is the guitar I want, oh, by the way, I want to have a monkey grip in it. And by the way, I want to release it in three Day-Glo different colours; green, pink and yellow," and they're probably just »



Photo © Larry DiMarzio

scratching their head going, “what the heck, man? This guy’s crazy!”

This guitar was a huge risk, but I didn’t see it as a risk because I had no expectations. I didn’t back when I designed the JEM. It was a completely personal project for me to build a guitar that had these things in it that I wanted, and that no other guitar had. It was very simple and innocent, and my expectations were zero because I didn’t think anybody would be interested in it, or that it would go on to have the kind of life that it has.

I just wanted a guitar that fits my idiosyncrasies. So when Ibanez said, “we want to release this guitar,” I took it seriously, of course, but I didn’t think, okay, well what’s the market? You know, what sells most? What colours do people want? There was none of that. I said this is my guitar. Do you like it? Great. If not, okay, no problem, but this is what it is, and I don’t want to change it.

It was very bold, but there was no fear or concern. On my part, it didn’t matter. I think for aspiring creative people, it’s important to understand, and this is something I’ve recognised in my own career. Whenever a person is inspired by a creative idea, anything, there’s that feeling of enthusiasm for the idea itself and the sense of enjoyment and excitement about the evolution of it, the manifesting of it. When you approach the creative process with that kind of enthusiasm and positive expectation, you’re going to get the best product that way because you’re pleasing yourself.

You’re going to win if you build it around exactly what you want without any fear. Whenever I’ve entered that mental zone and have designed things or written a particular song or a melody or whatever—within my limitations—I’m able to grab my inspiration and really manifest it. Whenever I do that, it feels organic, and it feels natural. There’s no resistance. The same thing happened with learning all that Zappa music. It was impossible shit, but I just took a very simple organic approach. I thought, I’m just going to learn every bar at one beat at a time,

then I’m going to play it until I’m tired, and then play it faster. There’s no fear in it. They just approached it like I did. How did it work? There was no fear in it. It worked. I started designing various bits of gear, and they naturally and organically have been a part of my career that I had a mental approach to something that had like some kind of success and wealth and all this stuff, and it just worked.

JG:

But Steve, if you say that, I’ve got to ask you that then? Because I can’t think of anything that failed for you musically?

SV:

Well, oddly enough, it doesn’t show up in my career except in songs that I may have written. You know like, I’ve got to write a song like that, it never really works out. Those songs. But in other parts of my career, fantasy agendas, whether it be in the moments or ideas to do this or that, they can be really big and everybody’s going for it. That’s what ever worked. I’ve lost track of it in following these fantasy agendas. It’s about do with who I am as an artist. That’s what it is when you can see them as such.

JG:

In reference to the PIA name. Fantasy is a personal connection here. Obviously, you’ve produced over the years some of the platinum recording artists and one of the best of all time. However, are these guys you see them continuing on for their own, having a life of their own like the

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SV:

Well, I've been concerned about it. I don't want to be on the road all the time. As for the future, The last thing I care about is you can't have a little bit of everything, everything is going to be there.

It's going to be like a name, like a brand, will be there. You know, that's the only way or not. It's a guy. Because he's created a day that he holds in his hand, it's a thing, it affects the experience, the perspective at it from a thing. Steve Vai has been going, Vai has been and the everything.

only time will tell, but I'm really not concerned about that stuff because when you're dead, I don't think it's going to matter to you. I focus on the moment. The now. That makes life easier. Not carrying around this desire to have a legacy. A legacy can only arise when you allow it to take care of itself. A legacy isn't something that I believe I can plan. The story of Steve Vai will live on for a while, but it's going to be dust along with the guitars and all the music one day, just like everything else you're looking at right now. It's going to be dust.

Everything is going to be changed into something else. The story of Steve Vai for a little while will just sound like a funny name from the past, and a mystique will be created because that's how the press works. I know—about this genius, crazy, wacky guy who did all these wild things, whether they're true or not. I've already kind of been targeted as that guy, but you can't buy into that as an identity because it's a Mirage. An illusion. Anything, anybody can do it. The Beatles music is going to be dust. One day the Bible is going to be dust. The Universe can last its breath for a million years. But, here's the miracle—anything anybody does contributes to everything. Anything you do contributes to the expansion of the Universe. There is no debate about that. It doesn't look that way from the human perspective, but it's very obvious when you look at it from a practical, reasonable standpoint. Anything you do is changing the whole, somehow. So Steve Vai's music, his name and his guitars, they're not going to be forgotten entirely. But what Steve has been contributing through his whole life, what he goes for everybody, has been inspired by everything he has come in contact with that came

before him. We then add to that our own personal sense of creativity and then we express that and what we bring into the world, as a result, contributes to adding to the expansion of all that is. So the moral of this story is, don't ever underestimate your own inspired good ideas because they will somehow have an effect on everything eventually. There's no escaping this. The march of creative expansion is inexorable.

JG:

The PIAs are stunning and as you explained, there's true inspiration behind the design. Have there been tweaks in the past to the JEMs that haven't gone down so well would you say?

SV:

Oh yeah. Well, thank you. As you know, the JEM's been around for many years and there was one point where we talked about changing the grip and we just made a sort of weird hole. Well, that didn't really fly very well, but it was just like a one-off experiment. Another one that didn't really work was the hardtail model. I remember the fans hated it. I did it for those players that would like to have a JEM without a whammy bar, but I got the shit beat out of me for that one. Other than that, the JEM's continued to go through this wonderful evolution. The colours and the various things like the pickups and the neck have changed over time, but the bones of the guitar have stayed the same. That's what got me thinking; you know what, it's time for a new model. My instincts say, okay, it's time to do it, to change it up. When I get an instinct like that, I hold onto it and make sure it's real. I know it's real when it doesn't go away, and it gets louder! »

JG:

You've just got to do it?

SV:

You've got to do it. You know that you have those things in your life, right? I call that "push comes to shove." So the push came to shove and the idea to evolve the instrument started to happen. We fooled around with a bunch of different ideas for the handle, as that was the first thing really. It took a year and a half-brother! I mean, we went through hundreds and hundreds of different ideas and designs until finally, I saw that petal design. I'd sort of said, well why don't you do me

some illustrations that kind of look like this? And the design team at Ibanez, man, they are just Bulletproof. They are amazing. They say, okay Mr Steve, you wanted this, here's that, but here's ten others sort of like it that you can choose from. I'm like, Oh gee, how nice!

Once we came up with the one petal design for the grip, it really started to come together, and I said, okay, but we need two of these. It's the yin and yang;; there's a balance. So the placement of those two holes, you have no idea what I went through. I mean tweaking the placement of them all the time, 20 millimetres here and there and waiting until the guitar said: "here I am." You know, and when it did, I knew it. It's like when you get the right solo, or you've got the right melody, say the right thing or you're in the right place at the right time. It's like a little a-ha moment. So that put that to bed, and then we thought, well, how can we incorporate this into the rest of the guitar, so there's asymmetry? That's when we started fooling around with things like the neck inlay, which has all sorts of variations. Then there's the logo itself, PIA, which is beautifully taken from the petal grip. Some of the contours of the body were altered slightly to match various dimensions and arcs of the petal grip too, so there's a very artistic design element through the whole guitar. And then there was the design of the pickup covers by Mike Mesker that incorporate the petal design. It was a very

“ When they came back with the guitar, **I have to tell you, brother,** when I opened the case and looked at it, I felt like I was a foot off the ground... ”

artistic and fun project where we just thought, you know, how can we improve on this, and every time with every tweak it would come together better than before, I'd look at the results and say, "oh, that's nicer, what about this? Or maybe that?" It just kept improving.

JG:

You've got me imagining you like Bob Ross. You know? Just when you think he's finished the painting, he's got some more "happy little trees" to add.

SV:

Ha! it was a lot like that. Once I got that a-ha moment on the complete design, they took it away and built the thing. When they came back with the guitar, I have to tell you, brother, when I opened the case and looked at it, I felt like I was a foot off the ground. I couldn't believe the appreciation that I had for that instrument at that moment. It was like meeting an old friend that you thought died and you'd never see again. Suddenly you know, it's like, wow! Then when I got them, the four of them, and first had them in the studio, I could not walk through the studio without stopping and marvelling. I don't mean to come off pretentious. It's just how they make me feel.

JG:

I can definitely understand that feeling. I have many different guitars myself, but I will tell you this, when I walked into my studio, my JEM7V still always draws my

eye. Even after 20 years, I still can't help but stop and have a look. A great guitar just has that thing.

SV:

You know, I remember the first time I saw a guitar, I mean, like really connected with one. I was five years old and I was in the auditorium in a school. There was a boy on stage that was probably eight or nine years old playing the guitar. Right then I had an epiphany in that very moment. I could tell you everything about the room, the way it smelled, the colours of the chairs, what the kid was wearing and the guitar itself.

I just fell in love with the instrument and from that moment even to now, whenever I look at it, any guitar, there's a feeling of nostalgic delight. With the PIA though, that's become a different level, man. That's it for me. It's a new level of attraction. When I decided to name it PIA, obviously there's the connection there as that's my wife's name. She's been very helpful in all of this. She's very artistic, cultured and really with it. She's been through my whole career with me, and we've been together for 41 years. She's really critical too, though. If I play something for her that she doesn't like she'll say, "well, that sucks. You're not doing this, or you did this too many times." You know, something pretty brutal and I'm like, "okay, all right, I'll try it again." She's always had inspired instincts and much of her critiques through »

the years have helped to guide me to deeper levels of my own creativity. What a score ay? Both of us came up with the colour names, and she was very helpful since she's like a barometer. Pia's an outside source of critique that I don't get from anybody else because a lot of other people when they're talking to me, might sugar-coat things. They may not be quite as honest about the way they feel about things. I have some close creative people that I work with that will tell you what time it is, you know? But with a lot of people there can be a bit of a barrier, but not with Pia. I told her we need a name for the guitar and it always works for me when they're very short names. I hate calling them something like a number, you know? Like an XJY something or whatever.

JG:

Ha! I was going to say, if you'd left it too Ibanez, they don't always come up with the sexiest names. Something like KHMM1497? Catchy eh?

SV:

I never understand that shit, brother. I would always say to them; "You'd be better off calling it Bob. What is with all these numbers? It's like my phone number." People ask me particular specifics on these kinds of numbers and stuff, and I don't know. Yeah, they don't make sense.

JG:

It never used to be that way. I mean, when you think of the early S series or the RGs. They were much easier to keep track of and gave the model a better chance to get a following.

SV:

Exactly. That's why when it came time to naming any of my guitars, I refuse to do something that

conventional. Yeah, so the three letters, PIA. look nice together, it's short, and it's a cool name for a guitar I think. I said to Pia, I want to name it PIA, and she's like oh okay? She's so disconnected from that. I mean, of course, she's thrilled, but she had no expectation or desire to have a guitar named after her. Not a care for any of that. But she did the gesture. Plus, she is a big part of the story of the guitar and why it all came together so perfectly.

Paradise In Art, which is really the moniker for it, seemed to work because for me, the guitar is an artistic statement. Any guitar is, but this one is.

JG:

Out of the anniversary models that you've created over the years, there have been some real beauties. Have any stood out from the others for you?

SV

Yeah, for various reasons. I like different ones. The DNA was kind of cool. Oh yeah, and the anniversary black one that had all the silver.

JG:

That's the one for me.

SV

Yeah, man, that guitar is like, Whoa!

JG:

I can remember seeing you doing a few promo shots with Joe and Eric Johnson during the original G3 press tour, and you had that guitar on. However, I'm not sure it ever made it to the stage. Do these anniversary guitars connect with you as much as the standard releases?

SV:

Well, in a perfect Ibanez world, every time we c

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Photo © Larry DiMarzio

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JG:

Are we ar How abo

SV:

You know start worl things jus supposed year, but

a new aesthetic, whether it's an anniversary or whatever, the idea is for Steve to play it how off the guitar. But it just seems to me D has been the boss. I just seem to have a attraction to that guitar. It's always been a ce that I could feel like home. New guitars e broken in. You know what I mean? It a year to break a guitar in properly so it has A, your sweat, it has your stories, and your nd there's the sound. The sound changes. new car. New cars have that new car smell, ell, a new guitar has a new guitar sound e wood hasn't breathed, it hasn't expand- wood changes when the guitar resonates he years. So with something like EVO, it rd for me not to play that guitar or FLO. two guitars that have been my main guitars es. So I apologise to anybody that would've at I would play those anniversary models Especially Ibanez, because who knows if d the potential of the sales of any of those, just the way I am. I have to move with my tegrity, and that makes more sense to me, play Ibanez guitars because I'm endors- . I play them because they are the perfect nt for me. I was just fortunate enough to e to work with such a conscious and effec- any as Ibanez.

any closer to hearing some new music, Steve? ut a new album?

y, it's the oddest thing. I've been trying to king on this record for years, and other st come up that are so compelling. I was to start work on it in the middle of last I had another impulse that wouldn't go

away. Like I was saying before, the instinct takes over, and this one said I have to record my orchestra music now. I have about four hours of intense orchestra music that I've composed throughout the years. It's been performed various times, but I never liked the recordings. So this summer I'm going into several studios in Europe with symphony orchestras to record all this stuff, and the preparation is intense. I have been working on that almost exclusively, so any time that I've had for the new studio guitar record or whatever has gone to towards that.

As soon as that project is put to bed though, I'm not even going to release the stuff right away because I just don't feel that my next record should be eclectic orchestral records. I do have the complete layout and a lot of the tracks already recorded for what I'm considering right now to be the third instalment of the real illusions trilogy, so I'm hoping to do that next. It's kind of weird though, how you blink and five years have passed, and you're like?

JG:

What happened?

SV:

Well, I'm trying to figure that out myself. When I was younger, I had an intense focus, and it was on just making records and touring. The intense focus hasn't changed, but it's just gone into other things like creating a record company, writing the VAIDEOLOGY book, or even just taking part in other aspects of life, family vacations and all these things. The demand I put on myself is whatever I'm doing right now. Make sure your instincts are telling you that this is the right thing. So the fact that a record hasn't come out in some years is just that. It's just me following my instincts and doing other things. »

JG:

It makes sense. I mean, it's always got to be an inspired choice. When I saw you in January, you were jumping around like a 21-year-old on stage. How are you managing to keep so fit and healthy these days? What's the regime, and how are you just in general? Life's good right now I take it?

SV:

Life is so good that if it gets any better, I think I'm going to explode. There are obviously things that you have to start being aware of when you get older, but I haven't had any troubles with anything though. I got my last physical, and the doctor kicked me out of the office. I have the blood pressure of a 17-year-old athlete. My resting heart rate is 52. I've got 98% oxygen in my blood. I might get a cold now and then and stuff like that, but I'm completely healthy, and I can tell you why I believe it is.

My greatest interest is in spirituality and the study of self. It's been an intense quest for as long as I can remember and to put it in a nutshell, the only obstacles in your life that create any suffering at all are down to the quality of the thoughts in your head. Nobody realises that. People believe that stress is caused outside of themselves, but stress is only ever caused by you allowing it. So for instance, it's not uncommon for a person to find themselves saying, "you're stressing me out," or "what you did has caused me stress," right?

And as a result, I'm stressed out because of you. This is a very common belief that virtually everybody has. There's something in the outside world that's creating unrest in them.

Another way to say it that's more accurate is, I am allowing myself to be stressed out based on what you're doing. I am expecting you to be different in order for me to be happy and stress-free. A person can only allow themselves to be stressed out. When a person realises this, it's a strong step in the direction of their independence and liberation. We all create our own stress based on the perspective we have about anything, and only we are capable of changing that perspective. We all create our own personal reality, but in truth, it's a form of pseudo reality. So you're the only one in control of the amount of stress that you have in your life. Now, that's mostly undebatable. If somebody reads that and says, "that's bullshit," they need to take a closer look at it because it's the secret to a happy life. You realise that you're creating all of the stress in your life by the way you're thinking about things and that you're the only one that's in control of your thoughts. Most people don't realise they're in control of their thoughts. Your thoughts are manifesting in your life, in your world, the world you see, you see through your thoughts. So if you have not such a good view of the world and people, then the world can be a very harsh, painful place for you. Sure, this is all based on

the way you choose to look at things, the way you choose to look at people, other people, events. If you find yourself criticising things in your mind, anything, the government, other people's religion, other people's sexuality, or even yourself, anything about yourself. When you're criticising those things, you're creating suffering in your life. That's what sickness is. When you realise this, it's challenging to change these mental patterns because they're very ingrained in you to believe them. You believe that they're true. It's a lie. Everything you believe is an opinion, but it's not necessarily true. It's not real; it's just your opinion. But the ego says, "no, no, this is true. And what I believe is true" That's what every war in the world is about. Whether it's in the kitchen between the husbands and wives or between Afghanistan and America, it doesn't matter. The same mechanism is in place. The egoist belief that your thoughts are the correct ones.

So spiritual awakening is basically the realisation that you're not your thoughts. When you realise that you are in control of these painful thoughts of your past, or your fearful thoughts of the future, they start to dissolve, and the power they had over you starts to dissolve. After that, you feel more peace inside of yourself. You see, it's very simple. The more you feel that peace. The more you realise how valuable it is to not criticise. Whenever you hear criticism, you're hearing somebody talk about themselves. It's true, it

really is. It's not any other way.

These are some of the things you can learn when you start looking inside of yourself as opposed to outside of yourself for something. It's true. But you know, as you go through this, it deepens. As a person starts to recognise these patterns in themselves and correct them, they are taking more control of their own life and their ability to find peace becomes sharper and that peace deepens. There's a door that opens that allows your creative intentions to flow a little clearer and cleaner since there's no fear in them. There's no fear of failure or fear of being made fun of, or fear of not fitting in or fear of going broke. There's none of that shit and that creates a clear shot to your inspiration, your personal, unique inspiration. That's how the JEM came about for me. That's how the PIA came about, and that's how some of the songs came about. Obviously, it doesn't mean that anything that I create in this state of presence is going to be pleasing or effective for everybody. However, it works for me.

JG:

How long did you find it took you to attain this thought process? I'm assuming that takes some considerable training?

SV:

You don't realise you've attained that. You realise it was always there and you never knew it. About 12 years ago, I discovered »

‘The Illusion Of Time’ by Eckhart Tolle. You hear a lot of people saying, “Oh, the only time is the present moment” and “you have to live in the now.” That’s a very catchy phrase. Yeah, but not many people really understand what that means. Your only security is in your now because when you’re in your now, there’s none of those fantasy, fearful thoughts of the past or the future or anything. You’re present. That’s peace in the now.

Everything is fine. Everything is perfect, actually. So what happened was he was talking about the illusion of time, and he said, “time doesn’t actually exist. The past does not exist; It’s in the present moment. The future doesn’t exist.” I looked around, and I remember that was an epiphany. I had heard stuff like that before and I agreed with it, but I didn’t fully understand what it meant. In reality, there’s only the present moment. Nobody can deny that. So that was a huge realisation. From there, you start seeing things differently,

and as you see things differently, your world changes. When you change the way you look at the world, the world changes. That’s the best answer I can give to why I feel so good at 60.

