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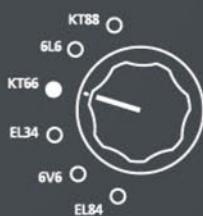
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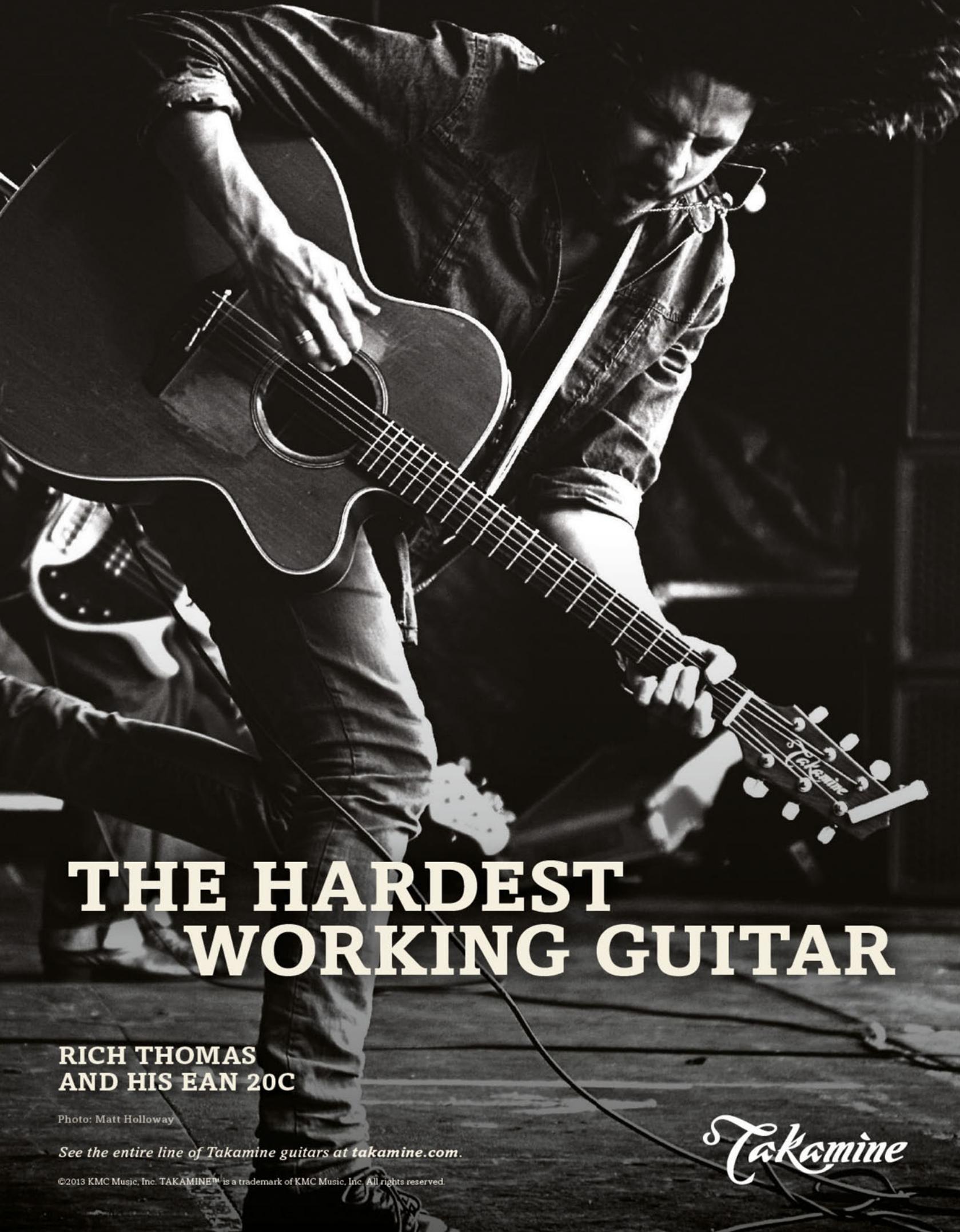
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FUTURE PUBLISHING
30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2BW
Tel: 01225 442244 Fax: 01225 822763
Email: totalguitar@futurenet.com
Website: www.totalguitar.co.uk

EDITORIAL

Editor Stuart Williams
Content Editor Rob Laing
Reviews Editor Dave Burruck
Deputy Reviews Editor Michael Brown
Managing Editor Josh Gardner
Senior Art Editor Mark Thomas
Art Editor Leanne O'Hara
Senior Music Editor Jason Sidwell
Music Editor Chris Bird
Music Co-ordinator Natalie Smith
Editor At Large Neville Marten

CONTRIBUTORS

Steve Allsworth, Owen Bailey, Phil Capone, Rich Chamberlain, Trevor Curwen, Charlie Griffiths, Nick Guppy, Jonathan Horsley, Jamie Hunt, Jim Kimberley, Andy McGregor, Isobel Morris, Matthew Parker, Rob Power, Adam Rees, Christopher Sutton, James Uings, Gary Walker, Henry Yates

Music Engraver Simon Troup

Audio Mastering Duncan Jordan

Video Production Martin Holmes

Photography Joe Branston, Adam Gasson, Neil Godwin, Kevin Nixon, Gavin Roberts, Joby Sessions

ADVERTISING

Phone: 01225 442244 Fax: 01225 732285

Advertising Sales Director Clare Coleman-Straw

Sales Manager Amanda Burns, amanda.burns@futurenet.com

Account Sales Managers James L'Esteve, james.lesteve@futurenet.com

Alison Watson, alison.watson@futurenet.com

Advertising Sales Executive Simon Rawle, simon.rawle@futurenet.com

MARKETING

Marketing Manager Sarah Jackson

Direct Marketing Executive Alex Moreton

CIRCULATION

Head of Trade Marketing James Whitaker

Trade Marketing Manager Daniel Foley, daniel.foley@futurenet.com

Direct Marketing Executive Alex Moreton

PRINT & PRODUCTION

Production Manager Mark Constance

Production Controller Frances Twentyman

Prepress Future PreMedia

LICENSING

Senior Licensing & Syndication Manager

Regina Erak, regina.erak@futurenet.com

Tel: +44(0)1225 732359 Fax: +44(0)1225 732275

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FUTURE PUBLISHING LTD

Head Of Music Rob Last

Group Art Director Rodney Dive

Creative Director Robin Abbott

Editorial Director Jim Douglas

Managing Director, Future UK Nial Ferguson

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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Welcome...



We've received a lot of comments from you readers over the last month about the new look TG we unveiled in issue 251.

Some of them have been very positive, some less so: but I'd just like to take this opportunity thank you all for giving us your feedback, and we're stoked that so many of you guys are enjoying it.

Moving on to the current issue, however, and this month, we're all about tone! What tone actually is, and what you need to do

to get it, is an elusive and subjective area to most guitarists. But put all the snake oil and opinion to one side – we just want to help you sound better.

Some people say it's all in the hands, others swear by high-end gear. But if you weren't born with fabled 'tone hands', or you don't own an arsenal of expensive equipment, we've got your back.

Inside our cover feature, you'll find tips on tidying up your playing, eliminating tone-killing noise from your gear, and advice on how to wring every last drop of sound out of your rig. We've even tackled a few classic tonal myths, which culminated in a very fun afternoon spent destroying some jack leads. Check out the accompany video to watch the results.

See you next time when, 20 years after his death, we'll be looking at the huge legacy that Kurt Cobain left on guitar music. Enjoy the issue!

Stuart Williams, Editor

MAKING THIS MONTH'S MAG:



CHRIS BIRD

HAVE you ever wondered how important it is to use premium guitar cables? Well, this month, TG's music editor ditched his regular tab-proofing duties to answer this question by conducting destruction tests on a selection of popular leads. Turn to p56 to see which - if any - leads survived the big man's wrath.



MICHAEL BROWN

TO QUOTE a severely underused office catchphrase, it's NAMMertime – turn to p88 for the lowdown on all the hot new gear that's heading your way this year. That said, there's plenty to ready your wallets for already, with tasty offerings from PRS, Gibson and Line 6 all reviewed this issue. Gear on!



ROB LAING

TWO things have occupied Rob's mind and our ear lugs this month. First off, he finally bought a Fishman Aura, and secondly, Scott Stapp has announced some UK dates. When he wasn't listening to Creed, Rob was making videos. Check out our YouMeAtSix, BlessTheFall and NAMM features. Chyeaaaahhh!

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WE'LL MAKE YOU SOUND BETTER TODAY!**

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Cover: Phil Sowels Redferns/Getty Images



008

FIRST LOOK



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Total Guitar

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MONITOR

FIRST LOOK...

Syn'win

Get ready for heavy with
Synyster Gates' Schecter
Hellwin Stage Head

With *Hail To The King*, Avenged Sevenfold hit the big time: No 1 album, Download Festival headline slot, and now a signature amp for axeman Synyster Gates – the Schecter Synyster Gates Hellwin Stage Head.

First unveiled at NAMM 2013, the Hellwin Stage is part of a new line of amps co-designed with James Brown, the man behind the legendary Peavey 5150. It boasts 100 watts of EL34 valve power, with three channels (Clean, Lead I and Lead II), plus a built-in noise gate, MIDI control and even a 4x12 cabinet emulation line out. It's a killer list of features for a modern metal amp, with a price (£1,789) to match: but most important of all is the sound, and Syn is thrilled with it.

"I wanted it to have this incredible break-up but not lose any of that fluidity, especially when you're doing legato stuff," he explains. "The other huge thing for me was clean tones. It's the first thing I had qualms with on other [heavy] amps. James nailed that right away. The other stuff took a little longer, but we got it, and it's a fucking incredible amp."



Photography: Jesse Wild



"I wanted it to have this incredible break-up but not lose any of that fluidity, especially for legato stuff"



MONITOR

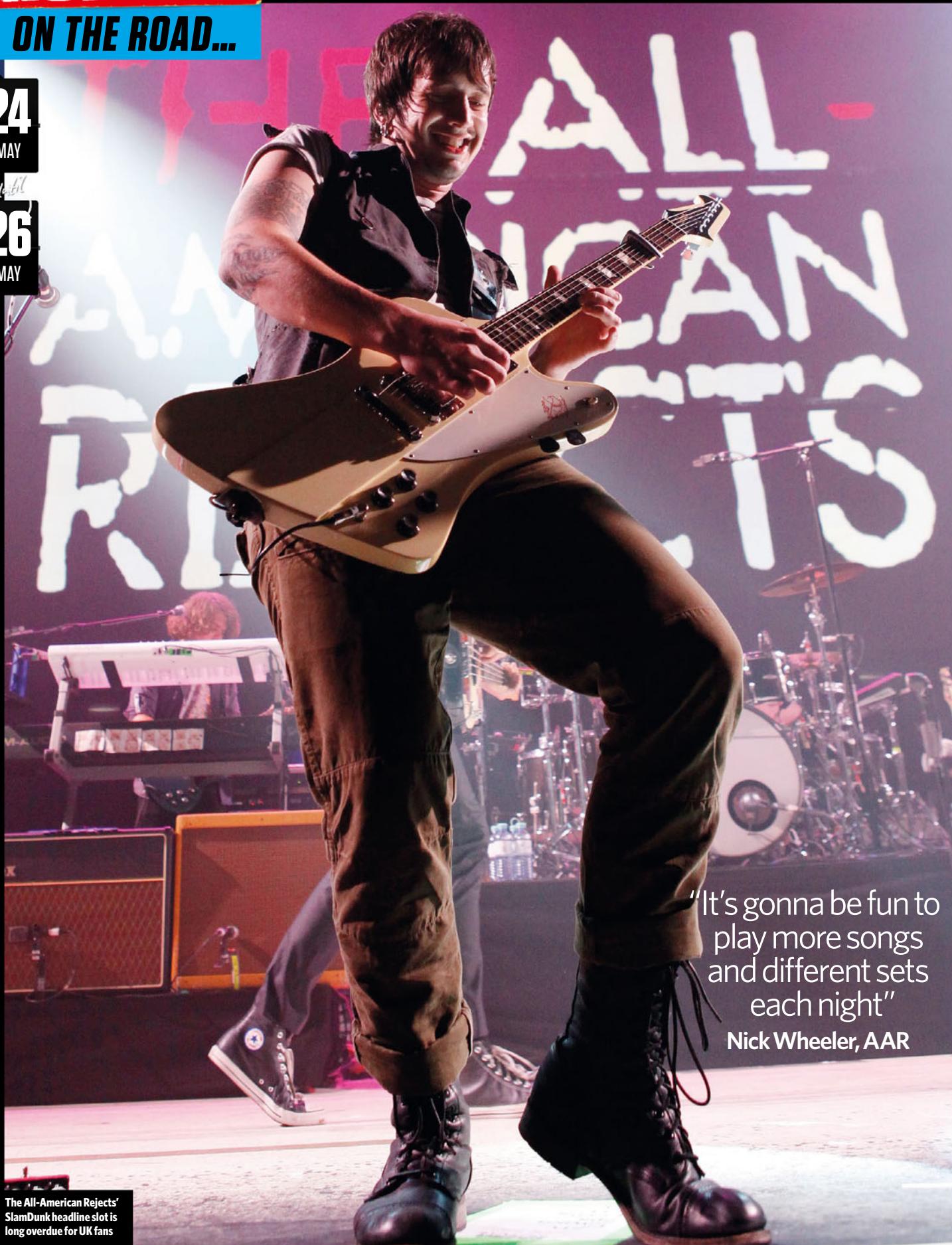
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MAY



"It's gonna be fun to play more songs and different sets each night"

Nick Wheeler, AAR

The All-American Rejects' SlamDunk headline slot is long overdue for UK fans

Slam Dunk Festival

The All American Rejects headline three-day, three-venue bash

We've never had it so good in the UK when it comes to festivals. Pretty much every guitarist's taste is covered by an event this spring and summer, especially if you like your music heavy.

But while the bigger hitters such as Reading and Leeds, Download and Sonisphere are catering for in excess of 80,000 people a day, they are also open to the wrath of the British weather. In contrast, the indoor collective of punk, metal and alternative rock that is the Slam Dunk Festival brings a much needed intimacy. "The festival has grown organically," explains festival and Slam Dunk Records director Ben Ray. "It didn't start big, nor have we tried to get too big too fast, which often goes wrong. Although we have a lot of international bands, it's a homegrown UK event through and through."

Slam Dunk now visits three UK venues – Leeds, Wolverhampton and Hertfordshire – over three days in May, and UK talent this year includes rising alt-rock four-piece Canterbury and wonderfully-monikered pop punks Chunk! No, Captain Chunk! Stateside acts include Less Than Jake, Goldfinger, Letlive, We Are In The Crowd and headliners The

All-American Rejects.
Metalcore's out in force, too, with The Devil

Wears Prada, Caliban and Aussies I Killed The Prom Queen. "The line-up looks exciting," AAR's lead guitarist Nick Wheeler tells TG. "I've been a fan of Goldfinger and H2O for quite some time, and it's always fun to play with some younger bands, too. It should make for a diverse audience."

The Oklahoma band have a dedicated UK following among their huge fanbase, having sold 10 million records worldwide. "It's gonna be fun to play more songs and different sets each night," explains Nick. "We're stoked to be returning, especially to headline. Our last trip was supporting Blink-182 almost two years ago; we were only playing 40-minute sets."

Nick and rhythm guitarist Mike Kennerty promise their best tones yet, having recently traded in our cabs and combos for Fractal's Axe-Fx II. "They've been treating us extremely well!" says Nick. "I've always been a purist when it comes to recreating the tones on the records in our live shows. If I used a boutique overdrive on even just one song, I always made sure it was on my pedalboard. But with these bad boys, my tone has never sounded better, and it's more versatile than running patch cables or loops ever was."

Slam Dunk Festival is at Leeds University on 24 May, Hertfordshire Forum on 25 May and Wolverhampton Civic on 26 May.

www.slamdunkmusic.com



Pop-punks We Are The In Crowd are one of several US bands on the SD14 bill

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RIFF OF THE MONTH



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Van Halen

HOT FOR TEACHER 00:57

This year marks the 30th anniversary of Van Halen's epic and highly influential album, 1984. To celebrate the occasion, TG puts the spotlight on Eddie's masterfully crafted verse riff from *Hot For Teacher*. Eddie leads the way in the verse with an unaccompanied clean, hybrid-picked riff. The phrase repeats four times before the band kick in and Eddie lunges into the highly energised, high-gain version of the same line.

You need to keep timing and attack consistent while alternating between pick and fingers. Try to balance volume by easing off with your pick: this will help you stay relaxed and you won't have to work so hard when picking with your fingers. Too much emphasis on the fingerpicking may sound too 'country'. Movement should come from the end of your picking finger. If you lift the whole finger, you're using too much energy, which is bad for your timekeeping.

Get the tone CHANNEL DISTORTION

The diagram shows a guitar's pickup selector switch. The middle position is labeled 'BRIDGE' and is highlighted with a red box. Other positions include 'NECK', 'TREBLE', 'MID', 'BASS', and 'REVERB'.

STARTING with a high-gain tone on the amp, Eddie rolls back the volume control on his guitar to clean up the sound. Using the volume as a distortion controller is particularly effective with valve amps, so if you have a solid-state amp, you may prefer to set up clean and high-gain channels, and switch between them. A bridge-position humbucker offers the right amount of aggression, but if you have single coils, try increasing the gain and bass on your amp for a little more body.

VIDEO LESSONS All our Video Lessons are online at totalguitar.co.uk. To see video for this lesson, type www.bit.ly/tg252rotm into your browser.



NAMM: EFFECTS EXTRA

Even more stompbox temptation from NAMM 2014

THIS YEAR'S NAMM served up so many new pedals, we couldn't cram them all into our round-up on p88, so here's a taster of what's to come. For starters, ProCo has updated its legendary RAT, the FAT RAT (£185), which offers a choice of transistor and MOSFET circuits for harsher or smoother sounds.

MXR also had a few new stompers on display: the Echoplex Preamp (£115); a compact incarnation of the Uni-Vibe (£119); and the Clyde McCoy Cry Baby (£185), a tribute to the first wah ever made. There are further stompbox delights from T-Rex, too, with the introduction of the SoulMate analogue multi-effects (£489), plus three compact pedals: the Vulture distortion (£159), Creamer reverb (£159) and Replay Box stereo delay (£189). All in all, it looks set to be a pretty tasty year for pedals – bring it on!



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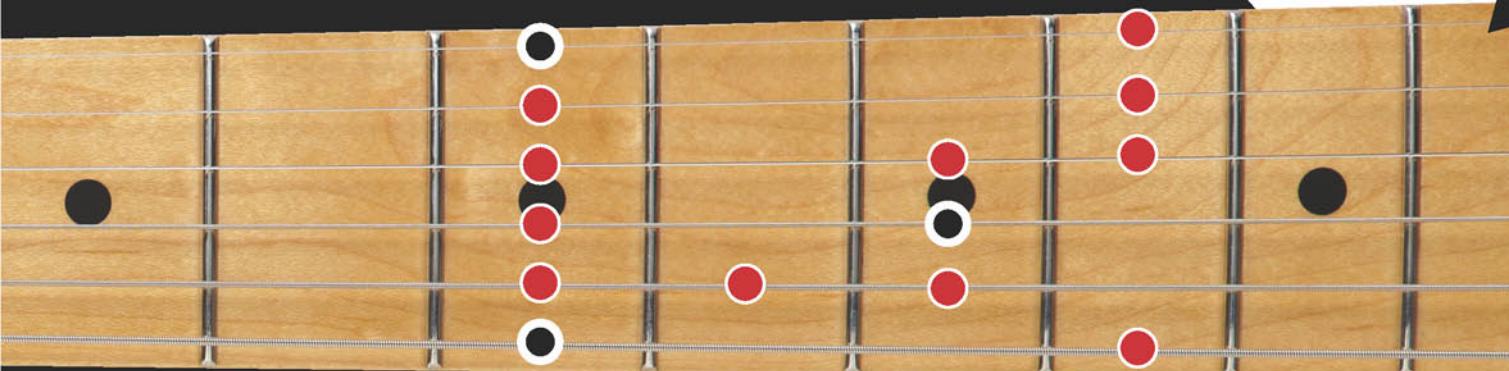


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BLUES ON PARADE

THIS TOM Morello-style riff goes up and down one octave of the blues scale. Fretting-wise, place one finger at each consecutive fret; keep your pick hand moving down and up to keep a steady groove. Don't overdo the dirt. A medium gain tone is best.

J=80

Play 4 times

GOT THE BLUES

THIS LICK is a classic Eric Clapton-style blues idea and focuses on the treble strings. You'll need a bit of strength for string bends. The trick is to use three fingers to bend the strings and angle your fingers diagonally to the frets.

J=100

BLUE SPANDEX

THIS LICK is inspired by 1980s hair-metal players such as Dave 'The Snake' Sabo and CC DeVille. Use legato technique to smoothly hammer on and pull off the notes on the third string. It helps to keep your fingers in line with the frets this time.

J=90

The blues scale is a sequence of six notes that's essentially the same as the minor pentatonic scale, but with a vital extra note. That extra note is the ♫5th, aka the 'blue' note from which the scale takes its name. The blues scale is theoretically 'minor' (it

includes a minor 3rd and a minor 7th) but, unusually, it sounds good over major chords. In fact, it works in most musical styles, so knowing some blues-scale licks will help you through tricky jam sessions. This month's licks cover heavy rock, blues and hair metal.

TRACKS 09-10

TRACKS 11-12

TRACKS 13-14

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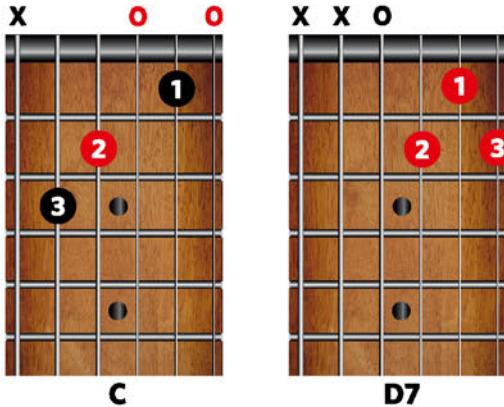
TG helps you
blag a new style

AMMO

THIS MONTH...

Country

If you're a fan of players such as Danny Gatton and Brad Paisley, then that staple of country music – the Fender Telecaster – surely tops your list of instruments to try in the local guitar shop. The cutting twang of the bridge pickup, and the mellow rounded sound of the covered neck single coil, forms a perfect blueprint for country guitar tones. Use 'pick and fingers' style hybrid picking to play partial chords and major pentatonic licks to nail the country vibe.



Many country tunes use the I, IV and V chords in keys with lots of open strings, such as G major. Try playing this month's lick around these three chords, and remember to finish on the G.

TRACK 15

J=110

let ring

TAB transcription:

T	3	1	0	3	3	2(4)	2(2)	0	2	5	3	0	5	3	0	0	1	2	3
A	2/4	2	0	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	V	m	m
B																			

The bright sound of the major pentatonic scale (here, in the key of G major: G A B D E) is ideal for country. To avoid sounding overly 'happy', we've used the country trick of adding a few ♯3rd, ♯5th and ♯7th notes (B♯, D♯ and F). Follow the picking instructions for a 'pick and fingers' approach.

What You Need To Know

KEY PLAYERS: James Burton, Merle Haggard, Brad Paisley, Vince Gill and Danny Gatton

KEY TECHNIQUES: Hybrid picking, partial chords, fingerstyle, major pentatonics

1 The Tele was the world's first mass-produced solid-bodied electric guitar, and the shape was designed to be quickly and easily carved out from slabs of wood.

2 The Tele was originally named the Broadcaster, but Gretsch had released a Broadkaster range of drums, so the name was changed.

3 Although a country favourite, the Telecaster is also guitar of choice for rockers Keith Richards, Wilko Johnson, Joe Strummer and 'The Boss' Bruce Springsteen.

4 The single-coil bridge pickup on the Telecaster is mounted onto a metal plate that some say adds to that distinctive Tele twang.

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MONITOR

IN PRAISE OF...

DigiTech Whammy

The pitch-shifting powerhouse makes us squeal with joy

If you played guitar in the 1980s and wanted to harmonise your playing, you had to either buy a pricey rack unit, or recruit another guitarist. In 1989, DigiTech's Whammy changed all that.

This first pedal-based pitch shifter had a single knob and 16 preset harmony, detune and pitch-shift settings, controlled using the built-in foot pedal.

The glitchy tones and ear-piercing squeals quickly recruited stars such as Tom Morello, Dimebag Darrell and Steve Vai. Other models soon followed, including the black Whammy II, XP 100 Whammy-Wah and Bass Whammy, while 1999's Whammy IV added MIDI.

Although some tonehounds still swear by the original, the latest models take the Whammy formula to the very limit of sonic craziness: the Whammy DT adds polyphonic tracking, drop-tune and 'momentary drop-tune' options, while the Whammy V offers the choice of polyphonic and classic modes, recapturing that legendary glitch for a whole new generation. (MB)

1989

DigiTech releases the first Whammy unit

1999

10 years on from the original, the Whammy IV is unveiled

2011

DigiTech rolls out the drop-tune-enabled Whammy DT

2012

The all-encompassing Whammy V is released



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STEAL



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What the *f*? THEORY FOR LAZY B*ST*RDS

THIS MONTH... WHAT ARE RHYTHMIC SUBDIVISIONS?

Now now, don't drop your plectrums at the back there. We're aware that 'rhythmic subdivisions' sounds like a module you failed in your maths GCSE. In fact, it's a simple idea in music theory.

Most rock and pop is in '4/4' time, which means you count to four in time with the music. Alternatively, count to eight, but twice as fast. You can

even count to 16, although talking at four times the musical pulse may be a tongue twister. 32 anyone?

You are simply dividing the pulse of the music into shorter rhythmic subdivisions. Counting can be quite mind-numbing, though, so get the 'feel' using the syllables of words or phrases, then try playing the rhythms on your guitar.

Count:	1 ↓	2 ↓	3 ↓	4 ↓
Eighth notes	rum - ble - rum - ble - rum - ble - rum - ble -			
16th notes	moth-er-truck-er-moth-er-truck-er-moth-er-truck-er-			
Triplets	vin - e - gar -			
swing	hump - ty - dump - ty - hump - ty - dump - ty -			

BRING THE NOISE!

Coax crazy sounds from your axe

#112: VETTEL'S METAL

As TG goes to press, the 2014 Formula 1 season is but a few days away. And though you may consider this information irrelevant in your favourite guitar mag, we beg to differ. Yes, as Vettel, Hamilton, Button and co get ready to blaze up the world's fastest race tracks, TG is planning an F1-style jam session. All you need is a fierce, biting distortion tone and a slide. We're playing a simple two-note chord, initially on the third and fourth strings, then the fifth and sixth. Join in, and you too can make your guitar sound like Alonso's Ferrari!



STEP 1

Dial in a distorted tone with plenty of treble and gain, and select your bridge pickup. Place your slide on whichever finger is most comfortable. The slide is just the job for creating the smooth pitch change of an accelerating F1 engine.



