

# Upcoming Mayson MS5/S talent

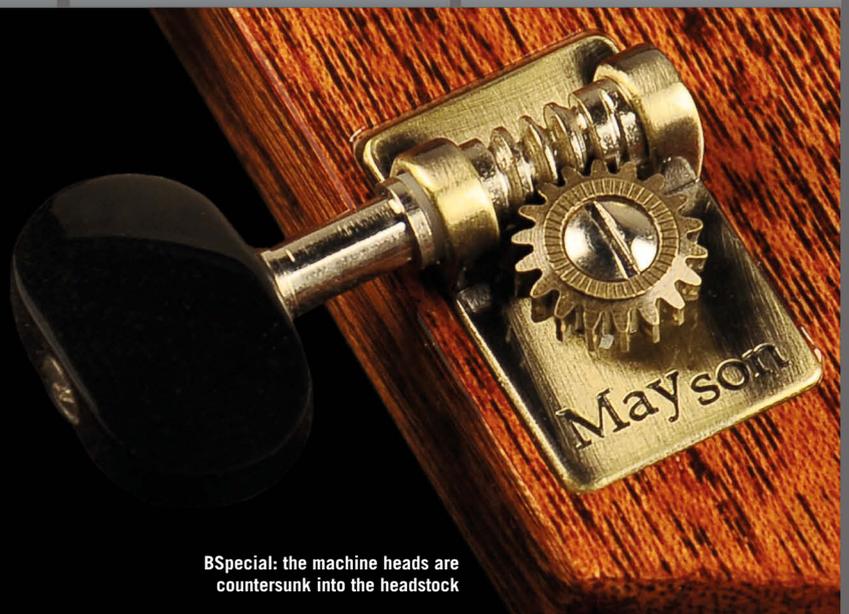
The quality of guitars coming from China is getting better and better. The luthiers in the Far East take giant leaps forward, anxiously monitored by many American brands. Newcomer Mayson's approach of 'NASA meets Stradivarius' might force the 'big boys' to watch their steps sooner than expected.

by Paul van de Vlasakker

**I**t is clear that the man behind the brand new name Mayson, Alex Wang, wishes to make a statement. Sitting behind a fancy Apple computer in casual clothing Wang lets us know that what seems perfect today can be better tomorrow, without wanting to neglect the history of guitar

making. Mayson uses the term 'Smart Concept Guitar' to underline this statement, while embracing the proven approach of 'better well stolen than badly invented'. And frankly, they are just right; actually every brand does the same. What Mayson has done is the following. In 2008, they made their first prototypes which, over the next three years, they continued to improve.

During the process Alex Wang took a close look at the work of renowned U.S. Brands. One of those brands clearly inspired him more than any other: Taylor. As with Mayson today, Taylor is well known for their computer controlled production, with consistency as a result. Another strong resemblance with Taylor are the bolt-on necks that Mayson uses (the T-neck of Taylor).



#### Rivals

- Eastman AC312
- Taylor 214

**BSpecial:** the machine heads are countersunk into the headstock

Obviously Mayson uses its own construction and it is not bad at all! So what we are looking at is modern guitar making, but with a critical eye on pure quality.

## MS5/S

We got an MS5/S in (the latter S stands for 'spruce') and had a close look at it, after going through all the marketing talk. Let's start with the case. It is gorgeous and has the stylish Mayson letters imprinted in the leathery upholstery, as well as, in a tighter font, the winged words 'Smart Concept Guitar'. With high expectations we unlock the attractive, brushed bronze hardware and see a beautiful, glossy guitar. On the transparent pickguard we find the words 'Mayson Smart Concept' plus explanations of the phrase. Luckily it is just a sticker, which can be peeled off easily. The guitar is finished extremely well and notably all bindings are made of solid wood. The solid rosewood back and sides look very nice and the spruce top seems even better. The bolt-on mahogany neck with ebony fingerboard and 'three-dimensionally' finished frets (which means that they are mounted and finished insanely well) also looks very neat. But the 'piece de resistance' is at the back of the head: the open machine heads are sunk into the wood - Seeing is believing and you will really enjoy seeing this! Everything about this Mayson MS5/S breaths quality! Therefore I can not wait to try it.

## Sound and playability

Before I bluntly explain about the things that count for every guitar, I must tell you this. The Mayson MS5 is a model that is focused on fingerpickers. It is a compact guitar with a slightly shorter scale, thus perfect for those players. Further more: his clothing style, the Apple computer on his desk, the extremely well looking, well finished guitar itself, and the case trim and imprint, reminded me of Porsche. In Mayson I recognise a similar casual yet solid style with a super technical approach

to its products and production methods. Well, the decisive moment has arrived: how does the MS5/S sound? The first impression is (and it often remains for a long time): I have a Porsche at hand but it seems to have a different engine. Such a beautiful guitar deserves better! The idea behind their sound bars is kept as a secret and now I suspect that they haven't completely made up their mind. The sound of the MS5 is not bad, but at this price (EUR1198) one might expect better. Please, a little bit more bass, a little less middle range and some more brightness. It seems to be present but doesn't come out totally. It is worth noting that when looking at Mayson's website, a movie starts of a jazzy style guitar player that is even playing slide. Indeed, it is true that these styles sound really nice on this guitar. But it should sound like a fingerpicker guitar, not like a mini jazz or bluesbox! Regarding playability we can say without a doubt: excellent, really great!

## Conclusion

The first impression was formed a week or two ago, and I got used to the sound, but familiarity is often a trap for musicians. The Mayson MS5/S is a wonderful guitar in its finish, construction and looks. The next goal should be to catch those matching 'silver' sounds. When you play jazz or blues, with or without slide, or loose yourself in funk: it all suits this MS5. But to a fingerpicker a more than solid midrange is not always a guarantee of that delicious, spicy sound you are looking for. Fortunately, the importer sent out another MS5/S. Apparently the sound bars are positioned slightly more comfortably in their beautiful cabinet, as the balance between basses/mids/highs now proved significantly better. A fraction more lows, more sparkling highs and a less penetrant midrange all together made it much harder to lay aside this guitar compared to its brother. Congratulations Mr. Wang: you have mounted a better 'engine' in your 'Porsche'. Looks and sounds definitely match much better now. So, as a soothing conclusion I give Mayson's Alex Wang the benefit of the doubt. I am convinced that his passion will make these guitars be part of the establishment in no time. NASA meets Stradivarius is just a too good a starting point to not be met! 📧

## MAYSON MS5/S

PRICE: € 1198,-

(incl. case)

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:

China

TYPE: auditorium model

TOP: solid spruce

SIDE AND BACK: solid rosewood

NECK: mahogany with ebony fingerboard

MACHINE HEADS: open, flush mounted, with ebonite pegs

WIDTH AT NUT: 45 mm

12TH FRET WIDTH: 55 mm

SCALE LENGTH: 645 mm

FRETS: 20 standard

BRIDGE: ebony

WEIGHT: approx 1.8kg

Optional LR Baggs Anthem electronics

DISTRIBUTION:

The Music Alliance

WEBSITE:

www.maysonguitars.eu



## TEST RESULTS

### MAYSON MS5/S

Construction	★★★★★
Playability	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★☆
Price/quality	★★★★★
<b>OVERALL OPINION</b>	<b>★★★★☆</b>

■ **WE LIKED** Fantastically finished guitar with recessed open machine heads

■ **WE DIDN'T LIKE** The sound does not yet match appearance