

SECOND-HAND STAN

BUYING AND SELLING SECOND-HAND GEAR CAN BE A DAUNTING TASK SOMETIMES. THERE'S A LOT TO KNOW AND IT CAN BE TOUGH TO KEEP ON TOP OF WHAT THINGS ARE WORTH, WHAT THE SMART BUYS ARE, AND WHEN TO ACTUALLY DECIDE TO SELL THAT OLD VINTAGE BEAUTY THAT'S BEEN SITTING IN THE BACK OF YOUR CLOSET FOR YEARS. NEVER FEAR THOUGH, WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED. WE'VE GOT OUR RESIDENT BARGAIN HUNTER OUT THERE TRAWLING THE INTERNET, DOING THE HARD WORK FOR YOU...

PEOPLE ARE CHASING:

This won't come as news to a lot of people, but the hype train continues to gather speed when it comes to the mythical properties of old Sunn amps, in particular, the near legendary Sunn Model T. The skyrocketing prices of these amps is a classic case of "broke band buys gear because it's cheap, makes great/influential music with it, demand skyrockets because everyone suddenly wants THAT sound".

The original Model T's were built in the '70s, but rose to fame as an amp of choice in the doom/drone/stoner metal scene during the '90s because they were incredibly loud tube amps that sounded good and were very affordable because they were unfashionable. This isn't to say they aren't great amps, but with prices on original ones now starting at around \$2,000USD (plus shipping and import taxes if you are going to buy one from overseas) and very few of them actually in Australia, people have been asking for \$3-4k for them locally. In some instances, one does question: At what point does it become more about the statement of owning one than it does about how they actually sound?

DOS AND DON'TS:

Modifications and upgrades are a great way to fine-tune an instrument to your needs and get the most out of it. What people often don't think about, however, is how modifications can impact the resale value of a guitar. There are two different areas to cover here - vintage guitars vs. "modern" guitars, the impact of modifications being different in both cases. There's a lot to cover, so we'll stick to vintage guitars for this issue.

The first thing to point out is that if someone is looking at vintage instruments, there's probably going to be a certain degree of the collectability factor in play. Many people who buy old guitars aren't necessarily doing so just because they like the way they play and sound. Often people are buying them as investments, or simply because they have the money and like the idea of owning a cool old


guitar. So, what do collectors want in a vintage guitar? Easy. They want it to be ORIGINAL. The difference in price between an original guitar and one that has been modified can be huge - it just depends how much has been changed.

The most common major thing to look out for is guitars that have been refinished. In most cases, even the most beaten up and worn out looking vintage guitar will be worth more in its current condition than it would if it were a completely flawless but non-original paint job. The other big thing to look out for is examples of different necks and bodies being paired up. A 1965 neck on a 1966 body might still technically be a '60s guitar and it might be fantastic to play, but it won't be worth anywhere near as much as a body and neck of the same age that left the factory together. This is something to look out for with old Fender guitars in particular, due to their bolt-on necks. Anything that has a set neck or neck through construction, you shouldn't have too many worries with.

With all that being said, if you're the sort of person who really couldn't care less about collectability and/or resale value, then a non-original vintage guitar can be a good thing. It means you get all the sound and feel of a great old instrument, but at a better price. If that's all you want, then consider if it's worth spending that extra \$1,000 just for an original finish, or whether it's worth saving it to spend on other things (like more gear, obviously). On the flipside, if you happen to be the owner of an original condition vintage guitar, think twice before modifying irreversibly, as you could be severely affecting its resale value. If it's something small like a simple pickup change or new tuning pegs, this can be fine, but make sure you hold onto the original parts so you can return it to its original state if you ever want to sell it. If it's something bigger that you want to change, like the finish, maybe consider selling what you've got and either buying something that IS what you want, or something that is already altered or refinished, and won't be devalued if you change it further.

NEW HOME FOR DEAN

FST MUSIC are proud to announce that they are the new distributors of Dean Guitars in Australia. With an artist roster that boasts names of the biggest players in the world along with some of the most iconic guitars ever built, Dean Guitars

have a pedigree that is hard to ignore. Since 1977, Dean have created timeless guitars in the Cadillac right through to present day shred machines in the new Jacky Vincent Model (check out page 85). Dean have true versatility covered in their range. 

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SOUND ADVICE

HEAR THIS!



EACH ISSUE JMC ACADEMY WEIGHS IN WITH SOME HELPFUL TIPS FOR PLAYERS AND MUSIC PROFESSIONALS LOOKING TO TAKE THEIR CRAFT TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

COMMON MIX MISTAKES

In the digital recording environment, the user is often spoiled for choice. A plethora of processing and enhancement options await you within your DAW (Digital Audio Workstation). For a beginner, it is extremely easy to overlook technical understanding, and apply certain mix principles "just because". Some common mix mistakes are:

I'LL FIX IT IN THE MIX

If something has been recorded and issues have been identified, it's probably a good idea to record the element again. The time wasted during the mix stage to try and fix imperfections could have been saved by re-recording the element, making sure that the performance was right from the get-go.

STEREO IMAGE


A well balanced mix does not only consist of the volume that each instrument utilises, but also the placement of each instrument in the stereo field. Having all of your instruments located in the centre of your stereo field means that all of the energy is in the middle, so your chances for getting certain instruments to "pop" in your mix is slim. Using the stereo image tool (pan), you are able to move particular instruments out of the centre image, and give them their own space and identity in the mix. The classic example of this is having guitar and keyboard parts moved slightly to the left and right of the stereo field, giving them their own space to breathe, and also freeing up the centre image for your main vocals, kick drum and bass guitar.

EQ BOOST ONLY

EQ is a useful tool during the mix process, but not only to boost frequency content. The common misconception in the audio world is that louder is better. Each instrument that has been recorded is harmonically rich, and due to this, some instruments will sit better and more balanced in the mix if clashing frequencies are identified, and actually removed. This will provide clarity to each sound, and when this is combined with stereo placement, the instrument may actually sound more clear and present without having to turn it up louder.

SONG DYNAMICS

Each song has been written a particular way, with particular instrumentation helping to paint this musical landscape. Building tension within a mix is a crafty skill to possess. Understanding where intensity is required, and applying appropriate mixing techniques, as well as understanding the light and shade of a vocal, and where there is space in the song to breathe. Subtle use of automation on effects processors can help you with this. Using automation to bring particular elements of the song to the forefront in terms of volume is one way, an example being to balance the guitars in the mix, and then using automation to bring the guitar solo in the chorus to the forefront, and then bringing it back to the appropriate mix volume for the remainder of the song. The same thing can be done by using automation on effects such as reverb and delay, adding depth to the sounds.

Keeping these ideas in mind the next time you approach your mix, hopefully you will have a firmer understanding on how these individual factors contribute to the final mix outcome. 

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