JG:

Well, you know what? I am talking with Steve Vai in the present moment and that always puts me in a good place. Steve, it was an absolute pleasure to chat with you again. Congratulations on the Ibanez PIA. I can’t wait to see you play it live again in the UK soon.

SV:

Well, thank you, Jonathan. I really appreciate the support, and I’ll tell you this, now when I walk into the studio and I look over at my white PIA...the input jack on EVO closes up! Ha!

END◀



Photo © Larry DiMarzio

For more information on Steve Vai, please visit:
vai.com



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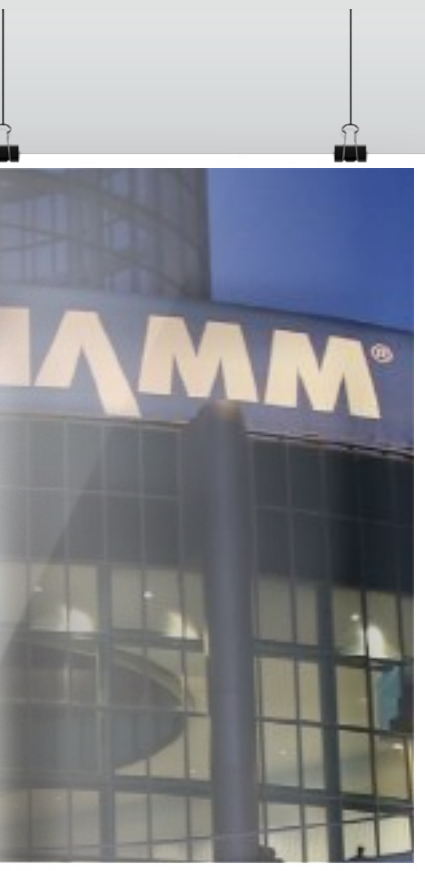
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FOUNDED in 1901, the NAMM Show is one of the largest music product trade shows in the world - and this year's event may have been the biggest yet, with well over 100,000 people in attendance to soak up all the latest releases from the more than 2,000 exhibitors. The **Guitar Interactive** team were once again on site in Anaheim, California to bring you our highlights from this year's show, including booth walk-throughs, the latest releases and announcements. Plus, interviews with some of guitar's biggest names including; Andy Timmons, Steve Morse, Doug Aldrich, Jared James Nichols and more. »

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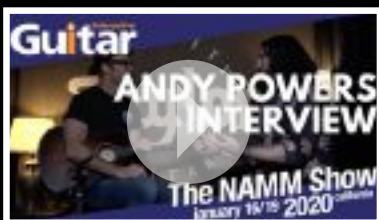
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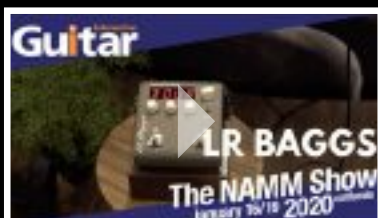
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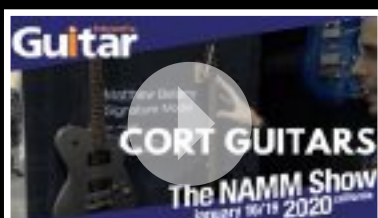
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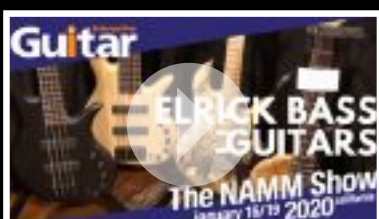
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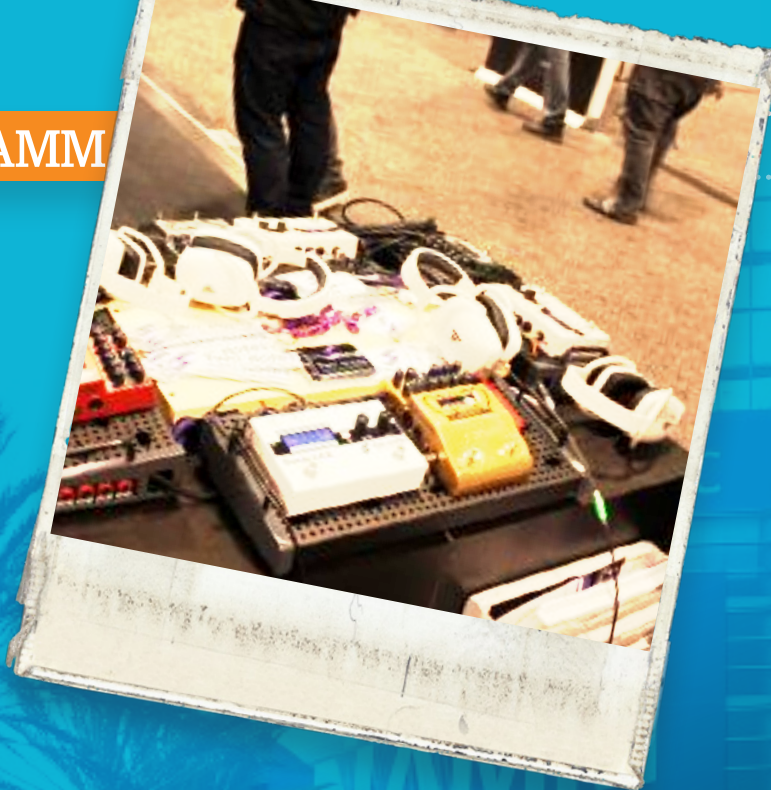
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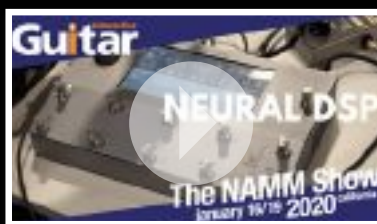
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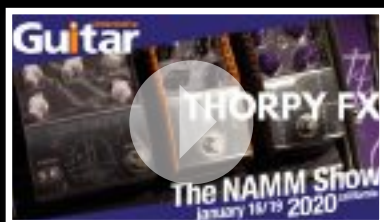
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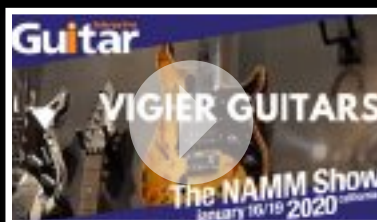
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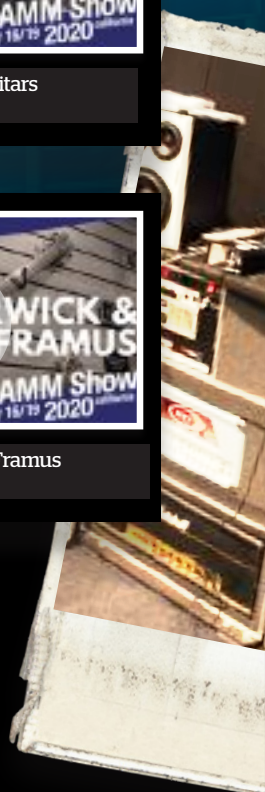
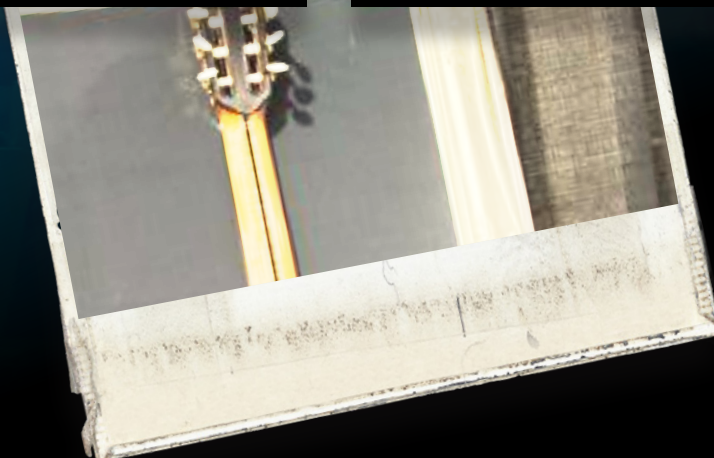
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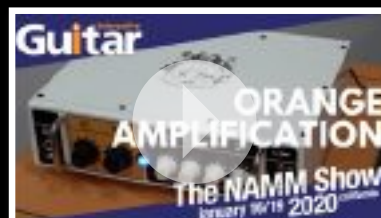
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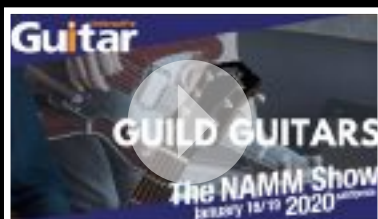
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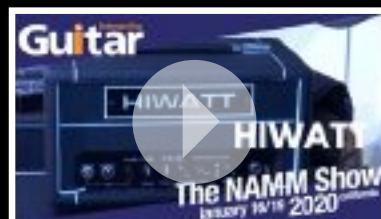
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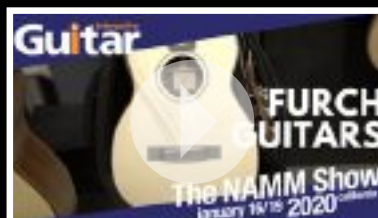
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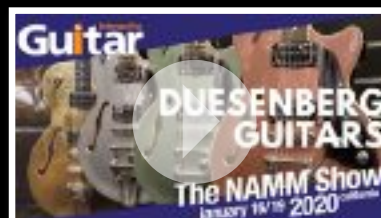
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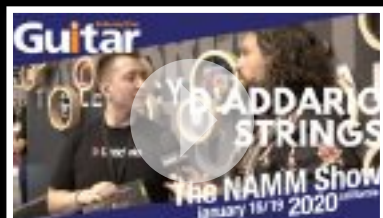
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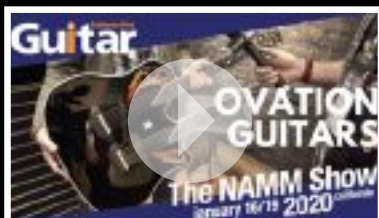
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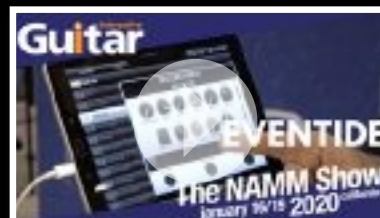
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*Angus
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TECH SESSION

This issue we have a very special Tech Session looking at the guitar style of the master of pure Rock and Roll - AC/DC's Angus Young. We wired **Jamie Humphries** up to the mains and let him rip...

[...>]

FORMED ormed in Australia in 1973 by Scottish born guitar duo brothers Angus and Malcolm Young, AC/DC are without a doubt one of the world's most successful and influential hard Rock bands. Known for their tight *"four on the floor"* grooves AC/DC have sold over 200 million records world wide, and are responsible for such classic rock albums as "High Voltage", "TNT", "Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap", "Highway to

Hell", "Let there be Rock", "Back in Black" and "For Those About To Rock We Salute You", to name but a few.

Undoubtedly the most iconic and best loved figure in the band is lead guitarist Angus Young, whose slight frame clad in a school uniform brandishing a Gibson SG is a legendary image in Rock and popular culture. The band's outrageous on stage antics were matched by their hard drinking,



[...>]

hard living off stage life style, a life style that tragically claimed the life of singer Bon Scott in 1980. The position of lead vocals was filled by English vocalist Brian Johnson, who recently (and controversially) was replaced by Guns N' Roses frontman Axl Rose.

Angus Young's guitar style is firmly rooted in Blues and Rock and Roll, his main influence being Chuck Berry. As well as imitating Berry's famous 'duck walk' Angus blends his "Johnny B Goode" style string bends with high-octane pentatonic runs and licks. Angus also includes arpeggio licks that make use of the open strings. Sometimes criticised for their simplistic songs structures (not that the band's audiences could care less!), often based around a handful of chords, AC/DC have penned countless classic rock riffs, that feature the brothers' (Malcolm and Angus's) tight driving rhythm riffs, a hard edged vocal style as well as Angus' electrifying lead playing.

For our Tech Session, I have borrowed ideas from such classic tracks as "Let There Be Rock", "Highway to Hell" and "Thunder Struck", although there are countless other tracks in AC/DC's vast catalogue that you could relate this track to. In classic AC/DC style, although not transcribed, the left hand channel features a Malcolm Young style rhythm part, which sonically is a slightly thinner and cleaner tone.

Bars 1-9 kick off our piece with a stylistic opening intro riff based around the chords of G major, E5 and A5. The rhythm makes use of "*pushes*" with the chord accent falling on the offbeat. The riff also features the note of G played on the 3rd fret of the 6th string, performed with a quartertone bend for a bluesy sound. The riff concludes with the chords of G major, D/F#, resolving to A5.

Bars 10-17 include the first half of our verse riff, and are based around tight chords performed against a static driving E note on the bass guitar. The verse concludes with an additional rhythm figure, with the A5 chord performed on the up beat.

Bars 18-27 include the second half of the verse riff, but with a slightly different conclusion before leading to our chorus progression. Bars 26 -27 includes more up beat accenting based around the chords of D major and G/D, with the bass guitar remaining on the D root note.

Bars 28-35 includes our chorus riff based around the chords of A5, G/D, and D major. Once again the harmony provided by the guitars moves against the static bass note performed underneath. The chorus concludes with the chords of C major, A5 and D major.

Bars 36-49 include our break down which is inspired by "For Those About to Rock We Salute You", and features a melodic figure »



performed with the picking hand fingers. This figure use minor 6th shapes, (inverted major 3rd), and a major 6ht shape, (inverted minor 3rd), on the 3rd and 1st strings, whilst the open 2nd string is used through out all of the changes. Pay attention to the accents, as they really affect the dynamic of this section.

Bars 40-43 kick off our guitar solo, and see us modulation to a B Mixolydian key signature. This section features a Blues-based lick mainly around the B minor pentatonic with an added major 3rd. This section concludes with the start of a new phrase based around B major pentatonic. »

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Bars 44-47 continue with our B major pentatonic phrase, that shifts up and repeats a minor 3rd higher, resulting in B minor pentatonic. This section concludes with some higher register string bends and rapid vibrato.

Bars 48-51 see us modulate back to an E Mixolydian key signature, with the second half of our solo performed

over our verse progression. Bars 48-49 include a cycling E minor pentatonic string-bending lick, which is quite tricky on the picking hand, so start off at a slightly slower tempo and build it up to speed. Bars 50-51 include some fast pattern based E Blues scale licks, similar to something Angus might play when achieving speed.





Bars 52-53 references a lick seen in the open section of the solo, with the licks shifting between both E major and E minor pentatonic scales by shifting in a minor 3rd interval.

Bars 54-57 conclude our solo with a descending E minor pentatonic lick that uses the open 1st string as a pedal tone. The track concludes with some free time 6th based Blues licks.

The Gear

Angus Young's choice of guitar is as iconic as the man himself, and favours a variety of Gibson SG guitars, although his main SG is a 1968 standard. This guitar was used as the inspiration behind his signature "Thunder Struck" Gibson SG guitar. His choice of amplifier is the Marshall 100 watt Super leads from the early '70s, some of which feature a variety »

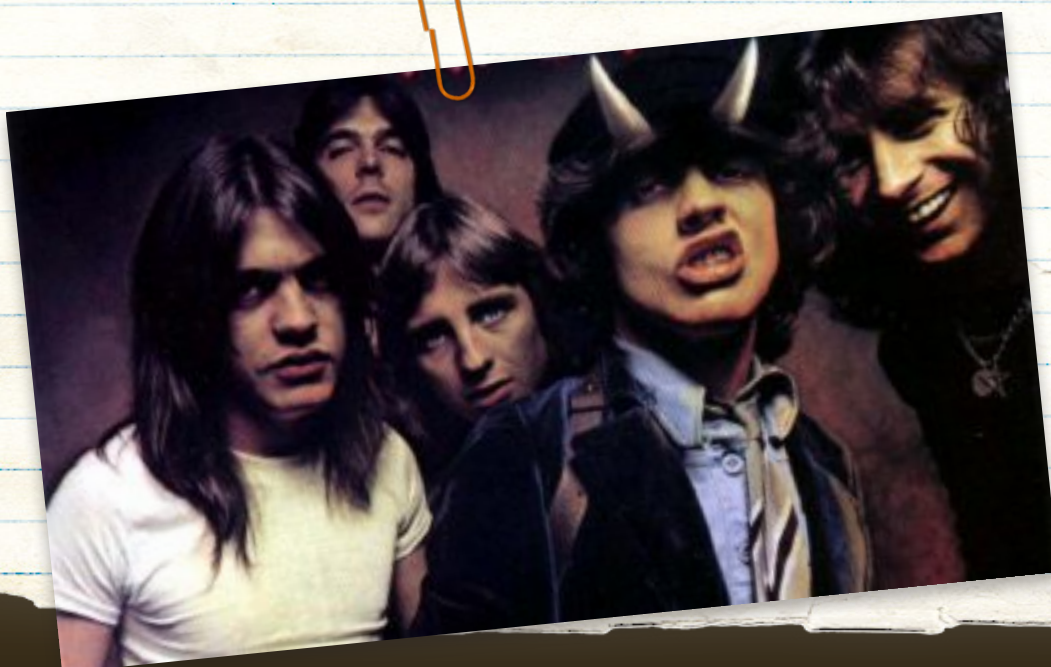
of modifications including extra valve in the pre-amp stage, and a master volume. Although Angus doesn't use effects, part of his sound was achieved by an early wireless system - the Shaffer Vega Diversity System. Due to signal loss in these early systems a pre-amp was used, which added a little extra gain and body to the tone. The company Solo Dallas now produces the Schaffer Replica unit, which is basically the pre-amp part of the old wireless system, which Angus uses to add boost and compression.

For this Tech Session I used an original 1974 Gibson SG plugged into my Mesa TC50 head, on the green channel. This head uses EL34 valves so it has a very British sound when in the normal mode. I ran the speaker output into a Two Notes Torpedo Studio digital load

box, and used an impulse responses by Celestion (*see our review in this issue's Making Tracks - Ed*), two V30 cabs, with both ribbon and dynamic mics, blended together in the mixing stage. The reverb on the guitars, more apparent in the break down, was courtesy of the UAD Ocean Way studio plugin, which provides an impulse response of the famous studio live rooms, and a variety of mics. This is a fantastic plug in for adding a really live vibe and depth to your recorded guitar tone!

Before signing off I would like to thank my good friend Michel Santunione at DLX Music in Stockholm for the loan of the beautiful SG guitar for this session; I couldn't play Angus-style on anything else!

