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Welcome...



“Your individuality is the best thing you’ve got.” So says this month’s cover star Yungblud (real name Dominic Harrison), who, as the quintessential voice of Gen Z, has built a loyal following, a community known as the Yungblud Army, that prides itself on accepting individuals of every kind, regardless of gender, race or sexual orientation.

You might say this spirit of openness extends to his first signature guitar, the new Epiphone SG Jr he’s sporting in our cover photo (and which you’ll find reviewed on p82) which is a replica of his own ’64 Gibson. For Yungblud, the guitar had to be affordable – it’s a hair over £500. It had to be accessible to all – and he’s been giving them away at live shows!

Dominic is an interesting character. In our exclusive interview he reveals that he’s a guitar nerd and a collector with a love of vintage Gibsons. Perhaps not what you’d expect of a major pop act. He also reveals himself to be something of a purist when it comes to amplification. I don’t want to overhype him as a “saviour of pop”-type figure, but I do think he’s a refreshingly guitar-focused presence. A true individual, you might say.

Elsewhere this issue, we discuss Fontaines D.C.’s most ambitious and experimental album to date with guitarist Conor Curley. King Gizzard multi-instrumentalist Stu Mackenzie talks us through the “classic 70s” vibe of the band’s latest release. You’ll find lessons on songs from Black Sabbath, Sam Fender and Jack White, plus reviews of gear from Line 6, Squier, LTD and more.

Enjoy the issue and I’ll see you next month.

Chris Bird Editor

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Words: Stuart Williams
Photography: Phil Barker

BRIGHT SPARK

The world's best-loved practice amp returns for its second generation

P

ositive Grid's Spark series amplifiers have been huge game-changers when it comes to all-round solutions for practising and recording at home.

Now, the tech-loaded amp has made a return with Spark 2, which Positive Grid promises, "doesn't just push boundaries - it shatters them".

All the previous Spark features we know and love are here (Auto Chords, Smart Jam and more), but PG has overhauled Spark 2 with a host of upgrades. It's got twice the processing power, all-new HD amp models, an improved looper with "hyper-realistic" drum patterns, and, at 25 watts, it's 25 per cent more powerful. It's not just louder,

though, Spark 2 includes a pair of FRFR speakers equipped to reproduce your guitar, acoustic or bass tone as well as give crystal-clear music playback.

One of the most intriguing features, though, is the new Spark AI tone creation. Simply tell it the type of sound you're imagining, and Positive Grid reckons that Spark 2 can create a patch to match.

What's more, the removable, rechargeable Spark battery (£79) and carry bag (£60) mean you can take Spark 2 anywhere. Spark 2 costs £279, and is currently available for preorder - if you act fast, Positive Grid is offering Priority Access pricing for shipping in October but the numbers are limited. Head to Positive Grid for more details.



UP CLOSE



More power

Double the processing and a 25 per cent power boost are on offer with the 50-watt Spark 2.



Spark AI

With Spark 2's AI, you can tell it the song, band or type of tone you're after and it'll generate audio patches for you to try.



Loops & drums

The upgraded looper section features hundreds of great-sounding drum patterns for you to jam along with.



07

SCENE

YOUR





ALBUM

“I’M GETTING CLEANER WITH MY TONES”

HOW **RICHIE KOTZEN** IS STILL GROWING AS A “MORE EXPRESSIVE” PLAYER

From Shrapnel shredder and fusion master to soul singer and acoustic balladeer, **Richie Kotzen** is undoubtedly one of the most multifaceted guitar talents on earth. On latest album *Nomad*, he’s embracing the cleanest tones of his career to date...

One of the new songs, *Cheap Shots*, has a rootsy vibe that comes from the Keith Richards school of guitar, and you once opened for The Rolling Stones...

I half-jokingly asked my old agent to get me an opening slot for the Stones and I ended up doing a whole Japanese tour. It was surreal! On *Cheap Shots*, I’m definitely leaning in on that influence. Keith would often tune his fifth string lower and lose his sixth string altogether, but because I have big hands I don’t need to drop my A-string down to a G. Instead, I use my pinky on the sixth string for the root and don’t play the fifth string at all.

Another song, *These Doors*, has some cleaner chromatic runs that owe more to jazz influences like George Benson...
There are a lot of clean solos on this record. As I’ve gotten older, I’ve been getting cleaner with my tones. I feel more expressive that way. You have less to worry about in terms of controlling the distortion, because that stuff can get in the way. In the hard rock world, some people depend on overdrive to mask things they’re trying to hide. It’s like a false confidence. Take it away and you can really hear the guitar.

You used a lot of hybrid picking early on, but for the last 17 years you’ve been performing without a plectrum...
Yeah, it’s been a long time. It came out of feeling uninspired and wanting to go in a different direction. I had to think, ‘Can I play the whole set like this?’ and then needed to develop some new techniques. I use my thumb to strike chords, or the top of my nails which I fan over the strings. For the records, I do sometimes use a pick. It’s probably 50–50.

What made you switch to Marshall for your most recent recordings and tours?
The 1959 Super Lead is almost like a wine glass. You hit a chord and there’s a certain resonance and thump, much like when you swirl a wine glass. When you roll the volume down it doesn’t go flat. Some hotter amps are more compressed and forgiving but you end up losing a lot of the tone. That’s why I ended up using Marshall again. I’ve got three 1959s in orange and then a few more in black.

Your preferred string gauge is 11-49, which is on the heavy side for someone dealing out fast runs and big bends...
My action is somewhere in the middle, but yeah, the strings are heavy. It’s funny, as a teenager I read that Paul Gilbert used 11-49 gauge on his albums. But he was only talking about his rhythm parts! I misconstrued that and thought he was using them for everything. I bought a set, put them on my guitar and got used to it. It was accidental! Now, if I pick up a guitar with 9s, I get all twisted and can’t play!
Amit Sharma

Photos: Morgan Bachmann



GUITAR

**EPIPHONE JIMI HENDRIX
"LOVE DROPS" FLYING V**

Epiphone has been working hard on its "Inspired By Gibson Custom" line, and the latest model is the Jimi Hendrix "Love Drops" Flying V. Based on the V that Jimi played between 1967-1969, and selling for £1,499, the Love Drops recreates Jimi's customised paint job, applied to the originally-Sunburst guitar by the man himself. Underneath the psychedelic design, it's a mahogany body equipped with a

one-piece mahogany neck, laurel fingerboard and 22 frets. Being an "Inspired By..." model, it comes fitted with a pair of Gibson USA Custombuckers with upgraded electronics including CTS pots, Mallory capacitors and Switchcraft pickup selector and output jack. Hardware includes a Maestro Vibrola and Epiphone Deluxe tuners, and it's bundled in a hardcase. Of course, it's available as a leftie too.



PEDAL

**UNIVERSAL
AUDIO
ANTI 1992**

Amp modelling pedals have been changing the way we think about our rigs, and some of the best standalone examples we've tried have come from Universal Audio's UAFX series. So far, that's very much been geared towards the more vintage/classic end of the amp world, but that's set to change with the introduction of the company's ANTI 1992. For £380, this bright red pedal aims to ape the sound of the classic Peavey 5150 amp, known for its Eddie Van Halen connections, but also for delivering some of the heaviest tones in metal since. UA's approximation offers three



channels and six cab emulations geared towards premium high-gain tone. There's hands-on control from the six knobs (which serve double-duty), and UA has also included a TS-style overdrive circuit and noise gate.

GUITAR

**FENDER FINNEAS
ACOUSTASONIC
PLAYER
TELECASTER**

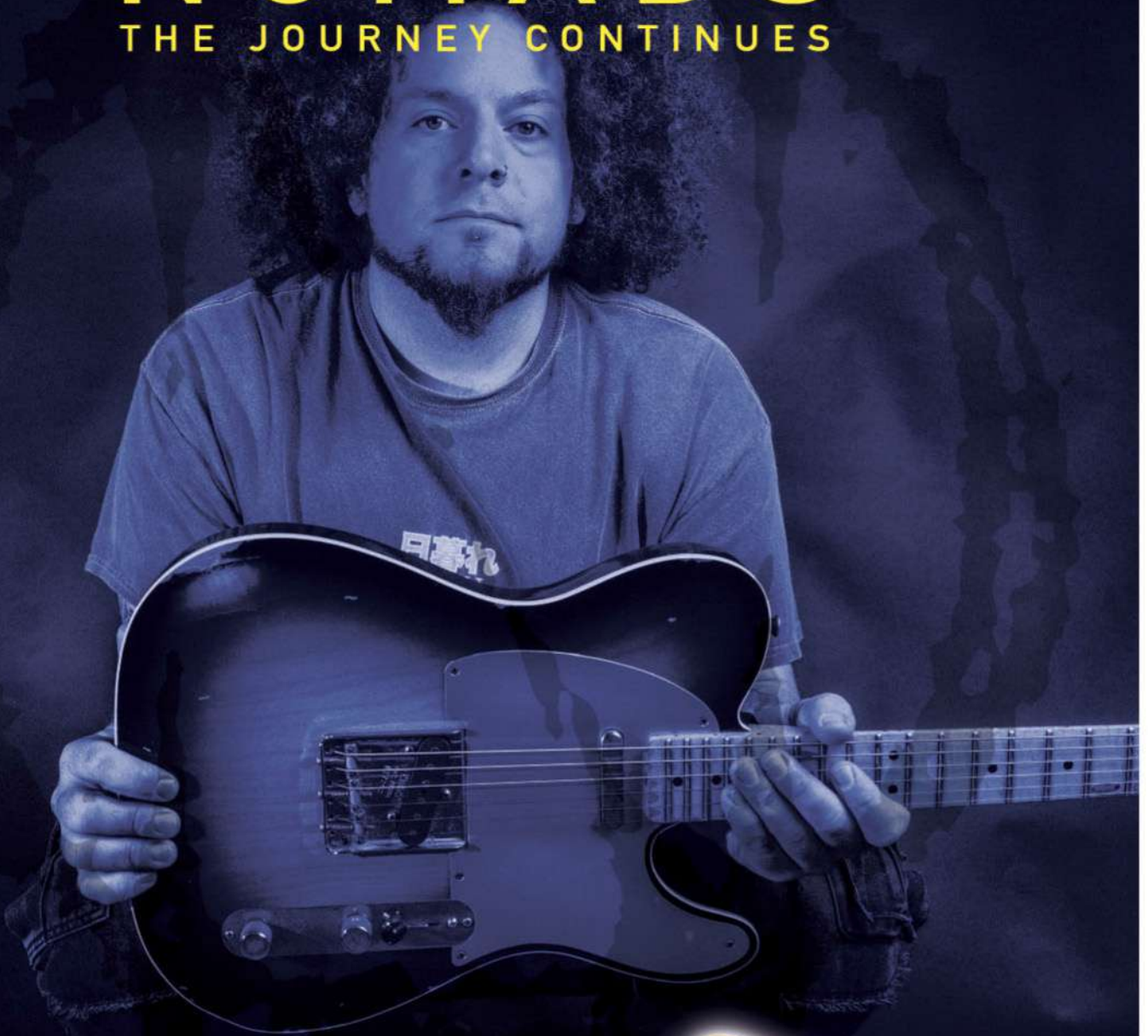
If the name Finneas escapes you, you may be more familiar with his sister, Billie Eilish. Finneas is the brother, co-writer, co-producer and guitarist for one of the biggest names in pop, and Fender has just honoured him with the first ever signature Acoustasonic model. There are actually two (with a US Acoustasonic also available), and the Player series version includes Fender's Shawbucker magnetic pickup, while it's also equipped with a Fishman under-saddle transducer. For his guitar,



Finneas spec'd a chorus circuit, which is selectable in two positions, and, as usual, the magnetic/acoustic sounds can be blended together. It comes in a Cappuccino Fade finish, and is available now for £1,199.

NOMADS

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES



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TALKING GUITARS

MICHAEL SCHENKER

HARD ROCK LEGEND. HERO TO SLASH,
KIRK HAMMETT AND MORE

Interview Jonathan Horsley Photo Tallee



12

B rilliant, eccentric German guitar hero Michael Schenker debuted with the Scorpions before joining UFO in 1974, then breaking out on his own with The

Michael Schenker Group. He favours a black and white Flying V and helped popularise cocked-wah guitar tone. His new album is an all-star celebration of his UFO days, featuring Slash, Axl Rose and other heavy friends.

What guitar did you learn on?

It was a guitar that was lying around. It must have been an acoustic. My brother Rudolf [Scorpions guitarist] got a Gibson for his

birthday instead of a motorbike. It must have been that one that I secretly played against his will! The first song I played was something to do with San Francisco. It was a hit in those days. [Hums *San Francisco* by The Mamas And The Papas] Yeah! And there was a solo in there, and I learnt that. I was nine years old and I was very happy.

Was was there a moment when you felt you had arrived as a player?

No, it has always been the same for me. Right from the moment when I was nine years old and picked up a guitar, I was always amazed with what I could discover, and it never stopped. I am in the same place!

How much did you practise in those early days and how often do you practise now?

It is more like play and discover. That's different. It is less technical. It is more like looking for gold, and once in a while I find a piece of gold. This will automatically become part of my developed style.

What is the one song or performance that you're most proud of?

I'm happy with everything. For me, it is never about a song. I am a lead guitarist! Ha! Lead guitarists think differently. My whole life has always been about development, so every moment is special, and every moment is different. We can never compare any of them.

"THERE IS NO TECHNIQUE FOR ME.
I DIDN'T CARE IF I DID IT THE
RIGHT OR WRONG WAY"



What was your biggest motivation as a player?

I wanted to express myself. That was my devotion. It still is and I have done it for fifty years, without listening to music so I don't get influenced, and that's where the uniqueness comes from. Focus on opening up what's unique about yourself. Anybody who makes that decision can do it. I am a musical monk or something. That's my mission. Self-expression is my mission. That's what I want, in every sense, not just music. I just love to self-express and really do what I like to do. I am just in a place where I choose to do it this way instead of copying anyone else. What you do with the guitar expresses your personality.

What technique did you have to work hardest to master?

There is no technique for me. Technique is very, very much in the background. The important thing was to find the note. I felt like I knew it was there, somewhere, and I have to find it! And the last thing on my mind was if I do it the right way or the wrong way, as long as I found that note. And of course, that's what I did. Day after day after day, I basically developed – technically – the wrong way of playing compared to today where you have the guitar schools, where you learn the perfect position of the hand, how to hold your fingers and play with all five fingers. But I couldn't have found my notes. I couldn't have written the songs I wrote if I would have followed that first. I just didn't care if I did it the right or wrong way.

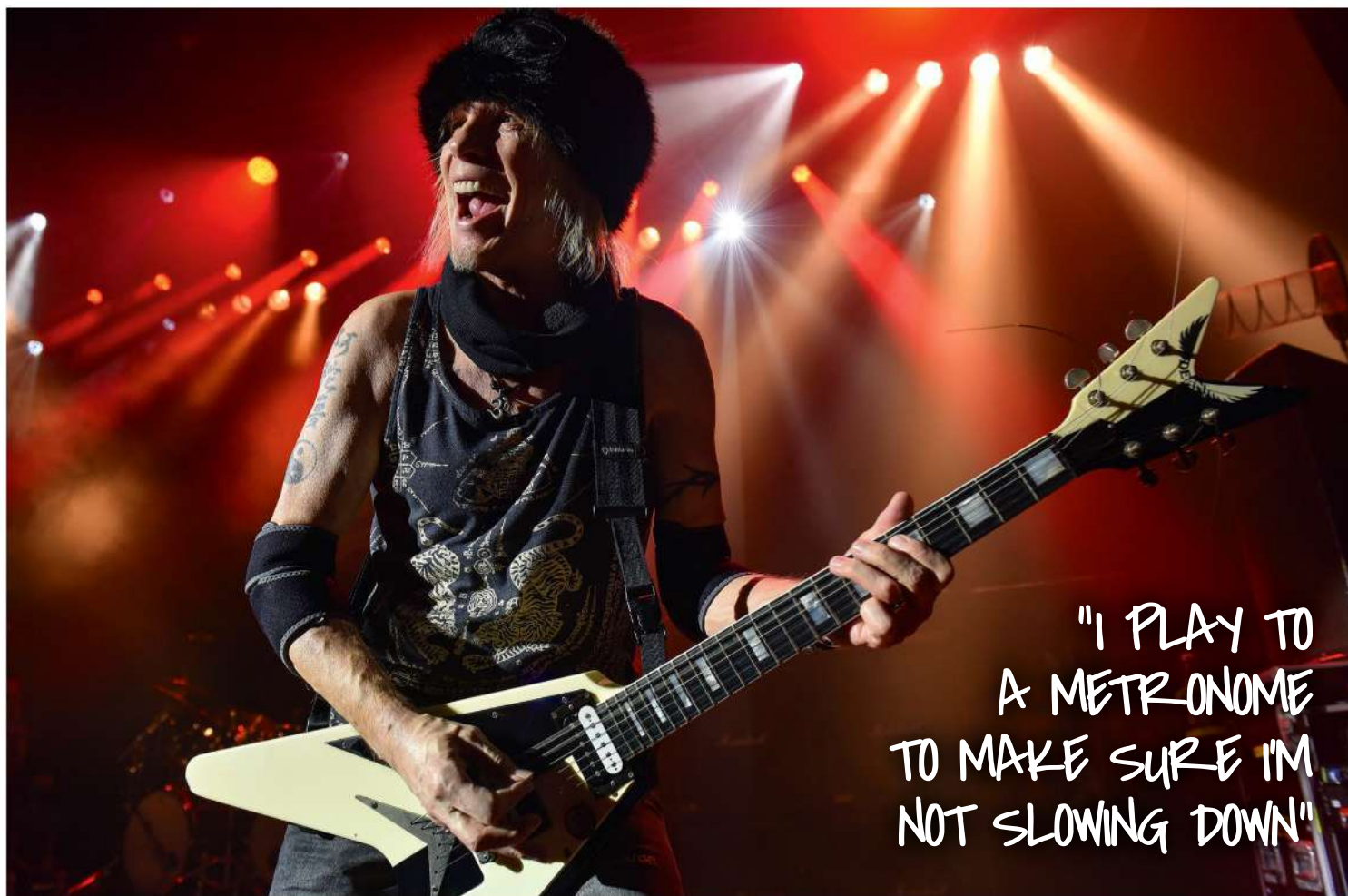
As a player, do you have any bad habits?

There are no bad habits! There is only one thing: to make good music however you do it. Hey, there is no right or wrong for me. I can get better technically because I have plenty of time to get my fingers into easier positions, but the thing is, there are certain ways of playing, like my style, that you cannot necessarily get across if I play it perfectly positioned with my fingers based on what's taught at guitar schools. It's like fishing. How you find the note, how you strike or sweep over the strings, how you hit them, that is how the sound comes together. It's not technical. Technicality makes everything clinical. But fishing for notes as a priority makes everything three dimensional, analogue. It gives it warmth. It's not perfect – it's feeling. It's more feeling than having the right position of your fingers playing guitar.

In your early days, what guitar was the game changer for you?

A triangle guitar! Yeah, very strange. I had never seen a Flying V, but when I was at school, doing this project, building something out of wood, I wanted to make a guitar and ended up building a triangle guitar, which is similar to

Photo: Getty



"I PLAY TO
A METRONOME
TO MAKE SURE I'M
NOT SLOWING DOWN"

→ a Flying V, but it's not the Flying V. You put a Flying V next to a Les Paul, next to a Strat, on the floor, it won't do anything. It becomes something with the person who picks up the guitar. That's what that guitar becomes. I found the Flying V by coincidence. Like many things in my life, it happened by itself. So maybe I was meant to have that guitar. I discovered that guitar by accident. I liked the combination of my amplifier with that guitar. It was closer to the sound I imagined, and I found that I was able to do a really good vibrato by putting the V between my legs, so that the neck would not wobble around. I was able to lock it in and so that was one of the main reasons why I felt good about that guitar.

With your new album of classic UFO material, was there anything you learned about your playing when revisiting songs you wrote 50 years ago?

I don't analyse things. I just do it. I don't analyse what I have done, or why I did it, I just do it because that is the moment of being an artist. You just do it. Less thought!

What do you play when you're just relaxing and playing for fun?

Again, I don't think. I just pick up the guitar and play. But one thing I do in order to keep shape is I play to a metronome to make sure I am not slowing down in any way, because when you get older the way we perceive time is different from when we are younger, so sometimes you think you are playing as fast as you did the day before but it is do with the biological rhythm. I always measure by a metronome, at a certain speed. I have to make sure that I can play my old songs.

Do you have any favourite tracks from revisiting your UFO years?

I love *This Kid's* with Biff [Byford, Saxon frontman]. I was amazed. I always wanted to do something with Biff. Every song is different but everybody did a great version. I don't like comparing things. I just like to listen to it and not compare it like the Olympics! There are so many different qualities, different feelings, but all of them are unique in their own way, so I don't give them points for their performances. It is all great stuff, what they did. When I heard Dee Snider [ex-Twisted Sister singer] I went, 'Wow!' I didn't know he had a great voice like this. Kai Hansen [Helloween guitarist/vocalist] was another one. He did a fantastic job on *Rock Bottom*. And when I heard Joel Hoekstra, he

sounds like a saxophone on his guitar. He's really, really unique. It was fun. It still is fun listening to the different approaches. I didn't expect anything, but when I heard it I was extremely happy with it.

And Axl Rose?

Axl originally sang three songs, but he didn't like his versions of *Only You Can Rock Me* and *Too Hot To Handle*, so he decided to stick with *Love To Love*, which is a fantastic version.

Can you recall a moment when you felt like you'd failed as a player or felt embarrassed by a performance?

That's a big question. Of course you can feel embarrassed when you play a bum note. But I don't really focus on that. I'd rather focus on the good moments. You know, I played bum notes on *Strangers In The Night* [UFO's legendary 1979 live album], and today those bum notes are the right notes! Because everybody got used to it. And people ask me, 'Michael, how do you make this work, playing a major over a minor?' I'm like, 'I don't know what you're talking about!' But they might have been asking about those bum notes!

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JAMEY ARENT

Jamey Arent is an LA-based guitarist and educator who has worked with artists like Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, Matthew Morrison, B. Slade, and many others. His session work can be heard in Netflix, TBS, and Comedy Central shows.



10 SPANKY RHYTHM RIFFS

Learn from the masters of funk with Pickup Music's 10 practice riffs inspired by legends including James Brown, Prince and Vulfpeck

Things are about to get funky! We've got a brand new bag of riffs for you to learn, courtesy of Pickup Music. These 10 rhythm riffs showcase funk guitar styles from across the ages. Whether you're into the classics like James Brown and Michael Jackson or the more contemporary funksters like

Vulfpeck, you'll find plenty of inspiration here. If you're new to funk guitar playing, here's a handful of helpful ideas to get you into the groove. First up, aim to stay in the pocket – nothing is more important than keeping your timing tight. Second, serve the music – funk isn't about showcasing your shred skills. Next, find your space in the groove – try to

find what's missing and fill that gap. Finally, you want solid staccato – get good muting with both hands for complete string control. If you really want to be a great funk guitarist, practise 16th notes to a metronome... practise them a lot! Okay, let's get into the good stuff. And remember to see how it's done you can follow the link to Pickup's video lesson.



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CHORDS

These are the most important shapes we'll be looking at, but with one key difference. These are the *full* shapes. It's rare in funk to play all the strings, but it is still helpful to know which shape the 'partial chords' are taken from. Play these shapes first, then see if you can spot them in the tab examples that follow.

Diagram 1: E9 (6th fret, strings 2-4, fingers 1, 2, 3, 3, 3)

Diagram 2: E13 (6th fret, strings 2-4, fingers 1, 2, 3, 3, 4)

Diagram 3: Am7 (12th fret, strings 2-4, fingers 1, 1, 2, 3, 4)

Diagram 4: Am6 (12th fret, strings 2-4, fingers 1, 1, 2, 3, 4)

Diagram 5: E7#9 (6th fret, strings 2-4, fingers 1, 2, 3, 4)

Diagram 6: D7 (12th fret, strings 2-4, fingers 1, 2, 3, 4)

Diagram 7: G (10th fret, strings 2-4, fingers 1, 1, 2, 3, 4)

Diagram 8: D7 (10th fret, strings 2-4, fingers 1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 3)

Diagram 9: Em11 (12th fret, strings 2-4, fingers 1, 2, 3, 4, 4)

Diagram 10: Em7 (7th fret, strings 2-4, fingers 1, 1, 1, 2, 3)

Diagram 11: A (7th fret, strings 2-4, fingers 1, 2, 3, 4)

INSPIRED BY JAMES BROWN

bit.ly/tg389audio

Free time

This riff is the first of a few in the key of E. Play the top four strings of the E9 voicing. For added funk, slide up from a semitone below. Then, take your pinky and hit the 9th fret - this briefly turns it into an E13 chord. Keep the strings muted where you see X's in the tab, then press the chord down when you want to activate it.

