

Treasured Possessions

Photo: Marco Van Rooijen



Left: Danny Bryant in full flow. Right: A UK-built guitar to rival any in the world - Bryant's Fret-King Corona SP prototype



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From soulful ballads to relentless power blues, a homegrown guitar is proving to be the perfect foil for a homegrown talent

Danny Bryant

Finds British is best with the

Fret-King Corona

At the tender age of 18, Danny Bryant introduced his fiery brand of blues-rock to the British blues circuit. Eleven years on, Danny Bryant's RedEyeBand have recorded seven albums and clocked up an incredible 2000 gigs, winning fans across the country and beyond.

Like many power-trio guitarists, Danny was originally a devoted Stratocaster man - but one night in 2006, after a storming show in Southport, there was a knock on the door and in walked Trev Wilkinson, Britain's foremost electric guitar designer, who invited him to stop off at his workshop before moving on to the next gig the following morning.

'Case after case of amazing guitars were opened in front of me,' marvels Danny. 'One in

particular caught my eye - a prototype of the Fret-King Corona SP, an S-style guitar with a P90 in the bridge. It felt and sounded amazing.'

Of course, Danny accepted the guitar. Wilkinson even built him a back-up as well, and before long the Fret-Kings had become his main instruments.

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classed as the UK-built Green Label series now, which start at around £1400. That Masterbuilt Strat was listed at £4300!

'I'll always love Strats, but when I come to go on stage the Fret-King is the one I feel most

'I had just bought a Masterbuilt Strat. It's beautiful, one of the best Strats I've heard, but the Fret-King is on a par build-wise, it's more versatile and it actually sounds better live. Trev's told me these Fret-Kings would be

comfortable with. I find the bridge pickups on Strats a bit harsh and trebly. I can get all the Strat sounds out of the Fret-King, but the P90 kind of softens it up a bit at the bridge. It's not so piercing but it still gives you that cut, really pushing it up and rounding it out.

'It's slightly hotter than any of my Strats. I used to have a Clapton Strat, and though the Fret-King isn't active it has that smoother kind of sound. It's also got quite a big neck on it, which I like.'

The Corona SP's body is two-piece American alder and the neck is one-piece maple with a lower-mass truss rod - which, according to Trev, means you hear more wood than metal in the neck. 'It's all those little things he does that make a real difference to the sound,' Danny reckons. 'I do a volume swell - like a violin kind of thing - with the volume control, and he made it so it's got a groove and a little rubber ring for more grip. It's just like everything has been thought through.'

Danny's wife is on the road with him full-time, so he's trained her up as his guitar tech. Trev even showed her how to work on the Fret-Kings.

'She's at the point where she's just starting to learn to do refrets. It's quite scary! I keep having these nightmares where I wake up and she's butchering one of my guitars! I've got this old US Standard Strat, one of my first guitars. It's desperate for a refret so that's on the workbench, ready to go. I keep going in and almost taking it off again, but I'm going to have to trust her.'

info

LATEST ALBUM: JUST AS I AM

As the title suggests Danny has kept the edges raw on this album, capturing at his thrilling fretwork at its most dynamic

MORE INFO:

www.redeyeband.co.uk or www.fret-king.com