<https://www.dlxmusic.se>





GUITAR INTERACTIV

COMP

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ETITIONS

YOUR CHANCES TO WIN



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- Seymour Duncan Killing Floor
- 24 packs sets of DR Strings Veritas Electric Guitar Strings (You choose the gauge)

2 Lucky Runners-Up winners will Win the following

- 12 packs sets of DR Strings Veritas Electric Guitar Strings (You choose the gauge)

Epiphone Ltd Edition Jared James Nichols Old Glory Les Paul

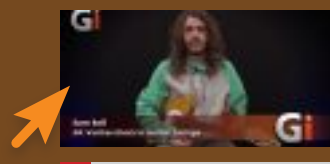
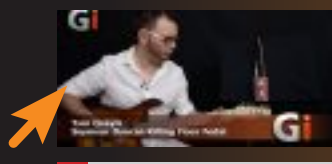
The Ltd. Ed. Jared James Nichols "Old Glory" Les Paul Custom Outfit is the premier signature model by the rising star from Les Paul's hometown who Music Radar named their Top 5 Upcoming Guitar Players in the World. Jared James Nichols' "Old Glory" features a classic 1955-style Les Paul Custom body with a single Seymour Duncan TM P-90 pickup, an Ebony fingerboard with traditional block inlays, Grover™ Rotomatic tuners, and EpiLite™ case along with a signed Certificate of Authenticity.



Epiphone Jared James Nichols Signature Old Glory Les Paul

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have an absolutely incredible free to enter prize giveaway for you this issue.

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CA APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION Learn the highlights of each track from Guns N' Roses explosive debut album with LickLibrary veteran Danny Gill



CA DARK SIDE OF THE MOON Jamie Humphries walks you through Gilmour's classic riffs, searing solos, masterful bends and ambient sounds from this psychedelic rock masterpiece



CA PARANOID A must-have for Sabbath fans. For the first time ever, you can learn each song from this absolute all-time metal classic



CA NUMBER OF THE BEAST A heavy metal masterpiece including, "Children of the Damned," "The Prisoner," "Run to the Hills" and the album's legendary title track



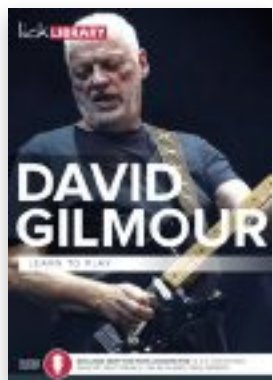
CA HOTEL CALIFORNIA Danny Gill walks you through the many highlights of each song from the rock music giants one phrase at a time



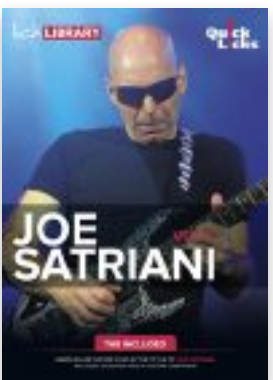
LTP BB KING Learn to play 5 classic tracks - Everyday I Have The Blues, Rock Me Baby, Sweet Sixteen, Three O'Clock Blues, The Thrill Is Gone



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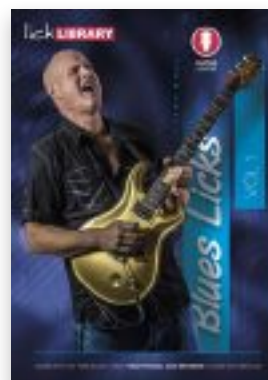
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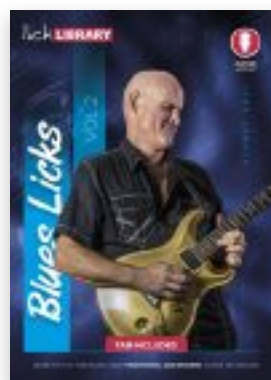
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GUITAR INTERACTIV

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REVIEWS

GUITARS, AMPS AND EFFECTS



Cort KX508MS 8-String Multi-Scale

With some huge sounds matched by incredible playability, the Cort KX508MS 8-String multi-scale loaded with Fishman Fluence pickups brings some serious thunder when you pick it up and play. **Nick Jennison** tells us more.

THE multi-scale takes centre stage. Designed to make your playing experience the best it can be, the frets feel entirely natural - how they were always meant to be. You'll be shredding through songs with ease, with the ebony fretboard and pristine neck allowing for incredibly fast access to each fret position. Whether you're playing some ambient, clean music or tearing through metal, this dynamic and responsive instrument will show you what a guitar can really do.

Extended range guitars pose a number of problems to builders. A typical 6-string guitar sports a scale length (the distance between nut and saddle) of 25.5". This works perfectly well for standard tuning, but downtune more than a few semitones and things start to get very loose and flabby. You can remedy this with really heavy strings, but the results might be

darker than you'd like. This is a problem for 7 string guitars, even more so on 8 strings, where the low F# string is only a tone higher than the low E on a 4-string bass (typically 34" scale).

So we need a longer scale length to accommodate low tunings then? Yes, but not so fast. Imagine putting a .010 gauge E string on a bass guitar and tuning it to pitch. Assuming you can get it there without breaking the string, it'll be so tight that it'll be deeply unpleasant to play (and to listen to). The solution? Multi-scale. A multi-scale guitar uses a shorter scale on the treble strings and a longer one on the bass strings, with frets that fan out from the treble side to the bass side. This way, every string gets its own "optimal" scale length. »

"The pickups are the **superb Fishman Fluence Modern humbuckers**..."



STAR RATING



PROS

- » 9th fret neutral position is super comfortable.
- » Fishman Fluence Modern humbuckers are a massive selling point.

CONS

- » Stock .065 low string supplied is way too light.

Check **THE SPEC**

Cort KX508MS 8-String Multi-Scale

MSRP (UK) £799 (US) \$1199 //

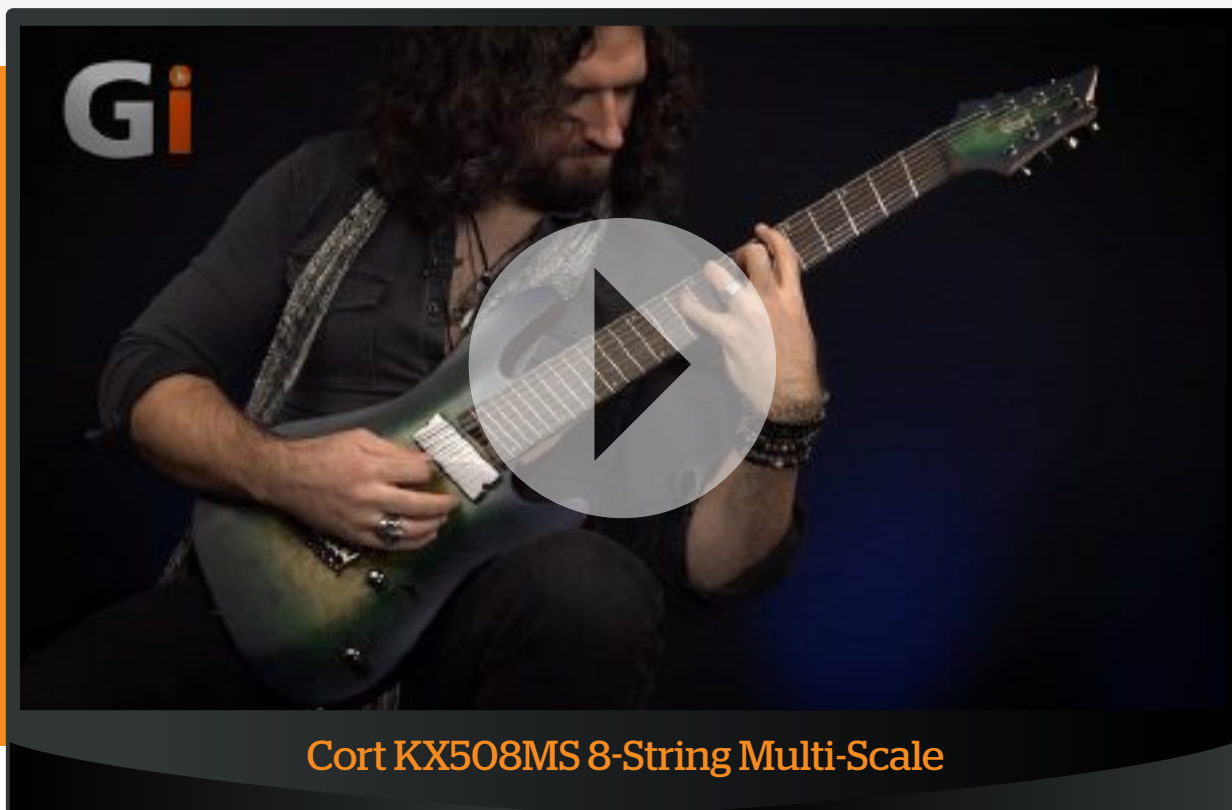
Swamp Ash Body: // Poplar
Burl Top // Maple/Amaranth
Bolt-on Neck // 24 Fanned Frets
// Fishman Fluence Modern
Humbuckers //

For more information, please visit:
cortguitars.com

The Cort KX508MS is just such an instrument, and an excellent example of one at that. While some more affordable multi-scale guitars can feel very alien, the adapting to playing KX508MS is very easy thanks to the 9th fret neutral position (meaning the 9th fret is “straight”, with the other frets fanning out from there). This makes the fan much less pronounced across the majority of the fretboard compared to the typical “12th fret neutral” necks found on other “affordable” musical guitars. This requires a much more pronounced bridge and pickup angle compared to 12th fret neutral models, which

drives costs up, so kudos to Cort for not cutting any corners here.

The pickups are the superb Fishman Fluence Modern humbuckers. In addition to sounding staggeringly good, the lack of polepieces on these pickups means they’re much more forgiving when it comes to angle and string alignment. The articulation and string-to-string balance is wonderful, and there’s a very impressive range to tones available (12 in total!).





The rest of the spec is equally impressive, with locking tuners, a thick poplar burl top (with matching headstock veneer) and a super-stable maple and purpleheart neck with an ebony fretboard. The finish looks great in the flesh, but personally, I'd prefer something less eye-catching. It comes strung with D'addario EXL120-8 strings, running 9-65. The .009 feels great with the 26.5" scale, but the .065 is way too light - we swapped it out

for a .078 with great results and no trouble with the nut or tuners whatsoever.

If you're considering making the jump to a multi-scale extended range instrument, you'd be hard-pressed to find a better guitar for the money. The neck and the exceptional pickups make the KX508MS hard to beat.

END «

PRS 2020 SE Mira

Originally released as part of the core line back in 2011, then later added to the popular deliver an excellent USA made guitar, packed with features but at a mid-level price position as one of the most popular PRS guitars on the market precedes it. Now, as part of P sary, the Mira gets an incredible SE line, and **Nick Jennison** is here to tell you all about

WHILE you might not immediately associate Paul Reed Smith with stripped-back rock machines, the PRS Mira is precisely that. Introduced in 2007 as a Stevensville-made “core” model, the Mira follows the symmetrical lines of the early pre-production guitars that would eventually become the Santana model. Later, the Mira - along with its stablemate, the PRS

Starla - was re-released as part of the more affordable “S2” range (standing for “Stevensville’s 2nd guitar”).

The new 2020 SE model is the latest incarnation of the no-nonsense Mira. Like it’s USA-made predecessors, it’s an all-mahogany set-neck design with a solid colour finish and a retro-inspired pickguard. »



r S2 line in an attempt to
nt. The PRS Mira's reputa-
PRS guitars 35th Anniver-
t it.



STAR RATING



PROS

- » Looks great.
- » Clear and articulate pickups.
- » Adjustable bridge a very nice addition.

CONS

- » Metal players should look at other models.

Check **THE SPEC**

PRS 2020 SE Mira
MSRP (UK) £599 (US) \$699 //

Singlecut Body Shape //
Mahogany Neck & Body //
Rosewood Fretboard

For more information, please visit:
prsguitars.com

“An **interesting but welcome** inclusion is the adjustable stoptail bridge...”

It's a very different look compared to PRS's typical curly maple-adorned instruments, but it's every bit as handsome in its own rugged way: the black model with the tortoiseshell pickguard is my personal favourite, although the frost blue model we're taking a look at in this review is very cool.

Like the majority of the SE range, the SE Mira sports PRS's excellent 85/15 “S” humbuckers. The “85” refers to the original Standard Treble & Bass pickups used in the first production PRS guitars, while the “15” refers to the first year these pickups were successfully re-imagined. They're a bright and open sounding set of humbuckers that are something of a departure from the warmer and darker pickups that preceded them. The treble pickup is biting and twangy with a slight scoop in the low mids, while the neck pickup is clear and articulate, and both sound fantastic with the coil-split engaged.

An interesting but welcome inclusion is the adjustable stoptail bridge. It looks much like PRS's one-piece compensated stoptail, but with the addition of the hefty adjustable brass saddles from the 594 bridge. While it's hard to say for certain, I cannot help but feel the brass is adding a certain “something” to the tone (and with the move towards brass

bridge inserts across the core range, I can assume Paul agrees). What is certain is that this bridge will allow the use of a much wider range of string gauges, including sets with a wound G string (not recommended with the regular stoptail bridge). This is especially cool for slide players and blues/roots players that need a big plummy string gauge, with the zingy 85/15s offsetting the darker sound of big wires. Interestingly though, the SE Mira comes strung with 9-42 gauge strings, which felt a little too slinky even for me.

When it comes to playing comfort, the SE Mira is everything you'd expect from PRS. It's deceptively light and balances well on either leg sitting down (something I struggle with on most guitars), while the wide thin neck is slightly meatier than the name would imply. It's equally comfortable for thumb-behind legato work and thumb-over chordal playing and everything in between.

The SE Mira is a very appealing guitar that's at home in just about any style - visually and sonically. It's a whole lot of PRS for the money, and (in my opinion) it's one of the coolest looking guitars in the whole range.

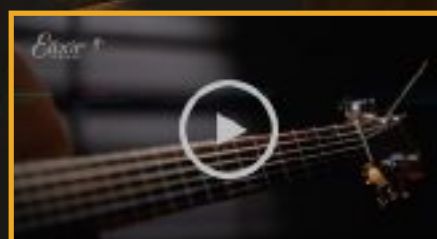
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THE
MOMENT
WHEN
THE

Music Pulls You In



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Epiphone Jared James Nichols Signature Old Glory Les Paul

The Jared James Nichols “Old Glory” Les Paul Custom Outfit is the premier signature model from Les Paul’s hometown. Featuring a classic 1955-style Les Paul Custom body with a P-90 pickup and an Ebony fingerboard with traditional block inlays, “Old Glory” could be the machine you’ve always dreamt of. **Nick Jennison** tells us more.

AS much as signature guitars can divide opinions, they can be some of the coolest and most interesting guitars on the market. Given free reign, artists will often make bold decisions on visuals and specifications that product designers may otherwise shy away from. Take Epiphone’s Lee Malia signature guitars: they’re drop dead gorgeous, and offer a combination of pickups and electronics that aren’t available on any other guitar in the Epiphone range.



The built in collaboration with the fast-rising virtuoso whose name it bears, the Jared James Nichols “Old Glory” Les Paul Outfit (a bit of a mouthful, for sure!) is another home run from Epiphone. Marrying a Les Paul Custom’s good looks with the stripped-back functionality of a Les Paul Jr, it’s a unique instrument with a vibe and a voice all its own.

Picking up the JJN (as I shall be abbreviating the guitar’s lengthy name from here on!), the most interesting thing you’ll notice is how *old* this guitar feels. If you’ve ever handled vintage instruments, you know that nitrocellulose ages in a very specific way that doesn’t feel like satin, but doesn’t feel like lacquer. It’s hard to describe, but damn it if Epiphone nailed it with this guitar! It doesn’t look like a well-used relic, but it feels like a 60 year old case.

As invitingly tactile as the finish is, the JJN’s neck is a bit of a shock. It’s absolutely huge! Jared is a big dude with big hands, and this neck is made for large paws for sure. If you like to grip hard with an aggressive touch, it’ll be right up your street, but it’s not terribly friendly for thumb-behind-the-neck shredding - even for a big chap like myself! If you can get past that, the ebony fretboard and me-

nature

model by the rising star
single Seymour Duncan
very well be the blues

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STAR RATING



PROS

- » Unique feature set.
- » Serious good looks.
- » Feels like an old guitar right off the shelf.

CONS

- » Pickup is very low output at the factory height.

Check **THE SPEC**

**Epiphone Jared James Nichols
Signature Old Glory Les Paul**

MSRP (UK) £529 (US) \$699 //

Mahogany Body & Neck // 1950s
style Rounded-C neck Shape //
Seymour Duncan P-90 Bridge
Pickup // 1 Volume, 1 Tone

For more information, please visit:
epiphone.com

“A **truly unique** guitar that looks gorgeous, feels old and sounds killer...”

jumbo frets feel great for string bends, although I'd like to have seen true jumbo frets to match the girthy neck.

Plugged in, the single Seymour Duncan P-90 is clear and open, much like the mid-50s models that inspired it.

It's pretty low output, which is compounded by the distance between the

pickup and the strings straight from the factory - if you're going to be playing with any level of gain, you'll want to jack the pickup (or at least the pole-pieces) closer to the strings. That said, the pickup's voice is great with a bit of distortion - it's very well balanced across the frequency spectrum, and has a great midrange grind that's perfect for slide. »



Epiphone Jared James Nichols Signature Old Glory Les Paul

LINE 6

HELIX

Real. Smart. Control.

You Already Know How To Use It.

Helix™ is so intuitive you already know how to use it. With touch-sensitive footswitches, customizable scribble strips, a large color LCD and a revolutionary hands-free editing mode, Helix sets a new standard for user interface design.



The beautiful thing about a guitar like this is that it forces you to work the volume and tone controls (as well as your picking style) to get different tones. There are certainly plenty in there - the pickup with the tone wide open and the volume backed down is bright enough for clean styles, and winding it up full with the tone turned down will produce some serious “woman tone” fatness.

The Jared James Nichols “Old Glory” Les Paul Custom Outfit is a truly unique guitar that looks gorgeous, feels old and sounds killer (if a little on the low-output side). If you’re up to the challenge of a single pickups and that manful neck profile, you’re in for a treat.

END◀





Aria Pro II 615-MK2-Nashville

Originally released back in 1995, the all-new and improved 615-MK2 evokes a heritage II Nashville, however, it comes full of modern tweaks. Featuring a roasted maple neck and poplar Body and fitted with some powerful alnico-5 pickups, the Aria Pro II 615-MK2-Nashville machine. **Nick Jennison** reviews.

IT'S really hard to beat the sound of a great single-coil guitar. But which single coil? While humbuckers share many of the same qualities regardless of output and magnet type, Strat and Tele style single coils are wildly different beasts. Strat pickups shimmer, sparkle and bite. Tele pickups punch, growl and twang. Whatever your preference, you need both flavours in your arsenal.

Aria's 615-MK2 "Nashville" is a perfect blend of both sounds in a single guitar. With a single-cutaway body and Tele style neck and bridge pickups (the latter replete with the signature bridge plate), it's pretty clear where the inspiration for this guitar comes from. It's definitely not a straight Telecaster copy though, with a number of notable differences. The body is sleeker and slimmer, with forearm and belly contours for added comfort. The poplar and flames maple construction has a distinctly luxurious look, with a Pearloid pickguard as a finishing touch. Oh, and there's a Strat middle pickup too!

