



6/21/2019

To whom it may concern:

The Dean Owners Association (DOA) which has over 4,000 members is both baffled and amused by the legal filings against Armadillo Enterprises who owns both Dean and Luna guitars that are listed in the lawsuit.

Many of our members own guitars made by multiple manufacturers and there is clear distinctions in the products and the brands that sell them. Dean, to our estimation, has never put out a product that has attempted to sell itself as a Gibson, or any other guitar brand.

In fact, Gibson did not invent the open bookmark headstock shape. There are many examples of guitars and other string instruments that had that shape of headstock prior to Gibson's existence (The Perfumo-Terz circ 1835 for instance). As for the Shapes of their Explorer, V and Moderne and others being replicated by Dean's Z, V & ML, etc. has already been established in case law. Fender has already gone down that road on its "Strat" shape and lost in court (See Stuart Spector Designs, LTD, et all vs Fender Musical Instruments Corporation March 25, 2009) In addition to the Gibson vs PRS Nos. 04-5836, 04-5837 on the Single Cutaway shape.

Not to mention, many of these Dean guitars have been in production by Dean since the late 70's. If Gibson had an issue with these body shapes, why wait over 40 years before filing a lawsuit? There are a number of other manufactures who also put out similar body shapes with different headstocks. In fact, Dean has one of the most unique headstock differences from Gibson's on those models.

Finally, we the members of the DOA are amused and offended that Gibson thinks we are so stupid that we were purchasing a Gibson when we bought a Dean. It is not as if Dean is putting out the exact same shape and putting a Script "Gibson" or similar sounding name such as "Dibson" to pass it off as a Gibson guitar.

This lawsuit looks like a desperate attempt at monopolistic tendencies of a corporation. We fully support intellectual property rights but find that Gibson is attempting to strangle ("Come After...") the competition in an unfounded way. We believe Dean will prevail in this case and pick up market share as a result of the negative backlash of the guitar buyers.

The Dean Owners Association is a Guitar club with over 4,000 members from around the world. We are not directly affiliated with Dean or Armadillo Enterprises. More information can be found at our website at <http://www.deanowners.org>.

Brian K. Willard
Executive Director
Dean Owners Associations
<http://www.deanowners.org>