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PETER FRAMPTON "How I rescued the *Frampton Comes Alive* Les Paul!"



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Guitar Player

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THE GUITAR PLAYER INTERVIEW

JIMMY PAGE

on guitars, gear, and the secret to
Led Zeppelin's heavy metal thunder

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{ From the Editor }

When the Levee Breaks

JIMMY PAGE HAS been many things in his life: guitarist, songwriter, session player, producer, rock-star style icon. His journey through the 1960s saw the teenage guitarist grow through a succession of bands to become an in-demand session guitarist and producer on his way to leading the Yardbirds and, their successor, Led Zeppelin. Through it all, he developed an ear for sound that would define Zeppelin's bombastic hard-rock productions

and arrangements, and give shape to the sound of heavy metal.

Page's journey was very much on our minds when we had the rare opportunity to speak with him. The occasion was the release of his new book, *Jimmy Page: The Anthology* (Genesis Publications), in which the rock guitar icon discusses the instruments and other artifacts that have played a role in his musical life.

Contributing writer Ian Fortnam did the honors and came back with a deep and enlightening interview. As you'll see, Page walks us through his journey, from his first encounters with performing through his earliest guitars, bands and sessions, right up to and beyond his groundbreaking success with Led Zeppelin.

To be fair, our rare interview with the great Pagey was just part of a veritable flood of great stories that came our way this issue. They include an excerpt from Peter Frampton's new autobiography, *Do You Feel Like I Do?: A Memoir*, in which he delivers an account of the scene in the hotel room where he came face to face with his long-lost "Black Beauty" Gibson Les Paul Custom — the guitar on the cover of *Frampton Comes Alive!* — some 30 years after it was presumed destroyed in a plane crash. We were also honored to speak with John Fogerty about the making of *Cosmo's Factory*, the 1970 hit album that shows Creedence Clearwater Revival at the pinnacle of their power and success.

The more we looked at the Page, Frampton and Fogerty stories, the more we saw a common thread. Not the obvious one about these three artists emerging

from rock's fertile 1960s era but the one with the guitar attached. As it happens, all three of these men at one time favored the Gibson Les Paul Custom. By chance, we had an in-depth story on hand about the model's history as told through an interview with David Davidson, the owner of Well Strung Guitars in Plainview, New York, and COO/curator of the Songbirds Guitar Museum in Chattanooga, Tennessee. As you'll see, we get up-close and in deep with a gorgeous 1958 Black Beauty in some stunning photos.

The riches continued to pour in. In his interview, Fogerty mentioned that his rock-and-roll idol was Duane Eddy, and wouldn't you know that we had just finished speaking with the guitar icon about his 1958 hit "Rebel-'Rouser" for our "How I Wrote" page! Around the same time, Frets acoustic editor Jimmy Leslie called me up to say he'd just had the most amazing interview with acoustic legend Leo Kottke. And it is fantastic — so good, in fact, that we didn't have room to fit it all in this jam-packed issue, so look for part two next month. And while I'm at it, I'd be remiss if I didn't call out Bill Milkowski's enlightening talk with Kurt Rosenwinkel, perhaps the most influential jazz guitarist of the day, and Joe Bosso's insightful look at five classic sessions with guitarist Danny Kortchmar.

It all adds up to a whole lotta great reading. I hope you enjoy it.

Chris Scapelliti

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CONTENT

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Christopher Scapelliti,
chris.scapelliti@futurenet.com

SENIOR EDITOR Art Thompson,
arthur.thompson@futurenet.com

ART EDITOR Rosie Webber,
rosie.webber@futurenet.com

PRODUCTION EDITOR Jem Roberts,
jem.roberts@futurenet.com

LOS ANGELES EDITOR Jude Gold,
judegold@gmail.com

FRETS SECTION EDITOR Jimmy Leslie,
j@jimmyleslie.com

LESSONS EDITOR Jimmy Brown,
jimmy.brown@futurenet.com

CONSULTING EDITORS Matt Blackett,
Jim Campilongo, Dave Hunter, Michael Ross
MUSIC COPYISTS Jeff Perrin, Matt Scharfglass

ADVERTISING SALES

DIRECTOR OF U.S. MUSIC SALES Jonathan Brudner
jonathan.brudner@futurenet.com, (845) 678-3064

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR Mari Deetz
mari.deetz@futurenet.com, (650) 238-0344

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR Jason Perl
jason.perl@futurenet.com, (646) 723-5419

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CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER: Aaron Asadi

BRAND DIRECTOR, MUSIC: Stuart Williams

CONTENT DIRECTOR, MUSIC: Scott Rowley

HEAD OF ART: Rodney Dive

HEAD OF DESIGN (LONDON): Brad Merrett

GROUP ART DIRECTOR: Graham Dalzell

COMMERCIAL FINANCE DIRECTOR: Dan Jotcham

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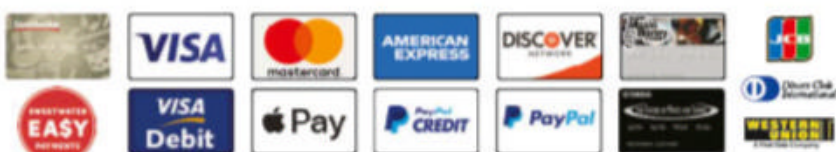
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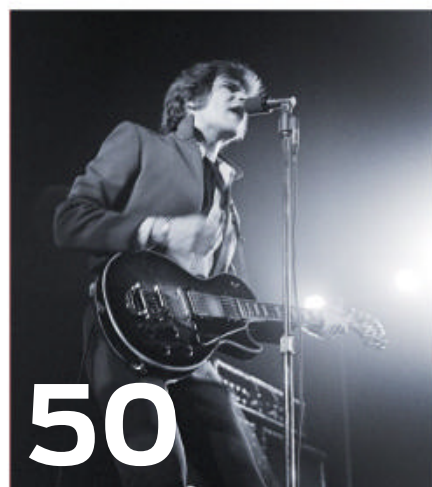
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Jimmy Page

