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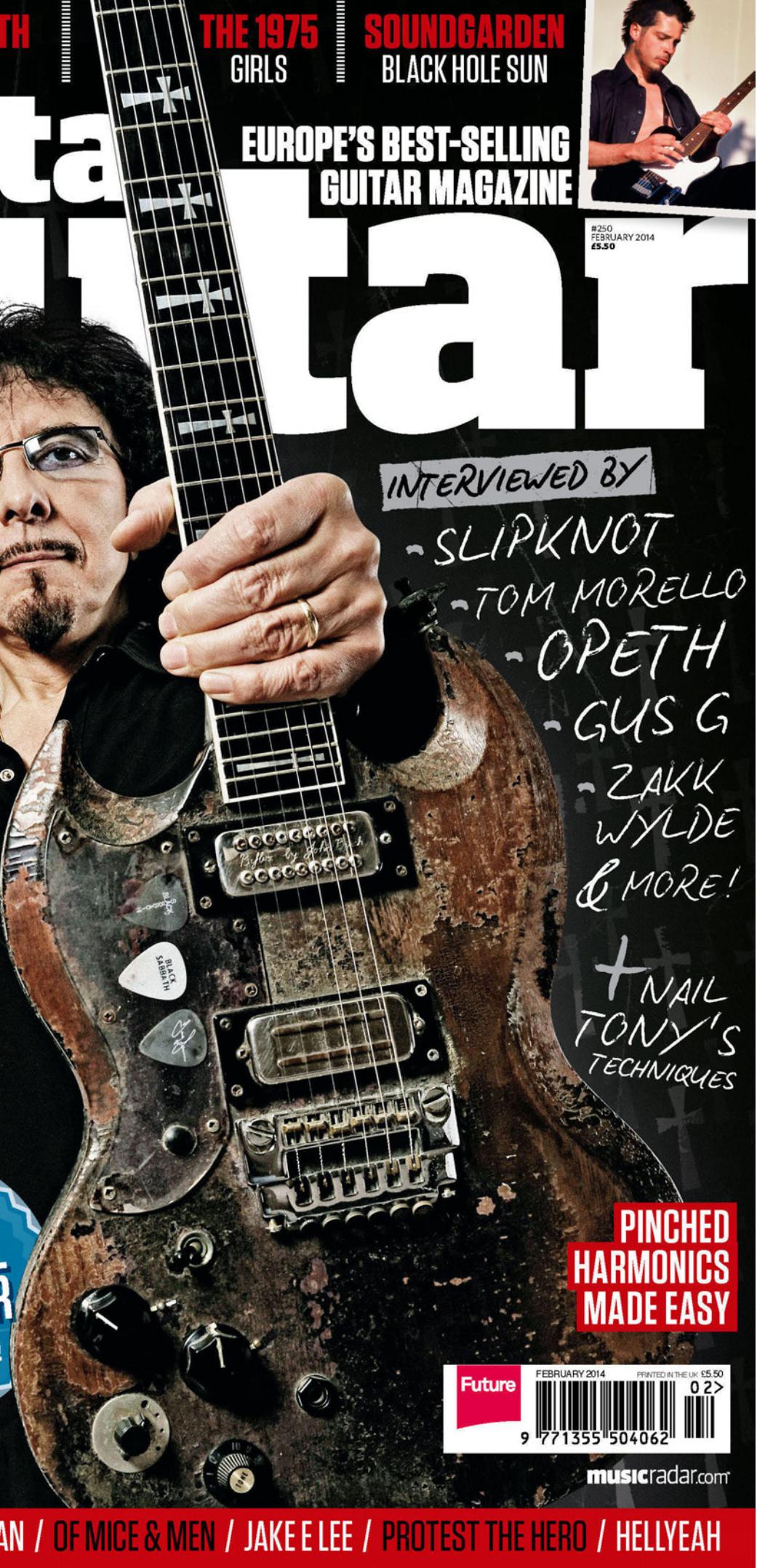
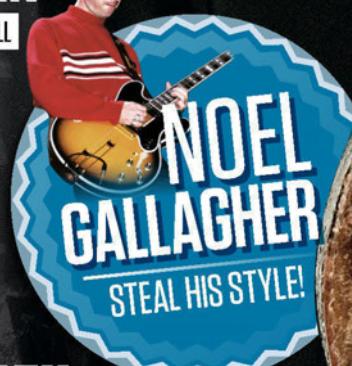
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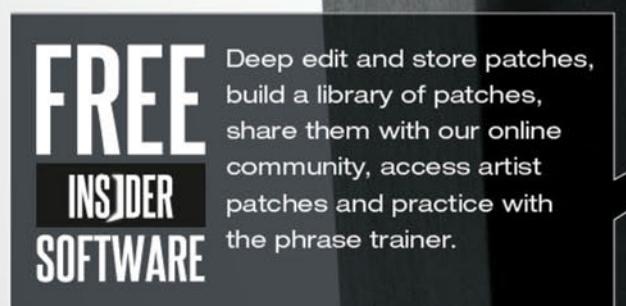
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For orders and enquiries phone our UK hotline on: 0844 848 2852
For international order and enquiries phone: +44 (0) 1604 251 045
Subscribe online at: www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk

Next issue on sale Monday 17 February 2014
Printed in the UK by William Gibbons on behalf of Future.
Distributed in the UK by Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue,
London, EC1A 9PT. Tel: 0207 429 4000

abc
The ABC combined print
and digital circulation for
Jan-Dec 2012 is:
22,846
Print: 20,869 Digital: 1,977

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Welcome

EDITOR'S LETTER



We're 250 issues old! A lot has changed since TG launched in 1994, but one thing is clear – the guitar still has its legends, like the guy gracing our cover this month.

It's hard to measure Tony Iommi's influence over heavy metal guitar playing – the man who now gets to call himself 'Dr Tony' has brought us so much. That's why we decided to celebrate this issue by asking as many guitarists as possible

to submit their questions to Tony.

The response was amazing – particularly as this happened over the US Thanksgiving holiday. So, if you want to know what his favourite Tom Morello riff is, what he thinks of modern trends like amp modelling, and why he hangs with Jimmy Page but less so with Ritchie Blackmore, I'd suggest turning straight to page 38 now.

On a different note, look out next month for some big changes in TG. We've been busy behind the scenes coming up with more of the stuff you guys love, and we'll be introducing it next issue!

Stuart Williams, Editor

MAKING THIS MONTH'S MAG:



TOM MORELLO

WHEN putting our list of celeb twanglers together, Tom Morello was one of the first to spring to our minds. After all, who better to quiz the king of riffs than the tastiest riffer of his generation? Cheers, Tom!



MIKAIÅKERFELDT

THE Opeth shredder went berserk, sending in three questions for Tony Iommi. Each one was insightful, interesting and showed his love for his hero... Unfortunately, we only had space for the best one.



GUS G

WE couldn't interview Tony Iommi without getting Ozzy/Firewind shred monster Gus G involved. Having learned the Sabbath catalogue, and mastered the sound, Gus asks a great question about Tony's gear.

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GET CLOSER TO THE MUSIC

EVERY issue, we deliver tabs of the biggest classic and contemporary guitar songs. From pop to metal, if you can play it on guitar, you'll find it in TG!

GET THE SOUND

AS well as a backing track, every song comes with settings for amps and effects. This enables you to not only play classic riffs, solos and tunes, but to replicate the tone, too - even if you don't own the exact kit that was used on the original recording.

TAB

PREFER to learn by reading tab and/or musical notation? Our full transcription is for you. If you're new to tab and not sure what all the symbols mean, turn to our full Tab Guide on p86.

BACKING TRACKS

EVERY song you learn in the magazine comes with a backing track on your CD, so you can play the guitar parts along with a full band. The CD is just that, a CD of music, so you can play it anywhere and easily transfer the contents to your computer or iPod.

PLAY IT!

GREAT SONGS, TRACKS & RIFFS FOR EVERY LEVEL OF PLAYER



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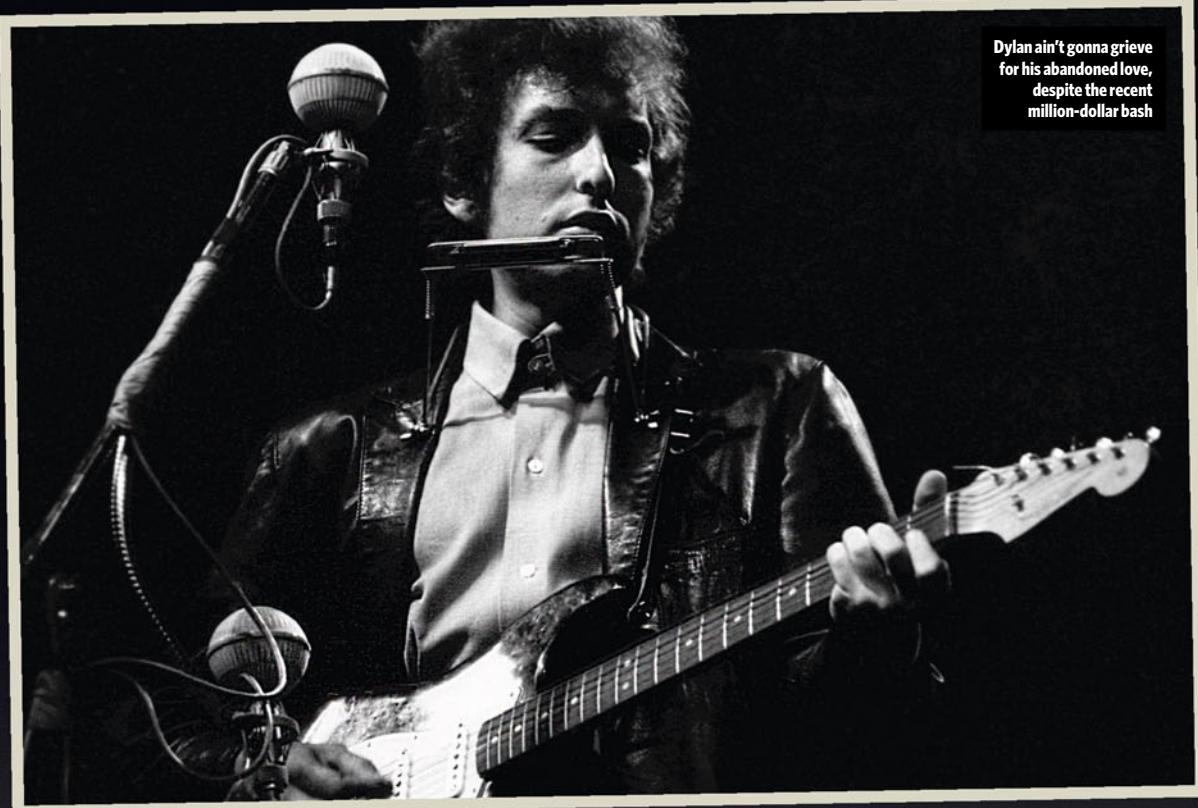
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MONITOR

PEOPLE ★ NEWS ★ NOISE

Dylan ain't gonna grieve
for his abandoned love,
despite the recent
million-dollar bash



WORTH A FEW BOB

Bob Dylan's legendary Newport Strat sells for \$965,000 – and becomes the most expensive guitar ever sold at auction

THE Fender Strat Bob Dylan played when he 'went electric' at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival merited boos at the time, but it met a very different response at a Christie's Auction in New York in December, when it sold for \$965,000.

Before it was won by a guitar-loving 'private individual', the instrument had spent 40 years with Dawn Peterson, whose father had been a commercial pilot and found the Strat in the back of his plane. According to Peterson, her father had tried to contact Dylan's management to return it but received no reply. Since then, Dylan's management had raised questions about the guitar's authenticity, but US TV show *History Detectives* proved it was

legit in July 2012, and an auction was born. Little did the Peterson family realise the guitar would outdo the previous record for a guitar sold at auction, which was another Fender: Eric Clapton's 'Blackie' Strat, which sold for \$959,500 at Christie's in 2004.

The Newport Strat's record-breaking winning bid proves this guitar remains an iconic instrument, and Christie's in-house specialist, Tom Lecky, summarised its importance: "It was the moment Bob Dylan transformed his career from a folk troubadour to a visionary, surrealist poet and made music that transformed the way everyone made music," he said. "Everyone recognised this was a guitar that had mystical power."

Photography: The Estate of David Gahr/Getty Images







FIRST LOOK **TERU-RIZER**

Japanese guitar maker Edwards launches a raft of pointy new axes, including the razor-sharp E-Geki-Tetsu Teru



Photography: Gavin Roberts

YOU might already know Edwards guitars - the company has a long history of making axes with, ahem, familiar outlines in Japan. But now, in the hands of ESP, the manufacturer is set to hit the UK with a variety of new guitars, including the Japanese Artist Series, one of which is this dangerously serrated E-Geki-Tetsu Teru Signature Model.

We're not 100 per cent sure what the first part of the model name means, but Teru refers to the Japanese guitarist of the same name, who found fame with hugely popular - and aesthetically regal - power-metal

band Versailles. His latest signature is every bit as extreme as his playing, with a modified Explorer-esque body and jagged headstock. Spec-wise, Teru's opted for top-of-the-range kit, too: there's a Seymour Duncan SH-1n in the neck and TB-4 in the bridge position (with mini-toggle coil split), plus an original Floyd Rose vibrato and Gotoh tuners, not to mention 24 frets fit for severe shredding.

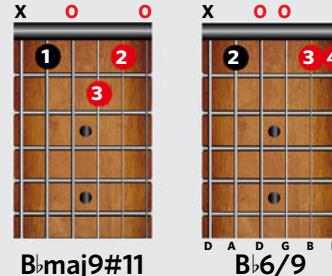
The Edwards Japanese Artist Series is available exclusively from Nevada Music in the UK, but if you're after Teru's model, there's a price to pay: a positively Teru-fying £1,699.

QUICK CHORDS

10 minutes to improve your... **B♭ major chords**

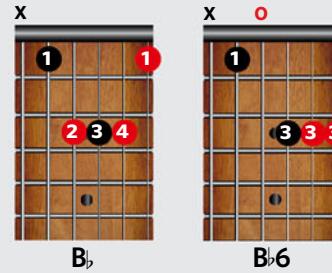
KEYS like A♭, E♭ and B♭ major can be troublesome for guitarists, because there aren't many familiar shapes in standard tuning. However, B♭ is worthy of your practice time, because it's a popular key in blues and jazz (many brass instruments are tuned to B♭). This selection of chords will help you during any B♭-based jam.

Open position chords



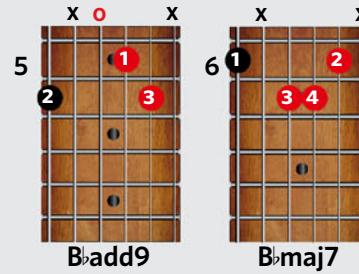
Despite the scary names these chords are quite easy to play. Just make sure the open strings ring out.

Barre chords



B♭ is one of the most common barre chord shapes. B♭6 is a variation on that shape.

Sixth-string root chords



It's worth learning a few shapes with a sixth string root note. The major 7 shape is very common.

LISTEN TO CHUCK BERRY

One of the most famous tracks in the key of B♭ is Chuck Berry's *Johnny B Goode*. No retuning was involved! He played it in B♭ live.



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RIFF OF THE MONTH

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The 1975 like their guitars crisp and clean with a lil' bit of funk

THE 1975 GIRLS

INTRO 0:00

THIS month's track kicks off with a highly polished sounding disco/pop-style line, its precision-placed twin-guitar parts combining to form the complete riff over a tight and groovy rhythm section. Your guitar will need to be in standard tuning (EADGBE).

This kind of rhythm playing demands accuracy and solid timing. The best way to stay in the groove is to listen to the drums and 'lock in' with the 16th note hi-hats, making sure also to emphasise

(or 'accent') the notes that land on the beat. This will help you to internalise the tempo and rhythmic feel of the track.

To get a tight, fluent sound you need to mute the strings with your fret hand during the gaps between those funky chords. This is achieved by relaxing your fingers after each phrase, which brings the strings to a swift, controlled silence. You'll also be making space for the two guitars to integrate, rather than one line playing over the other. (JH)

Get the sound

THIS song uses crisp, clean guitar tones with a plush production sound. It's best to use a guitar with single-coil pickups; if your guitar has humbuckers try lowering the bass on your amp, and boosting the treble. Compression and chorus are essential effects. A compressor, although subtle, helps keep the volume level of your strumming even. Chorus is a vital ingredient, enriching the sound and giving a bit of 'shimmer' to proceedings.



Video Lesson

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MONITOR

PEOPLE ★ NEWS ★ NOISE

Ibanez's J Custom guitars have never let Luke down



ON THE ROAD

PROTEST THE HERO

Canadian tech-metallers set to dazzle and bewilder on UK dates

TAKING new songs out on the road is a tough enough task, without every one of them being a mind-bending labyrinth of polyrhythmic riffs and leads. That's what goes into even the most basic Protest The Hero symphony, so how hard must it be when they start stretching themselves?

"The new songs are really difficult," says guitarist Luke Hoskin, currently sat with his bandmates in a van in Florida on the way back home to Canada via a few more shows with British headliners Architects. "We start and end with new songs, bookending the set with new material, but jumping into those songs while they're still fresh is difficult. Sometimes, when we open with the new songs people are into it, but others I wonder from the reaction whether people even know we have a new album out."

The new album is the unsurprisingly bonkers *Volition*, a marathon of all the elements that have made the band such a unique musical proposition, from the histrionic shredding of

the appropriately impenetrable Fortress, to their more chorus-driven but no less sonically impressive debut, *Kezia*.

Given the unconventional way *Volition* was funded (the band raised over \$340,000 through crowdfunding to record it), the band are thinking of giving the fans a chance to choose the setlists when they arrive on British shores in February for a run of dates with djent trailblazers TesseracT and

However, going over old ground gives ample opportunity for new drummer Mike Ieradi to get to grips with both old and new tracks, after taking over responsibilities from none other than fan and friend, Lamb Of God's Chris Adler, who stood in for the recording process. It also gives Luke and fellow axeman Tim Millar plenty of time to enjoy their latest gear.

"I've got two Ibanez J customs," says Luke. "I've always played

"Jumping into new songs while they're still fresh is difficult"

up and coming London prog-metallers The Safety Fire.

"Choosing the setlist is getting harder," he says. "We have a lot of songs we've played so often, and the fans really love them, like *Bloodmeat* and *Sequoia Throne*. But we want to play new material as well, so this is an idea we're playing with. We're just worried people are going to ask us to play the same sets we've been doing for years."

them and they've never let me down. The attention to detail, especially on the high-end models, is awesome." And considering the meticulous nature of the band's songcraft, attention to detail is certainly something they know a thing or two about. (AR)

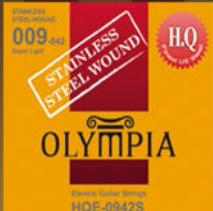
The band's tour with TesseracT and The Safety Fire begins in Birmingham on 2 February.

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IN THE STUDIO HELLYEAH

Depleted Texan titans return with crushing new record

GOING into the studio two members down would knock the wind out of many bands, but it seems that Texan metal rabble-rousers Hellyeah are made of sterner stock. The band – guitarist Tom Maxwell, Pantera's Vinnie Paul and Mudvayne frontman Chad Gray – are currently holed up in producer Kevin Churko's Hideout Studio in Las Vegas, and Maxwell explains that they're doing so without lead player Greg Tribbett or bassist Bob Zilla.

"This record has brought the three of us together – I won't go into the details, but there are reasons why we're doing it as a three-piece. Those stories will come later," he teases. "It's been very hard having all of the drama and struggles we've had to go through to get to this point. There were times we didn't know if we'd be able to make it through, but there's a happy ending to the story and we're making the record of our career."

The guitarist does acknowledge that losing a lead player has meant

he has had to step up when it comes to solos. "It's intimidating," Maxwell says of the additional responsibility. "I'm most insecure when recording solos because the spotlight is on you. I'm not winging it off the cuff, I'm structuring the solos piece by piece. I like my solos to sing and be parts, not just shredding. I've approached the solos like musical pieces – I want people to remember them and hum along."

of his tracking, adds that he's re-found his true songwriting chops during these latest sessions. "The last two records, personally, I felt like as a songwriter I had sold out. I was writing riffs and songs that we thought our fans wanted, our management wanted, this person wanted, that person wanted. It's not about the management, record labels, the industry. No disrespect, but they can all go f**k themselves."

"It's the most honest and organic record we've done"

Entering the studio as a three-piece isn't the only seismic shift between this new record and 2012's *Band Of Brothers*. "It's not about partying and kicking ass and all that other s**t. It's not that mentality that we've had in the past. It's going to crush everything that we've ever done before."

The guitarist, who has teamed a PRS SE Mike Mushok baritone with a Peavey 6534 Plus for the majority

"This is a record that is more personal," he concludes. "The album is heavy, but it's just different – it's brutal, it's beautiful, it's melodic, sad, lonely, angry, rebellious, it's diverse and the most honest and organic record we've ever done. People are going to be very surprised." (RC)

Hellyeah's as-yet-untitled new album will be released in April.



Hellyeah's next album balances the brutal with the beautiful



Tom's Dean Cadillac is joined by a LP Deluxe and PRS baritone



Hellyeah are also using Axe-Fx II in the studio

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ON THE UP

THAT F**KING TANK

Art rockers making tracks to the big gigs

MOST bands we feature in On The Up are shiny and new – but we'll make an exception for That F**king Tank. The Leeds two-piece actually formed in 2003 to honour a pre-booked date of their defunct previous band.

"We started the band as a bit of joke, but people came to like it," explains guitarist Andy Abbott.

"I broke a string on the first gig and we didn't get to play our whole set, so they said, 'Right, you'll have to play again' – and here we are, 10 years later!"

The instrumental duo play riff-heavy "deconstructed rock music" with Andy taking cues from leftfield guitar bands such as Lightning Bolt, The F**king Champs and Captain Beefheart. It's a responsive, unrestricted form of playing, but not the kind that has you checking Twitter mid-gig. "Me and James [Islip, drums] have been playing together since we were 11," explains Andy. "So there's an

element of trying to disrupt the other person and throw them off track – with two people you can play around and make mistakes, and people don't realise you're making them."

Andy gets his frequency-filling tone from a custom aluminium Electrical Guitar Company baritone axe, which is then split through a Fender Twin and an Ampeg bass amp. "The guitar is tuned ADGADG," adds Andy. "So I play it in a way that sounds like two lines happening at the same time."

TFT's avant-garde approach has earned the duo support for Foals on their gigantic UK dates this February. "It will be interesting to play these super-huge venues," says Andy. "I don't think we'll be playing on the floor in the middle of the venue like we have in the past, but we'll play a lot of riffs people can dance to!"

Hear: *Keanu Reef*
For fans of: *The F**king Champs, Lightning Bolt*



SAINT RAYMOND

Putting the work in (albeit not at college)

MUSIC'S never been a steady profession, which is why most players have a back-up plan. Not so for Nottingham's Callum Burrows aka Saint Raymond – 2014's indie-pop heir apparent. "I went to college for an hour and then dropped out," he explains, guiltily. "I didn't do too badly at school, but as soon I knew I wanted to do music, I took my eye off it."

He's focused elsewhere, though: the 18-year-old recently toured Europe with band-of-the-moment Haim and is garnering plentiful radio play of his new *Young Blood* EP. "People might see me and think, 'This is a really quick thing,'" says Callum. "But I was gigging for years and last year I was away writing, so I tried to put a lot of the foundations in before I really went for it."

In his battle for teenage hearts and minds, Callum's weapons of choice are a Fender Blues Deluxe and a Gibson ES-335 (tuned to open C), which you'll see in use



come his UK headline tour in March. "You always think, 'Is anyone going to be there?'" he admits. "On the last tour, I played one of my [most obscure songs] and loads of people were singing it back. That was a special moment. This acoustic song that I wrote in my bedroom – and now the people of Glasgow are singing it back to me." Back-up plans be damned!

Hear: *Young Blood*
For fans of: *Bombay Bicycle Club, The Temper Trap*

MT ROYAL

Scaling a tonal Olympus



"The big thing was just setting up a minimum practice schedule and sticking to it," says Woody. "Then, every week, you see things start to grow."

Their debut EP, produced by Dave Fridmann, is out on Bella Union, which should be endorsement enough for fans of empyrean guitar tones. "My main guitar is a '71 Mustang," says Woody. "It has a really bell-y sound. I wanted just enough to push the song along but to let the vocal and the bass be the driving melodic instruments."

Playing "sonic helper" has proven to be a dream role. "I've been a singer in other bands," he says. "And it's always more stressful. This is more like a treat!"

Hear: *Mockingbird*
For fans of: *My Morning Jacket, Beach House*

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WHEN Rocksmith launched in 2012, we could scarcely contain our excitement: any videogame that helps you *really* learn guitar is a winner in our book. Now, with Rocksmith 2014 (www.rocksmith.com) on its way, we've teamed up with the bright sparks at Ubisoft to give away an almighty bundle of Rocksmith goodies.

First up is a copy of Rocksmith 2014, which boasts over 50 new tracks, new modes and new features over its predecessor. Of course, you'll need a console to play it on, so we've thrown in an Xbox 360, too. Not only that, but we're also giving away an Epiphone G-400 SG in a classic Cherry finish for you to plug in using the included Real Tone Cable. Finally, as if that weren't enough, you'll also bag a Rocksmith bottle opener and plectrum case.

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To enter, text TGROCKSMITH followed by a space, your answer then another space and your name (eg, TGROCKSMITH c Dave Smith) to 87474. Alternatively, you can head over to www.futurecomps.co.uk/tg250rocksmith and enter the competition online

T&Cs: The competition is open to UK entrants only. Under 18s must obtain parental consent to enter this competition and be able to demonstrate this to Total Guitar's reasonable satisfaction. Answers must be received between 14/01/2013 and 16/02/2014. The winners will be selected at random from all correct entries received between the relevant dates and will be sent the prize free of charge. Each winner will be notified within 28 days of the closing date and will be required to give details of a delivery address in the UK to which the prize should be sent. Texts will be charged at £1 plus your normal network tariff. By entering this competition, you consent to us using your personal details to send you information about products and services of Future and Ubisoft which may be of interest to you. If you do not want to receive this information, please include the word STOP at the end of your text message. For full terms and conditions, please go to: www.futurenet.com/futureonline/competitionrules.asp

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This 2010 MB-1 Standard has a Fernandes Sustainer and X/Y MIDI control pad

IN PRAISE OF

MANSON MATT BELLAMY SIGNATURE MODELS

The Muse frontman has rock's best riffs and the world's greatest boys' toys. We look back at the birth of his plug-in babies...

SONIC

maverick. Sci-fi anorak.

Conspiracy theorist.

