

MODEL CITIZEN *Peekamoose Model-1 HSH*

WHEN YOU'VE BEEN repairing guitars as long as Paul Schwartz and Hawley Waldman have, you've seen it all: Melody Makers mangled by ham-fisted baggage handlers, Flying V's violated by vindictive spouses and Telecasters torn asunder by treacherous toddlers. But while nursing these near-casualties back to life gets the blood pumping, it's the more hum-drum work—modifying and upgrading guitars to rectify their inherent small flaws and shortcomings—that has imparted Schwartz and Waldman, who run New York City's Peekamoose Guitars, with an almost sagelike insight into the electric guitar.

This hard-earned knowledge is amply evident in the Model-1 HSH (\$2,650), a Strat-style instrument that boasts sinfully buttery playability and balanced, bodacious tone. The custom-built guitar has an ash body and a substantial, 22-fret, 25 1/4-inch-scale rock maple neck with a biflex truss rod, rosewood 12-inch-radius fretboard and mother-of-pearl dot inlays. Hardware is all top-notch, and Graph Tech Tusq nut and bridge saddles in concert with a set of Sperzel locking tuners ensure maximum tuning stability, even when the vintage-style tremolo is subjected to vigorous wiggling.

At the heart of the Model-1's ingenious electronics scheme are two

custom-made Seymour Duncan Seth Lover-type pickups in the bridge and neck positions (the bridge unit is F-spaced to ensure that the strings and pole pieces are properly aligned) and a Seymour Duncan single-coil in the middle position. Both of the tone controls feature a push/pull function that switches the humbuckers over to internal parallel wiring, allowing the Model-1 to produce a range of Fender-flavored single-coil sounds that aren't readily available on most humbucker-equipped guitars. A miniswitch located near the volume and tone pots engages the neck and bridge humbuckers so that Les Paul-flavored middle-position sounds can be achieved. With the miniswitch engaged, it's also possible to activate all three pickups at once, which produces a uniquely full-bodied sound not available from most guitars.

Then again, impeccable quality and careful craftsmanship like this aren't available from most guitars, either. —Tom Beaujour

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