STEP 2

Play a slow two-note sliding chord from the 19th fret to the 21st on the third and fourth strings. A rapid shift back to the 19th fret should sound like you are changing up through the gears. This effect sounds best when played with no fixed rhythm.



STEP 3

Next up on the track, we hit the chicane – and it's time for some 'downshift' gear changes. This sound is made by playing another two-note chord on the 21st fret of the fifth and sixth strings, then sliding quickly down to around the 15th fret.

TRACK 16

The All New Guitar Multi-Effects Pedals by Zoom



G1Xon £69.00 rrp
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Which will you choose?



G1on
Guitar Multi-Effects
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MONITOR

Master textural delay like Mogwai's post-rock pioneer, Stuart Braithwaite



SOUND ADVICE

Post-rock soundscapes

Crank up the delay and ready your picking hand for some epic textural playing

Delay pedals have helped legions of guitarists imbue their tunes with sweeping orchestral-like grandeur, with Mogwai's Stuart Braithwaite and John Cummings among the most famous examples. Although Mogwai weren't the first band to use delay in this way, they certainly popularised it on their

1997 debut, *Mogwai Young Team*. Since then, heavy delay abuse has become a stock-in-trade for post-rock bands such as Explosions In The Sky and Sigur Rós. It's a handy trick to have in your arsenal, and all it requires is a sturdy picking hand and some settings know-how...

TRACK 17

A guitar tablature for 'Track 17'. The top line shows a single string being played with a tremolo pattern. The tempo is indicated as J=95. The tab includes a 'w/delay' instruction. The bottom line shows a standard staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. Fingerings are marked above the strings: 'T' for thumb, 'A' for index, 'B' for middle, and 'G' for ring. Measure numbers 1, 12, 10, 15, and 8 are marked along the staff.

This lick is played using tremolo picking, which means you have to pick rapidly, but that perfect timing isn't 100 per cent crucial. It's all played on the second string.

1



2



3



4



5



6



Happy songs for happy people...

STEP ONE **PICKUP** You can use any guitar for this sound, but stick to the neck or middle pickup to avoid an overly trebly tone.

STEP TWO **DELAY TIME** The key to utilising delay pedals effectively in atmospheric music is to avoid using super-fast delay times. At a slow tempo, an eighth-note setting is ideal.

STEP THREE **LEVEL** You want the delay's repeats to be as prominent as your playing, if not more, which makes a digital delay your best bet. We've used a 75/25 wet/dry mix for our track, but as long as the repeats are at least 50/50 with the dry signal, it'll work.

STEP FOUR **FEEDBACK** Be careful with the delay feedback – you want to ensure that each note blurs into the next, without getting too messy. Two o'clock is about right on most delay models.

STEP FIVE **TREMOLO PICKING** Now, just play each note as fast as you can. If that seems difficult at first, don't panic; once the delay gets going, speed and accuracy become less important – but don't tell anyone we said that! Make sure to slide between frets while you're picking, too – these 'in-between' notes add to the wall of sound.

STEP SIX **THE AMP** Post-rock bands often run delay pedals into the front end of cranked valve amplifiers. To replicate this at lower volume levels, use your amp's clean channel, setting the master volume low, and the preamp high. Keep it on the verge of overdrive, so that when the wall of delay feedback hits the amp, it begins to distort.

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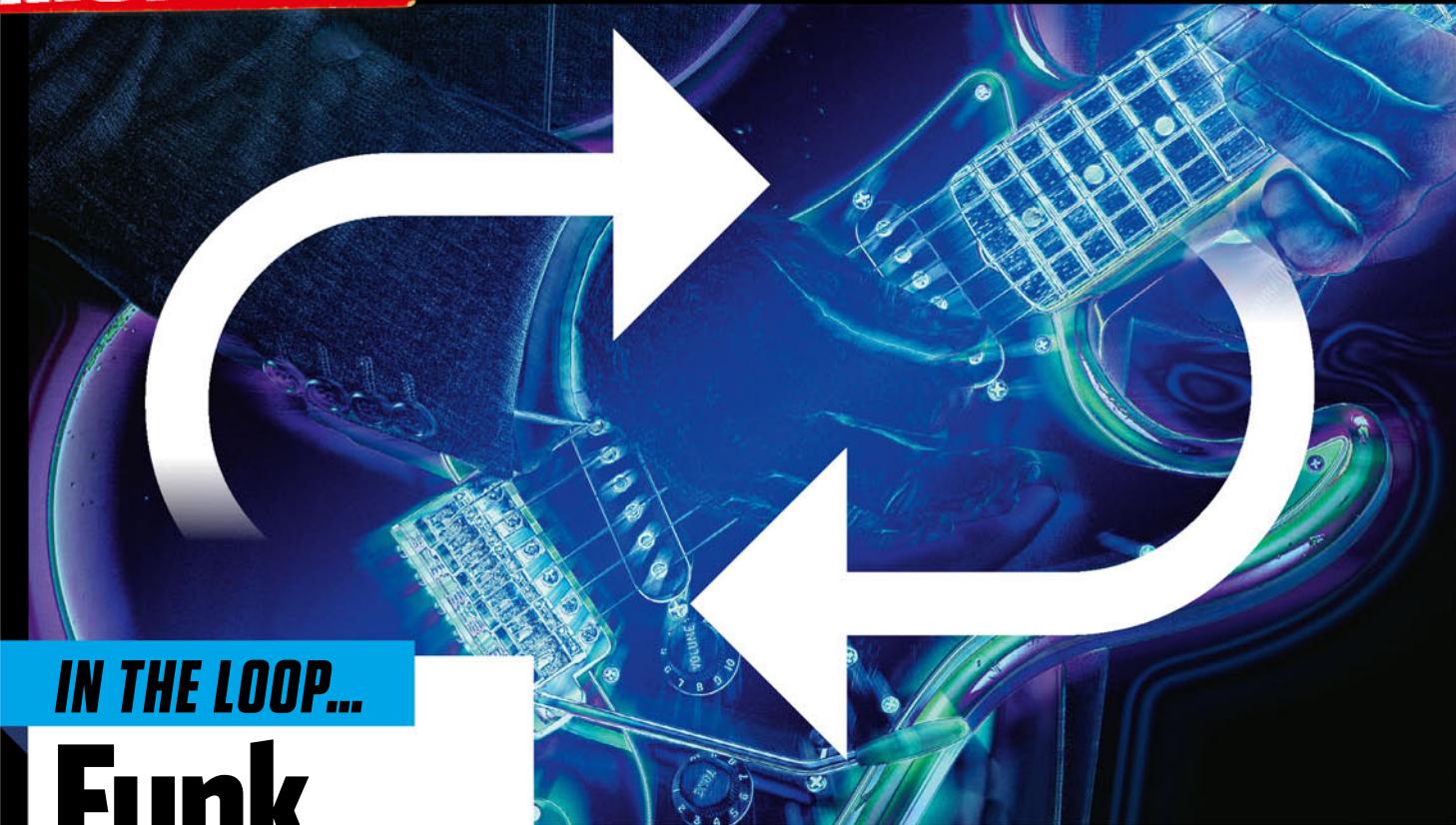
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IN THE LOOP...

Funk

Fire up your looper pedal and layer up some cool funk grooves. TG shows you how

If there's one style of music that's perfectly suited to a looper, it must surely be funk. Funk relies on contrasting syncopated parts working together to form a groove. This month, we've fired up TG's looper and laid down three lines that form a typical funk- or disco-style groove. A good tip is to think 'low, middle and high', and assign a riff to each register. Check out David Williams and Marlo Henderson's guitar playing in Michael Jackson's *Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough* for a masterclass in layered funk guitar.



No looper pedal? We've included audio files on your TGCD for you to import into a DAW, such as GarageBand

TRACK 18

LOOP 1: DOUBLESTOP RIFF

This riff is in the style of Tower Of Power's Bruce Conte, who often uses doublestops to outline the chord ideas. Keep the notes short and abrupt for a funky vibe.

TRACK 19

LOOP 2: SINGLE- NOTE RIFF

Use palm muting as you play this David Williams-style single-note line. Use a forceful pick attack so that the string 'pops' back into position.

TRACK 20

LOOP 3: CHORDS

Nile Rodgers is best known for his work with Chic, and more recently, Daft Punk. This Nile-style rhythm part is based on an E9 chord, but the emphasis is on the treble strings rather than the whole shape. Either barre with your third finger (as if playing the full 9th chord) or use your first finger instead.



Zakk's back - with a new
guitarist, demonic new
album and a world tour

Artist:

BLACK LABEL SOCIETY

Chippendales routines, real tans and the new Zumba? It's the return of Zakk Wylde

AS A MAN, Zakk Wylde is no-nonsense personified. Unsurprisingly then, when writing the new Black Label Society record, he didn't mess around. He tells TG: "When we got off the road I said, 'How much time have we got? The guys will be out here in 25 days? Okay, I've got 25 days to write a record."

The result of this concentrated blast of songwriting is *Catacombs Of The Black Vatican*, a reference to Zakk's studio, in case you were wondering. "I'd go in every day with the Marshall JCM2000 at a low volume with reverb so it sounded like I was at Madison Square Garden, and start writing riffs on two strings," Zakk says. "All the riffs we love, you can play them on one or two strings. You don't even need chords, just notes. Sabbath, Zeppelin, Deep Purple, whatever, you can play it on two strings."

In the studio, Zakk plugged his Maple Vertigo Les Paul Custom into a trusty Marshall JCM800 and a Jaguar Bluesbreaker Combo given to him by Jim Marshall himself. And it turns out, you can make a right old din with just two strings. After being given a sneak peek of

the new record, TG can confirm that this is indeed classic BLS, with a few heartfelt acoustic tunes nestling alongside an avalanche of balls-to-the-wall, pinch harmonic-punctuated chest beaters.

While it's business as usual on record, though, there is one major change for the BLS crew, as longtime guitarist Nick Catanese has amicably stepped aside to concentrate on other projects, being replaced by Lizzy Borden's Dario Lorina.

"I called Nick, and he was knee-deep in his own stuff he was doing," Zakk explains. "He always has a home here, I'll support him whatever he wants to do. I love Nick."

"We flew Dario out to the Black Vatican, I had him do a Chippendales routine for me and [Ozzy Osbourne bass player] Blasko, and he was phenomenal. I asked him if he had a spray tan or a real tan. He said it was a real tan, and I looked at Blasko and said, 'Obviously he's committed to the project'. From then, I knew he was our guy."

New guy in place, record set to drop, all that remains is a lengthy world tour, and Zakk reckons coming to a BLS show could be the new Zumba. "This is our finest exercise album to date," he laughs. "It's chocked full of jazzercise, so people will be burning more calories than ever before to this Black Label fitness album."

Catacombs Of The Black Vatican is released 7 April on Mascot Records.

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ASG

Rags to riffage: the heavy-rocking underdogs you must hear

On The Up isn't just for breaking new acts, it's also for pointing out underrated established bands, grabbing people by facial handholds and yelling, "CHECK THESE GUYS OUT!" ASG require the latter treatment.

The North Carolina four-piece formed in 2001 and spent a decade writing crushing stoner riffs and releasing records to a small, dedicated fanbase. However, it's their fifth effort *Blood Drive* (released on Relapse last year) that is finally – and deservedly – making waves.

"It's been a 12-year progression," explains guitarist/vocalist Jason Shi. "All of the mistakes and learning processes were with this group of guys, so for me it was a natural step from [fourth album, 2009's] *Win Us Over*. We got a lot of flak for taking four years, but until then, I didn't know that many people cared!"

But people do care – the kind who enjoy bands such as Torche, Red Fang and Baroness and who get very excited by spectacular riffs. Accordingly, *Blood Drive* sounds like Atlas himself has strapped on a Les Paul and let rip.

"Most of the songs start with a riff – it's out of the bedroom and into the jam room," explains Jason. "Blues For Bama is a good example. It's rather hypnotic and a bit

bluesy – and it's heavy, which is I guess how they're all supposed to be!"

Unsurprisingly, for a riff nut, Jason's gear of choice is a trusted Gibson Les Paul and Mesa/Boogie Dual Rectifier, plus an MXR Carbon Copy, while lead man Jonah City opts for the same amp, but favours a Flying V and a Tube Screamer.

"I've never been a two-guitar guy," says Jason. "I've never had one waiting in the wings. I don't break strings on my Gibson, knock on wood, and I cannot recall in all of these years that there's been a devastating moment... even when we opened for Motörhead for three weeks, I never had a second guitar."

Despite their touring pedigree stateside, ASG have been able to play only one UK show – a figure they will fortunately double come London's Desertfest on 26 April.

"It's tricky!" laments Jason. "It costs \$10,000, and that's a big hole to start in, so we're essentially touring now to pay for the trip, which is a bit nerve-wracking, but I think it will be worth the adventure in the long run!" Let's just hope he doesn't bust a string...

FOR FANS OF: Torche, Red Fang
HEAR: *Blood Drive* (play it LOUD!)



Vulkano

Wild Swedes making musical magma

Sweden's riotous psychedelic post-punks Vulkano rose lava-like from a fault line created by the dissolution of Those Dancing Days. "I wanted this band to be different to traditional pop music," explains frontwoman Cissi Efraimsson. "We wanted to come up with something animalistic – closer to nature and mysticism."

Album *Live Wild Die Free* certainly hits that nail on the head. It's a brilliantly off the wall combination of spooky synths, woody basslines and some primal, aggressive fuzz guitar, courtesy of ex-band mate and friend, Rebecka Rolfart.

"I used a Fender Mustang, a Hagström Deluxe and a Roland Jazz Chorus amplifier, with a Vox Big Ben overdrive pedal... that was the only gear I had, but it

sounded really nice," explains Rebecka. "I like my guitar sounds to be quite simple but convincing – like a well-rounded voice that has been drinking whisky!"

It's fair to say everyone involved with Vulkano has a powerful imagination. For example, *Jungle* features the immortal lines: "In the jungle I see a mushroom/I pick it up, it smells funky – and I like funk/ So... I... eat it!"

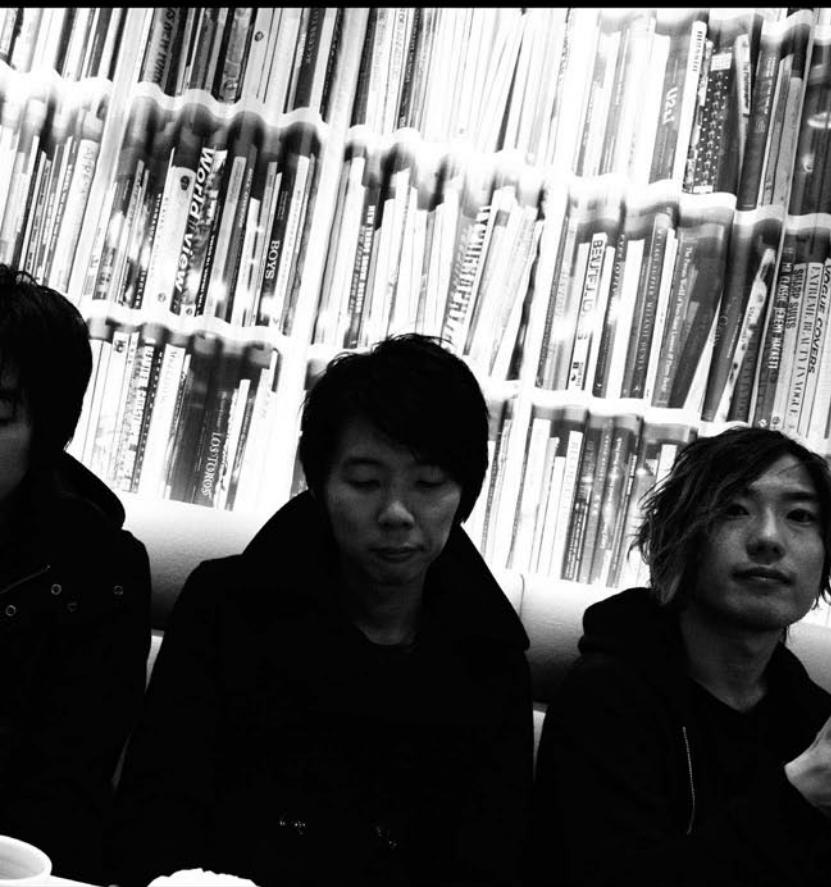
"I guess we have a kind of animalistic, energetic, fairytale style live," explains Cissi. "I think we have caught some kind of nature spirit. It's quite an intensive experience."

Keep an eye out for Vulkano erupting around the UK in March.

FOR FANS OF: The Velvet Underground, Siouxsie And The Banshees **HEAR:** *Choir Of Wolves*



© Aneta Byström



LITE

Switched-on sonic adventurers

Japanese instrumental band, LITE... wait. Where are you going? Seriously, if you leave, you're only punishing yourself. These four mad-cap math-rockers make the kind of melodious racket that fans of Three Trapped Tigers lap up like, err, tiger milk.

"We want to make music that has never been played by anybody," says guitarist Kozo Kusumoto. "It's difficult, but I think the original thing comes out when good things are mixed. I think we each have strong character, so LITE can do that."

Recent album *Installation* proved why they're a chart mainstay in their homeland, stunning us with its creative twists and turns, plus some impressive and, yes, original playing. Kozo and fellow guitarist Nobuyuki Takeda coax their chameleon tones from a Schecter S-type/

Marshall JCM800 and T-type/Fender Bassman, along with a small selection of EHX, Boss and Line 6 pedals and a modded Big Muff – a modest selection, really.

"I don't really want to be a guitar hero in this band," says Nobuyuki. "I think the guitar is only one part of the band. When I realised that, I came to think that the most important thing was making good songs first. I think that one's good guitar playing only really works in a good song."

Still not convinced? Check out the video for the awesome *Bond* (bit.ly/1fcarpM) or new single *Hunger* (due 24 March). We'll accept apologies via Facebook and Twitter, and in shop-soiled Terry's Chocolate Oranges.

FOR FANS OF: Three Trapped Tigers, Adebisi Shank **HEAR:** *Bond*

MONITOR

ALBUMS



Animals As Leaders

THE JOY OF MOTION

★★★★★

Animals As Leaders broadly fall into the prog-metal genre, but there's much more to this instrumental trio than pure djent-le riffage. The first thing that strikes us about this third album, *The Joy Of Motion*, is the musical breadth covered. Check out the ambient, heavy, delayed rhythm grooves on *Air Chrysalis*, the jazz fusion of *Another Year*, the touch of Latin influences on the nylon string-driven *Para Mexer*, and Tosin Abasi's distinctive, signature funky slap-bass grooves for his eight-string guitar that figure frequently throughout.

The gentler moments, which you'll find in nearly every track on the album, are welcome respite, providing contrast with the dissonant onslaught of Vai-like modal lead lines, syncopated rhythms and Abasi and Reyes' brutal octave-down dual eight-string riffing.

Reyes and Abasi have said *The Joy Of Motion* features some of their finest material to date, and we agree. This is some of the most creative guitar playing around today.

Chris Bird

DOWNLOAD: Lippincott



JOHN 5
THE LAST
ALBUM I
BOUGHT...



STEELY DAN
ALIVE IN
AMERICA

"My iTunes says I have 14,886 items, so that's a lot of music. The last album was Steely Dan's *Alive In America*. It reminds me of my childhood, because you heard Steely Dan on the radio all the time. It's just smart music, and I love the perfection of the playing.

A lot of people are like, 'That's not rock 'n' roll', but personally, between me, you and everybody reading this, I love it..."

EXCEPTIONAL ★★★★★ | EXCELLENT ★★★★★ | GOOD ★★★★★ | FOR FANS OF ★★★★★ | POOR ★★★★★



Gus G

I AM THE FIRE

★★★★★

WHEN a lead maestro breaks out a solo album, it's easy to assume 12 tracks of instrumental shred will follow. But Gus seems to be spreading his wings as a songwriter here, though one with serious chops and stunning solos. Two metal instrumentals demonstrate the fine balance of melodicism and intricacy that typifies him, but Swedish singer Mats Leven and other vocalists feature on a number of songs that showcase a hard-rock edge compared to Firewind's power metal. The meaty 1980s rock of *Summer Days* and brooding *Long Way Down* suggest there's more to G-Force than you may think.

David Hands

DOWNLOAD: Terrified



The Pretty Reckless
GOING TO HELL

★★★★★

THIS IS album two from the New York rockers fronted by former child prodigy/actress/model/musician Taylor Momsen, and they pick up pretty much exactly where they left off with 2010's well-received *Light Me Up*. Lead man Ben Phillips shows his worth on the raw title track, even sneaking the odd pinch harmonic in there, while the stripped-back *Heaven Knows* packs a mighty singalong chorus. There is some formulaic filler peppered amongst the gems here, but in the main, this is a batch of solid modern rock, and if you liked the first album, you'll lap this up.

Rich Chamberlain

DOWNLOAD: Going To Hell



Wolves Like Us

BLACK SOUL CHOIR

★★★★★

FANS of Kvelertak, Baroness and Thrice should check out this Oslo post-hardcore foursome, formed from the ashes of several bands from Norway's rock scene. The collective experience shows: Wolves Like Us's second album is all about massive distorted tones and melodic leads, not to mention huge choruses. Grungy riffage abounds in the Alice In Chains-like *Dig With Your Hands*, while the heavy, delay-laden lament of closer *Thanatos Wins Again*, combined with Lovescared's delicate acoustic work, displays an impressive command of light and shade.

Michael Brown

DOWNLOAD: When Will We Ever Sleep



Architects

**LOST FOREVER//
LOST TOGETHER**

★★★★★

LOST FOREVER// *Lost Together* continues down the path set by 2012's *Daybreaker*, which saw Architects seamlessly combine their more aggressive, angular roots with the anthemic notes of *The Here And Now*. Lone guitarist and songwriter Tom Searle rises to the occasion. He adeptly balances subtle melodies and atmospheric meanderings with belligerent riffs and intricate breakdowns on the likes of C.A.N.C.E.R. and Naysayer. Vocalist Sam Carter delivers a career best in terms of both lyrics and impassioned delivery, making this the band's best album yet.

Adam Rees

DOWNLOAD: Gravedigger



Johnny Foreigner

YOU CAN DO BETTER

★★★★★

BRUMMIE vowel-phobes Johnny Foreigner return with their fourth album in possession of an extra guitarist and new purpose. Previous album...Vs *Everything* was ambitious in its 17 tracks, but in truth, that extended running order was probably around five songs too long. Here, though, things are much more focused - the band delivers 10 tracks of high-energy catchy, punky riffage and clever lyrics, and the result is all the better for it. With new guitarist Lewes Herriot adding welcome depth and riff-based interplay, *You Can Do Better* feels like a band who took the title to heart. They have.

Josh Gardner

DOWNLOAD: In Capitals

BOOKS:



Rolling Stones Gear

ANDY BABIUK AND GREG PREVOST

★★★★★

If weight is any indication of a book's value, this one's got a lot to offer. And the 700 pages within don't disappoint. It covers the Stones' beginnings in 1962 to now, on stage and in the studio: from Selmer to Showman and Framus to Firebird, the Micawber Tele and not forgetting Keef's (and Mick Taylor's shared) stunning '59 Bursts, it's all here, in the most insightful context. It's an incredibly well-researched story of their music and gear, with great studio photography to accompany the live shots and relevant vintage gear adverts from the eras.

David Hands



Alaya

THRONES

★★★★★

TECH METAL is in rude health, but the equilibrium between showcasing fresh prog chops and tones with writing songs to hook listeners remains a challenge for all. This Chicago trio doesn't shy from it. Frontman/guitarist Evan Graham Dunn's voice recalls Chester Bennington, but his playing and tone are the most intriguing elements. The singer/guitarist role is often an underappreciated skill, and Dunn is facing down potential live challenges confidently with some intricate picking among the rhythmic syncopated sections on these three-minute nuggets.

Rob Laing

DOWNLOAD: Thrones



Centiment

STREETS OF RAGE

★★★★★

WITH three-quarters of alt-rockers InMe among their ranks, you might expect Centiment's output to echo their main gig, but the guitar playing provides a sharp contrast - the band dub their music 'geeky gamer tech metal', and they're not far off. Their debut is crammed with videogame references and retro synths, offset by a wealth of metal flourishes courtesy of axemen Gazz Marlow and Greg McPherson. A potent fusion of djent and prog - plus a few anthemic choruses for good measure - makes *Streets Of Rage* almost as addictive as its button-basher namesake.

Michael Brown

DOWNLOAD: The Kraken



Cage The Gods

BADLANDS

★★★★★

THEY MAY BE THE LATEST in a long line of British 'saviours of rock', but - refreshingly - on this evidence, guitarist Jam and his Cage The Gods mates certainly have the tunes to back up the hype. Wearing their influences proudly on their sleeves, we witness The Cult being channelled on *favourite Sin* - and *The Ending* has a huge Alter Bridge tilt, thanks in no small part to singer Peter Comerford's Myles Kennedy-esque range. There's plenty of Kennedy's pal Slash in the pot as well: the title track has a slither of, er... *Slither* to it, which is certainly no bad thing.

