

SHADOW NANOFLEX PICKUP

SHADOW'S NEW TRANSDUCER SYSTEM IS QUICK TO INSTALL AND SOUNDS PRETTY GOOD TO BOOT. **TIM SLATER** GETS BUGGED-UP WITH THE SHNFX AC NANOFLEX

German brand Shadow is well known for its expertise in the field of transducer pickups, being particularly popular with folk and acoustic musicians due to the good value and diversity of its huge range.

The company makes several types of transducer pickups for heaps of exotic and conventional acoustic instruments, including different models for acoustic guitars. The new Nanoflex system currently includes two models; one for acoustic guitars, which we have here, and another for amplifying upright basses.

NO SOLDERING REQUIRED

The Nanoflex system comprises an undersaddle transducer pickup, that will appeal to non-technical musos because it's easy to install; there's no need for soldering-iron prowess, nor do you need the skills of an experienced guitar repairer to fit it correctly. The entire kit consists of a flexible foil transducer pickup covered by a protective rubber sheath [very sensible – Family Planning Ed], and a compact preamp with a single mini volume control and a 1/8-inch jack socket. A 12-foot guitar lead is also included, with a mini jack on the 'preamp' end and a standard 1/4-inch jack plug at the other for hooking up to an amplifier or a mixer. There's also a nylon cable-tie that sticks to the guitar's side and hooks the guitar lead out of harm's way.

Mounting the Nanoflex system onto an acoustic guitar (a nylon-strung classical in this case) doesn't even require removing the strings; just de-tune them until they're slack, to let the bridge saddle lift up enough to allow the flexible pickup to slide underneath. In most cases, the corner of the saddle closest to the high 'E' string may need filing down slightly to prevent the saddle

GBINFO

SHADOW SHNFX AC NANOFLEX PICKUP

PRICE: £95

BUILT-IN: Germany

TYPE: Transducer pickup with preamp

FEATURES: Preamp with a single rotary volume, 3V Cell battery, 12-foot guitar cable, adhesive pads, flexible foil transducer pickup, and cable clip

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GBOPINION

SHADOW SHNFX AC

- ★ Easy to install; a monkey could do it
- ★ Very powerful tones

BLACK MARKS

- Not as discreet as some permanent transducer systems

GBRATING

★★★★☆



■ The nifty SHNFX attaches quickly and easily to your guitar

pinching or damaging the flexible pickup strip, but once this is done the whole installation process is surprisingly straightforward.

WHO SQUARES, WINS

Fitting the Nanoflex system takes less than five minutes, and its compact size means that the small preamp mounts fairly unobtrusively onto the guitar's bridge, using small pads of double-sided adhesive tape. The lone mini volume control sits adjacent to a 3V battery clipped into a recess on top of the preamp, and Shadow claims

that battery life is one year, which is pretty good value. To be on the safe side, however, you need to unplug the mini jack from the preamp when not in use to avoid unnecessary battery drain. The single volume pot is the only available control on the Nanoflex preamp, although it goes without saying that employing an outboard signal processor or EQ will provide an extra guarantee against feedback and allow extra tonal tweaks. As a stand-alone unit, however, the Nanoflex sounds perfectly good; the tone is very natural, there is plenty of power and it remains completely noise-free. It's entirely possible to plug the Nanoflex directly into a mixer, or even a guitar amp, and begin strumming away more or less immediately.

CONCLUSION

Shadow's SHNFX Nanoflex is a very workable alternative to the hassle and expense of fitting a permanent transducer system to your guitar. For many players, having a small preamp mounted to the front of the guitar may not be the ideal aesthetic addition, but what it lacks in subtlety, it more than makes up for in tone and ease of use. Good show, Shadow. **GB**