INSPIRED BY PRINCE

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Free time

This is a great funk loop. Feel free to experiment with different rhythm patterns to make it your own. Start with an Am7 chord shape at the 12th fret. Use your fourth finger to hit the 7 G note on the 15th fret. Play that shape twice, followed by two muted chops. Next, play an Am6 by simply moving the fourth finger down one fret, then repeat the same strumming pattern. Lift your fourth finger again for the very last strum to finish on the Am7.

FUNKY SINGLE-NOTES

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Free time
N.C.

TAB: 3 3 x x 3 3 x 3 x 5 x 3 4 3 x x | 3 3 x x 3 3 x 3 x 5 x 1 x x

Time to go low! Start with your first finger on the 3rd fret of the A string. Pick those 16th notes really close to the bridge to get a spanky sound. The lick is based around the D minor pentatonic scale with that funky trill moving between the major and minor 3rd. The only time you stop the stream of tight 16th notes is during those hammer-ons and pull-offs.

"BUBBLE" LINE

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Free time
Am⁷

TAB: 5 x 5 x 5 7 5 x 5 7/9 7 5 7 5 | 5 x 5 x 5 7 5

This is a common sound in many Michael Jackson songs. The guitarist's job here is to add another percussive layer while creating a short, hooky melody. The 'bubble' term comes from that bright popping sound. You can generate this by switching to a middle-position pickup, using the edge of your pick, and plucking sharp staccato notes.

INSPIRED BY EARTH WIND AND FIRE

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Free time
D^{#7#9} E7^{#9}

TAB: 7 8 8 x x x 8 x 8 x x 8 8 x x | 7 8 8 x x x 8 x 8 x x 8 8 x x

Grab that E7^{#9} chord – for the non-jazz players, it's better known as the "Hendrix chord". Similar to the first riff, we'll slide up from a half-step below to give that laid-back feel. It's very rare to strum all six strings in funk guitar – and this riff is no different. Use some overhang from your second finger to mute the low E and the same with your fourth to mute the high string.

DOMINANT 7TH RIFF

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Free time
C^{#7} D⁷ G D⁷ C^{#7} D⁷ G D⁷

TAB: 13 14 14 x x 12 x 10 x x | 13 14 14 x x 12 x 10 x x

This riff is based around a D7 chord up at the 12th fret. Again, start with the half-step slide into the D7. For the next chord shape, barre your third finger along the D, G, and B strings on the 12th fret – this is like a mini G chord. Now move that shape down two frets and play it with your first finger. The final flourish is almost like a little blues run.

UNISON BEND

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Free time
Em¹¹

We're starting on on an Em11 chord on the 14th fret here. Can you guess what your strumming hand has to do? That's right! 16th notes – just like most of these riffs. The pattern is four strums of the chord, then two muted. Play that two times round, but on the second time, follow the two muted strums with a unison bend. For the unison bend, put your first finger on the 12th fret of the E string, then bend the 15th fret of the B string up until the two pitches match.

COMBINING SINGLE-NOTES AND CHORDS

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Free time
N.C.

Time to mix things up. Quite often, funk players move between chords and single-note lines in the same riff. This riff is based around an E7 shape and the pentatonic box that surrounds it. After the initial lick, you land on the 5th fret of the A string and hit a few muted strums. The final finesse is that big E9 chord chunk at the end. It's a great way to lead back to beat 1.

DOUBLESTOP RIFF

bit.ly/tg389audio

Free time

Don't have another guitarist to harmonise with? No worries! This riff incorporates doublestops to double the fun. You can think of these like chord fragments. For example, play the G and B strings on the 5th fret, and it's almost like a tiny C chord. Move down to the 4th fret on the G string and the 3rd fret on the B string for a 'rootless' G chord. Often the bass player will cover the root note, so you don't always need it in your chords.

MOVING SHAPES

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Free time
Em⁷

Speaking of mini chords, you can play an Em7 using the open D chord shape – just move it to the 7th fret and play the top three strings. The next part of the riff is just moving the shape up two frets, but... there's a funky bit in between – the "CHIKAPITAI" triplet. Loosen up your wrist and try to emulate the sound of that word with your picking hand. The "CHI-KA-PI" is played on the first shape and the "TAI" lands on the chord two frets up.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN
 ✓ E minor pentatonic scale
 ✓ Single-note riffing
 ✓ Octave shapes

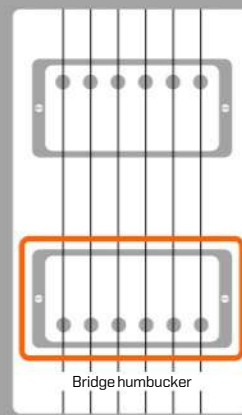
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RIFF OF THE MONTH

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL OVERDRIVE



Jack White has been spied playing *OSB* on his heavily modded Low Rider Telecaster set to its bridge position Filter'Tron pickup. He's most likely using modified/custom Fender amps for what is a bluesy, but straight-ahead overdrive tone – and that means you don't really need specific gear to dial in a ballpark sound. Select a bridge humbucker and set your amp with just enough drive to help the notes sustain.

JACK WHITE

Old Scratch Blues

Jack White has stormed back into the limelight with his unexpected – and initially secret – new album, *No Name*. Some are calling it a return to the punky blues sound of The White Stripes, though it's a little less deliberately retro to our ears.

We're looking at the album opener here, which uses single notes and octave shapes within the E minor pentatonic scale right across

the fretboard – so be ready for some big position shifts. Start with four palm-muted open E notes picked with downstrokes, then play the notes on the 3rd and 5th frets with your first and second fingers. Repeat the palm-muted open E notes then shift up to 7th fret for the octaves. You can play the octaves with your first and third or first and fourth fingers. In either case use your first finger to mute the idle strings; this allows you to strum the octave

shape without the open strings ringing. The riff ends at the 5th and 7th frets, and a slide up to the final E root note. Watch our slowed down video to learn the exact notes and phrasing.

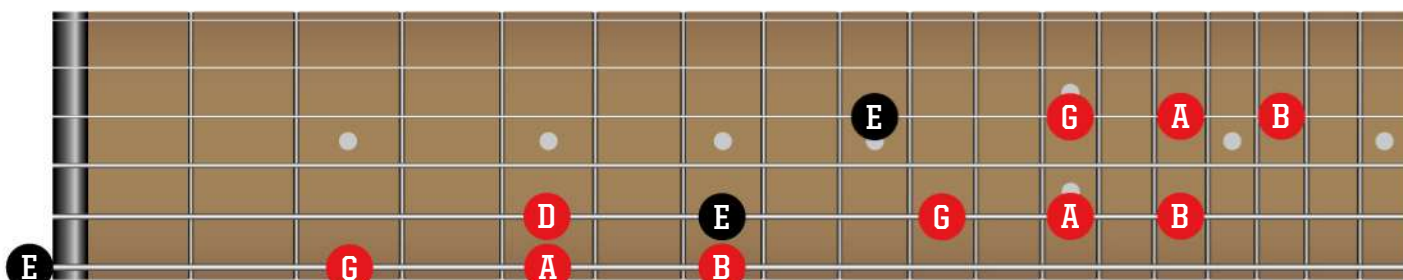
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:15–0:29

Tempo: 70bpm

Key/scale: E minor pentatonic

Main techniques: Picking, slides, palm-mutes



The riff is based entirely in E minor pentatonic scale (EGABD). You can find the first four notes of the scale along the sixth string starting on the open E. Those same

notes are found an octave higher starting on the 7th fret of the fifth string and again an octave higher from the 9th fret of the third string.

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Dave Celentano is one of the industry's hottest and most sought-after guitar instructors, and has been teaching for over 30 years. He has written numerous tutorial books and DVDs for guitar, and released several CDs throughout his career. Dave is proficient in many styles of music including rock, blues, heavy metal, jazz, and classical. His technique specialties include multi-finger tapping, sweep picking, music theory, and reading music.



INTRO TO ROCK

How to start playing rock guitar for beginners

Rock music is usually the main reason people get into guitar lessons in the first place. Shredding a mega solo under big stage lights is any guitarist's dream!

Don't worry if you're still new to guitar, though. In this lesson we'll go over three easy rock guitar licks for your solos. You can also head to guitartricks.com/rockmag where you'll find more in-depth and

step-by-step rock guitar lessons.

The licks we are sharing here will utilise the D minor pentatonic scale, which we've shown across the page, along with a couple of other related shapes.

This first lick is a shred-style line, so, although it's best to practise slowly, be prepared to speed up and get shreddy! The pull-offs help with that classic shred sound.

The second lick introduces more notes on the high E string, and

almost sounds like Van Halen-style tapping. It can get a bit tricky since you'll be jumping from the E to B strings so take it easy. Finally, we add more notes in our third lick, including the "blues" note.

There's plenty to learn here in just three licks. We recommend practising slowly, and, if you're struggling, try to home in on short, bite-sized phrases. Just three or four notes can be all you need to make progress.



Guitar Tricks' step-by-step lessons will be your guide to learning how to play guitar. With our Core Learning System, video feedback, practice reminders and Custom Lesson Plans you will save tons of time on your guitar learning journey. Guitar Tricks has a 14-day free trial plus a 60-day money-back guarantee so you can purchase with confidence.

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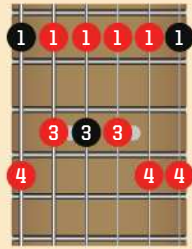
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SCALES

These are the three shapes we'll be using in this month's licks. First, the good old minor pentatonic scale. It's probably the most commonly used scale in lead guitar so make sure you know it. The other two are variations on the pentatonic theme - so take note of where there are new or different notes in the tab examples.



D minor pentatonic scale



D minor pentatonic scale (w/extra notes)



D blues scale

1 SHRED STYLE

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩=130

Start at the 10th fret position, then pull off from the 13th fret to the 10th. See that the lick is a mixture of these pull-offs on the first and second strings. Your goal is to identify the pattern that the pull-offs repeat in.

Start at the 10th fret position, then pull off from the 13th fret to the 10th. See that the lick is a mixture of these pull-offs on the first and second strings. Your goal is to identify the pattern that the pull-offs repeat in.

2 TAPPING STYLE

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩=100

We're in the 10th position again here, but keep an eye out for the extra notes on the high E string. You'll need a good stretch to reach the 15th fret. Notice that adding more pull-offs at a faster speed gives the sound like you're tapping.

We're in the 10th position again here, but keep an eye out for the extra notes on the high E string. You'll need a good stretch to reach the 15th fret. Notice that adding more pull-offs at a faster speed gives the sound like you're tapping.

3 TRIPLET LICK

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩=90

Utilising some tremolo picking and pull-off sequences, this next-level lick will make you sound like the pros. Take care with the rhythm though. Break the lick down and you'll see how it's phrased around three-note 'triplets'.

Utilising some tremolo picking and pull-off sequences, this next-level lick will make you sound like the pros. Take care with the rhythm though. Break the lick down and you'll see how it's phrased around three-note 'triplets'.

ARCTANGENT'S RISING GUITAR STARS

ArcTanGent is one of the world's biggest festivals for boundary-pushing guitar music. We bring you the lowdown on the players setting fretboards and imaginations ablaze

In 2013, in the heart of rural Somerset, a new kind of music festival was born – one that played host to some of the boldest, most adventurous and downright noisiest alternative guitar music the world had to offer. Named after an album by cult Nottingham alt-metalers earthtone9, ArcTanGent wasn't for casual

music fans; with headliners like 65daysofstatic, Public Service Broadcasting and Maybeshewill, it was laser-targeted at post-rock, math-rock and prog obsessives.

Now into its 10th year, 2024's festival played host to ATG's most sprawling lineup yet, headlined by post-rock gods Mogwai and Explosions in the Sky, and bolstered by metal guitar juggernauts Meshuggah, Animals as

Leaders and Plini. But perhaps more than any other festival, ArcTanGent is a breeding ground for fresh guitar talent, and 2024's bill was bursting at the seams with inventive playing. This year, guitarworld.com Editor-in-Chief and TG contributor Michael Astley-Brown was there to perform (his band's called Maebe – look 'em up, wink wink!) and as a punter. These are the players who blew his mind...

Words Michael Astley-Brown

24



NIGHT VERSES

Night Verses are already tipped as prog-metal's Next Big Thing – the LA trio's larger-than-life sonics even saw them land a blockbuster support slot with Tool on their recent European tour. Which might go some way to explain why the crowd for their late-afternoon ATG set was overflowing with fans eager to get a glimpse of Nick DePirro's awe-inspiring

chops. Fortunately, anyone who couldn't get a look-in could still hear his dizzying effects prowess, which makes highly inventive use of the DigiTech Whammy and lights the fuse on explosive riffs like the opening of standout single *Arrival*.

"In the beginning, I would pretty much just rip Tom Morello, as far as going up and down. I didn't fully understand how much control you can actually have over shaping each note," DePirro says of his approach. "Then I started realising I could manoeuvre notes,

harmonics, and chords. I can do some weird stuff with the Whammy."

DePirro is always looking to get more out of the instrument, which he regularly demonstrates on Instagram. One of his secret weapons is alternate tunings, which he tweaks on his Music Man six-strings and Abasi Concepts eights to maximise glittering harmonics. "I always try to think about which keys lend themselves best... I try to use them as often as I can," he says. "I feel like harmonics always sound cool."



BICURIOUS

If you think you've heard everything a guitar/drums duo can do, Dublin/Leipzig-based rockers Bicurious will run those preconceptions through an industrial shredder, then steamroller over the remains.

Guitarist Taran Plouzané drops riffs that are technical, heavy and bouncy in equal measure, and it's won the band an extremely loyal fanbase – so much so that they crowdfunded over €9,000 to help make new record *Your Life is Over Now...*

This was the band's third time playing ATG, and as Plouzané proudly says, "every year more and more people are singing the riffs back to us". His new material has taken those singalongs to their logical conclusion, employing – gasp – vocals. Yet whether his larynx is muscling in or not, his playing is built around making his two-piece sound as big as possible. "I have to cover all melodic frequencies myself, so I've developed a way to

write riffs that often jump between the low E string, where I keep the low-end/root of each chord going, and the higher strings, which provide the melody on top," he explains. "Those riffs can be a bitch sometimes, though..."

Infectious hooks are bolstered by a rehearsal room's worth of gear, which gives them gut-punching rumble and the kind of clarity that can get a festival singing along with even the most finger-twistingly complex runs.

Plouzané says the secret to his sound is "the right combination of pedals, the right signal-splitting, and the right amps".

"It's mainly distortion, octaves, two guitar amps and a bass amp," he reveals. "I went through a lot of different combinations... I do currently have my eye on a new piece of gear which is way too expensive for me, and would be a big change in the way I do things. But it would save me a lot of hassle, too... *cough*"



SQUID PISSER

As you might expect from a band called Squid Pisser, their guitarist serves up some of the most unspeakably disgusting guitar tones in hardcore or any other genre. "I try to create textures that I haven't heard before," says deviant six-stringer Tommy Meehan. "I love using tons of effects and atypical melodies

to keep things interesting."

Interesting is an understatement. Performing in creepy alien masks, Squid Pisser don't so much play their instruments as assault them. Their debut album, *Dreams of Puke*, doesn't have a single song over three minutes. Some are as short as 40 seconds. It's a breathless, brutal assault on the senses.

All the while, Meehan is conjuring as many festering tones as he can from his pedalboard, including Bananana Effects' glitchy Mandala, Death by Audio's Apocalypse fuzz and a number of early-noughties nu-metal faves from the Ibanez Tone-Lok series. All that's paired with an all-aluminium Jazzmaster-style electric from Electrical Guitar Company that's probably suffering from PTSD. "It's covered in fake blood and sweat and it's all dinged up," Meehan says. "It's supposed to look shiny and beautiful."

The guitarist will soon be pulling double duty as Squid Pisser are lined up to support shock-rock mainstays Gwar, who he also joined this year. "I'm excited to infuse some nasty, dirty, effects-laden stuff," he says. "I like the potential of bringing that stuff to Gwar and making it sound disgusting sonically." Brace yourselves...



VOWER

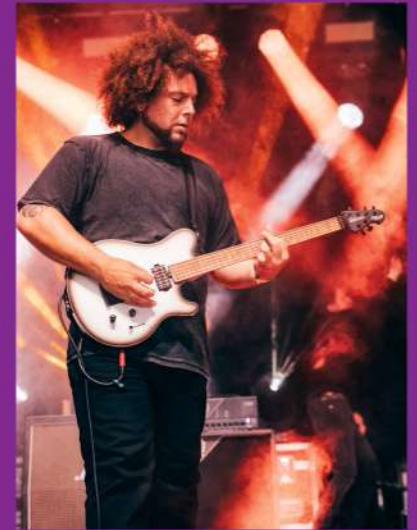
The band may be new, but Vower unites two of UK alt-rock's brightest guitar talents in Rabea Massaad (he of Toska, Dorje and Music Man signature model fame) and Black Peaks' Joe Gosney. But don't expect it to sound like their past projects.

"Technique and technical playing I feel is more for my other material," says Massaad. "In this band, we want to focus on songs and vibes over anything technical."

Vower's music is crammed with the kind of choruses that make you want to close your eyes and scream at the sky, before a crushing riff forces you to adopt the most unholy of stank faces. It's a welcome mashup of heavy alt-rock, textural post-rock and djent riffery – or "melodic, heavy and sometimes hopeful," as Gosney puts it.

To deliver the wealth of moods on display, the guitarists switch between D-standard tuned guitars and baritones (Music Man Sabre and Axis for Massaad, Tele Deluxe and Gretsch G5260 for Gosney), and lean on the Quad Cortex – at least for now. "We've just needed to work fast and get something that gets us the tones for the different songs quickly that we can travel with easily," says Massaad. "When we're doing bigger productions, I think we'll be moving to a hybrid rig of amps, pedals and QC."

The band already have plans to that end. "That's always been a goal for me: to write songs that connect with people on a deep level, and I'm so thankful to finally be in a band where I feel that's possible on a bigger scale than I've ever been in before," says Massaad. "That's not a slight on previous bands I've been in, but more that I feel Vower has the potential to reach more people and connect that way."



Photos: Derek Bremner

ASYMMETRIC UNIVERSE

In terms of pure technicality, Italian prog-metal fusion brothers Federico Vese & Nicolò Vese – aka Asymmetric Universe – were this year's guitar standout. But this ain't your dad's Pat Metheny set at the Jazz Café; the Super Vese Bros deliver a sense of groove and otherworldly licks that nod to Polyphia and Chon, coupled with djent beatdowns inspired by Periphery and Meshuggah. "Our sound aims to incorporate many genres together,

not creating compositions that have a 'jazzy' section then a 'metal' section... but rather mixing them at the same time," explains bassist Nicolò.

Deploying that diversity within a single song means both brothers ask a lot of their instruments. Federico plays a custom-built eight-string from SIC Instruments fitted with Bare Knuckle Trilogy pickups and cunning custom wiring that delivers a fake humbucker sound in the bridge position. Slap-happy Nicolò, meanwhile, plays a six-string Mayones

Comodos, giving the pair an awful lot of octaves to play around with.

Recently signed to powerhouse prog label InsideOutMusic, the band are knuckling down on their next opus, but taking time out to play ATG was well worth it. "It was our first big festival and we felt great to be surrounded by such amazing bands like Animals As Leaders, Meshuggah, Plini, Night Verses," says Federico. "The welcome we received from the crowd was so warm... and they were able to clap in time over a 7/8 time signature, too!"

Words Stan Bull Photo Jamie MacMillan

“I’VE BEEN TRYING TO WRITE RIFFS THAT ARE LIKE WHEN YOU START PLAYING THE GUITAR”

A self-confessed “guitar-culture nerd” and TG reader, **Fontaines D.C.** guitarist Conor Curley has overhauled his band’s sound on *Romance*, their most ambitious and experimental album to date, inspired by a “massive sounding” fuzz pedal, a beefy new Jazmaster and... Korn?

“I t’s very nice to be in *Total Guitar* – I’ve always been a fan.” Conor Curley is sitting in a café near his London home. “In my mum’s attic, there’s a big stack of *Total Guitar* from when I was a teenager – I’ve held on to them.”

In the four years since TG last spoke to them, few – if any – guitar bands have had the same meteoric rise as Fontaines D.C. In that time, the Irish quintet – vocalist Grian Chatten, guitarists Conor Curley and Carlos O’Connell, bassist Conor Deegan III and drummer Tom Coll – have played hundreds of shows (including a US tour with Arctic Monkeys), scored a UK number one album with 2022’s *Skinty Fia* and even picked up a BRIT Award for Best International Act, inching them ever-closer to becoming household names.

This year? The now-London-based group headlined Glastonbury’s Park Stage, performed on the main stage at Reading and Leeds, and released their inspired fourth album *Romance* – a bold reimagining of the Fontaines’ core sound. Later this year, two sold-out headline shows at London’s Alexandra Palace beckon, before they return to the city for a huge outdoor concert at Finsbury Park next summer. It’s quite the feat for a post-punk band whose debut album was released in 2019.

“I’ve been trying to write riffs that are like when you started playing guitar,” explains Curley. “It’s such an interesting thing to me, because you hear bands’ first records and they’ll have these riffs that sound so intuitive. They don’t sound laboured



"IT WAS EXCITING
TO HAVE A MORE
MODERN, DIGITAL FEEL"



over from music knowledge or anything, it just sounds like they're writing their feelings."

Romance finds Fontaines D.C. embracing a number of new influences both contemporary and from years gone by. From the scuzzy alt-rock snarl of *Death Kink* to the Britpop hat-tip of *Bug* and the gorgeous ballad *Horseness Is The Whatness*, the band appear unafraid to tear apart their existing sound, writing as confidently as if they were composing a debut album.

These days, Curley admits that he hopes to "not be nailed down by trying to intellectualise the stuff that you're playing," but rather "trying to write feelings that end up being the sound." This approach is clearly one that the guitarist found liberating: "That's what I want to do for the rest of my career."

So far, he's on the right path. From the cinematic hip-hop-meets-Western sound of *Starburster* to the album's

colourful art direction, and outfits that wouldn't look out of place in a cult anime film, it's clear that the band have evolved since *Skinty Fia*. To achieve this new sonic identity, the guitarists reached for instruments outside of their comfort zone. "For this album, me, Carlos and Grian all bought Mellotrons," Curley says, "which became really prominent on a lot of the demos. When it came to trying to do that in the room, Carlos – because he's an amazing keys player – took the reins on being the Mellotron player. So it ended up being one guitar and him on keys for the first time ever, which was very interesting."