Rich Chamberlain

DOWNLOAD: Badlands



Band Of Skulls

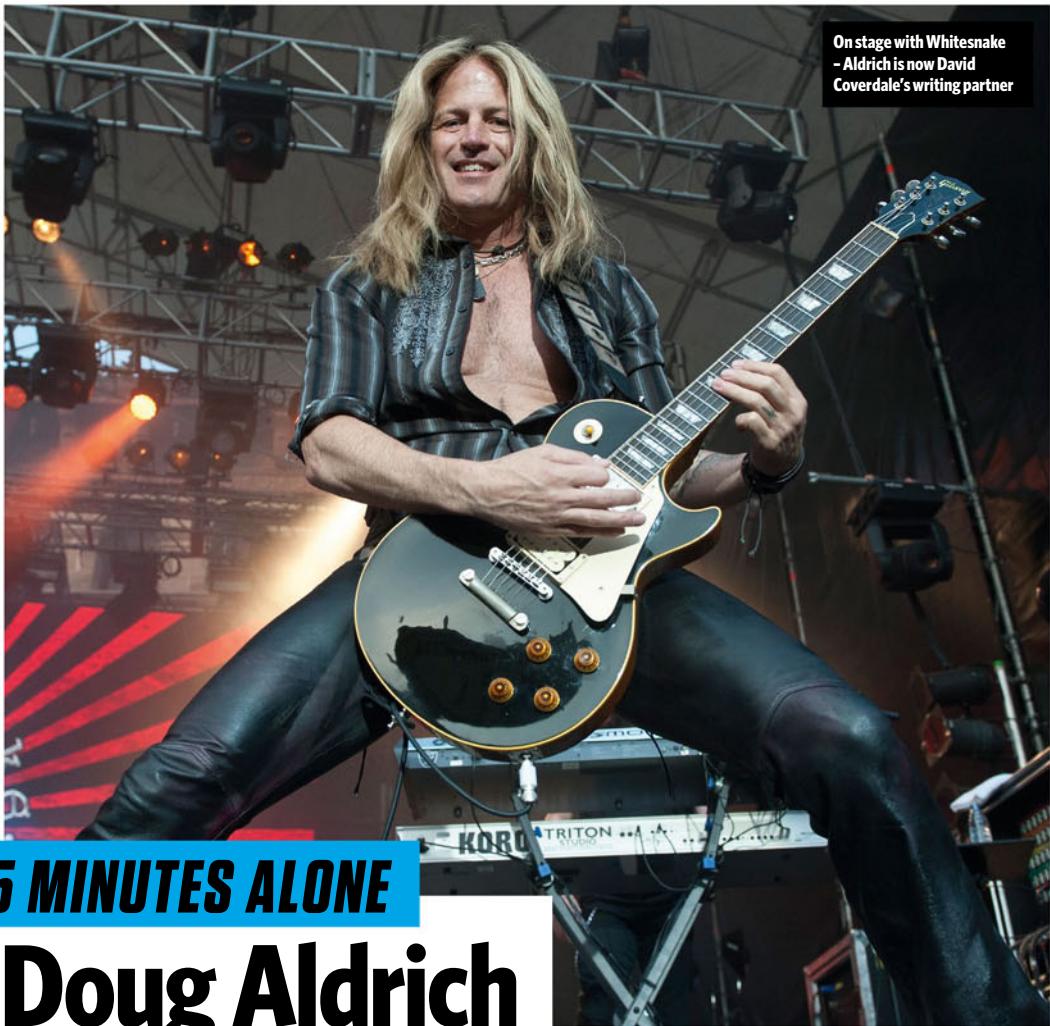
HIMALAYAN

★★★★★

THE THIRD full-length from Southampton's Band Of Skulls sees them take a slightly more polished approach to the production. At the core, it's still classic BOS with the glammed-up stomp, Led Zeppelin-esque riffing and quirky timings out in full force on first single *Asleep At The Wheel*, the retro twangy tones of *Cold Sweat* and *I Guess I Know You Fairly Well*. It's a smorgasbord of cool guitar tone and playing, and even though the hooks come and go at times, Band Of Skulls prove that it's possible to make an incredible sound with just three members.

Stuart Williams

DOWNLOAD: *I Feel Like Ten Men, Nine Dead And One Dying*



On stage with Whitesnake
- Aldrich is now David
Coverdale's writing partner

5 MINUTES ALONE

Doug Aldrich

The current Whitesnake and former Dio guitarist reveals all about his guitar-teaching past, and how he rates his own playing

I got my first real six string...

"My very first guitar was a department-store copy of a Les Paul. It was a department store called the Sears, Roebuck chain. It had a bolt-on neck, body made of plywood, and the frets were definitely cut off with wire cutters

on the side, cutting your hand when you played it. That was my first electric guitar, but my very first guitar was a classical guitar I pinched from my younger sister, and along with it a book of chords. I had heard some records that my older sister had, one being Jeff Beck's *Blow By Blow*, and I loved it, man. I loved the sound of the guitar. So I started on a classical, but when I got my electric guitar and a little amp – that was when it was on!"

Going to California...

"After I moved out of my parents' house and got my own place,

I was dedicated 24/7 to guitar. I remember when I left high school that Summer, I had plans to move to California from the East Coast, and I was pretty much just playing rhythm guitar. I'd play some lead guitar, but I couldn't do that much. When I moved out I dedicated myself 24/7 to playing and learning and practising. And I made some strides, because friends would come out from Pennsylvania, where I moved from, and go, 'Woah! What happened? You really changed a lot'. And then another big step came when I started teaching: I had some people who wanted to



Aldrich with mainstay 1990
'57 Goldtop Reissue Les Paul

"One player I'd have loved to get a lesson from is Gary Moore – Gary really inspired my playing"

have lessons, and I started to teach at a shop. I ended up having about 70 students a week, it was full-time, and then night-time classes. I was practising fundamentals all the time with other people and it really helped."

Still got the blues for you...

"One player that I would have loved to get a lesson from, but he's not with us anymore, would have been Gary Moore – because Gary really inspired my playing in a lot of different ways. Not so much in that I sound like him, but I love his passion and his attack on the instrument. His ferociousness. I would have loved to have sat down with him. He could cover everything from jazz to blues, to metal. Of people that are available today, I would love to sit down with Eric Clapton. That would be pretty cool."

One night in the city...

"I played a pub in Belfast with Ronnie [James Dio], and it was awkward. It was this really small stage, and there was this pole in the middle of it and it just did not feel like the right place to be doing *The Last In Line*. It literally was a pub. Ronnie was a champ and he delivered his show like he always did; that was amazing, and he went for it."

Here I go again...

"One of my weaknesses overall is memory. I'll do things that I'll hear on recordings and think, 'that was really cool, but why am I not doing that anymore?' I'll hear it and go back and remember it. Without actually listening to myself and reviewing what I've done, I can find myself getting in a rut – where I'll repeat myself and do the same sort of things. So that's a weakness for me.

"I think that comes down to practice, I need to up the game always. But I think one of my strengths is whatever I do play, I really play it like I mean it. I really do play from my heart. When I dig into a note, I really want it to count. I never want anyone to say that I just mailed in the performance live. But even if I played badly or something, I want people to say, 'Well at least he did it with gusto!'"



If Looks Could Kill the X6 VPR would be deadly. Its venomous look however is only a hint at its potent performance. Its shred-ready neck is fast and comfortable. The super high output Bluebucker pickups deliver that big tone that cuts. Get your hands on a X6 VPR if you dare!

X-6 VPR

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Model shown: LTD KH-330 Kirk Hammett Signature

RIG TOUR

MONITOR

BLESS THE FALL

WORDS: ROB LAING

PHOTOGRAPHY: ADAM GASSON

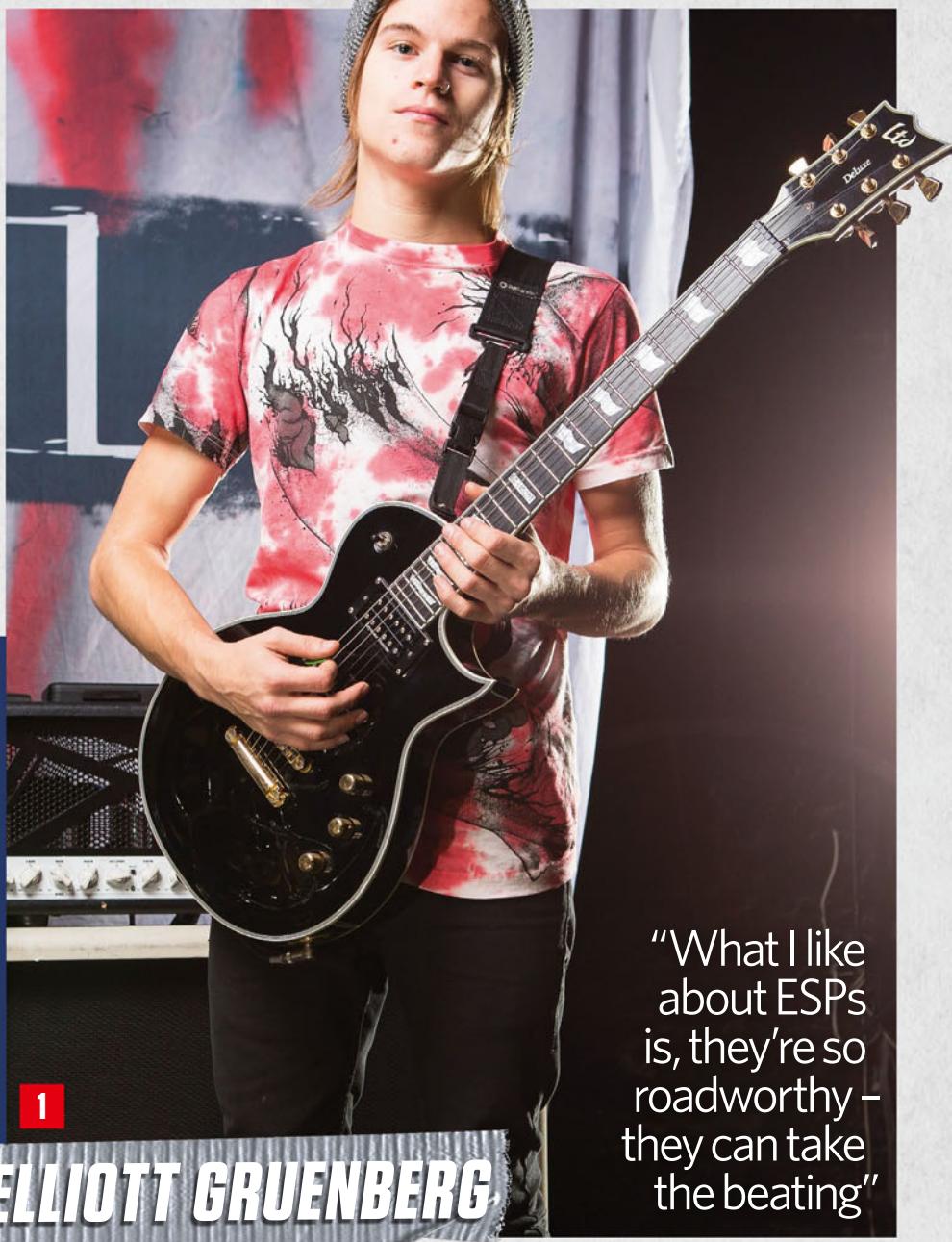
Eric Lambert and Elliott Gruenberg reveal how a huge modern metal guitar sound is really about getting the essentials right





Purrrrrrrrrrrchandise,
done Blessthefall-style

There's a frothing wave of US bands re-energising modern metal in the US right now, and ensuring a whole new legion of young fans of heavy music don't lose sight of its melodics. Of Mice And Men, Miss May I, We Came As Romans and Memphis May Fire lead the charge and Blessthefall are front of centre, too. Eric Lambert and Elliott Gruenberg's mix of metalcore's staccato syncopations with fluid atmospheric leads has struck a powerchord with many. They've refined it on latest, *Hollow Bodies*, aided by the extreme dynamic of frontman Beau Bokan's soaring high-range clean vocals and infectious melodies with quite the opposite from bassist Jared Warth's screams. It sounds massive on record, but how do Blessthefall deliver their guitar girth live? Eric and Elliott reveal all...



ELLIOTT GRUENBERG

"What I like about ESPs is, they're so roadworthy – they can take the beating"



2

Elliott's LTD has Seymour Duncan's JB and '59 pickup set

LTD EC-1000T

1 "My first guitar was a Strat, and then I bought an LTD Viper. The only thing with those is they're a bit top-heavy, so every time I'd go past the 12th fret I'd always have to battle it to stay up. I ended up buying an EC-1000 in Satin Black with gold trim way back in the day, and I remember working three jobs to get it. Once I got that, it was a case of 'this is what I like and this is where I'm at'. I feel the most comfortable with the Les Paul-esque shape, and I had the rationale that if it's good enough for Slash, it's good enough for me!"

"The T has a thicker body to it [the T stands for traditional and also has 22 instead of 24 frets]. What I like about ESPs is, they're so roadworthy – they can take the beating. They're reliable. We used these for recording the *Hollow Bodies* record, too: they still look pretty decent compared to some of the other ones I have! They're kind of new for us."

"This one has Seymour Duncan JB and '59 pickups. I've thought about putting different pickups in it, and I used to be an EMG guy. But with this band, I found there are songs they're too harsh for. Eric was all about BurstBuckers

and said, 'Trust me, they're high output and sound awesome once you put them with saturation.' So I said, 'Alright, I'll switch.'

D'ADDARIO 0.011S

2 "For *Hollow Bodies*, we went to drop B and drop C for most of it, and in our previous releases, it was drop D and drop C#. For this tour, we can't bring four guitars each for all the tunings. So we just transpose it, and play some things a little bit lower than we normally would. And these strings are a good middle ground, because if we wanted to do B, it could get it."



BOSS NS-2 NOISE SUPPRESSOR

3 "I think I've had that for seven years, and it's my oldest pedal. I've been contemplating buying a new one. I'll run that, and then the signal goes back into the front of the head from there. Then I have effects in the effects loop."

MAXON OD808

4 "This is my favourite Tube Screamer-type pedal. This is the dream one I always wanted – either this, or the Fulltone OCD. This one is used by Killswitch Engage and As I Lay Dying – many bands in that kind of vein were advocating it. Great saturation, it's awesome and it makes your pinching sound great. The tone is pretty much in the middle, and I balance the gain from the actual head with the pedal, so it's not too much."

BOSS TU-3

5 "Pretty standard – I had a TC Electronic PolyTune for a while, but I found in a live setting when I'd strum open, it didn't always get it. And it can only go so many semitones [down] before it

loses frequency, so I went back to the TU-3 just because it's easier."

BOSS DD-20 DELAY

6 "It's one of my favourite delays. I went between this, a [MXR] Carbon Copy and a TC Nova Delay. I love the Carbon Copy for what it does, and the Nova Delay is great, Eric runs that. But the DD-20 is just easy and user-friendly. It's the iPhone of pedals. I keep that pretty standard, and on this tour, I've kept it on the tap tempo. There have been times before when I'd go through and bank everything, adjusting the effects levels, but I find it varies according to the rooms we're playing sometimes. It can be subjective to what sounds good in our practice space, and whatever venue we're playing.

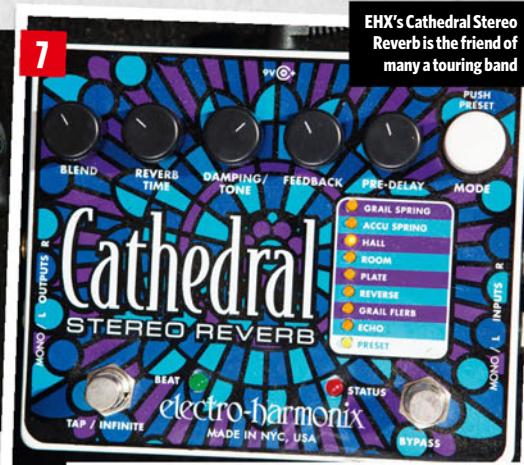
"There's leads I'll use it on, but on the new record there's lots of pretty swells, lots of parts to complement our sound so it's not so dry. Even when we do our older songs, I try to put it on when I'm playing things like octaves, so it's not so abrasive. That's why we use passive pickups, too."

ELECTRO-HARMONIX CATHEDRAL STEREO REVERB

7 "This is the newest pedal I'm running. I used to run the Holy Grail, but Eric's using mine right now. He had this one originally. They're a bit fragile, but they're great, and they sound good. Lee [Malia] from Bring Me the Horizon is the one that sold me on it. I feel like I'm on Logic with it, and I pull up all my reverb plugins with it."

BOSS GE-7 GRAPHIC EQUALIZER

8 "I think this is the most important pedal I have, because this is what will sculpt the tone. For my sound, I boost the bass a little bit, the lower tones, then I bring it up a little towards the mids so it gets a little of that high saturation. Then I just run that to the return of the amp. It can be a volume booster if you want it to be,



but whatever rig I ever play, I'll probably always try to run an EQ on it. You can hear where the bad things are, and just cut them out. You're saving the sound guy some time by doing it.

"I find that a lot of times with high gain, once you get to saturation you're really in a battle to hear notes – and you want it to be clear and crisp. This thing definitely helps sculpt the tone. I remember when I brought this to Eric and I said, 'Listen, we need to run these' and it just kind of changed the game for us."



EVH 5150 MK III

9 "That's the first head I've ever plugged in without anything and it sounded great. So happy. Couldn't be happier with it. Normally, we have Mesa 4x12 cabs with Celestions, but we're loaning these EVH cabs right now, which are also great.

"On the last record, we did everything on POD Farm, but [producer Joey Sturgis] is a genius of tone and knows just how to sculpt it. But on the album

before, we used an EVH and a block letter 5150 that Trivium used on *In Waves*. Honestly, though, I think the EVH kills it. A lot of guys have the Axe-Fx, and those are great, they're amazing at what they do. But I love my EVH, not to say that I'd never change, but right now I'm content with my setup. Obviously, there's things I could try and put in to see how it goes, but they're great amps. If Van Halen can do it, you'll be alright!"



MONITOR



"The ESPs are hot guitars, but I love them – they make squeals really easy and they play amazing"

Lambert's ESP Eclipse is also fitted with Seymour Duncans



2

The upside-down sound: Lambert is an EVH amp convert

ERIC LAMBERT

1



ESP ECLIPSE II

1 "This and the LTD [EC-1000] Deluxe are pretty much what I've used for the entire UK tour. I love the ebony 'boards, and I have Seymour Duncans in these. I'm not really a big active pickup guy, so it's nice to have more of a humbucker feel. I've always been into passive pickups. I used to play Gibsons for a long time before we came to ESP and I've always really appreciated the sound and the warmth of a nice warm pickup. For me, EMGs are a little buzzier. They're really hot guitars, but I love them – it makes squeals really easy and they play amazing. They're awesome."

**EVH 5150 MK III**

2 "I've been playing EVHs for the last three years. Once I got turned on to this amp, I never turned back. It's the perfect amp for cleans, crunch and dirty. Leads cut through so well on it. It's a real ballsy amp. This is actually the first time we've used EVH cabs and they sound awesome, they really complement the head well.

"We used POD Farm on the last album, and we basically tried to match this tone as much as we could. We ended up achieving that, which was awesome. These amps definitely translate over live very well. Overall, it's a pretty basic setup, but it's all we really need."

TC ELECTRONIC NOVA DELAY

3 "This can make any delay I want; from ping-pong to reverse and feedback. It's a very technical pedal; it takes hours to try and get the right delay, but you

can tap everything out to tap tempo, and I can pretty much load up everything from our sessions to this pedal, too."

BOSS GE-7 GRAPHIC EQUALIZER

4 "I scoop out some of the mid and let the highs cut through a little bit more. I don't do much more than that. If I step off that pedal it almost sounds like a lo-fi on my amp."

ELECTRO-HARMONIX HOLY GRAIL NANO REVERB

5 "We have a couple of bluesy solos that I'll throw that on to give it a little more atmosphere. Then that's it, as far as the effects loop is concerned."

MXR CARBON COPY DELAY

6 "This is probably my favourite pedal on the 'board. It gives me a nice little

studio delay. Any type of little lead I have that I don't want to be so raw, I'll kick on the MXR. It makes everything flow a little easier for me. On solos or tremolo picking parts, it's really nice."

MESA/BOOGIE GRID SLAMMER OVERDRIVE

7 "I use this on the front side, that's my Tube Screamer right now. I don't have it on right now, though, because the pickups are really hot in the guitars I'm using right now, so I actually don't really need that. But over in the States I usually use it, as it gives a nice bite."



Elliott and Eric –
a double shot of
modern metal tone

Total Guitar Feedback

LETTERS ★ EMAILS ★ PICS ★ FEEDBACK

Back in the habit

Last summer, I started to play guitar again after an absence of nearly 10 years due to commitments like mortgage and children that had taken a serious hold of my disposable income. I caught the bug again after making an impulse buy of TG in a newsagent to keep me entertained on a train journey.

Since then, I've really been getting back into playing after buying an Epiphone Casino and Hummingbird. I've been playing with the idea of building a pedal board with a selection of pedals, but in all honesty, it's a minefield – and I didn't have a clue of where to start until I picked up TG251. It has to be the best purchase I ever made, and not only have you given me a solid foundation of what pedals to start with, I now have a great understanding of the pedals that are out there, and after playing around with AmpliTube, the Big Muff and the Tube Screamer are both on my shopping list! Thanks TG!

Chris Dutton, Whitley Bay

Band aid

Hey TG, I have taken a music course at college and your band practice and recording articles really helped my band with recording our first song. However, I feel some of our members aren't writing enough of the music and we will have to play a gig at some point. I was wondering if you could write an article on live performance tips, gear choice, amp size and how to not be a shoe-gazer, perhaps?

Darren Curry

A little faith

I must admit, I was ready to tear you guys a new waste-disposal cavity, cancel my subscription and all sorts. For the past few months, every time my TG mag dropped through my



HOTSHOTS

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"Even ninjas need a hobby"



When rehearsing, spread the load of your amps over multiple sockets

(Signal) Chain Reaction

When I was 15, I was in a band with a few lads from school, but with nowhere proper to practise, we played in Edward's garage. One day, after about two hours of murdering some GN'R songs, we suddenly smelled burning, which set the smoke alarm off. The power also clicked out, because the fuse had blown. Edward's dad came in to see what was burning and saw we had all our gear (amps, speakers, mixer, lights, foot pedals, CD player) daisy-chained together and going into one plug socket on the wall (which was now a bit black and melted). I'll never forget his dad's face when he said "You can't plug all that into one socket, it can only take 13 amps!" only for me to reply, with a stupid smug look on my face, "Well, we haven't got 13 amps, Mr Phelps, we've only got three; the Marshall, the Vox and the Laney."

We were lucky, but for your readers that don't know, it's very important to spread the load across multiple plug sockets.

Ralph, Shropshire

Hi Ralph, and thanks for a great cautionary tale... Have fun daisy-chaining your PolyTune to the other pedals on your 'board.



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CYNTHIA BURGESS, SHROPSHIRE

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door, I was disappointed. "What is this? ONE crappy tabbed track!?" Some of my old TG mags had TONS of songs tabbed!"

But then I finally understood. Sure, learning new songs is great but you know how far that's going to get me? Pub band. Been there, done that. I want to progress in every aspect of my guitar playing, and if I want to learn a song, I have my ears and the internet for it. So, massive kudos to the changes you've made to TG. I have faith in your plans for us widdlers, and my TG subscription is very safe!

Craig Evans

Thanks to all our readers for the feedback – both positive and critical – about the changes we've made. Keep sending us your comments...

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RIFFS

"THIS IS Total GUITAR not Total BASS"

Daniel Virta, via Facebook

"BOUGHT a Pro Co RAT a couple of months back, love it, and chuffed to see it get a few positive mentions in TG!"

David Peake, via Facebook

"TO BE fair, Alice In Chains would absolutely nail Come On Eileen..."

Philip Owen Weller, via Facebook

"GOOD to see a slightly more serious Final Countdown from Total Guitar this month!"

Dan Scriver, via Twitter

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HEAVY CONSTRUCTION



Six albums in, and Architects have delivered the record of their lives. Self-confessed workaholic control freak Tom Searle tells TG how the Brighton metallers pulled it off

Words: Richard Chamberlain

The pressure writing and recording this album was completely unbearable," Architects guitarist Tom Searle confesses to TG. "I had a really horrible time."

His anxiety was perhaps understandable in the circumstances. As chief songwriter for the Brighton metallers, Searle had a mountain-sized portion on his plate when working on *Lost Forever//Lost Together*, the band's sixth record. "No one puts pressure on us, we put the pressure on ourselves. I have a bad record of retrospectively writing off our material, saying, 'That's shit, I fucked up, I should be doing better.'"

It's startling to hear such a frank admission from Searle, especially given that his band have been picking up a steady stream of plaudits since their 2006 debut, *Nightmares*. By the time 2012's riff-packed *Daybreaker* came along, Searle and co were being championed as the next Brit-metal troupe to follow Bring Me The Horizon into the big league. But Searle, now the band's sole guitarist after Tim Hillier-Brook's 2012 departure, isn't taking anything for granted.

"Architects is a band of great potential, but I don't really believe that we've ever truly hit the mark. It's nice that people have enjoyed our stuff, but I feel like there's something more."

If it's more he wants, he's found it on album six. *Lost Forever//Lost Together* is a force of nature, surely their heaviest record yet: and the hard and heavy approach can all be traced back to one throwaway comment. "I did an interview, and on the spot, I said the album was going to be our heaviest record. From

then on, I thought, 'Well, I've said it now, so we'll do that.'"

Searle began piecing together what would become *Lost Forever//Lost Together* at home before taking his ideas in to show his band mates. "We didn't really go into the rehearsal room this time, we had one rehearsal before recording. That's not very organic, is it? I'm sure Dave Grohl wouldn't approve of that, but it worked for us."

Architects traded their Brighton base for Gothenburg's renowned Studio Fredman, the spiritual home for the melodic-death-metal

all my fault. We went there to get big-sounding guitars and I put my faith in them. At first I didn't feel comfortable playing the sound that they got, but once it had four guitars on and was all mixed, it showed why we went there."

Searle admits his hands-on approach to recording is every bit as full-on as his pressure-inviting method of songwriting. "I'm a total control freak. In the studio, I have this desperation to make something that I think is of worth. I sink so much time into it. I have friends in other metal bands that write their records in two weeks. I'm always writing.

"I work a lot with Sam [Carter, vocals] when he's doing vocals, I like to oversee everything. That comes from the fact that I demo the songs on my own, so I know how everything is supposed to be laid out."

That Searle has his mark stamped all over *Lost Forever//Lost Together* is a testament to the guitarist's ability to craft stunning modern metal tunes. Album six is not just Architects' most brutal, it's also their most consistent – it deserves to put Searle and co at the front of the brand-new wave of alternative British heavy metal. "There's an opportunity for success but there's more to lose if you fuck it up and don't get it right. You look at a band like Bring Me The Horizon achieving incredible things, but it's dangerous to compare yourself to such unprecedeted success. We're six albums in, I thought on album three we were old dogs and nobody would care. For us to have our biggest-ever tour coming up at this point in our career is already, even before the album has sunk in, a success." ●

"I'm a control freak. I have this desperation to make something I think is of worth"

scene spearheaded by In Flames and At The Gates: and when it came to getting tones, Searle was happy to delegate to producers Henrik Udd and Fredrik Nordström.

"One of the things that attracted me to the studio was the guitar sound. Henrik came to one of our shows and told me he could make my guitars sound massive. I mainly used my ESP Horizon with EMGs, and we quad-tracked guitars; one was through an old 1980s Engl, one was through an EVH 5150. Henrik and Fredrik asked me what I thought, and I said it didn't matter what I thought because I'd been in the studio in charge of getting guitar sounds before and when I got the finished thing, I didn't like the guitar sound, and it had been

Architects (l-r): Alex Deane, Tom Searle, Dan Searle and Sam Carter



DIGGING DEEP

How Tom found an 'accidental' tuning

DESPITE Searle being meticulous in his writing, there's still room for the odd happy accident, such as the tuning found on *Lost Forever//Lost Together*'s opening track.

"Previously, we've been in C# standard, we've had the C# dropped down to a G# as well. I got on stage one day, turned the amp on and thought the guitar

sounded great. I went to tune it and realised the guitar had been knocked out of tune. I went on the bus afterwards and wrote *Gravedigger* in that tuning. It's even less practical than G#! It's down in F# F# B E, and then I tuned the higher G# half a step to A, and then G#. It's a weird one, but it made sense - and now I've got to work with the fact that I don't own enough guitars to have all these tunings going on!"

Guitarist PRESENTS.