Jetpack enthusiast. Straight out of the blocks, Matt Bellamy was different, and when Muse's first royalty cheques landed after 1999's *Showbiz*, his guitars started breaking the mould, too. Mirror-finished and metal-plated, rammed with onboard effects and pinging out laser beams, you'd have been forgiven for thinking these plug-in babies had fallen off the back of a passing UFO.

The reality was a little closer to home. In his early years as a Teignmouth teenager, Matt had often loitered at Mansons Guitars in nearby Exeter, and in the post-millennium, he approached owner, luthier and guitar tech Hugh Manson to co-create his first signature model. "We just sat down with paper and pencil and sketched the shape out," recalls Hugh, "with Matt saying, 'I want it bigger here, smaller there', or whatever."

Matt once told TG that "all my Manson guitars are influenced by the Fender Telecaster", and that's apparent in the bolt-neck single-cut shape that Hugh plated in aluminium to create the iconic DeLorean. "It was all covered in really rough file marks and looked industrially atrocious," recalls the luthier of his first attempt at the bodywork. "Matt turned up at the shop that day... and he goes, 'Oh wow, I love the finish!'"

While Matt tended to favour a Kent Armstrong Motherbucker (bridge) and P-90 (neck), it was tech that marked out his early gear. The DeLorean featured a built-in, hand-controlled Z.Vex Fuzz Factory and MXR Phase 90, and the guitarist soon had a taste for effects black magic, pimping subsequent models with everything from a Z.Vex Wah Probe (the 007) to a MIDI screen controller for operating a Korg Kaoss Pad (the M1D1). "Now, of course," says

Hugh, "I get loads of kids coming in wanting all sorts of effects fitted inside their guitars!"

Hugh is understandably too busy to take your commission for a DeLorean clone, but does periodically release batches of the hand-built MB-1 (an off-the-peg replica with many trademark features for £3,249), and throws us mere mortals a bone with the MA-1 (which nails the vibe, from £969). (HY)

BELLAMY'S MANSON TIMELINE

1997

MATT BELLAMY
VISITS MANSONS
GUITARS AS A
TEENAGER

2001

THE DELOREAN MAKES
ITS DEBUT IN THE
VIDEO FOR
'HYPER MUSIC'

2006

BELLAMY USES
THE MIDI-SCREEN-
EQUIPPED M1D1
GUITAR FOR THE
FIRST TIME

2009

MANSON
LAUNCHES THE
FIRST BATCH OF
OFFICIAL MB-1
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ALBUMS



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SETH LAKEMAN

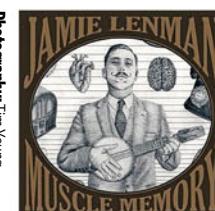
CHARLIE WINGFIELD

'PAINTED ON THE OUTSIDE'



"HE'S from Cornwall and he sent me this. I quite like the production and, of course, him as a songwriter, he's interesting. He's a fingerpicker - that sort of surfy singer-songwriter thing. He sings with his wife, so there's that boy/girl vocal element, which is interesting."

Our ratings explained



JAMIE LENMAN MUSCLE MEMORY



SINCE alt-rock heroes Reuben split in 2008, guitar-toting frontman Jamie Lenman has been somewhat quiet on the musical front, but his debut solo release heralds a return that's cacophonous and sedate in equal measure. To call *Muscle Memory* diverse is an understatement: the opening half is all skull-crushing riffs and post-hardcore fury, while the second is composed of ukulele ballads and big-band numbers. It sounds like an incongruous endeavour, but tying it all together is Lenman's superb sense of riffery and chord progression, which makes both sides equally essential.

Michael Brown

Download: *No News Is Good News*

SKINDRED

KILL THE POWER



SKINDRED

KILL THE POWER



WHILE 2011's *Union Black* was a riotous critical success, it didn't quite deliver the major breakthrough for Skindred that many expected. How have they looked to put that right? Well, for *Kill The Power* they drafted in songwriting guru and former Argent guitarist Russ 'Since You Been Gone' Ballard. In fact, it quickly becomes apparent that hooks are a major theme of this record. Sorry, make that hooks and huge riffs. The opening title track is a prime slab of classic Skindred ragga-rock with big sing-along choruses. Guitarist Mikey Demus earns his crust on *Ninja* and *The Kids Are Right Now* – the latter skips from tasty, chunky chug-a-thon to dubstep-lite, via one of the record's handful of standout Demus solos. If there is one misstep, though, *We Live* could be a Simple Plan B-side and smacks a little too much of a band seeking out its crossover hit. Other than that, it's killer.

Rich Chamberlain

Download: *The Kids Are Right Now*

Photography: Dan Sturges



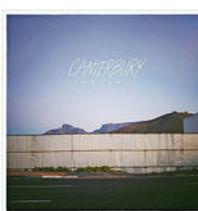
JOHN BUTLER TRIO FLESH & BLOOD



THIS sixth album might be John Butler's most well-rounded yet. There's plenty of songs from the sunnier side, but some of the strongest here are the contemplative tracks that run deeper. *Spring To Come* is a mellow and melancholic fingerstyle opener, *How You Sleep At Night* rises and falls with emotive bite, and moody closer *You're Free* sounds like Trent Reznor and Peter Gabriel jamming with steel drums. Butler's way with a slide is still mighty, electrifying the excellent *Cold Wind* on a record that strikes a very satisfying balance of his musical strengths.

Rob Laing

Download: *Spring To Come*



CANTERBURY DARK DAYS



THE clue is in the title for geographically confusing Surrey foursome Canterbury's third long-player. The crowdfunded *Dark Days* doesn't abandon the band's pop-rock accessibility, but there's definitely a less happy-go-lucky feel to proceedings this time around. The sing-along choruses and catchy chord-based riffage are present and correct, but the more sombre mood gives guitarists Mike Sparks and James Pipe the chance to pile on the evocative, delay-heavy Fender-y lead lines, particularly on the last third of the album, where *Dark Days* really comes into its own.

Josh Gardner

Download: *Out From The Cold*



SETH LAKEMAN WORD OF MOUTH



RECORDING in a Cornish church and interviewing West Country characters to inspire the songs: welcome to the wonderful world of Lakeman. Like on 2011's *Tales From The Barrel House*, the tenor/six-string/bouzouki/viola/fiddle folk troubadour recalls the earthiness of his earlier albums, this time with a cast of musicians providing a more layered, driven sound. *The Wanderer* is rousing and grand, but the ballads showcase Seth's storytelling at its finest – his acoustic hooks and vocal dynamic with new recruit Lisbee Stainton shine in the stone surroundings.

Rob Laing

Download: *The Saddest Crowd*



BEHEMOTH THE SATANIST



AFTER conquering Leukaemia and archaic criminal charges, Behemoth leader Nergal makes yet another extraordinary statement with *The Satanist*. From the violent grandeur of *Blow Your Trumpets Gabriel*, to the furious blasting of *Amen* and malevolent grace of *O Father O Satan O Sun*, this is an album born in turbulence and delivered in pure emotional glory by some of the finest musicians on the planet. Nergal and Seth's scything riffs on *Furor Divinus* are incomparable, while Inferno's drumming is sensational. A death metal masterpiece.

Adam Rees

Download: *In The Absence Of Light*



BLACKBERRY SMOKE THE WHIPPOORWILL



AS old mates of The Black Crowes, it's to be expected that some of the Robinson brothers' sound would have rubbed off on Atlanta Southern rockers Blackberry Smoke. *Shakin' Hands With The Holy Ghost* is a case in point; Paul Jackson's lead riff sounding like *By Your Side*'s lost hit-maker. It's when the Smoke turn away from the Rich Robinson riffs they run into trouble. The country rock *One Horse Town* and Skynyrd-influenced *Six Ways To Sunday* are musically derivative and lyrically ham-fisted, but are the exception rather than the norm.

Rich Chamberlain

Download: *Shakin' Hands With The Holy Ghost*



YOU ME AT SIX CAVALIER YOUTH



LIFE on the road must give young men old souls, because YMAS are in a darker place for album number four. And they wear the colour well: Josh Franceschi's yearning melodies make these songs feel instantly familiar and the personal emotion resonates. Max Helyer and Chris Miller have got their chiming arena delay on amid the surging rhythms of *Lived A Lie*, brooding with the ringing arpeggios on *Forgive And Forget* and the appropriately titled *Room To Breathe*. There are no growing pains to be found for them here, but there should be bigger venues on the horizon.

David Hands

Download: *Win Some, Lose Some*



BRUCE BOUILLET THE ORDER OF CONTROL



THE secret to masterful instrumental guitar is providing a shed load of face-melting licks that induce uncontrollable bouts of air guitar in your listeners without neglecting those all-important melody lines. On his third solo outing, Bruce Bouillet gets closer than ever before to nailing that critical balance, displaying impressive skills as both shredder and songwriter. *Defiant* and *The Order Of Control* are high points, showcasing Bouillet's fluid legato runs and melodic sensibilities. The album isn't as aggressive as early Racer X, but it's a decent listen for shred fiends.

Chris Bird

Download: *Defiant*



RED DRAGON CARTEL RED DRAGON CARTEL



RED Dragon Cartel is the long-awaited return by guitarist Jake E Lee, Ozzy Osbourne's axe slinger of choice in the mid 80s (Ronnie Mancuso, DJ Smith, Jonas Fairley and guests complete the line-up). Indeed, album opener, *Deceived*, harks back to Lee's most famous Ozzy-era song, *Bark At The Moon*. Tracks such as *Fall From The Sky* and *Redeem Me* have a more modern touch, akin to Velvet Revolver, while the riff-driven Whitesnake-esque *War Machine* takes us back to the 80s once again. If 30-year-old rock delivered with conviction floats your boat, this is a good listen.

Chris Bird

Download: *Deceived*

DVDS & BOOKS

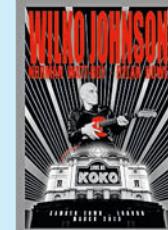
ROCKSMITH 2014 XBOX 360, PS3, PC



THE big test for *Rocksmith*'s sequel was whether it could build on the original. Okay, the lag between your playing and the signal is an obstacle that can't be overcome with just an HDMI cable (on PS3, we use a composite cable with an adaptor into headphones and it reduces it hugely), but on every other count, Ubisoft has aced it. The lessons are improved, the arcade games are useful, and the overall presentation is much clearer. Crucially, the settings allow far more control over the way you learn. The new Session jamming mode is a fun addition, too. There's a lot of rock here to keep beginners and the intrigued happy.

Rob Laing

WILKO JOHNSON LIVE AT KOKO



TO CREATE your own distinct sound and onstage presence is a destination many of us players will spend years trying to reach. Wilko got there a long time ago and the sight of him tearing it up with his red 'n' black Tele (still sans plectrum) and curly cable trailing behind in Camden is just as unique as it was when he did it with Dr Feelgood in the 70s. Staring in the face of his illness and rocking on, Wilko's spirit is inspiring on the highlights here from a two-night stand with the bonus of an essential moving, honest and funny interview.

David Hands



minutes alone

Ex-Ozzy right-hand man now brings the guitar fire with Red Dragon Cartel



JAKE E LEE

Back with new project Red Dragon Cartel, the former Ozzy gunslinger tells us about teenage epiphanies, competing with Eddie Van Halen and why winners don't warm up...

"My advice would be don't warm up at all. You've either got it or you don't"

I got my first real six string...

"I remember the exact moment. It was 1969 and I was 12 years old. I didn't really like rock music, because what I heard on the radio all sounded kinda stupid to me. But I was walking past my little sister's room, and I heard the opening notes of *Purple Haze*. It mesmerised me."

"My first guitar was some Japanese-made acoustic that belonged to my sister, she was a hippy chick. She never played, so I stole it from her. My first electric was bought on a naval base for \$35 and it was a really bad copy of an ES-335. It was godawful."

A castaway, an island lost at sea...

"If I was on a desert island that had electricity, I assume, and the amp would magically never



Jake E Lee would like a taste of Jimi's chord playing magic

burn out? Well, in that case, I would probably want to take a 1968 100-watt Marshall Plexi with the 25-watt Greenbacks in the cabinets with me. If I could only have one pedal, then it would probably be a Tycobrahe Octavia. And I'd probably take an early-to-mid 60s SG Special with soapbars."

How I wish you were here

"There was a period in the mid-to-late 90s when I wasn't in a band, where I wasn't playing out anywhere and I was plugging into a computer, basically. And since I had no plans, I sold all my cabs and heads. I even sold the 1969 metal-face 100-watt Marshall that I recorded *Bark At The Moon* with. I can remember, it still had the greasepen markings on for the settings I used on that album. I wish I'd held onto those, but I got a really good price for them."

I want you to show me the way

"Well, I guess I'd have to go back to Hendrix, although I'm not sure how good he'd be at giving lessons, because guitar playing just seemed like such a natural thing to him. I'm not sure [those skills are] something that he could pass on, but he'd be the guy I'd have the most questions for. The way he'd have a chord progression that most people would play pretty pedantically, whereas he'd do inversions and add notes – that's what I'd really want to grill him on if I had a lesson with Hendrix."

The best of you

"Well, rhythm-wise, I do try to play around with the chords I use. I think my rhythm playing is actually different to a lot of the LA guitarists – well, those of my era, anyway – where they were happy just chugging on the A string doing eighth notes and two-note chords. I always felt that I was a little outside of that box and that I contributed a little more. I've always thought that my tone is probably the weakest part of my playing. I don't know why. It always sounds sub-par to me."

The ultimate sin

"Don't warm up. I used to warm up before gigs when I was playing with Ozzy, but there was one time we were doing Monsters Of Rock with Gary Moore and Van Halen. I was getting a little nervous backstage, because I could hear both of them warming up. I just remember thinking, 'Well, if I'm gonna suck in between Gary Moore and Eddie Van Halen, then I want an excuse, so I'm not even gonna pick up the guitar until I hit the stage.' But I actually played really good, and Gary and Eddie both came up to me after and told me how much they liked my playing."

"So that would be my advice. Don't warm up at all. You've either got it or you don't." ●

Red Dragon Cartel is set for release on 27 January on Frontiers Records.

FEATURES



STEPHEN'S CUTAWAY



FLOYD ROSE



SPRING SILENCERS



OVERSIZED BRASS BLOCK



GROVER TUNERS



BUZZ FEITEN



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FEATURES

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JOHN BUTLER
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YOU ME AT SIX
BLESSTHEFALL



ON SALE
MONDAY
17 FEBRUARY



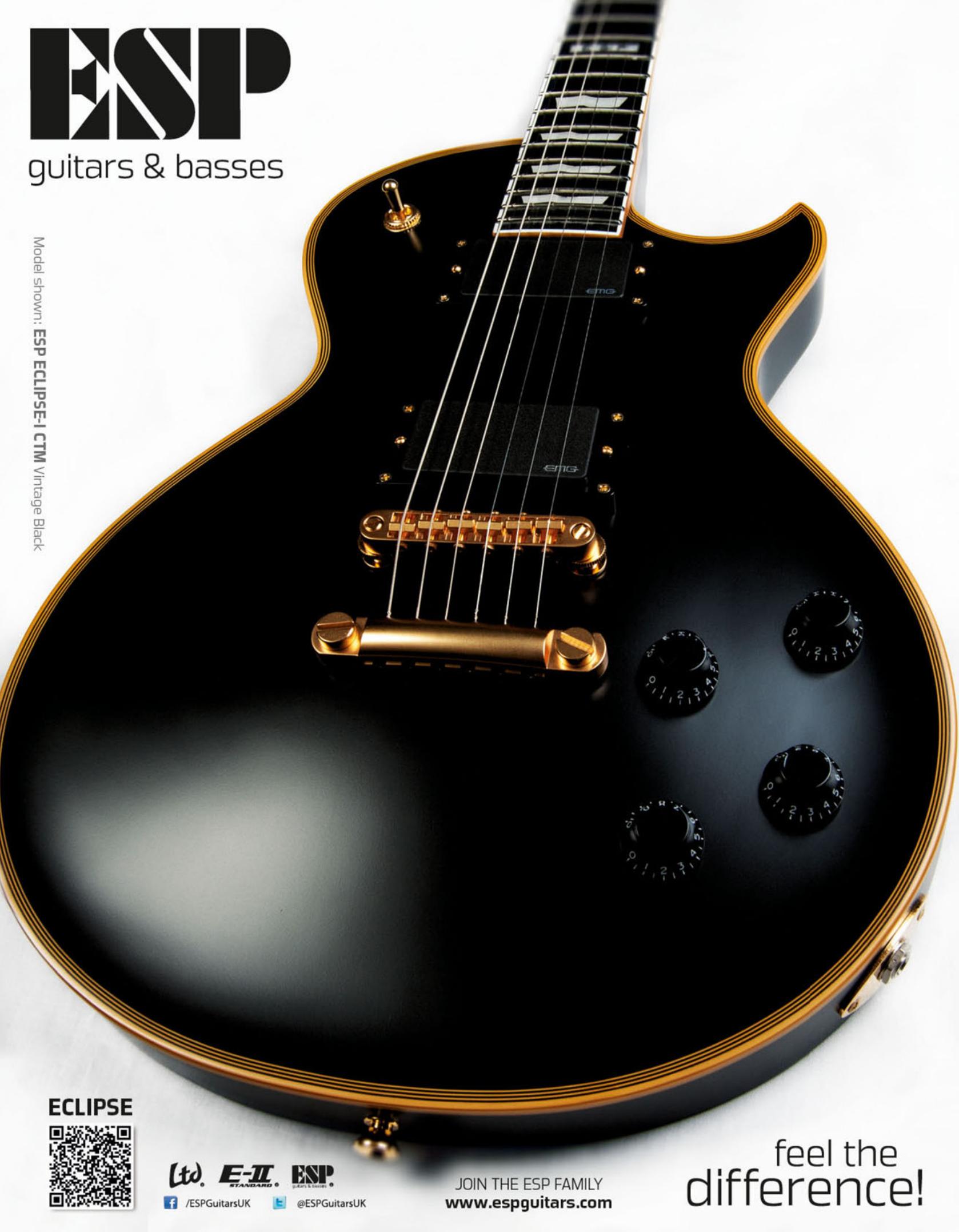
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Iron man

Hi, just a quick note to draw your attention to Ironstone Pickups. I was just reading your prog article, where you mention a Gilmour complete scratchplate [EMG DG20]. Ironstone does one that's Gilmour-esque and cheaper than the one you mention. I don't know which sounds best, but I'm a fan of the Ironstones.

Pete, via email

PS: I don't work for them, honest!

Man in a CAGE

I really enjoyed the CAGED Chords workout in the last issue. I think the perfect song to play to practise the five different chord shapes is *Hey Joe* by Jimi Hendrix, because this has all of those chords in it, and repeats long enough to practise them all. Start with open C, then slide it up or down to find the next placements of G, D, A and E. Then repeat with the A, G, E (barre chord) and D shapes. Just thought this may help some of your readers with associating the CAGED method to a popular song.

Ralph Chiltern, via email

Take your pick

Dear TG, I've been having trouble holding on to my pick when doing tremolos and on stage because my hands get sweaty - any suggestions?

James Barnes, via email

Hi James, you could try experimenting with different sized picks and relaxing your grip. Alternatively, try some picks with a different material or textured surface. Products like Gorilla Snot add a grippy texture to your plectrum, too. Keep spare picks to hand when you're playing, maybe taped to your mic stand - if all else fails, punch a hole in the pick and tie it round your wrist with string!



Photography: iStock



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Tab? You must be mad...

Dear TG, I've been a subscriber since 2004, but I feel I should tell you something. Every month, you fill up your pages with tabs, and great though they are, you might be aware of this newfangled invention called 'the Internet'. On this 'Internet' you can find tab for pretty much any song ever, for free, at the touch of a button.

While the song tabs were great in '04, times have changed. What I need is to learn how to do the things I can't do: set up my gear and have fun playing my guitar. Stuff like Rig Tour, Basics, Workout or Steal Their Style are way more useful than a song I don't want to learn, or can learn whenever I want!

Will Thompson, London

Thanks, Will! We agree with you, which is why next issue you'll notice a few changes to TG's practical features and tutorials. Enjoy your PolyTune...



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It's good to talk (box)

Dear TG, thanks for tabbing Bon Jovi's *Livin' On A Prayer* last issue. I'm playing a gig with some mates for a party on NYE - guess what we're gonna finish with?! One thing is still confusing me, though, and that's this talk box thing that you mentioned. What is it, and how do I use one?

Phillip Excelby, Nuneaton

Hi Phillip, the talk box works by taking your guitar signal, and pumping it through a little speaker attached to a tube. The end of the tube goes in your mouth, and when you make different vowel shapes, it acts like a filter to create vocal sounds. The Dano Free Speech or the EHX Talking Machine, are similar, but don't require the dubiously hygienic tube.

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RIFFS

@TOTALGUITAR this month is great, but it's missing Simon Neil playing violin in the Final Countdown section!"
Daniel Barnes, via Twitter

"I DON'T have a baritone, but I love the sound. I'd love a seven-string with a 26.5-inch scale or so to cover that range!" TJ Harris, via Facebook

"@TOTALGUITAR Alter Bridge's *Fortress* is the best guitar playing I've heard since *Rust In Peace* - it's that good!"
Simon Wade, via Twitter

"TOTAL GUITAR very kindly listed Altered State in their top 20 albums of 2013. Awesome!"
TesseracT, via Facebook



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USING THE

THE

CALIFORNIA METALLERS OF MICE & MEN ARE BACK WITH THEIR EAGERLY AWAITED THIRD ALBUM, 'RESTORING FORCE'. BUT THIS TIME, THEY TELL TG, THEY WON'T BE CAUGHT IN A METALCORE TRAP

OVER the last decade or so, metalcore has become the defining popular movement in heavy metal. Most of the fastest rising acts in that time – from Bullet For My Valentine to Avenged Sevenfold and Bring Me The Horizon – have their roots in its rich soil. Orange County five-piece Of Mice & Men were born in the heart of it in 2009, but took many by surprise when their rampaging last album, *The Flood*, broke the Billboard Top 30. Now, follow-up effort, *Restoring Force*, (due for release on 28 January) shows a band rapidly outgrowing the scene that raised them. The breakdowns have been scaled down, and thanks to the encouragement of producer David Bendeth (Paramore, Asking Alexandria), long-held but lesser-heard rock and nu-metal influences have been brought to the fore. We spoke to guitarists Phil Manansala and Alan Ashby about the gear wars behind their *Restoring Force* tones, working with "mad scientist" Bendeth, and becoming a "f**king rock 'n' roll band".

How did the success of *The Flood* affect your attitude towards the new album?

Phil: "It was actually kind of hard to write something that could battle with *The Flood*, so in our heads, when we were writing this new



FORCE

Words: Matthew Parker



"If we didn't work with David Bendeth, this album would have been something safe and easy"

album, we felt that we had to step out of the comfort zone."

Alan: "With *The Flood* we went a little bit heavier, a little bit more nu-metal and a bit more rock 'n' roll in our approach to writing the riffs, and it gave us a lot of confidence to think that we can do more than just playing breakdowns. We can write riffs and actual parts, so I guess it also gave us confidence in our writing abilities."

Which one of David Bendeth's past records persuaded you he was the right choice of producer?

Phil: "I'm a huge fan of Breaking Benjamin, so him making those records [*We Are Not Alone*, *Phobia* and *Dear Agony*] back in the day, it was like, 'Okay, we've got to go with that dude.' If we didn't work with him, this album wouldn't have been the same; it would have been something safe and easy. He really pushed us to our limits."

Alan: "The dude's a mad scientist genius! I could go down a huge list of things that he's done, but for me personally it was Breaking Benjamin, Papa Roach [*Time For Annihilation*] and Paramore's *Riot*."

Did your gear change for this album?

Alan: "This is the first album that we actually got to sit down and use real cabs and amps. With our last two, we'd do pre-production with live amps, but then when it came to the actual tracking, it was mostly POD Farm and plug-ins. With David, he's got the SSL console, he's like the real 'feel' guy. I can't tell you how many different guitars we went through on each song just to get tones right – I must have played six or seven different heads and about eight or nine guitars."

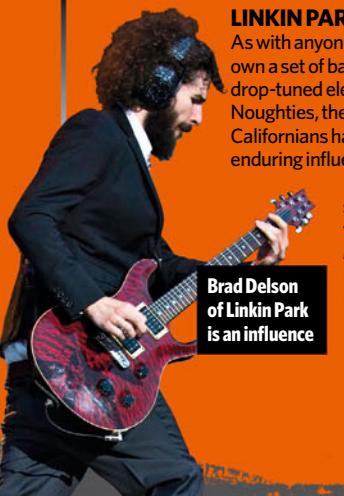
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HYBRID THEORIES

HOW OF MICE & MEN'S NU FAVOURITE BANDS INFLUENCED 'RESTORING FORCE'

Of Mice & Men's latest takes metalcore and gleefully hurls it into a bubbling cauldron of nu-metal influences, as Phil explains: "We always had these ideas and we never really pushed ourselves to keep on with them," says the guitarist. "[But this time] the stars aligned. I listen to *Restoring Force* in the car and I'm like, 'Damn, this is our album!' I hear Linkin Park's *Hybrid Theory* or Slipknot on the heavier songs. It's cool to hear our influences finally coming through in our music."



LINKIN PARK

As with anyone lucky enough to own a set of baggy cords and a drop-tuned electric guitar in the Noughties, the band's fellow Californians have had an enduring influence.

Feels Like Forever's super-punchy verse riffs are like *Hybrid Theory*-era Linkin on Lucozade.

DEFTONES

Space Enough To Grow – all minor arpeggios and drifting spacious delays – positively soaks itself in the critically lauded metallers', err, digital bath. Elsewhere, Stef Carpenter's more mountainous, rapacious riffing can be heard, albeit at a somewhat less red-eyed pace.



Stef Carpenter
at work on stage

And your favourite guitars and amps?

Alan: "There was this Naylor head, which had a scooped midrange and sounded so good for metalcore riffs, and a modded-out Marshall JCM900 head called a Friedman, which was just awesome. I also got to use the baritone Les Paul Studio that Breaking Benjamin recorded their whole album with, so that was a really cool one for me. Then several of my ESP Eclipses, several Horizons..."

Phil: "We play a lot of active-pickup guitars, but David was all about using his classic gear, so we used a lot of his Gibsons. Every guitar [we brought in] he was like, 'That's weak!' And I'd be like, 'Yeah, f***k, you're right...' I got lucky with a couple of my guitars: I got to play two ESPs – my seven-string and then my Kirk Hammett-issue ESP but I put the new James Hetfield EMG pickups in it. I was really happy about that because he hated active pickups, but when I brought that in, he finally liked it!"

Metalcore has a fairly limited palette of techniques and tones. Were you keen to explore new regions as players?

