

Rapier Saffire 12 String Electric Guitar

JHS, in collaboration with legendary UK guitar builder and designer Alan Entwistle—launch the new generation Rapier Saffire 12-string solid-bodied electric guitars. The Saffires make their debut as the latest line of solid-bodied electric guitars under Entwistle’s recently launched and highly successful, re-designed Rapier brand, based on iconic models that played a major role in the industry of British guitars, serving countless up-and-coming ‘60s British Beat groups and helped launch the careers of many guitarists in the ‘60s and ‘70s. **Nick Jennison** tells us more, as he reviews the Rapier Saffire 12 String.

THE older I get, the more excited I get about what a friend of mine lovingly describes as “guitar esoterica”. Strats, Teles and Les Pauls, are cool, sure, but show me a Coral Electric Sitar, and you’ll see a very large, very hairy man become very excited. In my career as a reviewer, I’ve come across some stunners: a 30” scale baritone with a tremolo, a perfectly formed tiny bass that, despite being the size of a uke and tuned to the pitch of a regular 6-string, is somehow still a “bass”; a fully hollow jazz-box that’s also a synth... and I’ve gotten a kick out of all of them.

The new Rapier Saffire 12 might be my favourite of the bunch, though. It’s an electric 12-string with three massive Tri-Sonic-esque single coils and a varitone, and it’s green. Not Surf Green, or Cadillac Green either - it’s like Kryptonite in a dark alley.

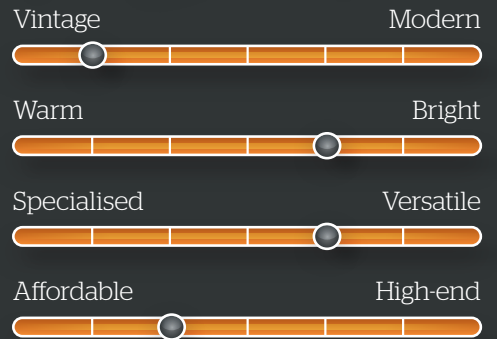
This wonderfully bonkers instrument is a reissue of the WEM Watkins guitar of the same name, but re-engineered by British master luthier Alan Entwistle with the same skill, care and attention as the recent Rapier reissue. It has the look and vintage charm of the originals, but unlike the originals, the new Saffire 12 plays beautifully and is built to an exceptionally high standard. If you’ve ever had your hand sliced open by the razor-sharp fret ends of a 1960s Watkins while it mockingly detunes itself from chord to chord, you’ll know why this is such a big deal.

Tonally, it’s hard to know where to begin with this guitar. For such a “specialised” instrument, there’s an absolute library of tones available, with 25 distinct combinations of pickup selector and varitone, and that’s before we take volume and tone control set-



Rapier Saffire 12 String Electric Guitar

The Breakdown



For fans of

Vintage British guitars

Every 12-string tone under the sun

Being inspired

For more information, please visit:

jhs.co.uk/collections/rapier



I **need one** in my life, and you probably do too...”

tings into account. There’s everything from huge and fat tones that sound positively murderous with fuzz through to mid-scooped pseudo mandolin sounds and cocked wah-style nasal honk. It’s hard to conceive of a 12-string tone that you could ever need that this guitar can’t produce, and there are several that you’ve probably never even dreamed of.

There are lots of reasons to love this guitar, but let me tell you about the most important one: I took it to a rehearsal on the evening after I shot the video that accompa-





nies this review, and we immediately wrote a new song inspired by the Saffire 12. I'll be using it all over two album projects I'm currently working on, and when it has to go back to our friends at JHS, I'll be enquiring about buying one in white (which looks drop-dead gorgeous). I need one in my life, and you probably do too.

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