



DANELECTRO '57 £799

A ridiculously cool reissue of one of the original American electric guitars

The Danelectro U2 was just the second branded model designed and produced by company founder Nathan Daniel after making his name supplying the American department stores of the fifties with musical instruments. This new '57 is a faithful reproduction of that landmark instrument, a model that was only produced between 1956 and 1958 and, like the majority of all Danos, it features a semi-acoustic body composed of a solid spruce framework with a front and back of a type of hardboard called masonite.

Also within is a spruce centre block that supports a pair of singlecoil lipstick pickups, designs

bridge pickup feeds into the neck unit thus boosting the signal.

Compared to the sound the isolated pickups provide, this gives a gloriously fat tone that's part P-90, part Tele neck pickup; take it from us, it's a real treat to play with. The '57 reacts well to drive settings, making it eminently useable for blues styles, and adding a gnarly fuzz really allows you to go to town. Danos make for excellent slide guitars and, with some minor adjustments, that goes for the '57, too. Out of the box the action is probably a little too low, but if you were to string it with a set of 12s, simply raise the action via the saddles and carefully straighten the resulting neck bow with the truss rod.

“ THE '57 REACTS WELL TO DRIVE SETTINGS; IDEAL FOR BLUES ”

that can also be attributed to Daniel. Back in the day he sourced actual lipstick tubes from cosmetics manufacturer Max Factor and simply inserted a magnet encased in copper wire into the each one; he didn't even use a bobbin. Proceedings are more sophisticated these days but the concept is still the same, and each uses an uncommon Alnico 6 magnet set within a chromed brass/zinc tube.

The maple neck sports a period-correct coke bottle headstock and is a delight to play, and both the pau ferro 'board and the 21 medium frets have been nicely finished too. Arguably the best feature is that the pickups are wired in series rather than in parallel, meaning that, with the toggle in the middle position, the

The elephant in the room is trumpeting far too loudly to be ignored any further, so let's quickly address that price. We'd concede that £799 is a hefty sum for any new Dano, but our advice would be to shop around as we've spotted some pretty generous online deals from a couple of established retailers that would make actually shelling out for a new '57 a far more palatable proposition.

At the very least you should try one; it sounds as good as it looks.

Simon Bradley

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	PLAYABILITY	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★

1 HEADSTOCK
The '57 features a coke bottle headstock, so named because of its shape. Other headstocks across the range include the dolphin nose and the thermometer.

2 CONTROLS
The stacked controls work really nicely. The lower, larger round regulates the volume, leaving the smaller upper pot for the tone-shaping.

3 TOP
The perfectly-named Limo black finish is flawless. How much more black could it be? The answer is none. None more black...

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Masonite front and back with spruce framework
NECK: Maple
SCALE: 635mm (25")
FINGERBOARD: Pau ferro, 14" radius
FRETS: 21
PICKUPS: 2x Alnico 6 Vintage 50s singlecoil lipstick pickups
CONTROLS: 2x Dual-concentric volume/tone pots
HARDWARE: Chrome hardtail adjustable U3 bridge, vintage-style Gotoh tuners
LEFT-HANDED: No
FINISH: Limo black (reviewed), Jade
CASE: Not included
CONTACT: JHS, www.jhs.co.uk/ danelectro