Photographed by Ross Halfin

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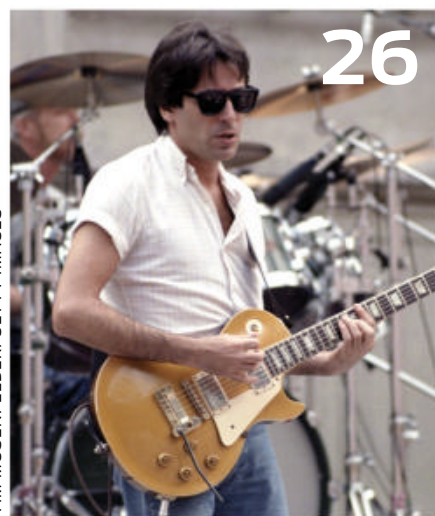
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Let me offer a heartfelt tribute to all of us; the women and men of this great industry. To all our partners around the world: manufacturers, distributors, builders, luthiers, techs, retailers, artists and weekend warriors.

We thank you for your support, your ideas and suggestions, you have made us better at what we do.

I'm not a Leo Fender, but I do have the passion and the drive to try and be a part of the future of guitar performance, push the boundaries in materials and design, and at the same time, respect the look, feel, and tradition of the guitar, bass and ukulele. With over 50 patents and trademarks worldwide we aren't slowing down. My team and I will keep pushing the boundaries, from our TUSQ nuts, saddles, bridge pins, Ratio multi-g geared machine heads, to the world's lightest ukulele machine heads, Tune-a-lele's.

Let's get ready to break some new ground, explore some new ideas, and we'll meet on the other side, smarter, stronger, and better for it.

Thank you one and all. We will meet again one day, in person, with a proper handshake to remember these days. We'll celebrate our achievements and see the future of this great industry that brings so much joy and love into this world.

Until we meet again, Happy Trails!

To us and to all the Leos of the world, past, present and future!

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Dave Dunwoodie
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First We Take Manhattan

Thanks to you and the team for this great issue. I'll try to make this quick. Mid '80s summer, my drummer buddy tells me he's got tickets for Stevie Ray Vaughan at the Pier in NYC. Who? (I hadn't heard of him.) "He's a great blues guitarist. Trust me, you'll love him." We are waiting outside the venue on the street. There was one way in for the audience and artists; the other end of the place is on the Hudson River. A limo pulls up, the band hops out, and this guy with cowboy boots, baggy suit and a big hat with a feather saunters by. I look at my friend. "What the f— did you bring me to?" "Trust me," he said smiling.

Stevie started playing, and saying I was blown away would be an understatement. It was more like being mesmerized. Stevie did "Voodoo Child" and I thought, This guy's got balls to cover Hendrix like this, but he nailed it. When he sat on the edge of the stage and did "Little Wing," it was incredible. I was in awe and delighted at the same time.

Years later, August 1990, driving home from the gym, I thought I was listening to an SRV rock block until I heard the tragic announcement from the DJ. I pulled over in disbelief, afraid I would hit something, and just wept. Extreme emotions from and for a man I knew only from his guitar playing. Music is powerful; music is wonderful. Keep playing, everybody.

— JEFF FROM NJ

Skip the Stack

With my subscriptions, I usually glance at each cover, then place it at the bottom of the small stack of back issues laying on my coffee table. Seeing Stevie Ray on October's cover, I sat down immediately and read it. I was so devastated by Stevie Ray's death that I couldn't listen to his music for 10 years. I was fortunate enough to have witnessed him live six times, the last six weeks before Alpine Valley. — STEVEN SPRING

Paul's Boutique

Thanks for the great article on Paul Reed Smith covering his history and guitar innovations at 35 years. I have many of his guitars in my stable along with a few other brands. I get to see Paul occasionally at the West Coast NAMM shows, and even though he doesn't know me personally, he always takes a minute to talk and thank me for playing his guitars. It's rare that at this point in PRS's history, or any other company, the creator is still involved in R&D innovations and is always pushing forward after 35 years. Most would have sold out, taken the money and retired. He is like a mad scientist who is never totally satisfied. I mean, let's face it: The electric guitar has been essentially "done" in design for decades now, and where do we go? Paul keeps pushing and tweaking. Rare indeed. May he continue to give us guitar slingers hope. — FRANK KOWALSKI, ALPINE, CA

Messin' With the Lesson

In your July and August issues, you had two articles on Melodic Lead players, which was very good. However, I think the authors made some serious omissions as far as that goes. They left out, in my opinion, four of the most melodic and lyrical lead players ever to grace a song with their playing, to wit: Carlos Santana, Dickey Betts, Peter Green and Jerry Garcia. I can't think of any more lyrical and melodic players than these four. How often can you hum or sing the lead parts days, weeks and even years after you've heard their solos?