Despite fellow six-stringer Carlos moving to keys, Curley rebuffs the idea that the band are moving away from being a guitar group. "We are a guitar band," he reasons. "Trying to think of us as being anything else, I don't think it makes any sense. The key to all the

GUITAR-DRIVEN

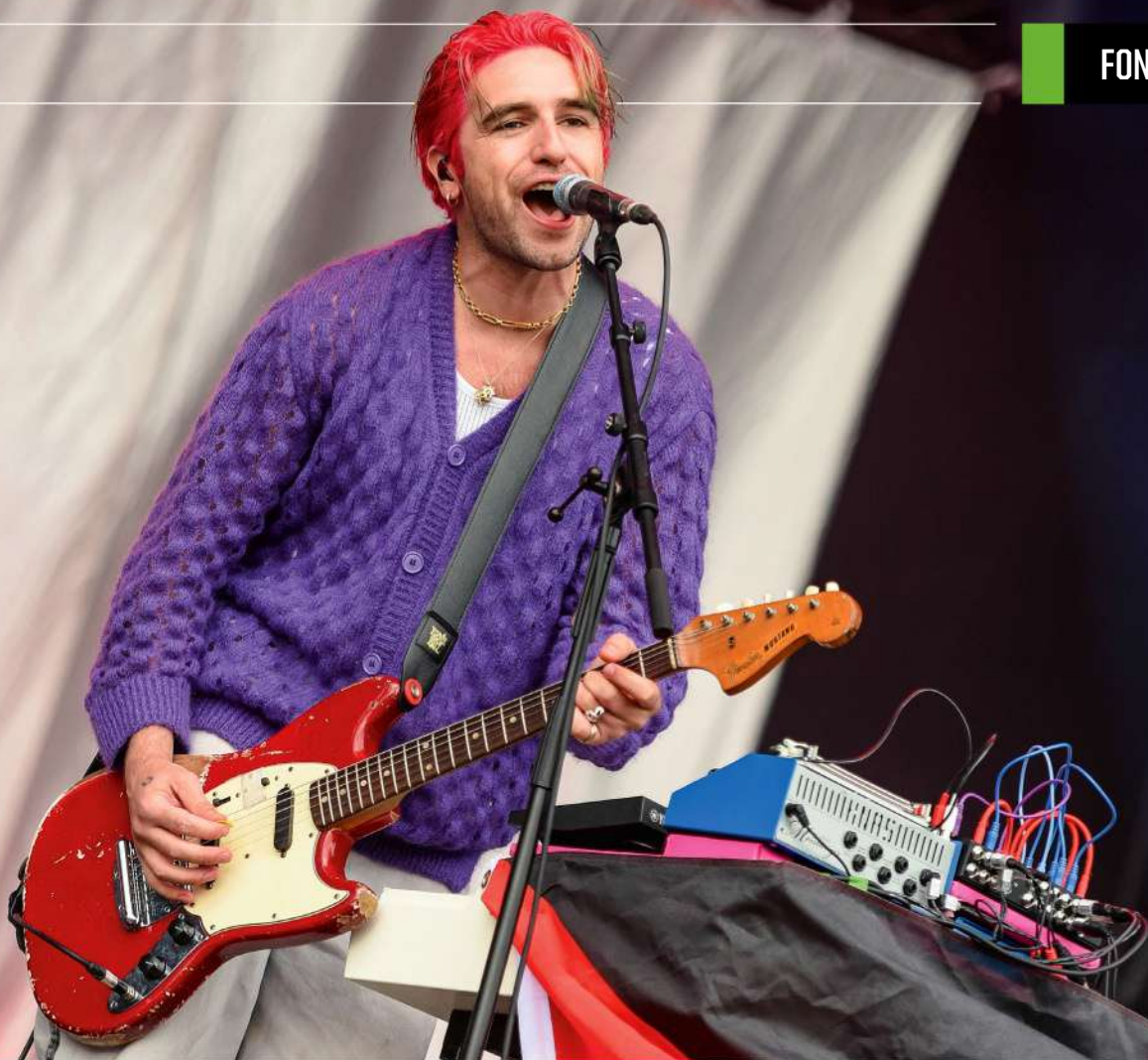
Above left: Curley and his *American Vintage II 1966 Jazzmaster*
Right: Tom Coll, Conor Deegan III, Grian Chatten, Conor Curley and Carlos O'Connell

ideas is guitar. All the songs come from my voice notes of us playing acoustics together and jamming backstage, although, on this album, it would be us writing a chord progression and then being like, 'Let's take the guitar out, and move it onto Mellotron, or use the guitar in a different way'. But I still feel like the basis of the band is guitar-driven."

Curley, a self-confessed "guitar-culture nerd", craved new tones for *Romance* that would contrast the band's earlier work, though his exploration led him back to a familiar influence: "One of the ideas for this record was to not rely on such a reverb-y guitar sound. That changes how you play, and I was a lot more inspired by early 2000s, heavier rock music like Deftones. When we were teenagers, that was the big guitar sound, and it was exciting to have a more modern, digital feel, rather than the 'in the room'-type sound that we'd been trying in the past." Explaining his love for the Sacramento alt-rock group, Curley adds: "I think that Steph Carpenter's guitar playing is incredible. His mix of a hard rock sound with a shoegaze quality is perfect."

Recent interviews from the *Romance* press rollout has seen the band

"I TRIED TO MAKE IT SOUND MORE CHOPPED-UP, LO-FI AND DARKER"



name-drop another seemingly unlikely influence on their new material – that of nu-metal pioneers Korn. Would Curley consider playing a seven-string in Fontaines? “Oh, man,” he laughs, “I’d love to give it a go, but I don’t know if my style would suit that.” Elaborating on the band’s own, perhaps misquoted claims of influence, Curley suggests: “I think the Korn thing came from us listening to music before going on stage and getting hyped up. The sound of their records and their big songs is so alien. People listening to our music might think, ‘Oh, I don’t hear it’, but it’s more the idea of trying to push things into a new realm that inspired us.”

An eagerness to mix-up their sound required a new approach to writing and recording. Having recorded their first three albums with popular post-punk producer Dan Carey, the band opted to bring in renowned Arctic Monkeys producer James Ford for the *Romance* sessions. But despite the new personnel behind the desk, Curley is hesitant to solely credit Ford with the band’s new direction. “We kind of changed it up ourselves before we even worked with him,” admits Curley. “When we met James, he was open to what we wanted

to do. He didn’t come in with a plan for our sound. I think he saw what we were doing, and then did what any good producer would do and helped enhance the direction that we were going for.”

Pre-production for the album took place in London, where the band “worked on the writing for four weeks, pretty much every day,” states Curley. “Then we had two days off, and we went over to Paris and then spent three weeks recording there.” The band decamped to the none-more-picturesque La Frette – a chateau-based studio on the Parisian outskirts. “It’s an amazing, vibey place,” says Curley. “With it being a residential studio, you never really leave. Once you’re in the world of it, you’re just working on the record every day.”

First single *Starburster* was creative ground-zero for the band. Mellotron string sounds loop over Britpop-style big-beat drums while Chatten spouts quick-fire, spoken-word rapping and Curley adds a single-note, quick-delay riff that wouldn’t sound out of place on an Ennio Morricone soundtrack. “Grian wrote the music on the original demo and he played the guitar part on the Mellotron,” says Curley. “The way that

LIVE AT LEEDS

Carlos on the main stage at this year’s Leeds festival

it sounded to me was as if he was sampling one of those old cowboy riffs. When it came down to me recording it, I felt like that guitar tone is like something I’ve gone for in the past, but it was more of a ‘live’ sound. For this song, I tried to make it sound more chopped up, lo-fi and darker.”

The guitars were layered, he says, “with an acoustic and a really overdriven electric”. Here’s some of the mouth-watering vintage gear the French studio had to offer: “I played through a Fender Princeton that they had at La Frette, which looked like it would fall over if someone breathed on it, but it sounded absolutely incredible. The engineer said that’s the go-to for everyone who records there. It’s an amazing amplifier, and I think it was nice to move away from just using Fender Twins. There’s something about those smaller amps where, if you can record them right, they sound absolutely massive.”

Second single *Favourite* gave a further glimpse of the album’s scope. Its jangly indie sound was earnest and melancholic – a world away from the confrontational swagger of *Starburster*. Propelled forward by one of the band’s



➤ best riffs yet, a serendipitous moment of jamming led to the song's creation: "Carlos and Grian had written the chords and the beginning of the vocal melody, and they had shown the chord progressions to Deego [bassist Conor Deegan]," says Curley. "We were doing a live rehearsal for *Skinty Fia*, and Deego started playing the chords. Sometimes you just hear a melody... As Deego was playing the root notes, I heard this descending riff and had to grab it immediately. I picked up the guitar and started playing it.

"Carlos and Grian realised that was the song they had been working on, so everyone jumped on stage, and we played it for about 30 minutes with, like, 12 different verses. It was just one of those songs that was written in a very short period of time. Sometimes it's labour, and sometimes it just comes out of thin air. And luckily enough, that was one of those times where I just heard it."

Favourite has been compared to the likes of The Smiths and '80s jangle-pop bands; an observation that Curley finds flattering. "It's really nice that people are comparing it to Johnny Marr and that kind of guitar playing, cus that's something that I've always wanted to try and go into," he admits. "People who have really slick ears for melody – it's such an incredible thing. Shredding is obviously such an amazing thing to be able to do on a guitar, but when you can really write a feeling with a melody, like Johnny Marr did so well – that's the goal."

In the spirit of reinvention, Romance finds Curley taking on lead vocals on the dreamy *Sundowner*, and trying his hand at the guitar's four-stringed cousin on the album's gothic, Danny Elfman-like title track. Of the latter's genesis, Curley says: "Grian had the idea of this chord progression, but not much else. Deego wasn't there [in the studio]. We were like, 'Oh, let's just start working on this

NEW COLOURS A new-look Fontaines D.C. for 2024

a little bit'. So I grabbed the bass and started playing that riff. There was a late-night air of lunacy going around. I wanted to write a panto.

"'Maybe romance is a place'," he says quoting Chatten's lyrics. "It had this intro-to-a-musical feel to it. I just started playing that melody on bass, and then we built the rest of the song around that."

Long-time fans of the band may have been surprised to see Curley stood in Deego's place as the group opened a number of their summer festival sets with the song. "When it came to doing it live, I was just like, 'Yeah, I'll just keep playing it on bass'. But to be honest, I didn't realise how scary it would be to be playing bass on stage. I thought I'd just pick it up, but it's actually such an unnatural thing for me that it took more practice than I thought it would. But I enjoy playing the bass so much. It was nice to be over in that world for one song."

"WRITING A FEELING WITH A MELODY IS THE GOAL"

Detailing the crunchier sound he had alluded to, Curley tells TG about a new purchase used to achieve the overdriven sound of third single *Here's The Thing*: "The fuzz is a Keeley Loomer pedal – just the fuzz side of it, which I think is based on an outbound fuzz. I think that is an incredible pedal. I incorporate it now into some of the older tunes as well, and it sounds incredibly massive." To round off the tone, the Loomer was run through a Boss chorus, with the guitar boasting no reverb whatsoever. "That's the early 2000s rock sound to me," says Curley. "And when I hear that lead line, it's like what Keith Richards did on *Satisfaction* – where when you have fuzz on it, it kind of sounds like a horn section."

Though the band are branching out from post-punk – a genre where big pedalboards are commonplace – Curley has no intention of cutting back. "I just continue to build it up!" he says. "But I realised that I have all these effects pedals that are only used for very specific things, and not even for whole songs. I own a lot of effects, but the main part of my tone, over my career, is just a really good amp sound with reverb, and anything else is just for a bridge or a pre-chorus. We're not actually that big on effects in terms of whole-song arrangements, it's just to add flavour to a basic guitar sound. But for this album, I was trying to push the boat out in terms of the amount of overdrive that I'd use and the gnarliness of the sounds."

Despite a focus on distorted tones, *Romance* features a surprising number of acoustics, too. "I think that kind of acoustic-rhythm-with-drums thing has always been a part of our songs, especially on *Skinty Fia*, with 12-string acoustics being so prominent," says Curley, who believes that "there should be some sort of call-and-response between drums and acoustic guitar." Whilst Carlos used his Martin J 12-15 parlour 12-string on *Romance*, Curley borrowed a beautiful Gibson ES-150 from Ford: "It's a hollowbody with one P-90 in the neck, and I played it through the Princeton to give it a bit of fuzz."

Though often spotted playing a Johnny Marr signature Jaguar or a rare Coronado, Fender-loving Curley's MVP

for the *Romance* era thus far has been an American Vintage II 1966 Jazzmaster in Lake Placid Blue – an acquisition that came from more of a practical need than an aesthetic one. "I realised that the Johnny Marr Jag is so crystal clear," Curley says pensively. "That's the Johnny Jag on *Favourite*. I feel like that's the kind of sound that it's best for. But for the bigger-sounding songs, like *Desire* and *Here's The Thing*, it needed that Kevin Shields, shoegaze rhythm sound. Even on *Sundowner*, which has a mental open tuning, the Johnny Jag didn't take up enough audio space. So it's mainly the Jazzmaster on most songs for this album. I asked Fender for one, and they sent it out to me when we were touring *Skinty Fia*, which I ended up using on *Nabokov* and *Big Shot* for the rhythm sound. When it came to doing this record, it seemed using that guitar was a natural progression."

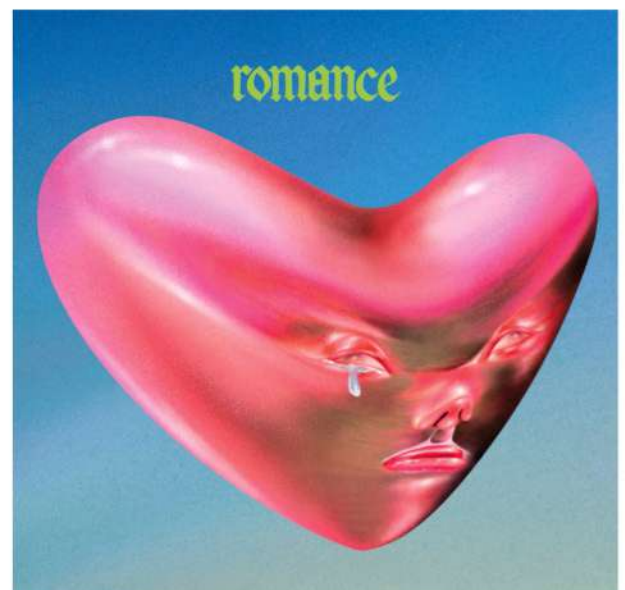
Has Fontaines' ascension to festival main-stage had any impact on their songwriting? "When I'm writing, I'm writing for the feeling of what I'm trying to put across," he says, "and I don't think how many people are going to be watching can really affect that. It's not really a positive thing to think about in terms of your decisions when you're writing music." Though the venue have gotten larger, Curley's idea of Fontaines remains the same – at least, for now. "I always think of us as a 1,200-capacity-room kind of band," he says, "and then everything that's bigger is just us dipping into something new. But I'll probably have to come to terms with being a bigger band at some stage..."

In June 2023, Chatten released *Chaos For The Fly*, his debut album as a solo artist, and one that came with another revelation for casual fans: that Chatten is something of an accomplished guitarist himself. When asked whether Chatten's six-string capabilities added to the writing of *Romance*, Curley beams with enthusiasm for his bandmate's ability: "Oh, 100 per cent, yeah. The solo on *Death Kink* was Grian. And I think that's one of the big guitar parts that he brought forward. The solo needed to be done and no one had written it, so he took it and absolutely nailed it. He's an amazing guitar player."

After layering so many guitar and keys tracks on *Romance*, ex-Palma Violets bassist and friend of the band Chili Jesson was enlisted to fill out their sound live – prompting a new foray into three-guitar territory. "Sometimes with the Mellotron or the keyboard or the piano stuff, Carlos wasn't playing guitar, so it just got to the point where we were really stretching ourselves trying to do what we did in the studio live," explains Curley. "Then again, there's also acoustic guitar on songs like *Televised Mind*, which we hadn't been able to do live for years, so I think it really adds something that we've been missing out on."

For a group that's released four albums in five years, Fontaines D.C. are showing no signs of slowing down, though Curley can only speculate as to where their new direction will lead them. "There have been some jams," he says, "but it remains to be seen. I could see us stripping things back again and kind of becoming an 'in the room' live band once more, just to prove that we're still the best at that to each other. After doing an album that's massively layered and building these walls of sound, to go back to just writing really good parts, and maybe having just two guitars might be the way forward."

"But it's too early to make a guess on that yet. We'll see what happens..." ***Romance is out now.***





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Words Jonathan Horsley Photos Maclay Heriot

“THIS IS THE MUSIC THAT WE MAKE WHEN WE JUST THROW OUR GUITARS ON AND NOODLE AROUND!”

No rock band on Earth is as prolific as **King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard**. On their 26th album in 15 years, they’ve captured the sound and the vibe of classic ’70s rock – but with cheap amps and zero pedals. As leader Stu Mackenzie says: “We were just going for the take that had the boogie!”

Just where should the uninitiated start with a band like King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard, who since forming in 2010 have already spawned 26 studio albums, and whose omnivorous stylistic appetites have led them by the nose through garage rock, psych-rock, synth-driven krautrock, microtonal avant-gardism, heavy metal and prog? This is the band with the creative audacity to conceive of a seven-suite concept album tied to Greek scalar modalities, and went into the studio to record it with little more than that idea in that Lizard Wizard brain of theirs and the determination to jam it out and make it happen.

Well, there’s always a strong case for starting at the beginning. But if you were to pick up their latest, *Flight b741*, you’d be all right, too, because this

recording boils the Gizzard down to its quintessence, a full-flavoured mother sauce offering a taste of exactly where they’re coming from. This is the sound of the Australian sextet returning to the musical womb, a band’s spirit restored to factory settings, playing the sort of ’70s rock and sun-kissed Americana that comes so naturally that it could well be something the central nervous system could take care of.

“We’ve made a lot of records where we’ve challenged ourselves to push outside of what we are comfortable with,” says Stu Mackenzie, the band’s leader, guitarist, vocalist and multi-instrumentalist. “I think we have made some of our most interesting music – the stuff I’m most proud of – in that mode, and that is sometimes the right thing to do. But sometimes the right thing to do is just shoot from the hip and do the gut instinct thing, and that is what this was. On a stylistic level, this is the music that we make when we are

warming up. This is the music that we make when we just throw our guitars on and noodle around. It is the music that we are probably jamming on when we are doing a soundcheck.”

If anything, *Flight b741* is an anti-concept record, six guys in the studio, arranging on the spot. What they had in the beginning was “napkin sketches, a couple of thoughts” and the requisite 10,000 hours or whatever of playing together. Once they had a part, they’d do a take and move on. Stu takes production and mixing credits, while regular front-of-house engineer Sam ‘Sammy’ Joseph engineered it and played pedal steel. There was no reason to overwork this. “All of the guitars on the thing is just the live take,” Stu says. “That’s just in the room. We could have done these takes a lot better, probably, perfected the performance better. But we were just going for the take that had the boogie! That was what was important.”

Everyone in the band is a multi-instrumentalist and there’s a musical agility that comes with that. Stu says their musical understanding is like the ability to finish one another’s sentences. Their approach to vocals on *Flight b741*, which saw everyone taking a turn on the mic before passing it on, gave everyone a voice – including Michael ‘Cavs’ Cavanagh, whom you’d typically find on the drums – and left

SEXTUPLE THREAT

From left: Lucas Harwood, Joey Walker, Michael Cavanagh, Cook Craig, Ambrose Kenny-Smith and Stu Mackenzie



"WE HAD NO PEDALS ON THE RECORD, JUST AMPS LOUD ENOUGH TO SOUND NASTY!"

STU MACKENZIE

"Let's make music like all the great albums that we love! That's actually not what I want to do. That's not really the goal. I'd rather create something that I wish existed but doesn't exist yet. But sometimes you've just got to do what is right, and we have injected enough things into it to feel creatively jazzed."

Press play and the first stop is *Mirage City*; an elemental melody takes flight, extending its wings across the stereo spread. This is exactly what Stu is talking about. It could be a nursery rhyme, an old folk Americana tune, but it sounds like something you could soundtrack a New Hollywood movie with. It starts, stops and starts again. It is hopeful but bittersweet, its ebb and flow, tension and release, establishes the emotional cadence of the record.

As Stu sees it: "All music is tension and release. It's on the micro and the macro. I've learned to be a bit better with all that just from the shows being a little more improvised. We're doing

them with a rotating cast of lead vocalists throughout the record.

"We'd pass the mic on and get everyone to share their perspective on whatever the song was about," Stu says. "We did all the vocal recordings, all six of us standing around, two microphones, one person who is doing the lead and the other five standing around the other mic, and we were facing each other in a little semicircle. I think we did it for over a week. We just stood in front of each other with two mics and pieced together all the vocals. As we went, the people who would be doing backing vocals would be spurring the lead singer on. We had a lot of fun doing it and it gave the record a sound."

What they came up with was huge, insistent melodies and pop hooks to present what is essentially elemental rock 'n' roll on a higher plane. *Flight b741* harkens back to the creatively fertile 1970s, when rock would abut blues, country, funk, R&B, and dipping in and out was de rigueur.

With another treatment, or, let's get real, in lesser hands, some of these riffs might have sounded like rehearsals from a James Gang rehearsal session in '73, from boogie blues 101, and yet trampled under the Gizz's unique rhythmic footprint, and with those vocals foregrounding a melody – and the sentiment behind it – they make you feel like you are

hearing this art form for the very first time. Some lead parts, like the reedy quasi-horn tones on *Antarctica*, sound as though they walked off a record by The Guess Who. You could hear all kinds of references – Steve Miller Band, The Band, The Byrds – and you would not be hallucinating. It's just that, if they are there pop-cultural touchstones, then they are there by osmosis, because making music like this is intimidating enough without thinking of the names and faces and history behind the sound.

"You are right about this type of music being intimidating," Stu smiles. "And that is why it has taken us this long, to album 26 or whatever it is, to do this – even though we love this kind of music. If you ask people what are the greatest songs ever written, a lot of them are in this style, and there is just a lot of great music out there in the world already that is kind of like this, and that has never been what we have intended to do."

that live, in real time, with each other, and in an entirely improvised way, and that is something that we have all got a bit better at getting onto the record. That is what's going on in *Mirage City*. That intro was not really part of the song. It was just kind of like... played! 'Is that wrong? Where's that gone!?' Then we started the song and that intro turned into

the outro, which is also not part of the song... The song was originally just that middle part."

An out-of-tune piano and an old battered National KX-88 keyboard became essential, adding honky-tonk wonk and retro organ mojo to fill out the mix. The KX-88 occupies all the frequencies that the squirrely, wiry guitars miss, and it became this tonal emulsifier bringing everything together, appearing on every song. The Gizz have access to plenty of keys, but Stu doesn't think they've ever had anything like this. "It just had the hugest vibe," he says. "It's, like, out of tune! And it's just got this janky preset sounds on it, almost like every combination of the sounds on it sounded amazing."

The sounds and the combinations thereof are crucial in making this recording work. Every detail matters, even if said details were thrown down in the heat of the moment. Guitars are at the forefront but their mission

LIZARD BRAIN
King Gizz
mastermind
Stu Mackenzie







"SOME OF THE TONES ARE PRETTY CRISPY, LIKE THE FIRST FEW BLACK SABBATH RECORDS" STU MACKENZIE

objectives on *Flight b741* were to support those vocal melodies and add some wild electric heat to the sound. "It needed to be dirty and fun and silly, and just feral," Stu says. "But also it needed to be melodic and beautiful, too. That was the line to walk. I'm not sure that we ever spoke about that, but that was just known." The guitars often sound toasted, broken, pushed to the point where it's hard to tell at times if it's a real guitar.

On the track *Sad Pilot*, which manages to be both a relaxed-tempo boogie number and a mental health epiphany, single notes issue forth like a skronky organ, chords a warm, muted scratch. *Raw Feel* has a riff that sounds like it was processed by a prototype fuzz from the early '60s, but there were no pedals on this record besides a boost pedal. And for a record that sounds expensive – a testimony to Mackenzie's skills in mixing this down to a Tascam eight-track cassette – the guitar tones couldn't have come much cheaper. Stu used his Yamaha SG-2A and Hagstrom

12-string. Joey Walker and Cook Craig shared the latter's Novo (Stu forgets the exact model). There were no vintage tube amps, no state-of-the-art modellers in the studio, just the cheapest practice amps Stu could find.

"I used to teach guitar. I used to teach kids and teenagers when I was a teenager myself," he says. "People would always come in with these tiny amps, just the classic thirty-dollar amps you can buy at the pawnshop. It's just the cheapest way to get started with electric guitar, and sometimes these things would sound amazing if you cranked them up loud enough. You crank them up to a place where they are not supposed to go, and they are distorting when they are on the clean channel... That is awesome to me. A lot of the time it's the speaker that's distorting, and there's something rattling that is not supposed to be rattling, but it's all harmonics and everything. I am hugely into that."

Stu needed lots of them, and would hit Cash Converters in downtown Melbourne in search of them. When you think about the architecture of these small solid-state combos, they are transistorised just like drive pedals, so it makes sense that something magic will happen when you make them clip.