Phil: "I felt like we did enough of the metalcore stuff. I love that – all of the breakdowns and everything – but we're a band that wants to keep moving forward. We always want more and we want to be better than everyone else in our scene, so trying rock-style songs was definitely something that we had to do."

Alan: "The cool thing to me about the band has been that we can do lots of different genres – not pigeonhole ourselves to be a

"We always want more, and we want to be better than everyone else in our scene"



Of Mice & Men have been progressing to bigger venues, with bigger bands

specific 'metalcore' band. We're a f***ing rock 'n' roll band. We like rock music. There's some metalcore aspects, there's some nu-metal aspects, whatever, we just didn't want an album that all sounded like the same song."

Phil, how did you develop your playing as a lead guitarist?

Phil: "I went from the basics: I started learning older songs and different scales – and just relearning the guitar. I found ideas came out from listening to older songs that I loved. *Would You Still Be There*, that song was not a normal Of Mice & Men song. When you listen to it, you're like, 'Damn that's like Papa Roach or Breaking Benjamin.' Or a song like *Identity Disorder*, there's barely any guitar in the verse, it's just the bass part with guitar harmonics and a tremolo in the back.

"They don't sound like [old] Of Mice & Men, but you can totally hear the band. Both were ones where everyone was like, Jesus, what's going to happen with these songs? But then two days before we finish the record, the guys knocked out the vocals and before you know it, they're two of the best hits."

Which guitar moment are you most proud of on *Restoring Force*?

Phil: "I did have one special moment. Dave was pissed at me – he always got underneath my skin just to push my buttons – it was on the song *Another You*, then I actually did it in one take. So I definitely pat myself on the back for that, because it was a difficult song to do. That's



OM&M (l-r): Phil Manansala, Valentino Arteaga, Austin Carlile, Aaron Pauley and Alan Ashby

the one that I think is the best, mainly because I got the nickname One-Take Phil!"

Alan: "For me, it was a Dunlop Cry Baby wah solo on *Bones Exposed*. I grew up loving Slash, so I've just always wanted to have a f***ing Dunlop Cry Baby guitar solo. Everybody was like, 'Yeah, I don't really know...' I was like, 'Watch this!' Then I had a few beers, went into the studio for two hours and came out with the solo and everyone was like, 'Yep – we're keeping it!'

"There's also a cool moment on *Public Service Announcement* where there's a lot of feedback and it kind of sounds like there's a guitar just getting thrown around a room – and that's literally what it was. Dave Bendeth came in and was like, 'You're not being f***ing mean enough to that guitar!' He took it out of my hand and was just bashing it up against the cab! So there's a part at the end that sounds like chaos – and that's what it was."

The band will likely go on to bigger things with this record. Do you think you're prepared for that, personally?

Phil: "We wouldn't write the album if we weren't. We didn't go to the studio going, 'We're going to write these kind of songs!' It just kind of came to us. We just write the music we like and we wrote catchier stuff. You never hope to be one of those Slipknots or Linkin Parks or Blink-182s. You want to be that band, but it's up to the people and the music that we write."

Alan: "Honestly? I don't feel like I'm ever prepared for anything! I just take it as it comes. I feel like the band as a whole is ready. We love playing shows and we've been playing bigger shows with bigger bands, so hopefully yeah, that's what will come with it. No band wants to come out with an album and have less people listen to it. So you could say we're ready. Individually, I don't think any of us is ready – we learn as we go, man!" ●

Photography: Getty Images Max Fairdough



Aaron Fink of
Breaking Benjamin

BREAKING BENJAMIN

Phil and Alan are both massive fans of the currently defunct US heavy rockers' output. You'll hear it in Alan's chorus writing and Phil's effects-laden lead tones on the likes of *Break Free*.

PAPA ROACH

Tracks like *Would You Still Be There* inherit Papa Roach's God-given talent to rock all the nations, not to mention Jerry Horton's knack for octave-spanning palm-muted riffs and pull-off-based upper-string lead embellishments.



Jerry Horton
of Papa Roach

SLIPKNOT

There's certainly some 'Knot at work here: *Glass Hearts* channels the impressive intensity and chugging, percussive bounce of Iowa's finest, whereas the rage and grimy riffing of *Public Service Announcement* gets pulses racing in a way not felt since the days of the dildo mask.



The rhythmic riffery of Slipknot is echoed on *Restoring Force*

THE CREATOR

It's a Tony Iommi interview with a twist,
as TG invites the axe hero A-list,
including Tom Morello, Jim Root and Zakk Wylde,
to put their questions to Black Sabbath's dark lord.
Over to you, boys...



Words: Henry Yates **Photography:** Joby Sessions

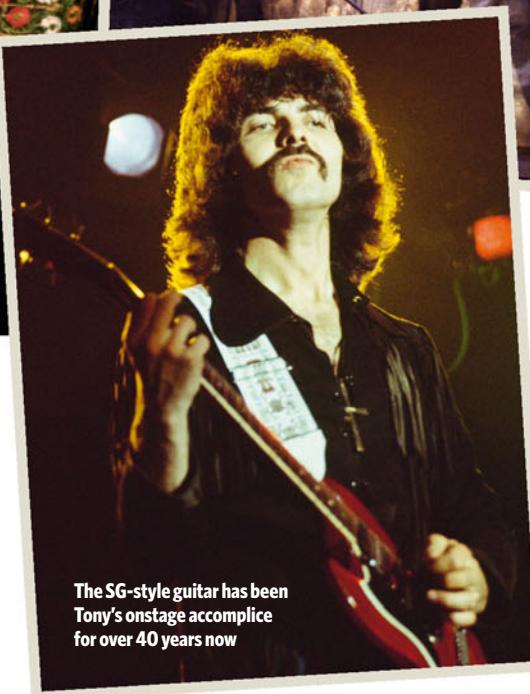
IT'S a funny thing, hero worship. At the bottom of the pile, there's us, the masses, swarming in the pit, battering on the limo windows, pleading with our idols to flick us a plectrum. Spend a little time in the music industry, though, and you realise that *everyone* is a fanboy. Even heroes have gods...

Case in point: when an interview with Black Sabbath's dark lord Tony Iommi came on the cards, TG put out the feelers to the guitar A-list to ask if, y'know, anyone fancied chipping in with a question. And lo, the emails pinged back. Some stars went with tech enquiries. Others went with thinly veiled gushing. And a few – Zacky Vengeance, we're looking at you – went with arm-chancing cheek. In every case, though, the respect was palpable.

And no wonder. No guitarist embodies 'heavy' quite like Iommi, or has done so much, for so long, to keep metal guitar alive. On Black Sabbath's eponymous 1970 debut, his anvil-heavy dino-riffs drew a line under the rinky-dink jangle of the 60s. By 1971's *Master Of Reality*, he'd single-handedly invented drop tuning, and become the planet's most iconic SG player (sorry, Angus). Even in the modern era, the Sabbath man has overcome cancer to strike back at manufactured pop with 2013's chart-topping *13*. So read on as we put the stars' questions to the Godfather of Metal – and a few queries of our own that we just *had* to ask. We're not worthy. Hell, even Tom Morello isn't worthy... **>>>**



Three 'taches and Ozzy: without this lot, there'd be no metal



TOM MORELLO



"Of the top 100 greatest rock riffs of all time, a substantial percentage of them are yours, sir. What makes a riff great to your ears - and what are a few of your favourite riffs by Sabbath and other artists?"

"I like a riff you can hum and whistle. It should stick in your head. They're usually simple, but some of them are harder to play than to listen to. I mean, the number of times I've heard people say, 'Oh yeah, I can play that...', then they play it and it's just not the same. It's the way you approach the riff, the feel and the vibe. Some people just play the notes, but you have to get that same hold-back on certain notes, and push others, to make it work."

"Oh God, there are so many Sabbath riffs. I like doing *Into The Void* and *Iron Man*, of course. Funnily enough, there's one of Tom's riffs that I really like – *Cochise*."

13 was a massive success – did you expect it to get to No 1?

"You never expect anything. Y'know, we weren't thinking, 'Oh, let's get to No 1 in the charts.' The main thing was to finally make another album together and enjoy doing it. You know what, it was Geezer Butler who emailed from LA to tell me. I was in the garden, actually, and it was like, blimey, because we haven't had a No 1 since *Paranoid*. I went in and had a bottle of champagne with my wife. So rock 'n' roll is not dead. I hope not!"



Sabbath's latest topped the charts back in June 2013

STEVE LUKATHER



"You seemed to get over your finger impairment with ease. How did you deal with that? Much respect and well wishes."

"It certainly wasn't easy. It was really difficult emotionally, and I had no help in those days. The hospital specialists just said, 'Well, the best thing to do is to pack up.' I just couldn't accept that. In hindsight, the easiest thing would have been to learn to play right-handed, but I'd already been playing a couple of years, and it seemed like a lifetime. So I persevered playing left-handed and I made my own fingertips. I don't have the original ones, because I made them out of a Fairy Liquid bottle. Later on, I found somebody at Selly Oak hospital [in Birmingham] who made prosthetic limbs, and they took a mould of my fingers and made these tips out of a sort of resin. I still have 'em today."

Do you consider yourself to be the inventor of metal guitar?

"Erm... it's hard for me to say that. I hate talking about myself that way, because it's big-headed. The stuff I came up with from the off was just something I liked. I suppose I was the only one doing that stuff, and it was a battle trying to get this sort of music through, believe me. In them days, a lot of people didn't want to know. If you'd have mentioned metal, it was 'Oh God, not that!' Y'know, we fought for 45 years, trying to keep the flag flying. They tried to bury it, but it got bigger and now it's a genre of its own."

"So I've gained that title over the years. I get a little bit embarrassed, but it's fantastic to be called the inventor of metal. Did you hear about the doctorate I got from Coventry University? That was basically for inventing the idea of heavy metal. I never expected that. It's funny,

"Tapping isn't my style... I'm from the old school"

Tony Iommi

because now, after all the years we've fought through with this thing, we're getting awards: Grammys, this and that. It's just unbelievable."



ZAKK WYLDE

"Dear Lord Iommi – were any of the early heavy Sabbath riffs originally written on an acoustic?"

"Not really. In the early days of Sabbath, I gave up playing acoustic. After my accident, I really found it difficult to play, because my fingers would hurt. With acoustic, the strings are always heavy, and I couldn't press them down, so I abandoned it for many years. That's also why I came up with the idea of having lighter strings and lowering the tuning."



Tony pioneered the down-tuned sound that has become essential for metal

How has your creative process changed, after the huge challenges you've faced with cancer?

"It's changed my life completely. The way I look at life. Music helped me carry on. If I wasn't playing, I don't know what would happen. That's what kept me going, and working with Geezer and Ozzy. They came to my house for 13, and we worked in my studio, because I was having treatments every day. Some days, I'd feel really ill and I couldn't do it. But there was a sense of urgency. To be honest, I thought I wasn't going to live very long. When I first got the diagnosis, I thought, 'I've gotta get this album done and then that's it.' That's how I saw it. But I changed my mind as it went on. I got out of the depression by playing with the guys."

ALEX LIFESON

"As a successful musician whose career has spanned nearly a half-century, what continues to motivate you as a guitarist?"

"Guitars have always been a thing for me. I like writing new stuff and I always fiddle about

with them. Y'know, I want to try this, I want to try that, I want to try a different sound... it's constant. Sometimes you do get into a rut. In all the years I've been doing this, you can't help but get into that state. I get frustrated if the sound isn't right. But I fight through that. I've still got enthusiasm. If I'm at home, I'll think, 'I'm not going to do anything for a bit,' but I always do. I'll go into my studio, twiddle about, start putting ideas down. I can't keep away from it."

What do you think of the current state of heavy guitar playing?

"Well, guitar playing to me now is just mind-boggling. Some of the techniques they've learned over the years... mainly from Eddie Van Halen, y'know, the fingertapping-type thing. I mean, I couldn't do it. It's something I wouldn't be able to do, and it's not my style, but I do appreciate it. I like it, but so many people do it now, it almost gets like, 'Oh, another one.' I'm from the old school of the blues-style playing."

What guitar and pedals did you use on 13?

"Well, I didn't take too many guitars. Normally, I have a whole set of guitars around me, but I didn't this time, because the whole idea of >>>

TONE ON TONE

WHY OLD GEAR ISN'T ALWAYS BEST AND AMP MODELLING ISN'T ALWAYS BAD



JAKE E. LEE: "I LOVE 13, AND MOST OF THAT IS BECAUSE OF YOUR GUITAR TONE. WHAT AMP WERE YOU USING?"

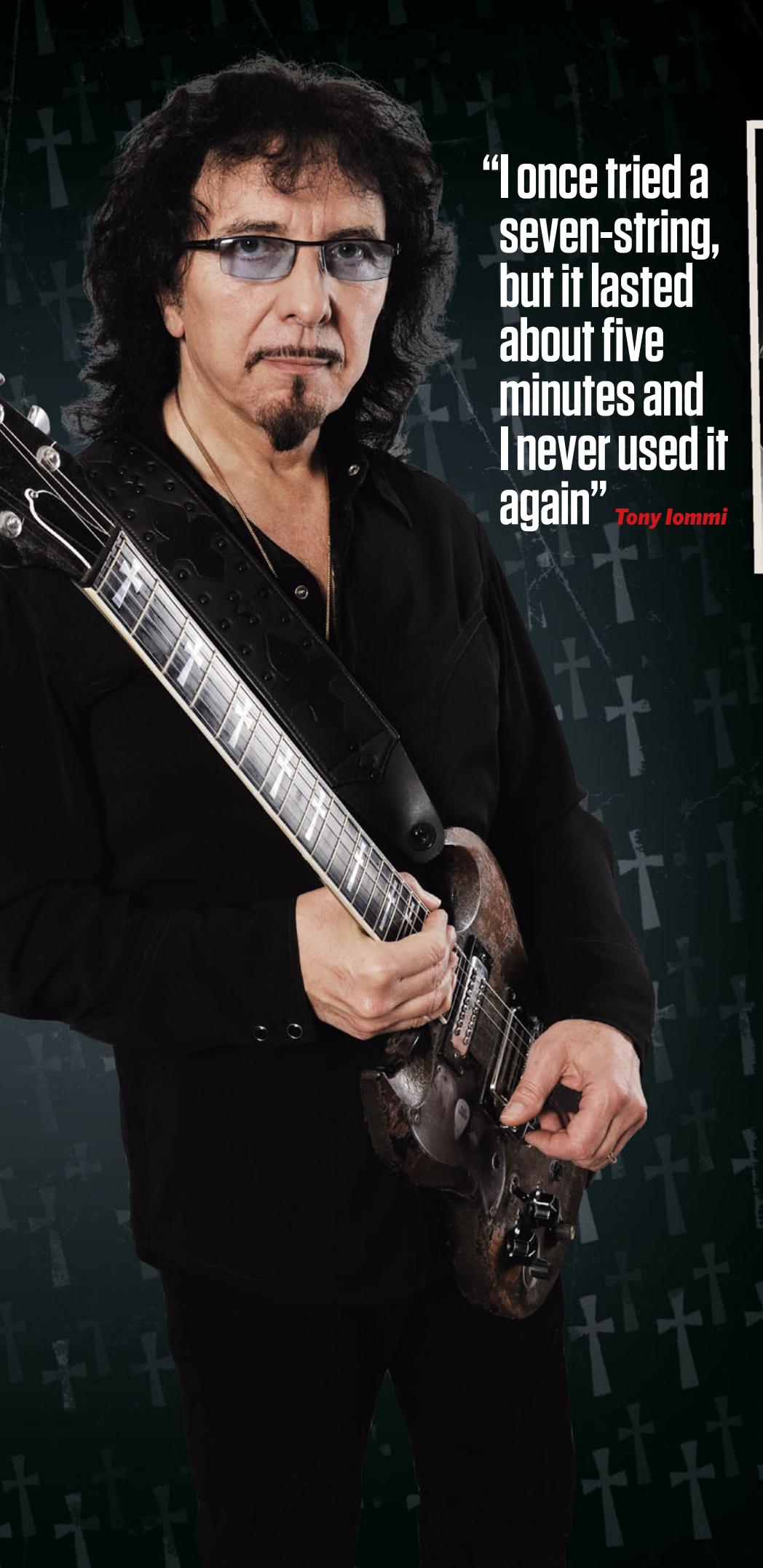
"I used my signature Laney amplifier, which is my second Laney model now. I'm really happy with the tone on 13. It's got a lot of variation. I backed off a lot of the drive and we got more of a cleaner sound, and that was quite different for me, but it worked. [At the start], Rick Rubin was adamant about wanting to get back to the old sound. When I arrived at the studio, there were 15 amps, all set up. Old Marshalls, old this, old that. I went through them all and I didn't like them. They just weren't like I remember them. Everybody thinks that because it's an old amp, it's gonna be great. But it's not the case. In those days – and I remember them well, because I was in those days – people had their amps modified. I always remember using one of Pete Townshend's amps in the early days, and thinking, 'Oh, that's a really great sound.' I got the company to send me some amps down... and they were nothing like it! It was obviously because he'd had work done on it."

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MODERN GUITAR TRENDS LIKE AMP MODELLING?

"Well, I suppose I approve of it for people who are trying to get an instant sound. It seems like these days, people want something quick. You can go out and buy most things, get stuff quick off the internet. I'm from the old school, where I like to develop something, work on stuff myself and build it up. Not just say, 'Oh, I'll go out and buy a Ritchie Blackmore sound,' y'know? I think it's a bit more rewarding to create the sounds yourself. It's getting into more technology now with computerised stuff, but I still like the old way."

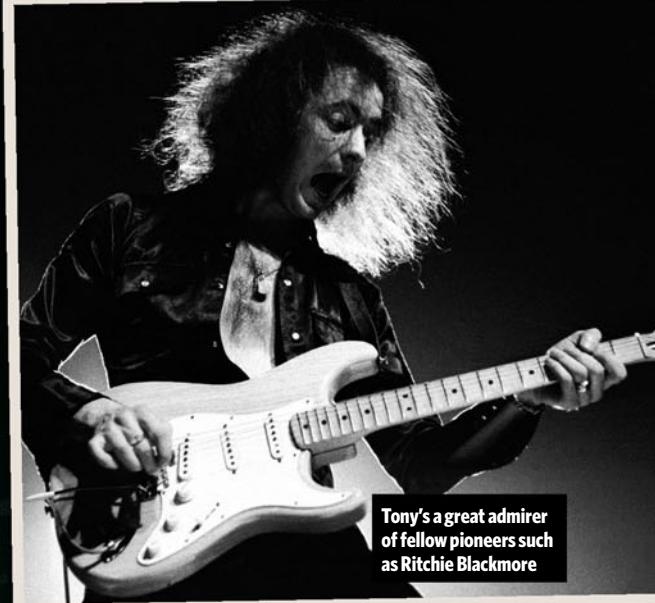


Iommi picks out EVH as being instrumental in the evolution of metal guitar



"I once tried a seven-string, but it lasted about five minutes and I never used it again"

Tony Iommi



Tony's a great admirer of fellow pioneers such as Ritchie Blackmore

13 was to keep it very basic and not overdo it. Mainly, I used a white SG that Jaydee [aka luthier John Diggins] made for me. He made it just a couple of months before we started recording. For effects, I used the Chicago Iron Parachute Wah, which is a copy of the Tycobrahe. And a chorus pedal that I think is probably a Boss, but I can't actually remember, because it's built into my pedalboard. It's a Mike Hill system, which is very good."

MAX CAVALERA



"Do you remember the time you wrote the riff for Symptom Of The Universe? To me, it's the best heavy metal riff ever written!"

"Oh God... no. Sometimes with Sabbath, we'd go into a rehearsal room and everybody's looking at me, waiting for me to come up with an idea. So you were sort of put on the spot, really. Quite often, I'd wing it and come up with something, and I could always tell if they liked it – because if they didn't, they wouldn't join in! I do like *Symptom Of The Universe*. I used to love playing that on stage. We used to do the full version of it, years ago, but, of course, it's very high for Ozzy to sing, so we don't do that now."

Which song on 13 are you proudest of from a guitar perspective?

"The one that I enjoyed doing – which was a surprise – was the bluesy one, *Damaged Soul*. That was totally off-the-cuff. Every day, we'd go in the studio and Rick would say, 'Just have a jam for 10 minutes.' We looked at him, and went, 'Why?' After we'd finished all the recordings, we went, 'Okay.' It was just going to be a loose thing. We never expected it'd be on the album. I just came up with these riffs, and we nodded at each other when to change. That was it. But it was good. It was fresh."



Luthier John Diggins has made Tony's custom 24-fret SG-type axes for many years



MIKAEL ÅKERFELDT

"Hi Tony! I love you, you're my idol. Together with Black Sabbath, Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple

and Uriah Heep are widely known as pioneers of hard-rock music. What's your opinion on the guitar players from those bands?"

"Oh, they're all fantastic. Y'know, those players were there from the off. In them days, you had to come up with something yourself. There weren't many people you could copy off. Today, there are a lot of things that guitar players can learn from to improve, but to come up with the initial stuff in the first place is difficult. You were basically just looking back to the blues players. Those early players were the groundwork for what's here today. Page has come up with some great riffs, and so has Ritchie Blackmore, which you don't hear now, because he's sort of left the rock scene. Clapton, too, of course. I still see Jimmy. He flew over to a show in Amsterdam a few years ago. I haven't seen Ritchie for a few years. He doesn't mix that much."

What is it about the SG that appeals to you?

"I like the size of it. I mean, when we did the *Black Sabbath* album, I was using a Strat. I did one track with it, then the pickup went. In them days, you couldn't just go in and buy a pickup, like you can now. It was a real struggle. We only had a day to do the album, and I happened to have an SG as a spare guitar. I'd never really used it, but my Strat went down and I ended up using the SG for the first album. It's stuck with me. I like the shape of it. I've got used to it. But in the early days, I did want a 24-fret SG. I went to a few big companies and they said, 'Oh no, we can't do that – 22 frets, that's it.' So I invested in a guitar company in the 70s to build me the equipment I wanted. I came up with the 24-fret and then I worked with Jaydee on the locking nut, many years before everybody used them."



ZACKY VENGEANCE

"Can I have one of your left-handed SGs? It's the only guitar I would care about in my entire collection for as long as I live!"

"Erm... we'll talk about it. As a matter of fact, I've actually got rid of a lot of my guitars now. It was getting ridiculous. I really didn't know where to put them. It was a shame. I mean, people should be using them, y'know? So I've passed them on. Some of them are in the Hard Rock Cafe. I've just kept about 20 of them, I suppose. It's not a bad collection."



GUS G

"No other wah sounds like your Tycobrahe. Where did you come across those pedals and have you always used them? Thanks, master – from your biggest disciple."

"Well, I used Tycobrahe from the very early days, and they only made so many of the originals. It was originally a PA company, and then they started making pedals, and I think Sabbath were one of the first bands to have them. I think Hendrix had one as well, but there was only a few people that had them. But then they stopped making them, and I was thinking, 'My God, what am I going to do now?' So I did buy as many as I could. And then this company in Chicago came out that did a replica of it [Chicago Iron Parachute], so I use them now."

Do you see seven- and eight-string guitars as a natural progression of the down-tuning method you first pioneered? And have you tried a seven or eight-string?

"Yes, but I did it on my own guitar. I never actually used seven strings, I just used the six >>>



CHILDREN OF THE GRAVE

THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF SABBATH WHO WORSHIP IOMMI'S SOUND

WITCHCRAFT

Magnus Pelander's Swedish metallers spent three albums developing an impressively authentic retro doom sound before disbanding and re-emerging with new guitarists and a more modern sound with 2012's *Legend*. Their riffs remain righteous.

Hear: *Legend* (2012)

ORCHID

Not only named after a Sabbath song, these San Franciscans are serious sonic supernauts. They frequently *really* sound like the boys from Brum, and they do it very well indeed; Mark Thomas Baker plays like he's been dropped by Beelzebub straight out of 1971.

Hear: *The Mouths Of Madness* (2013)

BLOOD CEREMONY

These Canadian occultists, fronted by flute-playing Alia O'Brien, have gradually moved away from the Sabbath worship of their debut, adding some more folky psychedelia to great riffage on last year's third album, *The Eldritch Dark*. It's let them keep the 70s spirit alive while also developing their own voice.

Hear: *Living With The Ancients* (2011)

UNCLE ACID & THE DEADBEATS

These young Cambridge psychedelics recently had the honour of supporting Sabbath and reach right back to the fuzzy roots of heavy music. Too often Iommi influence means formulaic doom, but there's some Beatles experimentalism spirit creeping into 2013's *Mind Control*.

Hear: *Blood Lust* (2012)

SAHG

Now four albums in, these seriously underrated Norwegians don't ape Sabbath like mere clones, but they have a similar otherworldly mystique to their hard rock dynamics. Mind you, Olav Iverson is certainly close to golden age Ozzy vocally at times.

Hear: *Sahg II* (2008)

"There's no practice like when you go out on stage"

Tony Iommi

and tuned them down. And that, again, was because I always liked to try things. I always tried different tunings, different sounds. And of course, in them days, they'd say, 'Oh, you can't do that, that's not right.' And I just thought, 'Well, I am doing it, and it's gotta be right, because it works for me.' I've never tried an eight-string. I tried a seven-string – I think Jaydee got me one – but it lasted about five minutes and I never used it again."

JIM ROOT

"Songwriting is an open process – how do you personally approach it?"

"All ways, really. I did a lot of preparation for 13 at home, in my studio, just me and the engineer. We put down a lot of riffs. They come off-the-cuff and I'll put 'em down, and then I'll listen to them a few days later and think, 'I'll use that one,' and push the others aside. And then I'd build them up. My engineer will put programmed drums and a bass on them, just so we can see how they're gonna sound. Then I give the other guys a CD with probably 50 or 60 riffs on, and it gives us a start, then, of where we're gonna go. But I'll play it either way. Sometimes, I just play a riff and then I'll build it up when we're all together playing it. Other times, I'll put a total idea down and see what they think. Songs can hit me any time. I've been quite lucky, dare I say it. I'll probably run out of them now!"

GRANT NICHOLAS

"One of my first school bands was called Sweet Leaf and we covered songs like N.I.B and Paranoid. What were you using for distortion in the early Sabbath days?"

"Well, again, in the early days, I was the first to do all that, and everybody thought I was mad. I used to have a Marshall 50-watt amp, and I used a Rangemaster Treble Booster. In the 60s, I was in a band with Bill Ward up in Carlisle, and there was this guitar player who was an electronics guy, so I gave him this Treble Booster, and lo and behold, he put in some new resistors and transistors



Tony is one of rock's most famous southpaws, but it's not easy to find the right axe

and it sounded really great. I used to plug it into the bass input of my old Marshall amp, and I just loved it.