Acoustic

THE ACOUSTIC GUITAR PLAYER'S QUARTERLY

Sit down with
SETH LAKEMAN

Britain's brightest folk star
tells us how he recorded
his stunning new album

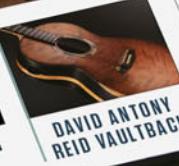


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Improve Your Tone

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TONE IS one of the most debated and elusive areas of guitar playing. Our bumper 13-page tone fest will show you how you can sound better through perfecting your basic technique, fixing the tone-killing elements of your rig, and optimising your gear to give you more tone

- 46 **IT'S ALL IN THE HANDS?**
- 48 **TONE KILLERS**
- 50 **TONE TIPS**
- 54 **TONE MYTHS**

Words: Chris Bird, Stuart Williams, Mick Taylor

Kick off your tonal analysis with a look at how sorting the basics of your technique can make your playing sound better

It's all in the hands?

WHEN IT comes to improving your tone by raising the standard of your playing, you're really talking about one thing: playing notes as cleanly as possible, without any other noise coming from your guitar. There are certainly plenty of advanced techniques you could be learning, but, for tonal improvements, it's really a matter of mastering the basics. This means taking a look at your picking and fretting technique at the most fundamental level.

Picking-wise, for lead work your main aim is to keep your hand movements small and efficient so that string noise is minimised.

Clean fretting, on the other hand, is all about hand position. Get your fret hand in the right position and you should find your playing soon sounds cleaner and smoother. Follow the tips and exercises here to whip the basics into shape and sound better.

PICKING/FINGERING TIPS...



Holding your pick

LEAD Lead playing requires small, precise movements as you pick one string at a time. To ensure that you're picking cleanly, hold your plectrum so that only the very tip of it is visible.

RHYTHM Strumming requires a wide hand movement, as you cover several strings on every stroke. Let more of your pick show than with lead lines, so you can hear some of the 'flappy' sound of pick on string.

LEAD The ideal spot for your pick hand is rested on the bridge, with your pick positioned to touch the string you want to play. Keeping hand movements minimal is key to avoiding extra string noise.

RHYTHM Generally, your pick should touch the strings halfway between the bridge and the end of the fretboard. Experiment with strumming nearer the bridge for a harsher, more treble-rich tone.

Picking exercises

TRACK 23 & 24

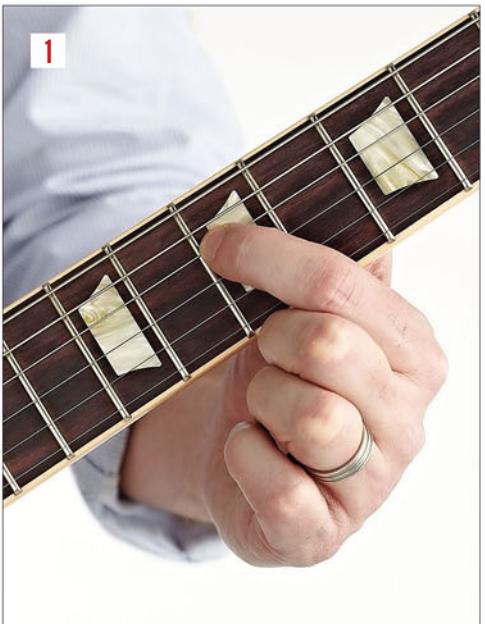
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N.C.

TAB

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G

Often, guitarists' upstrokes sound weaker than their downstrokes, so focus on making every note the same volume in the single-note exercise. When it comes to strumming, practise playing all six strings on the downstrokes, then five, four and three strings on the upstrokes without losing your timing.

FRETTING



General finger position

1 The general rule for clean fretting is to place your fingers as close to the intended fret as possible, without actually touching the metal. Too far behind the fret and you can expect to hear string buzz. This applies to everything you play, so make sure you are constantly checking that your fingers are in prime position.

Chords

2 Generally, the best way to play clean-sounding chords is to use the very tips of your fingers. This gives you the smallest 'footprint', and means you are less likely to touch other strings and create string noise.



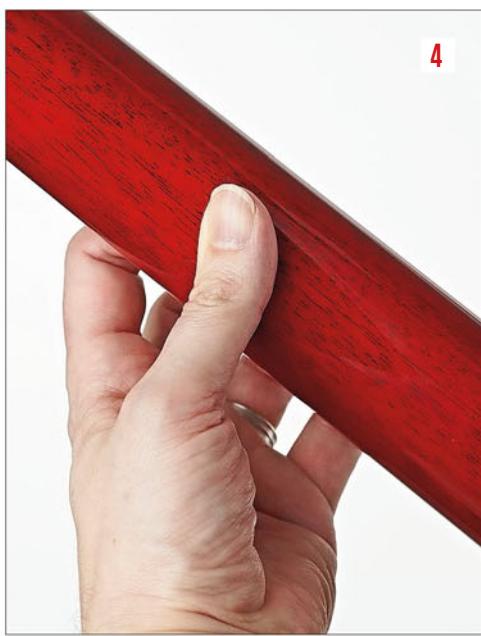
Lead

3 When it comes to playing clean lead lines, your main aim is for all four fretting fingers to be in line with four frets in a row. Aim to play on your fingertips, and always be ready to adjust this basic hand position for licks that involve stretches, string bends, position shifts, and so on.



Thumb position

4 For open chords, barre chords and 'one finger per fret' lead playing, the ideal thumb position is the middle of the back of the neck, roughly opposite your second finger, regardless of whether you are playing high or low on the fretboard. You may need to adjust your thumb position for string bending, and using your thumb over the top of the fretboard to fret notes on the sixth string is a useful technique for Hendrix-style rhythm playing.



Fretting exercises

TRACK 25 & 26

Play the chord change exercise at a tempo that challenges you to play cleanly and in time. The single-note exercise is a great way to practise clean fretting, whether you play legato (ie, using hammer-ons and pull-offs) or pick every note. Remember to practise using the one-finger-per-fret position.

Tone Killers

SO, YOU'VE developed your technique, but that's just the start. Your gear's performance will make or break your sound, and with so many potential tone-sappers at play, it's time to take a look at your signal chain...

FIX THE TONE-RUINING PROBLEMS WITH YOUR GUITAR



If your guitar crackles like a taxi radio, you need to sort out its electrical problems



Dust in your pots is a common cause of crackling controls

THE PROBLEM**1** **Guitar sounds in tune with open strings, but drifts out higher up the neck**

THE FIX If you're getting weird looks from the rest of the band and audience members when you solo, you'll want to check your intonation. First off, if your guitar doesn't have adjustable saddles on the bridge, you're out of luck here, and you'll need to get the intonation checked by a pro. If you have, however...

Change your strings, stretch them in and wait until they've settled, then you can get to work. Using a tuner, get the guitar in tune as normal, then turn your attention to the 12th fret. Fret the note, and watch the needle: you're looking for the same tuning as the open string. If it's flat at the 12th fret, you need to tighten the horizontal screw on the string saddle to make the string's sounding length shorter. If the note is sharp, loosen the screw to make the string's length longer.

4**THE PROBLEM****2** **Signal keeps cutting out**

THE FIX First off, check your lead by holding one end while plugged into your amp (turn your volume down). If the break still occurs when you give the cable a waggle, then you have a dead wire. If not, the problem is in your guitar. Check that the jack-socket nut is tight and holding it in place: if not, tighten it up with pliers or a spanner. CruzTools makes the brilliant Guitar Jack And Pot tool, which will fit every fixing on your guitar.

Next, you need to look at the actual jack itself. Assuming your wiring is sound, the problem most likely lies in the terminals. The sprung steel can bend out of position over time, but it needs to be in contact with the tip and barrel of your cable for your signal to work. Plug the lead in and gently bend it back into position, so you get a tight fit when plugging in.

THE PROBLEM**3** **Controls crackle when turned**

THE FIX Your guitar's control 'pots' (short for potentiometers) are mechanical, and have a limited lifespan. However, before you change them, it's worth giving them a clean, as dust is often the crackly culprit. You'll need to get into the control cavity and locate the dodgy control. The metal casing for your control is exactly that – the hard work goes on inside, and that's what we need to clean. Take a look at the back of the pot, and you'll notice a small hole. Get a can of contact cleaner, attach the straw to the nozzle of the spray can and squirt it into the guts of the pot. Give the pot some vigorous turns for 10 seconds or so, and you'll hopefully find any dust has been dislodged. This can also work on crackly pickup switches.

THE PROBLEM**4** **Guitar buzzes when you take your hands off the strings**

THE FIX Every conductive component in an electric guitar needs to be earthed at a common point (usually to the back of a pot), including the strings.

One of the most common causes of an irritating earthing buzz can occur when the guitar's bridge isn't earthed properly. To find your earth wire, look inside your control cavity for a wire that disappears into the body (on a Les Paul-style guitar) or is attached to the bridge/vibrato. Bad soldering, botched modifications or just bad luck can mean that sometimes this wire gets dislodged, and when you touch your guitar strings, you earth the guitar, and the buzzing stops.

Check out the wire and reattach it if it's come off. If there's no obvious detachment, replace the wire.

5**THE PROBLEM****5** **Machineheads are rattling and guitar won't stay in tune**

THE FIX Loose machine heads can create a distracting rattling sound, and they can also allow your tuning to drift. To fix the problem, arm yourself with the appropriate screwdriver, and tighten the screws that hold the offending pegs onto the headstock.

If you're finding that the screws won't bite into the wood, you should remove the peg and glue some wood from a matchstick into the screw hole. Snap off any excess match, wait for the glue to set, and reattach the machinehead. Job's a good 'un, boss.

THE PROBLEM**6** **Guitar keeps picking up electrical interference**

THE FIX Noise and interference can be a big problem – particularly if you're using single coils. Unfortunately, lighting, wiring, and radio signals vary from location to location, so sometimes you might have to live with it. However, you can prep your guitar to avoid interference as much as possible.

Start by checking that everything is earthed properly, because if it isn't, this will introduce annoying buzzes. Keep your jack leads and patch cables as short as possible, too (more on that later). Finally, try shielding the inside of your control and pickup cavities (and underside of your scratchplate on a Strat). This involves using conductive paint or foil to line the inside of the cavities. You'll need to remove the pickups and controls first, but worth it, as it can be a brilliant noise-blocker!

Tips For Better Tone

MAKE YOUR GEAR SOUND BETTER TODAY!

ONCE YOU have the foundation, you can start to experiment with different gear to enhance your tone. Over the next few pages, we'll guide you through with tips and explanations of how to make your gear work for you!

Change your speakers

It's surprising how few of us pay attention to the speakers in our amp. They are, after all, the final and critical link between hearing your signal or not! There are hundreds of different speakers on the market, from companies such as Jensen, Eminence, Celestion, Electro-Voice and more, and which one will work best for you largely comes down to taste. When considering swapping your speakers, it's worth bearing a few things in mind:

POWER RATING

This is measured in watts, and needs to at least match the output of your amplifier, or you risk distorting or even destroying the speakers. If you're using multiple speakers, they should combine to match the output of your amp, so a 100-watt 2x12 combo would take two 50-watt speakers.

IMPEDANCE

Impedance is measured in ohms, and is something of a minefield. You need to make sure that you don't go lower than your amp's rated impedance for the number of speakers you're using (marked on the back). If you do, you'll send the amp's output transformer into meltdown and fry your amp.

EFFICIENCY

This relates to how well the speaker can transfer the signal coming from your amp into sound. Most speakers will have an efficiency rating in dB. It's typical to find speakers rated at around 90 to 100dB: the higher the rating, the more efficient it is, meaning it will sound comparatively louder.

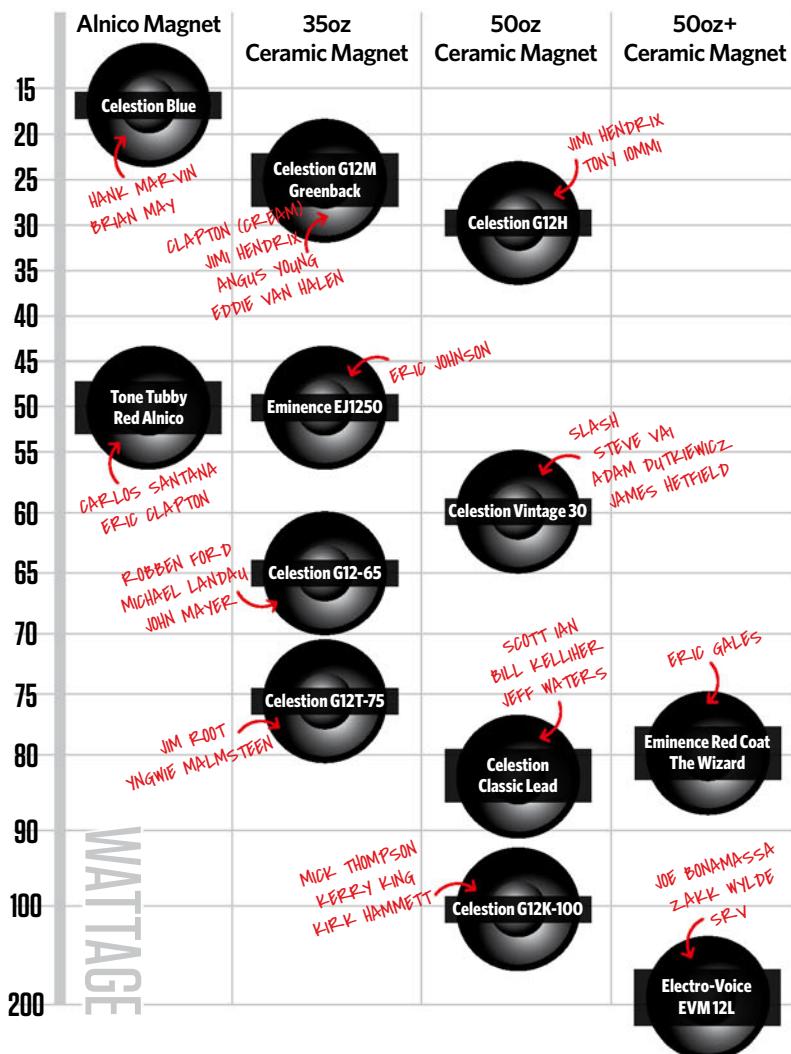
MAGNET

When it comes to classic guitar drivers, you're normally met with the option of alnico or ceramic. Classic amps from the 1950s and early 60s, by the likes of Fender Vox and Silvertone, made use of alnico-equipped speakers. However, as these got increasingly expensive to produce, ceramic magnets became the new standard. The Celestion G12M 'Greenback', G12H and Vintage 30 have become classic ceramic designs.



What they sound like

It's impossible to say how a speaker will sound in any given cab, but as a guide, we've compiled a chart of some of the most iconic speakers by their power rating, magnet type, and the players that used them.



KNOW YOUR VALVES

The sound of your valve amp isn't entirely governed by the glowing glass bulbs, but they do play a big part in shaping your tone.

EL34

The EL34 is the driving force behind the sound of a classic Marshall stack being pushed into overdrive. Often referred to as the 'British' sound, it'll produce a smooth, mid-rich and crunchy overdrive.

USED IN: Marshall 1959 Super Lead (after 1969), JCM800, Blackstar Series One

6V6

The 6V6 is another valve that's often used in lower-watt heads. It has a smoothed-out frequency range, lower output than a 6L6, and will add more compression to your sound at achievable volumes.

USED IN: Fender Champ (various models), Princeton Reverb, Deluxe Reverb & Tweed Tremolux

6L6

The 6L6 is the classic 'US' sound. Typically, a 6L6-powered amp will have increased low and high end, plus a greater headroom before breaking up. When a 6L6 does break up, you'll get aggressive thick distortion.

USED IN: Fender Bassman, Mesa/Boogie Dual Rectifier, Fender Hot Rod Deluxe

EL84

The sound of the EL84 is often typified by the timeless bell-like tone of the Vox AC30. The valve produces a smooth, chiming breakup and is ideal for use in smaller, low-wattage amps.

USED IN: Vox AC30, AC15; Fender Blues Junior; Orange Tiny Terror

IMPROVE YOUR TONE TIPS

Give your Strat a bridge tone pot!

This one's massive, and won't cost you a bean (assuming you own a soldering iron). Vintage-style Strats use the second tone pot for the middle pickup, but it's the bridge pickup that's often a bit shrill. It's easy to swap the tone control from middle to bridge by locating the wire connecting the second tone pot to the middle pickup on the selector switch. Move it one tag towards the middle of the switch, changing it from the middle to the bridge pickup.



Double up your amps

Do you love one channel on your amp, but feel it's lacking elsewhere? Maybe you're the only guitarist in your band, and you need to fill out the sound. Using two amps is actually pretty simple – with the help of an AB-Y box, you can switch between the two like massive distortion pedals, or use them both at the same time for ultimate power!

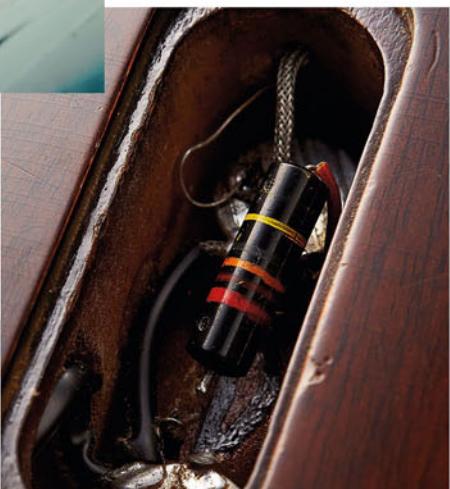


Use the right-size amp

Valve amps need to be working at their 'sweet spot' to sound best. Weirdly, for most Marshalls and Fenders, that seems to be anywhere from four to eight on the master, in our experience! If you find a valve amp sounds somehow 'cold', 'brittle' or harsh, it might be that it's just not turned up enough to be working properly. Joe Perry of Aerosmith, for example, uses small amps, suitably mic'd up, even for stadium gigs. We've seen Jeff Beck doing the same thing.

Lose some bass!

What sounds like the ultimate guitar tone when you're practising alone at home won't sound so good when you're playing as part of a band. You'll want to dial in some more bass when playing quietly than you will when you're playing loud. Too much bass – especially with lots of drive, and when using neck pickups – can mean a muddy, indistinct bottom end that clashes with the bass guitar and the kick drum.



Think about picks

They're the cheapest part of the tone equation after the hands you got for free, but picks have a profound effect on tone. Thin picks made of softer materials such as celluloid produce a flatter tone than stiff nylon picks, which can enhance snap and clarity. Thick picks are good for single-note speed and articulation, but can be awkward to strum with.



Don't forget the volume control!

Standard guitar volume controls cause a loss in treble when you turn them down. That's because, as a side effect of altering volume, they act as a low-pass filter. To get round this, you can do a treble-bleed modification. This is either a capacitor, or a resistor and a cap, wired, usually in parallel, to the pot. Popular combinations are a 150k resistor with a 0.001uf cap, or 100k/0.002uf. See www.guitarelectronics.com for an example!

El capacitor!

Key to your guitar's tone control is the capacitor. This controls the 'roll off' of tone when you turn it down. The lower the cap's value, measured in microfarads (uf), the less high end it will remove. So, if you reckon your guitar sounds too muddy and it is fitted with a 0.047uf cap, try fitting, for example, a 0.022uf or smaller cap instead. A lower value cap will also make more of the pot's turning range useful.

Active pickups? Up the voltage!

Many guitarists say that active pickups lack headroom and compress the signal too much. One common mod is to double the voltage by using two nine-volt batteries (instead of one) to power the pickups and double your headroom! EMG shows you how on its site, or you could try the EMG ES-18 external power supply. Tidy!



Tune up!

Do we really have to remind you that the first step to sounding great is to be in tune? You'd be surprised at the number of guitarists that still try to tune by ear and get it wrong. Tuning has come a long way, with products such as the all-six-strings-displaying TC Electronic PolyTune making it (almost) cool!

Or tune down...

If you thought drop-tunings were just for metal, think again. Certain tunings just sound better. Try taking everything down half a step from standard to E (E_b, A_b, D_b, G, B_b, E_b) for an instant tone boost à la Hendrix. Likewise, QOTSA, Mastodon and even Biffy Clyro have taken things low (C#) for a great modern-rock sound. Apply some fuzzy distortion, and you'll be like a stoner pied piper!



Simon Neil's Biffy Clyro use tunings as low as Drop B for low-slung riffery

Steel yourself

This one's for those who have Strats with a zinc, or leaded-steel vibrato block (ie, nearly all of them). Try swapping the standard vibrato block for a non-leaded steel replacement. If you play loud and live, you'll hear a noticeable improvement in the sustain, depth and focus of your tone. Make sure you get the right size for your guitar, though.

Play with your pots

You can improve a low- or mid-price guitar by replacing the standard potentiometers. Of key interest is the pots' resistance value: the cheaper they are, the more they tend to vary. A Strat can sound very different with 300k or 200k pots (the 'correct' value is 250k). Likewise, 300k and 500k pots sound quite different in a Les Paul or SG.



Dial in your settings

Mastering your amp's volume controls is one of the best ways to improve your tone. Here, two trusted tonemeisters tell us how to twiddle your knobs

CHRIS GEORGE, MARSHALL AMPLIFICATION

"If you're using an amp for the first time, set all the dials straight up in the 12 o'clock position so you're getting equal values of everything. From there, fine-tune the settings. Or try Zakk Wylde's method – max everything out, then take away the parts you don't want: but be careful!"



MATT SCHOFIELD

"You'll find that every pot has an obvious cusp point in its rotation – every single one – where it goes from not doing much, to where it really kicks in. So I sweep through the pots one by one and find those spots. All amps will do this – bass is especially easy to hear... nothing, nothing, nothing, then bang – there it is!"

"If you do that, the amp is set as evenly as it can be; not too trebly, not too dark. With everything set right on the cusp, you can push it over by digging in, or pull it back by playing softer. It makes everything really responsive and sensitive to what you do. The rest is up to you!"



Turn down the gain

Heavy distortion is a warm, comfortable place to be, and you might think it makes your tone massive. In fact, too much gain often equals too much compression, and that means nobody can hear you properly. It's why clean sounds often seem louder than dirty ones. Back off the gain, and your tone will sing out more clearly in the mix.



PICKUP TYPES

SINGLE COIL

The clue is in the name with this one: single coils have one coil, which gives the sharp, spiky tone that defines guitars like the Strat and Tele. If you're looking to upgrade yours, one thing to consider is whether you want traditional low-output tones or more modern, high-output sounds. Since single coils are more susceptible to noise than humbuckers, a variety of noiseless options exist, too, most notably from EMG and DiMarzio, which are worth seeking out.

TRY THESE:

- Fender Texas Special Strat Pickups
- Seymour Duncan Vintage Staggered SSL-1
- DiMarzio Area 61

HUMBUCKER

To combat interference, the humbucker is equipped with two coils that create a reverse polarity, which 'bucks' the hum. The first patented humbuckers were Gretsch's FilterTron, designed by Ray Butts, and Gibson's 'PAF', designed by Seth Lover, both of which were patented in 1959. The humbucker has evolved considerably since it was introduced, with huge output available from both passive and active 'buckers – again, think about whether you want a vintage or modern voicing.

TRY THESE:

- Seymour Duncan JB
- EMG 81
- Gibson BurstBucker 3

P-90

Designed by Gibson in 1946, the P-90 is commonly known as a soapbar because of its rectangular shape. Although it's technically a single coil, it has a larger output thanks to a wide coil that accentuates the mids. If your tone is getting lost in your band's mix, the P-90 is a great middle ground between a single coil and a humbucker, and is used by the likes of Billie Joe Armstrong, Pete Townshend, Neil Young and Tony Iommi among many others.

TRY THESE:

- Gibson P-90 'Super Vintage'
- DiMarzio Soapbar
- Bare Knuckle Supermassive 90

Myth

GETTING DOWN TO THE
TRUTH BEHIND THE SNAKE OIL

BUSTERS!

FROTHY LANGUAGE and artistic licence with the truth is never far from a discussion about tone. On one side of the table sits the tone snob, willing to argue to the death that they can hear the most incremental of differences in tone from the latest tone-hunting trends. On the other side sits the tonally ignorant my-guitar-I-found-in-a-skip-sounds-better-than-Hendrix's dullard. He's not bothered by his capacitors, he doesn't care about braiding, and he couldn't tell his arse from his EBow in a blind test.

We're here to strike a little balance. If the stench of bullshit is burning your nostrils, or you feel like your ear drums are made of cotton wool, read on as we attempt to find some truth...

True bypass is better than buffers

INCONCLUSIVE!

FOR True bypass simply means that when your pedal is switched off (bypassed), the signal doesn't run through the stomp's circuitry, thus avoiding any unwanted colouration along the way. It's a cleaner signal path from your guitar to your amplifier via your pedalboard.

AGAINST In a buffered pedal (Boss, for example), the signal from the input is given a helping hand by a small 'buffer' circuit, which maintains your signal's impedance and level. This means that any signal loss from cable runs is compensated for.

CONCLUSION We hope you brought a can opener, because we're cracking into a container of worms here. Let's start at the beginning. Every guitar lead introduces capacitance, which results in high-end signal loss. Double the length of your cable and you'll also double the capacitance – so by plugging in a 'board made of only true-bypass pedals, you'll be effectively joining a load of cables together.

Conversely, not all buffers are equal, and if you're using all-buffered bypass pedals by different brands, you run the risk of each one imparting different colourations into your signal.

In the real world, you're most likely going to be running a mixture of the two: some true bypass, and some buffered bypass. We'd say you're better off thinking about which effects, and how many, you're using, and then planning your 'board that way. For example, some overdrives/distortions will expect to see a signal direct from your pickups, while



If you're mixing true-bypass and buffered pedals, plan your 'board accordingly

some true-bypass delays/reverbs will cut the tails off your ambience the moment you stomp on the switch. We'd recommend having a buffered pedal – or standalone buffer – every three or four pedals on bigger 'boards, and using true-bypass loops where possible. In both instances, keep your cable runs short, and you'll be golden.

Heavier strings give you more tone

MYTH!