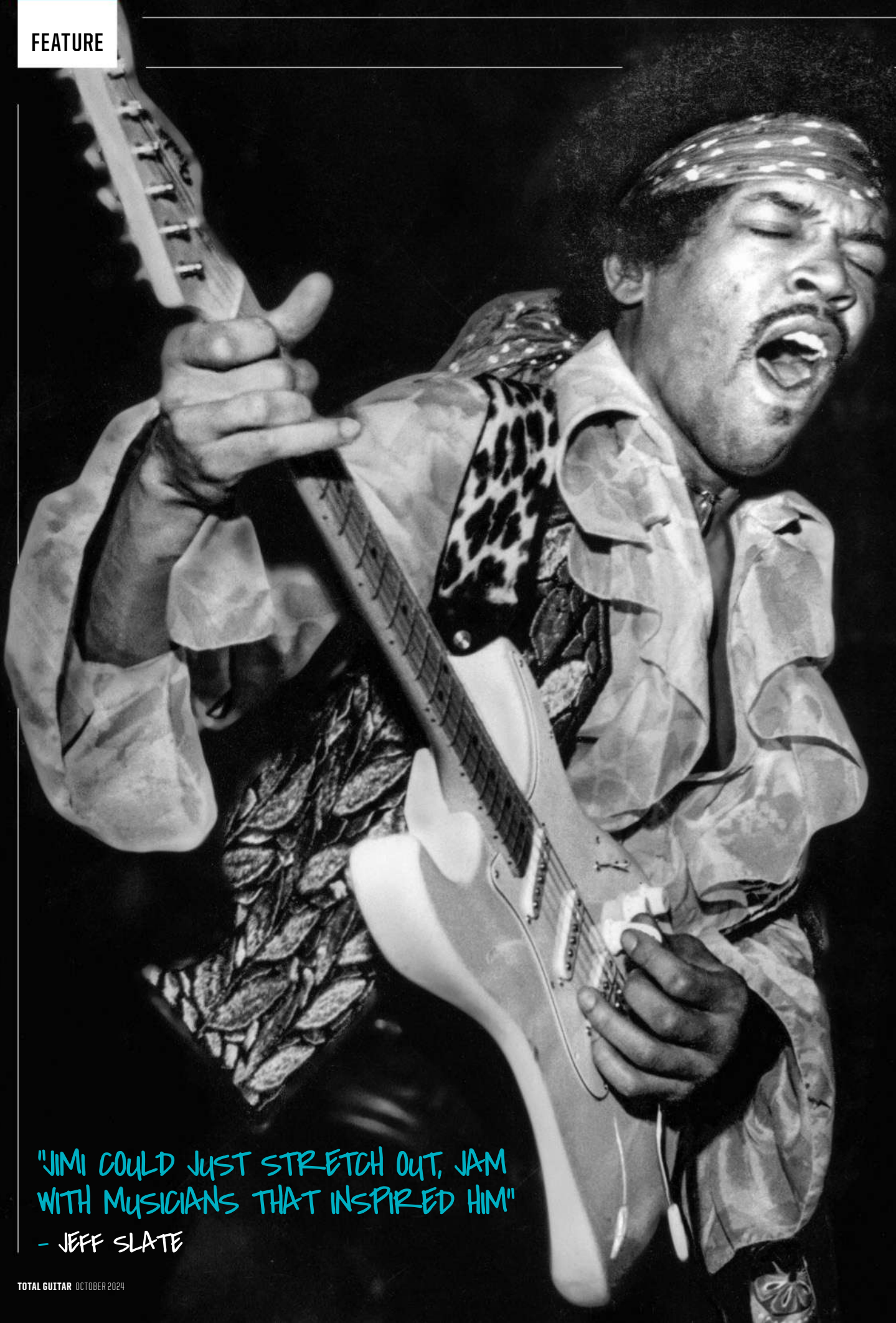
That's how the hitherto unloved Peavey Decade became a must-have when it was revealed to be Josh Homme's secret weapon on Queens Of The Stone Age's 2002 classic *Songs For The Deaf*.

"I bought about six or eight, maybe," Stu says. "I didn't spend more than 20 or 30 bucks on any of them. They were just tiny, tiny little speakers. Sometimes they would have a little gain channel that was absolutely nasty, but usually we would have them on the clean channel and just crank them. We had no pedals on the record, just guitars, straight into the amp, turned up loud enough so that it sounds nasty."

"Some of the tones are pretty crispy, and pretty hot, pretty spicy, but in my mind it was like the-first-couple-of-Black-Sabbath-records distortion. They weren't using tiny amps but that was the sound. It's different from stepping on a fuzz pedal. When you roll back the volume on your guitar you can really, really clean up in a way you can't do with pedals."

Hitting these little solid-state amps with an extra 6dB of clean boost pushed them over the edge. When rolling back the volume and tone controls on his guitar, Stu found a sound that's like Clapton's 'woman tone' through the looking glass, all "creamy bottom but with a nasty top-end that's just dying" – just throw a mic in front of it, press record, and you're good to go. There's your tone. 30 bucks, a little reverb in post. Done. Ready for takeoff...

***Flight b741* is out now**



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"JIMI COULD JUST STRETCH OUT, JAM WITH MUSICIANS THAT INSPIRED HIM"

- JEFF SLATE

ELECTRIC DREAMS

Near the end of his life, **Jimi Hendrix** founded Electric Lady Studios as a place where he could express his creativity to the full. A new boxset full of previously unreleased recordings reveals how the guitar genius was pursuing a bold new vision

Words Tim Tucker Photo Steve Braker

The Generation blues club in Greenwich Village, New York, was a favourite hangout of Jimi Hendrix, a place where he could enjoy the music he loved and jam with musicians he respected. He liked it so much he bought the property in November 1968, with the idea of installing some recording equipment to capture live recordings by himself and others. He was soon persuaded by his producer, Eddie Kramer, to turn the space into a fully fledged recording facility, and the concept of Electric Lady Studios was born.

Work started on converting the space into a recording studio in January 1969, but due to unforeseen setbacks and logistical complications, Hendrix wouldn't start recording there until June 1970. When he did, it became the perfect place for him to develop the tracks for his next project.

At this time, Jimi was still riding high on the success of his double album *Electric Ladyland*, his third with the Jimi Hendrix Experience, released in October 1968. This sprawling self-produced set showcased Hendrix's extraordinary vision for the future of rock, incorporating blues, psychedelic pop, funk and soul, and blending them all into a sound and style uniquely his

own. The result gave Jimi his first number one album in the US, and he was able to command enormous fees as one of the hottest acts on the touring circuit.

However, recording tracks for his next album in studios like The Record Plant and Hit Factory proved expensive and draining. With his own studio, Jimi felt in full creative control for the first time in his career. He brought all the existing tapes from previous sessions to Electric Lady Studios, in readiness for his next project, provisionally titled *Straight Ahead*. He envisioned this to be another double album with high ambitions for the quantity and quality of the music. Gone were the time and budget restrictions that came with working in commercial studios. Now he had the luxury to explore his ideas in a relaxed and inspirational environment.

A GENIUS AT WORK

TG spoke to Jeff Slate, recording artist, guitarist and writer, who worked with the Hendrix estate on the new six-disc release, *Electric Lady Studios: A Jimi Hendrix Vision*. "At that time, Jimi was constantly on the road," says Jeff. "He was having to be creative in his off hours, which was minimal. Now he had his own studio, he could just stretch out, jam with musicians that inspired him, and work out his ideas."

Electric Lady Studios became the environment Jimi had been dreaming of all along: a workshop and laboratory for developing his music. "There were little rooms in there where he could find a nook or cranny to hide away in, with a guitar or microphone, and noodle until he found what he was looking for," says Jeff. "It was invaluable creatively."

The newly released boxset includes 39 tracks (38 of which were previously unreleased), offering incredible insights into Jimi's creative process. We've heard other versions of some of these tracks on posthumous albums like *The Cry Of Love* (1971), *Rainbow Bridge* (1971), *Voodoo Soup* (1995) and *First Rays Of The New Rising Sun* (1997). But here we get a treasure trove of unreleased demos and outtakes that reveal his working practices in extraordinary detail.

Hendrix fans now get to hear snippets of Jimi discussing the tone of his guitar and the musical arrangements of songs he was writing. The alternate takes let us hear his different approaches to improvised solos, and provide invaluable insights into how he developed his musical vision. We learn how tracks like *Dolly Dagger*, *Freedom*, and *Night Bird Flying* were formed from scratch and developed, take-by-take, into (almost) finished articles.

UNIQUE SOUNDSCAPES

Hendrix had to feel inspired to create his best work, and many of the outtakes on the new release show how he would take his fellow musicians into new territories to fire them up. Listen to the mix of *Bolero/Hey Baby (New Rising Sun)* and hear how Hendrix launches into vigorous improvisations on the spur of the moment – to drive the band to new heights.

One of the most stunning discoveries here is a 26-minute medley improvised by Hendrix, along with bassist Billy Cox and drummer Mitch Mitchell. Transitioning from a take of *Astro Man*, tempos vary from the chugging *Beginnings*, picking up the pace for *Hey Baby (Land of the New Rising Sun)*, downshifting again for *Midnight Lightning (Keep on Groovin')* before wrapping up with a thrilling instrumental rendition of *Freedom*. The almost telepathic interaction between the musicians is astonishing, with Jimi providing blistering lead runs and inspired double-stopped licks in this marathon session.

Other revelations include fresh new takes that reveal Hendrix's creative

approach in more detail than we've heard before. Jimi's mastery of the wah-wah is on full display on the alternate mix of *Bleeding Heart*, while the first instrumental take of *Belly Button Window* is a beautiful jazz-inflected shuffle, showcasing his inspired rhythmic chops.

Takes 6 and 8 of *Tune X/Just Came In* provide evidence of Jimi's superb sense for song development. With Cox and Mitchell, Hendrix's rock-solid riffs lead to improvised lyrics that spur his bandmates on.

Weeks later we hear the track more fully developed as *In From The Storm*, showing how Jimi would layer alternative guitar parts to create unique soundscapes.

A HOME FROM HOME

It was the flexibility of his working practices, along with the ambience that he was able to create in the Electric Lady Studios, that gave Jimi the ultimate inspiration, with no barriers to his creative process. The architectural structure, interior design and even the lighting were important, as they allowed Hendrix to control the environment and

create the atmosphere he needed to relax and make music.

Jeff Slate has worked at the studio and felt the vibe for himself: "There are long winding passages, it's almost womb-like," he says. "And I think that's something that would have really spoken to a guy like Jimi." Hendrix himself said that he always found studios blank and impersonal, and this drained him of drive and inspiration. "Electric Lady Studios is different," said Hendrix at the time. "It has been built with great atmosphere, lighting, seating and every comfort that makes people think they are recording at home."

In fact, the studio did become his creative home for those few months in 1970. His apartment was just a few blocks away, and he could walk down Sixth Avenue to the studio whenever inspiration struck. Engineer Dave Palmer, who lived across the street from the studio, recalls more than once being woken in the middle of the night to attend sessions Jimi wanted to record.

A NEW VISION

The tracks documented on the new album show a work in progress. From

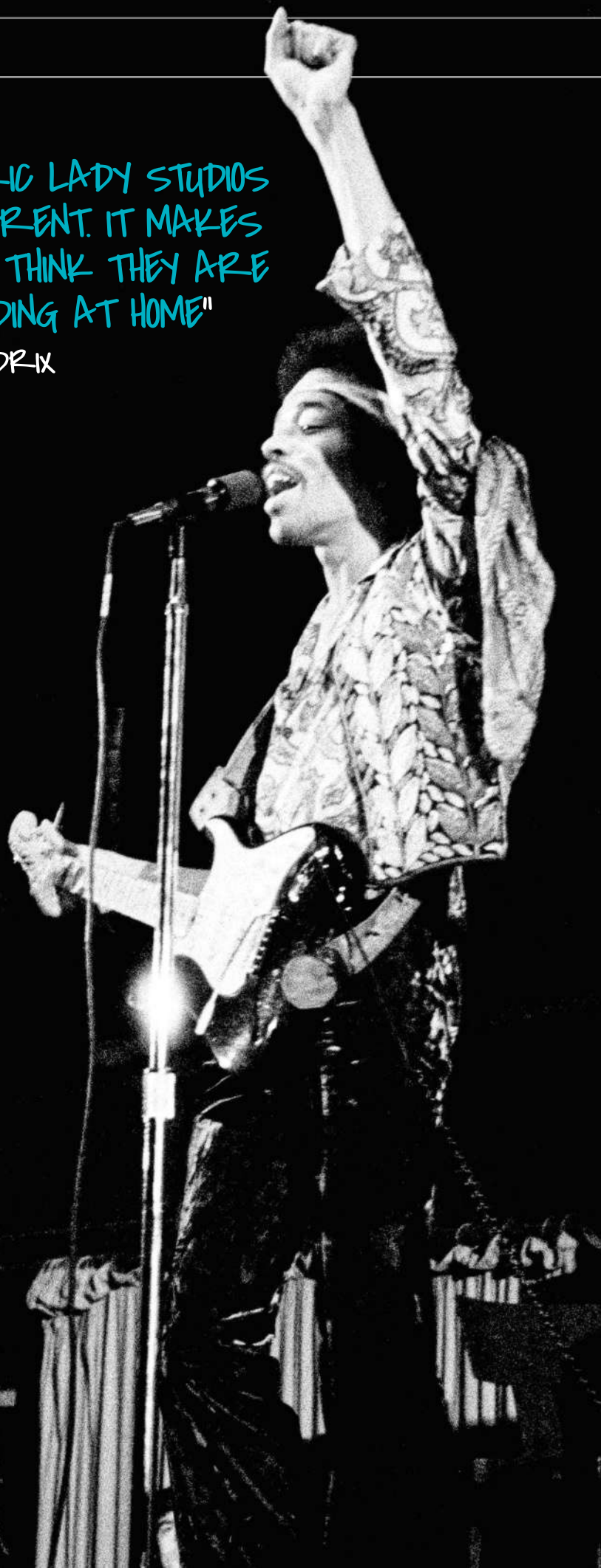
GENIUS JAMS

The newly released recordings offer incredible insights into Jimi's creative process



"ELECTRIC LADY STUDIOS IS DIFFERENT. IT MAKES PEOPLE THINK THEY ARE RECORDING AT HOME"

- JIMI HENDRIX



what we hear, Hendrix was poised to take a new direction yet again, foreshadowing imminent shifts by other black artists of the time. "It's pointing toward a less rock, more soulful direction, a sound that became so prevalent shortly afterwards," says Jeff Slate. "Curtis Mayfield, Sly Stone, the Isley Brothers, Miles Davis, what all those people were on the cusp of and heading towards, Jimi was hearing in his head. Would he have put strings and horns on there? We don't know. In these recordings we're just hearing the way they went down."

In late August 1970, a party at the studio launched Electric Lady Studios as a commercial venture for other artists to use. The next day, Hendrix left New York to play the Isle of Wight festival and other concerts in the UK and Europe. He never returned. The day before his death on September 18, he planned to travel back to America to finish the album he'd been working on at Electric Lady Studios, convinced he was on a roll. It was never to be.

After his death, Electric Lady Studios went on to host legendary musicians like Carly Simon, Led Zeppelin, John Lennon, Stevie Wonder, David Bowie, U2, The Clash, AC/DC and many more. Artists who have recorded there talk of feeling the aura of Jimi, and some even claim his spirit still resides in the studio.

"There are mosaics on the wall from Jimi's time," says Jeff Slate. "The design has so much of Jimi's sensibility to it, even now that it's been upgraded, they've maintained that feel. It's just a beautiful space. And when you're in that space, whether it's your mind playing tricks, or you want it to be the case, you do feel a sense of him. I know Questlove has his own room there, which he uses to workshop, make audio books, recordings and demos. People just love Jimi, and they want to be associated with him."

The *Electric Lady Studios* boxset and accompanying film finally give to the world some of the most important recordings Jimi made as he was poised to take music in a new direction once more. Included in the box is a newly created 5.1 surround sound mix of *The First Rays Of The New Rising Sun*, and it's surely the closest we'll get to the album he never lived to see released.

Electric Lady Studios: A Jimi Hendrix Vision is out now.



**“LUCK AND STRANGE?
IT’S ABOUT THE ‘LUCK’
OF THE VERY STRANGE
MOMENT THAT US
BABY BOOMERS HAVE
LIVED THROUGH...”**

Words Neville Marten Pictures Anton Corbijn

As the ex-Floyd guitarist presents his first solo album since 2015’s *Rattle That Lock*, we look at the songs and music behind David Gilmour’s best offering to date



f his first studio solo release for nine years, and his fourth since Pink Floyd split, David Gilmour says: “The album’s called *Luck And Strange*. It’s the ‘luck’ of the very strange moment that me, and baby boomers in general, have lived through,” he says. “To have had such a fortunate moment, so many positive ideas that one thought were moving us forward.”

For guitar lovers, the album is a showcase for fabulous instruments of all stripes, from Fender Stratocasters (of course) to vintage Gibson Les Paul Goldtop and ES-335 dot neck, Gretsch Duo-Jet, classic Martin acoustics and ukuleles, and of course David’s ancient Rickenbacker lap steel ‘frying pan’ that features throughout.

Produced by Mercury Music Prize winner Charlie Andrew, best known for his work with Alt-J, Gilmour admires Andrew’s lack of reverence for both him and his musical history. “He’s quite bossy and doesn’t have any great preconceptions about what I do, or what Pink Floyd has done,” laughs David. “He just tells us what he wants us to get on with, and we get on with it. The

“I’ve changed my whole thinking about guitar,” says Toto’s Steve Lukather. “I’d rather be more like David Gilmour than anybody else.”

Gilmour joined Pink Floyd as the group’s founder and guitarist Syd Barrett drifted from the band due to mental health issues. Since then, he has enjoyed a stellar career and his compositions, vocals, and huge soaring solos have featured on several of the world’s greatest-selling albums. *The Dark Side Of The Moon* became the fourth best-selling album of all time. *Wish You Were Here* is another monster, full of epic tracks including *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*, while *The Wall* features the Gilmour and Roger Waters composition *Comfortably Numb* – in 2022 *Total Guitar* readers voted it the third-best solo of all time, after Van Halen’s *Eruption* and Queen’s *Bohemian Rhapsody*.

When Pink Floyd finally imploded, Gilmour released solo albums like the eponymous debut, plus *On An Island* and *Rattle That Lock*, where he enlisted the help of fellow legends David Crosby, Graham Nash, Phil Manzanera, Jools Holland, Roger Eno, Floyd’s Rick Wright and others, to create finely-sculpted and highly-regarded works.

Gilmour’s playing is ever-tasteful, always in service of the song, and offers

"THE BEST I'VE MADE SINCE THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON"

result is extremely pleasing to me.”

“David’s been very receptive to my bossiness,” says Charlie.

With few budget restraints, the album brims with instruments, players and voices, including orchestrations by Will Gardner, and boasting the choir of Ely Cathedral (the ‘ship of the fens’ featured on the cover of Floyd’s *Division Bell* album). The orchestrations are “break-your-heart beautiful,” says David’s wife and lyricist Polly Samson. Gilmour agrees: “He’s a real genius.”

David Gilmour is one of those musicians held in almost universal reverence by players and music fans alike. “David Gilmour is an outstanding Strat player,” says arch-melodist Hank Marvin. “He always gets a variety of great tones, uses finger vibrato and the bar, has super feel, creates beautifully constructed bluesy solos and is not afraid to let a phrase really speak. Wonderful!”

a range of techniques including string bends (with the infamous compound bend) and vibrato, both finger and whammy style. His compositions are thoughtful and musical, with arrangements that blend rock, pop, prog and blues to create dreamy musical soundscapes.

All of this is in evidence on *Luck And Strange*. But there’s a sense within the Gilmour camp that this one is something special. “I started off in a pop group,” says Gilmour, “and I found myself eventually leading that group, never a position I wanted. Same with being a solo artist – not something I really asked for. This album feels much closer to that than I’ve had all these years, with a group of people very collaborative, very positive, and pushing in everything they can to what we’re doing. It’s the best album I’ve made since *The Dark Side Of The Moon* in 1973.”



TRACK BY TRACK

A brief rundown of the album's new songs

BLACK CAT

At just a minute and a half, the album's instrumental opener features just Gilmour on guitar and piano, plus ambient genius Roger Eno on synthesiser. *Black Cat* features a replacement for the infamous black Strat that David sold at auction in 2019 for over £3,000,000. A typically simple piece in C minor, the playing could be no one else. It's beautiful, tasteful and although mainly minor pentatonic-based, is laced with colour tones, glorious bends, and subtle vibrato, not to mention that echo-laden 'fingerprint' Stratocaster tone.

LUCK AND STRANGE

"*Luck And Strange* comes from a jam that we did in 2007 while Rick Wright was still alive," Gilmour explains. "I wrote choruses and bridges for it and Polly wrote these great words. From the first second you hear Rick playing his electric piano, you just know there's something about it that no one else could do." Introduced by Gilmour's black Gretsch Duo-Jet, it's as close as he ever gets to a foot-tapper. The changes are very Floyd-y, too, especially the Em-C in the bridge, followed by the very *Dark Side*-ish G-Gdim5-C move. Packed with gorgeous bluesy fills and another monster solo, Gilmour's vocals are relaxed and confident. A great track that harks back across the decades, both lyrically and musically.

THE PIPER'S CALL

The album's first single was written on David's old Martin ukulele and begins with uke and acoustic guitar licks. "It's a song about the Faustian pact - that deal with the devil," David explains. "It could be with using up the planet," says Polly Samson, "it could be with hedonism." The powerful fills and huge solo are played on possibly the same 1955 Les Paul Goldtop used on *Another Brick In The Wall Part 2*. Lyrically the song is almost Roger Waters-like in its social commentary: the dismissal of materialism ("the spoils of fame") and treachery ("but you reap what you sow, as I found long ago"). But is the 'piper' *The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn* (Floyd's debut

album on which Gilmour didn't play but which he performed live after Barrett left the band), or perhaps the Pied Piper of Hamelin? Whatever its meaning, the track's simple beauty belies the insidious darkness behind it.

BETWEEN TWO POINTS

"Polly always asks who my favourite drummer is," states David. "Steve Gadd of course!" This song from The Montgolfier Brothers, a 90s dream-pop duo featuring Mark Tranmer and Roger Quigley, had been on Gilmour's personal playlist for years. "I made a backing track and realised the lyrics weren't naturally a thing I'd sing," expresses David. So he asked daughter Romany to provide vocals. Gilmour says the guitar solo is a rare moment. "I was so into that moment, it was like being stoned but I wasn't - not separated from the guitar and what I was playing at that particular moment, which is rare. It was joyful."

A SINGLE SPARK

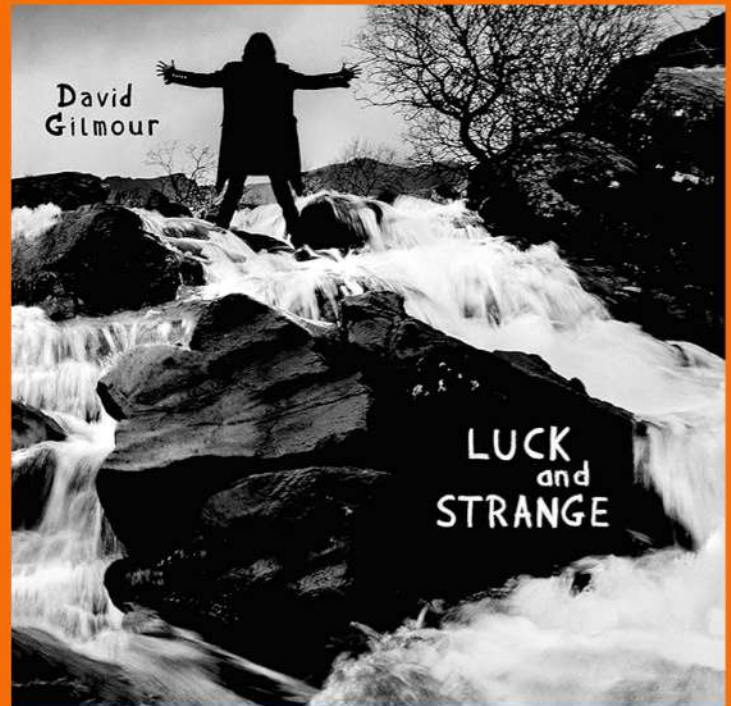
Featuring Romany, Daniel and David Gilmour on ethereal backing vocals, with the man himself singing raspy lead, this cool track's Cmaj7-Dm7-G7 verse is propelled by Adam Betts' lovely loping drums. As for the solo, it's about as melodic as a player can get, following the chords and targeting notes like major 7th, 9th and 5th so musically.

VITA BREVIS

If *Black Cat* represents the tasty pre-dinner nibbles then this 46-second snippet is the sorbet break in our 9-course feast. Featuring daughter Romany on delicate harp, and David playing swooping slide guitar it's a pretty and easy-to-digest respite from the weightier pieces here. Played as an entire album rather than cherry-picking tracks, *Vita Brevis* (life is short) works perfectly in the context of the overall offering.

DARK AND VELVET NIGHTS

Featuring A-list session drummer Steve Gadd and long-time collaborator on bass, Guy Pratt, *Dark And Velvet Nights* is one of the album's highlights. "The music



sprang out of me one day," exclaims David, although the lyrics were pure happenstance. "Polly had given me a poem for our wedding anniversary and it happened to be sitting on my desk next to me. I just picked up the paper and sang these words." Gilmour played it to Polly, she loved it, added some further lyrics... "and there it was. Serendipitous, really." With possibly the most soaring, anthemic solo on the album - played on David's recently acquired dot-neck Gibson ES-335 ("I don't know why I didn't discover one of these a long time ago") it's a joyous yet melancholy piece.

SINGS

Again, there's no mistaking the writing and playing here. Featuring David's two-year-old son Joe imploring him to "sing daddy, sing", the track's chorus was originally written 25 years ago. Perhaps more of a grower than an instantaneous album 'hit' it does finish with a tasty, dare we say Roger Waters-ish repeating bass run (from possibly Gilmour himself).