"I had that up to 1980. Then I had this guy come to work for us, to rebuild my Marshall amps. We were living out in Miami, doing the *Heaven And Hell* album with Ronnie Dio, and I had this guy in the back room building these amps. I happened to go in one day and said, 'Where's my treble booster?' And he went, 'Oh, that? I threw that away weeks ago.' What?! I couldn't bloody believe it! That was a classic, and he threw it out. After that, I tried to get it all built into the amp, but it was never the same."

"But believe me, I wished for many years that I played right-handed. When we started, I couldn't get a left-handed guitar for love nor money. I tried playing right-handed guitars upside down, which was a real pig, because all the knobs would be up the other way. I always wanted a Strat, and eventually I went into a shop in Birmingham, and they'd got a left-handed Sunburst one behind the counter. I managed to get the money together, got it home, painted it white, had a fiddle about. That was it. I'd finally got one."

CARL VERHEYEN

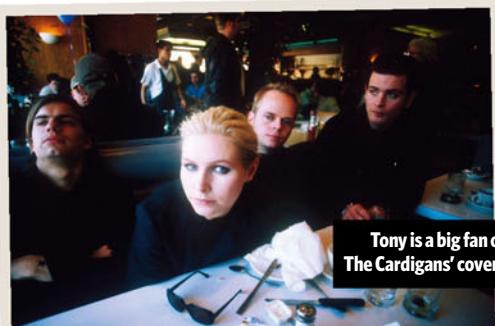
"Do you practise between tours and albums? If so, what do you work on?"

"I used to practise all the time. Now I don't, really.

Normally, when we're gonna do a tour, I'll go into the studio and I'll put some riffs down. But there's no practice like when you go on stage. You can practise all you like, but when you go on stage in front of 20,000 kids or whatever, that's when you've really got to play. You've got to go for it then."

Do you have a favourite cover version of a Black Sabbath song?

"I remember hearing one from that Swedish band, with the girl singer – The Cardigans. They did *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath*, and I thought, 'Blimey, that's weird,' but it was really different and amazing. I've had a lot of Sabbath cover versions sent to me. I heard one done on accordions – and it was really good. Choirs, all sorts of stuff. It's amazing, the things they do with them." ●



Tony is a big fan of The Cardigans' covers

THIS IS **THE SOUND**



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GARY CLARK JR.
MAY 17, 2013
ROYAL ALBERT HALL, LONDON

Fender

IOMMI'S INFLUENCE



As undisputed Godfather of Metal, Iommi has cultivated an entire genre. TG takes a closer look at his playing style and lasting influence

THE style of guitar playing and songwriting techniques Tony Iommi laid down on the 70s Black Sabbath albums formed a blueprint still used today by almost every metal band in existence. The concept of a powerchord-based riff played through a cranked, distorted amp seems completely normal to us today, and Tony Iommi was – while not the very first – one of the most significant pioneers of this approach.

Iommi is also regarded as a master of riffing, having written some of the most famous guitar lines ever, such as *Paranoid* and *Iron Man*. The dark, brooding atmosphere of metal is down to careful note choice, particularly the evil-sounding tritone (aka ♯5th) interval that drives many Black Sabbath songs. Play along with our Iommi-style riffs and master six of the most influential elements of Tony's playing. ●

TRITONE RIFFS TRACK 15-16

J.=60

TAB

The tritone or ♯5th interval is the key to those evil, sludgy riffs from tracks such as *Black Sabbath* and *Electric Funeral*, which directly influenced 90s doom metal bands including Cathedral and Paradise Lost. Here, the all-important ♯5th is at the 1st fret on the fifth string. The open sixth string is the root note.

BLUES SCALE RIFFS TRACK 17-18

J.=120

N.C. E⁵ N.C. D⁵ 1. 2. 3. N.C. 4. N.C.

The *Sabbath Cadabra* and *Sweet Leaf* riffs reveal Tony's blues roots and the blues scale sound is still used throughout the metal genre by bands such as Black Label Society, Rage Against The Machine, Pantera and Lamb Of God. Use your first, second and third fingers on the first three frets of the guitar here.

POWERCHORD SLIDES TRACK 19-20

B=80

Play 4 times

Tony's dense powerchord tone in *Iron Man* and *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath* is due to his preference for using the two thickest strings. 80s thrash metal acts such as Anthrax, Megadeth and Metallica took the movable powerchord and based their whole sound on it. Modern bands including Trivium and Avenged Sevenfold followed suit.

DOWN-TUNED RIFFS TRACK 21-22

B=110

(8^{vb})

(8^{vb})

Tony sometimes tunes his guitar down three semitones to C# F# B E G# C#. Tracks like *Lord Of This World*, *Into The Void* and *Snowblind* had a huge influence on metal, with bands such as Soundgarden, Killswitch Engage and Meshuggah all getting down and dirty. We've kept things simple: you can play this riff by down-tuning your sixth string.

MELLOW CHORDS TRACK 23-24

B=80

let ring

Play 4 times

With tracks such as *Embryo*, *Fluff* and *Planet Caravan*, Tony made it okay for metallers to explore their softer side. Today, modern prog metal bands including Dream Theater and Opeth continue to explore the contrast between heavy and soft. Our idea is in E minor, which is great for mellow chords, as all the open strings are in key.

DOUBLE-TRACKED SOLOS TRACK 25-26

One of Tony's trademarks is double-tracking solos to thicken up the sound and create a wide chorusing effect. The lead work in *Children Of The Grave*, *War Pigs* and *N.I.B.* led to Ozzy Osbourne axeman Randy Rhoads following suit. You can 'fake' double-tracking with a delay pedal set to a single repeat at about 25 to 50ms.

SABBATH RIFFS YOU SHOULD KNOW

TG DELVES INTO TONY IOMMI'S BACK CATALOGUE TO CHOOSE A FEW FAVOURITE RIFFS. CHECK OUT OUR VIDEO LESSONS...

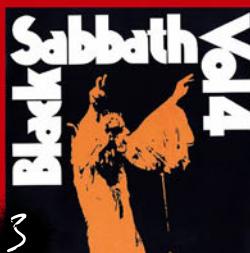
VIDEO!
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Electric Funeral (main riff)
This riff from Sabbath's second album is double-tracked. On the left side is the wah-wah guitar (simply press your toes down on every note); on the right, the same part is played with a dirtier sound, but no wah. If you're playing live, we'd recommend using a wah. You could emulate the double-tracking by playing with a second guitarist, but it isn't essential. We wedged a battery under our wah pedal to help restrict pedal movement.



Killing Yourself To Live (chorus riff)
This riff uses two typical Iommi techniques. First, he tunes down to C# standard (C# F# B E G# C#). You could play this particular riff in standard tuning, but the rest of the track needs the C# tuning. Still, the slack strings help create the dark and woolly distortion tone. The second common element of Iommi's playing here is the use of powerchords in a chromatic run from A5, G#5, G5 and F#5.



Supernaut (intro riff)
This track sees Iommi down-tuning to C# standard. The key to nailing the riff is sliding from note to note. It's a hell of a lot easier to use hammer-ons and pull-offs, but sliding gives the riff a sense of fluid movement. This is enhanced with the signature warble of a flanger effect. There is a tightly played overdubbed harmony line based on the C# major pentatonic scale. You'll need a second guitarist here.



Voodoo (intro riff)
This riff from 1981 album *Mob Rules* is in E standard tuning (E, A, D, G, B, E,) and requires a deft touch as you switch between palm mutes and ringing notes. There's also a switch from single notes to powerchords to bear in mind, all with some tricky syncopated rhythms. This is definitely one to practise slowly, if only to make sure that you are nailing the timing. It's all too easy to mis-time one or two of those chord stabs.



Under The Sun (intro riff)
This riff is in C# standard tuning and is very easy to play. The whole riff is based on a basic powerchord shape that you move around the fretboard. In typical Iommi style, there's some chromatic movement as he plays powerchords at the 10th, 9th, 8th, 7th and 6th frets – no bright, happy major key stuff here! What's significant about all this? Well, just listen to the power. This is pretty much the birth of doom metal, right here.



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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STEAL THEIR STYLE

NOEL GALLAGHER

THE TECHNIQUES AND TONES OF YOUR HEROES

THREE chords. Two fingers.

One eyebrow. Oasis were never ones to overcomplicate things and as a dole-queue Manc dreamer, Noel's setup was similarly simple.

In the early years, as the Guv'nor admits, "I wouldn't even try to experiment, because I couldn't be bothered." Instead, on 1994's *Definitely Maybe*, he went route-one with a Les Paul or Epiphone Casino into 100-watt Marshalls, "turned up as full as I could get them", with the occasional dash of Space Echo.

But it's funny what a few planet-sized royalty cheques can do for a man's guitar habit. By 2000's *Standing On The Shoulder Of Giants*, Noel was a 'proper' rock star, and spending like one, too, with 60s Strats and Teles jostling with Epiphone Sheratons and a Rickenbacker Mapleglo in his 180-strong collection. Even more critical to the mid-period Oasis sound were Noel's vintage Fender Bandmaster and Princeton amps – plus a boutique Clark Tyger – alongside old 70s Tube Screamers for solos.

Since going solo, Noel has called his Gibson ES-355 "the basis for everything", and generally plays through a Hiwatt Custom 100 or pint-sized tube-powered Fender Blues Junior. For all that, his most iconic model remains the Epiphone Union Jack Sheraton: the definitive Britpop guitar, forever evoking blissful summers, lukewarm Carling and arms around your mates.

Words: Henry Yates and Steve Allsworth Photography: FilmMagic Getty Images



NOEL'S GIG BAG

If you're going to stand on the shoulders of this Britpop giant, TG shows you how to get Gallagher's sound, whatever your budget

THE 'SOME MIGHT PAY' RIG

① EPIPHONE DOT (£299)

Noel has used the semi-hollow format since 1994, making the Cherry Dot a great budget box-ticker

② MARSHALL MG101CFX (£289)

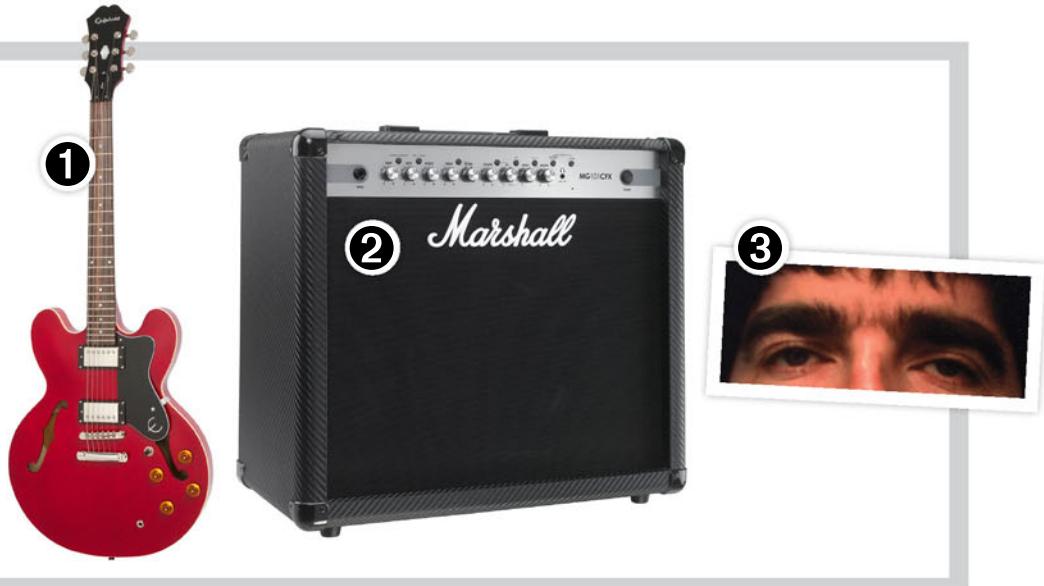
Perfect for that *Definitely Maybe* crunch, loud enough to gig, and with onboard delay

③ FALSE EYEBROWS (£2.67)

Recreate the iconic Gallagher mono-brow – from funfancydress.com

TOTAL: £590.67

(APPROX. BASED ON WEB PRICES)



'THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING MINTED' RIG

① GIBSON 1959 ES-335 DOT REISSUE (£1,599)

Okay, so it's not quite Noel's ES-335, but this vintage-inspired beauty will get you in the semi-hollow ballpark

② FENDER BLUES JUNIOR (£465)

Noel's go-to studio amp in the modern era, with 12AX7 and EL84 valves

③ IBANEZ TUBE SCREAMER (£125)

Send your solos supersonic with Ibanez's famous stompbox

④ GAUTHIER ROSE CHAMPAGNE (£20)

Perfect for the toasting the moment you go supernova – from Ocado.com

TOTAL: £2,209

(APPROX. BASED ON WEB PRICES)



GET THE SOUND

NOEL'S early days should inspire you if you're on a budget, since his main guitars were affordable Epiphone Les Paul, Sheraton and Casino models (moving onto more expensive Gibsons later on). The main thing to understand is the warmer sound you'll get from a humbucker, usually the bridge position. Typical 'British'-type gain/distortion should come courtesy of a Marshall amp. Avoid over-saturated distortion sounds (typically more 'fizzy' sounding with less bite in the midrange), keep your amp's gain moderate and try boosting your solo sounds with an Ibanez Tube Screamer or similar overdrive pedal.

AMP SETTINGS



NOEL'S PLAYING STYLE

Master Noel's approach to riffing, Indian-inspired Mixolydian ideas and pentatonic soloing

IF YOU ever find yourself playing in a covers band, it's almost inevitable that you'll have a few select Oasis tunes on your setlist. It's vital to cop Noel Gallagher's rhythm and lead guitar style, then. Having penned some

of the most memorable guitar hooks and riffs of the last 20 years, Noel has helped define the indie sound of the 90s and Noughties, most notably Britpop. This month we're looking at his rhythm and lead style, which draws

from classic rock sounds of the 60s and 70s. TG's riffs cover Noel's strong sense of melody, chord tones, pentatonic solos and inspiration from his heroes, most notably The Beatles.

INDIE RHYTHM RIFF TRACKS 27-28

This riff is typical of Noel's approach to open position chords. He'll often place a capo at the 1st or 2nd fret because this suits the range of his voice. The interesting thing here is the use of the open first string in all of the chords, which gives a more 'grown-up' sound and even makes the C#madd11 easier to play.

DRONE SLASH CHORDS TRACKS 29-30

The basic Asus2 shape is held as the bass notes change, creating some interesting harmonies. Make sure you mute out the fifth string in bars 2 and 4. Why not try experimenting with different bass notes? The idea works best with simple powerchords and 'sus' chords.

INDIAN-STYLE MIXOLYDIAN RIFF TRACKS 31-32

The B 'Indian' pentatonic scale (B D# E F# A) is hinted at here. It's typical of the George Harrison inspired Sgt Pepper-era music that Noel often references.

OPEN-STRING DRONE LICK TRACKS 33-34

The trick here is to keep the open first string ringing without interfering with the second string. Arch your fingers to avoid accidental muting.

MAJOR PENTATONIC LICK TRACKS 35-36

This is typical Gallagher-style lead work, ascending the fretboard through the various pentatonic scale shapes. Notice how each phrase lands on a note from the chord at each change. The F chord comes from another key signature, hinting at the G Mixolydian mode (G A B C D E F).



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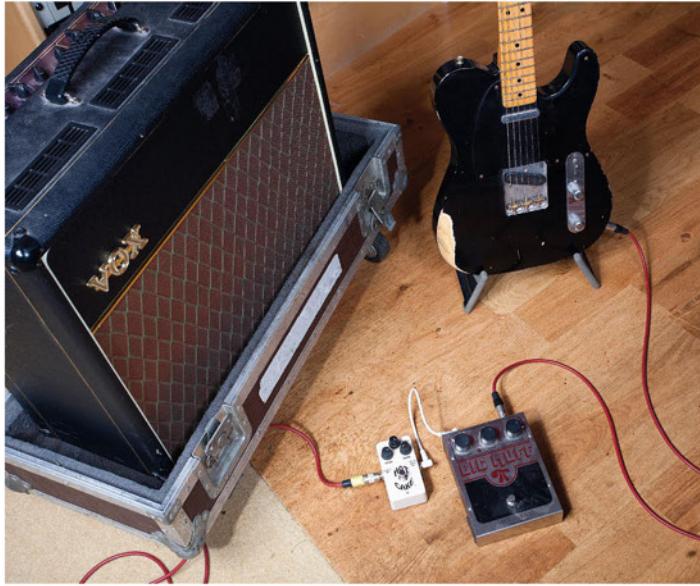
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Words: Rob Laing

BASICS FIRST BAND PRACTICE

You've got your band together, now you need to get your sound sorted ready to hit the stage or studio. Follow TG's tips for a successful band practice



MUSICIANS... it's like herding cats sometimes. Finding a few people you can stand to be in a room with for three hours without going crazy is hard enough, let alone share musical ambitions with. And then you have to make sure everyone can free up their busy schedules for the first step towards musical Mecca: the band practice.

But it needn't be so hard. With a bit of foresight and planning you can make sure your first band practices are both fun and worthwhile. Collaborating with musicians could be the best move you ever made as a guitarist, so grab your gigbag and let's get started...



BOOKING THE ROOM

SELECTION

You might think your garage is the perfect place for your new grindcore ensemble, but your neighbours won't. Find a shed in the middle of nowhere, the village hall or – best of all – book out a room at a rehearsal facility. Ask around for places via recommendations and search online in your area.

BOOKING

As you can imagine, there are plenty of promising local bands around and rehearsal rooms can be popular places, especially on weekends and certain weekday evenings. Make sure you agree a date with your bandmates that everyone will stick to – and book early. If you can agree to a regular night or weekend day for practice

it will be easier for regular booking, and everyone in the band will know where they stand.

GEAR NEEDS

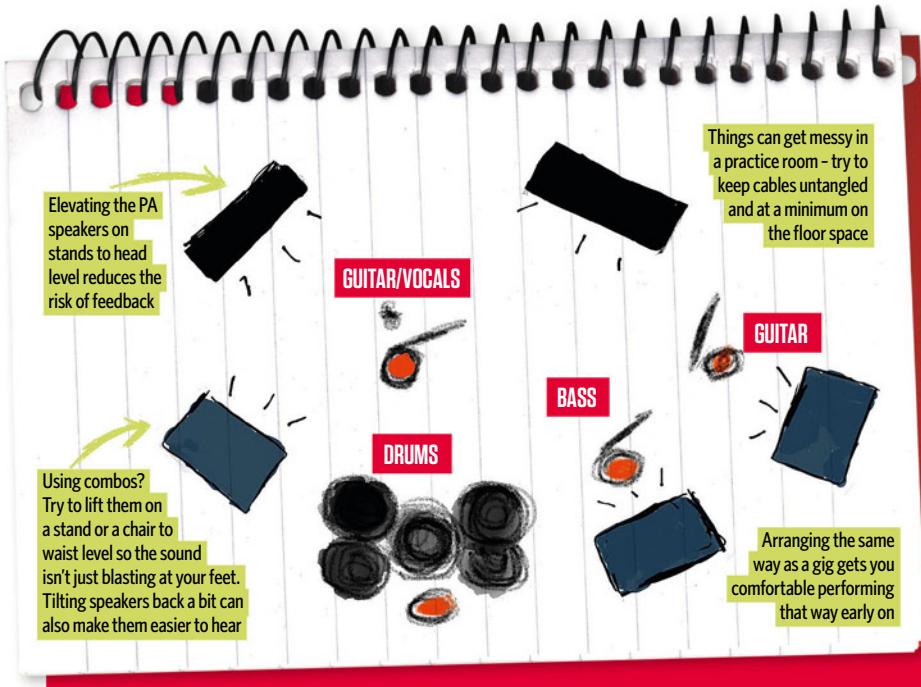
Find out what your bandmates will be bringing to the practice in terms of equipment, what they need, what the rehearsal facility includes in the hire, and what you might be able to rent at an additional charge (for example, the use of PA systems, cabs, leads, cymbals for drums, etc).

PLAY FAIR

Sharing is caring: make sure everyone chips in for the room fee equally. There's nothing like simmering resentment and a brooding feeling of inequality to kill off a band before it even gets as far as its first gig.

Leads always die at the worst possible moment. Buy spares





PREPARATION

PLAN

While walking into a room without any idea of what you're going to play is a nice idea for some jazzers, it's a frustrating waste of time for the rest of us. Jamming is great, but a few agreed songs bring a vital structure and can get things moving in a positive direction.

ESSENTIALS

Have you got cables and spares? We bet you haven't – pack guitar leads, patch cables, XLR and speaker cables, multi-plug adaptors, mics, strings, elusive plectrums... Bring 'em all!

COVERS

If you're playing covers, then make sure there's a general enthusiasm for playing them among the band. Does the song

choice represent the style that you want to pursue? Do you want to keep your version loyal to the original or put a very individual spin on it? These are things you need to discuss as an embryonic band.

DEMOS

If you're planning on playing original material, hand out a demo recording to each of the other musicians, and allow the other members not just to learn the chords, but to offer input into what they can bring to it, too.

ORDER

Write out a rough setlist plan of what to run through. A bit of structure like this can do wonders to focus everyone on making real progress.



THE PRACTICE

ROOM ARRANGEMENT IS CRUCIAL TO HEARING YOURSELF AND EACH OTHER

DO

SOUNDCHECK

Setting up everything for a band to play often feels like a military operation, and the temptation is to play as soon as you're plugged in. Treat practice time like a gig with a pre-performance soundcheck, and get everyone's levels right. It's a crucial experience and striking a balance between instrument levels will save time and buzzing ears later.

BE PROTECTED

It might get loud. Everyone needs to think about how to be heard at lower levels and maintaining their hearing health, because not enough players do. There's a wide range of hearing protection products available that can filter noise.

CAPTURE IDEAS

Take a recorder to capture anything you might want to revisit, expand upon later or even just evaluate to see how you can improve things.

ENJOY IT

Been over the same song 10 times and it's starting to feel like work? Kicking into a jam or something fresh can give everyone an inspirational kick-start.

DON'T

PLAY ALL THE TIME

Common mistake one: if members are trying to talk to each other before playing a song, don't just start riffing over them. Likewise, if you're trying to tune and the drummer decides to start paradiddlin' all over the shop – be considerate to each other and you'll make better music.

FORGET TEMPO

Common mistake two: us musicians are only human, and sometimes we will play songs faster or slower the second time around than we did the first. Agree on a tempo and try to stick to it; sometimes that will mean stopping the song and starting again.

FORGET COFFEE BREAKS

Never plough on for hours without taking a breather outside. There's more chance of intra-band tensions when people are tired, hungry and beaten into mental submission by repeated snare beats. Biscuit intake can help, too. Take food and drink.

PLAY ON 11

Don't think in terms of 'band volume' for your amp, set it according to the room. The smaller the room, the higher the sound pressure level (SPL) and the lower you need to set your volume.

Sometimes you just need to step away and take a break...

John Chamberlain
of Rewind Rehearsal
Studios, Hinckley



INSIDE PERSPECTIVE

A REHEARSAL ROOM MANAGER SHARES HIS WISDOM

John Chamberlain runs Rewind Rehearsal Rooms in Hinckley, Leicestershire, so he sees bands come and go every week – which makes him a perfect candidate to advise you on the pitfalls to avoid, and tips that we can all gain from.

What's the most common mistake that bands make when they come to your rehearsal facility?

"Turning up unprepared. You should make a plan of what you want to achieve from that night's rehearsal ahead of time – or at least think to yourself what you'd like to achieve. So many bands turn up and then spend the first hour deciding what songs they want to play, and then they start learning the songs. If you learn how to play the song on your own before you turn up, it'll all be much easier!"

What advice can you offer for bands wanting to get the most out of their time in the practice room?

"They should either write or learn a new song each week. So many bands end up getting bored because they turn up week after week, play through their set and then go home. You need to keep adding new songs to your set, if only for your own interest."

Is there any specific gear that players regularly forget to bring?

"Microphones, mic stands, mic leads. It must be a singer thing, but you can guarantee that not a night will go by without a band asking to borrow one of those three items. We supply drum kits, so all a drummer needs to bring is their cymbals, and we still get some turn up with no gear whatsoever. That's drummers for you! Having said that, I have had guitarists turn up without a guitar. Guitarists are usually pretty good for bringing their own gear, but you'll always get some without plectrums, leads or spare strings."

What are the cover versions you overhear being played the most?

"*Paranoid* by Black Sabbath is an old favourite. Lots of bands seem to have a go at *I Predict A Riot* as well, and then we have lots of Oasis and The Beatles."

What's the best thing about your job?

"I love seeing a band progress and improve over time. They start out playing as individuals all trying to be louder than each other, and then it all clicks and they become a band. It's really great when you see a band go from just starting out on their instruments to going out and gigging."

For more info on Rewind Rehearsal Rooms in Hinckley, head over to www.rewindrooms.co.uk



"Don't turn up unprepared. You should make a plan of what you want to achieve from that night's rehearsal"



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Words: Matt Parker **Photography:** Adam Gasson

RIG TOUR

THE DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN

From wireless guitars to tortilla chip picks, Dillinger's uncompromising metal magnate Ben Weinman reveals his tonal secrets as TG runs through his road-tested rig

The Dillinger Escape Plan live experience lies somewhere between a boisterous punk show and being trapped inside a washing machine's spin cycle with a load of bees and nails. At the heart of this whirlwind of aggression and complexity is guitarist/songwriting mastermind Ben Weinman – one of metal's most innovative guitarists. But while Ben may be most famed for his forward-thinking psycho-noodling and cliff-crumbing riffage, he also embraces innovation in his gear: from his new 'wireless' signature LTD, to his Mark V Mesa and weird wah, everything Ben uses has to be super flexible, user-friendly and practically bombproof...



Ben and his 'wireless' LTD signature X-Tone

Ben's LTD sports an EverTune bridge for ultimate stability



Watch the video to see more of Ben's Moser custom guitar

GUITARS

LTD Ben Weinman X-Tone signature guitar

"This is my signature guitar that I've just finished working on. It's going to be available soon. It's a semi-hollowbody guitar – a lot of people find it interesting that I use [this guitar] for playing aggressive music, but the main thing about Dillinger is the dynamics and this guitar covers every range. You can play quiet jazz stuff and it has a very full sound. In this model I've got EMG 81 and 85 pickups, so I've got different ranges of tone coming from those. The knob is out of reach, so that when you're playing you don't turn your volumes and tones off and on."

