

# Cole Clark's Fat Lady 2 (cutaway with pick-up)

reviewed by Nick Snelling

Okay, deep breathes. Probably going to step on few toes with this statement – but hell, I've just gotta tell it like it is. This acoustic guitar is probably one of the best I have ever played in my life. Now, I know what you're thinking - I can imagine a few people's lips are already starting to curl. Fact is, I'm not getting paid to write this roadtest. Nor am I seeing any cash for any advertising that may happen because of it. I'm also not the only one who thinks that this Cole Clark guitar is an amazing instrument. I am writing this because I strongly believe it. These guitars are 'the shit', and from the way the word seems to be spreading, it's only a matter of time before they make a major breakthrough into guitar players' consciousness. Cole Clark are on the way to becoming a 'name' guitar manufacturer. More with that later – here's a few of the features. Let's start with first impressions – the Cole Clark Fat Lady 2 looks as great as she smells. Beautifully finished in gorgeous timbers, this guitar is a perfect combination of Queensland Maple (back and sides), a Bunya top/face with a fretboard and bridge of Indian rosewood. Incidentally, it's got one of the best looking headstocks I have seen since a PRS. One sexy beast, let me tell you.

Now, more importantly – how does it sound? The signature thing about Cole Clark guitars is their in-built neck. Reverting to the original Spanish form of guitar construction, whereby the neck is actually built into the guitar during manufacture, as opposed to being added later, Cole Clark are making the most of modern technology to achieve sonic perfection. The integral neck and the internal scalloping mean that acoustic performance is maximised. In other words, because the guitar is essentially all one piece it resonates better. Combine that with the special way the wood has been scalloped on the inside to enhance the natural acoustic properties and what you have is one superb instrument which literally sings and throbs with every note or chord. There's a real vibrancy and all round great sound to it. Both the brilliance of the top end as well as the full meatiness in the bottom is there right where you want it.

Playability? It gets better. The Fat Lady's intonation is perfect and her action awesome. While that may sound



vaguely sexual (and if you've played one, you probably know it is) what I mean by that is no buzzes and no rattles. Every string, every fret is sweet. Indeed, the clarity on the high notes is great, even at the top frets, which as you know in some acoustic guitars, often don't sound that good.

Okay, now if that isn't enough of a good wrap for you, wait 'til you hear about the pick-up. This patented Cole Clark acoustic pick-up is the duck's nuts. Of course it has your obvious volume slider and active 3 band graphic equalizer, which offer you a great range in sounds, but the most unique thing is the second slider. Basically, it's the control for another pick-up sensor on the guitars' face, as opposed to all the sound coming from the saddle. This sensor is designed to pick up everything after 750 hertz, so with the right blend you can control the bottom end and still get that brilliance in tone. In a sense, it will make it sound more like a true acoustic guitar when amplified even if you're belting the shit out of it.

On a final note, I took the Fat Lady 2 into a well-respected studio in Melbourne where a couple of friends of mine were recording. I consider them to be both exemplary musicians and guitar-players. They were both both blown away by the sound and the playability of the guitar. The producer was there, and he immediately miked it up and we proceeded to record an acoustic track right there and then. In his words and theirs, they have played guitars worth \$5,000 which didn't sound anywhere near as good. So when I hear the Fat Lady 2 retails at around \$1675.00, and is all-



Australian made, designed and owned as well as using sustainable timbers, you can imagine my thoughts.

I kind of want to hold back from beating you over the head with how good Cole Clark guitars are. The last thing I want is for this read like advertorial. I assure you, it isn't. But the thing is, certain people in the industry just don't want you to know it. These are guitars are patented for reason – the design and sound is dangerously good. Too good, and it's obvious that the competition are worried. So they should be. That said, if you don't believe me – go play one for yourself. The Fat Lady will convince you herself. I just hope Cole Clark aren't expecting this guitar back anytime soon.

For more details call Cole Clarke Guitars on 03 9720 1696.