SCATTERED

Lyrical credit to Samson, and both David and son Charlie Gilmour, *Scattered* is a classic E minor ballad, but with a few surprises. It starts in atmospheric style with a synth-borne descending Em-D-Cmaj7 sequence that builds to a

darkly diminished piano breakdown from Eno and Rob Gentry. Light relief comes with Gilmour's acoustic guitar solo. But it's the calm before the storm as his distortion-laden guitar takes off like a rocket to the pentatonic Strat-osphere. If there's a '*Comfortably Numb*' moment on the album, then this is it!

BONUS TRACKS:

YES, I HAVE GHOSTS

Another short and sparsely instrumented number, *...Ghosts* boasts only Gilmour on acoustic guitar, with daughter Romany on backing vocals, string programming and harp. The instruments and vocals weave elegantly around one another, before David's acoustic outro solo dances around Polly's programmed violin before the song fades out. Somewhat Elizabethan in nature it's an interesting left turn from the album's more symphonic tracks.

LUCK AND STRANGE (ORIGINAL BARN JAM)

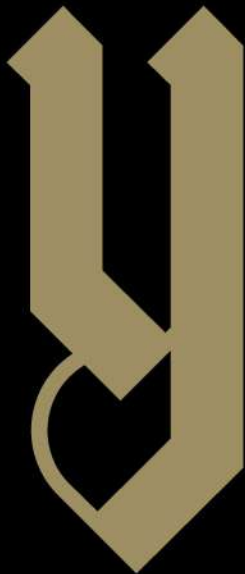
A spontaneous jam in Gilmour's freezing barn with the late Rick Wright playing unmistakable electric piano (with Guy Pratt on bass and Steve DiStanislaio on drums), there are nevertheless epic Gilmour moments here. He's as cool (sic) as ever, never drops a note, and this could well be the original black Strat.

Interview Amit Sharma Photo Andrea Ripamonti/Alamy

“MY GOAL IS TO BRING GUITAR MUSIC TO A NEW GENERATION!”

PUNK ROCK HERO AND GEN Z SUPERSTAR **YUNGBLUD** IS NOW LAUNCHING HIS FIRST SIGNATURE GUITAR. “I SPENT COUNTLESS HOURS READING *TOTAL GUITAR*, LEARNING ABOUT THIS STUFF,” HE SAYS. AND HE’S ALREADY PLOTTING HIS NEXT MOVE:

“A CLASSIC ROCK ALBUM FOR 2025!”



ungblud is momentarily lost for words. It doesn’t happen often. The punk rock superstar is known for speaking up about everything that excites or motivates him. But when he joins a Zoom call with TG, he is at the Gibson Garage in Nashville, holding his first-ever signature model, the Epiphone Yungblud SG Junior in Classic White, and at first, all he can bring himself to say is: “Just, wow...”

Seated on a turquoise sofa, and wearing leather-look dungarees, he shakes his head and takes a long pause for thought before finally saying with a smile: “It’s so cool, man. This day in particular, releasing it officially from the Gibson Garage, has been wild. Honestly, it’s been mental. When you’re a kid, you always dream of having a signature guitar made by Gibson and Epiphone, so now it’s happened, I’m like, ‘What the actual f*ck?’”

The new release is inspired by what he calls his “dream guitar” – an original 1964 Gibson SG Junior. A slice of history from the very tail-end of Gibson’s golden age, it’s certainly one of the more striking guitars of its kind, given how the black scratchplate contrasts with its creamy aged Polaris White finish and the inclusion of a single P-90 pickup by the bridge – a defining quality of the Junior models when compared to the dual humbucker-loaded standard SG designs.







It's so iconic," he says, "a rare '64 SG Junior in white. It has just the one pickup, which suits me because I'm a f*cking scrappy player, man! I wanted an instrument that had character, something which could replicate my energy. I can also hit this guitar really hard and she can f*cking take it, you know what I mean? It's such a sick instrument!"

It was a choice inspired by two of his greatest influences – Angus Young of AC/DC, one of the most famous exponents of the SG, and Billie Joe Armstrong of Green Day, a fan of single-pickup Les Pauls...

"When I was younger, two massive characters who were very important to me were Angus and Billie Joe," he says. "I was obsessed with them from a young age. Even before I picked up the guitar, I looked at those guys as heroes. They were like cartoon characters to me, people who made me think, 'I wanna be like *that!*'"

"When I found this guitar, it was exactly in the middle of what Billie Joe or Angus might use, and yet it hadn't really been used by anyone. It felt like it would be completely my own. I was buzzing when I found it. I still am whenever I pick it up. It's been around the world with me. It's survived headstock breaks, getting smashed up and dropped about... everything! It's a legendary guitar with its own identity, but I still can't believe we've recreated it as a signature."

Yungblud is one of the great success stories of recent years, and it's a story which begins, as they so often do for us guitar players, in a music shop.

He was born Dominic Harrison on August 5, 1997 in Doncaster, where his father Justin Harrison and grandfather Rick Harrison owned and ran a guitar store named Music Ground. "That shop was where I was brought up," Yungblud says. "There's a picture of me on the counter only six hours old with a Beatles ukulele on me."

An Aladdin's Cave of curious wonders and rare vintage specimens, as well as entry-level instruments for the uninitiated, Music Ground would serve as a significant landmark within the city's thriving music scene. The Harrisons' customers would include top-draw legends Noel Gallagher, Johnny Marr and Bryan Adams.

In 2012, the family business was embroiled in controversy. Rick and Justin Harrison were charged with handling stolen goods and given suspended sentences following a police investigation into the theft of 157 vintage guitars – including Fender Telecasters and Stratocasters, Gibsons and Rickenbackers – from the Guitar Ranch museum in the Italian city of Verona in 2006.

But as Yungblud says now, Music Ground was a huge part of his early life. "I worked there from as early as three years old," he recalls. "Just tuning or dusting or whatever to help out." And this was pivotal to the life he leads now, as a bona fide rock star.

His music has been embraced by fans across the world, leading to sold-out arenas, labyrinthine meet-and-greet queues, and collaborations with some of the biggest names in the music business. With the right combination of hooks, powerchords and overdrive, he's become the quintessential voice of Gen Z – an artist who has built and nurtured a community around his music to give fans a place to feel welcome. It's a close-knit family that prides itself on accepting individuals of every kind, regardless of gender, race or sexual orientation. It doesn't matter how weird



"I'M NOT SLASH OR JIMI HENDRIX. I WRITE SONGS AND PLAY WITH ENERGY AS A FRONTMAN"

or different you might think you are, this is a musical movement where everyone can belong and feel accepted.

After the series of singles that ended up on his self-titled EP, his 2018 major label-released debut *21st Century Liability* came loaded with anthems for the modern age, capturing the zeitgeist for a misunderstood youth struggling to fit into the broken world around them. Two years later, his second full-length *Weird!* ended up topping the UK album charts thanks to his growing talents as a songwriter, with Machine Gun Kelly, Blink-182 drummer Travis Barker and Imagine Dragons singer Dan Reynolds lending a helping hand on the album's standout tracks.

The following album, self-titled and released in 2022, reached pole position in seven countries, the rising star teaming up with Willow for second single *Memories* and getting Robert Smith's permission to sample The Cure's 80s classic *Close To Me* on the song *Tissues*. On top of all this, Yungblud has also collaborated twice with UK metalcore heavyweights Bring Me The Horizon and recorded with Avril Lavigne, Halsey and Demi Lovato. And throughout it all, he's had lead guitarist Adam Warrington at his side.

"I met Adam when I was 15," he says. "If you can capture that relationship through music, it's real and human. People can't argue with that." Their on-stage roles are simply described: "I'm playing for the people and I leave all the licks to Adam!" he laughs. But as he talks of this partnership, it leads him to a broader point.

"Your individuality is the best thing you've got," he says. "It will be the biggest thing you question, because, in music, people like to make all the rules about how you should sound or play. My advice is play with your f*cking spirit. It might not always be perfect, but that's always how you stand out. If they don't like it, f*ck them! Get in the room with your mates and your friends. That's how we ended up being so lucky. We love each other and we're all mates."

He cites AC/DC and Green Day as a reference points for his own music because they're arguably the biggest and best of their kind, purveyors of hard-hitting rock music served in its purest and rawest form. There's no mistaking things with either one – you know what they're gunning for. Simple cowboy chords and 5th diads can take you a long way.



"AC/DC MAKE ANIMALISTIC MUSIC. THE GUITAR PLAYING IS THE SOUND OF THUNDER!"

Both of those bands represent simplicity," he says. "They write stuff anyone can play or sing back. They can write a riff and 70 thousand people will sing it back, no matter what language they speak. That's what I've realised. With Angus, it's all very chord-based until he gets to the solo sections. I love songs like *Thunderstruck* and *For Those About To Rock (We Salute You)*. AC/DC make animalistic human music. It's very simple – just listen to the drums. But the guitar playing is the sound of thunder. You can just tell just from the name of the song! *Highway To Hell* sounds like hell. The same goes for *Back In Black* or *Shoot To Thrill*. They're so badass and radical. They purposefully make it simple so thousands of people

Photos Getty

can sing it with them and they can have a good time on stage, playing really f*cking loud."

He continues: "With Billie Joe, it's all about the downstrokes. I had to strengthen my wrists and build stamina, because that's what real rhythm guitar is about. I'm a rhythm player and singer, that's what

excites me. Musicians like Billie Joe and Dave Grohl are the masters of that. They play hard and simple, and it's always stuff the audience can sing back. That's what I learned most from them. *Longview* by Green Day is incredible. I love that opening bassline, it's almost like a guitar riff. And *Jesus Of Suburbia* was huge for me. It was like the *Bohemian Rhapsody* for my generation, with all these twists and turns that go everywhere."

Given his history, it's no surprise that Yungblud knows what to look for in a guitar. Beyond the obvious connection to one of his biggest idols, there's something about the demonic cut of an SG that works like a magnetic pull and draws him in every time. The early '60s design is particularly mischievous and playful, perhaps even a little bit bratty and juvenile, but these are all things Yungblud chooses to run with and embrace, the same very words he often uses to describe his personality...

"I found the 1964 online," he continues. "I knew a lot about guitars by the time I found it. I had a good idea about what I wanted and what would be right for me. And I always loved SGs. The horns remind me of a f*cking devil child! They used to call me 'Damian' in the shop when I was a kid, because I'd be running around throwing the horns at everyone with my tongue out, wearing goth pants and New Rock boots."

"I had a good idea of what to look for because I spent countless hours reading *Total Guitar*, learning about this stuff! I knew my guitar had to be iconic. I've always loved white guitars, especially as I always wear black. I need a guitar that can contrast with that. To find a '60s model just felt f*cking cool."

If there was one thing he asked of Gibson when the topic of a signature model was originally floated, it was that it had to be affordable. Much like the network of music lovers he's built around the world, a community also known as the Yungblud Army, it had to be inclusive – which is precisely where Epiphone came into the picture.

"I also had to make sure this replica was affordable," he says, looking more serious all of a sudden. "I'm an approachable guitar player, that's what I am, that's what I do. I'm not Slash or Jimi Hendrix. I write songs and play with energy as a frontman. This guitar had to be accessible to everyone. That's why I'm so happy it's come out through Epiphone."

This is especially important given the core demographic of his fanbase: younger individuals typically of the age where they're starting their first bands. In Yungblud's eyes, it's all in service to a greater cause, the rock 'n' roll movement that changed his life infinitely for the better, ultimately helping him find his place in this world.

It's not been an easy ride, either – plenty of hours and miles have been



Anarchy In The EU!

YUNGBLUD ON THE GUITAR
THAT DEFINED THE SOUND
OF PUNK ROCK

At a recent gig in Paris, Yungblud played Steve Jones' 1974 Les Paul Custom, the guitar which made history on *Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols*. As he recalls: "I was literally sat backstage playing it through a Twin Reverb and it sounded *exactly* like [Sex Pistols classic] *Pretty Vacant*. My favourite old-school punk bands are the Pistols, The Clash and The Damned. Hearing Johnny Rotten with Steve Jones, Joe Strummer and Captain Sensible was mind-blowing for me. I remember being hit in the face by their music around the age of seven. So being able to shut my eyes and play Pistols riffs, and have it sound exactly like the record without three hours of fine-tuning on pedals or a laptop was f*cking mental! Straight in, boom, go! And that guitar is heavy as f*ck, too heavy for me to play, to be honest. It's a proper '70s Les Paul in that sense.

"The guy who lent it to me, Matthieu [Lucas] from Matt's Guitar Shop in Paris, is the guy who sold me the 330! He's a guitar collector in France and he'll hook you in with things like Chuck Berry's Firebird or Steve Jones' Les Paul Custom. And then he'll say, 'Oh, by the way, this other thing has come in and it's only 20 grand if you want it!' And by that point you're hooked in, so you say 'Okay, I'll have it!'

"And it had originally belonged to Sylvain Sylvain from the New York Dolls, that's who gave it to Steve Jones. I was off my f*cking tits playing it, to be honest. I used it for one song but was sh*tting myself the entire time. I didn't want to break it, but on the other hand, if I did, that would have ended up being part of its story!



“It’s a dream!”

WHY YUNGBLUD INVITES FANS TO JAM ON STAGE AND KEEP THE EPIPHONE GUITAR THEY PLAY

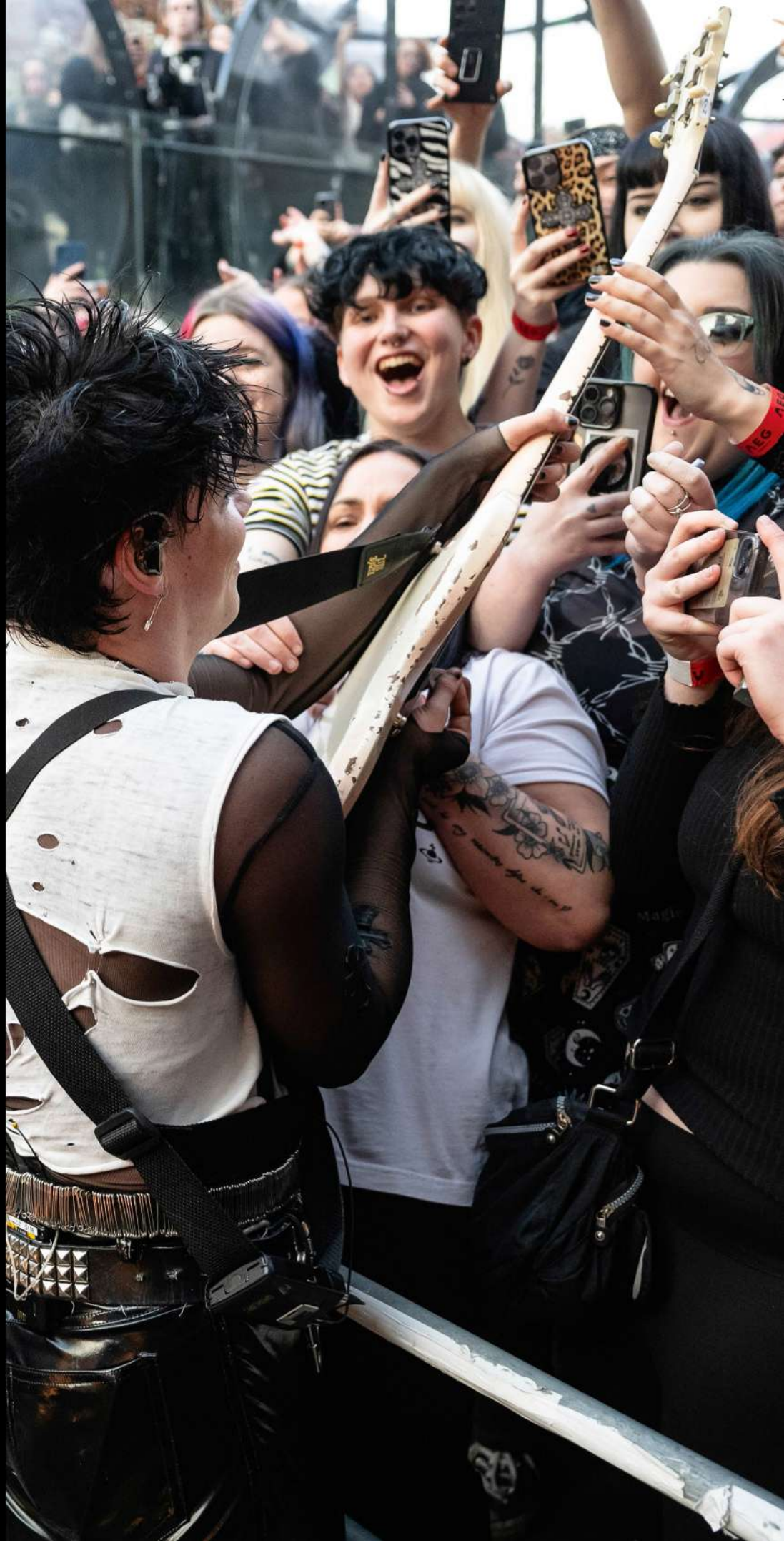
“I’ve handed out about nine guitars so far,” he says. “The first time happened by accident. We’d been sent some cool prototypes to tour with.

I wanted to try them out and switch between my main ‘60s Gibson and the Epiphones. I started to mix and match on stage. We were headlining a festival in Prague and I asked the crowd, ‘Does anyone want to come up and play this next song with us? Does anyone actually *know* how to play it?’ Everyone went a bit mad and it was crazy looking at 60,000 people screaming, ‘Yeah!’ I remember looking out and a moshpit opened up. There was one kid in the middle screaming, ‘Me!’ I got him up, his name was Simon, and it was like we’d been playing with him our entire lives.

“I handed him the guitar at the end saying, ‘You can keep that!’ And the next day it had millions of views. It was really organic. So I called the factory and said, ‘You need to send us a load more because we’re planning on giving them out.’ After the gigs, I would go to the barrier when the house lights come on to hang out with the kids – that’s what I’ve done since we started – and people will tell me they’re starting a band. That will lead to me calling my tech over to bring them a guitar. If I can play a tiny part in someone’s story, just like Angus or Billie Joe did for me, then what a f*cking honour!

“That’s what rock ‘n’ roll’s about; passing on the baton and hoping the person who takes it respects what came before, but also runs as fast as they can in another direction. The difference between our genre and everyone else’s is that rock is sacred. You can’t fake it. With pop and hip-hop, stuff like that, they give the crown to whatever is big in that moment. Rock is about a 30- or 40-year career. Taking heavy sounds to new people, to new waters. If you manage to do that, you get remembered.

“We are right in the middle of that voyage right now. It’s lit and we’re having fun with it. That symbol of me passing a guitar to someone in the same way my grandfather did to my dad and my dad did to me is a f*cking dream.”





NEW BLUD

"Right now it's exciting because rock 'n' roll feels different, it feels new"

➔ dedicated to the mission so far, and that doesn't look like it will be changing anytime soon. And there, perhaps, lies the big secret behind all the success. He's a lifer and everything he creates comes with a palpable sense of sweat and authenticity. Playing his part in the resurgence of rock music in wider popular culture is, in his own words, literally why he exists.

"I have a deep love for rock music," he shrugs, almost as if to say it shouldn't be too hard to figure what he's all about. "That's what I grew up on. It's what I listen to in the shower, it's what I listen to at parties and it's what I listen to backstage. My goal is to bring guitar music to a new generation but re-skin it to make it different. Right now it's exciting because rock 'n' roll feels different, it feels new. Whether people like it or not, it's *happening* again! We want to be a part of that.

"I'M AFTER A CERTAIN SOUND - YOUNG, BRATTY AND NAIVE"

Photos Getty

It's been a crazy five years for us. We started in small venues and now we're playing stadiums, but we're all under 30. So rock is definitely coming back. Young people are loving it."

So far he's been mainly operating out of the punk and indie circles within the rock universe, though there are some big changes afoot with the next full-length, currently a work in progress. After all this talk about his love for AC/DC, it very much sounds like his love for Angus and Malcolm will be brought to the forefront on album four, slated for release next year.

"We've really gone classic rock on this new record we've been making," he grins. "Or at least how we believed classic rock *should* be played. It's like new old stock, all guitar-based with four-minute breakdowns. The first song is nine minutes long with two guitar solos in it. We're just gonna f*cking do it, just because we can do it. Why not? We were asking ourselves how we can twist the genre. How do we make it sound new and how do we make rock guitar more interesting? We've got to this point where it's like 'Alright, sick, we've done all that, now let's make a classic rock album!' It will still feel fresh, though. It will be a classic rock album for 2025."

Beyond his prized SG Junior, there are some other rare Gibsons to be found in his private collection. His latest edition is a '60s ES-330 – a dream machine for just about any kind of guitar player,

whether they're into rock, metal, blues or jazz. And though he chooses to ditch the six-string during certain points of his live show – a fundamental aspect of his larger-than-life stage presence and primary role as a frontman – he's a guitar addict just like the rest of us.

"I just love guitars," he smiles. "Especially my Gibson B-25 acoustics... I've got seven of them! I will literally buy any one of those '60s models. Every time I see one, it comes home with me. Because those guitars are real songwriter's instruments. I write with them, so they come all over the world with me. I'm just obsessed with those things. I just bought a '60s ES-330 which came from Florida and it's an *unbelievable* guitar. Some guy drew a ghost on the scratchplate; we call it 'The Demon', and apparently it's cursed. If I'm dead next year, it's because of that guitar!"

"Really it just comes down to which ones have survived me and my playing," he laughs. "Some are in bits, lying around somewhere. I had a couple of Fenders a few years ago, but, for me, Gibsons sound heavier and can take

a f*cking beating. Adam occasionally plays a Fender, but we're Gibson lovers. It's like the company kidnapped us, locked us in their basement with all the goody bags and now we're fully down!"

It should come as little surprise that Yungblud's approach to tone is one that echoes his attitude towards songwriting. He places his trust in Hiwatt and Marshall amps for a hard-hitting crunch that can ring true and move air at high volume. You won't find anything in

between because – at least to his ears – less really is more. All the clever effects and pedalboard headaches are left to fellow six-stringer Adam, who brings more eclectic influences into their collective sonic palette.

"My approach is very simple," he admits. "Adam's rig is way more intricate, running two amps in stereo. His pedalboard is pretty mind-blowing, because he's really inspired by people like The Edge from U2 and Ed O'Brien from Radiohead. I like a one-pickup guitar going into an amp with a basic distortion or overdrive that kicks. I'm after a certain sound. I want

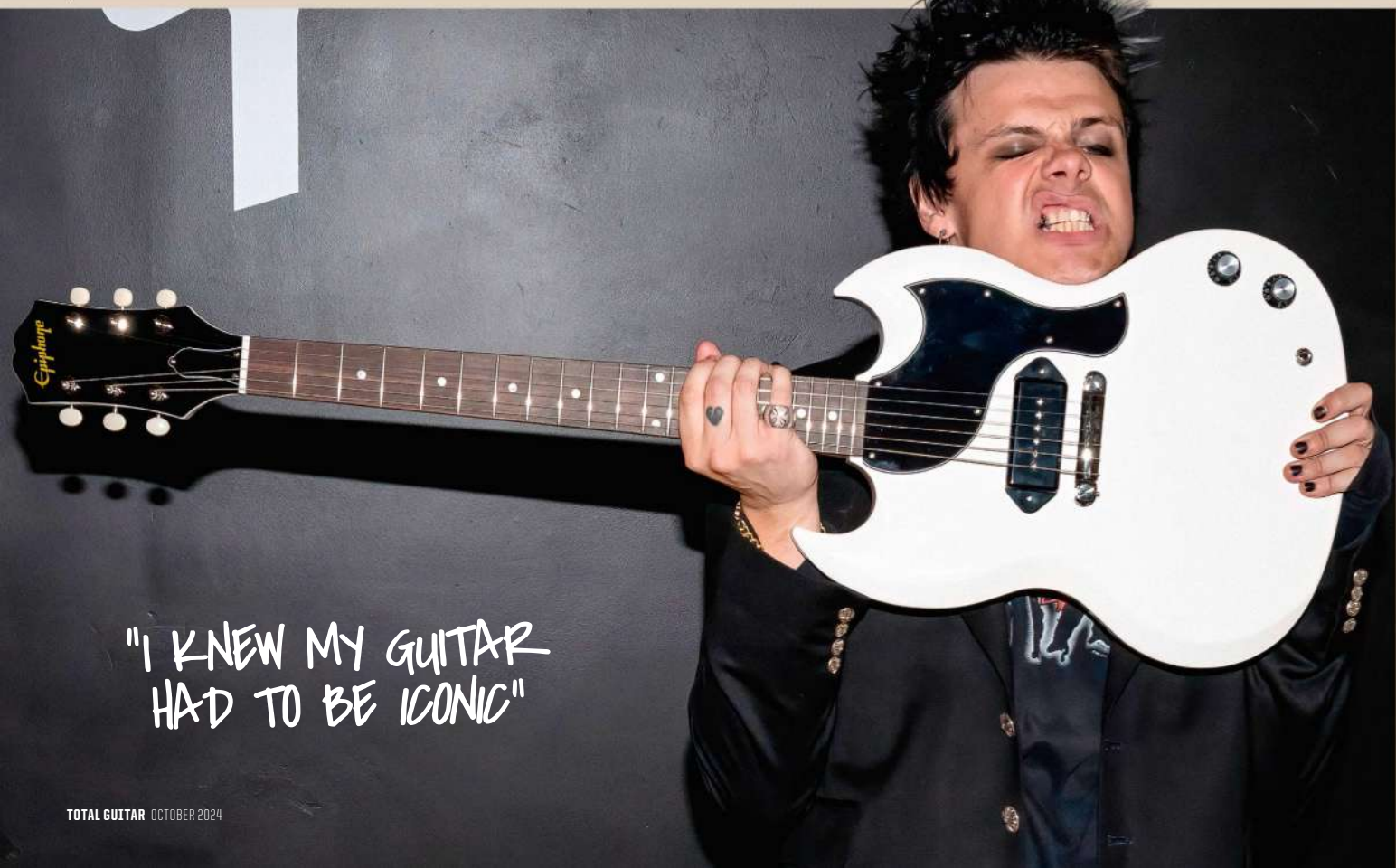
it to be young, bratty and naive. Adam can do all the clever sh*t. I want my parts to be accessible, so any kid can learn them quickly. I'm more of a songwriter, that's just how I play. I'll do something simple, then Adam will shred some mental sh*t all over it."

