

# High-End Fender-Style Basses

**BACK IN THE EARLY '80S, ROGER SADOWSKY WAS THE TOP FENDER REPAIR AND MOD GUY IN NEW YORK CITY. THIS WAS A GOOD** time to be in biz, as the studio scene was reaching a frantic climax, with guys like Marcus Miller, Will Lee, Francisco Centeno, and Anthony Jackson working all-day, everyday on sessions. Sadowsky eventually hung his own shingle, specializing in Fender Jazz-style basses incorporating many of his typical modifications and an active preamp. Since then, an entirely new market segment has emerged: J-style basses with high-end electronics, exotic woods, and other upmarket add-ons.



## SADOWSKY VINTAGE 5, JANUARY '97

"The 'Sadowsky sound': super fat, round, and punchy. The Vintage 5 has all of these qualities, which makes it the ideal axe for anyone weaned on the classic tones of collectable basses. It's also expertly built and features the excellent Sadowsky preamp. —Scott Malandrone

## MIKE LULL VINTAGE JAZZ, MARCH '97

"Does the bass world need another J-Bass-copy? It does if it's the Mike Lull Vintage Jazz. Lull's take on the classic axe incorporates such smart upgrades as a heavyweight ABM bridge, hum-free Bartolini pickups, and Hipshot Ultra-Lite tuners. Overall, the Vintage Jazz is hard to beat. We loved the instrument's pro setup, happening tone, and wicked looks." —Scott Malandrone



## LAKLAND JOE OSBORN SIGNATURE, FEBRUARY '99

With its sunburst finish, rosewood fingerboard, classic J-style pickups, and concentric knobs, the Osborn certainly looks right. Closer inspection reveals finicky attention to details. The finish is mirror-deep and virtually flawless. Its classic J-Bass flavors are gourmet quality. —Richard Johnston

## CELINDER J VINTAGE 5, OCTOBER '00

"Following the early-'60s J-Bass recipe, our tester came with an alder body, maple neck, slab rosewood fingerboard, bent steel bridge, and a tried-and-true rear pickup placement. The J Vintage 5 has the clarity, punch, and warmth you would expect from a '60s J-Bass. The vintage player looking to get into a 5-string should definitely check it out—it will be familiar territory." —Scott Shiraki



## KSD PROTO-J V60J & V70J, APRIL '04

"Ken Smith, who played Fenders as a successful New York session player, wanted to offer a low-priced but high-quality instrument for those players who simply must have that active Jazz-style bass sound and look. The affordable KSD basses should be on every active-J addict's lust list. They capture the vibe of the original and offer the full range of contemporary sounds that J-Bass lovers crave." —Jonathan Herrera

## NORDSTRAND NORDY VJ5, DECEMBER '07

"The Nordy-series basses concoct the J-bass formula with unique flavor, so they're worth a close look. The beautiful passive vJ5 was super in every way, provided I didn't expect it to sound like something it isn't. Sonically, the other vJ5 is the inverse of the passive model. Its hi-fi humbuckers, sophisticated Audere preamp, and punchy ash/maple body/neck combination make it a modern-sounding beast, with tight lows, a flexible EQ, and stratospheric treble response." —Jonathan Herrera