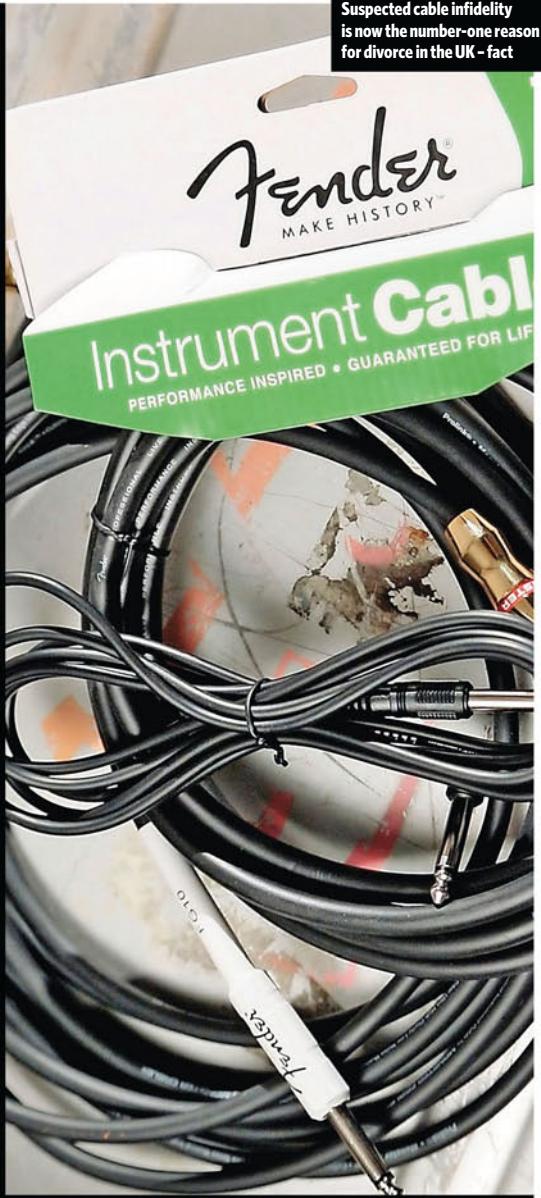
FOR Many guitarists will tell you that using heavier (thicker) strings will result in a heavier tone. The argument goes that a greater mass from the string feeds a greater vibration to your pickup, resulting in a fatter, richer output.

AGAINST Let's think about a couple of tonehounds for a second. Not just the guy down the pub that likes to chat tone, but proper, bona fide, I'd-cut-off-my-thumbs-just-to-sound-like-that tonehounds. Billy Gibbons, Brian May, Jimmy Page, Carlos Santana, even early Jeff Beck – all of these guitarists are well known for using 0.008s or 0.009s. Think their tone sucks? You suck.

CONCLUSION It's a tricky one, this. Your string gauge will feel different depending on the scale length of your guitar. A standard 'Gibson' length (24.75-inch) will require less tension to tune the strings to any given tuning than a longer 'Fender' scale



(25.5-inch). Tension will govern the amount of vibration on the string, how easy it is to bend or change the pitch with picking, and how much resistance is required to fret notes. All of these things affect the way you play, and it's getting them right that will have the most bearing on your overall tone. Fitting light strings to a guitar that's set up for a heavier gauge means you could encounter buzz from the nut or fretboard, and you'll probably find your pickup height will need adjusting: all causes of poor tone. We'd wager that paying more attention to a comfortable/stable string tension, proper guitar setup and choice of string material will have as much (or greater) effect on your tone.



Suspected cable infidelity is now the number-one reason for divorce in the UK – fact

Pedals sound different with dying batteries

TRUE!

FOR "I plugged my pedal in, and right before the battery died, it sounded better than normal". These words have been written hundreds of times on internet forums, and in some cases, are true. Some analogue pedals can still function with less than nine volts, and often sound 'warmer' than when powered from a power supply or fresh battery.

AGAINST Bollocks. Does your iPod sound better when the battery has nearly run out? Can you even hear the difference between a dying battery and a fresh one in the context of a gig? Surely, if it's about to run out, it could stop working at any second?



CONCLUSION We're not ones for hyper-bull-e (geddit?) here at TG, but this is technically true. As the voltage in the battery runs low, it starves the pedal of power, but can still supply enough for it to run. Common side effects of this include less treble and a 'smoother' sound, but all of this comes with a caveat: it's only true of analogue pedals. Try it with a digital pedal, and you'll be met with silence.

Whether or not the effect actually sounds better is a totally subjective call. You may or may not prefer the sound: it's completely unpredictable, and you risk your sound cutting out at crucial moments. Products such as the Beavis Audio Devolt allow you to starve your pedal of juice, and Electro-Harmonix's Germanium Overdrive and Germanium 4 Big Muff Pi have a 'Volts' control to do the same thing. And legendary Texan tonehound and bluesman Eric Johnson once claimed he could hear the difference between battery brands!

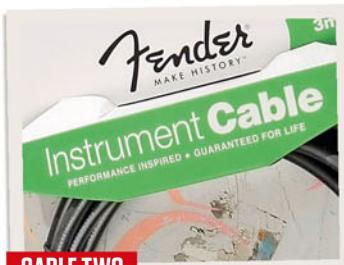
Expensive cables are better than cheap ones...

This debate is the stuff of all-out audiophile warfare. Every guitar player needs a cable or five, but what's the difference between the free one that came with your guitar and the expensive one that your mate bought?

We're not sure we can tackle this in one simple answer, so we've decided to put some to the test! ►

**CABLE ONE**

This fine specimen is familiar to all. It's the lead that came free with your guitar, the one that you used until it broke and then put in a box somewhere and pull out for 'special' occasions. It's thin, and you can't replace the jacks, because they're moulded on.

**CABLE TWO**

This is the all-rounder, the £20-ish functional workhorse that has seen you through numerous gigs and recording sessions. It's sturdy, with a pretty thick outer sleeve and the plugs are replaceable. It even came wrapped in nice card packaging with some info you never read.

**CABLE THREE**

Our third cable is an example of an expensive premium cable. It promises better isolation of magnetic fields (interference), fancy wound cable to improve phase/midrange signal, 24K gold plugs and multiple insulation technologies to improve handling noise. It costs about £50, and is longer than the other cables, as we want to see how much of an impact capacitance can have.

Cables

THE TG TEST

We'll be checking our cables in two main areas: sound quality and durability. Here's what we'll be looking for

SOUND QUALITY

The main thing you're looking out for is the dreaded C-word: capacitance. Any cable will introduce a certain amount, and the effect is akin to your tone control. In basic terms, the longer the cable, the more capacitance it will introduce, and the more high end you'll lose. It's not just the one cable though; every patch lead you introduce will add to it, so clearly, it pays to keep your cable runs as short as possible. It's worth noting that some players actually like the effect of capacitance.

DURABILITY

Jack leads have a tough life – they get knotted up, kicked around stage and trodden on. Then, at the end of the night, your drummer starts coiling it tightly around his elbow, risking breaking the internal wire, weakening connections and putting strain on the jack plugs. You want a lead that can survive these things, but ultimately, no cables are indestructible. We'll be rigorously punishing our cables, to see how they stand up to stress.

SOUND TEST

Our first test is a pure reference sound test. We need to know how our leads sound before we start testing them properly. We're playing through our Vox AC15 amp. The tone and volume controls on both guitar and amplifier are set the same throughout, so the only variable in play is the cables.

THE RESULT To our ears, the budget and mid-priced cables sounded almost the same, but the premium cable had slightly less treble than the other two. Now, do remember our premium cable is longer than the other two, to demonstrate the effects of capacitance on your tone from longer cables, rendering this a fairly even result in real terms. What this does mean is that you don't necessarily have to rule out using a budget- or mid-priced cable on pure sonic terms.

INTERFERENCE TEST

This is also a sound test, of sorts. Nothing will get sound engineers riled like a mobile-phone signal interfering in the PA. We want to know which of our three cables, if any, picks up most noise from a ringing mobile phone. We wrapped the phone in the cable and called it, with the end of the cable plugged into our DAW.

THE RESULT The mid-priced cable had some general background noise, followed by a peak as the phone rang. The premium cable was quieter in terms of background noise, but louder when the phone rang, probably due to the longer cable acting as a more efficient antenna.

Finally, and quite, amazingly, the budget cable not only picked up signal noise, it also acted microphonically, picking up the vibration and ring tone of the phone. This cable can literally transfer the sound of you touching it, to your amplifier. Not good!



There's a guitar legend on the 'phone, telling you to buy a curly cable like his

KNOTTING TEST

Cables have magical abilities to tie themselves in knots as soon as you turn your back, in some cases, breaking the wires internally and causing the cable to cut out intermittently when you move it. So, simulating a busy stage or rehearsal room, we wanted to know if our three leads would survive being knotted and pulled tight.

THE RESULT As you might expect – given how frequently your cables knot up – knotting did nothing to any of our cables. We'll get a little more heavy handed, but next, it's beer time...

BEER-SOAKING TEST

Let's face it, most gigs take place in bars, pubs, clubs and at parties. Because spilled beer could pose a serious risk to your gear, we thought we should test our cables to see which is most beer-proof. All we need is a bucket... and some of the finest lager money can buy for £2. After a good soaking in lager, we gave our cables a few minutes to dry out.

THE RESULT No change. While the beer soaking could prove problematic over a period of time (rusting the terminals on your cable), as long as you dry your lead properly, you shouldn't have a big problem.



BLUNT TRAUMA TEST



Angry Bird: TG's music editor finally loses it with those tardy contributors

Right. This is where things get serious. It's time to see how the jack plugs on our cables survive the impact of the blunt end of a rather heavy axe.

Each cable was held in place with a staple (without damaging the cable), before we dropped the back of an axe on the same part of each plug.

THE RESULT The budget cable had taken some damage and split, but it is still worked and was totally usable.

The mid-priced cable fared less well. And, as you can hear on our video, there is significant damage - the treble frequencies are lost. Meanwhile, there was superficial damage on the metal plug of the premium lead; it's slightly misshapen; but as you can hear, it still worked fine.



The premium cable was the only one in our sample to survive the snap test

SNAP TEST

Next, we wanted to see how our cables stand up to the might of TG's music editor, Chris Bird. More specifically, whether he could snap the cables by wrapping them around a metal bar he was standing on, while pulling as hard as he could.

THE RESULT The budget cable snapped easily, crashing out of our test. Likewise, as Chris yanked the mid-priced cable, the internal wires snapped, even though the sheath was stretchy enough to hold its shape. The premium cable remained unharmed. We suspect that the internal copper braiding makes this kind of cable pretty much unsnappable; certainly under normal use.



EXTREME HEAT TEST

Stage lights generate huge amounts of heat. You only need to lay your cable over a floor-mounted lamp for a couple of minutes and you'll see smoke. We set up our old studio lamp (outside, in case of fire!) to see how the last cable in the contest handles the heat after a few minutes. It's pretty burnt, but despite the beating it's taken, the premium lead is still working. Here are the final scores.

THE TG TEST	BUDGET CABLE	MID-PRICE CABLE	PREMIUM CABLE
SOUND TEST	1	1	1
INTERFERENCE TEST	0	1.5	1.5
KNOTTING TEST	1	1	1
BEER TEST	1	1	1
IMPACT TEST	1	0.5	1.5
SNAP TEST	0	1	2
BURN TEST	-	-	1
TOTALS	4	9	9

Conclusion



With only one cable left in the contest, there's one clear winner. We were impressed that our premium cable still worked after this, to be honest. Rounding up the scores, it seems that you get what you pay for. The budget lead you received with your guitar being more fragile and prone to noise, whereas a good premium lead is almost unbreakable under normal use. But, certainly for home use and regular gigging, there's a lot to be said for mid-priced and budget leads, too. Our advice? Get the best cable you can afford, audition it for sound quality first, and look after it!

CABLE JARGON EXPLAINED!

JACK PLUG

The bit that you actually plug into your guitar. Don't bother with gold-plated plugs unless the socket they're going into is also plated. Only bats can hear the difference.

STRAIN RELIEF

This is a collar that grips the cable by the jack plug. Without it, you're relying on the soldered connections to hold the whole thing together - eventually, it'll break.

OXYGEN-FREE

Forget about sonic benefits: oxygen-free cable will prevent the wires inside from rotting, meaning it'll last longer.

DIRECTIONAL CABLE

A cable with inherent benefits when the signal flows in a certain direction. Printed arrows determine which end goes to your guitar, and which end goes to your amp. Theoretically true, but years of standing next to amps and cymbals mean that we can't hear it above the singer's whining.

LIFETIME GUARANTEE

An invitation extended by nearly every cable manufacturer to replace the lead in the instance of it breaking. Someone, somewhere made use of it once. He wasn't available for comment.



MOVING UP

Since forming The Temperance Movement in 2011, one-time session sloggers Luke Potashnick and Paul Sayer have finally broken through – on their own terms

Words: Henry Yates

We're not gonna lie to you. The modern music industry is a cut-throat, dog-eat-dog bearpit, where good bands are left to die on hillsides while One Direction blow their noses on ill-gotten fivers.

And yet, just occasionally, there's a glimmer of karma. Take the case of The Temperance Movement. Formed in 2011 by red-raw Glaswegian vocalist Phil Campbell and former session guitarists Luke Potashnick and Paul Sayer, this was no band of hot-panted spring chickens, voted to overnight success by the nation's housewives. It was a proper, old-school, dues-paying British rock band, whose 30-something members had slogged at the circuit's sharp end for years before scraping together the cash to record their debut.

Last September – not before time – came the payback, as *The Temperance Movement* was

released to rave reviews, and *Classic Rock* crowned them Best New Band at the mag's 2013 awards show. They might be named after militant teetotalism, but after the six months this band has just had, no wonder the champagne is flowing...

Everyone else loves the debut album – how about you?

Paul Sayer: “[deadpan] I absolutely hate it. It’s my biggest regret of last year. Nah, I love it. Without wanting to sound too dramatic, when we got together and wrote these songs, it felt like a redemption. We’d all been searching for this band. We’d done other stuff, and it hadn’t worked out, in all these different incarnations, but when the five of us got together, that was it.”

Luke Potashnick: “The album feels raw and honest, and that, for me, has been missing in rock ‘n’ roll for God knows how many years. I think people can hear how into it we are.”

Are you acting like rock-star divas yet?

Paul: “Not quite yet. I’m saving that for album two, then I’m gonna pull out some real stonkers. A guitar-shaped swimming pool might be a little bit difficult in my back garden, but maybe a guitar-shaped paddling pool...?”

You’ve paid your dues, haven’t you?

Luke: “Oh yeah. There have been times our splitter van broke down on the autobahn. We’ve had nights with all five of us sleeping in one room. The mad thing is that it’s only been three years as The Temperance Movement, but this isn’t anybody’s first time. We’ve all been around the block for about 20 years, and I think that’s keeping us level-headed, whereas so many bands get to this stage and start hemorrhaging money.”

Paul: “At the start of 2013, we were playing to 150 people at the Water Rats. Nine months later, we were playing to 1,500 people at Koko.



So it's taken a long time to get to this point, but as a band, it's been no time at all."

You're both ex-session men. What's that really like for a guitarist?

Luke: "I recorded with people like Cat Stevens, and played on the Jason Mraz record, *We Sing, We Dance, We Steal Things*. I played with Katie Melua for a long time. When I was

"It was three takes a song, then move on... no overdubs"

younger, I just wanted to get up and play in different situations and pull it off. But I got to the stage where I wasn't necessarily making the music I wanted to anymore."

Paul: "With session work, there's rarely another guitar player, and live, you're usually combining three guitar parts from the record into one. But the biggest challenge is tailoring yourself to the gig. Some people want you to be über-creative. Others want you to play exactly the same every night, which is a challenge if you're on tour for three months. Some guys love being a session guitarist: that's what they were born to do. Other people, they have a creative itch that isn't being scratched. That was definitely the case with me."

So let's talk about the debut album...

Paul: "We'd written 16 songs. Then we booked four days at a studio called The Fish Factory. It's a bit rough round the edges, but it's got an awesome-sounding room and a great vintage desk and 16-track tape machine. Four days was all we could afford when we clubbed together our cash. We didn't have a label, management or a live agent. We were literally just another new band, and there are so many out there."

Luke: "The Fish Factory is quite grimy and not set up totally right, so it makes you go for sounds and playing you wouldn't get in a traditional, immaculate studio. Everything went down live. We didn't have time to do overdubs, even if we'd wanted to. It was three takes a song, then move on, so we really had to have our shit together."

Paul: "We were kinda feeling the pressure with *Serenity*, because it was the last song and we knew we were about to get kicked out of the studio!"

How does the guitar dynamic work between you?

Paul: "Very naturally. There's rarely a conversation about who's going to play what. It's all instinctive, and we just weave our way around. One of the big things is that we've grown up listening to the same records [see *Under The Influence*] and that's found its way into us. When we first started playing together, it was all about the interplay. You can't have an ego. That's why it works. I love listening to Luke solo just as much as I love playing them."

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Luke and Paul explain more about the guitarists who move them...



Luke: "Growing up, I was listening to a lot of British 'blues explosion' guitarists, like Eric Clapton. I also loved the more 'songwriterly' stage he had in the 70s. Peter Green, I love massively. Mick Taylor. Ronnie Wood, especially in The Faces. And then, I remember going to see the Black Crowes with Marc Ford on guitar, which was probably the most faultless gig of guitar-playing I've ever seen."

Paul: "In my early playing years, I went through a massive Clapton phase, then a Hendrix phase, then a Gilmour phase. I love Lowell George from Little Feat, and I'm a massive Paul Kossoff fan. He attacked really hard, so you get this impression of a really bold Les Paul through a Marshall; if you listen, it's actually quite a clean sound. Way more than his tone, it was his phrasing, and the fact he was thinking about more than just playing a load of notes."



© REV/Graham Quick

Luke: "Obviously, there's all this talk among guitarists about Keef and Ronnie and their guitar weaving. Paul and I spent months just sat in a room getting to know each other's playing really well, so now, we've always got half an idea what the other might do and can react simultaneously. With a song like *Know For Sure*, where I'm playing slide and Paul is playing this detuned blues riff, it's hopefully much bigger than the sum of its pieces."

What sort of guitars do you like?

Luke: "I've always been interested in guitar sounds from the late 60s and early 70s, when the equipment was quite limited, and you'd just have a driven amp, then use the tone and volume controls on your guitar. On this album, it was mostly a '59 Les Paul Junior, a '64 Fender Jaguar and my '67 SG Standard. The frets on that one are really worn down, which meant I could play slide without a ridiculous action. For me, it's not so much the sound as how a guitar feels when you play it, and in turn, what that makes you play."

Paul: "I was playing my favourite early 70s Tele, which feels so natural it's almost like I haven't got anything in my hand. I've got other stuff, like my '63 Strat and Les Paul, but I'm into the idea of just having a couple of guitars and really knowing my way around their capabilities. It's easy to get caught up in what cable you're using, but it's all nonsense. There's been so many amazing recordings made with shit cables. It doesn't matter. No one cares."

How about your amps?

Luke: "Modern high-gain amps just don't move me, whereas those more classic sounds, they give me a feeling. That's what I'm always

after. Y'know, trying to move people, as opposed to making them say, 'Oh, that's a really refined guitar sound.' I'm pretty useless, and not much of a player, if I'm not digging the sound. It's very important, the ideas that sounds can make you channel. Paul and I were mainly using a Lazy J 20. It's this little tweed amp built by this guy down in Guildford [Jesse Hoff], but it just overdrives in a way I really like. Then Paul had his JMI amps, and I had a Cornell-Plexi 45/50 and a '65 Fender Deluxe Reverb. My sound is usually straight in, with an Xotic EP Booster on all the time."

"We went along thinking we might meet Jimmy Page..."

Sometimes, there's a bit of modulation from my Memory Man, or an Analog Man Fuzz Face."

Who else do you rate in British rock?

Luke: "We've bumped into The Virginmarys a lot on the road: they're a great band. I really like The Jim Jones Revue. I love the band Little Barrie, because it's coming from the 60s blues-guitar perspective, as opposed to a rock thing. Everyone tries to pigeonhole bands, but I definitely feel we're more of a soul-blues rock 'n' roll band, as opposed to just a rock band."

Can you turn a new generation onto this 'classic' music?

Luke: "I remember times when I'd go and see a band like The Black Crowes, and come out feeling like it was the closest I'd ever got to

church. If we can touch that feeling with people who come to our gigs, I'll be a happy man. I get a real kick when a 17-year-old guy or girl comes up after a gig, and they're loving it, and start reeling off bands you also love."

So it's all working out. Where do you go from here?

Paul: "We're going to write some new songs – but who knows what's going to come out of us, creatively?"

Luke: "We've got to keep working. We're still driving ourselves in the van, loading gear every night. People say you can't do it the old-fashioned way anymore, but I guess we have. We played over a hundred gigs last year, to anything from 30 people to 1,800 people. I hope we continue to pay our dues,

because I think that's the reason it's going okay. We're certainly not rock stars yet. If anyone started acting like that, we'd bring them hurtling back to earth."

Finally, how did you celebrate winning that Classic Rock award?

Luke: "We never expected to win. We just went along thinking it might be fun, and we'd get to meet Jimmy Page. It was a fairly heavy night."

Paul: "I got very drunk. I know it's a cliché, but we really didn't think we'd win it... So much so, that when it came to our award, Phil was in the toilet!" ●

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SONIC YOUTH

First they took Wembley,
then they took the charts –
You Me At Six take time out
from partying to tell us the
story behind their stunning
number-one album...

Words: Matthew Parker Photography: Adam Gasson



On the 8 December 2012, Surrey five-piece You Me At Six headlined Wembley Arena – the final date in their *Sinners Never Sleep* album cycle. It was the crowning achievement of their seven years as a band, but as the crowds parted the question remained... What next? Even the largest contemporary bands don't dare to dream far beyond Wembley and the top 10. Crucially, though, You Me At Six don't think in terms of don'ts. And it's a good thing, too: young UK rock groups don't headline the Astoria as an unsigned band. They don't crash into the top 30 with an indie-released debut album. And they don't have three gold records before they're 25... But that's not stopped You Me At Six from doing all of the above.

So how do you top that? Well, returning with a number-one record in *Cavalier Youth* is a good start. We met up with the guitarists at YMAs's London label HQ the day after their chart victory and found the place in full party mode. Fortunately, Max and Chris opted to share the afternoon (and a few beers) with TG to recount their six-string success story...

You had your first number-one album last night. How did you celebrate?

Max: "Well, I was quite a wet boy! I had a beer with my parents and they cracked open a bottle of champagne. Then I had a roast dinner and we all went out to the pub."

Chris: "I may have had some midday pub action – a few pints of Peroni and some chips

"I really wanted to show off our guitar skills on this album"

– and then I'm off on holiday, so I was packing my suitcase!"

What were your aspirations when the band formed eight years ago?

Chris: "We didn't have any!"

Max: "No, it was just fun. All of our friends would go down to the same venues every week. Guildford Backline was basically a hub for us when we were growing up because you could put on your own gigs there. You'd get between 200 and 500 people in this really small venue, all just having a good time."

Chris: "Half the people there were in bands as well – so we'd be taking turns to play each week. We had no expectations, but people started coming from further afield to see us, and it went from there."

Who were your guitar influences back then?

Max: "For me, I grew up on a lot of Nirvana and Blink-182. It was more or less Kurt Cobain



Max's prized axe is a Wine Red Gibson Les Paul Custom from 1976

and Tom DeLonge that I was looking up to. I loved how simple, but hard-hitting Kurt Cobain could be. And then Tom DeLonge was the pop-punk king of guitar."

Chris: "Mine was very blues-based, really. My dad was a guitarist, so he would always be sat with an acoustic playing John Lee Hooker. Then my cousin, who is probably one of my biggest guitar influences, was always big on blues. Then, from there, I sort of branched off into Tom Morello territory, and Mike Einziger of Incubus."

Were you conscious of a need to mature as players and writers on the new record?

Chris: "There's obviously a mission: to write a better album than your last one – even if it's just us personally that thinks it's better – but for me, it's just us writing songs for ourselves."

Max: "I really wanted to show off our guitar skills on this CD. I think it kind of hit home to me when I was watching a Parkway Drive DVD, and the whole crowd was just singing the riff. I was like, 'I want crowds to be doing that to our songs!' And that's why songs like *Cold Night*, *Hope For The Best* and *Room To Breathe* came out. I would almost start from the idea of humming it to myself and then put it on the guitar."

Neal Avron [Fallout Boy, Weezer] produced, why did you go with him?

Chris: "It was about having someone with a great track record and who we felt comfortable trusting with what we wanted to do. In the past we went with GGGarth Richardson and I was like, 'He recorded Rage,



BEST OF BRITISH

Three of 'Six's tips for the top

1. TWIN ATLANTIC

Chris: "They're always one of those bands that we toured with where you'd be in the crowd thinking, 'I don't want to play after this!' I could sit with Barry McKenna and just talk about pedals for three hours and, besides the people, I'm just a genuine fan."

2. CANTERBURY

Max: "They're one hell of a band and they keep getting thrown under the bus. They've never got to that next level and I want to seem them do it, because their guitar work is out of this world. Some of the stuff they put in, I'm like, 'I would never have thought of doing that!'"

3. ARCHITECTS

Max: "They're some of the best musicians I've ever met, technique-wise, and then songwriting-wise Tom Searle makes you go, 'Well, now my bowels have dropped out of my arse.' That's when you really know it's a great rock band, because you almost go 'Urrrrgh! This is not happening!'"





this is the shit! But when you think about it, for a band like us, it's not the best approach. So it was an executive decision that 'We can trust this guy and we get on with him like a house on fire.'

Where did you record the album?

Chris: "We did it in LA again. We went to NRG for drums, and after that, we went to Neal's studio, which is a big outhouse in his garden that he's turned into a studio."

Max: "It's called La Casita, which means 'little house' in Spanish."

Chris: "It's the only studio I've ever been in that you can see the day go by. It's a white room with these huge church-y windows on the side. For us, it really boosted morale to walk into a nice, sunny room in the morning."

Max: "It revived our recording dreams, especially after *Sinners Never Sleep*, which was such a tough album to record..."

What was so hard about recording *Sinners Never Sleep*?

Chris: "I just don't think that we gelled with the people we were working with and it was a dreary, dark room. I'd get there and be like, 'Let's record!' Six hours later, I'd still be waiting with my guitar plugged-in, and it would be like, 'Can we do something now?' Whereas Neal was like, 'Let's get in. Let's work!'"

Max: "On the last album, I'd come home at night and be like, 'Fuck this! We've paid a lot of money to be here and record an album and I'm not getting to do my work...' And that affects everybody. This time round, Neal understood us as people, he knew what we wanted to achieve and he doesn't fuck about."

What gear did you use in the sessions?

Chris: "It was different to what we were used to. Everyone we've recorded with in the past is very vintage gear-driven, but this time, when

I walked in, I was almost a bit disheartened. It was like, 'There's a Krank and a new Vox AC30 head!?' The only old thing was a Marshall JCM800, so everything seemed very tame at first, but when we actually started playing, it all sounded really sweet."

Max: "Chris also brought a really nice old Fender Deluxe Reverb over, and I brought over an Audio Kitchen amp. We're a UK rock band, so I thought, 'Why don't we promote some of these great UK companies?' So we took out a Big Chopper and we used that quite a lot and I got this Big Trees pedal, which is like a clean/distortion valve pedal. Then we varied tones from Vox to Marshall to an Orange AD30 and the Krank."

What were the main guitars you used when you were recording?