And while there are plenty of great digital rig options striking that perfect balance between consistency and portability, there's nothing quite like plugging a guitar straight into a cranked amp. Technology has come on in leaps and bounds over the last two decades, but for players like Yungblud, the more things change, the more things stay the same...

"I don't even use pedals, I stick with the gain from the amp. We might use a couple of Boxes Of Doom [isolated cabinets] backstage, but it all comes from plugging straight in. That's just what I like. People have been trying to get us to switch to Kemper for years and we keep telling them to f*ck off. All of our mates come on the side of the stage and I want that area to be a party. Sometimes I take my in-ears out and it's *blaring* at me. I just want my amp all the way up and I'm ready to go... the only thing I need is for it to be f*cking loud up there!"

"I GREW UP IN A GUITAR SHOP"

"I KNEW MY GUITAR HAD TO BE ICONIC"







“I NEEDED SOMEONE TO BE THE SID VICIOUS TO MY JOHNNY ROTTEN”

MEET ADAM WARRINGTON – THE MAN HANDLING MOST OF THE GUITARS YOU HEAR AT A YUNGBLUD SHOW...

Words Amit Sharma Pictures Dave Simpson, Roberto Ricciuti/Getty

Look up any footage of Yungblud playing live on YouTube and there's a strong chance you will see Adam Warrington on stage right. The

Scottish-born 28-year-old guitarist has been on almost every tour with the band, including landmark performances at the Reading And Leeds Festivals, various awards ceremony events and television appearances, including *The Graham Norton Show*. You'll also spot his face in a lot of the music videos and see his name credited on a handful of tracks from the last two studio albums.

Back in November 2020, Yungblud decided to introduce Warrington to fans on his BBC Sounds podcast “because of how important he is in my life and in my career,” going on to describe him as a guitar player who always makes people turn their heads wherever he goes. High praise, indeed...

“I met Adam on Phil Taggart's Slacker night in Old Street in East London,” Yungblud recalled. “I was like, I needed a guitar player. I kind of needed someone who would be the Sid Vicious to my Johnny Rotten, or the Carl Barât to my Pete Doherty or whatever. I remember we were both wearing Harringtons and you came up to me and passed me a beer. It was that doppelgänger thing and I was like, ‘Ah, hello!’”

Within two weeks of meeting, the pair were living together and playing in the same band. In the same podcast, Yungblud revealed how these early years playing together helped him transition

from Dom Harrison Music to the pseudonym he'd go on to take over the world with – the relationship and chemistry fuelled by their shared love for Joy Division, gin and port.

The effervescent frontman praised Warrington's well-roundedness and passion for the guitar but also championed his ability to not overthink it all. “He's great at scales but he's not going to be like, ‘Hey man, B minor diminished blah blah blah!’” grinned Yungblud. “He'll just have a couple of beers and play you something amazing.”

Before working in his current role, Warrington was performing alongside chart-topping Scottish singer-songwriter Lewis Capaldi, who remains one of his oldest friends and biggest supporters. “Adam is one of my oldest pals from back home,” Capaldi once revealed. “We started off together playing shows out and about in tiny venues in Scotland. He's an incredible guitar player and is usually off playing around the world with Yungblud now! It's nice to have someone you grew up with going on to do amazing things.”

For live shows, Warrington tends to rely on his Gibson six-strings – with models like his 2018 SG Standard, 2001 Les Paul Standard and Custom Shop ES-335 covering most of the set. On the rack, you're also likely to find a Gretsch G6128T-89VS Vintage Select '89 Duo Jet with Bigsby and Fender Classic Player Jazzmaster Special, with whichever he picks up running in stereo via a Hiwatt Custom 20 and Marshall 1962 Bluesbreaker reissue. The latter was demonstrated on Marshall's YouTube channel as part of its Artist Spotlight



PLAY TIME
“He'll just have a couple of beers and play you something amazing”

series, in which Warrington explained how it was the John Mayall's *Blues Breakers With Eric Clapton* connection that led him to the amp, citing it as his main workhorse. “It's called a Bluesbreaker for a reason,” he smiled, highlighting its ability to sing and cut through with a “really amazing middle presence”.

As for pedals, there's an entire universe of tonal options coming from the high-performance Boss 500 series – namely the RV-500 reverb, the DD-500 delay and MD-500 modulation. For standalone stomp boxes, he favours the Ibanez WH10V3 wah, the Electro-Harmonix Micro POG, the DigiTech Whammy, the ZVEX Super Hard On boost and the Dunlop Echoplex delay. And there's no shortage of fuzz options coming from a JHS Crayon which recreates the sound of plugging direct into a preamp, a JHS Muffuletta which packs five classic Big Muffs into one unit, and a Fulltone '70 BC-108C – famously reverse engineered from Eric Johnson's original blue Fuzz Face, which made history on the Strat virtuoso's early studio albums.

PUNK JUNK

THE GEAR THAT POWERED THE GENRE

Here we take a look at the guitars, amps and effects as used by punk's greats. Back in the '70s these players embraced a DIY 'make do and mend' ethic...

Words Jenna Scaramanga

1. WAYNE KRAMER'S STRATOCASTER

In the 1970s, poverty-stricken early punk innovator Wayne Kramer repainted his Strat metallic purple and sold it. The guitar has never been recovered, so hard info is scarce today. The big headstock puts it no earlier than December 1965, and Kramer had it for the recording of the MC5's *Kick Out The Jams* in October 1968. In a bid to make his solos cut through, Kramer installed a humbucker (most likely a Gibson, given the era) in the middle, retaining the single coil Strat bridge pickup for his preferred rhythm tone. In the Vietnam era, the stars and stripes motif was Kramer's own patriotic

way of reclaiming the US flag from right wingers.

Buying now?

Fender did a run of Wayne Kramer Strats in 2011. Failing that, you'll need to find a Strat with a middle pickup rout to install a PAF 'bucker.

2. JOHNNY THUNDERS' 1960 LES PAUL JUNIOR

The New York Dolls were forerunners of punk and glam metal, and you can thank Thunders for the Junior's subsequent appearances on records by The Clash and Green Day. Thunders started out playing a 1957 Les Paul Special with the neck pickup disconnected. At a show with the Stooges in Memphis, Thunders

hit the pickup selector, cutting out the sound. Thinking his guitar was broken, Thunders smashed it and incited a riot. On returning to New York, he purchased his TV yellow doublecut Junior which had no confusion-causing switches. He referred to it as an 'automatic guitar' because it was easy to use, like an automatic car.

Buying now?

The Harley Benton DC-Junior has all the right features, and even comes in TV yellow.

3. JOHNNY RAMONE'S 1965 MOSRITE VENTURE MODEL II

Johnny Ramone wanted something cheap and individual, and the Mosrite

MONEY MAKER

Johnny Ramone's 1965 Mosrite sold for a whopping \$937,000 at auction in 2021





was perfect. They're now highly collectible as less than 150 of Ramone's preferred slab-bodied variant were originally built, but at the time it was a junk shop special. According to the auction catalogue when it sold in 2021, "The fretboard shows an incredible amount of wear to the bass side of the higher register frets" from Ramone's savage pick attack, and "extreme wear on the back of the neck from the first to 5th fret" from his constant powerchording. It sold for \$937,000 to an anonymous buyer who, we would assume, does not play punk guitar for a living.

Buying now?

The Harley Benton MR-Classic gives much of the look and vibe of the original Mosrite.

4. STEVE JONES' 1974 LES PAUL CUSTOM

By his own account, the Sex Pistols' Steve Jones, er, "borrowed" some of the gear he used in his early career, but this guitar was not misappropriated. It had belonged to the New York Dolls' Sylvain Sylvain, and some say that Malcolm McLaren took the guitar as payment for managing the Dolls, eventually passing it on to Steve. Regardless, it wound up in Jones' hands for the duration of the Sex Pistols' career, before being stolen from him in 1978. Rumours flew about its

whereabouts until May 2024, when it sold for a not-very-punk \$390,000 at auction.

Buying now?

The Epiphone Les Paul Custom looks the part, but the Inspired by Gibson Custom version has Gibson specs, including an ebony fingerboard.

5. JOAN JETT'S 1972 GIBSON LES PAUL DELUXE

The 17-year-old Joan Jett picked up a natural finish Deluxe on joining the Runaways, and wouldn't get her better known Gibson Melody Maker until her solo career. The Deluxe's mini-humbuckers are clearer and brighter than PAFs, and live footage frequently shows Jett using the neck pickup. Although manager Kim Fowley called the Runaways "an all-girl answer to Grand Funk", the group quickly became friends with the Ramones, the Damned, and the Sex Pistols, cementing their punk credibility. Being a '72, the Deluxe had a 'pancake' body, with a layer of maple sandwiched between two mahogany slabs in addition to the maple top, for greater rigidity.

Buying now?

Mini humbuckers are rare but will fit in P-90 routs, so something like the Harley Benton SC450 is ripe for modification.

AMPS

Classic punk amp brands

FENDER

Steve Jones recorded *Never Mind The Bollocks* with a Fender Twin Reverb using his 'magic settings' - everything on 10. It was also Joe Strummer's amp of choice for *London Calling*. The Dead Kennedys' East Bay Ray recorded his parts for their seminal debut *Fresh Fruits For Rotting Vegetables* using a Fender Super Reverb he'd modded himself.

MARSHALL

Historically, this is probably *the* punk amp brand. Johnny Ramone bought three in 1976, along with six 4x12 cabinets, all of which he ran simultaneously. Steve Jones toured with a 100-watt Super Lead during the Pistols' original run. Minor Threat and their early 80s contemporaries leaned hard on the JCM800, and Green Day's *Dookie* was recorded with a 1959SLP.

VOX

Vox amps, widely available in the UK, were unsurprisingly grabbed by many young punks. Most notably, The Clash's debut album tone is defined by the AC30. The Stranglers' Hugh Cornwell has used them for his entire career, only recently resorting to the Fender Blues DeVille as an emergency backup.

MESA/BOOGIE

The Clash's Mick Jones was an early adopter of Mesa/Boogie, using MkI and MkII models paired with Marshall cabs from *London Calling* onwards. Pop-punk loved Boogie too. The Offspring and NOFX used the Mk IV. Tom DeLonge ran his Triple Rectifier alongside a Marshall JCM900, with the 900 on the clean channel, gain on 10.

SOLID STATE AMPS

Solid State goes right to the roots of punk. The Stooges' Ron Asheton used the transistor-powered Vox Super Beatle. Wilko Johnson was an early HH IC100-S user, as were The Clash, Bauhaus, The Buzzcocks, and The Skids too. Early on, Johnny Ramone used an Electro-Harmonix Mike Matthews Freedom Solid State amp until his budget permitted that wall of Marshalls. Hüsker Dü's Bob Mould gigged Yamaha G100 and Roland JC-120 heads. The brittle and cutting tones of post-punk were an ideal home for solid-state gear. In Siouxsie and the Banshees, John McGeoch used one with the chorus on all the time, alongside two 50-watt Marshall JMP combos, one clean and one dirty. Gang Of Four's Andy Gill proudly used an early 80s Carlsbro 2x12.



"THINKING HIS GUITAR WAS
BROKEN, THUNDER'S SMASHED IT
AND INCITED A RIOT"

7



6. JOE STRUMMER'S 1966 TELECASTER

Strummer had this Sunburst model sprayed black and the bridge swapped to a six-saddle model for better intonation. The tuners were replaced with contemporary 70s models too, but this was otherwise a stock 1966 Tele. The tradition of adorning guitars with anti-establishment messages goes back at least to Woodie Guthrie's "This Machine Kills Fascists", probably earlier, but Strummer popularised stickers in punk. The 'Ignore Alien Orders' and 'Trash City' decals sat alongside 'NOISE' stencilled in white. There were raised eyebrows when Fender released a roadworn Joe Strummer Tele for £1,599, and a run of 75 masterbuilt replicas of his original for – gulp – \$20,000.

Buying now?

The Squier Sonic Telecaster has the six-saddle bridge and comes in black. Job done.

7. MICK JONES' 1958 LES PAUL STANDARD

It might not seem very punk to play the world's most collectible guitar, but when Jones picked up his '58 the vintage market had not yet exploded,

and they were much more akin to playing a '90s Les Paul today. The classic combination of Les Paul and Tele fuelled The Clash from *London Calling* onwards, although Jones played the majority of guitars on the band's studio albums. And, though Jones is more associated with the Les Paul Custom because of its appearance in hit videos like *Should I Stay Or Should I Go*, it was the Standard on The Clash's most important recordings.

Buying now?

Almost every budget brand has a singlecut option. The Vintage V100NB has no frills but solid quality.

8. PATTI SMITH'S FENDER DUO-SONIC

Patti Smith's 1962 Sunburst Duo-Sonic was a gift to her from Television's Tom Verlaine who played it on *Little Johnny Jewel*. The Duo-Sonic was rumoured to have belonged to Jimi Hendrix during his stint playing for the Isley Brothers after his original one was stolen – though its authenticity can't be proven. Smith is more frequently photographed with her other, black, Duo-Sonic, which has a pre-1959 maple fingerboard. The short 22.5" scale length gives it a spongy attack and

CLASH CLASSIC
Jones' 1958 Les Paul Standard featured on The Clash's most important recordings

deeper tone than a Strat. Smith refers to the Duo-Sonic in various lyrics and is credited on some of her albums specifically for Duo-Sonic guitar.

Buying now?

Tough! Only the Fender Player Duo-Sonic comes close, and it's based on the later 24" scale spec.

9. GREG GINN'S DAN ARMSTRONG PLEXI GUITAR

As Black Flag pushed punk's evolution into hardcore, guitarist Greg Ginn looked for something unusual and came up with the Dan Armstrong Plexi guitar. He's the reason Dave Grohl plays one – Grohl's even touts a Black Flag sticker. Ginn replaced the pickup with assorted humbuckers, frequently having trouble with them shorting out. Greg reputedly sweats like a beast, and the pickup was later sealed in a bid to prevent damage. There were two Black Flag Plexis. One had the Black Flag logo taped on and was eventually

"GROHL'S PLEXI GUITAR EVEN TOUTS A BLACK FLAG STICKER"

11



sprayed black, while the other remained clear. Both were eventually stolen and remain missing.

Buying now?

Budget acrylic-bodied guitars appear frequently on eBay; we cannot attest to their quality!

10. DOYLE WOLFGANG VON FRANKENSTEIN'S ANNIHILATOR

Misfits guitarist Von Frankenstein drew this body design in high school, inspired by Batman, and then built it himself while working in a machine shop. He bought mahogany body wood from Paul Reed Smith and used a graphite neck-through design. Rather than side dot markers, the frets are labelled with the names of the E-string notes. Although there's a Floyd Rose bridge, it's modified to be a hardtail, and Doyle even wound the pickup himself to his own spec. After a brief partnership with Oktober Guitars, Dean now makes a replica for an eye-watering \$9,999.

Buying now?

Nope! Your best bet may be the Ibanez Iceman as played by Doyle before he built the Annihilator.

11. BILLIE JOE ARMSTRONG'S FERNANDES BLUE

Billie Joe got his 1980s Fernandes Strat copy for his 10th birthday and it has been his favourite ever since. Only the bridge pickup is connected. On *Dookie* it featured a Bill Lawrence dual blade

humbucker, but this died in an epic mudfight at Woodstock '94. The guitar has housed a Seymour Duncan JB SH-4 since then. The body is probably made from reclaimed bowling alley wood—Fernandes built many of its 80s guitars this way, pancaking silver heart planks together to get the required thickness. Blue has probably been seen by more people than any guitar in the history of punk.

Buying now?

If you're beset by brand loyalty, you could track down a new Fernandes RT model. An HSS Fender Strat will be easier to locate on these shores though.

12. TOM DELONGE'S 1994 FENDER STRATOCASTER

DeLonge's original Strat is an Olympic White USA 40th Anniversary model, covered – of course – in stickers. Tom has always used the hottest pickups he can find. He originally fitted this with a Duncan Hot Rails and JB Jr in the neck and middle, and an angled DiMarzio X2N. In 1997, the JB Jr was swapped for a Lil Screamin' Demon and the X2N became a Duncan Invader. The guitar stayed in this form for *Dude Ranch* and the band's breakthrough *Enema Of The State*. As Blink-182 exploded, Fender custom built DeLonge five single-pickup Strats in various colours, each with a single Invader pickup.

Buying now?

The Squier Sonic Stratocaster HTH has a single humbucker, fixed bridge, and bright colours and is ripe for stickering.

12



PEDAL POWER

Essential effects for punk



MODULATION

Punk is not about brand loyalty, but you may spot a pattern here... Mick Jones originally employed an MXR Phase 90 before moving on to the Phase 100 for *London Calling*. Steve Jones similarly employed MXR phasers on *Anarchy...* Dr. Know/Gary Miller was an MXR devotee for reggae parts, and, in *Magazine*, John McGeoch used MXR M117R flangers.

DELAY

After modulation, a good tape or analogue delay is the next most common punk accessory. Mick Jones used a Roland RE-201 Space Echo on *Train In Vain* and its successor the RE-301 Chorus Echo on *Lost In The Supermarket*. The Echoplex, meanwhile, was part of the Dead Kennedys' sound, heard most prominently on *The Man With The Dogs* and *Holiday In Cambodia*.

COMPRESSION

These crop up more frequently than you might expect, particularly in the spiky cleans of post-punk. David Byrne and John McGeoch favoured the MXR Dyna Comp, while the Boss CS-3 is used by East Bay Ray and Blondie's Chris Stein.



Never Mind the Harmonics

Think punk is just powerchords and rubbish technique?
Think again as we take you through all you need to know...

Words, guitars and backing Charlie Griffiths

Punk is traditionally ensconced in a DIY ethic, from its “use what ya got” approach with gear to self-taught playing and musicianship. This was probably truer in the 70s heyday – and punk has come a long way since, spawning a raft of sub-genres. We could list these, but perhaps the most telling fact is that

pop-punk, post-punk and more of those sub-genres are now all on their second or third revivals, with acts like Idles, Fontaines D.C. and Yungblud at the forefront today.

For us guitarists, there’s now greater musical history to draw on, and a lot more techniques to learn too. Our lesson here takes you through 10 examples which are loosely based around one or two artists apiece,

but, more importantly, with a focus on the techniques you need to know to cover 50+ years of punk.

As ever, your aim is to improve your playing, so don’t worry if you don’t master each example in full. It’s all about identifying the bite-sized ideas that you’re not so familiar with, then adding them to your own arsenal of techniques.

1 OFFBEAT CHORD CHANGES

bit.ly/tg389audio

We're kicking off in the style of US shock-punk rockers, Misfits, with a riff using barre chords from the key of B major and delivered in continuous eighth-note downstrokes. Take careful note of where the chord changes appear. They're played on the offbeat on several occasions, so, if you're counting to four to keep time with the quarter-note pulse, the changes will appear in between the numbers.

2 SLIDING APPROACH CHORDS

bit.ly/tg389audio

Played with E and A major barre chords at the 12th fret, this riff is spiced up with a slide from a semitone below each chord, Johnny Ramone style. It's a technique that you'll also hear on *God Save The Queen* by the Sex Pistols, amongst tracks by countless other acts. Keep your hand and fingers fixed in the barre chord shape and focus on sliding each finger across the fret-wires at the same time.

3 CHROMATIC RIFFING

bit.ly/tg389audio

This riff is something Black Flag's Dez Cadena might play to create a spooky sound - an effect that comes from the chromatic arrangement of notes, instead of staying within the key signature. Use your wrist and thumb to control the pick in an even alternate picking motion and use your four fretting fingers to span from the 5th fret down to the 1st. Stub your fretting fingers up against the idle strings to keep 'em quiet.

4 MUTED STRUMMING

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩=140

Am

F

G

Play 4 times

Add interesting rhythms to your strummed barre chords here by mixing full chords with muted strings in the style of Fall Out Boy's Joe Trohman. For these mutes, hold the chord shapes with your fretting fingers and relax them so they are touching the strings but not pressing into the frets. Note that the mutes don't appear on the same beats in every bar – and you can experiment further with this idea.

5 GREEN DAY-STYLE OPEN STRING CHANGES

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩=200

A

E

Bm

D

Play 4 times

Play rapid-fire Green Day-style chord changes by adding open string strums as you make the position shift. Moving between two chords can be tricky at high tempos and quickly strumming the open strings in between chords is a good way of giving your fretting hand time to find the shape, as well as being a subtle but important nuance of punk rhythm playing.

6 POP-PUNK MAJOR MELODIES

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩=190

E⁵

B⁵

C#⁵

A⁵

Play 4 times

This technique is a great way of creating an energetic, positive vibe like Tom DeLonge's upbeat pop-punk style in Blink-182. Here, we're using the notes of E major (E F# G# A B C# D#) along the length of the first string, and using that repeating open E note (known as a pedal tone) to really root the lick in its intended key. Use alternate picking or try hammer-ons and pull-offs. It's up to you.

7 SKA FEEL

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩=140

G Am B^b D^b w/bar E w/bar Play 4 times

TAB: 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 5 5 5 5 5 5 6 6 6 6 6 6 9 9 10 12 12 13

cont. sim.

Focusing the rhythm guitar on beats 2 and 4 gives this riff a ska feel akin to Mick Jones on The Clash's *London Calling*. Ska would overlap elsewhere in the genre with The Police's post-punk style then later in the 90s with the ska-punk scene. Our riff has a swung eighth-note feel which means longer downstrokes and shorter upstrokes.

8 DISSONANT BENDS

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩=170

E⁵ D⁵ G⁵ E⁵ D⁵ G⁵ Play 4 times

TAB: 15 (17) 15 (17) 15 (17) 15 (17) 15 (20) 15 (20) 15 (16) 15 (16) 15 (16) 15 (16) 15 (19) 15 (19)

Mark Bowen of Idles creates striking guitar parts by employing dissonant string bends, sometimes on a single string and other times using unison bends. The idea here is to bend the lower string to match the pitch of the fretted higher string. The slower you do it, the more dissonant and sour it will sound. You might say it's a "classic rock" technique but it's used extensively in punk and its sub-genres too.

9 OCTAVE LICK

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩=185

Em G Am C Play 4 times

TAB: 12-12 11-11 14-14-14-14 12-12 11-11 4/5 5-5 5/7 7/9 10-10 9-9 12-12 10-10 9-9 0-0 2/3 3-3 3/5 5/7

We're taking inspiration from East Bay Ray of Dead Kennedys and Dave Baksh of Sum 41 here. You'll hear countless bands use octave shapes though, filling out the sound of melody lines. Play the lower note with your first finger and the higher note with your third or fourth, ensuring you keep the idle strings silent by resting your fretting fingers against them. Ideally, you should be able to strum without string noise.

10 YUNGBLUD STYLE SINGLE-NOTE RIFF

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩=140

Am Bm Am Bm Play 4 times

TAB: 0 2 3 5 0 2 3 5 3 2 0 2 3 5 0 2 3 5 2 3 5

cont. sim.