— DEBBIE WEINER



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JACKSON MAXWELL

Online and Social Media Managing Editor

jackson.maxwell@futurenet.com

WEBSITE & SOCIAL



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THE MAGAZINE



CHRISTOPHER SCAPELLITI

Editor-in-Chief

chris.scapelliti@futurenet.com



ART THOMPSON

Senior Editor

arthur.thompson@futurenet.com



ROSIE WEBBER

Art Editor

rosie.webber@futurenet.com



JUDE GOLD

Los Angeles Editor

judegold@gmail.com



JIMMY LESLIE

Frets Editor

j@jimmysleslie.com



DAVE HUNTER

Gear Section & Video Contributor

dhunterwordsmusic@yahoo.com



JIMMY BROWN

Lessons Editor

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Working the Angles

The Frank Brothers' Arcade model puts its thoughtful features in the service of the player.

BY DAVE HUNTER

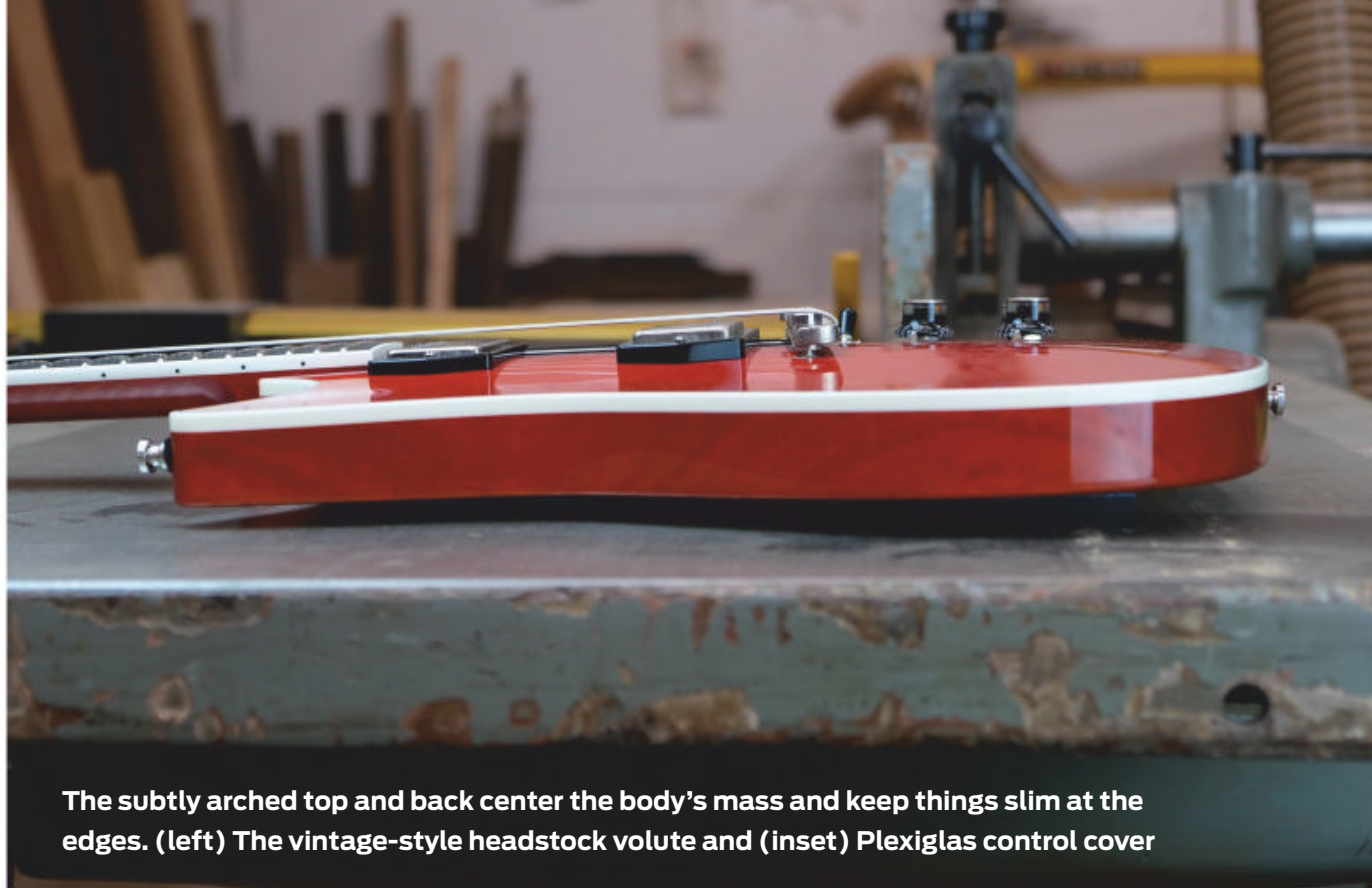
IT'S HARD TO create an electric-guitar design that pays tribute to past classics while looking fresh and original. Yet, that's what Frank Brothers Guitar Company of Toronto, Canada, has achieved with the Arcade, and it's earned raves. The company was founded in 2014 by luthiers Nick and Tim Frank and their managerial partner (and older brother) Jon. They are the third generation of Franks to work in music making and engineering, following grandfather Philip, first violinist with the NBC Symphony Orchestra, and father Jim, an award-winning recording engineer who worked with Peter Gabriel, Alice Cooper and the Guess Who.