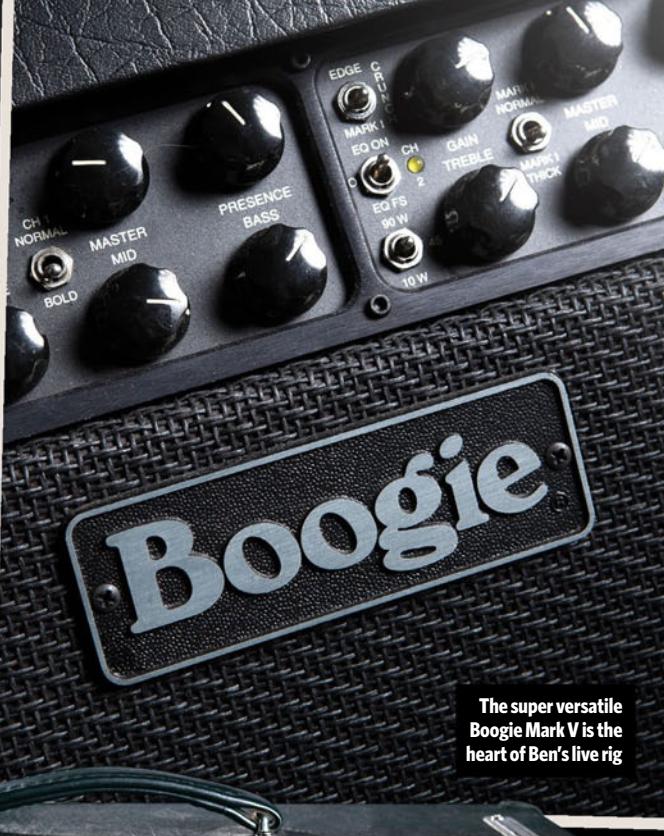
"I have also been putting my wireless transmitter inside the guitar, so when I'm playing I have nothing plugged in at all. I have a regular input jack, so you *can* plug it in, but I have a compartment, [the cover of] which is magnetised and then I have an input jack inside the guitar, so I can put my transmitters in there."

EverTune Bridge

"The [main] customisation that I've made to [my signature model] is the EverTune bridge, which is a new technology that enables every single string individually to be spring-loaded. You can tune the tension in each string, so whatever tuning you're using [usually E standard, in Ben's case – Ed], it'll remember the tension of that tuning. If the guitar gets warped, or you turn a tuning peg by mistake, or it's gone through a tough flight, you can pull it out of the case and it stays in tune. That's really been great for me and it's all mechanical, there are no electronics in it, so you don't have to worry about batteries. It's actually a pretty amazing invention."

Moser Custom Electric guitar

"This is a guitar that I've just had made for me by a company called Moser [luthier Neal Moser – previously of BC Rich and then the man behind the Rich Bich]. They're a company that makes amazing guitars. It's made of all mahogany and European maple and I really like the wood finish... [Again], the back of it has the compartment for my wireless and it's just a really well-made guitar. It's also tuned to standard E and it has custom pickups in it that he [Neal Moser] makes himself. It also has the ability to switch to single-coil or double-coil by just using one of the toggle switches."



ACCESSORIES



ERNIE BALL REGULAR SLINKY 0.010-0.046 GAUGE STRINGS

"Most of the time I tune to standard E. I have a couple of songs on this new record in drop D, which is new for us, so I keep my signature [for the standard tunings] and I just switch guitars for those songs. There are very few heavy bands out right now that do the standard tunings, like Metallica and the old stuff like that. It's really enabled us to push ourselves creatively, without relying on a tuning or a tone. It's been challenging, but it's also separated us from the herd."



DUNLOP ULTEX TRIANGLE PICKS

"Some people are surprised, but I actually use these big tortilla chips. The reason I use them is because every single side is the same. I play very aggressively. Everything is full-on, alternate picking with a very aggressive attack. Most of my tone comes from my hand and the way I play, so I go through picks really quickly – and having a pick like this, with so much surface space, means that when you're really digging in and you're sweating and you're attacking, it gives you the ability to really hold on. You can use all of the corners of the pick as you go through and sometimes I will use all of them, even within the one song."

AMP

Mesa/Boogie Mark V head

"This is my favourite amplifier that I've used. I used to use a Triple Rectifier, but this Mark V is particularly diverse. Again, our music is very dynamic and we've all kinds of things going on and this will cover the spectrum of things that happen within a Dillinger song."

"It's got three channels – so you've can have your typical clean tone, your middle gain and your distortion – then you can change the watts of every channel individually. So, if you wanna be able to play and push the tubes pretty aggressively – even at lower volumes, which sometimes is a circumstance for us when we're playing a smaller club – but you really want the amp to be optimised, you can lower the wattage from 90 to 45, and even to 25 on any individual channel. That way you get the most out of the head."

"Every single channel also has an individual reverb control, which is also controllable via the foot pedal [see p60]. That's great, because I typically have reverb on my cleans at all times, but I don't necessarily on my main distorted channel."

"It also has a five-band EQ, which can also be controlled from the foot pedal, so if you want some kind of a scooped sound for part of the song, or some specific tone, you can actually turn the EQ on and off from the foot pedal, which is really cool."

PEDALBOARD



1 Jim Dunlop Dimebag Signature Cry Baby wah

"It's a little more complex than the typical Cry Baby from Dunlop. You can affect gain and the range of scoop and sound and tone diversity and dynamic – and I've also had it customised to have an automatic on and off, so as soon as I let go of the wah it turns off. I always had problems where I'd leave it on and walk away and my tone would be totally screwed up and I couldn't work it out. Now I have this so that it automatically turns off [similar to the Morley Bad Horsie wah]."

3 Boss NS-2 Noise Suppressor

"It really cleans up your tone a lot without taking out too much sound from it. A typical gate works a little differently, but the Suppressor just cleans up the hum. When you have a really good, high-quality amplifier, I don't think you really need a gate, but having something that helps take out some of the hum and the hiss of the electricity that's going through the amp – especially when you're travelling a lot to different countries with different electricity – helps a lot."

4 Way Huge Swollen Pickle Fuzz

"It's a pretty funny name, but it doesn't sound funny: there's nothing funny about the Swollen Pickle! It's

basically like a really high, distorted fuzz. It says on it here that's it's 'jumbo fuzz'. I use it on a song called *Room Full Of Eyes* where we just need to take it up a notch and make it really, really heavy... It just makes everything that you put through it gnarly."

5 T-Rex Tap Tone Delay

"I have the tap set right now for a song called *One Of Us Is The Killer*, which is the title track off of our latest record, where I have a kind of ping-pong-y thing going on with a linear lead. I also use it for effects and noise quite a lot, as well. There's one song called *Crossburner* that I use it on quite a bit."

6 TC Electronic PolyTune

"It's amazing, because you can strum all of the strings and see simultaneously which ones are out. It shows you all of the strings in the spectrum, or you can use it just individually. A lot of tuners you can [only] use it one way or the other, but with this you can use both. It's really small and the TC Electronic stuff is great... the firm's really innovative with the way that it's doing things." ●



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GUITAR WORKOUT

PINCHED HARMONICS



TRACKS: 37-40



HOW TO COMPLETE YOUR WORKOUT

CHOOSE AN EXERCISE...

- EX 1: basic pinched harmonics (three minutes)
- EX 2: pinched harmonic triads (three minutes)
- EX 3: pinched harmonic overtones (three minutes)
- EX 4: rock riff (three minutes)

SET THE TEMPO ON YOUR METRONOME

These exercises can be played to a metronome to provide a greater technical challenge (we've suggested tempos beside each exercise). However, your main aim this month is to target the harmonic points and make sure they ring out clearly.

START THE STOPWATCH AND GO...

All of the exercises are suitable for all players except absolute beginners 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. Don't stop before three minutes is up, though!

PINCHED HARMONICS

Make your guitar squeal with delight as you follow this month's guide to producing perfect pinched harmonics

THE pinched harmonic (aka 'squealie') is a picking technique that enables you to create high-pitched singing notes beyond the range of the fretboard. The idea is to pick a note as normal but touch the string at a strong harmonic point with your thumb as part of the picking motion. With practice, this can be an exciting and dynamic addition to riffs and solos.

The technique is most associated with rock and metal, but it can be applied to many styles. In the 1960s, blues legend Roy Buchanan regularly used pinched harmonics throughout his solos and is said to be the first player to fully utilise the technique. During the 70s, ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons

further popularised squeals with classic tracks such as *La Grange* (tabbed in TG246). The 80s brought improved amp technology, providing players including Eddie Van Halen with more gain, perfect for riffs such as *Jamie's Crying*, while Zakk Wylde perfected the squeal in the 90s in Ozzy Osbourne tracks such as *Miracle Man*, and to this day he's regarded as honorary harmonic headmaster.

The technique is tricky, but practise this issue's tab examples and follow the workout routines to build the technique step by step. Select a bridge humbucker, dial in plenty of gain on your amp and be patient as you practise.



EX 1 Start your workout with this simple pinched harmonic exercise

TRACK 37

$\text{♩} = 80-125$

8^{va}

TAB

1 9 9 9 9 9 9 9

To play the pinched harmonics hold your pick so it's mostly hidden by your thumb and only the tip is visible. Pick a downstroke and allow the side of your thumb to briefly touch the string (above what would be the 33rd fret), all in one motion. Quickly lift your thumb away from the string and you should hear a harmonic.

WORKOUT SHEET – THREE MINUTES

- 1 80bpm – 45 seconds
- 2 95bpm – 45 seconds
- 3 110bpm – 45 seconds
- 4 125bpm – 45 seconds

TG TIPS

Use more gain to make harmonics more responsive

20-SECOND CHALLENGE

Move your finger to a new fret and find the position of the new harmonic



The best beard in rock is still too short to mute out Billy's harmonics

EX 2 Stage two is to practise producing more precisely pitched pinched harmonics

TRACK 38

$\text{♩} = 15^{\text{ma}}$

TAB

1 9 8 7 8 9 8 8

Here, your goal is to produce harmonics exactly two octaves above the fretted notes of the chord. To do this, you have to pick at a precise point 24 frets higher than the note you're fretting. You'll need to make small adjustments to the placement of your pick to mirror the position of the fretted notes.

WORKOUT SHEET – THREE MINUTES

- 1 80bpm – 45 seconds
- 2 95bpm – 45 seconds
- 3 110bpm – 45 seconds
- 4 125bpm – 45 seconds

TG TIPS

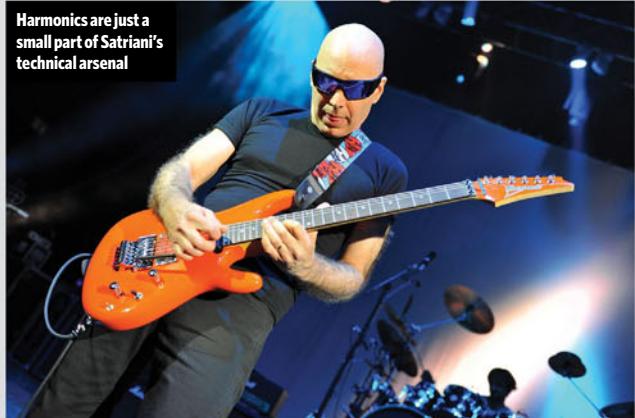
'Virtual' fret numbers are shown above the tab to help you

20-SECOND CHALLENGE

Try playing pinched harmonics using different chord shapes



Harmonics are just a small part of Satriani's technical arsenal



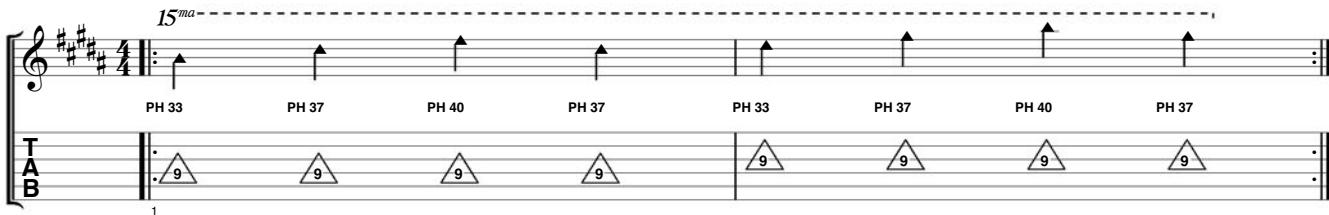
GUITAR WORKOUT

PINCHED HARMONICS

EX 3

Discover hidden 'overtone' harmonics by moving your pick along the string

TRACK 39



Keep your fretting finger at the 9th fret and this time move your pick towards the bridge to reveal the other available pitches. These harmonics are known as 'overtones'. You can play a B major triad (B D# F#) on the fourth string and an E major triad (E G# B) on the third string, keeping your finger at the 9th fret.

WORKOUT SHEET – THREE MINUTES

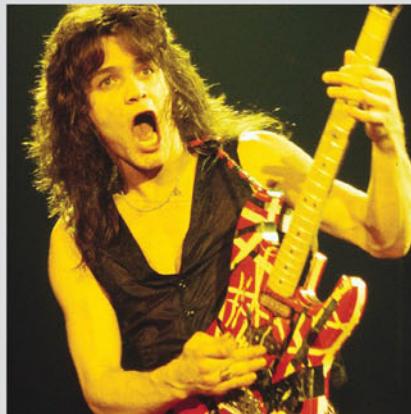
- 1 80bpm – 45 seconds
- 2 95bpm – 45 seconds
- 3 110bpm – 45 seconds
- 4 125bpm – 45 seconds

20-SECOND CHALLENGE

There are many more 'overtones' on the strings. Try and find some!

TG TIPS

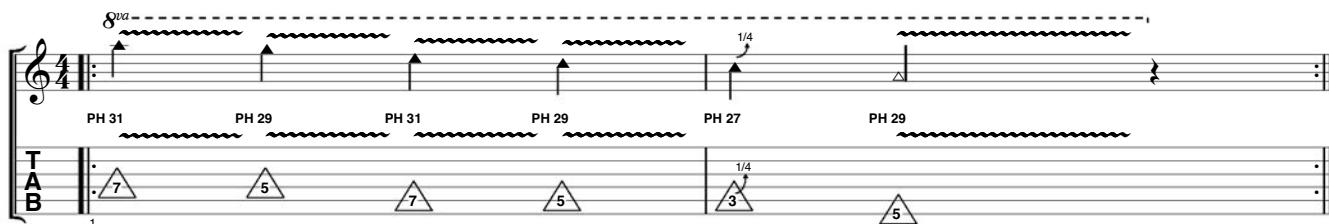
Use parts of your guitar's pickups as reference points for harmonic positions



A perfectly executed squealie may just make your jaw drop, too!

EX 4 Add some vibrato with your fret hand to make your pinched harmonics sing

TRACK 40



This is the kind of rock lick that Eddie Van Halen or Zakk Wylde might play. The fretted notes are from the A minor pentatonic scale (A C D E G) and the two-octave pinched harmonics are found 24 frets higher. Fret hand vibrato really brings these harmonics to life and makes them sing.

WORKOUT SHEET – THREE MINUTES

- 1 80bpm – 45 seconds
- 2 95bpm – 45 seconds
- 3 110bpm – 45 seconds
- 4 125bpm – 45 seconds

20-SECOND CHALLENGE

Play the lick using some other overtones

TG TIPS

Use vibrato to keep your harmonics ringing out



When it comes to pinched harmonics, Zakk is the daddy

Words & guitar: Charlie Griffiths

Photography: E. Aaron/Redferns/Getty Images

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LEARN TO PLAY

Each month TG brings you the best transcriptions and backing tracks on your TGCD, plus extra help in the form of Video Lessons online



BLACK HOLE SUN SOUNDGARDEN

STRUMALONG
THE WHO

84



IT'S all too easy to get carried away with superlatives when talking about a guitarist's influence. This month, however, we can safely say that our cover artist is one of the most influential players of all time. Here are but a few of the key techniques Tony Iommi was using back in the early 70s: down-tuning his guitar; powerchord riffing; high-gain tone; double-tracking; chromatic powerchord lines; dissonant intervals. Now, let's be clear – Tony was not the first to use any of these techniques. His lasting influence is how he fused these various elements together, forming a blueprint for all metal bands that have followed since.

With that in mind, we asked TG's own metal guru Charlie Griffiths to record some 'in the style of' Iommi riffs, focusing on those aspects of Tony's playing that have become part of the lasting DNA of heavy metal. Head over to p46 and check out Charlie's tab. We've also put some video lessons together of five of our favourite Black Sabbath riffs: *Electric Funeral*, *Killing Yourself To Live*, *Supernaut*, *Voodoo* and *Under The Sun*.

This month's full tab even owes a debt to Iommi's influence. The fusion of hard rock and psychedelia in Soundgarden's *Black Hole Sun* is all very Sabbath-y, and the two bands are often compared. Enjoy the issue!


Chris Bird Music Editor

Our labels explained

FULL TAB

OUR Full Tabs are transcriptions of your favourite songs, laid out in extra-wide pages of tab for the ultimate reading experience. We also offer extra help with tricky sections.

VIDEO LESSON

OUR Guest Lesson and Get Your Grades! tutorials feature extra help in the form of Video Lessons on our website. Visit totalguitar.co.uk/video whenever you see the orange Video Lesson logo in the magazine.

STRUM ALONG

SOMETIMES you just want to nail the chords and strumming patterns of your favourite song then sing along. Strum-alongs help you do just that. Plus, we tab the best bits!

SONGS

- 14 **Girls**
The 1975 (video riff)
- 76 **Black Hole Sun**
Soundgarden
- 84 **Strum-along:
Substitute**
The Who

LESSONS

- 70 **Guest Lesson**
Eric Gales (part 1)
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- 86 **Tab Guide**



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ESSENTIALS

QUARTER-TONE BENDS

Add authenticity to your blues and rock lead phrasing with this essential technique



A TONE is a difference in pitch equal to two frets on a guitar string. Logically, then, a semitone is one fret. A quarter-tone is half a semitone – thanks to the layout of the frets on the neck, you can't fret this interval so you have to bend the strings instead. This technique

is most common in blues and rock and gives a fluid, authentic sound to your lead phrasing.

There is a certain knack to the technique. Quarter-tones have a clashing, dissonant sound, so make sure not to dwell on the quarter-tone note for too long.

Generally, it sounds better if you draw out the course of the string bend, but silence the string as soon as you hit the quarter-tone note. Check out the video to see this demonstrated.

This issue, we've composed a blues solo packed full of quarter-

tone bends for you. You can either learn the solo in full, or if you're not quite at that level, select one or two licks and focus on the quarter-tone bends you find. Practise this tricky technique by switching between semitone bends and quarter-tone bends.

BLUES SOLO TRACKS 41-42

It's easy to break this solo down into shorter licks, so that's a good starting point if you want to learn it in full. The quarter-tone that opens the solo is probably the easiest one to play; bars 4 and 5 are the most challenging. Make sure you don't stay on the quarter-tone notes for too long or they tend to sound dissonant.

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VIDEO
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Photograph: Ross Pelton

ERIC GALES

Freshen up your blues and rock solos with a lesson in pentatonic lead playing from TG's latest guest tutor

OUR first instalment of this two-part lesson offers an insight into the man hailed back in the early 90s as the "second coming of Hendrix". Unconventionally, despite being right-handed, Gales plays a right-handed guitar upside

down (he doesn't restring, so the sixth string is nearest the floor), so you'll need to watch carefully.

Eric also plays in E♭ standard tuning (low to high: E, A, D, G, B, E♭), so you may find it's less confusing to retune when you're

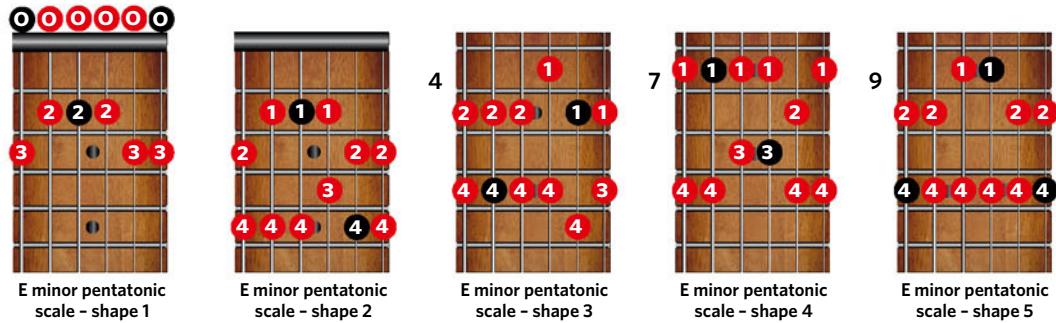
working through these examples. Our notation is in the easier-to-read standard EADGBE tuning, however.

In this issue's video lesson, Eric reveals some of the concepts and approaches he uses to create lead lines from the minor pentatonic

scale. "I think from a whole different area when I'm soloing, so I don't know what would really be a basic lead lick, but I'll try," he informed us. His playing is sure to inspire you to create some new pentatonic-based solos.

FIVE PENTATONIC SCALE SHAPES

THESSE are the five shapes of the pentatonic scale shown here in the key of E minor. All five shapes contain the same notes (E G A B D), but depending which note you start on, there's a different fingering pattern or 'shape'. The idea is to use these shapes to construct licks that cover the entire fretboard, something Eric is extremely adept at.



FIVE-NOTE GROUPINGS

This section shows a musical score and tablature example. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a descending line of notes on a treble clef staff. The tablature below shows the corresponding fingerings (10, 7, 9, etc.) and string numbers (6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1) for a right-handed guitar player. The notation illustrates how grouping semiquavers in sets of five notes creates a more complex and rhythmic sound.

Here, Eric illustrates how grouping semiquavers in sets of five notes transforms the way a basic minor pentatonic scale lick sounds. This may sound complicated, but it's actually very easy to do. He's simply descending through five notes of the scale in a row before starting on another note and playing another five-note run.

"DOUBLING UP"

This section shows a musical score and tablature example. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a descending line of notes on a treble clef staff. The tablature below shows the corresponding fingerings (10, 7, 9, etc.) and string numbers (6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1) for a right-handed guitar player. The notation illustrates a "doubling up" technique where the player plays two notes on the same string before moving to the next note.

“DOUBLING UP” (CONTINUED)

Bm 11

N.C.
a tempo

accel.

1/4

TAB

5 7 [5] 7 7 10 7 9 10 7 9 7 9 9 7 11 9 7 9 9 7 9 9 7 9 9 7 9 9 7 5

3 7

In this example, Eric starts by descending from a high D using two five-note and one three-note grouping. He then “doubles up” by returning to A on the 10th fret to begin a new ‘five, five, three’ phrase. This is a quick way to create cool, flowing pentatonic licks, without leaving the familiar comfort of the first minor pentatonic scale shape.

“UP THE STAIRS, DOWN THE STAIRS”

Eric's "up the stairs, down the stairs" concept allows you to explore the fretboard in a musical and fun way. As Eric says: "This is a combination of your basic pentatonic five [the five shapes of the scale] and 'doubling up,'" and it's a fantastic way to ascend and descend the entire fretboard.

ADDING AN EXTRA NOTE

accel.

let ring - - - - - 0

Adding an extra note to the E minor pentatonic scale (E G A B D) instantly increases its melodic potential. Here, Eric adds the second degree of the E natural minor scale, an F# note. This gives you more notes to play with when using Eric's 'doubling up' and 'up the stairs, down the stairs' approaches.

LEARN TO PLAY

GUEST LESSON

ERIC GALES

IMPROVISED SOLO

Freetime

N.C.

1/4

TAB 1

BU 10(12) accel.

7 7 10 12 10 7 9 10

1/4

3 let ring - - - - 1

TAB 3

BU 10(12)

7 10 7

1/4

3 let ring - - - - 1

Bm¹¹

TAB 5

10 7 10 7 7 10 7 10 7 9 10 7 9 7 9 7 9 7 5 7 7

N.C.

accel.

1/4

TAB 7

10 7 9 7 9 7 9 10 11 9 7 9 7 BU 9(11) 7 10 7 7 10 12

1/4

3

1/4

10 7 10 7 10 7 9 10/12 10 7 9 7 9 7 9 6(7) (6) 9 7 9 8 7 10 7

1/4

BU BD 12(14) (12) 10 7 10 7 10 7 9 10/12 10 7 9 7 9 7 9 6(7) (6) 9 7 9 8 7 10 7

1/4

Eric mixes blues licks with his 'doubling up' approach here. His ideas are based around shape 1 of the B minor pentatonic scale (B D E F# A), illustrating just how expressive this shape can be. In bar 12, he adds a C# note (the second degree of the B natural minor scale), bending and then releasing the note to provide a classy concluding phrase.

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RESTS AND REPEATED LICKS

Find the shortcut to soloing glory by keeping it simple and making the most of pauses and repeating your strongest lick ideas

ONE simple trap many inexperienced guitarists fall into is playing too much. Making use of rests (pauses in the music) can add an extra dimension to your playing, which will make it more dynamic and more enjoyable for your audience. Another simple idea you can use is repeating short sequences

of notes. This can stop your solos from sounding like unfocused scale widdle and more like musical statements.

Follow the video lesson to see how you can create interesting licks without using lots of different scales and advanced techniques. With these basics in place, you can start to use

these principles with techniques like hammer-ons and pull-offs. Make sure you try your own ideas, too – remember to keep them simple at first and use repeated notes and rests to make your basic ideas more musical.

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

GRADE THREE BOOK

We'll be taking you step by step through everything you need to pass the Rockschool Grade Three exam, but you'll need to buy the Grade Three book to get the rest of the syllabus, because there's not room to print it all in TG. Go to www.musicroom.com

USING RESTS

This lick is played over the first four bars of the G section in Rockschool's Grade Three track *Indecisive* and uses rests to provide space in the music. The rests have the effect of making the notes you're playing more powerful here, as you outline the chord changes.

COMBINING REPEATED NOTES AND RESTS

If you combine the idea of repeating notes from the previous example along with some rests, you'll add another dimension to your playing. This isn't some kind of guitarists' cheat – listeners will latch onto repeated notes and phrases more than licks with lots of unrelated notes.

REPEATED PHRASES

This example uses the same lick repeated across the first three bars. Notice how the chord changes give the illusion of the notes changing. This idea of repeating short phrases was a common technique in blues and early rock 'n' roll, and has filtered through to modern rock and punk.

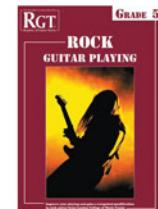
RGT: GRADE FIVE SCALES

GRADE FIVE LEAD PLAYING

Show off your scale knowledge and arsenal of lead techniques as you improvise a solo for the Grade Five exam

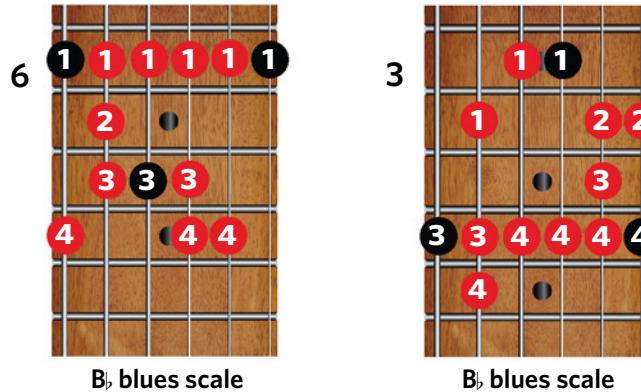
THE LEAD improvisation section of RGT's Grade Five rock guitar exam is based on one of five scale types: major, blues, minor pentatonic, major pentatonic or natural minor, and you could be asked to play in any key signature. At Grade Five your improvised solo must be fluent

and musical, and should include two different scale shapes across the fretboard. Using two fretboard positions can help to add a sense of movement and a variation of tone to your lead solos, giving a boost of inventiveness and creativity. This issue we have provided a chord

**EXAM INFO**

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

B♭ BLUES SCALE



The Grade Five sample solo tabbed below is based on the B♭ blues scale shapes shown here. Learn these two shapes in preparation for this month's solo, and then try transposing them to other key signatures so that you're comfortable playing at different pitches.