This single-note Yungblud style riff uses the A natural minor scale (A B C D E F G) starting with the open fifth string. After the root note, keep your hand steady and in position as you play the scale notes with your first, second and fourth fingers. Pick each note with a downstroke for an even, consistent attack making sure you strike the string exactly when your fretting fingers land.



BLACK SABBATH

WAR PIGS

Sabbath's classic anti-war protest song tabbed in full

Photo: Getty Images; Guitars and backing: Phil Capone; Transcription: Simon Young & Phil Capone

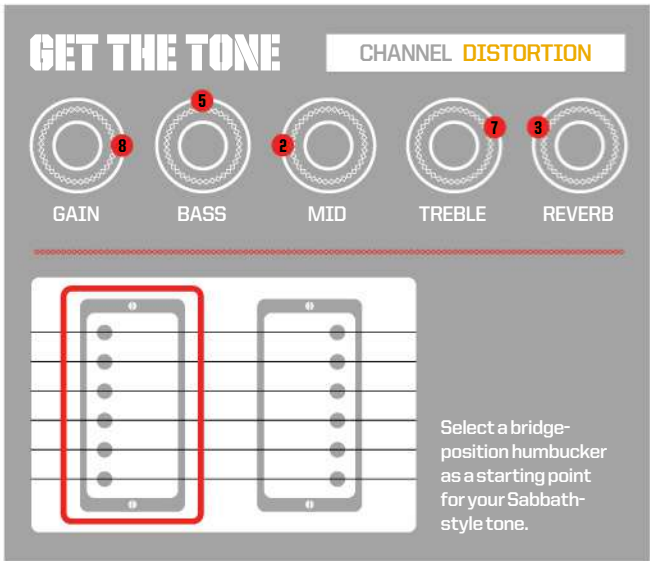
SOUND ADVICE

Everything you need to know before playing *War Pigs*

The opening track on Black Sabbath's iconic second album *Paranoid*, *War Pigs* is chocked full of Tony Iommi's masterful riffing. The song has an unusual structure, kicking off with a slow, spacey intro in 6/8 time before breaking down for a sparse-sounding verse and then eventually reaching its chorus riff. We've tabbed the song in full here, but be aware that the solos are a composite of double-tracked parts which, in the main, are in unison, but elsewhere deviate briefly away from each other. Based mainly in common minor pentatonic shapes, there's certainly room for experimentation if you want to try jamming your own ideas.

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL DISTORTION

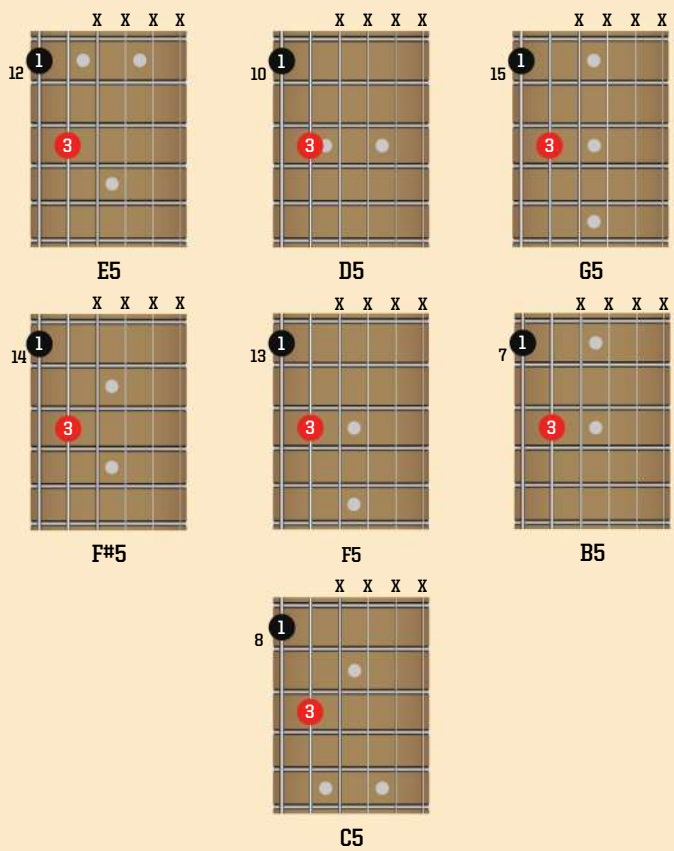


Select a bridge-position humbucker as a starting point for your Sabbath-style tone.

Iommi played a Gibson SG through a Laney 100BL amp on *War Pigs*, so you'll need a guitar equipped with a bridge-position humbucker and a British-style valve amp to get an authentic tone. Keep the midrange low and the treble reasonably high to get close to Tony's sound. If you're playing a Stratocaster or a similar single-coil-equipped guitar, dial in more bass and less treble on your amp and experiment with more gain.

CHORDS

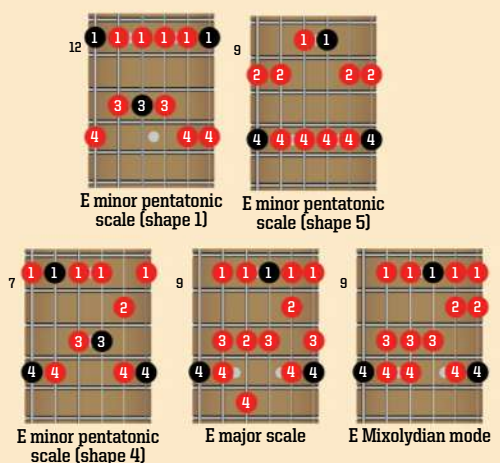
These are all simple two-note powerchords with their root notes on the sixth string. They're easy to play and easy to change between, too – all you have to do is remember where each shape is played on the fretboard. Other chord names shown above certain parts of the tab are 'implied' by the music and are not played on guitar as actual chords.



E5, D5, G5, F#5, F5, B5, C5

SCALES

The majority of Iommi's solos in this track are based on the E minor pentatonic scale (E G A B D). As you can see here, he uses three main scale shapes. These follow the same set of scale notes but in different areas of the fretboard. Your aim should be to learn these shapes and see how Tony moves through them, linking long lead licks together as he goes. The parts leading in and out of the main body of the solos hint briefly at the E major (E F# G# A B C# D#) and E Mixolydian (E F# G# A B C# D) scales, thanks to the mixture of G#, D# and D notes.



E minor pentatonic scale (shape 1), E minor pentatonic scale (shape 5), E minor pentatonic scale (shape 4), E major scale, E Mixolydian mode

BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS



WAR PIGS
John Osbourne, Terence Butler, William Ward, Anthony Frank Iommi
Westminster Music, Ltd. of Suite 2.07, Plaza 535 Kings Road, London SW10 0SZ
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BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Intro

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♩=110
N.C.

let ring - - - 1

let ring - - - 1

TAB 7 0 5 7 7 5 9 11 11 12

let ring - - - 1

let ring - 1

TAB 11 0 5 7 7 5 11 0 11 12

let ring - - - 1

TAB 14 0 5 7 7 5 11 7 0 0

E⁵ D⁵ E⁵ D⁵

TAB 14 12 14 14 14 12 12 12 12 14 14 14 12 12 12 10

This intro is slow, spacey and in a different time signature from the rest of the track, so groove and feel are the name of the game. Each brief flurry of notes is played against a drum fill, so try to groove with the percussion rather than playing dead straight and metronomic.



BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Verses 1 & 4

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩=91 D⁵ E⁵ D⁵ E⁵ 1. 2. 3. 4.

Play 6 times

0:51

TAB: 12-14, 10-12, 12-14, 10-12, 4-2-0, 2, 5-(7 5), 6/11, 7/12, 5/10, 12, 12

† slides on rpt. only

These powerchords are very simple and shouldn't challenge you. Iommi down-picks each pair of chords. Use the side of your pick hand to silence the strings after the second chord. There are four different endings, as well as some long pauses, so stay focused and take care not to lose your place.

BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Chorus riff

bit.ly/tg389audio

D⁵ E⁵ G⁵ F^{#5} F⁵ E⁵ 1. 3. 2. 4.

1:46

TAB: 12-14, 10-12, 17-16, 15-14, 15, 14, 12, 12, 15, 14, 12, 12 (14-12), 15, 14, 14, 12, 12

The 12th fret G note at the end of bar 2 has some fairly vigorous vibrato. Fret the note with your first finger and move your hand from the wrist to generate the vibrato effect. The trill at the end of bar 3 is a set of fast hammer-ons and pull-offs at the 12th and 14th frets.

BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Pre-verse riff

bit.ly/tg389audio

Em Play 4 times

2:06

TAB: 0 0 0 0, 12, 12, 0 0 3

PM - - - - -

If you follow the picking directions it's easier to nail the timing. In particular, the two open-string E notes before the 3rd fret G must be played with upstrokes.

BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Verses 2 & 3

bit.ly/tg389audio

E Play 8 times

2:17

TAB: 0 0 0 0, 2 0, 0 0 0, 2 0, BU BD, 2 (3) (2)

PM - - - - -

Like the pre-verse, this riff is based on a four-notes-per-beat idea, so use down-up style alternate picking to help with the timing.

BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Solo 1

bit.ly/tg389audio

E 3:30

let ring

TAB: 11/12, 12\11, 11\7, 7\5, 5/7, 7, 7, 7\5, 5/7, 7/11, 11/12, 12\11, 11/12, 12/14-14, 12-14, 12-14

4

7

9

12

13

BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Solo 1 (cont'd)

bit.ly/tg389audio

14

17

19

Iommi double-tracked this solo. The two parts he recorded (panned roughly centre and right) are not identical, so where they differ we've presented a selection of the licks to form a single part. Practise bars 12 and 13 slowly – it's a six-note melody line played with an eight-notes-per-beat (32nd notes) feel, which can make it hard to feel where the melody recycles itself.

BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Breakdown

bit.ly/tg389audio

5:43

BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Breakdown (cont'd)

bit.ly/tg389audio

Em⁷ E⁵ G⁵ E⁵ Em⁷ Play 4 times

let ring-----

TAB 12 14 12 12 14 12 12 14 12 12 14 12 12 14 12 12 14 12

D⁷ C⁷ B⁵ C⁵ B⁵

let ring-----

TAB 10 12 10 12 10 8 10 8 10 8 9 10 10 9

This section follows a repeat of the verse 1 and interlude guitar parts. Focus your attention on bar 1, which, thanks to being repeated and transposed, forms most of the section. Iommi lets notes ring over each other during the first half of the bar, but sticks to single notes at the end.

BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Solo 2

bit.ly/tg389audio

E⁵ D⁵ E⁵

6:34

TAB 5 7 0 4 5 4 5 4 4 5 7 5 5 7 0 4 5 7

1. D⁵ 2. D⁵ N.C.

TAB 7 7 4 5 7 4 4 4 7 7 9 9 7 9 12 9 12 9 12 9 7

TAB 9 7 9 7 9 9 11 9 7 9 7 9 9 11 9 7 9 7 9 9 11 9 7 9

BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Solo 2 (cont'd)

bit.ly/tg389audio

Musical notation for the first system of the solo, featuring a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a guitar tab staff below it. The tab includes fret numbers and rhythmic markings 'BU BD'.

Musical notation for the second system of the solo, featuring a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a guitar tab staff below it. The tab includes fret numbers and rhythmic markings 'BU BU BU BU BD'.

Musical notation for the third system of the solo, featuring a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a guitar tab staff below it. The tab includes fret numbers and a chord marking 'E5'.

Musical notation for the fourth system of the solo, featuring a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a guitar tab staff below it. The tab includes fret numbers and chord markings 'D5' and 'E5'.

Tommi repeats a lot of the ideas from his first solo here. Work on short sections (two or four bars or so is ideal) to get the licks down, but feel free to improvise around Tony's minor pentatonic ideas. Once again, double-tracked parts are presented as a single playable part in our tab.

BLACK SABBATH WAR PIGS Outro

bit.ly/tg389audio

Musical notation for the outro, featuring a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a guitar tab staff below it. The tab includes fret numbers and a 'let ring' instruction.

This outro is a repeat of bar 1 of the breakdown section. Hold down all three strings where you see the 'let ring' instruction in the tab. Where there is no 'let ring', play each string one after the other instead of holding them all down together.

OPEN-MIC SONGBOOK

SAM FENDER GETTING STARTED

Discover Sam's capo hack for creating supersized guitar parts

Sam Fender's second album, *Seventeen Going Under*, was not only a huge success critically and commercially, it also spawned several single releases. *Getting Started* is the sixth of these and highlights Sam Fender's American AOR influences, featuring a driving Springsteen-style groove underpinning the Tom Petty-esque 'wall of sound' guitar riffs.

Sam plays the main riffs with a capo on the 9th fret, enabling him to play open chords higher up the neck and create his trademark jangle. There's also

an acoustic rhythm part running throughout the track, most likely played in C# standard tuning (C# F# B E G# C#). We've provided shapes in E standard with a capo on the 4th fret to save you the hassle of retuning.

The rhythm parts use slightly different chords, for example Eadd9 instead of Emaj7 and F# instead of F#sus4. This keeps the rhythm part simple, leaving space for the capo'd electric riffs to give additional harmonic textures on top; a great technique for spreading guitar parts to create a bigger sound.



76

SAM FENDER GETTING STARTED Intro / Chorus

bit.ly/tg389audio

♩ = 162

Capo 9th fret

Emaj7 (Gmaj7) B (D) F#sus4 (Asus4) B (D)

TAB

† tacet 2nd time

Rake across the strings with a single downstroke and allow each chord to ring for its full duration. Reference the chords boxout for our tips on playing the shapes cleanly. Dialling in just the lightest of crunch to your clean sound adds presence and depth. You'll see two lots of chord names thanks to the capo: the 'true' pitch of the chords is on top, and the shape names as you know them from standard 'un-capo'd' tuning in brackets below.

SAM FENDER GETTING STARTED Verse

bit.ly/tg389audio

Capo 9th fret

G#m7 (Bm7) B (D) F#sus4 (Asus4)

let ring throughout

Play 5 times

TAB

† Play Emaj7 on 2nd, 4th and 5th repeats

In bar 1, the G#m is played on the first and third times, then substituted for Emaj7 on all other repeats. Use the same picking pattern for Emaj7 except for the root which is on the sixth string. Use the alternate picking as shown for best results.

Guitar sand heading: Phil Squire Photograph: Gensler/RedUX/Images



SONG SHEET

Getting Started

Intro

Emaj7 // // // B / F#sus4 // // // B /
Emaj7 // // // B / F#sus4 // // // //

Verse 1

G#m7 B
Eighteen, failed dream
F#
Attracted to a bad scene
Think I'll make a couple errands
Eadd9 B
Cataclysmic age to be
F#
When you're out of luck
And your mother's in need
G#m7 B
I made my money for the crooks and pushers
F#
In the hopes that I claw something
Eadd9 B
Together for toni - ii - ight
F#
I'm going out
Eadd9 B F#
Oh toni - ii - ight I'm going out

Chorus

Eadd9 B F#
I'm only getting started
B
Don't mean to be disheartened
Eadd9 B F#
Felt like giving up so many times before
B
But I'm still here grinding
Eadd9 B F#
I'm only getting started
B
Don't mean to be disheartened
Eadd9 B F#
Felt like giving up so many times before
But I'm still here grinding
Verse 2
G#m7 B #
I came home and you were on the floor
Eadd9 B F#
Floored by the letters and the council rigmarole
G#m7 B F#
What I wouldn't do to get you out this hole
Eadd9 B F#
But toni - ii - ight I gotta let go
Eadd9 B F#
But toni - ii - ight you gotta let me let go

Repeat Chorus

Sax Solo

Eadd9 // // // // F# // // // // //
G#m7 // // // // B/A# // // B / B/A# /

Chorus 3

Eadd9
I'm only getting started
F#
Don't mean to be disheartened
G#m7 B/A#
Felt like giving up so many times before
B B/A#
I'm still here grinding
Eadd9
I'm only getting started
F#
Don't mean to be disheartened
G#m7 B/A#
Felt like giving up so many times before
B B/A#
I'm still here grinding

Outro

Eadd9 // // // B / F# // // // B / x2

GETTING STARTED

Words and Music by Sam Fender
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CHORDS

Damp the idle fifth string in the Emaj7 chord by angling your second finger so that it just touches the string to prevent it sounding. When you change from the G#m7 to B in the verse, move your fingers *after* picking the open fourth string in bar 2 – the pros' technique for creating seamless chord changes. Use the chords shown to play a strum-along rhythm part but remember to move your capo down to the 4th fret first!



TAB GUIDE

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

What is tab?

This is where the key signature and time signatures are shown

This is the beats per minute (BPM)

0:51

2nd string 3rd fret

2nd string 1st fret

3rd string 2nd fret

4th string Open

CD time (where the part occurs on the original CD)

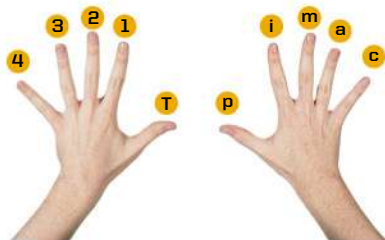
Tab is short for tablature, a notational system used to give detailed information as to where notes should be played on the fretboard. Tab appears underneath conventional music notation as six horizontal lines that represent the strings of the

guitar, from the sixth (thick) string at the bottom to the first (thin) string at the top. On these lines, numbers represent which frets you 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 notation. TG also includes a timestamp to tell you where in the original track you'll find each example and tempo expressed in beats per minute.

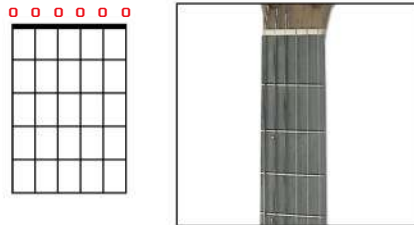
FRET BOXES: CHORDS, SCALES AND CAPO NOTATION

HAND LABELLING



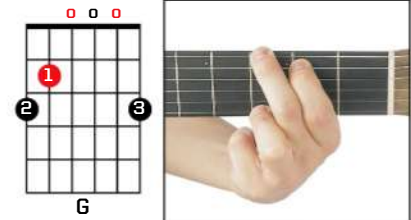
Here are the abbreviations used for each finger. Fretting hand: **1, 2, 3, 4, (T)**
Picking hand: **p (thumb), i (index), m (middle), a (annular), c (little finger)**

NUT AND FRETBOARD



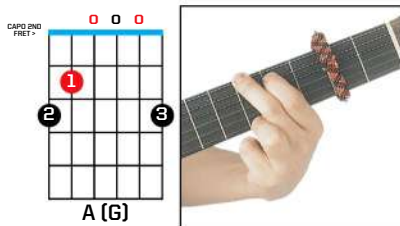
This fretboard diagram represents the guitar's fretboard exactly, as seen in the photo. This design is used for ease of visualising a fretboard scale or chord quickly.

CHORD EXAMPLE



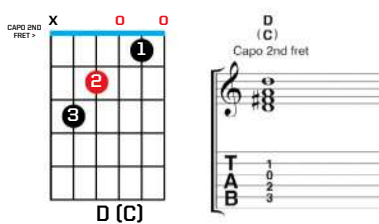
This diagram represents a G chord. The 'o's are open strings, and a circled number is a fretting hand finger. A black 'o' or circled number is the root note (here, G).

CAPO EXAMPLE



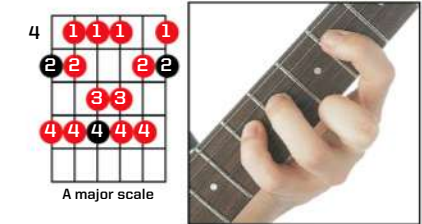
The blue line in the diagram represents a capo - for this A chord, place it at the 2nd fret. Capos change the fret number ordering. Here, the original 5th fret now becomes the 3rd fret, 7th fret now 5th fret, etc.

CAPO NOTATION



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

SCALE EXAMPLE



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

GUITAR TECHNIQUES: PICKING

DOWN AND UP-PICKING



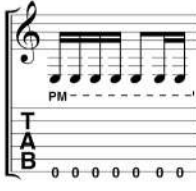
The symbols under the tab tell you the first note is to be down-picked and the second note is to be up-picked.

TREMOLO PICKING



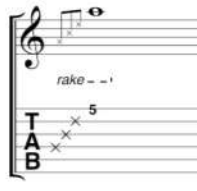
Each of the four notes are to be alternate-picked (down and up-picked) very rapidly and continuously.

PALM MUTING



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

PICK RAKE



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

APPREGIATED 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 shown in the bracketed note, before releasing again.

RE-PICKED BEND

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

PRE-BEND

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

QUARTER-TONE BEND

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

VIBRATO

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

HARMONICS

NATURAL HARMONICS

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

ARTIFICIAL HARMONICS

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

PINCHED HARMONICS

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

TAPPED HARMONICS

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

TOUCHED HARMONICS

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

VIBRATO BAR / WHAMMY BAR

WHAMMY BAR BENDS

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

SCOOP AND DOOP

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

SUSTAINED NOTE AND DIVEBOMB

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

GARGLE

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

WHAMMY BAR VIBRATO

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

OTHERS

PICK SCRAPE

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

VIOLINING

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

FINGER NUMBERING

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

PIMA DIRECTIONS

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

PICK HAND TAPPING

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

THE GAS STATION

REAL WORLD REVIEWS OF THE BEST NEW GEAR

Welcome to the GAS (Gear Acquisition Syndrome*) Station! Every issue, TG scours the market for the hottest new gear and brings you transparent reviews that you can trust. From the smallest of accessories that make your life easier, to big investments, such as brand new guitars, amps and effects pedals - if it's worth your attention, you'll find it here!

HOW WE TEST

CURATION

Our product selection is driven by our love of gear. We select the most exciting products on the market every month to bring you opinions you can trust.

FACE-VALUE REVIEWS

We're not gear snobs here at *Total Guitar*. We judge it on whether it looks good, sounds good and plays well - not by the name on the headstock.

NO SNAKE OIL

You won't find us getting hung up on hokey mythology or nonsense marketing speak: we aim to bring you bullsh*t-free opinions on the gear you're interested in.

WE CAN'T BE BOUGHT

TG review scores are a true reflection of our experts' opinion on the product they've been testing. You'll never find a rating in our mag that has been bought and paid for.

REAL WORLD REVIEWS

We test every product under the conditions that they were designed for. For example, if an amp is designed to be played loud, rest assured that we'll have tested it at rehearsal/gig volumes!

BEST BUY AWARD

TG Best Buy Awards are reserved for stand-out products that earn a 4.5 star overall rating. This is the most exciting new gear that you need to check out



PLATINUM AWARD

Reserved for the very best of the best, TG's Platinum Awards are given to class-leading, gamechanging products that score a maximum 5 stars in every category.



80 START ME UP

Five new products you need to check out

82 EPIPHONE YUNGBLUD SG JUNIOR

Yungblud's 'anonymous' signature model is a garage-rock workhorse

86 LTD EC-201FT

The single-pickup resurgence continues as we ask: is one really all you need?

88 CHAPMAN LAW MAKER LEGACY BARITONE

A T-style bruiser to handle your lower range needs

90 SQUIER LIMITED EDITION CLASSIC VIBE '60S TELECASTER SH

A stealth contender for the nicest-looking (and best-performing) Squier of the year

92 LINE 6 HX ONE

The HX One is a hugely versatile multi-FX unit

94 JHS HARD DRIVE

High-gain distortion pedal for 90s' tones



*WHAT IS GAS?

Gear Acquisition Syndrome is the guitar-player's never-ending urge to acquire new gear, irrespective of whether they actually need it. Don't pretend you don't have it - we all do!



SUPERB, A BEST BUY



EXCELLENT



ABOVE AVERAGE KIT



SOME ISSUES



POOR



START ME UP!

Five awesome new products to get your gear engine revving this month...

GRAPH TECH UN-LOCK NUT

1 Everyone loves a Floyd Rose, don't they? But not everyone enjoys clamping/unclamping their strings. Graph Tech's Un-Lock Nut does away with the Allen key, for speedy string changes, while claiming to offer all the stability and performance of a traditional locking-nut setup. What's more, you can use your traditional tuners as well as the bridge-end fine tuners to get your guitar up to pitch!

£29.99
graphtech.com

XVIVE A58 WIRELESS SYSTEM

2 XVIVE's been offering impressive yet affordable wireless systems and accessories for a while now, and its latest looks set to keep this up. The A58 set contains a transmitter and receiver, and operates at 5.8GHz to stop potential interference. Each system can work on one of six channels, so you can equip your whole band, and thanks to the built-in rechargeable (USB-C) battery, you'll get five hours of playing time without needing to splurge on AAs.