But their real motivation comes from a desire to bring their customers' ideas to life. "The rarity of our guitars is part of the excitement," Tim tells us. "Often, people who order a Frank Brothers guitar haven't had an opportunity to see one in person, so it's crucial that it really blows them away. Building each guitar one at a time and giving it all our attention allows us to do that."

That's certainly true of the review sample we were sent. "This particular Arcade features a compensated wrap bridge and a pair of humbuckers, which makes it sound big and direct, with a lot of guts and sustain," Tim says. "So it's great for your rock and blues players, but really it's a super-versatile guitar."

The Arcade is the youngster of the Frank Brothers' stable, which debuted with the larger, chamber-bodied Signature model. More compact, and solid-bodied, the Arcade retains the Frank flagship's dual-horned





The subtly arched top and back center the body's mass and keep things slim at the edges. (left) The vintage-style headstock volute and (inset) Plexiglas control cover

shape, a sort of “SG meets compact ES-335” design. Several body and neck wood options are available. This one is made with a solid mahogany back and solid Canadian maple top, with three-ply binding around the top and a thin nitro finish in translucent cherry, which has been gently aged to display some checking in the lacquer. It's also light for a solid mahogany/maple design, coming in around 7.4 pounds.

Taken in hand, it reveals further nuances, such as the arched top and back, which puts the body's core in line with the neck. “This way the core has substantial mass and provides great resonance, while the edge of the body is slim, making the guitar really comfortable to hold,” Tim explains. “There's also a slight taper along the sides — the body is actually thicker near the tail and slims down toward the neck joint, similar to an acoustic guitar, which improves the look and feel of the neck angle.”

The glued-in mahogany neck has a bound Macassar ebony fingerboard with a 25-inch scale length. The 22 medium frets have been beautifully dressed, with smoothly rounded crowns and delightfully snag-free ends. The medium-C neck profile (0.86 inches deep at the first fret and 0.94 inches at the 12th) sits easily in the hand, and playability is aided by the Franks' extra efforts in neck and truss-rod design. “We use a vintage-style curved, single-action stainless-steel truss rod,” Tim explains. “We build a precise amount of relief into the neck so that we always have a well-tensioned rod that can be backed off to increase the relief while still being in tension,

which also stiffens the neck and increases the overall sustain.”

The closer you look, the more this build reveals the Brothers' custom touches. A vintage-style diamond volute at the rear of the back-angled headstock supports the transition from the neck and is unobtrusive to the left hand. The unique “pinched-waist” headstock is faced with a book-matched Macassar ebony overlay, elegantly bound, capped with an unfinished ebony truss-rod cover and adorned with a mother-of-pearl Frank Brothers logo inlay. Down at the other end, a clear Plexiglas control cover reveals the



immaculate wiring of the CTS pots with Jupiter tone capacitors. The wraparound bridge — an out-of-house addition alongside the aged Kluson Deluxe tuners — is MojoAxe's acclaimed compensated unit, beloved for its ability to work miracles with wrap-tail intonation as

well as enhance tone and sustain. A range of pickup options are available, and this Arcade carries a pair of Lollar Imperial Low-Wind humbuckers with independent volume and tone controls and a three-way toggle.

Unplugged, the Arcade is lively, balanced and responsive, with surprising elements of acoustic woody resonance and compression when strummed with some attitude. It also plays superbly in all positions, without a hitch in the faultless setup. The guitar's pointy, subtly asymmetrical double-horned shape becomes more familiar, and even natural, the more you play it. It sits much as a Telecaster would, placing the player's left and right arms in natural and comfortable positions, and

without digging into the ribs and forearm like other square-edged guitars.

Tested through a tweed Deluxe-style 1x12 combo and a Friedman Small Box head and 2x12 cab, the Arcade proved instantly loveable and impressively versatile. To ballpark the guitar's overall voice, I'd return to the SG-meets-335 analogy: There's plenty of clarity and snap amid the humbucker-induced thickness, with a good balance, overall, but a little extra edge in the upper-mids, and a blend of biting attack and semihollow-like airiness that lends depth to the platform. That said, set your amp or pedals right and the Arcade will sub for just about anything you'd normally take a Les Paul out for, while elegantly imprinting its own personality over it. With either amp set relatively clean, the low-wind humbuckers allowed plenty of crisp articulation, yet with rich underpinnings of warmth and breadth and a delectable harmonic shimmer imparted by the guitar as a whole. As such, the Arcade will tackle anything from rootsy twang on the bridge pickup to trenchant jazz on the neck, while eating up a range of indie-rock jangle and arpeggio riffs on all settings.

Into the Friedman's modded-Marshall lead channel, however, or with a JHS Angry Charlie or Tsakalis Six overdrive into the 5E3-style combo, the Arcade dished out throaty power-chord rhythms or wailing, toothsome leads like it was born to rock. And while it ain't “cheap” as such, this Arcade's \$4,000 price tag — including significant upgrades — delivers a guitar that is overtly lovable and of a caliber for which many makers would charge a lot more. 🎸

CONTACT frankbrothersguitars.com

PRICE \$4,105 direct, as reviewed (base price, \$3,200)



Blues Dues

On My Blues

Pathway, Kirk

Fletcher pays back a debt to the forces that shaped his ferocious style.