GRADE FIVE SAMPLE SOLO TRACK 45

This Grade Five level solo demonstrates the various elements that you should be getting to grips with. These include: being able to ad-lib licks using two scale shapes, and using rock techniques such as string bends, vibrato, hammer-ons and pull-offs for musical effect.

LEARN TO PLAY SOUNDGARDEN
BLACK HOLE SUN

FULL
TAB

SOUNDGARDEN

BLACK HOLE SUN

Master the psychedelic guitar sounds and Kim Thayil's
raucous soloing in this classic 90s grunge track



SOUND ADVICE

Everything you need to know before playing 'Black Hole Sun'

Get the sound

A ROTARY speaker emulator is just the ticket to recreate the signature warble of the Leslie unit used in the studio. A vibrato effect is a good alternative option. The smooth-sounding intro legato line is played using an EBow and a long stereo delay through the Leslie rotary unit. You could try using a slide if you don't have an EBow. Kim Thayil most likely used his Guild S-100, which is equipped with humbuckers. You need clarity on the low arpeggios so dial in plenty of treble on your amp. A Mesa/Boogie-style distortion works well for high-gain sounds. Take care not to use too much gain, though; much of that muddy, 'grungy' sound comes from the down-tuning, not purely from high gain.



TIME: 360ms
FEEDBACK: 35%
LEVEL: 30%



DEPTH: 90%
RATE: 60%
LEVEL: 90%

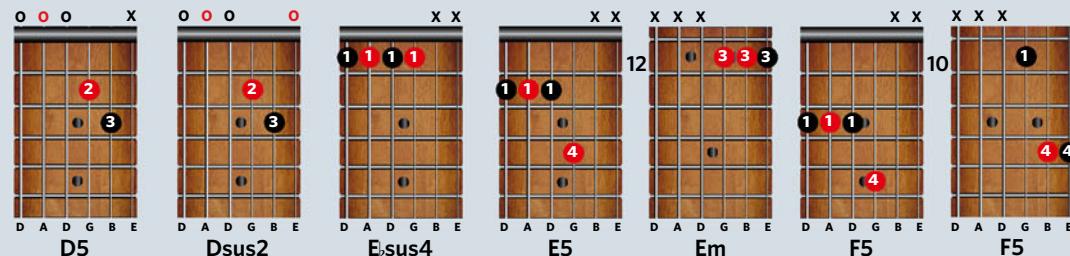
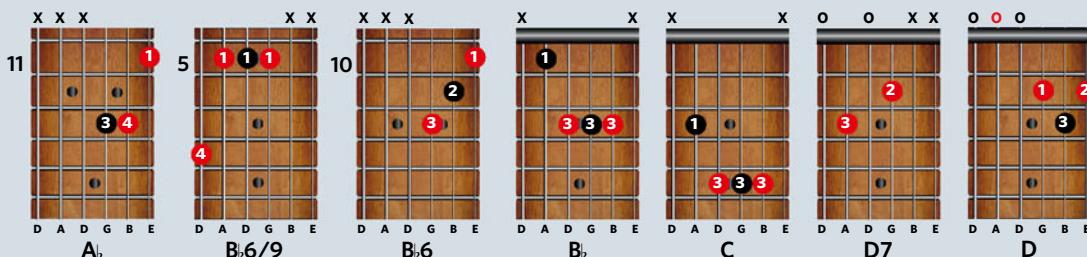
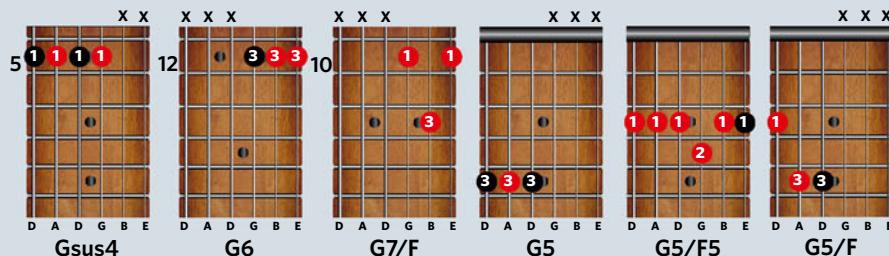


CHANNEL DISTORTION



Chords

LIKE many of Chris Cornell's tunes, this track contains some unusual chord shapes as well as more standard powerchords and major/minor chords. The drop D tuning allows for some simple barring, but works really well for the big D5 chords in open position, too.



Scales

THE tonality in the solo has a strange ambient quality due to the unresolved sound of the G/F5 chord. It's essentially F Lydian (FGABCDE), although the A minor pentatonic scale (ACDEG) is used, too (it's the same scale, minus the F and B notes). Our tab is for drop D tuned guitars (DADGBE), which is how Chris and Kim play the track live.



LEARN TO PLAY SOUNDGARDEN

BLACK HOLE SUN

'BLACK HOLE SUN'

Music & Lyrics by Christopher Cornell.
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Full track + backing (tracks 46-47)

THIS song comes with a full demo track and a backing track (minus guitar) on your CD. Simply insert the disc in your player, press play and jam along guitaraoke style!

SOUNDGARDEN

Black Hole Sun



INTRO (ARPEGGIOS)

The main things to watch out for here are smooth changes between the chords and eliminating fret buzz. There are a few first finger barres, so be careful to press down evenly across the whole finger, especially as your fourth finger gets in on the action, too.

INTRO (EBOW GUITAR)

The use of an EBow will help sustain the notes across six bars without the need to re-pick the string. If you don't have one, try to pick in obvious places, such as the start of a new note or bar. Aim for lazy, slow slides between notes, so don't worry if you're slightly late with timing.

VERSE

G⁶ **B_b⁶** **F⁵** **E_m**

0:16 *w/leslie
let ring throughout*

T B | 12 12 12 12 | 12 11 10 | 10 13 13 13 10 13 | 10/12 12 12

A D | | | |

B D | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1

E[♭] **Dsus⁴** **G⁶** **G^{7/F}** **A[♭]**

5

T A | 12 11 11 12 11 | 12 10 10 10 12 | 12 12 12 10 12 10 | 13 13 11 .

B D | | | |

Tap your foot and count to four in time with the music here. The arpeggios in bars 1 to 6 all start on the offbeat of beat 1. Bars 7 and 8 are perhaps trickiest. Hold down a first finger barre while you're playing the 12th fret G6 arpeggio in preparation for the change.

CHORUS 1

E_b sus⁴ **D⁷** **G⁵** **G^{5/F}** **B[♭]**

0:55 *w/distortion*

T B | 1 1 1 1 1 1 | 0 3 0 2 0 3 | 3/5 5 5 3 5 5 | 1 3 3 3 3 1

A D | 1 1 1 1 1 1 | 0 3 0 2 0 3 | 3/5 5 5 3 5 5 | 1 3 3 3 3 1

B D | 1 1 1 1 1 1 | 0 3 0 2 0 3 | 3/5 5 5 3 5 5 | 1 3 3 3 3 1

E_b sus⁴ **D⁷** **C** **D**

5

T A | 1 1 1 1 1 1 | 0 3 0 2 0 3 | 5 6 5 5 5 | 2 3 2 3 2 3

B D | 1 1 1 1 1 1 | 0 3 0 2 0 3 | 5 5 5 5 5 | 0 0 0 0 0 0

You'll have seen most of these arpeggios in the intro, but here there are a few variations. In bar 1 focus on a solid first finger barre technique, keeping all the strings pressed down firmly. Bar 2 requires a more precise approach, so be careful not to mute the open strings.

>>>

LEARN TO PLAY SOUNDGARDEN

BLACK HOLE SUN

CHORUS 2

1:54 w/distortion

E^bsus⁴ **D⁷** **G⁵** **G^{5/F}** **B^b**

TAB

1 1 1 1 1 | 0 3 0 2 0 3 0 | 3/5 5 5 3 5 3 | 1 3 3 3 3 1 |

E^bsus⁴ **D⁷** **C** **B^b**

TAB

1 1 1 1 1 | 0 3 0 2 0 3 0 | 5 5 6 5 5 | 3 3 3 4 3 3 |

The main difference here is the inclusion of a B^b chord to turn the chorus around for a second time. Try not to rush the hammer-on/pull-off lines in bars 7 and 8. You'll be executing this with your fourth finger, which can feel a bit weak at first. Practise this part of the riff at a slower tempo.

BRIDGE

2:26

C **B^b** **D⁵** **Dsus²** Play 3 times

TAB

5 6 5 | 5 5 | 3 3 4 3 | 3 3 2 0 0 0 | 3 3 2 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 | V V V |

C **B^b** **D⁵** **Dsus²**

TAB

5 6 5 | 5 5 | 3 3 4 3 | 3 3 2 0 0 0 | 3 3 2 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 |

This section develops the last two bars from chorus 2, ending each time on a huge D5 chord played over five strings. The open first string E note in the Dsus2 chord isn't necessarily a key part of the riff (more a by-product of moving back to the C chord), so leave it out if you like.

Solo (Rhythm)

N.C. G/F⁵

N.C.

G/F⁵ Play 3 times F⁵ G 5

2:53

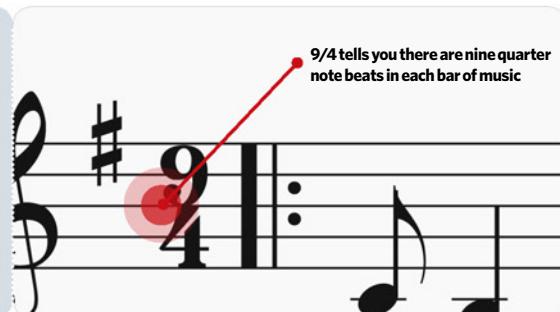
TAB: E B G D A B D
3 2 0 2/3 5 4 3 3 2 0 2/3 5 4 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

TECHNIQUE FOCUS

Learn time signatures

'SIMPLE' time signatures are those that have beats that can be split into two equal parts. For example, in 4/4 time you could count to four to stay in time with the main pulse of the music or you could count at double speed to keep track of the eighth notes (count '1& 2& 3& 4&'). This idea extends to other time

signatures such as 3/4 (count to three) and 2/4 (count to two), too. This section of *Black Hole Sun* is in 9/4, ie, each bar of music is made up of nine beats that can be broken down into half beats if you prefer. You may prefer to think of this as three lots of 3/4. It's easier than counting to nine.



You might like to split bars 1 and 2 (transcribed in 9/4 time) into more manageable 3/4 chunks, although the feel is not a straight 3/4 pulse. The G/F5 chord sounds best if you emphasise the four bass strings, bringing your pick away from the guitar as you reach the first and second strings.

Solo (Lead)

N.C. G/F⁵ N.C.

w/wah NH

† rapidly move wah up and down

15(17 15) 17 15 15 15 [15] 0 3 5 3 2 3 0 3 1 3 2 1 3

2:53

TAB: E B G D A B D
1

TECHNIQUE FOCUS

Learn creative solo ideas

KIM Thayil's solo is loose and informal in its rhythm and melodic content, which makes it difficult to recreate a note-for-note rendition. There are several clever ideas to incorporate into your own solos, though. First off, in bar 1, Kim plays a harmonic at the 5th fret, which he tremolo picks (fast up-and-down-picking) while quickly

moving a wah pedal for an unusual EQ effect. He follows this up with a trill (rapidly alternating between two notes) at the 15th and 17th frets. There are several position changes throughout the solo, taking in the F Lydian and A minor pentatonic scales. Finally, there are a few semitone bends in bars 5 and 6 that are a key part of the solo.



N.C. G/F⁵

12 15 12 15 12 12 [12] /14 13 13 12 12 14 14 12 12 14 14 BU BD

2:53

TAB: E B G D A B D
3

>>>

LEARN TO PLAY SOUNDGARDEN BLACK HOLE SUN

Solo (Lead) (Continued)

N.C.

TAB 4

1/4

G/F⁵

rake -↑

BU BD

3

N.C.

TAB 5

6 6 3

BU BD

10 10 12 12 10 12 (13) BU BD

8 8 7 9 7 9 8 7 9 7 5 7 7 (8) (7) BU BD

10 12 10 12

N.C.

TAB 6

(8^{vla})

3 3 6

BU BD

(12) 10 12 (13) 10 10 12 (13) 10 12 13 12 10 12 13 12 15 13 12 13 12 13 12 14 12 14 12 [12] BU BD

F⁵ G⁵

The original solo is somewhat random and psychedelic, so it's arguably more fitting to borrow some general ideas rather than recreate the whole thing note for note. Overall, this has an F Lydian (F G A B C D E) vibe but with extra notes (such as E♭ or F♯) for added colour.

OUTRO SOLO

OUTRO SOLO (CONTINUED)

The tablature shows three staves of guitar music. The first staff starts with a C note, followed by a BU sustain. The second staff starts with a B♭ note, followed by a D5 note. The third staff starts with a C note, followed by a B♭ note. Each staff has a tab below it with numerical values indicating fingerings and positions on the guitar neck.

You'll need a little feedback to get the opening string bends to sustain, so hold your guitar in front of your amp (but not so close that it squeals). Exactly where you place your instrument differs with every guitar, amp and room, so experiment to find the perfect spot. What you will need, however, is plenty of volume.

OUTRO RIFF

The tablature shows two staves of guitar music. The first staff starts with N.C. (No Chord) followed by a G/F5 chord. The second staff starts with a F5/G5 chord. Each staff has a tab below it with numerical values indicating fingerings and positions on the guitar neck.

The outro riff is essentially the same as the solo rhythm idea, just watch out for the string mute on the final beat. Make sure also to try not to get distracted by the rhythm of the snare drum, which is slightly different to the guitar part.

**Three
of a kind**

If you like
Black Hole Sun,
try these...

THEM BONES ALICE IN CHAINS



CANTRELL'S drop C# tuned guitars create some seriously heavy riffing. Couple this with 7/8 'odd' time and we're into the classic AIC grunge/metal sound.

ANIMAL PEARL JAM



EDDIE Vedder's vocal style bears a resemblance to the lower range of Chris Cornell's voice, but it is the distortion-laden riffage that gives this track its rocky edge.

NO SURPRISES RADIOHEAD



JUST like *Black Hole Sun*, there's something eerie and slightly disarming about the crystal clean arpeggios in this British alt-rock track, sounding a bit like a wind-up toy.

LEARN TO PLAY THE WHO
SUBSTITUTE

STRUM
ALONG

THE WHO
SUBSTITUTE

Test your timing with Pete Townshend's famous strummed licks in this bona-fide British classic rock track

Photography: Michael Putland/Getty Images

**Backing track (track 48)**

THIS song comes with a full backing track (minus guitar) on your CD. Simply insert the disc in your player, press play and jam along, guitaraoke style!

'SUBSTITUTE'

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THE WHO

Substitute**INTRO**

$\downarrow=140$

1

5

The first four bars form the famous intro riff, which also doubles as the chorus later on. For the last four bars, notice that the chords always land on beats 2 and 4. Strum confidently throughout and keep your picking hand moving down and up continuously to help you stay in time.

Chords

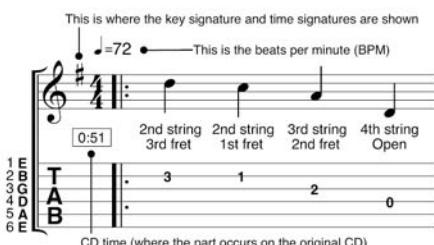
ALL of these chords belong to the key of D major. The main riff consists of three different major triads - D, A and G - each played over an open fourth string D note. Although there are two different D chord shapes, both contain the same notes (D F# A), albeit in a slightly different arrangement.



TAB GUIDE

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

WHAT IS TAB?



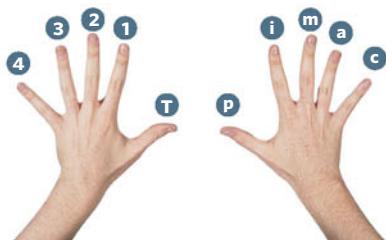
TAB is short for tablature, a notational system used to give detailed information as to where notes should be played on the fretboard. Tab appears underneath conventional music notation as six horizontal lines that represent the strings of the guitar, from

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.

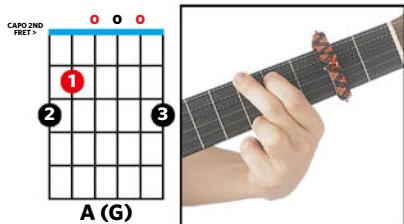
FRET BOXES: CHORDS, SCALES AND CAPO NOTATION

HAND LABELLING



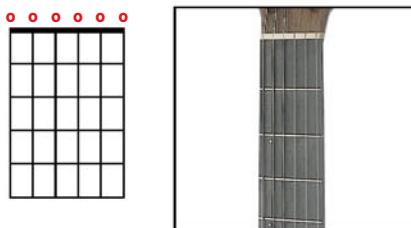
HERE are the abbreviations used for each finger. Fretting hand: **1, 2, 3, 4, (T)**
Picking hand: **p (thumb), i (index), m (middle), a (annular), c (little finger)**

CAPO EXAMPLE



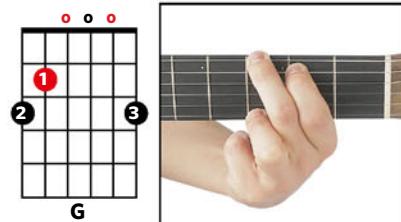
THE blue line in the diagram represents a capo - for this A chord, place it at the 2nd fret. Capos change the fret number ordering. Here, the original 5th fret now becomes the 3rd fret, 7th fret now 5th fret, etc.

NUT AND FRETBOARD



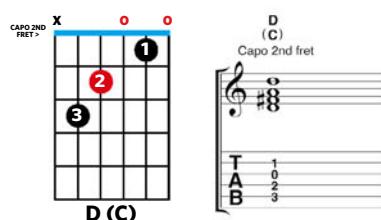
THIS fretbox diagram represents the guitar's fretboard exactly, as seen in the photo. This design is used for ease of visualising a fretboard scale or chord quickly.

CHORD EXAMPLE



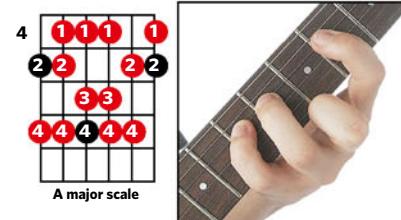
THIS diagram represents a G chord. The '0's are open strings, and a circled number is the root note (here, G).

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



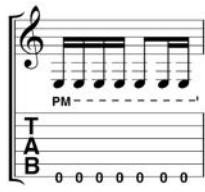
THE symbols under the tab tell you the first note is to be down-picked and the second note is to be up-picked.

TREMOLO PICKING



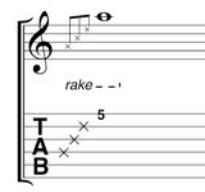
EACH of the four notes are to be alternate-picked (down and up-picked) very rapidly and continuously.

PALM MUTING



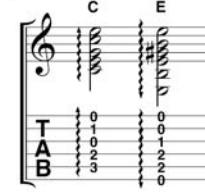
PALM-MUTE by resting the edge of your picking hand palm on the strings near the bridge saddles.

PICK RAKE

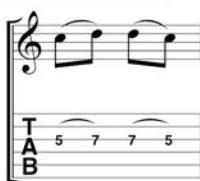


DRAG the pick across the strings shown with a single sweep. This is often used to augment a rake's last note.

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**

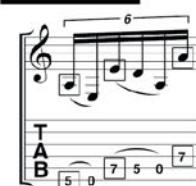
PICK the first note then hammer down on the string for the second note. Pick the third note and pull-off for the fourth note.

NOTE TRILLS

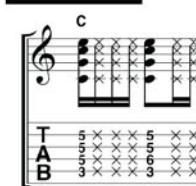
AFTER picking the first note, rapidly alternate between the two notes shown in brackets using hammer-ons and pull-offs.

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

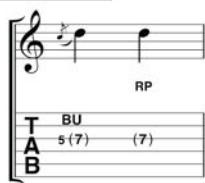
SOUND the notes marked with a square by hammering-on/tapping with your fret hand fingers, instead of picking.

FRET HAND MUTING

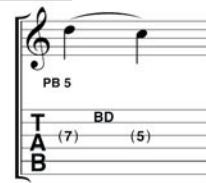
X MARKINGS represent notes and strings that are muted by your fret hand when struck by your picking hand.

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

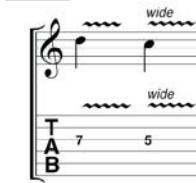
BEND up to the pitch shown in the brackets, then re-pick the note while holding the bent note at the pitch shown.

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

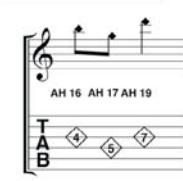
PICK the note then bend up a quarter-tone (a very small amount). This is sometimes referred to as a 'blues curl'.

VIBRATO

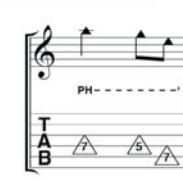
YOUR fretting hand vibrates the string by small bend-ups and releases. Exaggerate this effect to create a 'wide' vibrato.

HARMONICS**NATURAL HARMONICS**

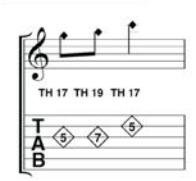
PICK the note while lightly touching the string directly over the fret. A chiming harmonic results.

ARTIFICIAL HARMONICS

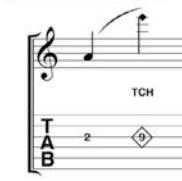
FRET the note as shown, then lightly place your index finger directly over 'x' fret (AHx) and pick (with a pick, p or a).

PINCHED HARMONICS

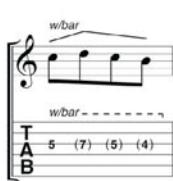
AFTER fretting the note in the triangle, dig into the string with the side of your thumb as you sound it with the pick.

TAPPED HARMONICS

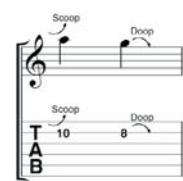
PLACE your finger on the note as shown, but sound it with a quick pick hand tap at the fret shown (TH17) for a harmonic.

TOUCHED HARMONICS

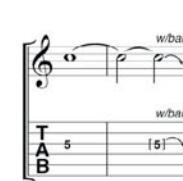
A PREVIOUSLY sounded note is touched above the fret marked TCH (eg, TCH 9) for it to sound a harmonic.

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

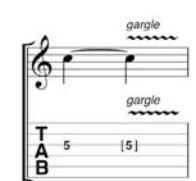
THE note is picked as shown, then the vibrato bar is raised and lowered to the pitches shown in brackets.

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

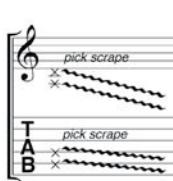
A NOTE is sustained then the vibrato bar is depressed to slack. The square bracket indicates a further articulation.

GARGLE

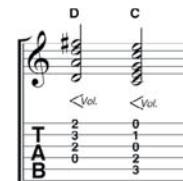
SOUND the note and 'flick' the vibrato bar with your picking hand so it 'quivers'. This results in a 'gargling' sound!

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**

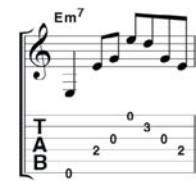
THE edge of the pick is dragged either down or up along the lower strings to produce a scraped sound.

VIOLINING

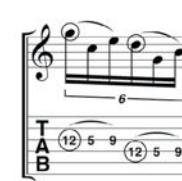
TURN the volume control down, sound the note(s) and then turn the volume up for a smooth fade in.

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.

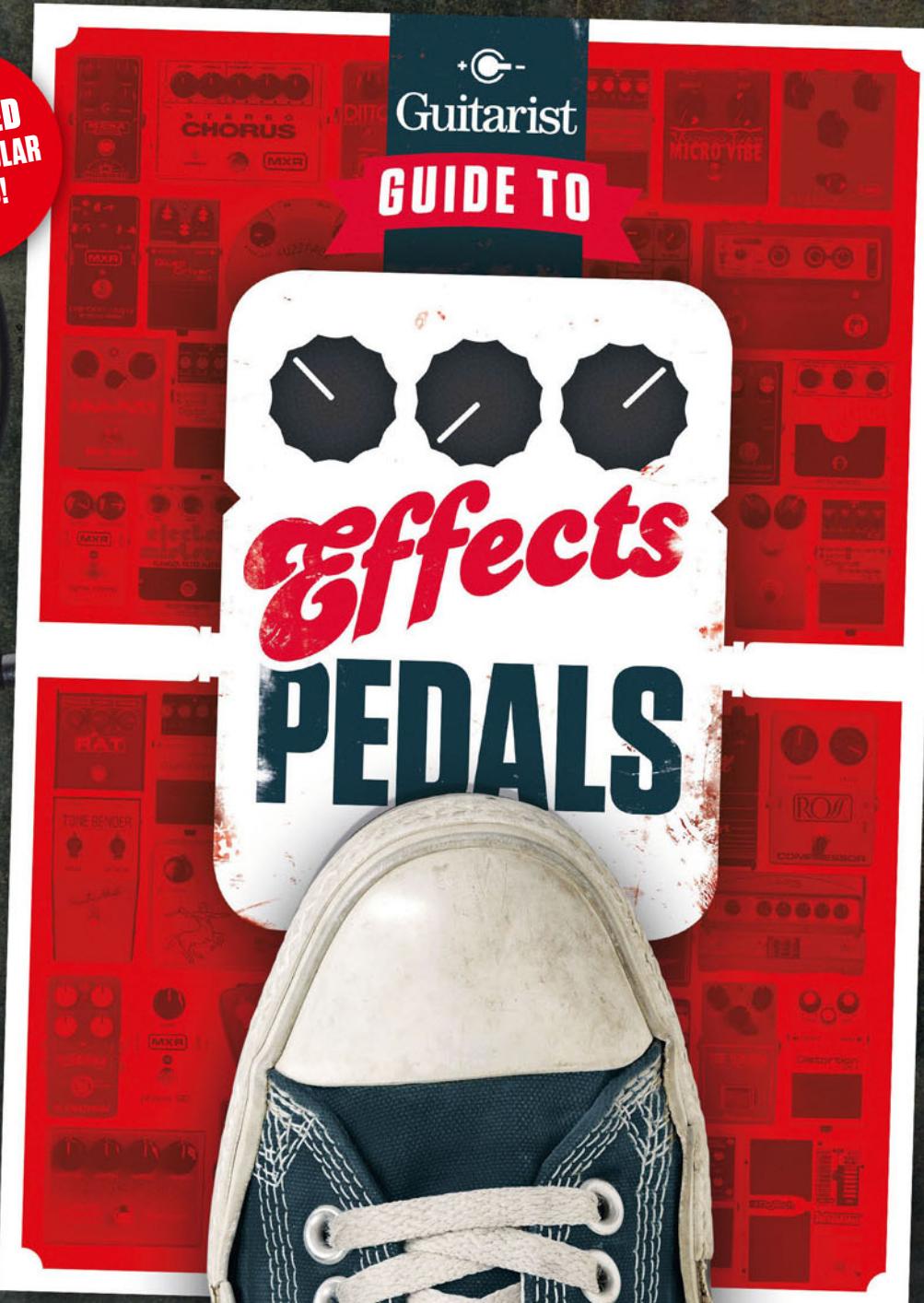
PICK HAND TAPPING

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

Pedal Crazy?