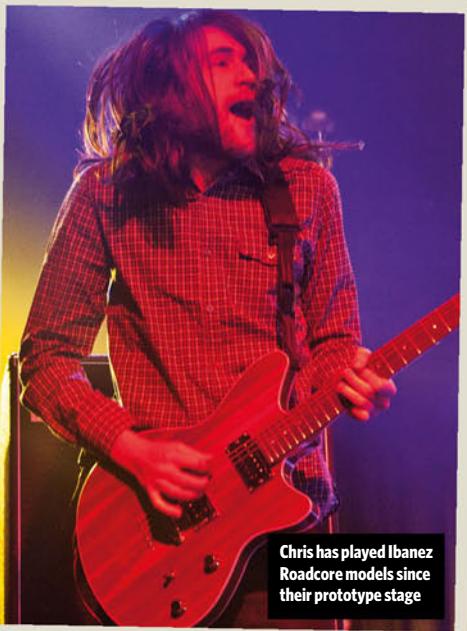
Max: "I took my '81 Les Paul Custom and my '85 ES-335 and a '77 SG. Then I actually bought a new 335 while we were over there. It was one of the Chris Cornell ES-335s with the Lollar pickups in it, and as soon as we plugged



it in, it was so different to my '85 335. It had more balls to it, and I wound up using that for half of the record."

Chris: "In the past, it's been Gibsons with big strings – beefy stuff. Whereas this time, the main guitar I used was my Custom Shop Strat, which is a '50s Relic – and it sounded amazing. I brought five guitars with me, including my signature Ibanez, which sounded great. Then my '56 Custom Shop Strat, a '63 Jazzmaster and I used one of Neal's Strats with two humbuckers and a coil-tap."

Max: "We also had Neal's Telecaster and a Danelectro Baritone."



Chris has played Ibanez Roadcore models since their prototype stage

Chris: "Again, it was a lot of new gear that I've always been scared of using because I'm really into older stuff, but it really pulled through."

Could you have made this record anywhere else?

Chris: "I'd say no. I wanted to record in the UK because we'd had such a bad experience last time, but I think the whole atmosphere and where we were recording and where we were living – you can really tell how positive it was by how the record feels."

Max: "I almost think it started from the minute we finished Reading and Leeds in 2012. We had our Wembley show and then we went to the Doghouse in Henley and spent five weeks in pre-production there, one week at a time. We'd left our management, we'd left our record label and it was like, 'Why are we doing this?' That really started the bonding in the band again. It was like, 'Let's just have some fun and be great mates.'"

Was the goal with this album always to go to number one?

Max: "There have been a few targets with this record and number one with *Cavalier Youth* was the first benchmark, but I'm not going to turn into Billy Big Bollocks because we've done



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Chris: "We've always used the Boss DD-20s, but I've also got an old Ibanez AD-80. It's a short delay because it's an old analogue pedal from the '80s, but the sound's great, so I use a DD-20 for all of the click-track stuff, and then something a bit warmer for the looser parts."

Max: "I was using the Roland Space Echo. I was introduced to them on *Sinners Never Sleep* and I was like a kid..."

Chris: "It was like, 'How fast can you break a Space Echo?!'"

Max: "It was a bit! Then I saw my friends The Skints use a Space Echo pedal [RE-20], so I got one, and that's how the riff in *Cold Night* came about."

it. We want to show why we're worthy of being where we are today – that we're not just a small rock band from Surrey anymore. We've been doing this for eight years."

Do you feel you've been overlooked in the past? Is this a vindication?

Chris: "Yeah, it's showing people that you can't ignore us anymore."

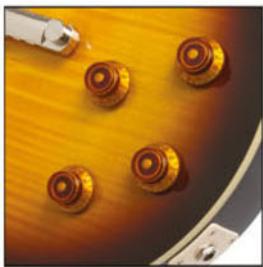
Max: "Bands like Muse and Biffy Clyro really hold the torch for UK rock acts. It's like, 'If they can do it, why can't others?' If you look at the best rock acts of all time, a fucking lot of them are from the UK, and it's about time there was a new wave internationally."

Chris: "I like being the underdog, though. I like seeing idiots walk around with huge egos after being on TV and they'll go play to 500 people. Then it's like, 'Ah, well, we're just going to do Wembley. See you in a bit!'" ●

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JOE SATRIANI

THE TECHNIQUES & TONES OF YOUR HEROES

IF we were to send one man into the furthest reaches of Andromeda to promote intergalactic harmony through the medium of guitar and teach the locals how to play, it'd be Joe Satriani. The official line is that Satriani is of Planet Earth – Westbury, New York (population 15,146) – but his mastery of his instrument appears to be informed by some sort of extraterrestrial wizardry; surely not of this earth. And given that he's has already taught Earth's greatest players – Steve Vai, Kirk Hammett, Andy Timmons and Alex Skolnick to name but a few – giving this gargantuan talent a crack at the aliens seems only fair.

Through 14 solo studio albums, he has demonstrated a wealth of technique, feel and imagination few could get close to. Satch is synonymous with Ibanez, playing his JS signature, jockeying its double-locking Edge tremolo for effect. He has used his signature JVM410HJS Marshall head live, an amp based on a modded Vintage Modern, but through the years he has enjoyed an omnivorous relationship with amps and effects. Joe Satriani shreds – his legato playing has such a liquid quality that it sounds effortless – but he transcends shred. He has toured with Jagger and played with Deep Purple. He even appeared on Crowded House's debut. Maybe he is human after all.

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JOE'S GIGBAG

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GET THE SOUND

JOE SATRIANI'S setup has differed over the years, with various rack effects, but his main guitar remains an Ibanez. Its flat neck profile and low action enable speedy legato and tapping passages, although these should be achievable on any guitar. A humbucker in bridge or neck position will give you a thicker sound, but if you don't have one, don't overcompensate with lots of distortion. For space-age sounds, a ping-pong delay set to three to four repeats will give a feeling of depth and help sustain the longer notes. It will also give you a great sound for the widdly tapping ideas.

AMP SETTINGS: OVERDRIVE CHANNEL



JOE'S PLAYING STYLE

Fire up your engines of creation and boogie like Satch as we look at Joe's space-age soloing skills

IN TERMS of his lead playing, Joe is known equally well for his tasteful blues improvising and silky sound as for his stellar modern legato, tapping and whammy-bar technique. His typical approach to legato and tapping using

pitch axis (essentially choosing a mode to match the chord extensions and root notes) is embodied by tracks such as *Satch Boogie*. More classic bluesy ideas can be heard in *Cool #9*, *New Blues* and *Three Sheets To The Wind*, and have a

listen to his latest album - 2013's *Unstoppable Momentum* - to see how he has extended these themes. While speed is the focus for some of the ideas, it's just as important to learn how to use the techniques in other key signatures.

DOUBLESTOP LEGATO TRACK 27

The challenge here is keeping your first finger on the 10th fret while executing the legato. This is a great workout for your fourth finger, so practise slowly.

BLUESY LICK TRACK 28

Am - A⁷ D/A Dm/A A⁵

TAB

BU ~~~~~

Joe's roots are in blues (he's a huge Hendrix fan), and our lick shows his unusual approach by adding C# and F# notes to the A minor pentatonic scale.

MIXOLYDIAN LEGATO TRACK 29

Musical score for guitar showing chords Am, A7, D/A, Dm/A, and A5 with corresponding TAB notation below.

Am: 12 measures. TAB: 11 12 11 0 9 11 9 0 7 9 7 0

A7: 12 measures. TAB: 5 7 5 0 4 5 4 0 2 3 2 0

D/A

Dm/A

A5: 2 measures. TAB: 2

This pull-off-to-open-strings idea is pure Satriani. The background chord is essentially an A5, which has an ambiguous tonality (ie, it's neither major nor minor). This means several A scales are open to you. We've used the A Mixolydian and natural minor scales.

EXOTIC LEGATO TRACK 30

This lick starts off with an exotic-sounding A Phrygian Dominant scale run (A B_b C# D E F G), which Joe is very fond of. Each phrase is a combination of legato (hammer-ons and pull-offs), plus slides to make the position changes easier.

TAPPING TRACK 31

We're in typical Satch territory here, with a repeating six-note phrase played at seven notes per beat, creating an unusual rhythm. Start off slowly and memorise the patterns of notes. Ideally, use your first, second and fourth fret-hand fingers throughout to maintain consistency and speed.

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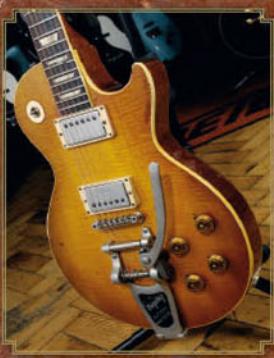
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GEAR REVIEW

JOE BONAMOYD' CUSTOM 24



PRS SE 'FLOYD' CUSTOM 24 £899

Lock up your vibratos: this SE is here for some intense whammy action

SINCE 2001, PRS's Korean-built SE series has been providing Paul Reed Smith's high-class instruments at mid-range prices. The SE 'Floyd' Custom 24 debuted alongside its American-made big brother at NAMM 2014, and if that big hunk of metal hadn't already given it away, the differentiator with this Custom is a Floyd Rose locking vibrato. The whole package doesn't look quite as outlandish as we'd expected, though – the well-proportioned

Vintage Bass combo fills the bridge and neck pickup cavities, and offers a wealth of classic sounds, thanks to a cunningly installed coil-split activated via a push/pull pot on the tone control. The Vintage Bass is warm and evocative, ushering in smooth octaves and open chords, while there's plenty of rock aggression available from the HFS. Kick in the coil-split and you get an increased treble spank, which is remarkably convincing for Strat-a-like tones, reinforcing the Custom's Gibson-

The locking vibrato makes for a surprisingly coherent fit

body and smooth curves fuse with the Floyd to form one seriously high-class rock machine.

The other specs of note are the finishes: there are seven of 'em, although Sapphire, Grey Black, Emerald Green, Amethyst, Black Cherry and Tobacco Sunburst are limited to a mere 50 models each in Europe. The Sapphire we have here makes us want to go for a dip in the lush ocean-blue lacquer – and with that Floyd Rose, diving is this guitar's speciality.

Sling the 'Floyd' Custom 24 round your shoulder, and your first instinct will be to hit a chord, grab that whammy bar and give it a good yank. We're no different, and this Floyd rose to the occasion, handling a wide array of dive bombs and Satriani-style vibrato histrionics with ease, never once threatening to slip out of tune. It's smooth all right, just like the rest of this guitar; from the endlessly playable Wide Thin neck to the PRS machineheads, the 'Floyd' Custom 24 is pure class.

The tones continue the playability's good work. The ever-popular SE HFS Treble and

meets-Fender ideals. Maybe the overdriven split-coil tones are a little overbearing when compared with real single coils, but really, that's splitting hairs. Whack on some distortion, and the 'Floyd' transforms into a roaring rock dragon, with enough 'bucker-loaded output to sustain your wildest lead-based fantasies.

We're running out of Best Buy badges to throw at the SE series. No matter what tweaks PRS makes, the Custom 24 remains a refined, classic design, from that lower cutaway carve to the tonesome pickups, and the locking vibrato makes for a surprisingly coherent fit. Usable for so much more than the rock and metal a Floyd Rose implies, the 'Floyd' Custom 24 is yet another addition to the PRS rack of greatest hits.

Michael Brown

FEATURES	★ ★ ★ ★
SOUND QUALITY	★ ★ ★ ★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★ ★ ★ ★
BUILD QUALITY	★ ★ ★ ★
USABILITY	★ ★ ★ ★
OVERALL RATING	★ ★ ★ ★



AT A GLANCE

BODY: Mahogany w/ flame maple veneered maple top

NECK: Mahogany, Wide Thin

SCALE: 635mm (25")

FINGERBOARD: Rosewood

FRETS: 24

PICKUPS: 1x SE HFS Treble (bridge), 1x SE Vintage Bass (neck)

CONTROLS: 1x volume, 1x tone w/ push/pull coil-split, 3-way blade pickup selector switch

HARDWARE: Floyd Rose 1000 Series locking vibrato, PRS tuners

LEFT-HANDED: No

FINISH: Amethyst, Vintage

Sunburst, Grey Black, Emerald Green, Black Cherry, Tobacco Sunburst, Sapphire (shown)

CONTACT: PRS Europe

01223 874301

www.prsguitars.com

PICKUPS

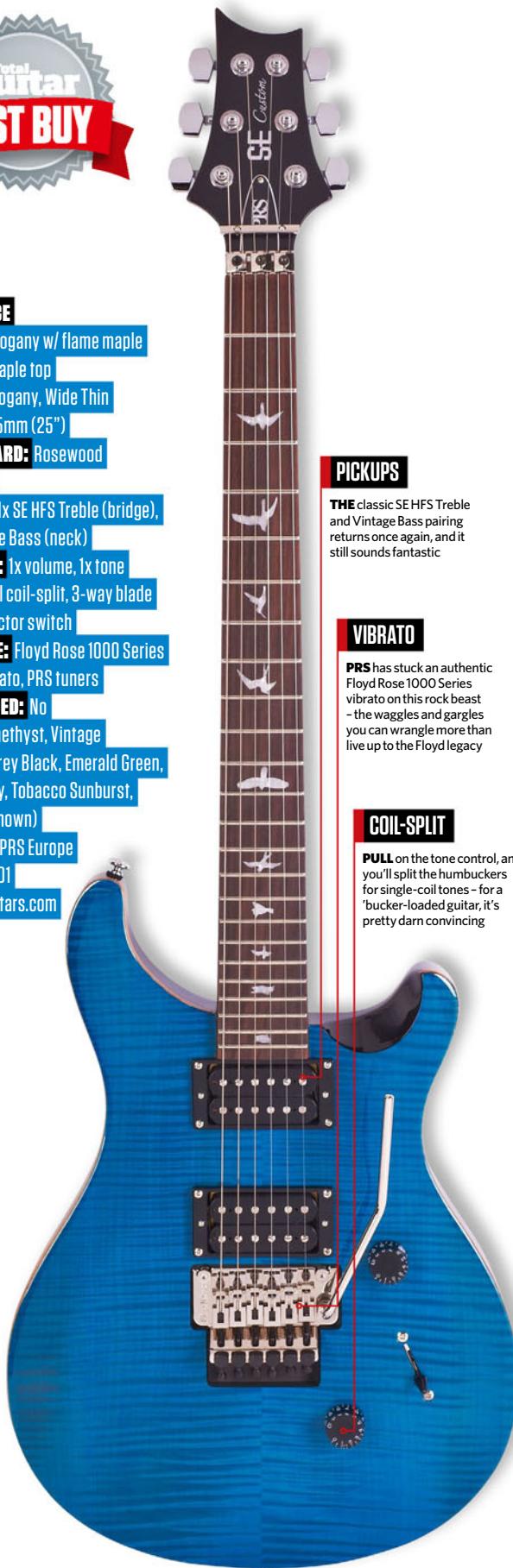
THE classic SE HFS Treble and Vintage Bass pairing returns once again, and it still sounds fantastic

VIBRATO

PRS has stuck an authentic Floyd Rose 1000 Series vibrato on this rock beast – the wiggles and gurgles you can wrangle more than live up to the Floyd legacy

COIL-SPLIT

PULL on the tone control, and you'll split the humbuckers for single-coil tones – for a 'bucker-loaded guitar, it's pretty darn convincing





SPEAKERS

A PAIR of Special Design 10-inch loudspeakers give the Vaporizer plenty of volume to cope with gigs, as well as for home or recording use

CONTROLS

THREE lab equipment-style knobs keep things simple, controlling volume, tone and reverb

CABINET

THE Vaporizer is a trapezoidal tone machine, and it sounds as cool as it looks

FENDER PAWN SHOP SPECIAL VAPORIZER £490

Another collectable has arrived from the Pawn Shop – or outer space...

THE Chinese-made Pawn Shop Special amps are inspired by late 1950s America, a time when the USA was crazy about anything to do with atoms and space travel, which was also the beginning of the electric guitar's golden era. The styling now known as 'Googie' was everywhere back then, so it's about time the Pawn Shop properly nailed that retro-futurist look – welcome to the twilight zone that is the Vaporizer.

Aside from the textured vinyl (applied so well it almost looks sprayed on), the first thing that grabs you about the Vaporizer is the *Jetsons*-esque trapezoidal cabinet. With an aluminium-effect control panel, silver-grey grille cloth and a way cool matching grab handle, the Vaporizer looks the part – remove the rear cover, though, and there's a thoroughly modern printed circuit layout with most of the electronics on two large boards.

The Vaporizer's controls have a couple of twists we don't recall seeing before. Two inputs labelled Bright and Normal feed controls for volume, tone and reverb. A pair of jewelled indicator lights tell you when the amp is on and when you engage the Vaporizer mode, which cuts the tone and volume controls from the circuit,

inputs give you a wide range of tones to play with – if you want to shatter glass at 50 paces, use the bright socket with a Telecaster... and wear ear protection. The normal input is more civilised and really flattened a Strat, yielding a tubular punch from the neck pickup, and a stinging treble from the bridge that made powerchords

– not for shy retiring types. The disembodied reverb-only signal is very cool, and even if you're not into surf it has loads of potential for special effects. With dual-10-inch speakers, it's capable of holding its own at a gig, and it's plenty loud enough to compete with an unmic'd drum kit.

The Vaporizer is about style as well as substance, and if you like the looks, the tones won't disappoint. The price is pretty reasonable as well, and if blue isn't your favourite colour, fret not – it also comes in red and green. Put on your best *Men In Black* suit and check it out – coming to a Fender dealer near you, soon.

Nick Guppy

The Vaporizer is about style as well as tone and substance

the amp is instantly catapulted to its maximum 12-watt output. The reverb level control links to a short-pan spring in the bottom of the cabinet; the trick here is that the reverb output is independent – turn down the volume control and the reverb signal remains.

The Vaporizer is a little noisy, but acceptable for home use and serious recording. Those two

explode with harmonics, like a Vibroverb on steroids.

As you up the volume, the output gets crunchier and louder, the best sounds occurring at around 70 per cent. Beyond this, it gets a little too squashy, compressed and flabby, more so when you engage the Vaporizer mode. This full-on sound is aggressive and very unforgiving

SUMMARY

FEATURES
SOUND QUALITY
VALUE FOR MONEY
BUILD QUALITY
USABILITY
OVERALL RATING



**CONTROLS**

LINE 6 has kept the amp's physical controls very simple, instead offering an easy-to-use app for tweaking, saving and downloading sounds

LOOKS

THOSE sleek futuristic lines might not look traditional, but you're bound to find a spot for them in your living room



LINE 6 AMPLIFI 150 £395

A gig-ready amp that also plays music in your living room

GREAT purveyor of modelling technology Line 6 is known for pushing the boundaries – and its latest product demonstrates that innovative streak, big time. While the company's claim to have reinvented the guitar amp may be a touch grandiose, it's certainly come up with something cross-genre and quite different: an amp designed for two very different roles... roles, however, that can be combined for extra practicality.

While it's perfectly proportioned and powered for onstage use, with 150 watts running into a 12-inch Celestion, the AMPLIFI 150 has extremely clean lines that wouldn't look out of place in any modern living room... and as well as being a guitar amp, the AMPLIFI 150 is also a stereo music player that has access to your music library, wirelessly streamed via Bluetooth and reproduced through full-range speakers – a pair each of tweeters and mid-bass drivers.

What this means is that you can listen to your favourite tracks and play along at the same time, with no compromise in the quality of either guitar sound or music reproduction – an ingeniously designed volume knob lets you set the blend between the two.

It's perfectly possible to use the AMPLIFI 150 without involving

training facilities, including half-speed playback, looping and automatic tone matching.

Using over 200 of Line 6's modelled sounds, presets in the AMPLIFI 150 are made up of a set signal chain: noise gate-wah-amp-cab-compressor-EQ-volume-modulation-delay-reverb. Of course, you can just have the amp

The most convenient way yet to play along with your music

any extra high-tech gear – it has four preset sounds onboard, with a standard array of gain and tone knobs plus controls for effects and reverb, but to unlock the full potential you need its accompanying AMPLIFI app, for iOS but not yet Android. This features a full editor and librarian for all of the amp's sounds, as well as a music player with phrase-

sound, and don't have to use every element in the chain. We found the iPad app very easy to use, creating tones that were immediately loaded into the AMPLIFI sitting across the room. You have the facility to not only create a whole library of your own tones but also use new ones from the Cloud, uploaded by the Line 6 community – when you fire up the music

SPEAKERS

THE AMPLIFI boasts two tweeters and two mid-bass drivers for playing your tunes, plus a 12-inch Celestion for your guitar tones

AT A GLANCE

TYPE:	Guitar combo/music player w/ Bluetooth
OUTPUT:	150W
MODELS:	200 amps and effects (70+ amps, 100+ effects and 20+ speaker cabs)
SPEAKER:	2x tweeters, 2x mid-bass drivers, 1x 12" Celestion custom guitar speaker
CONTROLS:	Drive, bass, mid, treble, effects, reverb, volume/blend, preset select switch, tap tempo switch
SOCKETS:	Input, headphone output, aux input, USB, FVB pedal port
WEIGHT:	17kg
DIMENSIONS:	[HxWxD] 575x240x415mm
CONTACT:	Line 6 01788 566566 www.line6.com

player and play a song, an online search starts automatically to find an appropriate tone.

In terms of sound, the AMPLIFI 150's music player is like a ghetto blaster on steroids, putting out enough volume to guarantee a visit from the environmental health officers in the wee small hours. As a guitar combo, it's plenty loud for gigging, and features a practical and very playable range of modelled amps. It's the combination of the two, though, that makes the AMPLIFI 150 such a potent force. We all love to play along with our favourite songs, and this is by far the most convenient way yet to do that.

Trevor Curwen

SUMMARY

FEATURES	★
SOUND QUALITY	★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★
BUILD QUALITY	★
USABILITY	★
OVERALL RATING	★★★★★



GIBSON 2014 ROUND-UP

The legendary guitar company celebrates its 120th birthday with a cavalcade of new models, including some fresh takes on old classics

GIBSON 120TH ANNIVERSARY



Words: Michael Brown | Photography: Jesse Wild

AFTER 120 years in the business, it's fair to say that Gibson knows a thing or two about guitar-making. So, for 2014, it's launched a whopping 29 new models, loaded with innovations. There are four new pickups and plenty of eye-catching nitrocellulose finishes, plus Graph Tech nuts, easy-grip knobs and cryogenically-treated frets for long-lasting playability. The latest Min-E-Tune robot tuning system also features heavily in the new line-up, and each guitar even carries a 120th Anniversary inlay at the 12th fret.

These three models are typical of the Gibson 2014 approach: the all-singing, all-dancing SG

Futura, the similarly able Les Paul Futura and the back-to-basics SG Special. All three guitars offer coil-splittable pickups, but the Futures pack an uncommon P-90 and humbucker combination with switchable 15db boost, while the SG Special sticks with the ol' faithful dual-'bucker format. As well as the finishes we have here, you can get the Futures in Pacific Blue, Brilliant Red, Champagne and Bullion Gold, while the SG Special also comes in Heritage Cherry, Desert Burst, Ebony, Fireburst and Walnut. So, with experimentation and tradition on display in equal measure, let's find out if 120 years of guitar building have been put to good use...

>>>



GIBSON 2014 SG FUTURA £799

Back to the Futura

THE Plum Insane finish won't be for everyone, but this SG has it where it counts: '60s slim-profile neck, classic double-cut body and a new P-90H Sidewinder/BurstBucker 3 humbucker configuration for tons of tones. That's aided by coil-splits accessed by pulling each pickup's volume knob, plus a 15db boost, powered by a nine-volt battery and activated via the lil' toggle on the scratchplate. Add in the Min-ETune's accessible open tunings, and you have a guitar that's kitted out for any tonal situation.

Get your hand around the Futura's svelte neck and it feels instantly familiar, while plugging in rewards you with bucketloads of classic bridge 'bucker SG tones, from liquid AC/DC leads to

writhing Sabbath riffage. The neck P-90-sized humbucker, though, paints a darker picture than your usual SG 'bucker. Played clean, it's difficult to muster enough treble to cut through a live mix, but that's where the Futura's extra tonal tweaks come in handy.

The individual coil-splits yield realistic single-coil sounds that inject a healthy amount of treble into each pickup. There's considerable mileage to be had from the boost, too – for heavier tones it proves incredibly addictive, beefing up both pickups. It might be a bit much for some players, but you could say the same about the robot tuning and flash finishes – if you want an SG that stands out from the crowd, the Futura is the answer.

GIBSON 2014 LES PAUL FUTURA £879

A single-cut with tons of tonal potential

RUN your hands over the LP Futura's sultry curves and you're bound to pick up on the rock-solid build quality: the jacks, pots and switches feel reassuringly robust, as does the fretwork on the smooth rosewood fingerboard. It all makes for a supremely confident playing experience as you traverse the LP Futura's myriad coil-split and boost options, as well as its smoothly finished D-shaped neck.

Like the SG Futura, the LP's Sidewinder P-90H can seem a little gloomy in comparison with a ballsy neck humbucker. It's great for chimy, crunchy chords, though, and in combination with the coil-split, produces snappy sounds that you'd never expect from a Les Paul. However, like its SG brother, the LP Futura is

at its best when it's firing on all cylinders on the bridge humbucker – the tones are brash, obnoxious and in your face; flick the boost switch and you'll send any amp or overdrive pedal into meltdown, with a huge increase in volume and gain. The boost helps to bring the P-90 out of its shell, too, and there are some intriguing mixes of boosts and splits to be had.

Of course, we can't neglect the Min-ETune, which is as effortless as ever. Perfecting standard tuning is as easy as pressing the power button, strumming the strings and letting the tuners do their robot thang, while there are 12 alternate tunings available at the touch of a button. Combine this cutting-edge tech with the old-school playability, and you have yourself a modern-day tone machine.





Total
Guitar
BEST BUY

GIBSON 2014 SG SPECIAL £699

The rock solidbody with Special forces

THE traditionalists among you will be relieved to see that Gibson's 2014 SG Special features the standard dual-humbucker pickup line-up, and does away with the Min-E-Tune and boost systems. It holds on to the discreet coil-split options, though, so single-coil tones are still within reach. What's more, the '60s slim-profile neck is practically identical to the Futura's, which makes the 24-fret fingerboard just as classic and satisfying to speed across, with easy chording and soloing across the 'board.

Although the SG Special has one of the lower price tags among its 2014 brethren, the tones emitting from its pair of 490 humbuckers are anything but cheap – these are rich, meaty aggressors, and

they're here to rock. Whack up the amp gain and strum a few open chords using the bridge 'bucker, and you'll hear echoes of countless SG legends. Given a bit of drive and a few tweaks of the flexible tone control, the neck humbucker hones in on Clapton's legendary 'woman' tone, while fans of clean sounds will love the way the coil-split lessens the low-end and ups the sparkle, providing a lower yet sweeter output.

Of these three 2014 Gibsons, the SG Special has perhaps the best combination of tradition and innovation, with tweaks in all the right places, and all the sounds you want from an SG – and more besides. Offering superb value, classic rock tones and modern versatility, this SG is special indeed.