BY ART THOMPSON

ARMED WITH ASTONISHING chops, great tone and an encyclopedic knowledge of blues styles (check out his YouTube demos to see him in action), Kirk Fletcher is a veritable force of nature who has played with the Fabulous Thunderbirds, toured with Joe Bonamassa and traveled the world, playing what he calls “the music closest to my heart.” On his sixth solo release, *My Blues Pathway* (Cleopatra Records), the Blues Music Award–nominated guitarist presents a selection of original songs that run the gamut from classic blues forms, such as “Struggle for Grace,” “Heart So Heavy” and “D is for Denny,” to the Memphis-style soul of “Love Is More Than a Word,” the pop-savvy “Ain’t No Cure for the Downhearted” (co-written with Robert Cray bassist and songwriter Richard Cousins) and the funky “No Place to Go.”

“I wanted to try some different grooves on this record to make people realize there is other stuff besides ‘Hoochie Coochie Man’ and classic blues songs like that,” Fletcher says. “That’s why I included a few covers by some of my favorite blues artists, like A.C. Reed, Juke Boy Bonner, Chris Cain and Sonny Boy Williamson. This is the music that motivated me and gave me great inspiration.

“I owe everything to the blues,” Fletcher continues. “Even before I was old enough to be in clubs, I would go out and see people like Denny Freeman, Robben Ford, Michael Landau, and all of these guys that really excited me. And now I feel it’s my turn to, hopefully, excite some younger players into the things that swept me off my feet.”



Tell us about your blues pathway and how it led you to join the Fabulous Thunderbirds and eventually go solo.

I started playing in my father’s church when I was nine or 10 years old. My older brother played guitar, so I picked it up trying to be like him. Then I started playing with different bands, and that led me to this gentleman named Al Blake, who knew all the blues people, like Hollywood Fats, Jimmy Watson, Kid Ramos and all of the L.A. blues guys. He introduced me to [*Fabulous Thunderbirds frontman*] Kim Wilson, and I played in his blues band for a couple of years. Then I joined Charlie Musselwhite and played with him for two years.

One day I got the call from Kim that the slot had opened up for me to play with the T Birds. I was with them from 2004 to 2007, and it was fantastic. Jimmie Vaughan is one of my favorite guitar players, and it was great

“I STARTED PLAYING WITH CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE IN 2002, AND HE JUST LET ME PLAY AND FIND MY OWN VOICE”

to be in a band and playing the music that I love so much. But I wanted to spread my wings, and that’s when I decided to start doing my own thing.

Where does your songwriting inspiration come from?

I think about the words first. I’m not one of those guys who comes up with a guitar riff or something. I get a line that intrigues me and try and build a song on it. I try to give a little bit of a message in there but still keep it simple. I listen to everything from Merle Haggard to Shuggie Otis to Bobby Bland to country blues like Robert Johnson, Tommy Johnson or Peetie Wheatstraw. I try and always have this classic blues thing, where you say things in the classic blues language, married with something that’s going on now. I just love that, for some reason. So that’s it with songwriting. It can be just one thing. Like, on this new record, the song

“Ain’t No Cure for the Downhearted” — that word *downhearted* made me want to talk about today’s times and what I’ve seen over my time of playing.

You’re adept at so many different styles. Who are your main influences?

I’m from the church, so I had blues, gospel and R&B influences, and then I also had rock and all of those things. B.B. King probably inspired me the most as far as blues guitar, and of course the old Chicago guys like Otis Rush, Buddy Guy, Magic Sam, and people like that. That being said, Larry Carlton and Robben Ford, with that lyrical and melodic style, really hit me hard, as did listening to Steely Dan records. So my style is like that ’70s Laurel Canyon sound mixed with all the Chicago blues. That’s kind of where I live.

How did you record this album?

I recorded it over Christmas last year, and we did everything live because of time constraints. I had to do a couple of tours: I went to Australia before the pandemic hit, and I had a little tour in the U.K., so I tried to do as much as I could live. Getting the whole performance from front to back is really cool, even if you have a little mistake or something.

Tell us about the gear that you used.

I used a couple of different Strats, a blackface Deluxe Reverb and a Lovepedal Tchula overdrive, and that was it. My go-to live amps are an old Fender Super Reverb and a Deluxe Reverb. I also love tweed Bassmans.

Are your Strats old ones?

I own a couple of old Strats, but this time I used one with a custom-made body that I got right after high school. Basically, it’s a rosewood-’board, alder-bodied Strat that’s strung with .011s. I also used a ’63 Strat with a rosewood ’board, and I might have used a new Fender American Performer Strat.

Also, I just started working with PRS, and I’m really excited about that. The PRS isn’t necessary a blues guitar in the traditional sense, but that’s fine. People expect me to play a

ADAM GASSON



Strat or a Tele or a 335 or Les Paul, and I’ve played all of those. But this PRS McCarty 594 semihollow has a little of all of that. It’s comfortable, and it’s really in tune, and I can get split-pickup sounds, too. You can’t fly with lots of guitars these days, so it’s nice to have one guitar that can give me a lot of different sounds. It’s a lot of bang for the buck.

The opening cut, “Ain’t No Cure for the Downhearted,” establishes right off the bat that this isn’t a typical blues release. Tell us about that song.

“Ain’t No Cure for the Downhearted” was marrying that type of old-school blues lyric with some more modern things. For the main part, I was inspired by this riff I heard Robben Ford play; it was a slow minor blues, and it’s the one time I actually did have the music first. And then I had this other part that’s the Temptations’ “Papa Was a Rolling Stone.” I wanted to do something that wasn’t rock but

still had impact. Like, Otis Redding is not rock, but his music is as intense as anybody’s. I purposely tried to do things that had a big impact without playing rock-blues or something like that.