£159
xvive.com

POSITIVE GRID VAI

3 PG's Spark 2 might be stealing the spotlight, but they're not resting. The practice amp hero has just issued a new version of the Spark Mini, in association with none other than shred legend, Steve Vai. As well as all the regular Spark features, it comes in a special edition burgundy tolex with an exclusive Mandala grille and custom burgundy weave tolex. Vai has created four custom presets, and it's available to pre-order now.

£210
uk.positivegrid.com

DIMEBAG WARHEAD MINI

4 Designed in conjunction with Dimebag's partner Rita Haney and his longtime guitar tech, Grady Champion and David Karon (formerly of Randall amps), the Warhead Mini packs the essence of the late Pantera man's tone into a small-format, 40-watt solid-state head. It includes a pre-EQ circuit alongside bass, middle, treble, and presence controls to help you nail Dime's tone. The Black edition is available to order now, for shipping in November.

\$529
warheadamps.com

BLACKSTAR POLAR 4

5 Hot on the heels of the Polar 2 comes the Blackstar Polar 4 interface. This expanded, 4-in/4-out audio interface gives twice as many channels, each of which are equipped with mic preamps and line/instrument inputs, as well as Blackstar's Enhance circuit. The extra channel count is a great solution if you want to capture your guitar tracks with multiple microphone positions, and once again it's bundled with a suite of software including Ableton Live Lite, Blackstar St. James Plug, Melodyne Essential and more.

£329
blackstaramps.com



EPIPHONE £549 YUNGBLUD SG JUNIOR

This 'anonymous' signature model is a garage-rock workhorse

As discussed in this month's exclusive interview with Yungblud, his new Epiphone SG Junior signature is based on the 1964 Gibson original he's taken with him across the globe, and was created to give younger players access to classic looks and sounds. It's the kind of double-cut that makes a statement before you've even had the chance to strum a chord thanks to its single Dogear P-90 Pro bridge pickup, cream

Clash, while also being capable of a whole lot more. You can dial in shimmering cleans, screaming blues tones or even go all the way to classic heavy metal thunder if you have an amp or pedal with enough gain on tap. Lacking a neck pickup, of course, you might struggle to dial in convincing jazz sounds, but then again, that's a million miles away from what Yungblud is known for. There is, however, a tone control for taming the brightness and a volume control to back down the output –

“IT'S BUILT FOR POWERCHORDS THAT SNARL AND GROWL”

oval tuners and wraparound bridge. The only other signature SG currently in production by Epiphone is the Tony Iommi model, which retails for nearly twice as much, so this latest addition to the range is definitely well priced for beginners working with smaller budgets.

It should come as no surprise Yungblud's weapon of war is purpose-built for powerchords that snarl and growl – the P-90 pickup spanning the heft of a humbucker and the crispy bite typically associated with single-coils. It's perfect for punk rock in that regard, covering anything from Green Day and Paramore to Fugazi and The

very practical if you're the kind of player who likes to set and forget, using one amp channel and then the guitar itself to vary the amount of gain and treble coming through.

Speaking of practicality, it's an incredibly inviting instrument to play, arriving with low action and 10 gauge strings that feel more like Super Slinkys thanks to the wraparound bridge, which decreases string tension while also promoting sustain. As for other features, it's nice to see touches of class coming via the off-white button tuners and vintage-style top hat knobs, giving this guitar a decent amount of character despite it being more minimalist in spirit. Another big talking point

1 HEADSTOCK
There's no reference to Yungblud on the front or back of the headstock, nor anywhere else on this guitar, which definitely helps broaden its appeal amongst signature-phobes.

2 BODY
The new signature comes with a die-cut Yungblud bumper sticker, for anyone hoping to pay tribute to the Gen Z trailblazer on the body.

3 KNOBS
Vintage-style appointments like the top hat tone knobs with nickel reflectors ooze elegance and class, making this guitar more of a blast from the past.

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Mahogany
NECK: Mahogany
SCALE: 24.75" / 628mm
FINGERBOARD: Laurel
FRETS: 22
PICKUPS: Epiphone Dogear P-90 Pro
CONTROLS: Master Volume, Master Tone, CTS Potentiometers
HARDWARE: Lightning Bar Wraparound Compensating bridge, Deluxe Vintage tuners, Black Top Hat with Nickel Reflector knobs
FINISH: Classic White
CONTACT: Epiphone, www.epiphone.com





A different kind of single-coil

A quick look into why P-90s have their own unique sound

The first P-90 officially arrived in 1946 when the Gibson Head Of Electronics at the time, Walt Fuller, went back to work after WWII and started tweaking the so-called Charlie Christian pickups found on the ES-150s from the decade prior. As a result of the wider and shorter bobbin design, the sound produced is warmer and less bright than that of a typical single-coil, though still sits in that family of pickups and, as such, is subject to AC hum unless there's some form of cancellation involved. The term 'dog ear' refers to the protruding ends of the base plate and cover, with screw holes on each side to secure the pickup to the body – as opposed to 'soapbars' which slot straight in. Famous P-90 users over the years have included Tony Iommi, Pete Townshend and John Lennon, though in recent times players like Chris Buck and Jared James Nichols have been at the forefront of dialling in mesmerising tones that showcase just how versatile these pickups can be.

is the hardshell case – rare for an Epiphone guitar at this price point – and even more so when you factor in the hot pink interior.

Players who can't live without a neck pickup might not get on too



well here, but if you're a fan of Yungblud's music, loud punk-rock or simply SG Juniors in general, this latest signature will almost certainly renew your lust for life.

Amit Sharma

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

ALSO TRY...

EPIPHONE 1961 LES PAUL SG STANDARD £879

This model from Epiphone's 'Inspired By Gibson' range pays tribute to the very first SGs ever made and comes with a pair of real Gibson Burstbuckers.



GUILD POLARA KIM THAYIL £799

Announced last year, this long-awaited signature model for the Soundgarden legend is easily one of the best double-cut electrics out there.



ESP LTD VIPER-256 £499

LTD's Viper range offer a lot of tone for very little money, this particular model coming with two ESP LH-150 humbuckers that can be split.



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LTD EC-201FT

The single-pickup resurgence continues as we ask: is one really all you need?

£479

7o years ago, Gibson's Les Paul Junior set the bar for single-pickup guitars: packing a lone P-90, yet somehow managing to wring seven decades of stellar, tonal versatility out of the most basic of formats. More recently, this month's cover star, Yungblud is pushing a one-and-done ethos with his signature Epiphone SG, and we've seen the single-pickup idea pointed in a different direction from the likes of Manson, EVH and others.

Similarly far from the dusty, vintage fuzz of garage-rock sits LTD, the affordable arm of ESP traditionally (although not exclusively) tailored towards the heavier end of the spectrum. Earlier this year, LTD released a pair of flat-topped single-pickup Eclipse models (the EC-01FT and more affordable EC-201FT here) that puts its spin on the format, promising instruments "for players seeking the most hardcore performances imaginable".

The unbound mahogany body design and slightly retro scratchplate are met by all-black hardware (LTD tuners and T-o-M-style bridge with through-body stringing), the angular LTD headstock and apparently fire-breathing single pickup. Elsewhere, we get a three-piece, glued mahogany neck, which is fitted with a roasted jatoba fingerboard, block inlays and 22 extra-jumbo frets.

But, we can see where LTD is coming from. Considering that a high percentage of LTD fans are likely to spend a lot of their time gained-up for rock, punk and metal with the bridge pickup engaged, possibly not even changing the tone control, doing away with the neck pickup and

additional electronics sort of makes sense for some people.

Our Black review model comes shining out of the box bathed in a solid gloss finish. The setup is comfortable, with the potential to go lower, but ultimately buzz-free and where we'd expect for a middle-ground action. The jatoba fingerboard has a reddish-brown mahogany-like hue while the frets look like they could have done with more time under the buffing wheel. But the thin U-shaped neck offers a comfortable ride for open and powerchords as well as lead playing.

Tonally, the LTD LH-150B pickup is solid, and excels under higher gain. It cleans up nicely with the volume rolled back, but, to our ears, it's lacking some of that bite we were hoping for. There's a slight woolly-ness to it that means punky, overdriven open chords lose some note separation - nothing a quick EQ change can't fix. The coil-split is engaged from the volume control, and yields a decent single-coil bridge sound. There's a roundness to the attack and a midrange honk that lends itself to Clash-style jabs and greasy vintage funk and soul rhythm playing.

So, it seems we've got a model with a potential identity crisis on our hands. But what we do get is a very playable, quality guitar for bridge-heavy rock sub-genre playing. It's fuss-free and fairly affordable, just don't expect it to do everything.

Stuart Williams

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

1 SINGLES' NIGHT

The bridge humbucker is joined by a single volume pot: there's no tone control, and obviously no need for pickup-switching.

2 ODD COUPLE

The body finish and visuals scream 'old school', while the black hardware, stealthy controls and heavy connotations say 'modern'.

3 SPLIT 'EM UP

The sparse control set is enhanced by a push-pull pot. Give it a yank and you'll turn the 'bucker into a decent-sounding bridge single coil.

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Mahogany, flat-top
NECK: Mahogany, three-piece
SCALE: 24.75"
FINGERBOARD: Roasted jatoba
FRETS: 22 XJ
PICKUP: LTD LH-150B (bridge position)
CONTROLS: Volume, w/ push-pull coil split
HARDWARE: Black LTD tuners and T-o-M-style bridge (through-body-stringing)
LEFT-HANDED: Yes
CASE: No
FINISH: Black, See Thru Cherry
CONTACT: Sound Service www.sound-service.eu





CHAPMAN LAW MAKER LEGACY BARITONE

£1099

A T-style bruiser to handle all your lower range needs

There's a lot to like about Chapman's Law Maker Legacy Baritone. The alder body, flame maple top and rosewood neck go well together to create a highly responsive instrument, with the balance of snap and warmth resulting in a remarkable amount of articulation. It also feels reliable and robust, holding its tuning no matter how adventurous you get with your picking and bends.

Much like the tonewoods, the Seymour Duncan pickups are a perfect match: the ceramic bar Little '59 is a mini-sized humbucker that's usually found in the bridge, but works well here in the neck, while the Alternative 8 is a high output trembucker that uses an Alnico 8 magnet for extra warmth. The five-way blade switch is the trick to unlocking all the options here and, while the bridge pickup sounds a little sterile when plugged into a clean amp, it's also what provides the firepower when fed into overdrive channels and distortion pedals.

If you're hoping to emulate the gargantuan tones associated with down-tuned metal bands like Slipknot and At The Gates, this is the kind of guitar that won't require much tweaking at all. And though that may very well be its USP, the Little '59 packs plenty of dynamic range for less driven and cleaner exploits, so it's a well-rounded guitar from a tonal standpoint. Other noteworthy inclusions are the Hipshot Grip-Lock tuners and Chapman Hipshot-style bridge which both play a part in the reliability of the instrument, as well as Orange

Drop capacitors and treble bleed for increased clarity at all volumes.

Baritones can feel bulky and challenging to play because of the longer scale length and higher string gauges, but the Law Maker Legacy is one of the most user-friendly instruments of its kind. It handles more like a regular guitar, which is a big plus in our eyes – guitar playing shouldn't be laborious, after all. In terms of aesthetics, the T-style design is very appealing, complemented by the darker brown hues of its rosewood neck and reverse headstock. The modern-leaning Ocean Moss Blue finish might not be for everyone, though baritone electrics with high output bridge pickups aren't necessarily aimed at vintage players anyway.

Admittedly, it lives on the more expensive side of Chapman's Indian-produced guitar price range, but we're seeing a general uplift in this from brands across the board. Stability becomes more of a concern at these lower depths – a perfect 4th down in this case, with our review model arriving tuned to B – and it proved to be well-engineered and dependable in that regard. The Seymour Duncan pickups and tonewoods coalesce in perfect harmony, providing a wide range of sonic options that can easily cater to almost any kind of genre.

Amit Sharma

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

1 HEADSTOCK
A reverse headstock on a T-style body is as striking as it gets, especially when you factor in the contrasting colours.

2 PICKUPS
The inclusion of two lesser-known Seymour Duncan pickups also helps give the guitar a certain degree of originality that adds to its overall charm.

3 BODY
Though arguably more green in actuality, the flamed Ocean Moss Blue Satin finish is modern, elegant and very easy on the eye.

AT A GLANCE

ORIGIN: India
BODY: Alder with a flame maple top
NECK: Rosewood
SCALE: 28" / 711mm
FINGERBOARD: Rosewood
FRETS: 22
PICKUPS: Seymour Duncan Little '59 (neck), Seymour Duncan ALT8 Trembucker (bridge)
CONTROLS: Master Volume, Master Tone, Five-way blade switch
HARDWARE: Hipshot Grip-Lock tuners, Chapman Hipshot Style bridge
FINISH: Ocean Moss Blue Satin
CONTACT: Chapman Guitars, www.chapmanguitars.com





SQUIER LIMITED EDITION CLASSIC VIBE '60S TELECASTER SH

£399

A stealth contender for the nicest-looking (and best-performing) Squier of the year

Squier's Limited Edition Classic Vibe models came out with a bit of a whisper this year. That's a shame, because the drop included one of the nicest-looking Telecasters of recent memory – this Sherwood Green example, which arrives with a colour-matched headstock, tortoiseshell pickguard, and an Andy Summers-style SH configuration.

It's easy to get in a hot flush over an aesthetically pleasing guitar only to be disappointed by its performance, but straight out of the gates, it's clear we have an impressive player on our hands.

There are no surprises in the components. There's a poplar (rather than alder) body, maple neck and 9.5"–radius Indian laurel fingerboard – but they've been put together nicely, and that tinted urethane-finished C-shape neck is dreamy (and, dare we say, even reminds us of our AVII).

This Squier is incredibly resonant, with some intangible tuning fork–esque harmonic overtones that embellished its timbre, especially when playing unplugged. There wasn't a fret to be found that offered any nuisance, and the surprisingly well-finished fingerboard offered no resistance when navigating up and down the neck.

Tone-wise, it was good. It's certainly got some of the cleanest tones we've heard in a Squier Tele, and the fact they're Fender-designed pickups is very nice. They aren't 'thin' or 'metallic', which some budget single-coils are guilty of, and the neck humbucker is addictive: big with a lot of warmth

that can deliver some juicy rhythms and throaty leads.

When played through some Neural DSP Captures, it can cover all the bases, but sounds particularly classy when run through a regular Blues Junior with just a touch of reverb and overdrive, for that classic edge-of-breakup tone. But, yes, if you wanted to, you could do the woolly riff thing on this.

The only downsides on this example were an ill-sitting tuning peg – the washer was weirdly raised (admittedly, something a simple DIY fix could cure), and a slight scuff on the cutaway that blemished the otherwise perfect finish. Talking of which, in a forest of 'bursts and tradition, we need more Sherwood Green guitars, Squier.

This reviewer's go-to guitar is an American Vintage II Thinline Telecaster, putting us in a good position to see the direction this Squier is shooting for. Having put it through its paces, it passed almost every test with flying colours. First and foremost, it's a tidy thing to play with a great-sounding range of tones on offer. Will it make you put down a more expensive Tele? Possibly not, but if Fender's native models are out of reach then Squier yet again proves that it's capable of putting out impressive alternatives.

Matthew Owen

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

1 NECK
This Tele is a solid all-rounder, but the neck – with its C-shape profile, tinted urethane finish and top notch fret job – is a particular highlight. Very comfortable indeed.

2 FINISH
Need we say more? We can't remember the last time a finish got us so worked up over a Squier guitar. Extra points for the matching headstock.

3 PICKUPS
The SH configuration – a nod to Tele mods of the late-'60s – is a nice combo, and the reversal (bolstered by Fender pickups) lends itself to some impressive tones.

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Poplar
NECK: Maple
SCALE: 25.5"
FINGERBOARD: Indian laurel
FRETS: 21, Narrow Tall
PICKUPS: Fender Designed Alnico Single-Coil (Bridge), Fender Designed Alnico Humbucker (Neck)
CONTROLS: Master Volume, Master Tone, 3-Position Blade
HARDWARE: 3-Saddle Strings-Through-Body Tele Bridge, Vintage Style tuners, nickel
FINISH: Sherwood Green, Black (with matching headstocks)
CONTACT: Fender





92



1 TAP/FLUX FOOTSWITCH

A dual function footswitch – a press and hold changes it from Tap Tempo to Flux where it can be used to trigger parameter automation.

2 FOOTSWITCH

This turns the effect on and off. Its glowing LED turns bright when the effect is active and is colour coded to signify the effect category.

3 ROTARY CONTROLS

Each knob adjusts the parameter displayed directly above it in the display. You can use the cursors to take you to the next page of parameters.

LINE 6 HX ONE £236

Line 6 applies its Helix technology to this problem-solving multi-FX unit



AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Multi-FX
FEATURES: True or buffered DSP bypass, Tuner, 128 presets, over 250 effect algorithms, tap tempo, Flux expression switch, noise gate, adjustable input impedance
CONTROLS: Soft knobs (1-3), Effect knob, Page buttons (L/R), Home button, Bypass footswitch, Tap/Flux footswitch
CONNECTIONS: Standard inputs (L/Mono, Right/Return), standard outputs (L/Mono, R/Send), USB, MIDI In, MIDI Out/Thru, EXP and footswitch input
POWER: 9V DC adaptor (supplied) 500 mA
DIMENSIONS: 98 (w) x 125 (d) x 60 mm (h)

Okay, you've got a pretty good pedalboard setup but there may be one or two types of effect missing, perhaps things that you don't want to spend good money on as you wouldn't use them too often. So, how do you go about expanding your pedalboard to cover all your options? The answer to that may be to add an HX One, a relatively compact, chameleon-like pedal that offers a massive array of Line 6's Helix-powered effects, albeit one at a time.

The pedal contains over 250 different effect algorithms, derived from the Helix family and previous Line 6 units, that you can use to fill the 128 preset slots which are easily accessed by footswitching or knob-twiddling. Just about any effect is here; there's plenty of fuzz/drive/distortion boxes, all the different modulation types, delays and reverbs, but you also get pitch effects, wahs, analogue synth emulations and a couple of loopers.

For some of those (namely wahs and pitch-bend), plugging in an expression pedal would be extremely useful, as would be using the extensive MIDI controller implementation. But there may be no need as the HX One has built-in expression control, which Line 6 calls 'Flux'. This, set up on a per-preset basis, is operated by the second footswitch, which also does tap-tempo, with a single press adjusting multiple effect parameters simultaneously over a predetermined time period. Minimum and maximum ranges can be set for each parameter, as can values for the ramp up/down times as well as the curve it takes. Changing a rotary speaker speed is probably the most obvious use of this, but you can program in a cool octave jump for the pitch-bend effects, or have an instant jump between two levels of gain for a distortion. While stereo operation is available, you can use the pedal in mono with the other sockets

used as a send and return, allowing you to connect pedal-to-amp via the 4-cable method and assign the effect in each preset to route into the front of your amp or place it in your amp's effects loop, which may go some way to solving the dilemma of where to place the HX One in your signal chain. If the editing sounds a bit complex don't worry as the pedal comes with a USB-connected librarian application that makes easy work of it all.

The HX One should easily slot onto any 'board and run from your usual power distributor, so could be the perfect complement to your existing pedals. It's a hugely versatile pedal, with pro-level effects quality coupled with flexible signal routing options.

Trevor Curwen

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



JHS HARD DRIVE £155

Josh Scott pays homage to desirable 90s drive tones

If someone mentions 90s rock guitar tone, there's a fairly broad church of sounds that might spring to mind. The tail end of hair metal, the fuzzed edges of grunge, thick saturation of pop-punk and even the retro-tinged wall-of-sound brought to us by Noel Gallagher. So, when JHS says its new Hard Drive pedal is based on 90s tones, we're listening! The Hard Drive is the brand's first pedal not to be based on, inspired by, or otherwise adapted from any other pedal. It also happens to be the final output of JHS Head Designer, Cliff Scott. Born out of jamming at the JHS HQ, founder Josh Scott says that the idea came to him while rocking some riffs through an Ibanez Smash Box distortion in 2016. Eight years on and many revisions

later, the Hard Drive is here. On the face of it, it's a fairly straightforward pedal – albeit with two colours to choose from (Black or White), with gain and output level, plus a three-band EQ. Now, any fan of Dimebag will tell you that the key to a great 90s metal tone is to scoop your mids. The Hard Drive makes this possible with a sweepable mid frequency, allowing you to dial in the exact part of your midrange that you want to then boost or cut using the mid level control. We'll start by saying that however you set your controls, this thing is *punchy*. If you're sick of your picking attack being squashed by the compression that comes with hard clipping, you won't have a problem here. This in turn lends itself beautifully to fast,

alternating palm-muted powerchord riffs, with every pluck cutting through. Our first stop is a scooped drop D sound, and we can confirm it nails the Dimebag thing perfectly (you'll probably want a noise gate for full authenticity though). With the treble up high, there's a Rat-like grind to the sound that remains present across the upper gain settings, perfect for emulating the near-fuzz tones of grunge. Meanwhile, with our guitar in standard tuning, we're able to get classic Marshall JCM and Mesa/Boogie Dual Rectifier sounds with ease – think classic Green Day and early Foo Fighters. It's thick, full and bursting with clarity. A must for fans of the era. **Stuart Williams**

AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Distortion

CONTROLS: Volume, Drive, Bass, Mid Freq, Mid Level, Treble

BYPASS: Buffered

POWER: 9v PSU (not included)

CONTACT: www.jhspedals.info



PERFECT FOR EMULATING THE NEAR-FUZZ TONES OF GRUNGE

SUMMARY	FEATURES	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕
	PERFORMANCE	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕
	VALUE FOR MONEY	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕
	BUILD QUALITY	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕
	USABILITY	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕
	OVERALL	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕

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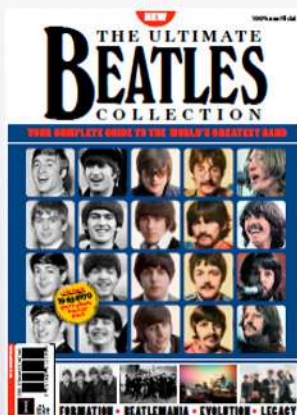
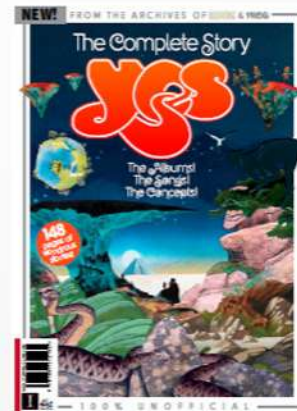
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TORUS

Getting to jam with Tony Iommi would be a mind-blowing experience at any age, let alone at 13, but that was Alfie Glass' introduction into the world of rock 'n' roll. With an Epiphone ES-339 in hand, he was a standout on Sky Arts' *Guitar Star*, which saw him championed by the godfather of heavy metal and record at Abbey Road.

"It was nuts," he reflects. Yet he isn't the type to revel in the moment. "It made me realise that I needed a band, and that being a flashy guitar player isn't everything. People are more interested in a show and you don't need to be the best guitar player in the world to do that."

Torus, his resultant band, channels his love for Kyuss and early QOTSA, with Josh Homme's "weird guitar playing" and groove-orientated songwriting proving a major influence.

"I got really obsessed with fuzz when I got into stoner rock," Glass admits, "I'd never heard a sound like it before."

Despite that, though, he says "everything in my life seems to go back to AC/DC. I grew up worshipping *Let There Be Rock*. I saved up for an Epiphone SG, I think subconsciously because of Angus Young, and the band definitely has the AC/DC formula – everything's in the right place, and that's why it feels good. We go for a bold, no bullshit rock sound."

Glass tunes his SG to C standard and plugs into a Vox AC30: "It's valve amps all the way for me." A Fulltone OCD, stolen from his dad – Solstice guitarist, Andy Glass – and Green Russian Big Muff fuzz add some grit.

Glass favours a Vox wah as a lowpass filter for intros, while an EHX Freeze, Belcat Chorus and T-Rex Quint octaver round out a simple setup that embodies the no-nonsense spirit of the band.

"We want to write songs with proper grooves that stay in your brain," he concludes, "and I think we've achieved that." They have. Torus' self-titled debut LP is a meaty stew of hairy stoner riffs and beats so solid you could build skyscrapers on them. It comes after a fractious few years – but going through some hardship made Torus even tighter.

"We're a lot stronger because of it," says Alfie. "Now the band is everything I've always wanted to be. We're only just getting started."



"EVERYTHING IN MY
LIFE SEEMS TO GO
BACK TO AC/DC"

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