



Aural Exams

Guitar Shop Magazine

By Baker Rorick

Jaros Custom 22 Carved-Top Designer Jim Jaros and his father, Harry (don't you wish your Dad built guitars?), work a fairly traditional, slab-sided, double-cutaway, '58-'60 LP Jr. shape with two humbuckers, obviously inspired by Gibson. They offer solid or semi-hollow bodies for the same price. Our test guitar was a chambered carved-top (\$2,600). The Jaros's remarkable stability and sustain comes from a unique neckthrough construction technique. The one-piece mahogany neck extends almost all the way through the body, so tailpiece, bridge, and pickups all mount to the neck piece. The body itself is a sandwich, with control cavities and a sound chamber routed through a mahogany center piece, completed with a bookmatched, figured maple back and carved archtop. Our test guitar had a big, meaty, "baseball-bat" neck, familiar to late'50s Les Paul lovers (Jaros also offers a thinner neck for the same price), 1 11/16" wide at the nut, and a thick slab rosewood fingerboard with pearl dot inlays.

The 25" scale is a comfortable compromise between standard Fender (long) and Gibson (short) lengths. The 22 jumbo frets were dressed wide and slightly flat for silky smooth playability. The Hamer-like snakehead headstock is faced with flame maple to match the body, with a flame maple truss rod cover as well. Gold-plated tuners, tune-o-matic bridge, and fine tuning stop tailpiece (especially convenient for quick adjustments mid-song) are all by Schaller. Pickups are Seymour Duncan humbuckers a '59 neck and a Pearly Gates bridge - with gold covers and creme mounting rings, and individual volume controls with coil taps on push/pull pots. A master tone and a three-way toggle complete the controls, which are all nicely inset into the arched top. The rear control cavity cover was fully backed in copper shielding foil, and the cavity painted with black shielding paint. In addition, there's a standard Les Paul-style jack plate on the side of the body.

The Jaros plays great and sounds wonderful - full, clear, bright, and musical, with incredible sustain: very lively. As the neck joins the body at the 22nd fret, access is unimpeded all the way up. Pickup combos and coil taps allow for eight different sounds; very versatile. The pickup selector's placement directly below the neck pickup is convenient, yet easy to hit inadvertently if strumming in that location. In addition to its Les Paul attributes, the Jaros's chambered body gives it more of an overall ES-345 character.

There was some less-than-perfect finish work at the neck/body joint, but everything else about the Jaros was flawless. All in all, it is a very impressive instrument that should especially appeal to Gibsonites. The Custom 22 Carved Top is a lot of guitar for the money. Jaros also offers a flat-top for slightly less, available with 22 or 24 frets.

-from *November 1998 Guitar Shop Magazine*

JAROS CUSTOM GUITARS

103 Mary Street

Rochester, PA 15074

(724) 774-5615

email:jimjaros@ccia.com

[HOME](#) * [carved-top guitar](#) * [flat-top guitar](#) * [acoustic/electric guitar](#) * [reviews](#) * [dealers](#) * [links](#)