While it's not the first time we've seen these mods to the Telecaster format, it's unusual to

see a "Nashville Tele" pickup layout on a guitar with "boutique" looks, but it's a combination that really works. The three-way pickup switch offers the standard array of Tele tones, while a push-pull switch brings the middle pickup into the circuit in any position. While this might seem like a convoluted way of wiring this pickup arrangement, it's actually very intuitive to use.

The neck and bridge pickups sound superb, with buckets of character and punch. There are great country and classic rock tones to be had, with surprisingly convincing metal and jazz tones through the right amp. You'd be forgiven for thinking that adding the middle pickup would produce more output and fatness, it's quite the opposite, yielding very convincing Strat "2 and 4" tones that are killer for funk, pop and fusion. Be warned, there's not a lot of compression in these open sounding pickups which can make shredding feel like hard work, but there's little else this guitar can't handle.

From a playability perspective, the 615-MK2 is excellent. The roasted maple neck feels great, with enough meat for "thumb-over" »

of the original Aria Pro
and fingerboard, Pop-
ville is a serious tone



STAR RATING



PROS

- » Loads of superb Strat and Tele tones.
- » Roasted maple neck feels superb.
- » Premium quality hardware.

CONS

- » Not the friendliest guitar for shredders.

Check **THE SPEC**

Aria Pro II 615 MK2 Nashville

MSRP (UK) £TBC (US) \$TBC

Poplar Body // Flamed Maple Top
// Roasted Maple Neck // Pickups:
TN-5/OS-5/TB-5 (Alnico 5)

For more information, please visit:
ariaguitars.com



The Aria 615-MK2 “Nashville” is a guitar that can handle everything from metal to jazz, classic rock to funk - there’s

playing without being cumbersome, and the jumbo frets make bending a breeze - particularly country style pedal steel bends. The body contours make for a much more comfortable right-hand position too (I personally really struggle with slab body guitars).

The Aria 615-MK2 “Nashville” is a guitar that can do it all. From country to fusion, metal to jazz, classic rock to funk - there’s a sound in this guitar for every style.

END «



that **can do it all.** From country to fusion, a sound in this guitar for every style...”

La Grange The Wheel

When La Grange founder Benjamin Wasservogel began his quest to create the new 'classic' blues and rock guitar player, he made it clear that he would leave no stone unturned in his head. The Wheel was very much a product of that journey. In 2019, the brand looked at a model that's helped make its name, with the latest incarnation of The Wheel. So, has La Grange reinvented The Wheel, or is it just more of the same? **Phil Short** tells us more.

IN a world full of 'boutique' guitars from an increasing number of emerging guitar builders, it can sometimes feel like there is possibly too much choice (if that can even be possible!) when it comes to finding that perfect instrument. With many manufacturers building their take on the most classic designs, the market can at times feel slightly saturated, and it can be tough to discern which guitars will really resonate with you (pun intended!). But every now and then, we get presented with an instrument that truly stands out from the pack – may we proudly present to you, “The Wheel” by La Grange guitars.

A truly stunning bit of craftsmanship, this beautiful offering from La Grange is a serious instrument, offering incred-

ible build quality, attention to detail and jaw-dropping tones and luxurious playability. First impressions right out of the box are that this guitar is going to really sing. From just picking it up out of the case you can feel that it's rock solid. The finish feels smooth, comfortable and robust under the hands, with that real sense of natural high quality that just oozes out of a guitar that we've come to expect from custom shop level instruments.

The guitar is extremely resonant down to a few key appointments. The finish is a nitro lacquer, used by many custom shop level builders for its natural feel and breathability of the wood. Over time the finish will age beautifully, and the wood can breathe freely, which helps the overall tone of the instrument. The neck is a

set neck construction, which helps yield a darker tone compared to a bolt-on style neck joint, where the metallic screws bring a bit zing to the overall sound. The other very cool feature is the addition of locking studs in the tune 'o' matic tailpiece. This means that none of the resonance gets lost through any rattling hardware, but that the vibrations travel cleanly straight into the body of the instrument, increasing overall resonance and sustain. The guitar also features some very light ageing to the finish and hardware to give it a really authentic, worn-in feel – we are big fans indeed!

The guitar is inspired by the Les Paul Junior, but there is absolutely nothing junior about this guitar at all. The tones are top shelf as is the playability, with excellent »

classic' instrument for the
n finding that sound in
ed to improve on the
La Grange guitars truly



STAR RATING



PROS

- » Superb tones.
- » Incredible custom guitar level craftsmanship
- » Extremely comfortable neck shape.

CONS

- » The price is going to be out of reach for many.

Check **THE SPEC**

La Grange The Wheel

MSRP (UK) £TBC (US) \$3480 //

Premium Korina Body // C-Shape
Maple Neck // 22-fret Ebony
Fretboard

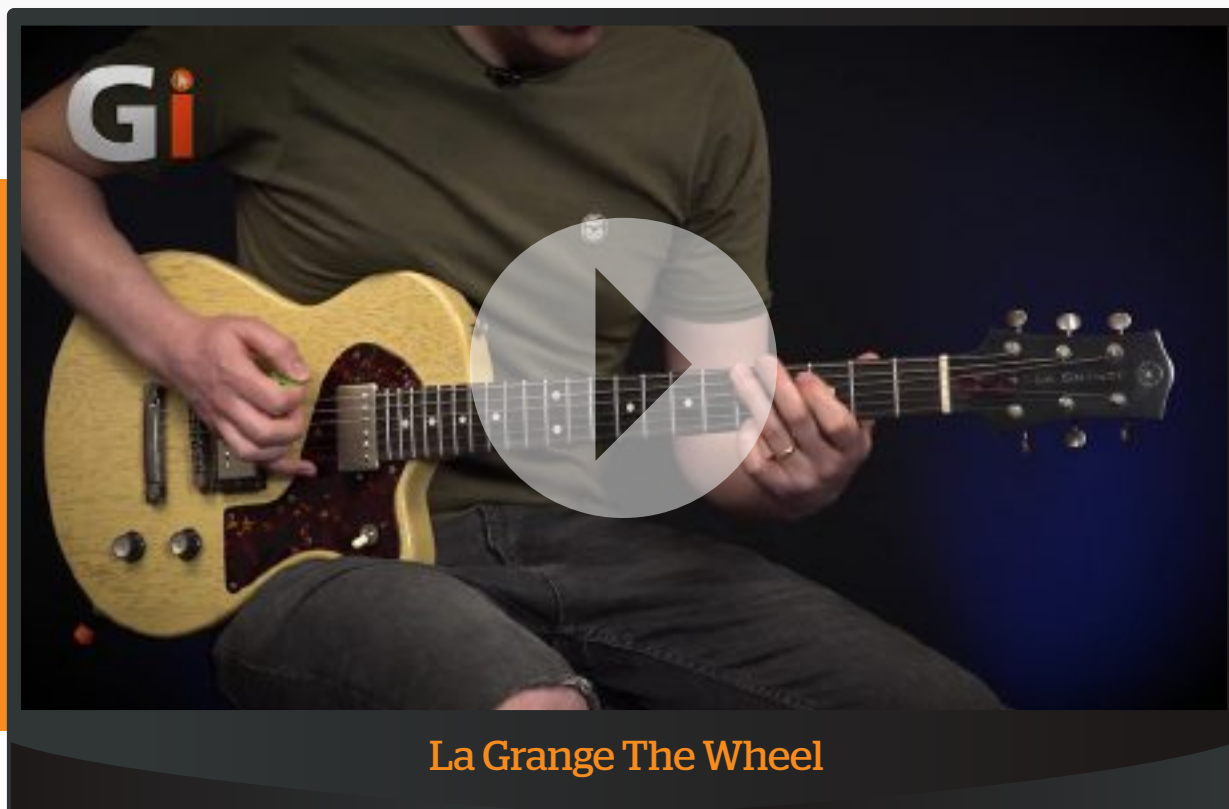
For more information, please visit:
lagrange.guitars

fretwork and perfect intonation straight out of the factory. The balance of the guitar is also very good. Sometimes these designs can feel a little top-heavy, but not so with this instrument. It's very comfortable to hold making playing effortless.

Tonally we got some stunning bluestones, that were full-bodied with a beautiful sweet top end. Rolling down the volume control and splitting the humbuckers yielded some

the best sounding split tones we've ever heard. Clean, sparkly and funky, this guitar will handle authentic funk tones with no problems at all. Higher gain tones are thick and juicy and gave us a throwback to that classic Gary Moore hot blues sound. For blues, classic rock, funk, country and roots styles, look no further than "The Wheel" from La Grange guitars.

END◀



One cable to rule them all

from backline to pedalboard

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A choice of four, six or seven channel cables

Mono jacks, dual jacks, stereo jacks,

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"Pedalsnake has taken 10 cables and 10lbs off my pedalboard, and shaved 10 minutes off my setup time."

For a travelling guitarist, it's a lifesaver.

Nick Jennison
Guitarist and iGuitar contributor



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visit madisonandfifth.co.uk



BOSS Angry Driver

Sam Bell review The BOSS JB-2 Angry Driver—the first collaboration pedal that BOSS has teamed up with JHS pedals to combine two of their best pedals into one sublime little unit, which combines the JHS Angry Charlie from JHS and the BOSS BD-2 Blues Driver. Let's take a

BOSS pedals are no doubt one of the most well-known guitar pedal companies out there, their legacy needs no introduction, their lineage of instantly recognisable pedals, sounds and familiar consistent quality have made them one of the go to choices for all levels of Guitarist. It's no doubt that BOSS has influenced many other budding pedal companies over the years in their choices of effects and approach to design. One particular person they influenced was a dude by the name Josh Scott, Josh of course is the brain power behind the awesome pedal brand JHS pedals. He has been making some fantastic pedals for many years now which are incredibly popular with many professional players. Josh has a YouTube channel in which he talks about the history of pedals, brings in pedals from different

brands and talks about their influence on Guitar Players and his own pedals as well. One video he has done on his YouTube channel is about how much of a 'Fanboy' of BOSS pedals he is. So to see that JHS has had a chance to hook up with Guitar Pedal Giant JHS is truly heart-warming and of course well deserved.

The pedal I'm looking at in this issue is one from my personal collection, the BOSS Angry Driver is a combination of two fantastic drive pedals. BOSS pedals own 'Blues Driver' and JHS's own 'Angry Charlie' These two pedals are the staple drive sounds of Andy Timmons rig, and whilst this is not an Andy Timmons signature pedal (he has his own Angry Charlie with JHS) this unique unit from BOSS/JHS lets us get our hands on some incredibly tasty drive combinations or

just by themselves. Let's take a deeper dive, and as ever, don't forget to check out the video!

This pedal is very simple to use, on the far right of the pedal there is a mode control to switch it between, JHS only, Blues Drive only, Toggle between JHS/Blues Drive, JHS series into Blues, Blues Series into JHS and finally a parallel mode. The next set of knobs simply control the Level, Tone and Drive of each pedal, the larger and lower control for the Blues Drive and the smaller control on top of each knob for the JHS. Nice and simple! With an additional footswitch you can have further switching options (such as having it in Blues into JHS mode, using an external switch to take out the Blues so it's just the JHS pedal etc). That's the basic functionality. It's awesome to be able to use the drives in different combinations, »

has ever done! Team-
The JB-2 Angry Driver
closer look.



STAR RATING



PROS

- » Two Really Good Drive Pedals in One!
- » Compact, Rugged Boss Design, easy to use.
- » Tons of tone!

CONS

- » None at all.

Check **THE SPEC**

BOSS JB-2 Angry Driver

MSRP (UK) £155 (US) \$199 //

Dimensions (W x D x H): 73 x 129 x 59 mm // Weight: 440 g // 9V battery or 9V DC Power Supply Required

For more information, please visit:
boss.info/uk/

the series modes allows us to 'push' one drive with the other for more gain/unique mid-range, and the parallel mode also allows for even further more detailed tone shaping.

So that's all well and good, what about the sounds? So, the Blues Drive mode is of course modelled exactly on the classic BOSS Blues Drive. It's a nice crunchy drive with a lot of upper mid range bite, traditionally it wasn't very gainy, however over the years players have modified them for more gain. The Angry Driver version of the Blues drive is a little bit more like the tweaked version,

leaving us with lots of room to play around. Andy Timmons has been said to use the Blues Driver for a broken up clean sound, which it does fantastically of course, he can also use it to push other pedals like a Tube-screamer would be used.

The JHS side of the pedal is of course modelled on the Angry Charlie. The Angry Charlie is like a JCM800 on steroids, with a nice smooth mid-range and depending on the tone setting, a lovely lower mid-range growl and tightness in response. This being said, as cliché as this may sound, and if Josh was to





ever read this he would probably laugh! but despite how high gain it sounds and feels at more extreme settings, it does clean up nicely for that 'transparent' feel. Even when the drives are stacked, its possible to roll of the volume and get the lovely glassy detail of a crunchy rhythm/lead tone.

It's quite clear to see that I am obviously a big fan of this pedal, its been in my rig for over a year now. I personally use it in toggle mode between the JHS/Blues, using the blues for a broken up clean and the JHS for all out shred. This pedal has been perfect on my board for shows where I borrow back line which is usually a clean Fender Twin

style amp, and often I'm on in ears. With other drive pedals I've found no matter what I do its either too muddy and woolly or super brittle and harsh. But with the Angry Driver I've found a perfect go between; I can really shape my tone for modern/classic drive sounds. It made it possible!

I highly recommend this pedal for all modern Guitar players, its super versatile, it can be powered by battery if need be, and its affordable. Go check one out, you won't be disappointed!

END «

Mooer GE250

With the release of the GE250, Mooer has packed premium preamps/cab simulation, and more, into one robust, compact unit. Throw in a variety of I/O types and a newly designed expression pedal for a highly customisable piece of equipment! **Nick Jennison** tells us more.

THE amp modelling market is positively stacked right now. With Fractal's updated Axe-FX 3 and Neural DSP's highly anticipated Quad Cortex set to drop later this year, guitarists with deep pockets are very well catered for. Thankfully, you don't have to spend a fortune to get amazing amp modelling and effects, and Moore's GE250 is perhaps the most affordable pro-level unit out there.

If you're familiar with last year's all-singing-all-dancing GE300 (full review in GI #68), you'll know how good Mooer's amp models and effects are. The GE250 boasts all of the same core sounds, but without the more outlandish features like synth sounds and guitar profiling (although the "Tone Capture" feature on the GE250 still offers amp and cab profiling). It's also about half the size and half the price of its big brother, but it still



excellent IR support and a shed-load of effects into
 ssion pedal, and you've got a versatile, powerful and

retains the colour display, onboard expression pedal and
 comprehensive I/O.

The GE250 can be used in just about any configura-
 tion you can think of: the XLR outs are perfect for going
 straight to front of house, while the jacks can go to either
 an FRFR cab, a power amp and speaker cabinet or a tra-
 ditional valve amp using the four cable method. You can
 run the internal cab models, or your own IRs to either
 the jacks, XLRs or both, and each set of outputs has its
 own volume control. There's even a USB port that allows
 you to use the GE250 as an audio interface for direct
 recording.

Connecting to an amp via four cable method allows
 you to place any of the GE250's effects either before the
 amp or in the amp's effects loop, but it also allows you to
 "clone" the sound of your amp's preamp using the "Tone
 Capture" feature. The process is simple, and the results
 are alarmingly good! We were able to get the GE250's
 5150 model sounding remarkably close to our Victory
 Super Kraken. You can "capture" your entire amp collec-
 tion this way and use them in your presets on the GE250
 - taking them with you wherever you go. For touring
 musicians, this is a very powerful feature! »

STAR RATING



PROS

- » Tone capture is a big plus.
- » Excellent amp models and effects.
- » Smart routing options for running DI or with an amp.

CONS

- » No external amp switching

Check **THE SPEC**

Mooer GE250

MSRP (UK) £499 (US) \$499 //

70 contrasting amp models. // 60
 drum tracks. // 10 metronome
 types. // 70-second capacity
 looper. // In-built tuner.

For more information, please visit:
mooeraudio.com

Of course, you don't need to use this feature to get the best out of the GE250. The internal amp models are very impressive, and the effects are superb - particularly the reverbs and delays. The selection of drive and modulation effects might not be as extensive as some other units on the market, but that may not be a bad thing - for some, a dozen different tremolo effects is bliss, but for others, it can lead to severe option paralysis. The GE250 has everything you could need

without going totally over the top with options.

Mooer's GE250 is a streamlined, affordable and great sounding amp modeller. The comprehensive I/O and Tone Capture feature set it apart from the crowd, and the internal effects and amp models sound fantastic. It's a very appealing little unit.

END «



Mooer GE250

Aria Pro II
Mat Red
COLLECTION ©2020

615-MK2
-Nashville-

www.ariaguitars.com

ARAI & CO., INC. JAPAN

D'Addario XT Strings

Combining high carbon steel cores with an advanced corrosion resistance treatment, are designed to give you enhanced break resistance, pitch stability, and long-lasting performance while preserving the tone and feel of your favourite uncoated strings. So, just how good are they? Here's **Tom Quayle** with the verdict.

GUITAR strings may very well be one of the least exciting purchases for every guitarist on the planet; however, they are arguably the most essential (and certainly the most regular) purchase. As the contact point between us and our beloved instruments and the very source of every sound we make, strings can make or break (no pun intended!) how a guitar feels, sounds and responds, so buying the right set and gauge is hugely important.

D'Addario is a household name when it comes to strings and, as one of the few companies manufacturing and controlling their own string production from start to finish, are trusted and used by millions of guitarists all over the globe. It's big news when D'Addario innovates with a new type of string, and their latest development, the XT Strings range, the brand has caused quite a buzz in the guitar industry.

For years now, string manufacturers have been experimenting with coated strings, designed to add longevity to their existing products. The idea is to make them feel newer for longer and thus like a better value proposition to the army of guitarists out there who hate changing

strings but love the sound and feel of a fresh set. But coated strings have historically dulled the high-end tone, and feel very different to regular strings thanks to their 'slipperiness' and increased tension. As such, many players have shied away from them as too much of a compromise, preferring to settle for more regular string changes than altering their precious tone and feel.

The XT strings are designed to change this feeling of compromise, utilising the same core string technology as D'Addario's highly successful NYXL strings, but with an extremely thin hydrophobic, anti-corrosion coating that is almost imperceptible in terms of feel and tone vs a regular string. By using the same high carbon steel found in their NYXL and Nickel Bronze strings, D'Addario quote the same superb tuning stability and break resistance for their XT range but with the added benefit of extended longevity thanks to the anti-corrosion treatment. Because the coating is so thin, the tonal compromises are greatly lessened, and high-end roll-off is all but eliminated for both electric and acoustic strings whilst the traditional 'slippy' feel of coated strings is avoided too. »

D'Addario XT strings
performance--all while
they?