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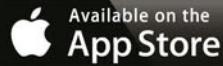
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GEAR

Reviews, buying advice and technical questions answered. All in language you understand



98

ROUND-UP DiVill BY ITALIA

IT'S impossible to discuss this issue's gear without mentioning the 30-fret elephant in the room: Ibanez's RG550XH. While it's by no means the first many-fretted instrument, it's certainly the most prominent in recent memory, and we love its flagrant one-upmanship in the face of lesser fretboards.

Of course, such radical designs can ruffle the feathers of guitar conservatives. But even if you like your fret count at 21 and your finishes nitrocellulose, there's nothing wrong with a touch of innovation, especially when it's integrated with a little more subtlety. Take Fender's Vintage Hot Rod '60s Telecaster: three very different pickups and the S-1 switching system built into a guitar that still resembles an instrument from its namesake decade.

While you're never going to hide 30 frets, tone-enhancing tech is getting more discreet, and therefore less likely to alienate retro purists. Whichever side of the line you're on, we'll always have gear aplenty to share with you.

Michael

Michael Brown Deputy Reviews Editor

REVIEWS



90 Ibanez RG550XH



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Our badges explained



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GEAR REVIEW
IBANEZ RG550XH



IBANEZ RG550XH

£419

Life begins at 30 for the axe that says you can never have too much fretboard

MOST people say that it was renowned session player Tommy Tedesco who was the first to caution that there is no money above the 5th fret. Now, advice from any man who recorded with Chet Baker and played on the *Enter The Dragon* soundtrack should be obeyed, but Tommy was speaking in a more innocent era – one where guitars such as the RG550XH didn't exist. Nowadays, the shred dollar just keeps on appreciating; the mean level of lead-guitar skills among the rock and metal set has never been higher, and in turn, players with such prodigious command of the fretboard need an instrument to showcase their skills. Enter the RG...

Ibanez's RG series was built for the shred-obsessed: skinny Wizard necks with 24 jumbo frets, hot pickup configurations and, of course, locking vibrato units – presently being rolled out with the super-stable and user-friendly Zero Point System, allowing players to make adjustments with a thumb-screw rather than an Allen key. All were a boon to players looking to add a bit of speed to their game.

The RG550XH takes it to another level: it has 30 frets. Even presuming Ibanez has digested the feedback from focus groups and the 'extending the fretboard' idea tested well, this is still the big talking point. It's contentious. It would be interesting to have a fret-o-meter chart how often we S-type owners visit the 24th fret, let alone wish for any above that.

There is an exaggerated lower cutaway, differentiating it from its RG kin, yet aside from the fretboard, the RG550XH is reassuringly familiar. Anyone who has picked up a mid-range Ibanez over the past few years will recognise all of its desirable appointments. The RG550XH has

the incredible Edge-Zero II locking vibrato unit that stays true under the most punishing abuse. With a slim 19mm (0.75-inch) depth at the 1st fret and a fairly flat 400mm (15.75-inch) fingerboard radius, the Wizard neck is a well-known speedster, satin-smooth with a profile that is pure Ibanez.

All that, and it comes equipped with an Infinity humbucker. Rolled out by Ibanez in 1994, the Infinity has a big ceramic magnet, and is hot but not overly so, making the RG550XH a superlative performer for classic high-gain rock playing, and capable of but not restricted to metal tone. Indeed, with the gain rolled back a little, the RG550XH has plenty of smooth blues and snappy crunch. Yes, there's so much fretboard that the extra six frets put the kibosh on a neck humbucker, but the battery-powered active neck pickup simulator does a passable impersonation, taking some of the sting off the bridge 'bucker's bright treble response. With the five-way switch, there is still plenty of range on offer, with little appreciable difference to an RG with a HSH pickup configuration.

Whether you go for the RG550XH, with its slightly weird body profile and seemingly endless fretboard, depends on whether you are subtle enough to accurately blitz those notes at the teeny-weeny summit of the fretboard. The RG550XH is a neat twist on the shred axe, but unforgiving for big, fat sausage fingers. Tommy Tedesco might not approve, but we do.

Jonathan Horsley

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

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Basswood
NECK: Maple, bolt-on three-piece
WIZARD III-XH
FINGERBOARD: Rosewood
FRETS: 30
SCALE: 648mm (25.5")
PICKUPS: 1x Infinity INF humbucker w/ neck pickup simulator (bridge), 1x Infinity INFS single coil (middle)
CONTROLS: 1x volume, 1x tone, 5-way pickup selector
HARDWARE: Edge-Zero II bridge w/ ZPS3Fe Zero Point System – Cosmo Black chrome
LEFT-HANDED: No
FINISH: Red Sparkle only
CONTACT: Headstock Distribution 0121 508 6666 www.ibanez.co.uk

HEEL

THE extended fretboard range is Ibanez's big selling point for this guitar, so it's no surprise that it's easy to get your fingers to all 30 frets. That's one huge lower cutaway, though

SIMULATOR

THE neck pickup simulator's tone is convincing, and powered by a nine-volt battery, which is easy to change on the fly, too

FINISH

THE RG series comes in all sizes and finishes, but the RG550XH is so far only available in this shiny Red Sparkle, complemented by a pearloid pickguard. A guitar for the extroverts, perhaps?



Robin N., guitar department



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FENDER VINTAGE HOT ROD '60S TELECASTER £2,110

Is three the magic pickup number for this old-school charmer?

IF there's one thing Fender does better than any other guitar maker, it's building axes that players didn't even know they wanted. Leo's early designs might as well have been beamed down from space they were so unique, and it's a tradition that carries on today – after all, who knew they'd want a Cabronita five years ago? The Vintage Hot Rod series is another fine example of Fender's ability to throw familiar features together and make magic, mixing old and new to make guitars greater than the sum of their parts.

This USA-made, high-line '60s Telecaster is a case in point. Right off the bat, anyone can see it's

three, four and five, and you've got options coming out of your eyes.

Of course, switching wizardry counts for nothing if it's no good on the ears, but that couldn't be further from the case here. The '60s Telecaster sounds great, and in more settings than it has any right to. It's equally adept at crisp as it is crunchy, the extra pickup making it a Swiss Army knife for players who like to pick and mix styles. It fuses all the usual Tele versatility with the swagger of a Strat, all at the touch of an easily accessed button.

So the electrics work brilliantly. But what else have we got here? Well, the D-shape rosewood on maple neck, chock-full of jumbo

The extra pickup essentially makes it a Swiss Army knife

a stunner, a slab of alder with a perfectly applied nitro finish that comes in a nicely vibey vintage white or this supremely sexy sunburst. The Tele connoisseur's eye will be drawn directly to that rogue pickup in the middle position, and it must be said, to some sensibilities it'll never look right. We'd suggest you hold your horses before drawing any conclusions, though, because that little single coil is this Vintage Hot Rod's secret weapon.

Let's look a little closer: of the three pickups, we've got a Custom Shop Broadcaster at the bridge, a Texas Special in the middle and a Twisted Tele at the neck. That's a trio of totally different tones all vying for your attention, from traditional Tele snap at the bridge through to velvety Strat slink and more besides. Throw Fender's volume knob-located S-1 switch into the equation, which adds the bridge pickup into positions

frets, is so comfortable that you'll be physically unable to tear your hand away from it. The details are all perfect, from the bone nut to the brass saddles, and the build is impeccable. Throw in a beautiful Fender case, complete with the coolest strap we've ever had the pleasure to sling round our necks, and you're looking at a package that's damn near impossible to resist, even at this price. In short, this is the Tele you never knew you wanted until now. And with street prices around 25 per cent lower than the price quoted here, play one at your peril – your wallet may well end up lighter...

Rob Power

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

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Alder

NECK: Maple

FINGERBOARD: Rosewood

FRETS: 21, narrow jumbo

SCALE: 648mm (25.5")

PICKUPS: 1x Custom Shop

Broadcaster single coil (bridge),

1x Texas Special Strat single coil
(middle pickup), 1x Custom Shop

Twisted Tele single coil (neck pickup)

CONTROLS: 1x volume (w/ S-1
switch), 1x tone, 5-way pickup
selector switch

HARDWARE: Vintage-style
machineheads, 3-saddle American

Vintage Tele bridge with
intonatable saddles

LEFT-HANDED: No

FINISH: 3-Colour Sunburst (shown),
Olympic White (£2,038)

CONTACT: Fender GBI 01342 331700
www.fender.com

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NECK

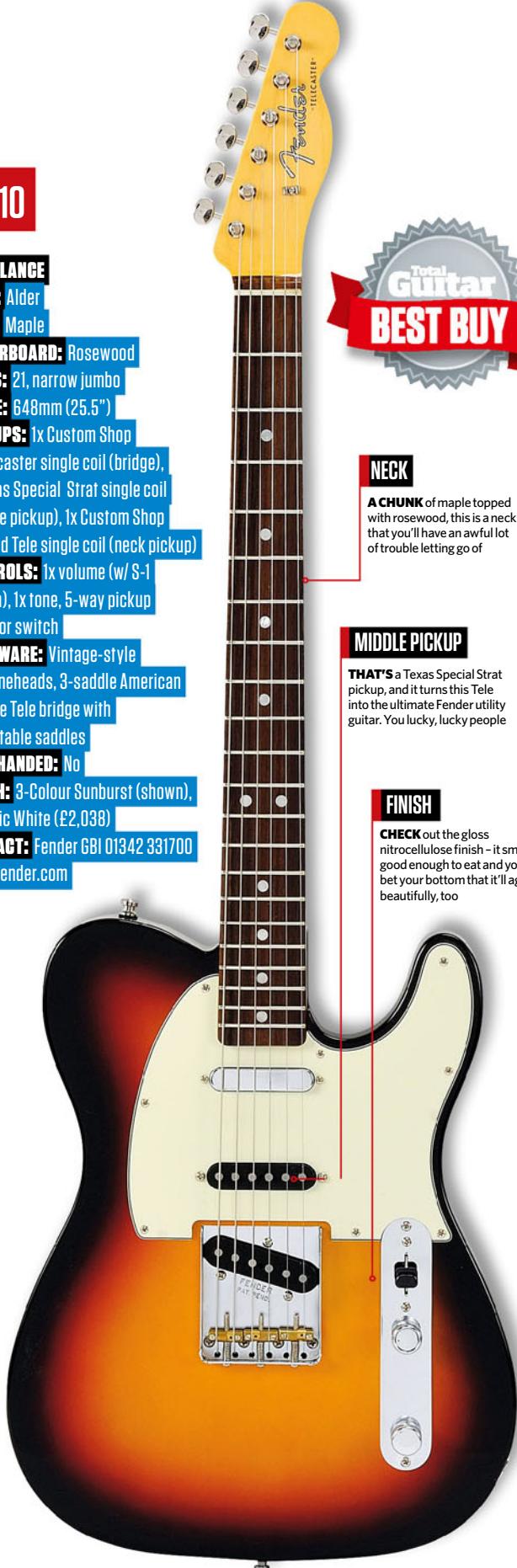
A CHUNK of maple topped with rosewood, this is a neck that you'll have an awful lot of trouble letting go of

MIDDLE PICKUP

THAT'S a Texas Special Strat pickup, and it turns this Tele into the ultimate Fender utility guitar. You lucky, lucky people

FINISH

CHECK out the gloss nitrocellulose finish – it smells good enough to eat and you can bet your bottom that it'll age beautifully, too



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ALVAREZ MASTERWORKS MG75SCE £879

If you're in the market for an electro-acoustic upgrade, here's a master of its craft

WHILE the company is based in St Louis, Missouri, Alvarez has a broad Chinese-made range of acoustics and electros, starting at just under £200. Our review guitar, however, comes from the top-line Masterworks series.

Made from all-solid woods, with a cedar top and rosewood back and sides, the craft is faultless. From the perfect, almost aged-looking satin finish through to the cleanly cut spruce braces, this is one reason why Alvarez guitars are gaining quite a foothold in the electro-acoustic market. Then there's the Bi-Level bridge design,

two pickups, volume, three-band EQ, a tuner and a notch filter for feedback rejection. Two outputs are side-mounted: standard jack and balanced XLR. All in all, this is one gig-ready electro.

The vibrant, lively acoustic sound balances quite a big bass with clean but not over-crisp highs and a dipped midrange – typical of a grand auditorium – and really suits strummed styles or pick and fingers. There's a solid dynamic range, and it kicks out a good room-filling volume. But it's the plugged-in performance that makes you sit up and take notice. The soundboard transducer

The bridge design gives the guitar a strident, ringing voice

which, as the name suggests, places the rear section, when the strings attach, lower than the front, which holds the nicely compensated bone saddle. The result is a little more back angle from the saddle to the bridge pins, and to our ears, it gives the MG75SCE a strident, ringing, almost piano-like voice.

The mahogany neck isn't overly slim, but for both stability and sound, that's no bad thing. Fretting is tidy, and aside from rather high string grooves at the bone nut, playability is pretty easy and very business-like. For a strummer, the string spacing at the nut is fine, although a little cramped for fingerstyle, perhaps. Likewise for the pickup and preamp system, which is made by B-Band. We have two pickups: one under the saddle and one under the soundboard. These pass to a nicely designed and well-featured preamp, which offers a slider mix control for the

gives a very mic-like sound with crisp, papery highs; the feedback-resistant under-saddle is more focused and direct. Mixing a little of the former with the latter, however, gives a very true 'mic'd' sound that can be tailored by the broad EQ. At higher volumes, go easy with the bass EQ – there's a lot of feedback potential. Mind you, the notch filter is very effective; pity there's no phase switch.

If you're serious about your electro tone and find the usual under-saddle-only pickup system less than satisfactory, then we strongly suggest you check out these guitars.

Dave Burruck

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



AT A GLANCE

TOP: Solid cedar
BACK & SIDES: Solid rosewood
NECK: Mahogany
FINGERBOARD: Bound rosewood
FRETS: 20
SCALE: 648mm (25.5")
ELECTRICS: Alvarez/B-Band SYS650 with dual under-saddle (UST) and soundboard (AST) transducers
CONTROLS: Volume, bass, middle, treble, notch, AST/UST mix, tuner
HARDWARE: Chrome-plated Grover Rotomatic tuners, bone nut and compensated saddle
LEFT-HANDED: No
FINISH: Natural satin
CONTACT: Go To Guitars 01925 444696 www.alvarezguitars.com

TOP

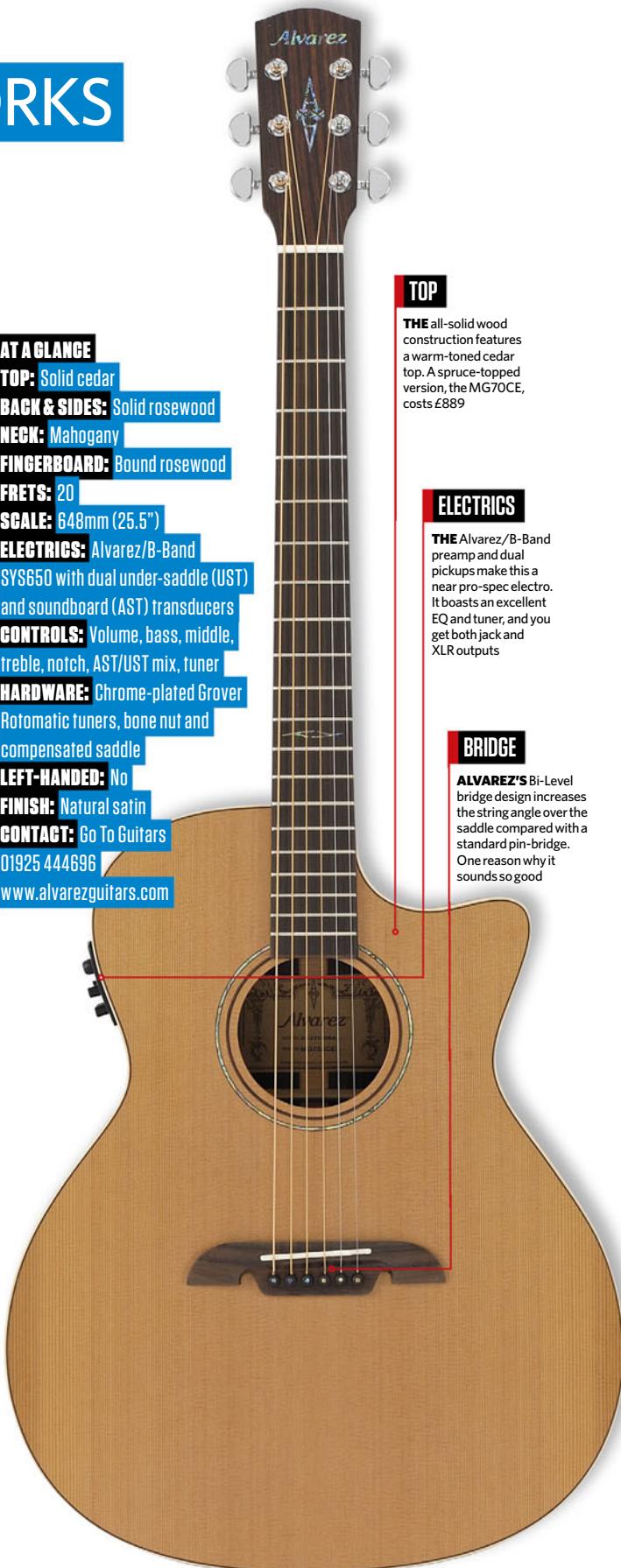
THE all-solid wood construction features a warm-toned cedar top. A spruce-topped version, the MG70CE, costs £889

ELECTRICS

THE Alvarez/B-Band preamp and dual pickups make this a near pro-spec electro. It boasts an excellent EQ and tuner, and you get both jack and XLR outputs

BRIDGE

ALVAREZ'S Bi-Level bridge design increases the string angle over the saddle compared with a standard pin-bridge. One reason why it sounds so good



DANELECTRO '56 BARITONE £499

Get into the spirit of '56 with this 'tone-laden beast

THERE'S no doubt about it: the baritone's back. Maybe it's because extended-range guitars are such an everyday sight, or manufacturers are just getting bored of churning out instruments in the same ol' tuning, but we've seen more than our fair share of 'tones over the past few months. What better builder to add to the pile, then, than Danelectro, which was the first company to launch the electric baritone in the late 1950s – and its new '56 Baritone pays homage to that bygone era.

While some baritones offer guitar-like 648mm (25.5-inch) scale lengths, this is a traditional 'tone, with a guitar-meets-bass

love the company's lipstick single coils – the '56 Baritone takes their versatility to another level. The neck pickup is perfect for bass-heavy grooves on the low B string, while flicking to the bridge pup engages a biting twang more akin to a traditional guitar – using the selector switch is like switching between instruments, rather than pickups! The middle position, which, in traditional Dano style, runs both pickups in series for increased output, gives you gnarly overdriven tones – perfect for thrashing out punk and indie riffs.

However, as well as their distinctive tones, Danelectro models are known for occasional quirks in build quality, and this is

It bulks up recordings and fleshes out live performances

scale of 755mm (29.75 inches), which ships tuned a perfect 4th lower than standard tuning (B E A D F# B). Long-necked beauties like these need strings to match, too – they're typically strung with 0.014 to 0.068 or 0.013 to 0.062 gauges. You'll struggle to emulate the wailing bends you wring out of your regular electric, but this isn't designed for widdly solos; the '56 Baritone is a rhythm machine.

If you're yet to experience a 'true' baritone, it could feel like that neck goes on forever – and the 24-fretted fingerboard further reinforces that impression. Dano's typically lightweight Masonite body construction means that the neck is a little top-heavy, too, so make sure you don't let it drop! None of these teething problems matter as soon as you strum your first chord, though: the '56 Baritone sounds massive.

If you've read any of our other Dano reviews, you'll know that we

no exception. Remember we said you'd struggle to bend those thick strings? Well, the fourth string on our review model had a habit of popping out of its nut slot when we attempted a wide vibrato or hit the open string with force. A new nut or deeper slots could fix that here.

Build quality aside, the '56 Baritone has us hooked. You never know how useful a baritone could be to your sound until you play one: it bulks up recordings, and even fleshes out live performances, treading the line between guitar and bass. However you use a baritone, '56 is a damn good place (and time) to start.

Michael Brown

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

BODY: Masonite, laminated wood frame
NECK: Maple
SCALE: 755mm (29.75")
FINGERBOARD: Rosewood
FRETS: 24
PICKUPS: 2x lipstick single coils
CONTROLS: 1x volume, 1x tone, 3-way selector
HARDWARE: Intonatable saddled bridge – chrome
LEFT-HANDED: No
FINISH: Gloss Black
CONTACT: John Hornby Skewes 0113 286 5381 www.jhs.co.uk

NECK

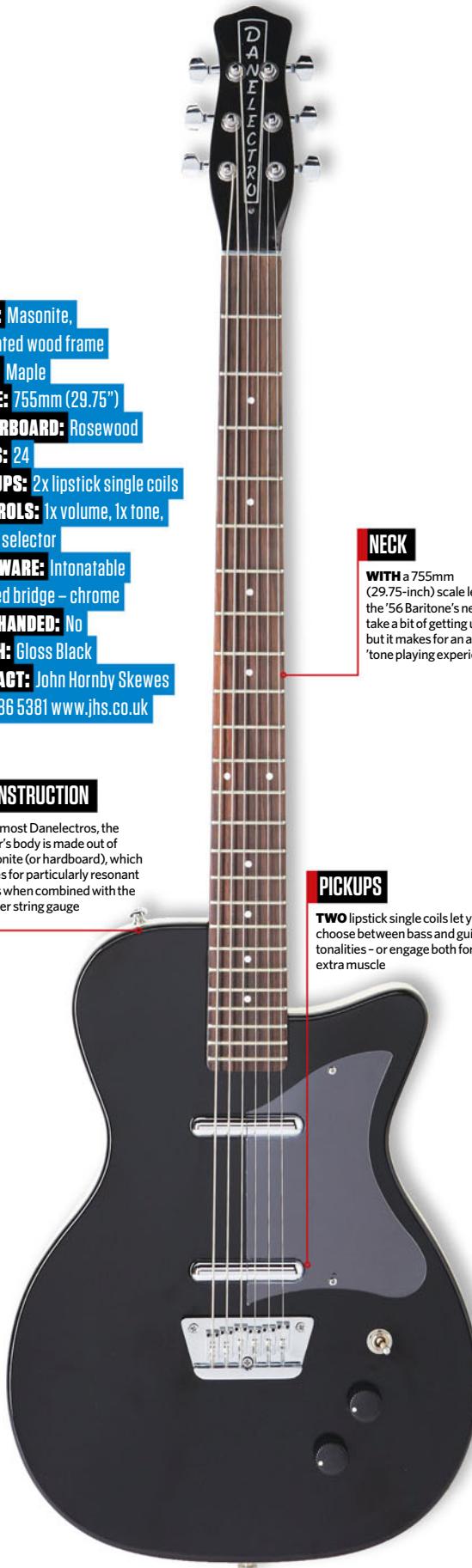
WITH a 755mm (29.75-inch) scale length, the '56 Baritone's neck can take a bit of getting used to, but it makes for an authentic 'tone playing experience

CONSTRUCTION

LIKE most Danelectros, the guitar's body is made out of Masonite (or hardboard), which makes for particularly resonant tones when combined with the heavier string gauge

PICKUPS

TWO lipstick single coils let you choose between bass and guitar tonalities – or engage both for extra muscle





DIVILL BY ITALIA ROUND-UP

Trevor Wilkinson's new sub-brand presents a fresh batch of guitars from the Italia time machine

Words: Michael Brown Photography: Gavin Roberts

WITH their bonkers offset bodies and 60s-inspired sounds, Italia guitars have certainly created a splash in the modern electric market. Founded in 1998 and masterminded by legendary designer Trevor Wilkinson, the company designs in England and builds in South Korea, keeping costs low and value high. And now with big names such as Chris Rea wielding its guitars, Italia has grown large enough to launch its own sub-brand: DiVill. So, if you like the Italia philosophy, but you're looking to save a little extra dollar, DiVill is the place to be, and these three vintage-inspired axes are priced to stun.

As well as featuring three distinct and retro body shapes, these guitars cover all the solidbody tonal bases: the M100 comes loaded with a pair of high-output humbuckers, the B100 boasts a mini-humbucker and P-90 combination, while the F100 features the classic HSS configuration. Throw in three different vibrato/bridge systems, and you've got a guitar for just about everyone - if you don't mind slightly, ahem, unconventional appearances, that is. So, without further delay, let's get on with playing these idiosyncratic Italians - after all, it's better the DiVill you know...

>>>



DIVILL BY ITALIA M100 £399

Running with the DiVill

WITH its smooth single-cut contours and twin humbuckers, you might think you already know what the M100 plays and sounds like. Picking the guitar up shatters any preconceptions. Its agathis body makes for a lightweight guitar that's ready to swing around on stage – and trust us, you'll want to take this one out on the road.

For starters, that matt black finish feels great, as does the lightly matt-finished mahogany bolt-on neck – speeding up and down the fingerboard is no problem. The single-cut-meets-double-cut 635mm (25-inch) scale length helps in this regard, too, making for trouble-free chords at the bottom of the neck, and swift solos at the top. For anyone who

likes the idea of an LP but finds it cramped at the dusty end, it's a welcome break from the norm.

