

Classic Guitar Pedals: The Fuzz Face

The Fuzz Face is a classic guitar pedal, originally produced in England by Arbiter in the mid-1960s. The company was later sold and became known as Dallas-Arbiter, and they continued to produce the pedal under that name. The original (Arbiter England) Fuzz Face pedals first began being imported into America in 1966. A strong argument could be made that its introduction contributed greatly to the burgeoning hippie movement, and the psychedelic rock scene that first took shape in the late 60s. So what made the original Fuzz Face so special? One of the most unique aspects of the pedal is its smooth, transistor-based fuzz sound. It produced this rich, smooth tone with the use of the (now rare) PNP germanium AC 128 transistors.

Later editions of the pedal began using more modern components, and replaced the original germanium transistors. Unfortunately, modernizing the components of the pedal also took away much of the warmth and color of its original sound. For this reason, original Arbiter England models are now considered rare finds. A unit in good condition can sell at auction for more than \$1000. Pretty expensive guitar pedal, huh? Fortunately, you can also find good deals on these vintage guitar pedals if you shop around at online auctions, or local pawn shops. Many times an individual will have an old Fuzz Face pedal lying around and decide to sell it without knowing how rare and prized this classic stomp box actually is. In these situations you might be able to buy one in great shape for as little as \$100 or less. Of course, you have to do some shopping around to find bargains like this, but it is possible. Tone-wise, the original Arbiter Fuzz Face is an amazing guitar effect. Legendary guitar heroes such as Jimi Hendrix and Pete Townsend have immortalized the this pedal on recordings from the 1960s and 70s. Many modern rock players also go ga-ga for its "creamy" transistor produced sustain. In fact, the Fuzz Face is probably more popular today than ever. Unfortunately, there is a great deal of confusion about what an original Fuzz Face pedal actually is. Various companies produce stomp boxes that use the name "fuzz face," but are in fact very different pedals, using completely different components. For example, Jim Dunlop produces a "Jimi Hendrix Fuzz Face" pedal that is quite popular, but is NOT the original. Like the Dunlop model, many manufacturers produce a reissue or "reconstruction" of the classic Arbiter English version. And although some of these "remakes" are very good, and have established solid reputations in their own right, none are as revered as the original English version. Even the Dallas-Arbiter version is slightly different from the original English model, and lacks a certain "bite" that is difficult to describe. Mind you, they still sound pretty great -- just not quite as great as the original. Trying to get your hands on original English Fuzz Face is not always easy, but with a little bit of persistence you can usually find one at a decent price by searching around. If the price tag of an original English model is a bit out of your league, consider one of the many high quality reissues such as the Cornell AC 128. Next to an authentic English-manufactured Fuzz Face, it's one of the sweetest sounding fuzz boxes you're likely to hear.

About the Author

Visit <http://www.soundsfat.com/> for the hottest used guitar pedals, like the original Arbiter England Fuzz Face.

Source: <http://americanahost.com>