STAR RATING



PROS

- » Coated string benefits without the compromises
- » Increases the time between string changes
- » Same core material as the proven NYXL strings
- » Well priced considering the longevity benefits

CONS

- » The thinner coating will probably be less effective for those with very sweaty hands.

Check **THE SPEC**

D'Addario XT Strings

MSRP (UK) £14.99 (US) \$14.99 //

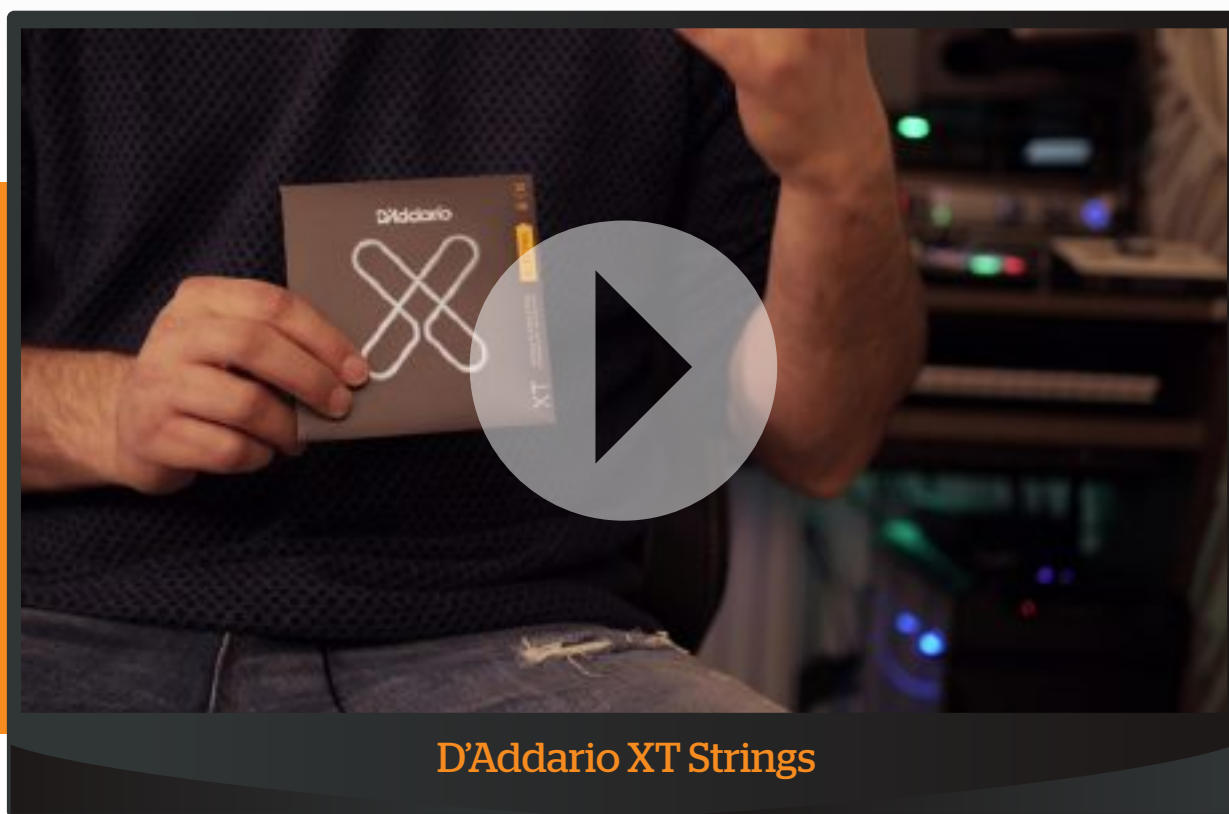
Available for Acoustic, Electric, Classical, & Bass Guitar, Plus Mandolin & Banjo

For more information, please visit:
daddario.com

As someone who used to play coated strings but moved away from them for all the reasons mentioned earlier, I can safely say that XT's exhibit none of the compromised elements associated with earlier iterations of other coated strings—having previously used NYXL's as my string of choice, the XT's feel almost identical with no added tension and just the tiniest amount of high-end roll-off that is pretty much undetectable on anything but the cleanest of single-note lines. Having never snapped an NYXL string it hasn't been surprising to me that I've yet to break an XT either and tuning stability has remained con-

sistent over many weeks, where other strings would lose intonation quite dramatically over the same time period. Of course, depending on the pH level of your sweat and how profusely you exude the stuff on stage or whilst practising, your mileage may vary, and I have friends who can only use heavily coated strings in order to maximise their longevity, but my experience has been superb so far.

D'Addario has even included a resealable, anti-corrosion bag for shipping their XT's. It's the same core material that the NYXL's ship in and does a great job of preventing rusted



D'Addario XT Strings



strings straight from the packaging as you might find with lesser quality brands. However, having a re-sealable bag (as opposed to the rip open and throw away one for the NYXL's) means that you can put unused strings back in the packaging and be sure they'll be fresh once you need them.

It's great to see that guitarists can finally get many of the benefits of a coated string without the compromised tone and feel. It's still recommended that you try any set of strings out to see how your hands react

with the materials at hand, but I think it's safe to say that many guitarists will love the benefits that D'Addarios XT range can bring to avoiding the dreaded string change! They cost a bit more than the average set, but are certainly worth the asking price. Highly recommended.

Be sure to check out the video for a full tonal comparison.

END «

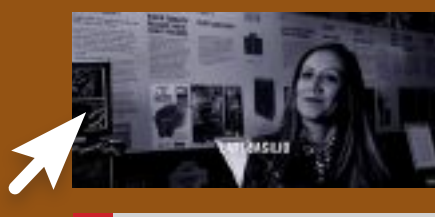
First Look: Laney Cub-SuperT

Brand new for 2020, Laney Amplification are back with some incredible
give us a fist look at the Laney Cub

Laney CUB-SUPERTOP

THE CUB-SUPERTOP boutique-style all-tube amp features an ergonomic, straight ahead single channel with three-band EQ plus a dynamic, footswitchable boost function. The CUB-SUPERTOP also features a footswitchable on-board reverb powered by the highly acclaimed spring reverb algorithm from the Black Country Custom Secret Path pedal.

The CUB-SUPERTOP delivers 15 watts of pure CLASS A/B tube tones in a compact portable head, and features the ability to be run at <1 watt by plugging into the < 1-watt input. The CUB-SUPERTOP is loaded with a pair of hand-selected 12AX7 tubes in the preamp and a pair of EL84 output tubes in the output section. »



 YouTube

NAMM 2020 CUB-SUPER Range
- Lari Basilio

Top & Cub-Super 12

new editions to their already stellar line-up. **Lee Wrathe** & **Lari Basilio**
o-SuperTop & Laney Cub-Super 12.



“Given how good it is, how small it is and how affordable it is, it’s a **no brainer**...”

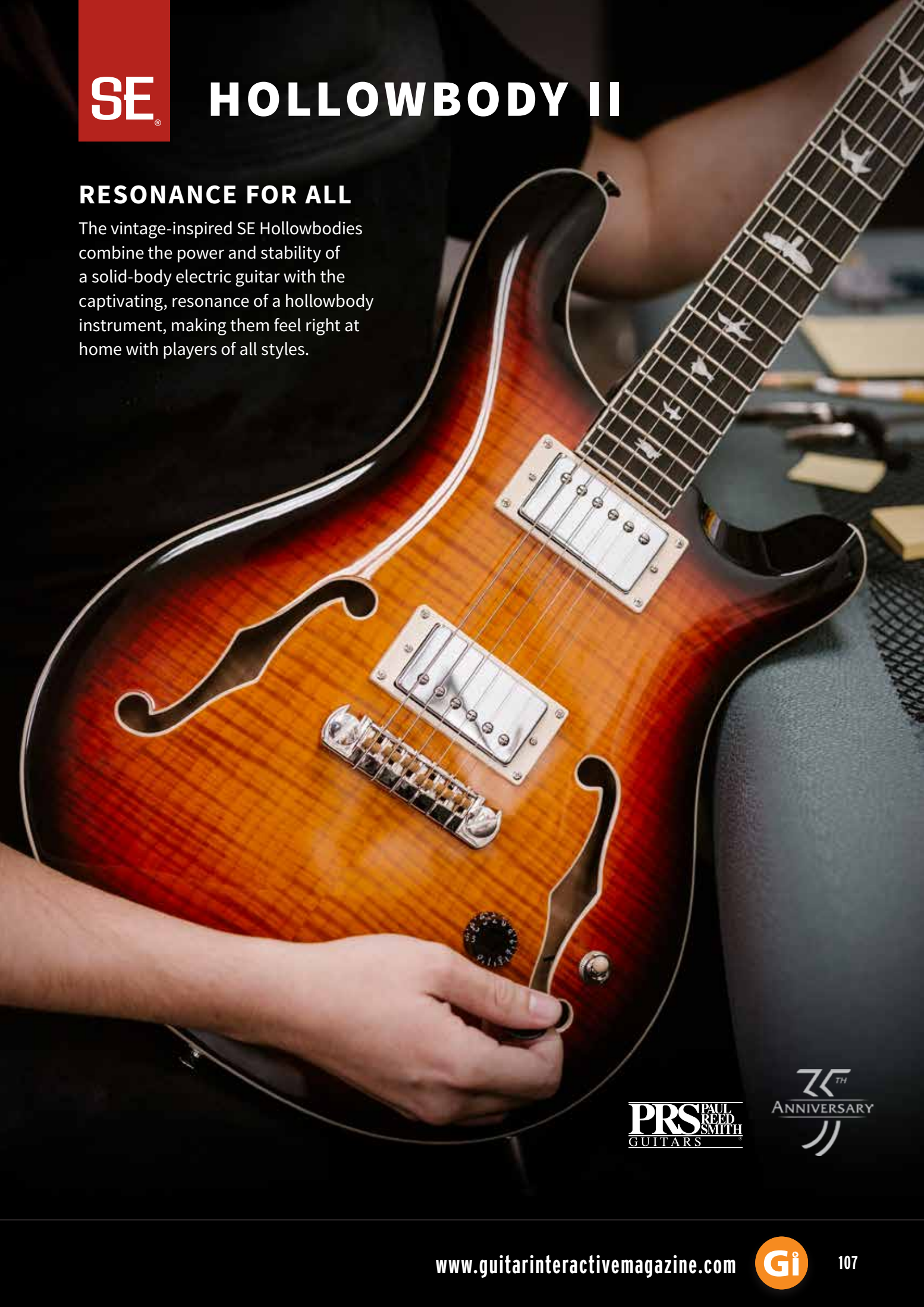
Laney CUB-SUPER 12

The CUB-SUPER 12 is a great-sounding boutique style all-tube amp, featuring an ergonomic, straight ahead single channel with three-band EQ plus a dynamic, footswitchable boost function. The CUB-SUPER 12 also features a footswitchable on-board reverb powered by the highly-acclaimed spring reverb algorithm from the Black Country Customs Secret Path pedal.

Loaded with a custom designed and voiced HH 12" driver, the CUB-SUPER 12 delivers 15 watts of pure Class A/B tube tones and features the ability to be run at <1 watt by plugging into the <1 watt input.

The CUB-SUPER 12 is loaded with a pair of hand-selected 12AX7 tubes in the preamp and a pair of EL84 output tubes in the output section. The CUB-SUPER 12 is equipped with an insert-style FX loop and external speaker socket. »



**SE**

HOLLOWBODY II

RESONANCE FOR ALL

The vintage-inspired SE Hollowbodies combine the power and stability of a solid-body electric guitar with the captivating, resonance of a hollowbody instrument, making them feel right at home with players of all styles.

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Laney Cub-SuperTop & Cub-Super 12

Key Features of the Laney Cub-Super-Top & Cub-Super 12

Class A/B

A Class A/B power section is based on the notion that music is a waveform and linear in nature – i.e. you only get a +ve section followed by a -ve section, you never get a +ve and -ve occurring at the same time. In a Class A/B amplifier,

the input signal is split into the +ve and the -ve sides of the waveform and each respective part is sent to a separate tube or tubes and amplified accordingly.

Selectable Power: 15W Or Less Than 1W

Allows you to drive the output stage of the amplifier harder at reduced output levels should you need to use the unit in situations where full volume is not appropriate.

On-Board Reverb

On-board studio quality reverb. Reverb gives you a sense of the space that you are in. A dry guitar signal can sound a little dull. Adding the right amount of reverb provides the guitar signal with ambience and brings it to life.

FX Loop

FX loops are important as they allow you to add effects to the signal path in a specific place between the preamp and the output section on an amplifier. This is where FX loops are important as it allows you to put time-based FX after the distorted preamp section. For example, delayed distortion sounds different to distorted delay – try it.

END «

Laney CUB-SUPERTO Specifications

- » 2 x 12AX7 Preamp Tubes
- » 2 x EL84 Output Tubes
- » 3-Band EQ Tonestack
- » Line Out
- » FS2-MINI Optional Extra
- » Item Dimensions: 210mm x 430mm x 176mm (H x W x D)
- » Carton Dimensions: 295mm x 555mm x 240mm (H x W x D)
- » Item Weight: 7.50kg

Laney CUB-SUPER 12 Specifications

- » 2 x 12AX7 Preamp Tubes
- » 2 x EL84 Output Tubes
- » Line Out
- » FS2-Mini Optional Extra
- » Item Dimensions: 399mm x 430mm x 233mm (H x W x D)
- » Carton Dimensions: 480mm x 495mm x 295mm (H x W x D)
- » Item Weight: 11.70kg

For more information, please visit:
laney.co.uk

GUITAR INTERACTIVE

STUDIO T

PLAY

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TO STAGE

IT - RECORD IT - PERFORM IT



Neural DSP Parallax

Encompassing over a decade of experience engineering some of the most powerful guitar processors, Parallax from Neural DSP could very well provide you with everything you need. **Dan Veall** tells us more.

IT boggles my mind, readers. It really does. “What Dan?” I hear you all exclaim. What could possibly be surprising me even after over 300 odd reviews for one of the biggest guitar magazines in the world? Well, let me explain.

Twenty years ago (maybe more), I was lugging around a great big 10u rack. I was fortunate to have not only a very healthy back but also a similarly healthy bank balance. (Then I became a professional musician ha ha!) I chose whatever I needed to create some huge bass sounds - and that required some clever crafting from a number of rack gear processors to get the job done. I had multi-band compressors, digital programmable equalisers and the biggest fattest sounding amp to drive two huge and heavy speaker cabinets. I am pleased to say I always enjoyed a big thumbs up from any FOH engineers.

How is it that nearly all of that kit, aside from the “bit that makes me loud” is sat in front of me on a laptop that costs a small

fraction of my previous “rig”. Yet, one single plugin can do so much more? I had to sit down and reflect on that for a while!

The answer is in my video demo, so I will expand on my thoughts in this written part of my review.

Bass guitar is an interesting beast when it comes to tone and sound. We can simply plug into any amplifier and know that we’re going to hear something close to our bass. Sure, we have some, ummm “extreme ends of the scale” that are outside of the discussion today, but we’re assuming that plugging into a reasonably modern example will reward us with a good sound, we can step up and gig.

Things get a little more complicated when for example distortion gets involved. Specifically, I am talking about the more aggressive rock tones, but the theory still applies for those mild grit sounds. You know, The ones that people often refer to as “warming up the sound”. Even on a very

st devastating bass distortions on the planet,
 ou need to design the ultimate bass tone.

clean bass sound in a recording, just that edge is enough to
 make the bass guitar sound more alive, like it was recorded
 at volume in a real space.

The distorted guitar sound can be split up in to regions of
 the frequency range: Sub, Bass, Low mid range, High Mid-
 range and treble. To my ear, distortion in the sub and bass
 frequencies (20hz up to around 300hz) doesn't sound as
 great. It can make anything sound stodgy and incoherent. »

STAR RATING



PROS

- » One plugin covers a huge part of a bassists signal chain.
- » Endless tweaking available but easy to get a great sound.
- » Neural are demonstrating they are capable of some incredible products.

CONS

- » You'll, of course, need some hardware to run this plugin.

Check **THE SPEC**

Neural DSP Parallax
MSRP \$99 //

Available in 64-bit VST / VST3 / AU
 / AAX & Standalone // Latest OS
 Compatibility for Windows & Mac

For more information, please visit:
neuraldsp.com



That could be exactly what you're looking for, and that's fine, but I think bass loses its depth and punch as transients are compressed by the very nature of the way that distortion "works".

Ok, let me now critique treble frequency distortion (ha ha) - ok, not really. But for us bassists we need to be careful, especially if we are fans of tweeters or if we are running our bass sounds straight out of the DI output into the front of house set up. There's lots of energy in the treble frequencies when it comes to high saturation drive sounds. This can sound brittle and harsh if we don't reign it in. - For our fine guitarist brethren, guitar speak-

ers actually do this naturally as they have a steep attenuation usually above 3Khz. That just leaves our low mid and high mid frequencies cutting through which interestingly is the very range that driven guitar sounds sound the best, especially dropped in a mix with the rest of the band. What would be really great then, back to us bass players, is a way to leave the bottom end alone, punchy and less driven; And a way to tame the top end to keep it sounding smooth rather than tearing our eardrums to pieces. In between both we have a huge amount of important midrange frequencies that we will want to treat carefully. In my video, hopefully, I explained clearly that this is exactly what Parallax offers.



Neural DSP Parallax



It is literally what I was attempting to achieve with my own bass gear all this years ago!

To reiterate my video: Page one of the plugin is I suppose what you could consider your “amplifier sound”, page two offers up the colour and characteristics of a mic’d up speaker cabinet.

Setting up, you can craft your bass sound’s low end for breadth and velocity, then mix in some band specific compression to tighten it up. The mid band, as described, is fixed around 400hz, yet the treble band is, like the bass band, configurable for roll off. (The bass band is a Low Pass Filter,

the High band is a High Pass Filter). The high band isn’t fixed and can be pulled down as far as 100hz.! The Low band will come up to 400hz, so, aside from my review, you can really get a big cross over of frequencies if that is your bag (even turn off the mid distortion altogether which also works so well.)

Neural know that having access to a great equaliser section is also very important and with that we have one in the plugin that can be engaged at will to further shape our resulting mix.

The elephant in the room for the more plug-and-play musician is of course that »

this plugin resides in a computer environment. For the benefit of the review, I plugged my bass directly into a Focusrite 2i2 audio interface, that has proved resilient and reliable. I now have a diminutive set up in which I can turn up to a gig and send “my sound” to the engineer. Monitoring whether or not via wedges on the floor or through an In-Ear system is for another column, but I have enough kit here to get a great ‘amp’d up’ tone without having to lug a fridge with ten speakers and a beautifully crafted back breaking all-valve amplifier head to my next epic show.

Did I mention the save button? - Not only can I save my favourite sounds at home or studio and head out to a gig, I can of course, whilst stood on stage, tweak for a particular show configuration and save as a separate program once my engineer has given it the thumbs up.