You have Charlie Musselwhite playing harp on that tune. What did you learn from playing with him?

Yeah, my old boss. I started playing with Charlie in 2002, and he was the guy that really just let me play and find my own voice. He never really cared if I played it exactly like the record, or if it was traditional blues or

whatever. He just wanted me to be free, because he’d played with all the legends and he wanted to hear what I could add. I really found my voice with Charlie.

One of the big contrasts here is “Love Is More Than a Word,” which has that Memphis soul sound.

That song was conceived about two years ago and came from a conversation I had with a dear friend about his marriage, and it just moved me so much. I had been holding on to different parts of that song for two years. I wanted to do something like an Eric Clapton *Journeyman*-era song, and I was listening to a lot of southern soul at the time, so it inspired me to take this song in a different direction and turn it into a soul tune, with the horns and everything.

Why did you choose to cover Juke Boy Bonner’s country-blues tune “Life Gave Me a Dirty Deal”?

I just wanted to highlight some of those different influences in blues and let people know there’s a different way. You don’t have to play the same style every time. I feel very comfortable playing that country-blues style, which I think is fun and exciting. As to why I picked that song, I’ve never really expressed these kinds of things, but on this record I thought it was time for me to really tell it like it is. I’ve always been one to be positive any time I get onstage or play or say something. But you know, like Robin Williams, sometimes the people who are giving you the laughs all the time are the ones that are hurting the most. So this song is the blues equivalent to that for me. I thought it was a good idea to show another side, because the world is not always so happy-go-lucky. 🎸



RECOMMENDED LISTENING

My Blues Pathway

“Love Is More Than a Word,” “Ain’t No Cure for the Downhearted,” “Life Gave Me a Dirty Deal”



FLIGHT *of the* PHENIX

BY PETER FRAMPTON

“ALL I EVER wanted to do was play guitar, and it’s taken me many different places — physically and mentally,” Peter Frampton writes in his new autobiography, *Do You Feel Like I Do?: A Memoir*. Written with Alan Light, the tell-all elaborates thoroughly on that statement, as the guitarist reveals his career highs with Humble Pie and his monster solo breakthrough album, *Frampton Comes Alive!*, and his personal lows, including his struggles with substance abuse and recent battle with the muscle disease inclusion body myositis. In addition to sharing stories about his friendships with artists that include George Harrison and David Bowie, Frampton discusses his own relationship with the guitar, including one very special — and now quite famous — instrument: his mid-1950s Les Paul Custom “Black Beauty.”

That guitar is the subject of this excerpt from the forthcoming memoir. In it, Frampton tells the story behind how he recovered the Custom years after it was presumed lost in a plane crash. Frampton acquired the guitar in 1970, while he was a member of Humble Pie, from his friend Marc Mariana. As the guitar’s owner, Mariana had switched out the guitar’s P-90s with humbuckers and sanded down the neck. Frampton loved the Black

In this excerpt from his new autobiography, **Peter Frampton** tells how he finally recovered his Gibson “Black Beauty” Les Paul Custom years after it went down in a deadly plane crash.

Beauty and made it his main guitar, using it for Humble Pie’s breakthrough album, *Performance: Rockin’ the Fillmore*, and his own *Frampton Comes Alive!*, where it appears on the cover.

The guitar continued to serve him until 1980. That November, Frampton and his band narrowly escaped Panama after they were forced to cancel a concert

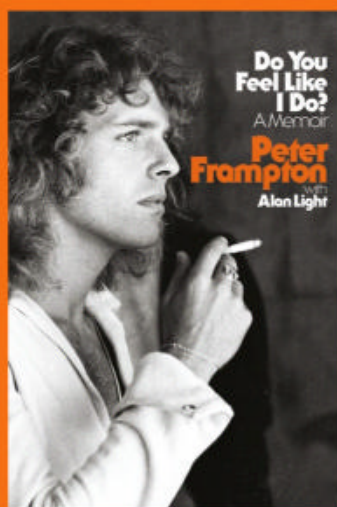
there, incurring the wrath of then-president Manuel Noriega. The group’s gear was less lucky: The cargo plane carrying it crashed on takeoff from Curaçao, Venezuela. In fact, the Custom was among four guitars that survived with minimal damage, though this information was never passed along to Frampton. The Black Beauty was subsequently sold to a musician in Caracas, who played it for 15 years. Its origins were finally discovered when his son brought it to a local luthier named Donald Balentina, who was also an immigrations officer at the Curaçao airport. Balentina instantly knew the identity

of the guitar and made contact with Frampton through the guitarist’s manager, Lisa Jenkins. But when he told the owner’s son he knew of the guitar’s background, the boy fled with the instrument. Frampton’s excerpt picks up the story in 2011, two years later.