Gibson 2014 SG Futura

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Mahogany

NECK: Maple

SCALE: 628mm (24.75")

FINGERBOARD: Rosewood

FRETS: 24

PICKUPS: 1x BurstBucker 3 (bridge),
1x P-90H Sidewinder (neck)

CONTROLS: 2x volume w/ push/pull
coil-split, 2x tone, 3-way toggle pickup
selector switch, boost switch

HARDWARE: Graph Tech nut,
Tune-O-Matic bridge w/ stopbar,
Min-E-Tune w/ vintage-style buttons

LEFT-HANDED: Yes

FINISH: Plum Insane Fade (shown),
see intro for other finishes

CONTACT: Gibson www.gibson.com



Gibson 2014 Les Paul Futura

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Mahogany w/ maple top

NECK: Maple

SCALE: 628mm (24.75")

FINGERBOARD: Rosewood

FRETS: 22

PICKUPS: 1x BurstBucker 3 (bridge),
1x P-90H Sidewinder (neck)

CONTROLS: 2x volume w/ push/pull
coil-split, 1x neck tone w/ push/pull
boost, 1x bridge tone, 3-way toggle
pickup selector switch

HARDWARE: Graph Tech nut,
Tune-O-Matic bridge w/ stopbar,
Min-E-Tune w/ vintage-style buttons

LEFT-HANDED: Yes

FINISH: Inverness Green (shown),
see intro for other finishes



Gibson 2014 SG Special

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Mahogany

NECK: Maple

SCALE: 628mm (24.75")

FINGERBOARD: Rosewood

FRETS: 24

PICKUPS: 1x 490T (bridge),
1x 490R (neck)

CONTROLS: 2x volume w/ push/pull
coil-split, 2x tone, 3-way toggle
pickup selector switch

HARDWARE: Graph Tech nut,
Tune-O-Matic bridge w/ stopbar,
vintage tuners w/ pearloid buttons

LEFT-HANDED: Yes

FINISH: Butterscotch (shown),
see intro for other finishes



SUMMARY	FEATURES	SOUND QUALITY	VALUE FOR MONEY	BUILD QUALITY	PLAYABILITY	OVERALL RATING
						★★★★★
						★★★★★
						★★★★★
						★★★★★

SUMMARY	FEATURES	SOUND QUALITY	VALUE FOR MONEY	BUILD QUALITY	PLAYABILITY	OVERALL RATING
						★★★★★
						★★★★★
						★★★★★
						★★★★★

SUMMARY	FEATURES	SOUND QUALITY	VALUE FOR MONEY	BUILD QUALITY	PLAYABILITY	OVERALL RATING
						★★★★★
						★★★★★
						★★★★★
						★★★★★

ARIA 511 £499

This new dreadnought gatecrashes the all-solid-wood-yet-affordable party

THE trend for realistically priced solid-wood guitars has to be applauded. Increasingly, manufacturers are making genuine attempts to produce quality instruments with longevity and affordability in mind, not to mention sound. Now, Aria has entered the market with an all-solid-wood dreadnought and an OM, with a choice of mahogany (£499) or rosewood (£539) back and sides, targeting the serious student market with enticing attention to detail and tempting prices, which include a decent hard case.

Here we have the mahogany 511 dreadnought, which features a good-looking Sitka spruce top,

bright to mellow. Intonation is accurate enough to allow fretting up at the dusty end, alongside ringing open strings.

Detuning to low C, the 511 possesses a convincing sound for fingerpicked parts and retains its reliable intonation. The compensated bone saddle and nut are rarely seen at this price, and they pay off – this guitar definitely punches above its price tag. Not all dreadnoughts are quite as comfortable picked as they are strummed. But that's where this one scores, too: strum it for big and bold rhythm parts; fingerpick it to reveal a more delicate character.

It's not all good, though. There is a buzz or two while using a capo,

The 511 is convincing: it stands up to scrutiny where it counts

paired here with solid Indonesian mahogany back and sides, all coated with a high-gloss finish that really brings out the figure of the woods. From the quarter-sawn internal 'X' bracing to the eye-catching black and white herringbone purfling and rosette, this guitar certainly looks the part – but how does it play?

Well, the neck feels sturdy, when the profile has a slightly deeper U shape than you might expect. It really responds to energy: while fingerpicking, you can dig right in and the string spacing feels so natural that pulling and slapping is a breeze, and it never sounds too clangy. The sustain is barely blunted by full barre chords, and there's a low-mid grunt to the sound, which lends a satisfying punch to big rhythm parts. Strumming from down near the bridge and on up to the base of the fingerboard, you really appreciate the harmonic content change from

and overall, the action could come down. Finish-wise, our sample shows signs of glue where the heel meets the body and where the fingerboard joins the top, while there's a slight roughness to the satin finish on the guitar's heel, too. But these are relatively small issues, and are almost reassuring in a way – there has to be something to separate this guitar from its bigger-ticket equivalents!

While the 511 is not without fault, it's hard to criticise such a considered and realistically priced instrument. Aria has made a very convincing guitar that holds up to scrutiny where it counts.

Isobel Morris & Jim Kimberley

SUMMARY	FEATURES	SOUND QUALITY	VALUE FOR MONEY	BUILD QUALITY	PLAYABILITY	OVERALL RATING
						★★★★★

AT A GLANCE

TYPE:	Solid Sitka spruce
BACK & SIDES:	Solid Indonesian mahogany
NECK:	Indonesian mahogany
FINGERBOARD:	Indonesian rosewood
FRETS:	20
SCALE:	650mm (25.6")
ELECTRICS:	None
HARDWARE:	Chrome-plated enclosed tuners
LEFT-HANDED:	No
FINISH:	Natural w/ satin neck only
CONTACT:	Aria UK 01483 238720 www.ariauk.com

VOLUTE

MIMICKING a traditional V or bridle-joint, a so-called 'volute' – on the back on the neck, behind the nut – adds mass and a touch of class

PURFLING

WELL-CUT herringbone purfling around the body and soundhole livens up this classic dreadnought without looking too posh

BRIDGE

THIS compensated bone saddle, along with the nut, ensures there's no loss of clarity over the 511's impressive tonal range



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GODIN ACOUSTICASTER 40TH ANNIVERSARY KOA

£1,099

**Oops, we missed the 40th anniversary... but, hey,
41 is cool. Let's toast the original Godin guitar concept**

DESPITE starting to build

Norman guitars in 1973, it wasn't until 1987 that Robert Godin launched his first own-brand instrument: a thinline Telecaster-shaped electro-acoustic with an 'internal harp': the Acousticaster.

Construction-wise, this new Anniversary model is very similar to the original Acousticaster: a mainly hollow chambered body with cedar top that, here, is faced with a rather fetching koa veneer. The thin top is braced like an acoustic, but the difference is in the form of the 18 tuned metal 'tines', or prongs, that stick out from a

the panel operate treble and bass EQ for the magnetic neck pickup. Then we have two (unlabelled) jack outputs: output 1, furthest from the base strap button, is the regular magnetic out; output 2 is a mono mix of the piezo and magnetic signals. However, use two mono leads and you can send your magnetic pickups, via output 1, to your guitar amp, and the piezo acoustic sound, via output 2, to an acoustic amp or PA.

There's a spacious, sustaining but relatively quiet unplugged acoustic-like resonance, and it's strung with nickel-wound 'electric' strings to take full advantage of the

This Godin is two guitars in one – and a few more besides

spruce brace placed under the acoustic-like pin bridge. The idea is that they continue the energy of the strings and compensate for the relatively small acoustic chamber.

The shape has evolved, too, from the original – the bass-side shoulder is pulled out a little. It's less Fender, more Godin. That said, the maple bolt-on neck feels more Fender than Taylor, and certainly feels very electric-like; the fretting is tidy, and there's even a slight rollover to the fingerboard edges.

Pickup-wise, we have an under-saddle piezo pickup and, new to the Acousticaster, a neck-placed mini-humbucker. This is an electro-acoustic that wants to reach out for lower volume electric duties, too. This duality is easily handled via the control panel – which also acts as a series of soundholes. We have volume for each of the pickup sources, plus treble, midrange and bass slider controls for the piezo. Two smaller rotaries at the top of

magnetic neck pickup. Plugged in, the electro-acoustic sound is highly credible, with plenty of control to thin mids and tame crispy highs. Conversely, the neck humbucker sounds quite bluesy and jazzy into an acoustic amp – quite 'hollowbody'. Mix in a little of the acoustic sound and you have a more contemporary jazz tone à la Pat Metheny. It works well into a clean guitar amp, and with dual amps, the fun really starts.

Two guitars in one? And a few more besides. Suddenly, that price looks easier to justify. Overall, a serious tool for the creative musician that's well worth trying.

Dave Burruck

SUMMARY	FEATURES	SOUND QUALITY	VALUE FOR MONEY	BUILD QUALITY	PLAYABILITY	OVERALL RATING
						★★★★★
						★★★★★
						★★★★★
						★★★★★

AT A GLANCE

TOP: Cedar with figured koa veneer
BACK & SIDES: 2-chamber mahogany
NECK: Rock maple, bolt-on
FINGERBOARD: Rosewood
FRETS: 22
SCALE: 648mm (25.5")
HARDWARE: Black-plated enclosed tuners, Schaller strap lock buttons
ELECTRICS: Godin GJN1 Mini-Humbucker w/volume, treble and bass controls; custom Godin under-saddle transducer and custom preamp, 2x output jacks: electric and acoustic mix
LEFT-HANDED: No
FINISH: Natural high gloss
CONTACT: 440 Distribution 01132 589599 www.godinguitars.com

NECK

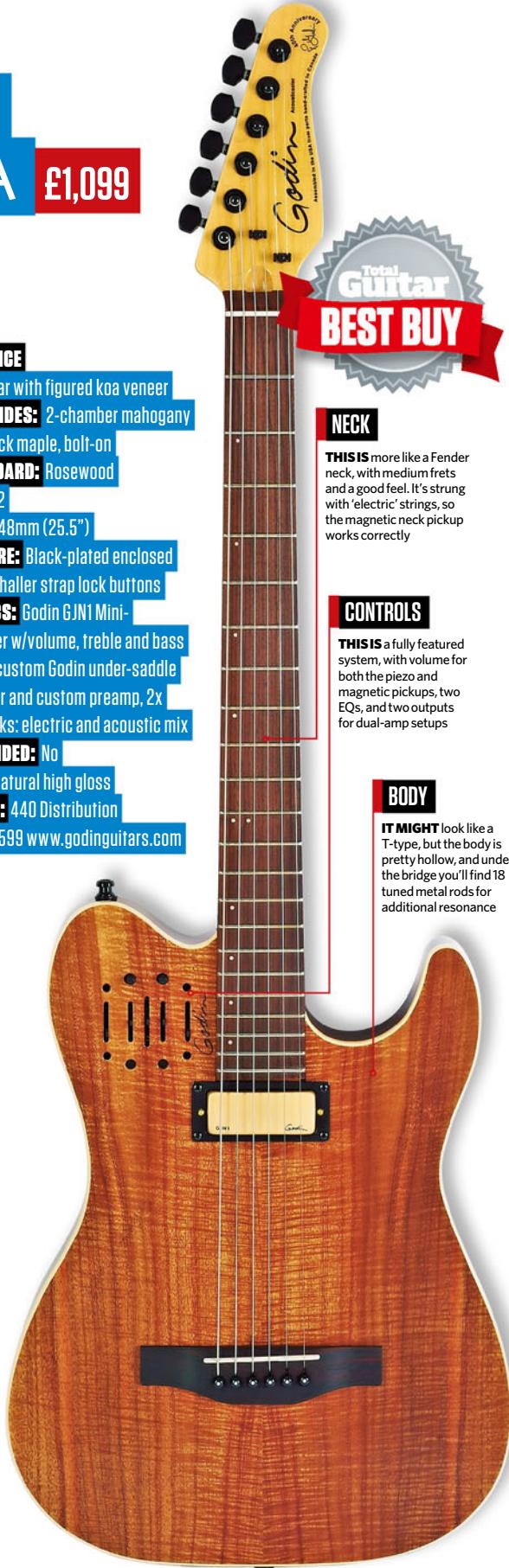
THIS IS more like a Fender neck, with medium frets and a good feel. It's strung with 'electric' strings, so the magnetic neck pickup works correctly

CONTROLS

THIS IS a fully featured system, with volume for both the piezo and magnetic pickups, two EQs, and two outputs for dual-amp setups

BODY

IT MIGHT look like a T-type, but the body is pretty hollow, and under the bridge you'll find 18 tuned metal rods for additional resonance





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NAMM 2014 ROUND-UP

TG filters the gear goodness to you from this year's Winter NAMM show – hold on to your wallets!



Words: Rob Laing & Michael Brown

TG'S BRIEF yet joyous recon mission to the Anaheim Convention centre in California was, alas, not about escaping the wretched British winter and kicking back by the hotel pool with a margarita in one hand and a burrito in the other: instead, it was all about priming our tonehound snouts to sniff out the best new gear launches the collected titans of the music industry had to offer. And if you followed our progress on [totalguitar.com](#) and our Facebook and Twitter feed, then you'll already know we found a feast of incredible gear on offer. Here's the pick of the buffet...

1 WIRE INSTRUMENTS SLEEPWALKER

WHO SAID originality in guitar design is dead? Sharing a booth with Travis Bean guitars and the Electrical Guitar Company was former Nirvana guitar tech, Earnie Bailey. He's launched his own brand, Wire Instruments, with some classic and leftfield flavours. The latter was best represented by this Sleepwalker with flamed koa wings, maple body, ebony fretboard and Lace Alumitone pickups.

How much? Varies
When can I get one? Now





2

2 ORANGE DUAL DARK

COR, THAT'S a bit gloomy for Orange, isn't it? No wonder: the Dual Dark amp heads offer four stages of gain across two channels: Channel A is different to anything else in the Orange stable, while B puts out metal-ready Dark Terror tones. The range includes 50-watt and 100-watt heads, both of which have switchable wattages and come loaded with EL34 and 12AX7 valves for classic Orange sounds.

How much? From £1,479
When can I get one? April

5 BLACKSTAR ID: CORE AMPS

WHY WERE we shocked by a practice amp at NAMM? Well, we kind of assumed the 'super wide stereo' on the ID:CORE range was just colourful marketing speak. Then we heard one, and they sounded so widescreen, we kept checking whether Blackstar had a bigger amp hidden behind the curtain. Based on the inspiring sounds we heard on the show floor, you'll want one.

How much? £89-£159
When can I get one? Now



3

3 EPIPHONE FT-350SCE MIN-ETUNE

WE'VE SEEN Gibson's Min-Etune robot tuning technology in action on plenty of electrics, but this Epiphone is the first self-tuning acoustic guitar. As well as the tuning tech, it also features a solid spruce top, plus a Shadow Performer preamp with Nanoflex pickup - not to mention a tidy price tag.

How much? £449
When can I get one? May



4

4 ELECTRO-HARMONIX PEDALS

STOMPBOX-MEISTER EHX showcased 10 new pedals: the Nano Big Muff, East River Drive, OD Glove, Hot Tubes Nano, EHX Tortion, Lumberjack, Satisfaction Fuzz, Klon-aping Soul Food, Crying Bass and Holy Grail Plus.

How much? From £45
When can I get one? Now



5



6 SCHECTER DEMON 6

ALONG WITH many updates to its popular models, Schecter also unveiled a new range; the Demon. This is the cut-price model, a competitively priced heavy rock and metal steed. Spec on this black-satin axe with aged cream binding includes Duncan Designed active HB-105 pickups (the DD version of Blackouts), maple neck, basswood body and gothic cross inlays, and there's Floyd Rose, seven- and eight-string models in the line, too.

How much? £339

When can I get one? Now

7 MOOG MINIFOOGERS

WE'VE LONG lusted over Moog's Moogerfooger pedals, but they're just too expensive for us to fill our 'boards with 'em. Praise the stompbox lord, then, for the arrival of the Minifoogers: five compact analogue stompers with plenty of that wacky Moog character. Look out for reviews of the MF Boost, MF Drive, MF Ring, MF Delay and MF Trem in TG soon.

How much? From £119

When can I get one? Now

8 IBANEZ RG9

SEVEN-STRINGS? Pah, that's so 2013. Extended-range guitars were all the rage this year, and few were extended further than Ibanez's nine-string offering, which adds a low B# and C# for ultra-heavy tones. There was

eight-string action aplenty, too, with the M80MWK, an entry-level Meshuggah model, also on display, which will be available for £999.

How much? £679

When can I get one? Now

9 BOSS OD-1X, DS-1X & ME-80

MORE SHINY new pedals came courtesy of Boss, which unveiled the OD-1X Overdrive and DS-1X Distortion, plus the ME-80 multi-effects. The two compact pedals are updated takes on the original OD-1 and DS-1, featuring Boss's 'magical' MDP (Multi-Dimensional Processing) tech, while the ME-80 combines ease of use with the ability to create and share patches using the Boss Tone Studio software.

How much? From £139

When can I get one? Now

10 GRETsch G5034TFT RANCHER

AS FAR as acoustics go, this one is pretty out there: Savannah Sunset finish, iso-mounted Fideli'Tron pickup and, strangest of all, a Bigsby B70G vibrato – although you can get the Bigsby-less G5031FT Rancher for £526. Also on show was the oh-so glam, White Falcon-aping G5022CWFE-12 Rancher 12-string (£598), which is sure to elicit awe at your next open-mic.

How much? £706

When can I get one? Now



SIGNED & SEALED

The best new signature models unveiled on the show floor



1. LTD James Hetfield Iron Cross

£1,249

Who says metal is all about black? White guitars seemed to be on the rise at this year's show, and this latest Hetfield signature is 'Snow White', no less. The prototype premiered at Metallica's 30th anniversary shows last year, and the finished article weighs in with both LTD (£1,249) and ESP (£4,999) options. Both have Papa Het's own signature EMG pickup set.

2. Schecter Jinxx Recluse-FR & Jake Pitts C-1-FR

£TBC

Schecter's stand impressed with the sheer number of new models, and we spied these debuts for the Black Veil Brides guitarists. The mahogany-bodied Recluse has an ebony fingerboard, Floyd Rose and classic metal combo of EMG 81/85 active pickups. The 'Metallic White with Metallic Black Burst' (er, looks like Silverburst to us) Pitts model shares the latter's mahogany construction and pickup configuration.

3. Fender Troy Van Leeuwen Jazzmaster

£1,300

We got a preview of the Fender stand a day before NAMM officially kicked off and were pleased to see this one for the Queens Of The Stone Age guitarist. Troy calls it "an all-round useful guitar" with "a bit of fashion and function involved".

4. PRS SE Zach Myers

£750

The second SE signature PRS has released for Shinedown's guitarist is a chambered mahogany-bodied beauty in faded Trampas Green. It's a 22-fretter, with a 24.5-inch scale length and satin neck finish. Those humbuckers are a pair of SE 245s.

5. LTD Ben Weinman BW-1FM/ET

£1,279

Ben gave us a preview in issue 250's rig tour; now, you can buy the Dillinger Escape Plan man's unique signature. Chambered bodies aren't exactly commonplace in heavy music, and the EverTune bridge also means this could be a real hardy road dog.

6. Ibanez MTM20-WH Mick Thompson

£499

Mick had his own version of this guitar when TG caught up with him at last year's Download Festival. Now the production model is finally here and it's more than all-white. Mahogany body. An Edge FX III double-locking bridge and Duncan HB-105MT pickups... Woof!

7. Charvel Guthrie Govan

£3,022

Guthrie has road-tested this to the limit in pursuit of something great, and Charvel has listened, and tweaked. The two options of birdseye maple or flame top have a basswood body, HSH Fender Custom Shop pickups designed by Michael Frank Brown, graphite-reinforced maple neck, an old school Floyd Rose (that doesn't lock at the nut) and Tremol-No.

8. Washburn Parallaxe Ola Englund

From £579

Washburn's new Parallaxe series impressed us with its sheer range of models for a wide range of budgets headed by the endorsement of Swedish death metal guru Ola Englund (of Feared and now The Haunted, too). This Matt White model features an alder body and Duncan-designed humbuckers, while Ola's other model is Matt Black, with Evertune bridge. Ola was also celebrating his Randall signature amp, the Satan!



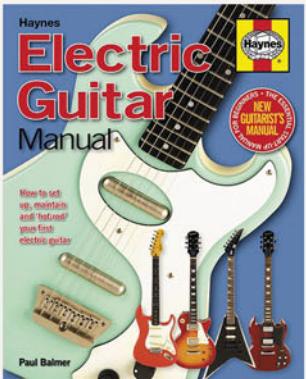


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TOOLS REQUIRED

- 3mm Allen key
- Electronic tuner and guitar lead
- Duster
- Wire cutters



Electric Guitar Manual by Paul Balmer (Haynes Manuals), priced £19.99, is available now from www.haynes.co.uk.



RESTRINGING A FLOYD ROSE VIBRATO

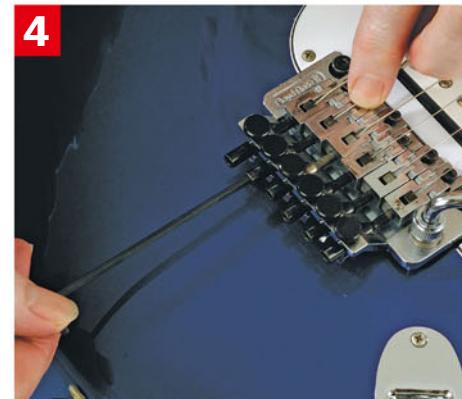
Many shred-focused guitars are equipped with Floyd Rose vibratos, which require a unique approach to restringing



1 The Floyd Rose recommendation is to use DynaMaxx FR-End strings, which have no ball ends. However, if you prefer your own brand, you need to start by cutting off the ball ends with a pair of substantial wire cutters - we recommend you invest in the Draper expert long-handled type, as they take a lot of wear and have plenty of torque; but cheaper, smaller equivalents will do the job for a short while. Make a careful note of the ball-end colour code for the string gauges, if this information is given on the packet.



Before cutting any wound string, always make a 90-degree bend in the windings to avoid unwinding.
2 Set the fine-tuners to their central position to give plenty of scope for adjustment.
3 The old strings are removed by first de-tensioning the locking nut fasteners with a 3mm hex/Allen key. Then, de-tension the strings via the machineheads as normal - Floyd Rose recommends replacing one string at a time to avoid



BEWARE

Do not try this on a dark stage! If you're committed to gigging with a Floyd Rose, carry a spare guitar and preferably a guitar tech. It's easy to lose some of the smaller parts of the Floyd Rose saddle clamps during a string change.



unbalancing the tremolo system. This is good practice on any guitar.

4 De-tension the individual hex/Allen fastener at the saddle end. We would recommend using a long-shank 3mm key for this, as it usually requires a lot of torque. Also, the long shank just clears the body, avoiding any paintwork damage – though you should take the usual precaution of positioning a rag or duster behind the saddles.

Remove the old string and de-thread it from the locking nut. The bare end of the new string can then be positioned in the block, and the Allen key clamp can be re-tensioned. Do not over-tension during this process, though, as this may damage the thread.

5 Thread the new string through the loosened locking nut, and affix as normal to the machinehead. Repeat for all six strings, working in from the sixth and first strings, thus

maintaining an even tension on the neck. Always put a string on under tension.

6 Tune the guitar to pitch, and thoroughly stretch the strings.

7 When the guitar has settled, re-tension the locking nut with a 3mm hex/Allen key.

8 Recheck your tuning, this time using the fine-tuners.



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TECHNIQUES



GUITAR WORKOUT

TRACKS 33–36



Your 12-minute workout guide...

1. CHOOSE AN EXERCISE...

- EX1** Blues-rock bends
Three minutes
- EX2** Unison bends
Three minutes
- EX3** Oblique bends
Three minutes
- EX4** Wide bends
Three minutes

2. SET YOUR METRONOME

This month's workout isn't necessarily focused on speed, but your practice routine will be enhanced by playing to a metronome at different tempos. We've suggested tempos beside each exercise.

3. START THE STOPWATCH...

All of this month's exercises are suitable for all players to attempt. Either dip in and try the exercise that interests you most, or for a tougher challenge mix and match any or all of the exercises. Make sure you don't stop before three minutes have passed, though!

String Bending

Master the art of string bending with TG's 12-minute practice routine covering four challenging exercises

IN THE 1930s and 1940s, players such as Django Reinhardt and Charlie Christian started using string bends to emulate the smooth sounds of violin glissando and slide guitar. It's now a staple technique, as modern guitars and slinkier string gauges allow bends to become wider, with up to five semitones possible. The smooth

string-bend sound is great for lots of styles, but the key to a pro sound is bending in tune.

We've recorded four exercises to help you develop your skills. The initial blues-rock style lick will get you used to bending the second and third strings. The second, Hendrix-inspired, exercise will help you develop accurate pitching and finger

movement. Our third example covers Jerry Donahue-inspired harmonised 'oblique' string bends. Finally, we introduce some three- and four-fret David Gilmour-style bends. Follow the workout for guidance on how fast to play. If our suggested tempos are too fast, make up your own checklist. You'll benefit from practising slowly.



GUEST LESSON
ERIC GALES p101

NEW! EAR
TRAINING p105

GRADES: ROCK
SCHOOL p106

GRADES:
RGT p107

EX1

TRACK 33

Start your practice session with this basic blues-rock bending lick

TRY TO execute each bend with your third finger, supported by the second just behind it. This will leave your fourth finger free for the 8th-fret pull-off. This lick is great for improving both strength and dexterity. Aim for seamless movement from bend to fretted note, and vice versa.

YOUR WORKOUT ROUTINE...

1	70 bpm	45 seconds
2	80 bpm	45 seconds
3	90 bpm	45 seconds
4	100 bpm	45 seconds

20-SECOND CHALLENGE

Use your fourth finger to bend the second string



TG TIPS
Keep your pick hand
in contact with open
strings to avoid
string noise

TRACK 34

Develop your finger independence and bending intonation with this unison lick

THE BASIC idea is to keep your first finger still on the second string while you execute the bend on the third string. The bend should reach the same pitch as the fretted note, so it's really easy to tell if it's in tune. You should hear the dissonant 'pulsing' sound slow down as you reach the target note.

YOUR WORKOUT ROUTINE...

1	70 bpm	45 seconds
2	80 bpm	45 seconds
3	90 bpm	45 seconds
4	100 bpm	45 seconds

20-SECOND CHALLENGE
Transfer the lick over to the first and second strings for a wider stretch



TG TIPS
Bring your thumb
over the neck for
greater strength
and stability

EX 3

TRACK 35

Take your bends to the next level with this country-style doublestop lick.....

Jerry Donahue's style incorporates note bends behind the nut of his Tele



TG TIPS
Keep your fourth finger on the first string throughout for the best position

THANKS TO the constant position changes, each bend will feel different – so it's important to focus on one at a time to perfect the tuning. It's very easy to overshoot the semitone bends, so make sure you practise slowly, referencing the sound of a C major chord to keep you in tune.

YOUR WORKOUT ROUTINE...