If you’re at a total loss where to start, well Neural have teamed up with some of the most amazing bassists, producers and musicians to get you started. Notable credits for me are Or Lubianiker, Nolly Getgood, Jon Stockman and Forrester Saville.

I need to find a way to round up this review as there’s still plenty more to discuss; I am hoping that my video review will at least give you an idea of what the plugin is all about. It is hugely powerful.

At this time though, given the options this plugin offers, It’s endorsement by highly regarded artists and the way that it delivers access to fine adjustment in driven bass tones, it’s a 5/5 for me.

END «



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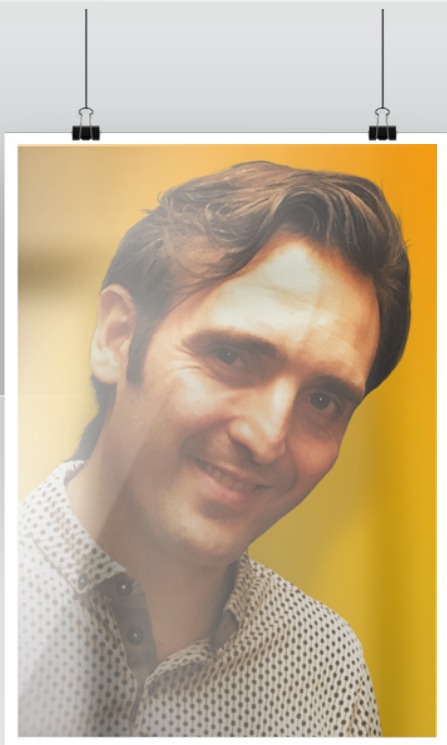
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QUIET ROOM

WHEN ONLY ACOUSTIC WILL DO



Yamaha Transacoustic CSF-TA

The Yamaha TransAcoustic CSF-TA parlor-size acoustic-electric guitar is a high-quality instrument that may very well provide a playing experience like no other. With Yamaha's onboard TransAcoustic reverb and chorus effects, you'll enjoy the sounds of playing in a rich and lively acoustic space no matter where you are. The CSF-TA features a parlor-size body with mahogany back and sides and a solid Sitka spruce top. You'll love the feel of this guitar's neck and smooth rosewood fingerboard. So does the TransAcoustic CSF-TA add new inspiration to **Nick Jennison's** playing? Let's find out.

SOME acoustic guitars are made for the road: rugged, tightly braced and feedback-proof. Others are studio workhorses, with just the right blend of projection and detail. Yamaha's Transacoustic guitars are something else: they're guitars designed to make playing more enjoyable.

They achieve this by producing their own reverb and chorus via an actuator under the guitar's top. In essence, this turns the guitar's top into a speaker, which produces the effects - no external amplification required. Clever stuff!

The CSF-TA takes this technology and combines it with Yamaha's parlour sized CSF - the smallest and most comfortable full-size acoustic in the Yamaha range. A fraction of the size of a typical concert or dreadnought model, it fits comfortably regardless of your

body type or seating position. You can slouch on the couch with it, you can take it on stage either sitting or standing.

The comfort extends to the neck. It's slim and comparatively narrow feeling despite having a conventional 43mm nut width, and the 12th fret neck join adds to the "dinky" feel. Fingerstyle and flatpicking passages feel great, but there's still enough fretboard real state for open chords - no matter how big your hands are.

Acoustically, the CSF-TA sounds sweet and balanced, with a gently compressed dynamic range. It's not loud, but in this context that's a good thing. You won't wake the kids or irritate your neighbours/significant other, no matter how aggressive your strumming style, and the warm reverb adds to the intimacy of the experience. »



STAR RATING



PROS

- » Small body size makes for great playing comfort. On-board effects sound great plugged in and unplugged.

CONS

- » Don't expect dreadnought-like lows or projection.

Check **THE SPEC**

Yamaha Transacoustic CSF-TA
MSRP (UK) £756 (US) \$1129 //

Compact Body // Solid Spruce
Top // Mahogany Back & Sides
// On-board Reverb and Chorus
effects

For more information, please visit:
uk.yamaha.com

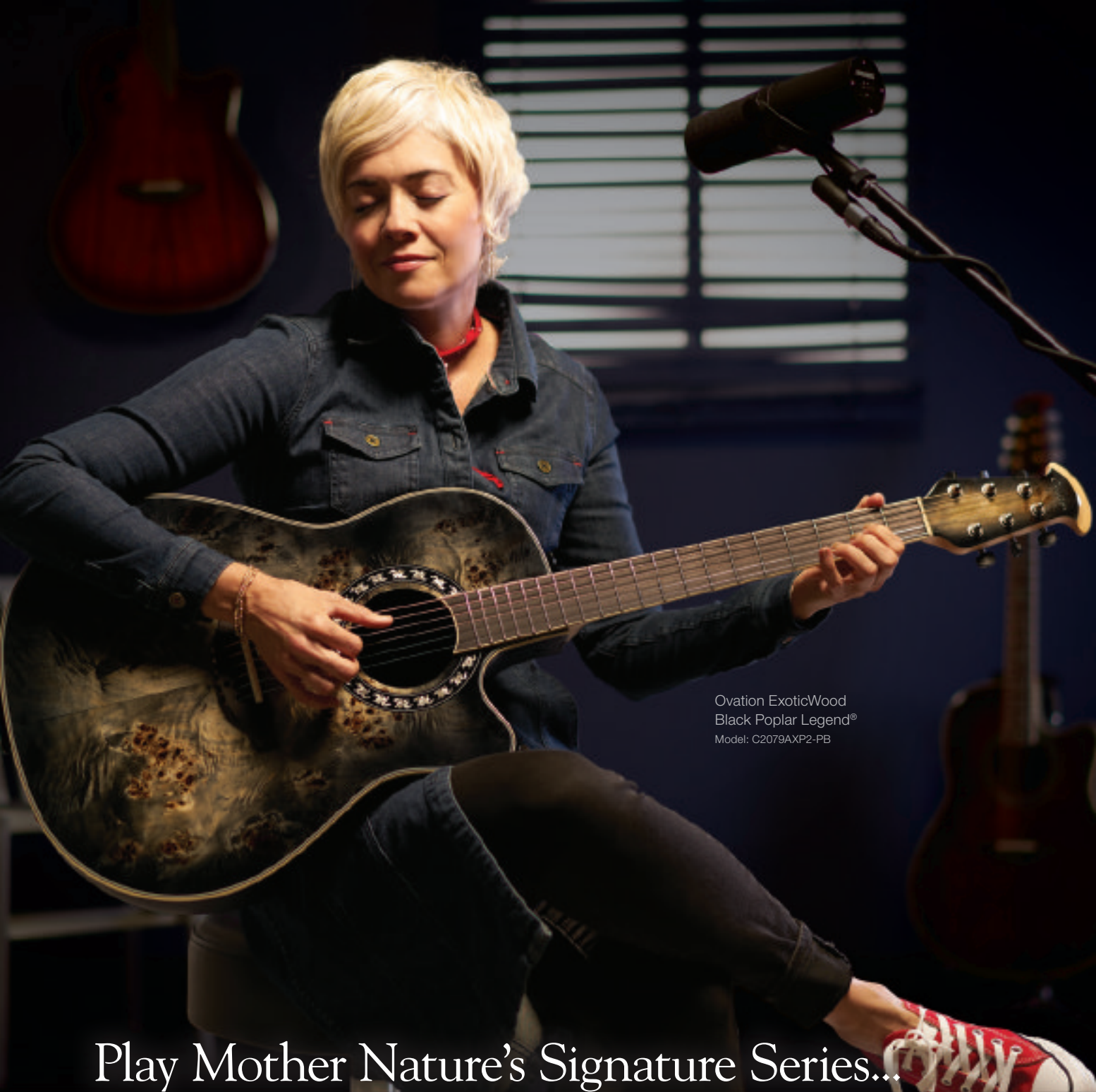


Yamaha Transacoustic CSF-TA

Of course, the CSF-TA performs just as well plugged in. Yamaha's pickups are up there with the best in the business, and this is no exception. The reverb and chorus are probably redundant on larger stages where the engineer has access to dedicated effects for your guitar, but in smaller rooms where there's a single reverb on the desk that's inevitably tuned to flatter a vocal (read: bright and long), the CSF-TA's warm onboard verb is a bit of a godsend.

The Yamaha Transacoustic CSF-TA is sweet sounding and super comfortable instrument that's ideal for quieter moments alone with your guitar. The on-board reverb and chorus make the playing experience feel intimate and immersive, and are actually pretty useful in small venues.

END«



Ovation ExoticWood
Black Poplar Legend®
Model: C2079AXP2-PB

Play Mother Nature's Signature Series...

And stand out in a crowd. Unique looks aside, playing the original round back design with optimized electronics delivers time-tested performance at every show.

Nature + Innovation = Ovation

Ovation
GUITARS

ovationguitars.com

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Takamine CRNCS1

Launched last year, Takamine brings us a modern instrument with incredible sonic attributes, an authentic vintage look and feel. **Sam Bell** reviews the Takamine CRN-TS1.

TAKAMINE is a legendary name in the world of acoustic guitar. Some of the first 'proper' acoustics I saw in real life were Takamine's, my old Guitar Tutor when I was seven had a Takamine, the Logo and the design takes me back! They are well known for their high-quality builds, quality features and versatile tone, not to forget liquid playability.

In this issue, I am fortunate enough to try out the Takamine CRN TS1, Dreadnought acoustic. This is a Japanese built instrument, and its quality is definitely reflected in the price range of this fantastic instrument.

First of, the specs. The guitar features a Slotted and angled headstock; the slotted headstock is kitted out with quality gold tuners and pearl style machine heads. (The gold hardware is featured on the strap buttons »



ilities, but with



STAR RATING



PROS

- » Stunning Wood/Appearance.
- » High-Quality Features
- » Classic Feel/Look
- » Hardcase

CONS

- » Some may feel the frets/radius are a little too on the vintage side if they are used to modern acoustics.

Check **THE SPEC**

Takamine CRNCS1

SRP (UK) £1499 (US) \$TBC //

Spruce Top // Solid Sapele Back & Sides // Mahogany Neck //
Electronics: CT4B II

For more information, please visit:
takamine.com

“The **guitar is stunning**, it most certainly has a classic vibe to it...”

as well) The angled headstock pulls the strings over the nut for more open string sustain and resonance. The 20 fret, fretboard is made from Ovangkol wood, and features beautiful yet straightforward fret markers, with double markers on the 7th and 12th fret. The frets are very low and there is a relaxed radius to this neck which makes it lovely for chordal work. The neck itself has a relaxed D shape and notes really pop from the fingerboard. Everything about this guitar so far showcases the vintage nature of this instrument's character both in looks and playability. The body meets the neck at the 12th fret, this is a big dreadnought body, which really accentuates the bottom end of the overall sound. The body top is made from a Solid Thermal Spruce, according to the website, this gives the guitar a 'played in vintage' tone. The back and sides are made from Sapele wood. All of this is finished in a natural gloss that really accentuates the woodgrain. The guitar

comes loaded with its own onboard pre-amp, one of Takamines own, which features a 3 band EQ (Bass, Middle and Treble), Volume, Tuner and access to the 9 Volt battery cavity. It's also important to mention that this guitar comes with a super high-quality hardcase. All in all, the Guitar looks, sounds, plays, and smells amazing. Oozing high quality and vintage charm.

My thoughts about this instrument are clearly reflected in the video and the write up so far. The guitar is stunning, it most certainly has a classic vibe to it. I feel it would go down well in a recording studio as part of an arsenal of high-quality instruments or for the player wanting a classic and simple feel and look with plenty of personality. If you're in the market for an acoustic instrument that's a little different but yet familiar, check this tasty Takamine out!

END «

inly

THE QUIET ROOM TAKAMINE CRNCSI



Martin D-18 Modern Deluxe

The D-18 Modern Deluxe from Martin Guitars is a new take on a true Vintage. Packed with traditional and modern technology including a titanium truss rod, Liquidmetal bridge pins, and a carbon fibre bridge plate that boosts volume without adding weight—this guitar is anything but vintage.

Tom Quayle with the full breakdown.

TINKERING

with a beloved, classic design will, more often than not, land you in hot water with the guitar community. Just utter the words 'Robotic Tuners' to any guitar aficionado, and you'll see them recoil in horror. It takes a great deal of courage, care and thought to alter or (shock horror) 'modernise' any classic guitar design but, with their Modern Deluxe series Martin has done just that. Tom Quayle checks out their D-18 Modern Deluxe to discover how much it respects tradition and just how modern things get!

Tradition is important, and guitars become classics for a good reason. The D-18 is a tried and tested design and vintage D-18's sell for truly eye-watering prices. For the Modern Deluxe, D-18 Martin has kept to tradition where it counts. You get a Sitka Spruce top, Mahogany back and sides, dovetail neck joint

and protein glue construction to match a classic 1930's D-18. One of the attractions of a real vintage D-18 is the 'worn-in' or aged sound that can only be achieved through years of playing as the wood's age and mature and the guitar is passed down or sold from player to player. For the Modern Deluxe series, Martin has employed their Vintage Tone System, (a form of heat treatment) designed to artificially age the top to match the tonal and visual qualities of a real vintage guitar, offering the tonal experience of a vintage D-18 at a (slightly!) more realistic price point.

This first modern touch is accompanied by some other additions that really make this new take on the D-18 very appealing. The first thing you notice upon pulling the guitar from its beautiful deluxe hard case is how lightweight it is. This is thanks to the inclusion of a titanium

truss rod as opposed to the traditional steel ones. Titanium is lighter and stronger than steel and really makes a marked difference to the weight of the guitar. This is combined with the use of a composite carbon fibre bridge plate, further reducing weight and boosting volume, without sacrificing the traditional look of the D-18. Further modern touchpoints include Liquidmetal bridge pins, designed to reflect vibrations as opposed to absorbing them and the use of Gold (copper alloy) coloured frets. These offer the wear-resistant properties of Stainless-Steel frets without the tonal brightness often associated with them. They also look fantastic and match the gold purflers beautifully.

The D-18 has never been the best-looking Martin on the block, but this Modern Deluxe is really something special to look at thanks to the gorgeous Antique 1930's script logo adorning

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STAR RATING



PROS

- » A modern take on a true classic
- » Subtle recent appointments that don't detract from the timeless design
- » Incredible tone, playability and looks
- » Genuinely useful modern elements

CONS

- » Out of almost everyone's price range!

Check **THE SPEC**

Martin D-18 Modern Deluxe
MSRP (UK) £3650 (US) \$4399 //

Sitka Spruce Top // Vintage Deluxe
Mahogany Back & Sides // High-
Performance Taper Neck

For more information, please visit:
martinguitar.com

the headstock, open-gear gold tuners and East Indian Rosewood binding. The VTS aged top has taken on the slightly yellowed hues of a vintage D-18, giving the guitar a more authentic old school look and feel that offsets the modern appointments very well indeed. The modern elements are well hidden and don't detract from the classic design and aesthetic at all, unlike those Robotic Tuners mentioned earlier! Martin has struck a wonderful balance between tradition and forward-thinking design here and should be applauded for it.

Playability and tone are exceptional, of course, as they should be at this price point. The neck has been given a slightly asymmetrical carve that is supremely comfortable in the hand across the guitar's range, and the satin finish feels smooth for position shifts and faster single note playing. The weight improvements over a standard D-18 are very welcome, offering excellent comfort for long gigs or playing sessions whether sitting or standing.

Tonally the D-18 is everything you'd want from a high-end Martin guitar but with bags



Martin D-18 Modern Deluxe

of volume and dynamic range to spare. Whatever you feel about those modern appointments on a classic guitar like this, it's hard not to be impressed by the sheer projection and dynamic control this guitar offers the player who's able to control it well. Across the entire tonal spectrum, the Modern Deluxe D-18 sings with authority and harmonic complexity, being incredibly rewarding to play and listen to. It's the kind of guitar that makes you the most musical version of yourself, elevating you to play and listen in more detail than with less inspiring guitars.

Of course, all of this comes with a hefty price tag and the D-18 Modern Deluxe will be out of the price range of most people reading this. However, it costs a lot for a good reason and represents the best way to modernise a classic, retaining everything that people love about the original and improving only the elements that make it tangibly better. We do not have innovation for the sake of innovation here – it is only used to improve the already great design.

If you have the available budget, the D-18 Modern Deluxe from Martin is a fantastic buy and will last you a lifetime, probably becoming the desirable vintage Martin of the future!

END «



FIN

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CREATIVE FINGERSTYLE



Giorgio Serci, award winning guitarist, composer, arranger and long-time guitar tutor at The Academy of Contemporary Music, continues his acoustic column in this issue of Guitar Interactive Magazine.

HELLO there and welcome to Guitar Interactive's Quiet room.

In this column I would like to share a composition of mine, originally recorded for my CD 'Silver Lining' under the name of 'Momentum' and also later re-arranged with a feature solo from the legendary trumpeter, composer and arranger Kenny Wheeler for the CD 'Scaramouche'.

This composition has been sung and played by many wonderful artists and, as a result, the arrangement has slightly

evolved and morphed, incorporating a few stylistic nuances deriving from the performers' interpretations.

Lately, the wonderful singer and author Basia, with whom I have been honored to play guitar for the last 9 years, as well as record and tour worldwide, liked the tune and not only did she decide to sing it, but she also wrote some lovely lyrics dedicated to my elder son. The song is now called 'Matteo' and has been climbing on the most prestigious charts internationally, including the US Billboard chart, reaching n.4 since May 2018.

The one presented in this column is an arrangement for solo guitar, which I thought would serve the great purpose to demonstrate the creative potentials of using harmonic inversions, to enhance the melodic qualities of a composition.

Any of you who have been following my previous columns would know that I normally use a Yamaha classical guitar for these fingerstyle sessions, which is my favourite guitar for nylon string recordings.

I thought it would be useful to do a few fingerstyle columns on an archtop guitar, to stimulate the GI readers/viewers' appetite in this wonderful area.

This piece was specifically written for this lovely archtop guitar made by Fibonacci, a formidable instrument that makes you want to play non-stop thanks to its tone quality, sustain and general feel.

Let's look at the melodic, harmonic and rhythmic content of 'Matteo'.

MELODIC AND HARMONIC INGREDIENTS:

The melody mainly gravitates around the key of C minor, however, it travels through a few closely related tonalities with the purpose of adding tension and release.

The harmony features many inversions and slash chords, with the main purpose to add melodic qualities to the bass line. The harmony in the first few bars for example, could be described as follows:

Cm	Ab	D7	G7
C7	F	Fm	Gsus4 G7

However, with the harmonic inversions these morph into the following:



Cm	Ab/C	D/C	G/B
C/Bb	F/A	Fm/Ab	Gsus4 G7

NB. Please note (play & sing the new bass line: it descends chromatically from C to G. Furthermore, I do love the effect of pedaling over a C bass for the first three bars.

Here are all the chords utilized in the piece, described in a concise manner, omitting a few passing notes.