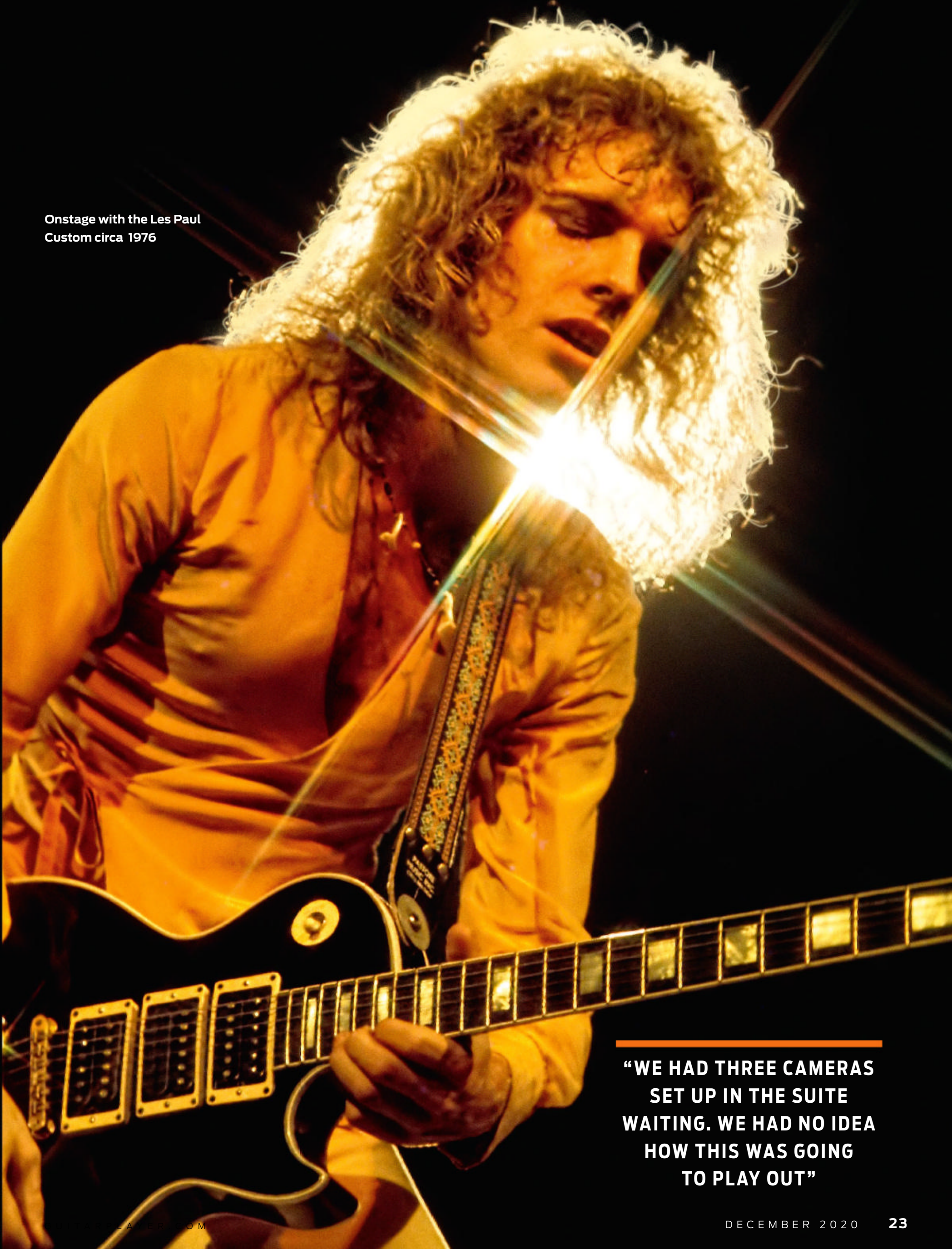
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TWO YEARS GO by and I thought I’d lost the guitar forever. But then the son of the current “owner” came back to Donald’s place again. He asked him, “So how much are you going to pay me for this guitar? I want to buy another one.” Donald asked, “What do you want for it?” And the boy said \$5,000—which was pretty close to the price of a nice new Gibson Custom Shop Les Paul. He said, “Give me your number and I’ll contact Mr. Frampton.”

Donald called Lisa Jenkins to let us know that he had made contact with the boy again, and he now wanted to sell the guitar. Lisa immediately started talking with Donald to facilitate the return of my old Black Beauty. Lisa suggested that we all meet in Nashville at the hotel where I always stayed when I drove in from Cincinnati. But we think Donald was worried that we were going to have



Excerpted from *Do You Feel Like I Do?: A Memoir* by Peter Frampton with Alan Light. Copyright ©2020. Available from Hachette Books, an imprint of Hachette Book Group, Inc.



Onstage with the Les Paul
Custom circa 1976

**“WE HAD THREE CAMERAS
SET UP IN THE SUITE
WAITING. WE HAD NO IDEA
HOW THIS WAS GOING
TO PLAY OUT”**



whoever brought the guitar back arrested in Miami by the FBI, because it was still technically stolen merchandise. I had no such intent — all I ever wanted was to have my lost treasure back in my hands, and that it wasn't going to cost me an arm and a leg. This goes on and on; he's scared to bring it, and then he said that he couldn't pay for the guitar himself, anyway.

Donald went to Curaçao's Minister of Tourism and explained the situation. He said, "Look, it will be great if Peter Frampton gets his guitar back after so many years, and the island's Minister of Tourism gets to be the savior!" I guess he loved the idea, because in the end, both Donald and the Minister of Tourism flew up from Curaçao, bringing the guitar with them. Before they got on a plane, though, they were still worried that I was going to have them arrested. Lisa told them to call the hotel in Nashville we had booked for them, and once the hotel confirmed that they did have reservations, the trip was on. I could then, and only then, begin to see a light at the end of a 32-year-long tunnel.

