

My Philosophy

Contributed by Max Cottam
 Wednesday, 11 April 2007
 Last Updated Monday, 22 September 2008

I'll apologise now if this turns into a bit of a rant.....I get asked quite alot "Why Ibanez" "Why Dimarzio" "Why This" "Why that" ??????????????????I was just lying in bed flicking through this months Guitarist - and come across the "This Months TOP STORY"- The 50th Anniversary Strat!!! Wow i hear you say, only 50 years since the Strat came out. Well not quite, Fender have more Anniversaries than.....What i'm getting at is, it's just the same as it was in 1957 - Crap! I'm a University qualified Engineer - Engineers either invent something OR improve upon an existing idea. Fender and Gibson and others..... carry on making them EXACTLY the same..... turn over the page and there's the Burns Marvin 60's replica.....WHY???? Can they not improve upon the original designs???? take a component that is complained about or doesn't perform so great - and IMPROVE it - Oh No! They make it like they did in the good old 50's/60's.Would you buy a car that was designed in the 50's???? Dodgy brakes, crap tyres/handling, incredibly underpowered, no electric gadgets.....Don't think so.....I like PRS! They have taken all the negatives of the LP - and improved them.....

I'm also a genuine person - i recommend and sell the things i do, because they are in my opinion the best and i'd be happy to use them myself. I'm not one of these sales guys who works for Marshall one week and they're the Dogs bits, and then go working for Peavey, and all of a sudden Marshall are shit and Peavey are The Dogs! I've bumped into several music industry sales guys on my travels and there's plenty like this! They have no passion for what they sell - just commision charts to work to..... I don't follow fashion - I don't like Strats this week because everyone else does and Les Pauls next week because a magazine tells me too - I'm no sheep. I like, what "I" like FULL STOP.Ibanez guitars (RG's for example) - STAY IN TUNE, are reliable, look COOL, are reasonably priced, have a good variety of sounds, aren't shoulder breakingly heavy..... What else do you need from a guitar????I'm not even into the whole "shred" guitar thing. I like 70's rock, Free, Bad Company, Lynyrd Skynyrd, ZZ top etc..... But i like a modern, versatile, cool looking guitar that won't let me down when i need it most!And for each of you guys out there who understand what i'm saying there's at least another hundred SHEEP, who play Les Pauls and Strats because their mate does or some magazine who gets loads of advertising revenue from the maker, tells them they're great..... F*** me! - Do i sound like Ed Roman???? (hope not)Update 1/4/08 : Oooops.... just bought a Les Paul. Picked it up on April fools day - so read that as you will!!!

A few people have commented recently on seeing me out gigging with my Cherryburst Les Paul..... Quite true, but its been tweaked to remove a couple of the stumbling blocks. Its a 2007 so is weight relieved as standard and has had some "proper" tuners fitted and a Gibson TP6 fine-tuning bridge added so tuning is much better. And for me at the moment, theres nothing sexier than a well flamed cherryburst Les Paul.Update 22/9/08 : OK so its fair to say that Fender have attempted to make more upto date guitars with better engineered parts that were an improvement on the older designs. But..... these guitars appear in their line-up for a year or two then disappear..... so logically, it must be us the public who WANT these "old" guitars, as the "modern" equivalent(ie. The Strat Plus/Ultra, with their locking tuners and roller nut etc) mustn't be bought in sufficient numbers to warrant them being available.So where is the guitar buying public getting its "ideas" from on wanting the 50's and 60's replicas???? (Answers on a postcard/email to..... me!)Were the 50's and 60's Fenders not just crude instruments built to a budget using whatever materials were available, using technology of the time. Its been said that although Leo F. was a clever guy in his designs, the rest of the work was an exercise in mass production and speed & ease of production..... whereas Gibson were the genuine "Luthiers" fixed necks, ornate inlays, transparent finishes that you can't hide filler underneath..... you get the picture!