

CD INSIDE! AUDIO LESSONS > EXCLUSIVE VIDEO
BACKING TRACKS > GEAR DEMOS

**300
ISSUE**

Guinness

PLAYER'S BIBLE

ISSUE

www.musicradar.com £5.25 March 2008



Marshall

THE 50 GREATEST TONES

OF ALL TIME... EVER!

**10 HOT
PRODUCTS
FOR 2008**
We pick
the best

Learn
Walk Don't
Run by The
Ventures
Transcription &
backing track

PLUS!
Sound like Brian May,
Clapton & SRV!
Video lessons on the CD

**THE BEST GEAR

FIRST**

**World first
review**
Fender American
Standards
All new for 2008

Plus
Marshall Kerry
King head
Blackstar
Artisan A100
And more!

future
MEDIA WITH PASSION

MARCH 2008 £5.25
03>

9 770953 702092

THE 50 GREATEST TONES

OF ALL TIME... EVER!

The pursuit of tone is actually the mastery of many different aspects of sound. Here's our countdown, compiled by our team with help from readers and contributors, of the top 50 sounds ever to emerge from the union of brain and signal chain

Words *Guitarist*, readers, contributors



Noise, glorious noise. Take six strings stretched across a few bits of wood, add electricity, turn it up to 10 and hit a chord. It's the simplest of formulas, yet it's one that stirs the emotions of any guitarist worthy of the title.

From Charlie Christian to Jack White, from a Fender Champ to a Marshall stack, from the sparkliest cleans to the dirtiest filth – we've rounded up the best of the best and listed them for your perusal. This is not a list of the best guitarists of all time (though many of them are here). Nor is it a list of the most influential (many of them are here too). It's simply what we – and you, thanks to your many letters and e-mails – regard as the best electric guitar sounds ever committed to tape or disk.

And if you take the time to dig these out of your record collection, buy them or take a punt and download the ones you've never heard, the rewards will be plentiful. As well as forming one of the most sumptuous-sounding compilation playlists ever to rock your iPod, we guarantee that – when listening purely as a guitar-tone detective – you'll discover plenty of surprises and hear these great records in a fresh way.

Plus it goes without saying that there's serious inspiration here for the next time you're standing, guitar in hand, in the studio, practice room or your band's rehearsal space, too. So, without further ado and in the words of Captain Beefheart: Mr Zoot Horn Rollo, hit that long, lunar note and let it float... >

1

David Gilmour

Comfortably Numb

Pink Floyd: The Wall (1979)

St Mark's Square in Venice gets a taste of Gilmour's impeccable tone in 2006

A regular candidate for Best Guitar Solo Of All Time, Gilmour's second solo on

Comfortably Numb is also a powerhouse of majestic, soaring guitar tone. At the peak of his creative powers during the recording of *The Wall*, on *Another Brick In The Wall (Part II)* he had explored the opposite end of the electric lead tone spectrum: for that, he'd dispensed with his trusty Strat, and DI'd his 1955 Les Paul Goldtop with P-90s straight into the mixing desk before compressing it to create the taut, rapid-attack sound heard on the record: "That's just Dave direct," producer Bob Ezrin explains, "with a little compression – we used a form of double compression. First we put the guitar through a very aggressive limiting amplifier, compressed that output, and overdrove it. The limiting amplifier makes it pop, and the compressor gives it a kind

of density, the sound of being right in your face."

In our faces in a different way is the majestic tone used for the solos in *Comfortably Numb*. It was played using a heavy pick, his iconic black Fender Strat with maple neck through a Big Muff and delay via a Hiwatt amp and a Yamaha RA-200 rotating speaker cabinet. As ever, the essential ingredient is Gilmour's technique. "You can give him a ukulele and he'll make it sound like a Stradivarius," Ezrin says. "He's truly got the best set of hands with which I've ever worked." Gilmour's guitar tech Phil Taylor concurs: "It really is just his fingers, his vibrato, his choice of notes and how he sets his effects. I find it extraordinary when people think they can copy his sound by duplicating his gear." Soaring, triumphant, emotional – this above all the other tones in this list is the sound that most people hear when they first fantasise about playing lead guitar... and that's why it wins.

© LUIGI COSTANTINI / PAPAFOTOS