Cm	Ab/C	D/C	G/B
C/Bb	F/A	Fm/Ab	Gsus4 G7
Cm	Ab/C	D/C	G/B
C/Bb F/A	Bb/Ab Eb/G	Ab/Gb G/F	G7 G/F
C7/E	Fm	F#O7	G7 G/F
C7/E	Fm	F#O7	G7 G7b9
Cm	Ab/C	D/C	G/B
C/Bb F/A	Bb/Ab Eb/G	Ab/Gb G7	Cm
G7b5			

RHYTHMIC INGREDIENTS:

The rhythmic qualities are inspired by the style 'Bossa Nova', therefore the melody is often pushed and syncopated.

As always, I would like to recommend exploring the above-mentioned techniques in order to compose your own pieces. We have to allow ourselves to make mistakes and reflect on the reasons why we like or not a particular sound, a chord progression or modulation. Eventually, these sounds will become part of your musical lexicon and you'll be able to use these with fluidity and effectiveness.

The picking-hand pattern is predominantly as follows:

(Please note E=low E string, e= high E string)

'p' focuses predominantly on the bass lines, while 'i, m, a' play the melody and counter-melody or harmony part. The melody is predominantly played with the 'a' finger, so it is important to use the appropriate velocity for the note to cut through.

Play this part in a relaxed and clear manner, making sure your thumb is a little forward compared to the 'i, m, a' fingers, in order to prevent it from colliding with the 'i' finger. As always, focus on attack and tonal consistency. The melody and the supporting harmonies will be played with the 'a' finger, so more attack is needed to outline the melody.



FOCUS ON THE FRETTING HAND:

BAR 1: Index n fret 3 of A, ring f on fret 5 of D and little f on fret 5 of G to start a melody, followed by fret 3, 4 of B (with index and middle f), then little f on fret 8 and 9 of B.

BAR 2: Middle f on fret 8 of E, index on fret 6 of D, ring f on fret 8 of G and little f from 9 to fret 8 of B.

BAR 3: Play fret 7 of D, G and B with index and middle f on fret 8 of E.

BAR 4: Same shape used in bar 2, down one fret. Middle f plays F on fret 6 of B.

BAR 5: Same shape used in bar 3, with index on fret 5. Index plays fret 5 of G.

BAR 6: Same shape used in bar 2, down three frets. Middle f plays Eb on fret 4 of B.

BAR 7: Same shape used in bar 3, with index on fret 3 and little f on fret 5 of G.

Bar 8: Index on fret 3 of E, D, B with little f on fret 5 of G, replaced by ring f on fret 4 of G.

BAR 9-12: As bar 1 till 4.

BAR 13: As bar 5 and 6 (harmonic rhythm=double time)

BAR 14: As bar 7 and 8

BAR 15: Index on fret 1 of D, G and B with middle f on fret 2 of E. Next, index on fret 1 of E, open D, G and little f on fret 3 of B, followed by index on fret 1 of B.

BAR 16: Ring f on fret 3 of E, open D, G and B. Index on fret 1 of E, open D, middle f on fret 1 of G, open B.

BAR 17: Open E, middle f on fret 2 of D, ring f on fret 3 of G, index on fret 1 of B. Open e, ring f on fret 3 of 'e'.

BAR 18: Barre' on fret 1 of E, D, G, B and little f on fret 4 of 'e'. Ring f on fret 3 of e and index on fret 1 of e.

BAR 19: Little f on fret 4 of B, middle f on fret 2 of E, index on fret 1 of D and ring on fret 3 of G. Little f on fret 3 of B.

BAR 20: Ring f on fret 3 of E, open D, G and index on fret 1 of B. Index on fret 1 of E, open D, middle f on fret 1 of G, open B. Descending countermelody, with index from fret 1 of G, open G, ring on fret 3 of D and middle f on fret 2 of D.

BAR 21-23: As bar 17-19

BAR 24: As bar 8.

BAR 25-30: As bar 9-14.

BAR 31: Index on fret 1 of D, G and B with middle f on fret 2 of E. Next, open B, G, D and little f on fret 3 of E.

BAR 32: Index on fret 1 of B, open G, D and little f on fret 3 of A. Countermelody with open D, index on fret 1 of D and open D again.

BAR 33: Middle f on fret 3 of E, ring f on fret 3 of D, little f on fret 4 of G and index on fret 2 of B.

FINAL THOUGHTS:

As always, you will be able to download a transcription by selecting the menu option in this page.

I strongly recommend experimenting with a few picking variations, changing the chords as you wish in terms of voicing (higher or lower), as well as trying the same picking pattern on a different chord progression, or using a 'capo' on fret 2 for a brighter outcome.

When repeating any section twice or more, you may want to play 'sul ponticello', (closer to the bridge) or 'sul tasto' (over the frets) for more contrasting results.

Make sure you highlight the melody (singing is a great strategy to play the melody in more assertive and singing-like manner)

Focus on minimum-movement approach, as this will help delivering the piece in a more



accurate and consistent manner, while saving energy.

This will complete this creative fingerstyle lesson.

I hope you will enjoy playing this study piece and that this will give you some ideas on how

to write your own solo guitar compositions. If you would like to listen any more of my compositions, please check the previous issues of Guitar Interactive Magazine as well as any of my CDs, available from my website:

Check me out here at
www.giorgioserci.com



You can also find me on **instagram** on **[giorgio_serci](https://www.instagram.com/giorgio_serci)** or **twitter** **[@giorgioserci](https://twitter.com/giorgioserci)** as well as on **facebook.com/****[giorgiosercimusic](https://www.facebook.com/giorgiosercimusic)**

Until the next time - Good-bye.

GUITAR INTERACTIV

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SSMENT

THE PLACE FOR BASS

EBS MicroBass 3 Preamp

Built exclusively with premium components—the MicroBass 3 is a 2-channel preamp engineered from the famous HD360 and Fafner II amplifier designs. **Dan Veall** Reviews.

EBS come zooming back into the Bassment with a brand new update to the well spec'd MicroBass II. MicroBass III builds on the preamplifier foundations that aren't a million miles away from the original EBS-1 19" rack preamplifier, I believe to be one of the very devices that helped "start it all" for EBS based in Sweden.

In itself a superb piece of kit.

Now, as much as MicroBass II did a great job being a super useful low noise multi-tool for both stage and studio, I did have just a few niggles with its operation.

It seems that Ralph & co from EBS has been reading my mind: MicroBass III appears with not only all the things I would envisage included but a whole lot more to boot.

Let's round up the details from my video and find out why I like this beast.

There's so much to cover so I am not going to be able to go into depth regarding each and every knob's operation. I did however cover a huge amount of granular detail in the video, which will help you hear how each function operates.

The areas, (my bugbears I suppose) with the v2 I am pleased have been tweaked, start with the driver section. Channel one originally had a two-band EQ on channel A and the semi-parametric mid-band on channel B. We now have all of the adjustments available on what is now called the clean channel, the equivalent of channel A on the v2. I really will have way more control and voicing options on the drive structure too. Yes, we have that as well now. The drive type and gain switches are very useful. The 'Deep' setting compensates for loss of low end when using high gain settings, but as I mentioned in my review I'd be careful when using that in blend mode as too much low end layering can make the sound a little less than clear - unless you have a particularly bright sound - giving bass to begin with. This function is a pre-drive shaping, thus will affect what frequencies are being sent to the saturating gain stages.

The "FX mix" knob, a blend, has been taken out on v3, but I'm not sure I'm going to miss it but the addition of the ability to go stereo is super handy! Not for everyone, but I love being able to add breadth to a bass sound using stereo spatial, modulation or delay effects when appropriate. The V3 gives me the option to use the pair of XLR outputs in stereo mode at a f

neered by EBS in Sweden with technologies from the

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of a switch, or leave in dual mono, offering separate outputs for “pre” and “post” effected signals.

In terms of signal chain, the two preamplifiers can be run in parallel for some Sheehan-esque tone shaping, or you can configure operation that the clean channel runs straight into the drive channel in series instead. More gain will give rise to more distortion, which could be useful. Personally I prefer the option to keep the two channels separate and blend for clarity and »

STAR RATING



PROS

- » All of the features you need, especially if you run an IEM system only.
- » Built with premium components.
- » Loads of headroom.
- » Very flexible signal routing.

CONS

- » It's so good; the design is bound to be copied soon!

Check **THE SPEC**

EBS MicroBass 3 Preamp
MSRP (UK) £329 (US) \$499 //

Dimensions: 168 x 124 x 53 mm //
Weight: 660 g // 9V DC, 450 mA
Required

For more information, please visit:

handinhand.uk.net



THE BASSMENT AMP & HEAD REVIEW

coherence. Your mileage may vary, or to put it another way, go forth and experiment!! Just turn it up when you do! :)

I often mention this when it comes to semi-parametric mid controls: I thank any brand that knows to let the sweep to reach down into the bass range. The 50-200hz region is really important to perceived girth in the bass sound. So I was pleased to dial this in on any set up I have.

Other features I have found particularly useful include the compressor that was brilliant on studio-style settings. The famous EBS character switch always gives me that 'big cabinet' tone should I need it, but never muddy. EBS still have space on the device to fit an accurate tuner, foot switch to mute the whole pedal and the ability to kick in the drive channel from the floor rather than reaching for a little button to engage.



EBS MicroBass 3 Preamp



The MicroBass III's all analogue electronics are operating at "studio" levels, enabling a larger headroom, but also offering plenty of level on the output to even drive a power amplifier on its own. Super if you are an "FRFR" guy running into a beefy active (/PA) cabinet as your backline.

There's an effects loop - but given the multitude of inputs and outputs, I'd treat these sockets like inserts too, because I really love the idea of being able to route signals in and out of a central "tone hub".

Again, like V2, shielded in an all metal construction with some decent foot switches on board, this unit is well built for the road and can be powered through the usual 9v power

supply (offering the correct current specification). EBS even do us the honour of including a power supply, which is very much appreciated!

Rounding up, this is an impressively featured preamplifier that can offer up a multitude of different voicing. There's grit available in the drive channel, but I love the clean channel's clarity and headroom. A great preamplifier, multi-tool and a great all-in-one DI box too.

Oh and my tip? Run the EBS Billy Sheehan Signature Drive pedals straight into this pre-amplifier, and that's a 5/5 from me.

END «

PRS Kestrel SE Bass

SE Kestrel takes a traditional single-coil bass platform and adds PRS's fit, finish, and attention to detail to a classic instrument. Pitched as the total all-rounder, no matter the style or decade, PRS claims no part needed, but just how good is it? **Dan Veall** tells us more.

PRS is well known around these here parts down in the Guitar Interactive studios! I know a few of my fellow staff members are rocking the electric guitar models! You will have recently seen me jamming with the fine Nick Jennison and his well-gigged fine example.

It's the turn of us bassists though! Enter the 2019 versions of the PRS SE models, the Kingfisher and Kestrel basses. We are taking a closer investigation of the Kestrel bass here, a modern take on a well known classic. (We will take a look at the Kingfisher in another review) But does it come up to scratch? Hopefully my video will tell you all you need to know.

Paul Reed Smith announced back in 2014 that we were to expect two basses to appear in the SE line-up and sure enough they did and had certainly been enjoying interest since.

Five years later and having played both the Kingfisher and Kestrel basses in

their current form, I have to say that they are still great basses. The models are not entry-level budget model quality, we are treated to a whole lot more than that.

Out of the pair, the Kestrel bass is my favourite. The super slim 22 fret neck is made of a 5-ply laminate of Maple with Walnut strips and is beautifully finished, so much so that the binding hides any feel of fret edges and is very comfortable indeed. This is one of the nicest bass necks I have played in this budget range. The set up on this particular example was super fast with a low, low, low action.

One thing that immediately struck me is that both basses are so well balanced. They sat perfectly still on my lap with not even a hint of neck dive. This, of course, translates well to any bass that is going to hang from the shoulder for lengthy performances; the headstock is small and features quality lightweight Hipshot tuners keeping the weight down.

On the subject of the bridge, it's a shot for the bridge, it's a chunky monkey! It's a bit of a thing though. Being as it has a modern vibe to it, the eye doesn't look like it's a rear-loader so it's a bit of a through the body thing. Limited, the current version of this tasty Tri-Color is black. Good job, it's a favourite!

On to the Alder body, it's two single coil pickups, a pickguard. I am a bit of a great deal about the pickups, suffice to say they are brilliant through the body. Today, an EBS Headstock anniversary head and the attention these as I found them particularly good.

Both pickups produce a sound I am pleased the sound nasal or the

STAR RATING



PROS

- » A modern take on an old classic that is not to be passed up.
- » Beautiful neck playability.

CONS

- » No left-hand models and no 5 strings (yet!)
- » Some may want more colour choices

Check **THE SPEC**

PRS Kestrel SE Bass**MSRP (UK) £750 (US) \$750 //**

Alder Body // 5-Ply Maple Neck with Walnut Strips. // PRS-Designed Singlecoil Bass & Treble Pickups

For more information, please visit: prsguitars.com



on to detail, delivering a new take on a classic. The Kestrel can achieve every bass

f hardware, it's Hip-ge too, and it's a. At the same time the whole bass has it, the bridge to my out of place at all. It's the strings come up y. Colour choices are ent models come in our sunburst or solid they are two of my

body are mountain pickups and a BWB afraid I can't tell you t the PRS SE pick- y that they sounded our studio amplifier. ID360 30th Anni- NeoLine210. I men- und the pairing to be .

provide a good tone and rear pickup doesn't in. Both on and »

we are treated to everything I want to hear in a J-bass tone. Just lovely.

Being a neck-thru instrument, upper fret access is unhindered further helped by the deep scoop of the lower horn. A joy to play “up the dusty end”.

I very much enjoyed reviewing both the Kingfisher and Kestrel basses. I love what

both had to offer, but this example of the Kestrel bass was a real gem. Now, all I have to do is convince Paul Reed Smith that they should also do a five-string model with a 17mm string spacing!

END «



PRS Kestrel SE Bass

Hold your group
together with



Strings

19⁵⁸

PLAYED BY THE BEST FOR OVER 60 YEARS

ELECTRIC ACOUSTIC BASS

20²⁰



WORLD FAMOUS MUSIC STRINGS

WWW.OTOSOUND.COM



Zoom B1X FOUR Multi-effects pedal

Dan Veall looks to take your low-end to new heights with the Zoom B1X FOUR. Featuring a looper and a built-in rhythm section, plus, an expression pedal that can adjust effects, such as reverb, for under £100. The B1X FOUR could be a must for all bass enthusiasts.

ZOOM'S latest multi-effects processor for bass guitar joins the family of red, in between the current crop of processors, the B1 & B1on models and the higher specification B3n.

Small but mighty, the B1 Four (and it's big brother the B1X Four that we are viewing here today) boasts 71 internal effects, 9 amp simulations of well known head and cabinet combinations any of which can be inserted in to a signal chain of five effects at once, in any order!

Getting creative is dead easy especially as Zoom have crammed in a 30 second looper whereby you can select whatever effect you want on your sound before recording a new layer over the top of the previous.

If you are like me, I always need a bit of practice with all aptitudes, such as timing, it's great that the onboard looper can sync-start the inbuilt rhythm section with the form of 68 internal rhythm patterns adjustable for tempo.

Your carefully crafted tones need not be lost either as there are 50 memory slots to save to. That would include taking an existing factory preset and tweaking it to your tastes.

There's a few nifty little features in the B1 that I think you'll like. There's the ability to "auto-save", which means whenever you get to a new patch, when you want to keep your ideas all you have to do is change a parameter. No need to hit save afterward for the patch to remember the new setting. This of course can be switched off in the setting menu. You'll be back to being asked if you wish to save in no time. There's also a "pre-select" allowing a player to cue up a new effect ready whilst another is still being used, thus cutting down on crazy foot tapping when the moment arrives in the music to drop a new sound bang on the beat with one single button press.

Not surprisingly as an effects unit, it has a built-in tuner which is of a chromatic type that is easily accessed by holding down both of the larger pedals.



al

over 70 effects and amp models,
n as volume, wah, delay and pitch all

Wrapping up, here is a multi-effects unit capable of a **mind-boggling array** of effects..”



STAR RATING



PROS

- » Zoom has lots of experience in DSP Audio.
- » Small.
- » Very affordable.

CONS

- » None at this price point.

Check **THE SPEC**

Zoom B1 X FOUR Multi-Effects pedal

SRP (UK) £73 (US) \$99 //

71 Internal effects // 9 Amp simulations // Dimensions: 156 x 216 x 52 mm // Weight: 610 g

For more information, please visit: zoom-na.com

I like the addition of an aux in for playing along to favourite tracks or even possible to use in rudimentary IEM monitoring situations I guess. Something to try out!

B1 will run off AA batteries that I am pleased to say are included in the box too - but also the usual pedal power 9v adaptors will work. These pedals feature a USB connection which is there to access either up-

dating of the onboard firmware or Zoom's Guitar Lab software for editing, creating and managing effects and patches. You can even download more effects from Zoom!

Interestingly for me, when the device is plugged in to a computer with the correct specification USB port, it will power the B1 too!



Zoom B1 X FOUR Multi-Effects pedal

B1 comes with a quick start guide and a list of the factory bass patches to help get you on your way to building some mammoth tones. Oh! In case I didn't mention it in my video review, the difference between B1 and B1X of course that the latter comes with a built-in expression pedal that works with effect parameters.

Zoom aren't just a new company, they have been producing a wide range of audio technology for musician, artist, studio and field workers alike for many years.

For the musician, they are forever managing to compact a huge amount of technology into affordable units that really do sound good.

Furthermore, in the case of devices such as the B1X we are looking at today, the layout of modern multi-effect pedals I think is getting more intuitive. Yeah sure, there have been a few hiccups on the way and yes, some units that have bigger colour screens and more "data entry" dials will be even easier than smaller units; Zoom B1 does a great job of allowing the user to access either banks of patches or individual effects when editing a patch easily.

There's a huge amount of power in a box designed to be compact here - and at a price that is practically mind-boggling. For that reason, I find it difficult to whinge about anything on it. Yes, the small screen could be difficult to read in bright sunlight should you need to edit an effects chain, but that's not a deal breaker for what this device is trying to achieve elsewhere. The only problem I personally had was getting the application to communicate with the device on my laptop. That could, of course, be a problem with my laptop though so we shall ignore that for this review.

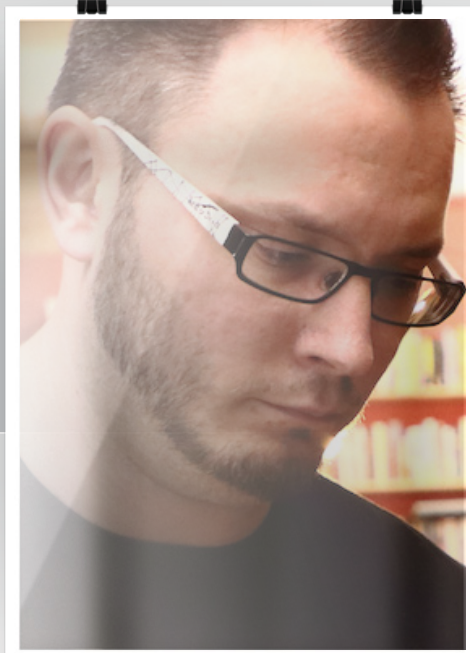
Wrapping up, here is a multi-effects unit capable of a mind-boggling array of effects. Seventy one stomp-box models of well-known pedals. Nine built-in amplifier simulation and speaker cabinets models. Somehow at this price point, easily handling five effects at once.