Plugged in, that pair of DVH high-output humbuckers brings to mind hot-rodded takes on the LP blueprint. Crunchy rhythm tones ring out with vintage authority and get seriously beefy as you up the gain, revealing these 'buckers as real rock machines. Bust out a few open-chord riffs and you'll be in classic rock heaven.

Played clean, the DVHs are surprisingly dynamic, too, although when the gained-up tones sound this good, you'll struggle to turn off the filth. All in all, these neat tonal touches and body tweaks could just make the M100 the single-cut for players who don't like single-cuts.

DIVILL BY ITALIA B100 £399

Tonal variety meets retro chic

WE know it's superficial, but we can't help bringing up the B100's look: that pickup combo reminds us of a pawn shop guitar that's been gutted and retrofitted a few too many times. However, it also affords the B100 maximum tonal versatility. With a P-90 in the neck and mini-humbucker in the bridge position, there are an awful lot of tones within your grasp, especially through judicious use of the flexible tone and volume controls.

Those pickups sound fantastic, too. The P-90 delivers tight rhythm tones without humbucker brashness, while the middle position thins out the tone for a middle single coil-esque sound. Meanwhile, the mini-humbucker is brighter than regular 'buckers, and its sounds reside somewhere

between P-90s and humbuckers, with plenty of single coil-like cut – it's a bit of an enigma, as far as pickups go, and we love it.

The mini-humbucker presents its own idiosyncrasies. With a heavy dose of gain, our review model's bridge pickup exposed some microphonic tendencies. That's testament to the guitar's vintage voice, though – early mini-humbuckers were known to produce similar squeals at high gain. There are more quirks on the playing front, too. While the unfinished neck plays like a pricey S-type, that awkward lower cutaway limits upper access, and the control knobs are a little cramped for our liking. Still, these are small sacrifices to make for the B100's colossal range of vintage-voiced tones.





DIVILL BY ITALIA F100 £429

Vibrato and tones to thrill

IT'S got the wackiest scratchplate of the lot, but the F100 is a seriously practical guitar. It arms you with hot-rodded HSS tonal firepower, plus a vintage-style floating vibrato system and tune-o-matic bridge, and even Italia locking tuners. Like the B100, it has a speedy unfinished maple neck, but unlike its stablemate, the cutaway isn't intrusive and allows unfettered access to the dusty end of the neck.

Once again, we noticed a few eccentricities while playing the F100: the vibrato system produces the odd clack or two as it returns to regular pitch, while the bridge's roller saddles can click a little with wide string bends. Still, you're unlikely to notice any of this when the volume's loud and the playing

is even louder, which is exactly what the F100 demands.

Plug in, and the neck and middle single coils treat you to a wealth of classic S-type tones, from Frusciante funk to Hendrix-y in-between quack, courtesy of positions three to five on the five-way pickup selector. There's plenty of spank 'n' sizzle on display, and they slice through distorted tones with aplomb, too. Kick in the bridge humbucker for a hefty boost in output and killer rock tones at higher gain levels, and the F100 makes an impressive case as a do-all vintage-inspired double-cut. Like the rest of the DiVill series, it spans a huge tonal territory and excels at just about everything it sets out to do – and at this price, that's no mean feat.

DiVill by Italia M100

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Agathis
NECK: Mahogany
SCALE: 635mm (25")

FINGERBOARD: Rosewood
FRETS: 22

PICKUPS: 2x DVH high-output humbuckers

CONTROLS: 1x volume, 1x tone, 3-way toggle pickup selector

HARDWARE: Tune-o-matic bridge w/ Italia trapeze tailpiece, Italia die-cast tuners

LEFT-HANDED: No

FINISH: Satin Black (shown), Metallic Blue

CONTACT: John Hornby Skewes 0113 286 5381 www.jhs.co.uk



DiVill by Italia B100

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Agathis
NECK: Maple
SCALE: 648mm (25.5")

FINGERBOARD: Rosewood
FRETS: 22

PICKUPS: 1x DVM mini-humbucker (bridge), 1x DV9 soapbar P-90 (neck)

CONTROLS: 1x volume, 1x tone, 3-way toggle pickup selector

HARDWARE: Hardtail bridge, Italia die-cast tuners

LEFT-HANDED: No

FINISH: Laguna Blue (shown), Metallic Orange



DiVill by Italia F100

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Agathis
NECK: Maple
SCALE: 648mm (25.5")

FINGERBOARD: Rosewood
FRETS: 22

PICKUPS: 1x DVH high-output humbucker (bridge), 2x DVS single coils (neck, middle)

CONTROLS: 1x volume, 1x tone, 5-way lever pickup selector

HARDWARE: Roller saddle bridge w/ vintage floating vibrato, Italia die-cast locking tuners

LEFT-HANDED: No

FINISH: Heritage Burst (shown), Vintage White



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**VALVES**

THE Ramparte's packing two 12AX7s and a single 6L6... just the ticket for great Class A tone

CABINET

LOVIN' that vintage 50s vibe: soft-furnished good looks collide with up-to-date sounds

CONTROLS

THIS amp keeps things simple with just a single volume control for each channel - it's all you need!

FENDER PAWN SHOP SPECIAL RAMPARTE £346

Blink and you'll miss it... The Big F unleashes another Pawn Shop collectable

THE Pawn Shop Special range from Fender has featured some very cool and unique products, as well as quirky twists on originals that would probably never get initial approval if they were intended for the mainstream catalogue. Like real pawnshop finds, they also don't hang around very long, with products such as the little two-watt Greta and last year's massively popular Excelsior disappearing after around six months. Now, Fender is hoping to repeat the same success story with a nine-watt combo called the Ramparte.

Covered in a two-tone chocolate and gold-patterned cloth fabric, the Ramparte looks like a 1950s house clearance refugee, but behind the gold-badged grille lurks a specially designed 12-inch speaker powered by a single 6L6 output valve pumping out around nine watts of class A goodness.

The control panel could hardly be simpler, with two inputs

labelled Cool and Hot, partnered by two volume controls that go from one to nine and one to 16, giving you a pretty good idea of what each can do. There are no tone controls, no effects, no loops or pull-switches and no cocktail umbrellas to get in the way; it's just you, a guitar and an amp, the way it would have been back in the 40s

There are no tone controls, just you, a guitar and the amp

and 50s, when many early guitar amplifiers were adapted from valve radios and jukeboxes.

Despite the vintage looks, inside the chassis, the electronics are very modern, with nearly every component mounted on two slim PCBs that are joined by a trio of ribbon cables. Considering the simple control layout, there are a lot of components – clearly, the

Ramparte is trying to be more than a beefed-up Champ.

With no tone controls, you'd want this amp to sound good, and it does, in a Tweed Champ meets Deluxe way. With the volume knobs up to halfway, the Cool channel has a fat 'nearly' clean sound with single coils, slightly more overdriven with

humbuckers. The Hot channel's toothy grind is ideal for more aggressive styles, perfect for a Tele bridge pickup, or FilterTrons maybe, but it has a little too much fizz for humbuckers. Maxing out either control fattens everything without really adding too much volume, but that's the way simple valve amps work; playing the Ramparte makes you work the

AT A GLANCE

TYPE: All-valve Class A combo

OUTPUT: 9 watts

VALVES: 2x 12AX7, 1x 6L6

SPEAKER: 1x Ramparte 12"

Special Design

CONTROLS: Hot volume, Cool volume

SOCKETS: Cool input, Hot input, external speaker out

WEIGHT: 9.5kg

DIMENSIONS: [HxWxD]

400 x 440 x 250mm

CONTACT: Fender GB 01342 331700

www.fender.co.uk

guitar for changes in tone, and dig into each note to squeeze out that extra last second of sustain.

Our only gripe is a common one for single-ended amps: noise. Most Class A amps have a little hum; however, the noise level on our review model was just ever so slightly too high. For large gigs, it will be completely inaudible, but for quieter use at home – and let's face it, the sofa-friendly good looks are aimed at home users – it could disappoint if you want to noodle at conversation levels. So, maybe it's not the lounge amp of your dreams, then, but for small gigs it's ideal – and there aren't many amps that look cooler than this.

Nick Guppy

FEATURES**SOUND QUALITY****VALUE FOR MONEY****BUILD QUALITY****USABILITY****OVERALL RATING****SUMMARY**

WAMPLER ROUND-UP

£189-£199

These boutique stompboxes from the USA ain't cheap, but killer tones and a huge array of features give you plenty of Wamp for your wonga

Words: Trevor Curwen Photography: Joby Sessions

HAND-BUILT

in the USA, you'll find Wampler pedals on professional pedalboards the world over – Guthrie Govan and modern fusion master Tom Quayle are two of the Brits who use 'em, while over the pond, the brand has made waves in Nashville with the likes of Keith Urban, Brad Paisley and Brent Mason. Designer Brian Wampler initially focused on the amp-in-a-box genre, and has pedals that recreate classic and boutique amps from both sides of the pond, but the full range has expanded to over 20 pedals with various overdrives, distortions and fuzzes, plus a compressor, buffer, chorus/vibrato, two delays and a reverb. One thing that strikes us about these solidly put-together and classy-looking pedals is their versatility – a lot of thought has gone into these stompers, giving you a load of extra switches and knobs that allow a wider range of tonal options than much of their competition. So, let's check out Wamp's going on...



WAMPLER PLEXI-DRIVE £189

Plex-able overdrive

FOR those who don't know already, Plexi is shorthand for a mid-to-late 60s Marshall sound that was derived from the Plexiglass panels found on some models of the era. And it's this classic sound that Wampler's Plexi-Drive is designed to deliver. Basically, this is an overdrive pedal with a British flavour and two modes of operation. Flicking on the Bass Boost switch adds a nice touch of 4x12 thump to proceedings, but both modes let you pile on that familiar Marshall-y crunch. After an overdrive that can give your amp some classic British rock tone? Then look no further...

WAMPLER EGO COMPRESSOR £199

Blue crush

LIKE many guitar compressors, the Ego is based on the classic MXR Dyna Comp/Ross Compressor. As a practical tool for keeping levels dynamically consistent, adding sustain or giving clean notes an extra snap for country or funk picking, the Ego Compressor can do it all with ease – and with the blend and tone knobs, you can balance your compressed and dry sound and add a touch of sparkle. A compressor might not be the first pedal that comes to mind when you're looking to expand your 'board, but if you've gotta have one, there are few that give you as much versatility as the Ego.

**AT A GLANCE**

TYPE: Overdrive, compressor, distortion and fuzz pedals

CONTROLS: Plexi-Drive: Gain, volume, tone, bass boost switch
Ego Compressor: Blend, attack, volume, tone, sustain

Sovereign Distortion: Gain, volume, mid behaviour, tone, bright/even switch, boost/standard switch
Velvet Fuzz: Fuzz, volume, brightness, big/tight switch

SOCKETS: Input, output, power

BYPASS: True bypass

POWER: 9V battery, PSU (not included)

CONTACT: First Line Distribution 07894 747041
www.wamplerpedals.com

WAMPLER PLEXI-DRIVE	
SUMMARY	FEATURES
	SOUND QUALITY
	VALUE FOR MONEY
	BUILD QUALITY
	USABILITY
	OVERALL RATING
★★★★★	

WAMPLER EGO COMPRESSOR	
SUMMARY	FEATURES
	SOUND QUALITY
	VALUE FOR MONEY
	BUILD QUALITY
	USABILITY
	OVERALL RATING
★★★★★	

WAMPLER SOVEREIGN DISTORTION	
SUMMARY	FEATURES
	SOUND QUALITY
	VALUE FOR MONEY
	BUILD QUALITY
	USABILITY
	OVERALL RATING
★★★★★	

WAMPLER VELVET FUZZ	
SUMMARY	FEATURES
	SOUND QUALITY
	VALUE FOR MONEY
	BUILD QUALITY
	USABILITY
	OVERALL RATING
★★★★★	

WAMPLER SOVEREIGN £199

The king of dirt

LIKE fuzz pedals, distortion pedals each have their own signature voice, usually with tweakable gain and volume and a single tone knob, maybe two. However, in typical Wampler style, the Sovereign takes that so much further. First off, you have a boost switch that can add a load more gain to the standard sound, and then you have not only a switch to make the whole lot brighter, but a tone knob to dial in the top-end, and mid behaviour knob that can really focus the midrange right where you want it. The result is a distortion that's rich in harmonics and with exactly the top-end presence you need to cut through the mix. Excellent.

WAMPLER VELVET FUZZ £199

Fuzzy feel-good factor

WHILE different fuzz boxes can sound quite radically different from each other depending on the components used, most of them usually only have one sound on tap. Enter then, the Velvet Fuzz, which breaks the mould by sporting selectable Big and Tight options. Big gives you traditional fat 60s fuzz that wouldn't be out of place on a Hendrix recording, while Tight trades in some of the fuzzy girth for a sharply honed, muscular distortion, but both are responsive and clean up nicely with your volume knob. Not sandpaper, nor Velcro, this is velvet-smooth fuzz and versatile with it.



KORG PANDORA STOMP £144

New stompbox possibilities from this practice tool

THE evolving Pandora series traditionally delivers multi-effects for guitarists in compact pocket tabletop units, but this latest version comes in stompbox form. You may not wish to slip this rock-solid metal pedal in your pocket, but it could easily fill a slot on your pedalboard.

The basic idea is to give you access to fully produced guitar and bass sounds. With 200 factory presets (and 200 user), you're presented with a seven-part signal chain that takes its effects and amp/speaker sims from 158 onboard models. On top of that, you get 100 rhythm patterns, an aux input (with pitch shift) to pipe in music to play along with, while listening through headphones or

via a standard output to your amp or speakers. Hold down the footswitch and you get a fully functioning tuner pedal.

Sound-wise, there's plenty to get your creative juices flowing, with many of the presets based on well-known songs and players. However, if you don't want a full complement of amp and effects at once, easy editing tweaks via the knobs or the included software can deliver a simple amp/cab setup or a single effect to store for recall.

This is genre-spanning at its most practical – you get a practice and recording tool, but also a stompbox that can offer any sonic flavour you desire, and doubles as a pedal tuner. Kracking idea, Korg!

Trevor Curwen



TYPE: Multi-effects processor/tuner

PRESETS: 200 factory, 200 user

EFFECTS MODELS: 158

(including 26 amps and 23 cabs)

SOCKETS: Input, output, mini-jack aux input, mini-jack headphone output, USB

POWER: 9V battery, PSU,

USB bus power

CONTACT: Korg UK 01908 304601

www.korg.co.uk

SUMMARY

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

RODE NT1 £179-£239

A budget recording classic is back... in black

ABOUT a decade ago, we saw a boom at the budget end of the mic market, with everyone and their mother pumping out cheap large-diaphragm condensers aping the look of the classic – and debt-enhancing – Neumann U87. However, Rode was way ahead of this trend with the original NT1, a mic launched in the 90s that became a staple of bedroom studios worldwide. This was replaced by the NT1-A, famously touted as having the lowest self-noise of any affordable LDC, but now, Rode has taken the model name back to the start.

So, what do you get? Well, the boffins at Rode have gone and made it even less noisy, and painted it black, too. However, besides the colour change, Rode has also spent over \$1 million

reworking the internals to give a more vintage sound than its predecessor, while maintaining a transparent and flat response. As well as that, they've made it available as a kit for £239, which includes the SMR shockmount by anti-vibration kings Rycote, plus a pop-shield.

The NT1 handled everything we threw at it, with a clear, true representation of the sound in the room. It's sensitive enough to pick out the detail in your acoustic playing or vocals, with enough guts to handle being placed in front of a cab. There are loads of cheaper mics out there – £239 is no small investment, but an investment it is. If you're only going to buy one mic to do everything, you can't go wrong with this one.

Stuart Williams



TYPE: Large-diaphragm condenser

POLAR PATTERN: Cardioid

FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 20Hz - 20kHz

CONNECTION: XLR

CONTACT: Source Distribution

020 8962 5080 www.rodemic.com

SUMMARY

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



T-REX FUEL TANK GOLIATH

Jurassic power



IF YOUR old power bank is starting to collapse under the strain of powering your pedalboard, it could be time for a new power supply – and they don't get much mightier than T-Rex's Fuel Tank Goliath. This heavyweight supply puts out 3,000mA of power – that's more than enough for most 'boards, and will easily cover power-hungry digital pedals. The Goliath has seven isolated outputs, which are capable of handling nine-, 12- and 18-volt DC, as well as 12-volt AC pedals, and includes all the power cables you could ever need. A worthwhile investment for the dedicated pedal hound. (£250, www.t-rex-effects.com)



MUSIC NOMAD THE NOMAD TOOL

Tool of the trade



YES, it looks like a collision between a paintbrush and a kitchen cloth, but don't judge it too harshly; the Nomad Tool is a remarkably useful cleaning tool for every aspect of your rig. The microfibre pad is great for cleaning underneath strings and between pickups, not to mention dusty old wah pedals, while the brush works a treat for removing gunk from vibratos, controls and headstocks. The Nomad Tool made itself indispensable while we were shooting this issue's guitars, so if a bit of spring cleaning is in order, we reckon it's worth the outlay. (£11.99, www.musicnomadcare.com)



IK MULTIMEDIA iLOUD

iLoud and iProud



WITH the iLoud, IK Multimedia reckons it's created the first portable speaker for musicians. This compact package boasts a 40-watt output, built-in rechargeable battery and Bluetooth connectivity, plus a highly tailored sound response for musicians – certainly, it produces an impressive spread of frequencies for such a small set of speakers. The real bonus for guitarists is easy connectivity with AmpliTube on iOS devices, without the need for a separate interface – plug your guitar into the iLoud, then the iLoud into your device for swift access to your tones. It's very pricey, but among the best speakers we've heard at this size. (£239.99, www.ikmultimedia.com)



SNARK S-1 SON OF SNARK

Tune-y Snark



ACCORDING to Snark, this lil' tuner is its fastest, most accurate yet. The Son Of Snark is designed to 'hide' behind the headstock – but not any headstock, we found. Classical heads are too thick, smaller three-a-side heads, like PRS, too cramped. A Fender head worked well, but the geometry of the tuner means that when it's clipped on, its display sits almost too far back – you have to lean a little to see it. Still, there's no doubt that it's compact, quick and accurate in use on all the acoustics, electrics and basses we tried. (£17.99, www.snarktuners.com)

REVISITED

ED'S SHED

In-depth tech advice from TG's industry expert.
This issue, restringing a guitar with locking machineheads

ED MITCHELL

TG'S RESIDENT gear guru has been repairing, maintaining and modding guitars since 1986. He joined *Total Guitar* in 2003 after 18 years in guitar retail, and has written the Ed's Shed column ever since.



Heads up!

I just bought a guitar that's fitted with a set of locking machineheads. They look really cool with their brushed metal finish and they've kept my tuning rock solid since I brought the guitar home. But how do I replace the strings? I realise the process is probably more involved than changing strings on a guitar with traditional non-locking machineheads, so I need some advice. The guitar didn't come with any instructions and I don't want to break anything. How do I get the strings on and keep them on?

Isla Mitchell, via email

Ed says...

There are a few different designs of guitar machineheads. The most common has a hole through its shaft that you push the string through. You then wind the string around the shaft and Bob's your you-know-what. Thing is, excess windings can cause tuning problems, which is why locking machineheads were developed. These clamp the string in place so that there's no need for pesky windings. They work a treat if used correctly. Follow our guide below and you'll get great tuning stability no matter what type of heads your guitar has.

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Let's kick off with the most common type of machinehead. These heads have a post or shaft with a hole drilled through (see above). Stringing a guitar fitted with this design of machinehead is easy.



You should have three to five windings on the string (as above). Cut off any excess string. Next, tune the string then keep stretching and re-tuning until it settles. Job done.



Begin tightening the string. If you applied enough tension on the string when locking the machinehead, you should get the string up to pitch with one winding on the post.



To restring a guitar fitted with these classic old heads, run the string up to the headstock as shown in step 2. Cut it a couple of inches past the head then run the string down the hole in the post.



2
Secure the string at the guitar's bridge, run it up over the top nut to the headstock. Cut the string a couple of inches past its corresponding machinehead, then get ready for a real wind-up.



3
Run the string through the machinehead's hole. Start winding the string onto the post with a string winder. Let it wind neatly down the post until you get some tension on it.



5
Locking heads have a pin running through the post to clamp the string in place. They usually have a locking wheel on the back to tighten/loosen the pin's grip on the string.



6
Loosen the locking wheel on the back until you can get the string through the hole in the machinehead. Pull it tight. Maintain tension on the string, and tighten the wheel.



8
Trim excess string, then tune, stretch, tune until the tuning settles. Once each string is stretched properly the guitar should stay in tune or only need little tweaks every so often.



9
Some vintage guitars and reissues (such as old-school Fender Strats and Teles) have machineheads that have a hole running through the centre of the post, as shown above.



11
Bend the string over the top of the machinehead post (as shown). Hold the string tight with one hand and grab your string winder with the other. Wind the string down the post.



12
Three to five neat string windings is the goal here. All you then need to do is stretch the strings. Okay, we may have mentioned that before. Now go and play the damn thing!

QUICK FIXES



CUTTING CORNERS

Q I've just got a Dean Razorback, but I keep bashing the pointy bits of it on things because I'm not used to it yet. Any advice?
Drew Burns, via email

A Put some bright coloured tape on the guitar's sticky out bits until you get used to its shape and size – simple, if a little ugly...

A FILTHY FIEND

Q Hi Shed, what is that black gunk that keeps appearing on my guitar's fingerboard? It can be a real pain to shift.
Graham Fyfe, via email

A It's a nasty sweat and dead skin cell paste, you mucky pup! Always wipe your fingerboard after you've played your guitar. This should help keep it at bay.

WIN!

GOT A BURNING QUESTION FOR ED?
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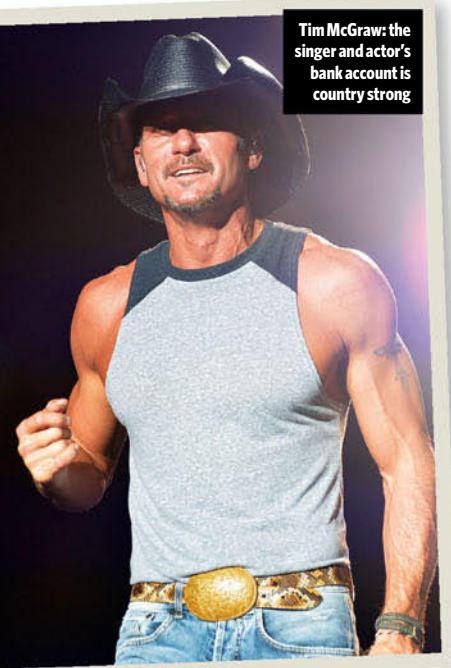


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The Final Countdown

10 HIGHEST EARNING PLAYERS OF 2013*



Tim McGraw: the singer and actor's bank account is country strong

10. Tim McGraw:

\$33m

Sneer all you like at his Stetsons, muscle vests and drive-time country-lite, but with last year's *Two Lanes Of Freedom* hitting No 2 on the Billboard album chart, and the associated tour putting redneck arses on seats across America, the Louisiana singer will never suffer the humiliation of his debit card being refused at Nandos like you.

9. Keith Richards/Ronnie Wood: \$39m

The Stones' back catalogue is the gift that keeps on giving, while princely ticket prices mean Keef and Ron coined it in despite only playing a handful of shows. It's not a bad little haul for the leathery pair, especially compared with the weekly UK state pension of £110.

8. Matt Bellamy: \$43m

Concert data-crunchers Pollstar estimate that Muse pulled in around \$1 million gross for every city they played last year. "Money and success haven't really changed my beliefs or opinions over the years," insists Bellamy, whose father went bankrupt in the early 90s. "We aren't going to let any of the spoils change us."

7. Roger Waters: \$44m

Despite the puppets, pyro and brickwork required to stage The Wall Live tour, the Pink Floyd legend was left with a healthy handful of change. Perhaps that's appropriate for the man who once penned the lyric: "Money, it's a hit, don't give me that do goody-good bulls**t."

6. Paul McCartney: \$47m

October's solo album, *New*, was just the start with Macca getting his cut from a half-century of hits, wetting his beak via his music publishing company and filling his boots on the road. It all made for a welcome top-up following the former Beatles' £24.3 million divorce settlement with Heather Mills in 2008.

5. Kenny Chesney: \$53m

The country giant turned a profit on this year's Billboard-topping *Life On A Rock*, but it's the No Shoes Nation tour that kept him in denim, playing to an estimated 1.25 million Hank and Jolenes at 42 different stadiums.

4. Bruce Springsteen: \$62m

The Boss finally wrapped up his world tour in September, presumably because he ran out of articulated lorries to stuff with banknotes. Lest we forget, a guiding theme of the associated *Wrecking Ball* album was the disparity of wealth in modern America. Hmm...

3 Chris Martin/Jonny Buckland: \$64m

Despite claiming they were "going broke" over the flashing Xyloband wristbands handed out to every punter at Coldplay gigs, Britain's nicest boys were also the nation's highest musical earners.



Jon Bon Jovi's been strumming his way to the mega bucks since '83

2. Toby Keith:

\$65m

July's *Forbes Magazine* dubbed Toby Keith "country music's \$500 million man", citing the Nashville songwriter's interests in steak-houses, clothing lines and his Wild Shot Mezcal (there's also the small matter of his squillion-selling blue-collar country albums).



Not a bad fortune for a man you've never even heard of

1. Jon Bon Jovi: \$79m

True, Madonna and Lady Gaga both grossed more than The Jove in 2013, but they can't play the guitar for toffee. If we're talking strummers, the list is headed up by the 51-year-old frontman, whose *Because We Can* world tour pulled in around \$3 million at every city. Lend us a fiver, will you Jon...?

*Pre-tax earnings, based on *Forbes* estimates

Words: Henry Yates

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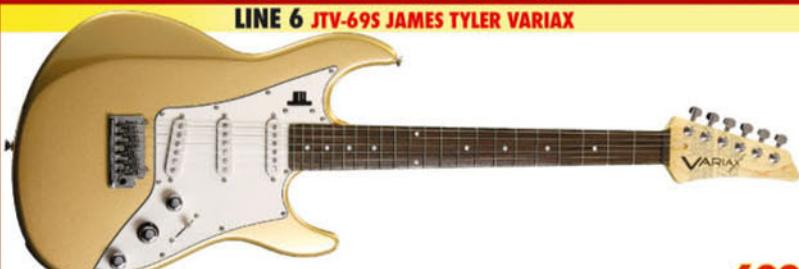
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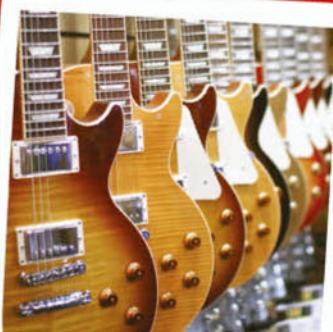


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