

fat sound guitars™

PRODUCTS FOR TONE SINCE 1993™

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Used & Vintage

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An all new model from PRS and IMO, their best yet.

I had the pleasure of playing this amplifier extensively in my shop last week (7-16-09) and am very excited about the launch of this new model and pleased to be the first to review what I believe will become a major player in the mid-wattage boutique amp world.

Having been in the boutique amp business since its inception in the early 90's I've found myself in the unique and fortunate position of helping bring to market a few amplifiers which have reached iconic status amongst modern players. I've learned to recognize these amps when I play them and the new PRS Sweet 16 is one of those amplifiers. Destined to please a wide variety of players and to have long-lasting staying power in the market place, this new amplifier is as good as any single channel amp I have played yet unique enough to carve out its own niche in the amplifier collections of my clients.

With the Sweet 16, PRS has brought to market a beautifully designed, amazing sounding, amplifier at 16 watts that combines the clean tone qualities and gain qualities of some of my favorite amplifiers with Doug Sewell's personal sonic touches in one small, reasonably priced package that looks stunning and is gorgeously constructed both inside and out.

The cleans have the absolute perfect amount of compression on the initial attack that gives the amp that wonderful feel under the fretting fingers....the feel that I describe as reminding me of squeezing water out of a sponge.

The initial compression releases at just the right moment which is critical for attaining that perfect degree of bloom up and out of the speaker cabinet and swirl around the room with that surround sound type of ambient greatness. I have only ever experienced this from a handful of other, single channel amps....none of which have the incredibly smooth and thick overdrive tones of this amplifier.

This is exactly the kind of clean tone experience I look for in what I consider to be the best of the best in the boutique amp world.

Whether plugged in with a humbucker equipped guitar such as the PRS AI D Model that I am currently favoring or a single coil guitar (I used my dual Fralin P-90 Grosh Electrajet and my personal Fender Custom Shop Strat loaded with Fralins for my extended play test) you will quickly discover some of the absolute best sounding and feeling clean tones in the business. Percussive, airy and harmonically complex with amazing sustain. Absolute perfection!

The reverb circuit has a warmth to it that augments the clean tones perfectly without ever getting in the way unless you want it to via higher setting of the potentiometer. It fills out the room with a wonderful multi-dimensional quality while laying behind the fundamentals in a way that is very transparent and unobtrusive.

With gradual increases of the Volume control the amp seamlessly morphs from pushed cleans that allow the player to control the amp via pick attack, through mild overdrive that is sweet and smooth, thick and complex and ultimately into higher gain sonic territory with very chewy, meaty overdrive with wonderful definition. This is not a gain tone to hide behind, but one to emphasize your skills or, perhaps, make you a better player; there's no cascading gain with infinite sustain here; just honest power tube distortion with richness, clarity and meat.

The range of gain tones available are perfect for any style of music I can imagine short of Heavy Metal and are achieved at levels that can be used for studio use, small to medium clubs or even around the house as long as you like to move a little bit of air in your home as I do.

The Sweet 16's mid to higher gain settings have that tight, focused low-end we have come to expect from the best of the boutique amplifiers, but without any stiffness to the feel. Very user friendly in its playability and quite forgiving in it's nature.

As is common in today's flooded boutique amp segment of the marketplace, on paper this amp will seem to be similar to many other offerings by other boutique builders, but the range and quality of lush, swirly and harmonically complex cleans to pushed, mild overdrive to singing lead tones via a single channel amplifier has got to be experienced to be fully appreciated.

The Sweet 16 ultimately is more of a musical instrument than a mere amplifier and possesses the very broad range of tones typically only found in dual-channel amps costing twice as much.

I can tell you that after 16 years of not just selling, but actually consulting with amp designers and personally bringing some of today's most iconic boutique amplifiers to market that it takes a lot to impress me. This amp has blown me away and it will do the same for you.

•JJ or Tung-Sol 6V6 power tubes

*V1 - 12AX7, V2 - 12AT7 (reverb driver), V3 - 12AX7 (reverb recovery), V4 - 12AT7 (phase inverter)

•Silicone Diode rectification

•Aluminum Chassis

•Belton tube sockets

•Mallory 150 coupling caps

•Cliff jacks

•Pine cabinetry for more open, ambient sound and lower weight

•Designed and built by Doug Sewell in Maryland, what we have here is an amp that raises the bar for what the player expects from a great, mid-wattage, single channel amplifier.

This amp easily achieves Fat Sound's Highly Recommended™ list and I am extremely proud to have been able to have played a small part in its development.