It's brilliant for the money, what more can I say?

END «

GUITAR INTERACTIVE

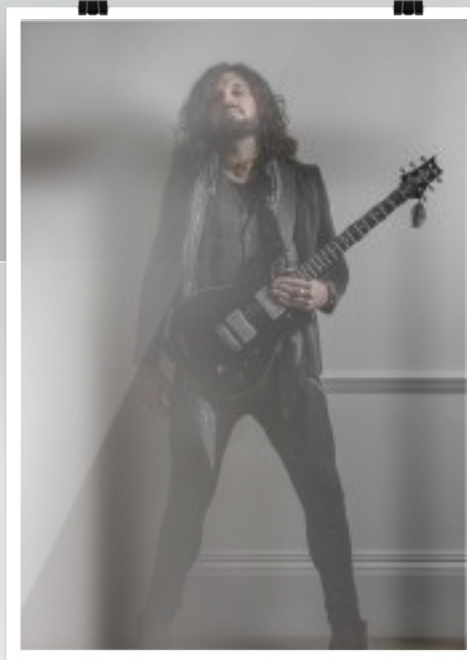
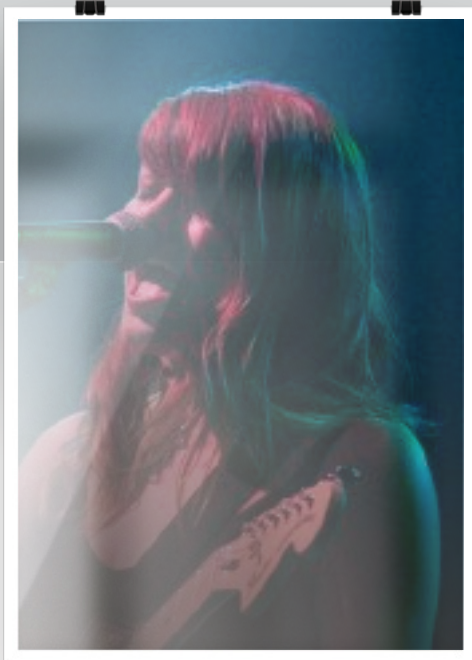
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COLUMNS

OUR FREE GUITAR UNIVERSITY





DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL TECHNIQUE: **PART 1**

Class is in session. **Tom Quayle** brings you a brand new and exclusive lesson for Guitar Interactive Magazine.

TOM Quayle took up the guitar at the age of 15 after being inspired by his Dad's incredible fingerstyle guitar playing and quickly developed a love for the instrument. Being addicted to players such as Steve Vai, John Petrucci and Brett Garsed, Tom initially focused on rock technique before developing a huge interest in Jazz and Fusion.

At this point Tom changed to his renowned 4th's tuning and studied Jazz, graduating with a Jazz Performance degree in 2002 from Leeds College of Music. Since graduating Tom has developed to become one of the foremost fusion legato players in the world with a strong reputation for both the teaching and playing, having produced a large number of highly acclaimed tuition products for his own website »

and Lick Library that have helped thousands of guitar players from every corner of the planet literally.

He has conducted masterclasses and played all over the world giving him acclaim that means he can count Dweezil Zappa, John Petrucci, Brett Garsed, Greg Howe, Andy Timmons and Tim Miller amongst his many

fans. Tom currently plays with and on the albums of some of the best fusion musicians in the world, releasing the highly acclaimed 'Elba Triangle' album in early 2017 with Virgil Donati, Alex Argento, Marco Sfogli and Allesandro Benvenuti.

Tom has many projects in the works including lots of studio and live work with his



Developing Professional Technique: Part 1

partner in crime, Martin Miller. His highly anticipated debut album is in the works, and he has produced a considerable catalogue of some of the most successful tuition material for the modern fusion genre.

Tom is incredibly proud to play his signature TQM1 guitar exclusively.

For more information, and exclusive courses from Tom Quayle, head over to http://bit.ly/Tom_Quayle

END <<



T O M Q U A Y L E

Signature SESSION



GUITAR
LESSONS

Tom Quayle's Signature Session is here!

In this brand new course designed for players of all levels, Danny Gill debuts his track “Per”, a 5 part rock extravaganza in which he talks in depth about his approach to melodic soloing, improvisation, chordal arrangement and modal playing. Each section of “Per” is performed with the supplied backing track and then broken down for you.

In addition to teaching the rhythm and the melodies, Danny talks about some of the scale choices available to you so that you can

easily play through each section regardless of your current playing level. There is even a section of ‘cool licks’ to add to your collection as well as a scales section showing you each of the scale patterns Danny refers to in the lessons.

“Per” features a bit of everything, starting off slow and dynamic and finishing with a heavy double time feel giving you plenty of opportunities to be creative and expressive over this rock instrumental.

lick **LIBRARY**

COLUMNS_SHAUNA TOHILL

HEAD SHOT

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COLUMNS SHAUNA TOHILL GUEST COLUMN



In a brand new feature, Guitar Interactive Magazine is proud to introduce an exclusive column from Northern Irish musician, songwriter and REWS frontwoman, **Shauna Tohill**, exploring the world of alternative rock and pop guitar playing »



About REWS

REWS is the high energy alt-rock/pop band and alter-ego of N. Irish songwriter Shauna Tohill. Beginning as a duo in 2014, the band has evolved into a stronger, and even more formidable force in the last year, ready to claim more stage time across the world and creating a genuine buzz on the UK/Irish music scene.

The act's first single, "Miss You In The Dark" was released on 23rd June 2017 to coincide with the band's performance on the John Peel Stage at Glastonbury Festival, with BBC 6 Music and BBC's TV coverage highlighting them as one of the acts of the weekend. »



Following singles have been featured on BBC Radio 1, BBC 6 Music, Radio X and Planet Rock Radio, with “Your Tears” being BBC Introducing’s ‘Track of the Week’ on BBC Radio 1, along with REWS’ debut album ‘Pyro’ featuring heavily across the UK press.

After a successful album cycle which lead to a supporting slot with Halestorm in September 2018 (as well as various successful headline

tours), Shauna is now working on the highly anticipated album number two.

If you didn’t catch REWS playing a number of selected Festivals around the UK this summer, you can see the band on a string of live dates supporting The Darkness in November and December this year, kicking off in Newcastle on the 14th of Nov.

END «



REWS - Shake Shake OFFICIAL VIDEO

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COLUMNS SHAUNA TOHILL GUEST COLUMN

The full **list of dates** are as follows:

NOVEMBER 2019

Thu 14th - O2 Academy Newcastle,
Newcastle Upon-Tyne

Mon 25th - Cyprus Avenue, Cork, IE

Tue 26th - Limelight, Belfast

Wed 27th - The Academy, Dublin, IE

Fri 29th - Rock City, Nottingham

DECEMBER 2019

Sun 1st - O2 Academy Birmingham, Bir-
mingham

Mon 2nd - O2 Academy Leicester,
Leicester

Tue 3rd - Cliffs Pavilion, Southend

Thu 5th - UEA LCR, Norwich

Fri 6th - Cambridge Corn Exchange,
Cambridge

Sat 7th - Pavillion, Bath

Tue 10th - Brighton Dome, Brighton

Wed 11th - Colosseum, Watford

Thu 12th - Portsmouth Pyramid,
Portsmouth

Fri 13th - Manchester Academy,
Manchester

Sat 14th - O2 Academy Newcastle,
Newcastle Upon-Tyne

Sun 15th - O2 Academy Glasgow,
Glasgow

Tue 17th - Barbican, York

Wed 18th - O2 Academy Liverpool,
Liverpool

Fri 20th - Roundhouse, London

For more information on Shauna Tohill & REWS,
please visit: rewsmusic.com



WIN



This Manson Guitar Works/Elixir Strings' "Screaming E" Custom Guitar worth over **£2000**.





LICKS & TRICKS

SPONSORED BY ELIXIR STRINGS

Nick Jennison is back with six essential guitar lessons to get your teeth into, plus an incredible one of a kind competition you won't want to miss.

ELIXIR Strings, leading innovator in string coating technology has teamed up with British luthier Manson to create this top-spec custom-built 'Screaming e' guitar, celebrating its the launch of their new OPTIWEB® Coated Electric Guitar Strings. »

THE GRAND PRIZE IN THE MAKING

Our Elixir Strings' Screaming e' guitar has been built earlier this year for the lucky Guitar Idol contest winner. A most beautiful custom electric guitar, hand made to highest specifications by our Devon-based guitar maker friends at Manson Guitar Works.

MORE ON "THE MAKERS OF THIS BEAUTY"

Manson Guitar Works is the latest facility from internationally renowned luthier Hugh Manson.

For over four decades Hugh has produced world-class premium quality guitars for some of the most respected guitar greats, combining traditional luthier skills with genuinely

new and exciting technology developments. Manson Guitar Works allows musicians to express themselves like never before. Their MIDI-controlled Matthew Bellamy signature guitars, multi-stringed bass guitars for John Paul Jones and countless one-off creations for musicians who are not afraid to play outside the comfort zone have resulted in a great demand for Manson products. Previously only available as individual commissions, the Manson Guitar Works aims to bridge that difficult area between full-scale production and a genuine hands-on luthier approach, offering a unique instrument, built with attention to detail, pride and individual service.

MANSONGUITARWORKS.COM

GUITAR SPECIFICATIONS:

Body: One piece Spanish Cedrela

Neck: Birdseye Maple with Indian Rosewood Finger board

Mother of Pearl side dots
22 Medium/jumbo frets

Graphtech nut

Pickups: MBK-2 bridge humbucker with coil tap on tone

Custom vintage hot single coil neck pickup

Hardware: Custom' Screaming e' Hardware Volume/Tone knobs

Three-way toggle pickup selector Switch

Kill Button

Gotoh Chrome 510 machine heads

Black anodized custom

'screaming e' hardware pegs

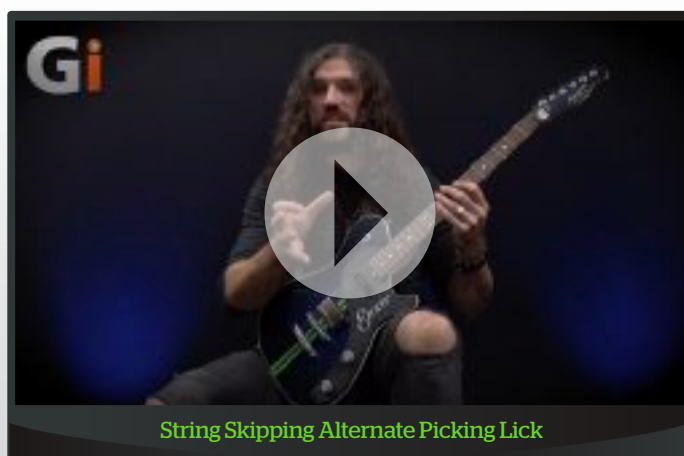
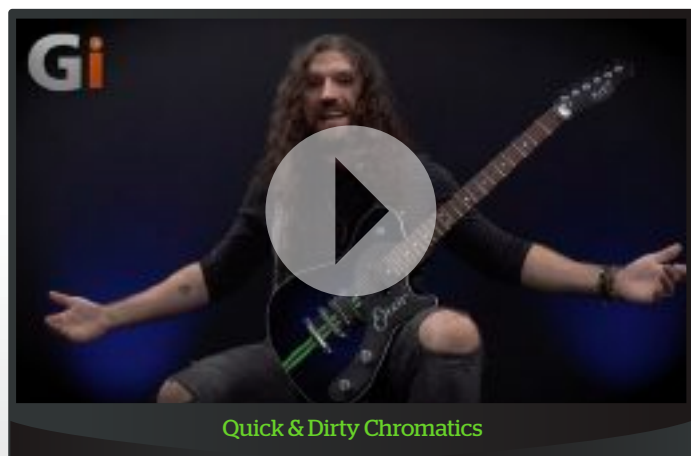
Gotoh Chrome Tailpiece and Adjustable Bridge

Black Anodized aluminum scratch plate

Strings: Elixir Strings - OPTIWEB Coated Electric

Guitar Strings in 10-46 Gauge

Case: Hiscox Hard Case



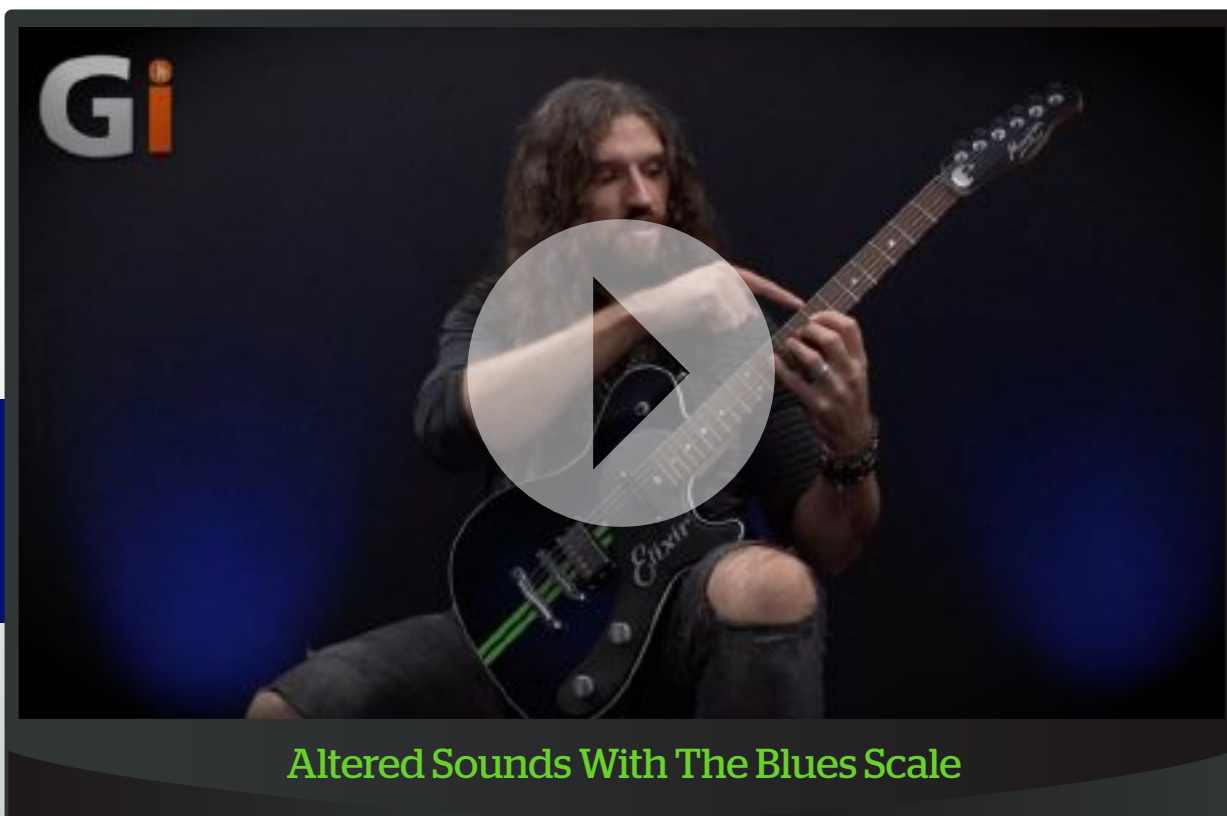
ABOUT THE ELIXIR OPTIWEB COATED ELECTRIC GUITAR STRINGS

You're an uncoated string player? Now is the time to take the challenge and try the OPTIWEB Coating. An extremely lightweight, yet durable coating, for when you want it all: The performance of an uncoated string – that crisp tone and natural feel you love, AND the long tone-life Elixir Strings is known for. Look no further: OPTIWEB Coated Electric Guitar Strings offer you the best of both worlds.

Listen and compare for yourself here:

ELIXIRSTRINGS.COM/EXPERIENCE







Gi



Is This The Fastest Blues Scale Lick?

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Combining Slide and Fingers

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EXTENDED RANGE

CHORD VOICINGS

Nick Jennison continues our series of lessons, stepping into the world of extended range guitars.

Brought you by Cort Guitars.

EXTENDED range guitars open up so many creative avenues for guitarists willing to take the plunge. The addition of a low B (or F#, or even C#) string can take your riffs to whole new levels of heavy with comparatively little readjustment, but chords require more consideration before dipping one's toe into the baritone register.

There's a simple principle that's as true for arranging for big band/orchestra as it is for voicing chords on extended range guitars: *the lower the register, the more spread out the notes have to be*. There's a solid reason for this, and it's »

that pitches exist on a logarithmic scale. The distance between the open A string (110hz) and the next octave up at the 2nd fret on the G string (220hz) is 110 hz. From there, the next octave up is 440hz, followed by 880hz, 1760hz, 3520hz and so on - basically, every time you move up an octave, you double the frequency.

This has the effect of putting the notes in a close voiced chord played in the low register much closer together than the same voicing played in a much higher register. Combine this with the longer wavelengths of lower

pitches and the tight clustering of their upper harmonics (which are exaggerated with distortion) and you have a recipe for mud.

The fix is really rather simple though: shift some of those notes up one octave! Let's go through the examples from the video - be sure to consult the tab too!

EXAMPLE 1: Two D major triads - one in a high register, another in a low register. Notice how much clearer the high voice is, especially with distortion. »



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COLUMNS EXTENDED RANGE SECRET - PART 3





EXAMPLE 2: A close voiced F# major in the low register, followed by a much clearer-sounding spread voiced F# major - with two potential fingerings.

EXAMPLE 3: The same, as Ex.2, but this time with minor chords.

EXAMPLE 4: Two ways to play a B major chord using the open B string.

EXAMPLE 5: A movable major chord voicing on the low three strings. NB: Ex.5c is a G major, not a Gb like I said in the video - my mistake!

EXAMPLE 6: A minor variant of the chords found in Ex.5 - along with a muddy-sounding close voiced Dm triad for contrast!

EXAMPLE 7: Some spread-voiced power chords, along with a spread voiced tritone voicing.

EXAMPLE 8: A quick improvisation using spread voiced power chords, demonstrating

how these shapes can easily be moved around the neck.

EXAMPLE 9: A Gmaj7#11 using speed voicings on the low three strings (once again, I misspoke and called this a Gb in the video - my bad!)

EXAMPLE 10: Another improvisation - this time setting the extended chord in Ex.9 in context.

These kinds of chord voicings are a lot of fun, and can really open up your sonic palate when it comes to writing progressions on extended range instruments. Obviously we're only scratching the surface in this lesson, so make sure you take these examples as a jumping off point for your own experiments - hopefully they lead you to some really interesting sounds!

END◀



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