1	50 bpm	90 seconds
2	60 bpm	60 seconds
3	70 bpm	30 seconds

20-SECOND CHALLENGE
Try playing the lick on the second and third strings



EX 4

TRACK 36

Round off your workout with this bluesy Gilmour-inspired lick

TG TIPS
Practise each bend by playing the target note before trying the bend

THIS HAS everything from quarter-tones to a full two-tone bend. The Gilmour trick in bar 2 involves a sort of 'double push' in order to reach the two-tone bend. Relax the first one-tone bend slightly to push on for the higher bend. Strangely, this is easier than trying to reach it in one go.

YOUR WORKOUT ROUTINE...

1	45 bpm	45 seconds
2	50 bpm	45 seconds
3	55 bpm	45 seconds
4	60 bpm	45 seconds

20-SECOND CHALLENGE
Have a go at transposing the lick to another key



Gilmour often connects two bends together in quick succession in a phrase

The 50 Greatest Heavy Metal Albums Of All Time



#17

AC/DC - Highway to Hell

Did yours make the list? www.musicradar.com/greatestheavymetal

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GUEST LESSON



Eric Gales

In this final video lesson, the blues maestro helps you freshen up your rhythm playing



IN THE final instalment of this blues virtuoso's guest lesson series, Eric focuses on rhythm playing. He begins by demonstrating how a wah can be used for smooth textural chord playing: "I'm not always kicking it on when I'm knee deep into soloing. I like it a whole lot in rhythm stuff; chordal things".

Next, he adds interest to a I-IV-V blues progression. "I'll use passing chords that will lead up

to the IV, go in between, and lead up to the V", he says. Finally, Eric shows how jazzy chords can be applied to a basic sequence.

Because Eric plays in E tuning (low to high: E, A, D, G, B, E), while also playing his guitar upside down, some of his chords are tricky to fret conventionally: some are near-impossible! You'll find alternative chord shapes and notes in the tab to help you when this is the case.

EXPRESSIVE WAH-WAH

Freetime

Am⁹

let ring

TAB: 0 1 | 3 4 5 | 0 5 | 3 4 5 | 3 5 6

Am^{9#5}

Am¹¹

E^{7#5#9}

Am¹¹

E^{7#5#9}

TAB: 3 3 5 7 | 5 7 | 3 5 6 0 | 4 7 5 8 7 | 6 9 7 10 7/9 7 5

accel.

rit.

BU

BU

TAB: 7/9 5/7 5 2 | 5 2 2 5/7 5 7 | 5 8 (10) 5 5 7 | 8 (10) 5 8 5 7 8 5 7 5 7 5 2 | 5 2

Eric Gales continued...

Staff 1: Am⁹, Am^{9#5}

Staff 2: E^{7#5#9}, E^{7#9}

Staff 3: E^{7b9}

Staff 4: Am¹¹

ERIC doesn't apply wah-wah in time here; instead, he opens and closes the pedal randomly to create unpredictable filter-style effects. Rather than copying Eric's use of wah exactly, experiment to create your own effects. Just remember that if you open and close the pedal randomly, you'll create more unexpected results.

PASSING CHORDS IN A I-IV-V PROGRESSION

Staff 1: A⁹, D⁹

Staff 2: D⁹, G⁹

THIS EXAMPLE illustrates how the upper notes of a 9th chord shape can be shifted chromatically to create a jazzy blues-rhythm idea. In bars 3 and 4, Eric slides the shape up and down two frets without adding the passing chord. Root notes can be omitted when playing these ideas with a rhythm section.

CLIMBING CHROMATICALLY TO CHORD IV

DENSE, jazzy chord shapes are used here to "climb" up from A9 to D13 (the I and IV chords of a 12-bar blues in A). Eric actually adds an extra F# note to the D13 chord in bar 2, but this is impossible to fret unless you hold your guitar upside down like Eric: so we suggest you play a 10th-fret, sixth-string D note instead.

DESCENDING CHROMATICALLY TO CHORD I

STARTING on a C13 chord, Eric again uses chromatic steps to weave his way back down to the root chord of A9. Instead of playing a chord in bar 2, Eric opts to outline the harmony with a lick instead. This approach is extremely effective when applied to the ending of a melody line.

OPENING OUT CHORD IV

IN HIS final example, Eric demonstrates how chord progressions can be "opened out" by using a different shape on each beat, instead of just re-playing the same fingering over and over. In bar 1, Eric plays four contrasting chord shapes as variants of D chords.

NEXT MONTH ON SALE 14 APRIL

Kurt Cobain

20 years after the Nirvana frontman's death, we celebrate the gear and playing that changed a generation

PLUS:

INTERVIEWS

Nuno Bettencourt

Animals As Leaders

Rival Sons

Black Stone Cherry

Joe Satriani

Gus G

Protest The Hero

The Safety Fire

GEAR:

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Major 3rds

Continuing our series on the sounds of intervals, we introduce the bright, happy-sounding major 3rd

MAJOR 3RDS are the most important interval of major chords. A major chord like C major is built using the root note of the C major scale (C), the major 3rd (E) and the 5th (G). Change or remove that major 3rd, and you significantly alter the sound of the chord.

Major 3rds generally have a bright, cheerful sound and are used for this particular sonic effect. Your aim this month is to memorise the sound of the two notes that form the major 3rd interval both as single notes and as dyads. Use the whole fretboard, rather than just staying in one area.

Next month, we'll look at the dark, moody sounding three-semitone minor alternative to the major 3rd.

With thanks to Easy Ear Training. For more, visit www.easyeartraining.com

Major 3rds on single strings
TRACK 37

Major 3rds on string pairs - single notes and dyads
TRACK 38-39

Learn the sound

1. Find major 3rds in songs you know

The opening notes of the tunes to *Swing Low Sweet Chariot* and Gershwin's *Summertime* both run through major 3rd intervals. Remember the tunes, and you'll have trained your ear to recognise the sound of the major 3rd.

2. Find the major 3rds in chords and solos you know

You've seen how the shapes appear on the fretboard, now see if you can spot those shapes in any chords and solos you know. With some chords, you may find the major 3rd note is in a different octave to create a more playable finger shape.

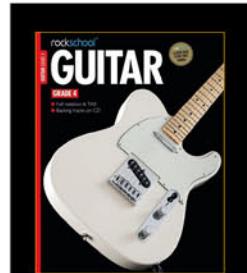
Learn the shapes

Major 3rds often feature in melodies and solos because they are easy to play on the guitar, so it's useful to know the most common shapes. Major 3rds are equal to four semitones (four frets) - so, armed with this information, you can map out how they appear both on one string and across two strings. Play them as two separate notes, and, when spread over two strings, as a two-note chord.

GET YOUR GRADES!

ROCKSCHOOL / LESSON ONE / GRADE FOUR

7th chords



Grade Four Book

Buy the Rockschool Grade Four book to get the rest of the syllabus. Go to: www.musicroom.com

Learn to play Rockschool's Grade Four track, *Funk 'O' Meter*

OVER THE next six issues, TG will cover Rockschool's Grade Four funk piece *Funk 'O' Meter*. This month, you will look at '7th' or '7' chords ('7th' and '7' mean the same thing). 7th chords are found in many different kinds of music and are a great way to make a

major or minor chord-based track sound more interesting.

So far, most of the chords in Rockschool's grades have been major or minor chords, which are built using three notes: a root note, a major or minor 3rd and a 5th. To produce a 7th chord, one more

note must be added: the seventh note of the scale. There are three popular types of 7th chords: major 7, minor 7 and 'dominant 7'. Check out the video lesson to learn how to construct and play these.

For more information go to www.rockschool.co.uk

MAJOR AND MINOR 7TH INTERVALS

The notation illustrates the two types of 7th intervals:

- Major 7th:** Root note G, 7th note F#.
- Minor 7th:** Root note A, 7th note G.

Shown in the tab here are the two kinds of 7th interval (the gap between the root notes and the 7th) that will be added to the basic major and minor chords.

MAJOR 7 AND MINOR 7 CHORD SHAPES

The diagram shows four chord voicings:

- Amaj7:** Notes G, B, D, F#.
- Dmaj7:** Notes D, F#, A, C.
- Am7:** Notes G, B, D, E.
- Dm7:** Notes D, F#, A, C.

These are the most popular voicings of major 7 and minor 7 chord types. Check that all the notes ring out clearly by playing each string individually.

DOMINANT 7 CHORDS

The diagram shows three dominant 7th chord voicings:

- A7:** Notes G, B, D, F#.
- D7:** Notes D, F#, A, C.
- From 'Funk 'O' Meter':** Notes G, B, D, E.

This example shows two barre chord voicings of the dominant 7 chord, as well as the voicing featured in *Funk 'O' Meter*.

RGT / PERFORMANCE AWARD / PRELIMINARY GRADE

Rhythm playing

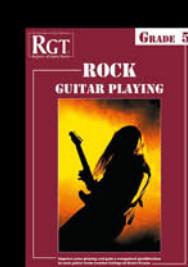
TG explains RGT's Preliminary Grade rhythm-guitar playing

RGT'S PERFORMANCE Awards consist solely of rhythm and lead guitar playing, and provide useful alternatives to standard-grade exams for developing guitarists who wish to have their playing professionally assessed, and receive independent feedback from an experienced examiner. You can either attend an exam

venue and perform live, or submit an audio or video recording of your performance; these options are particularly useful if you don't want to travel to an exam venue, or if you get nervous in exams. Your performances can be submitted by disc or uploaded online to RGT.

This month, we're kicking off our overview of the Preliminary Grade

with a rhythm-playing example. There is no notated rhythm to worry about; you just play through the chord progression, making up your own rhythm. At Preliminary Grade, this can be a simple 'four downstrokes per bar' rhythm, with occasional upstrokes to aid the musical effect. Practise the chords and changes slowly at first.



Grade Five Book

RGT is the UK's only specialist guitar examination board. View info on RGT's rock, electric, acoustic and bass guitar exams, and find a registered guitar tutor at www.rgt.org. Obtain RGT exam books at www.booksforguitar.com

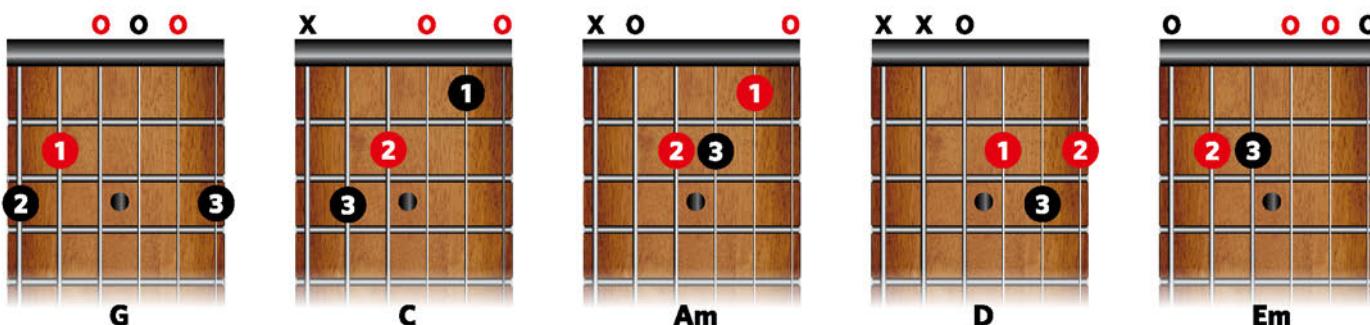
PRELIMINARY GRADE CHORD CHART

TRACK 42



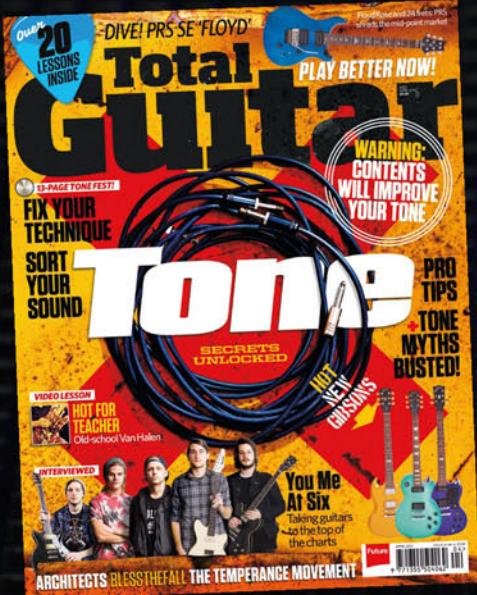
THIS IS a typical Preliminary Grade chord chart (for further examples get RGT's handbook from www.booksforguitar.com). Aim to play the chords accurately and clearly, with smooth, fluent changes, using a simple, steady rhythm pattern.

PRELIMINARY GRADE CHORDS



THESE ARE the chords used in this month's chord chart. Make sure you get clear-sounding chords by fretting with the tips of your fingers so that you do not accidentally mute any strings. Don't strike any of the strings marked with an X.

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FREE DRIVE PEDAL

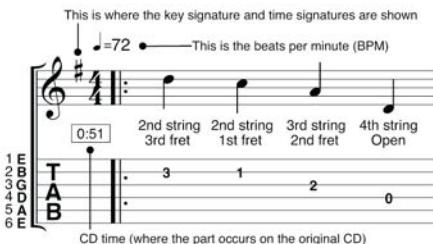
The Danelectro Cool Cat Drive is a good-looking, retro overdrive pedal that responds just like a valve amp would; low end/mids increase with gain - saturating and fattening the overdrive. Knock back the drive, keep the volume up, and the sound cleans up to a driving rhythm tone that's good for those nice crunching chords. Beside the usual controls, the Danelectro Cool Cat Drive has an Input Sensitivity trim pot that allows the user to customise the drive to suit their guitar - match it to single coil or humbucker output levels for optimum response. It also has a "Lo Fi" DIP switch so you can choose a second frequency range for an increasingly raw, unrefined drive tone.

www.danelectro.com

Tab Guide

Get more from TG by understanding our easy-to-follow musical terms and signs

WHAT IS TAB?



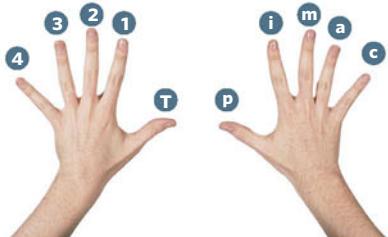
TAB is short for tablature, a notational system used to give detailed information as to where notes should be played on the fretboard. Tab appears underneath conventional music notation as six horizontal lines that represent the strings of the guitar, from

the sixth (thick) string at the bottom to the first (thin) string at the top. On these lines, numbers represent the frets where you should place your fingers. For example, an A note on the 2nd fret, third string, will be shown as a number '2' on the third line down on the tab.

Unfretted strings are shown with a '0'. The key and time signatures are shown in the traditional notation. TG also includes a timestamp to tell you where in the original track you'll find each example. Finally, a tempo marking is expressed in beats per minute.

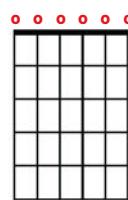
FRET BOXES: CHORDS, SCALES AND CAPO NOTATION

HAND LABELLING



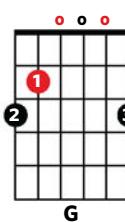
HERE are the abbreviations used for each finger. Fretting hand: **1, 2, 3, 4, (T)**
Picking hand: **p (thumb), i (index), m (middle), a (annular), c (little finger)**

NUT AND FRETBOARD



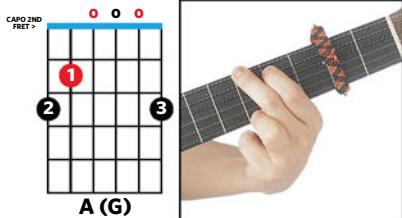
THIS fretbox diagram represents the guitar's fretboard exactly, as seen in the photo. This design is used for ease of visualising a fretboard scale or chord quickly.

CHORD EXAMPLE



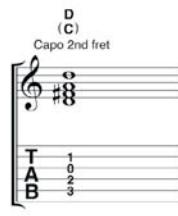
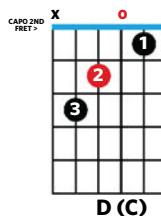
THIS diagram represents a G chord. The '0's are open strings, and a circled number is a fretting hand finger. A black '0' or circled number is the root note (here, G).

CAPO EXAMPLE



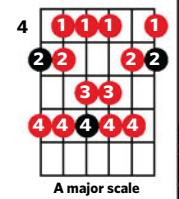
THE blue line in the diagram represents a capo - for this A chord, place it at the 2nd fret. Capos change the fret number ordering. Here, the original 5th fret now becomes the 3rd fret, 7th fret now 5th fret, etc.

CAPO NOTATION



HERE the chord looks like a C in the tab, but the capo on the 2nd fret raises the pitch to make it a D. The 2nd fret capo'd notes are shown with a '0' in the tab as if they were open strings.

SCALE EXAMPLE



THE fret box diagram illustrates the fret hand fingering for the A major scale using black dots for root notes and red dots for other scale tones. The photo shows part of the scale being played on the fourth string with the first, third and fourth fingers.

GUITAR TECHNIQUES: PICKING

DOWN AND UP-PICKING



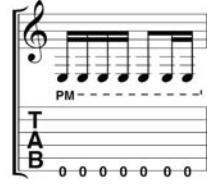
THE symbols under the tab tell you the first note is to be down-picked and the second note is to be up-picked.

TREMOLO PICKING



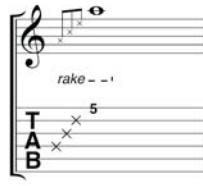
EACH of the four notes are to be alternate-picked (down and up-picked) very rapidly and continuously.

PALM MUTING



PALM-MUTE by resting the edge of your picking hand palm on the strings near the bridge saddles.

PICK RAKE



DRAG the pick across the strings shown with a single sweep. This is often used to augment a rake's last note.

APPREGGIATED CHORD



PLAY the notes of the chord by strumming across the relevant strings in the direction of the arrow head.

FRETTING HAND**HAMMER-ON & PULL-OFF**

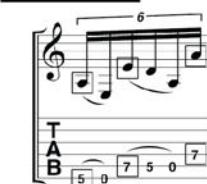
PICK the first note then hammer down on the string for the second note. Pick the third note and pull-off for the fourth note.

NOTE TRILLS

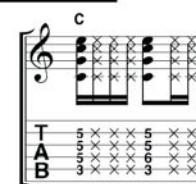
AFTER picking the first note, rapidly alternate between the two notes shown in brackets using hammer-ons and pull-offs.

SLIDES (GLISSANDO)

PICK the first note and then slide to the next. For the last two notes pick the first, slide to the next and then re-pick it (RP).

FRET HAND TAPPING

SOUND the notes marked with a square by hammering-on/tapping with your fret hand fingers, instead of picking.

FRET HAND MUTING

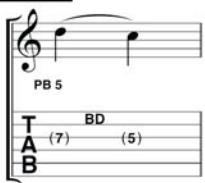
X MARKINGS represent notes and strings that are muted by your fret hand when struck by your picking hand.

BENDING AND VIBRATO**BEND AND RELEASE**

FRET the first note (here, the 5th fret) and bend up to the pitch of the bracketed note, before releasing again.

RE-PICKED BEND

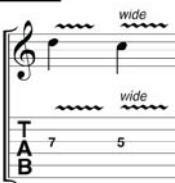
BEND up to the pitch shown in the brackets, then re-pick the note while holding the bent note at the pitch shown.

PRE-BEND

SILENTLY bend the string up from the 5th fret (PB5) to the pitch of the 7th fret note, pick it and release to the 5th fret note.

QUARTER-TONE BEND

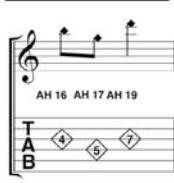
PICK the note then bend up a quarter-tone (a very small amount). This is sometimes referred to as a 'blues curl'.

VIBRATO

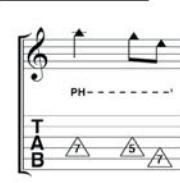
YOUR fretting hand vibrates the string by small bend-ups and releases. Exaggerate this effect to create a 'wide' vibrato.

HARMONICS**NATURAL HARMONICS**

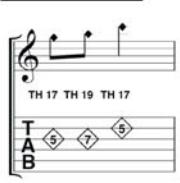
PICK the note while lightly touching the string directly over the fret indicated. A chiming harmonic results.

ARTIFICIAL HARMONICS

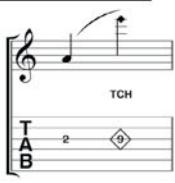
FRET the note as shown, then lightly place your index finger directly over 'x' fret (AHx) and pick (with a pick, p or a).

PINCHED HARMONICS

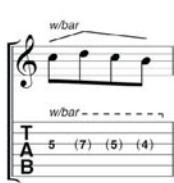
AFTER fretting the note in the triangle, dig into the string with the side of your thumb as you sound it with the pick.

TAPPED HARMONICS

PLACE your finger on the note as shown, but sound it with a quick pick hand tap at the fret shown (TH17) for a harmonic.

TOUCHED HARMONICS

A PREVIOUSLY sounded note is touched above the fret marked TCH (eg. TCH 9) for it to sound a harmonic.

VIBRATO BAR / WHAMMY BAR**WHAMMY BAR BENDS**

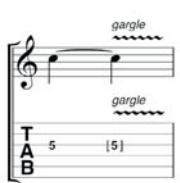
THE note is picked as shown, then the vibrato bar is raised and lowered to the pitches shown in brackets.

SCOOP AND DOOP

SCOOP: depress the bar just before striking the note and release. **Doop**: lower the bar slightly after picking note.

SUSTAINED NOTE AND DIVEBOMB

A NOTE is sustained then the vibrato bar is depressed to slack. The square bracket indicates a further articulation.

GARGLE

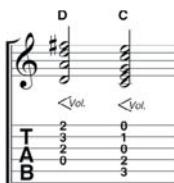
SOUND the note and 'flick' the vibrato bar with your picking hand so it 'quivers'. This results in a 'gargling' sound!

WHAMMY BAR VIBRATO

GENTLY rock the whammy bar to repeatedly bend the pitch up and down. This sounds similar to fret hand vibrato.

OTHERS**PICK SCRAPE**

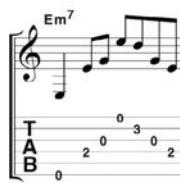
THE edge of the pick is dragged either down or up along the lower strings to produce a scraped sound.

VIOLINING

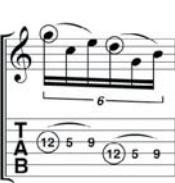
TURN the volume control down, sound the note(s) and then turn the volume up for a smooth fade in.

FINGER NUMBERING

THE numbers in the traditional notation refer to the fingers required to play each note.

PIMA DIRECTIONS

ANY kind of fingerpicking requirements are shown at the bottom of the tab notation.

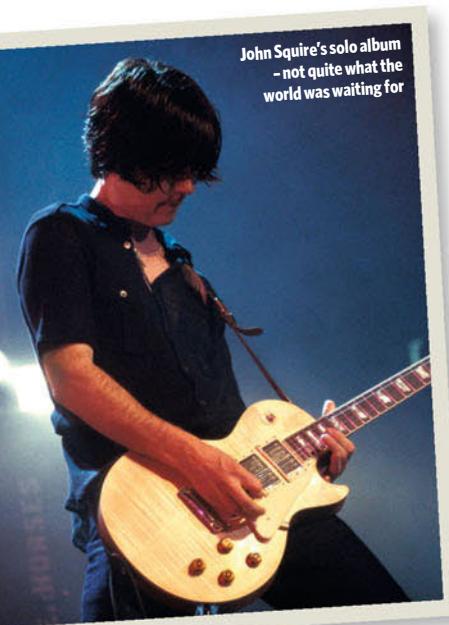
PICK HAND TAPPING

TAP (hammer-on) with a finger of your picking hand onto the fret marked with a circle. Usually with 'i' or 'm'.

The Final Countdown

10 BAD SOLO ALBUMS BY GREAT GUITARISTS

John Squire's solo album
-not quite what the
world was waiting for



10. John Squire - Marshall's House (2004)

He'd sprayed jangled genius over the Stone Roses' classic debut, but when Squire took the mic for this second solo effort, his catarrh croak managed the seemingly impossible feat of making Ian Brown sound like a King's chorister. *Marshall's House* limped to UK no.90 and sent Squire scurrying into musical retirement: if it actually was a house, you'd bulldoze it.

9. Steve Jones - Mercy (1987)

A decade after the primal crunch of The Sex Pistols' *Never Mind The Bollocks*, everyone's favourite cockney scoundrel was reimagined as an LA soft-rocker, complete with stone-washed denim and a hairpiece borrowed from a WWF meathead. The title track was used in an episode of 1980s cop drross *Miami Vice*, which says it all.

8. Ronnie Wood - 1234 (1981)

The sleeve featured a risible shot of Woody riding a camel, and 1234 only got more unintentionally hilarious from there. The lone Stone roped in everyone from Charlie Watts to Bobby Womack, but it'd take King Midas to make this turd shine.

7. Johnny Marr & The Healers - Boomslang (2003)

There's an argument that Johnny functions best as the stage-left wingman, spanking out crystalline awesomeness. Between its workmanlike guitars, anonymous vocals, and an appropriately named finale called *Bangin' On, Boomslang* backs it up.

6. Bernard Butler - Friends & Lovers (1999)

Something didn't quite compute when ex-Suede guitarslinger Butler went it alone. The guitars were turgid, the songs trudged, and the abiding memory is of that mewling transatlantic vocal. It didn't make him any new friends (or lovers).

5. The Nightwatchman - One Man Revolution (2007)

Tom Morello's politically driven side-project proved there's something hugely frustrating about hearing RATM's sonic magician reduced to campfire acoustic strumming.

4. George Harrison - Gone Troppo (1982)

Harrison's rag-bag of ditties sounds exactly like the contract-fulfilling last gasp it was. He wouldn't attempt another solo record for five years.

3. Dave Navarro - Trust No One (2001)

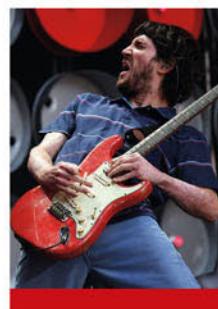
"It's a mind-fuck," reflected the Jane's Addiction legend of the experience of flying solo, after releasing this drab, technique-burying snoozefest. "I don't dig it. I'm much better suited to be part of an ensemble." You said it, Mr Navarro.



With *Scream*, Cornell laid a dog egg in the sound garden

2. John Frusciante - Niandra Lades And Usually Just A T-Shirt (1994)

These scratchy, tone-deaf doodles were unrecognisable from the guitar mastery of the Chili Peppers' *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*. Frusciante himself hoiked the album off the shelves in 1998: never a good sign.



John Frusciante withdrew his own album from the shelves

1. Chris Cornell - Scream (2009)

Hiring hip-hop producer Timbaland and smashing a Les Paul on the sleeve prompted a global 'uh-oh' – and *Scream* was a dance-rock disaster. Even NiN frontman Trent Reznor tweeted: "You know that feeling you get when someone embarrasses themselves so badly you feel uncomfortable? Heard Chris Cornell's record? Jesus..."

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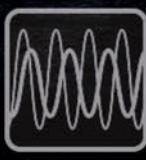


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