We had three cameras set up in the suite waiting. My tour manager, Donnie Lewis, had a friend stationed there who does personal security. We had no idea how this was going to play out.

The two very excited travelers came in and everyone was introduced. The thing I noticed first was the case that was covering the guitar. When I got my very first guitar, the case was just a plastic cover and a zip; it kept the dust off, but it wasn't protective. Well, that's what the Gibson was in, I swear.

Donald had read everything anyone had ever said about this guitar. He handed it to me, and it's a very light Les Paul, so before I even took the cover off I could feel the weight of it. He said, "It's light, isn't it?"

Without even looking, I could just feel it was mine. I finally got the cover off and it was just like putting on an old pair of extremely

"HE ASKED HOW I FELT ABOUT PLAYING IT ONSTAGE. I SAID, 'I'M SCARED SH*TLESS I'LL MAKE A MISTAKE!'"

comfy shoes. "Yes, it's mine." And there she was! Back home!

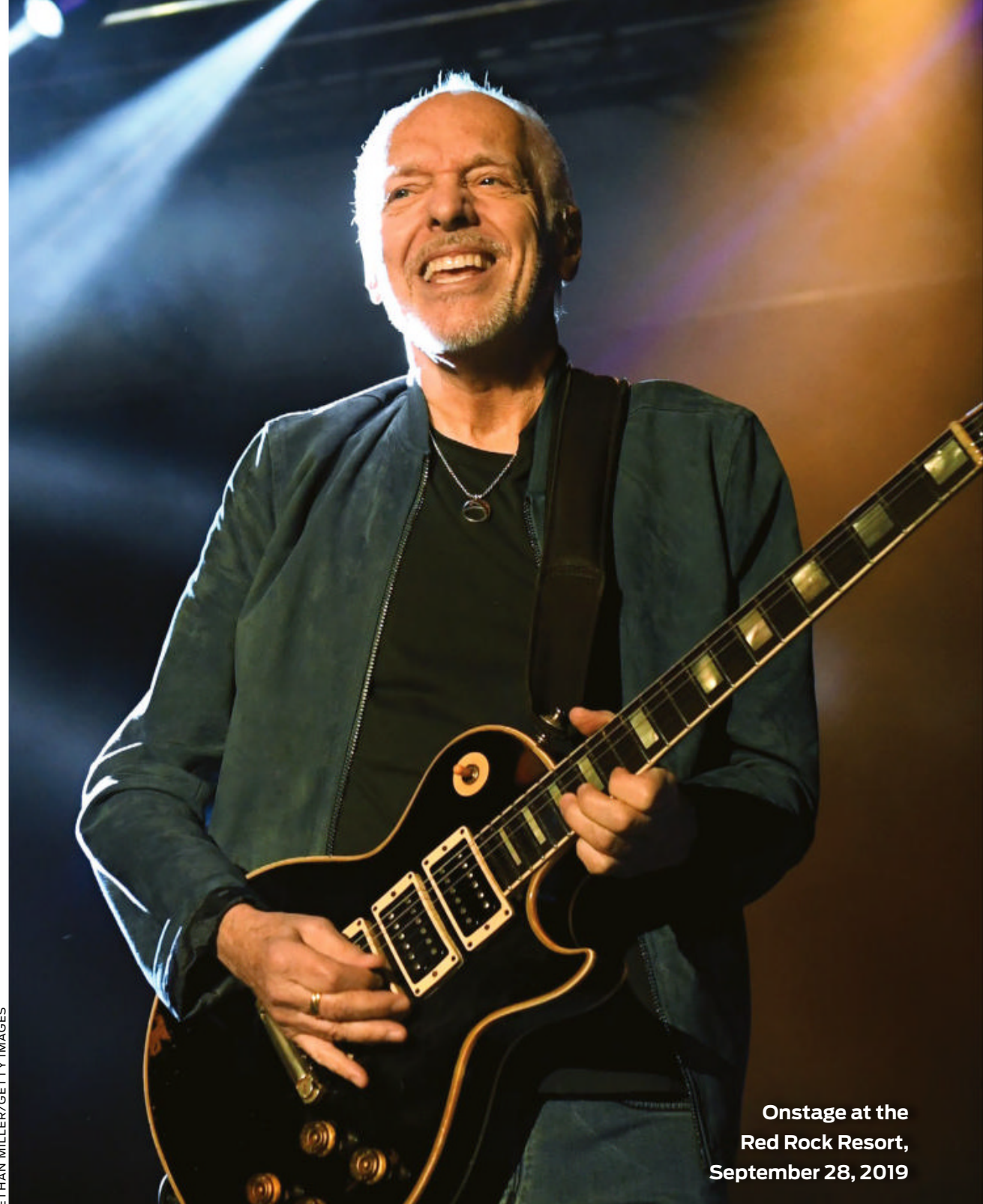
Once the expletives, cheers, and thank yous had all died down a bit, I was left in this wonderful kind of shock with a shit-eating grin. During the drive over to the Gibson Custom Shop, I couldn't help feeling I was having a weird dream and I would wake up any minute. We had some fine guitar aficionados waiting to see and check this baby out. All my friends at Gibson — Rick Gembar, SR VP/GM; Mike McGuire, head of the Custom Shop; and George Gruhn and Walter Carter — were there studying it,

taking this plate off and that knob off. They finally agreed that it was a 1954/'55 Black Beauty retrofitted with three humbucking pickups (the serial

number had been sanded off before Marc Mariana gave it to me).

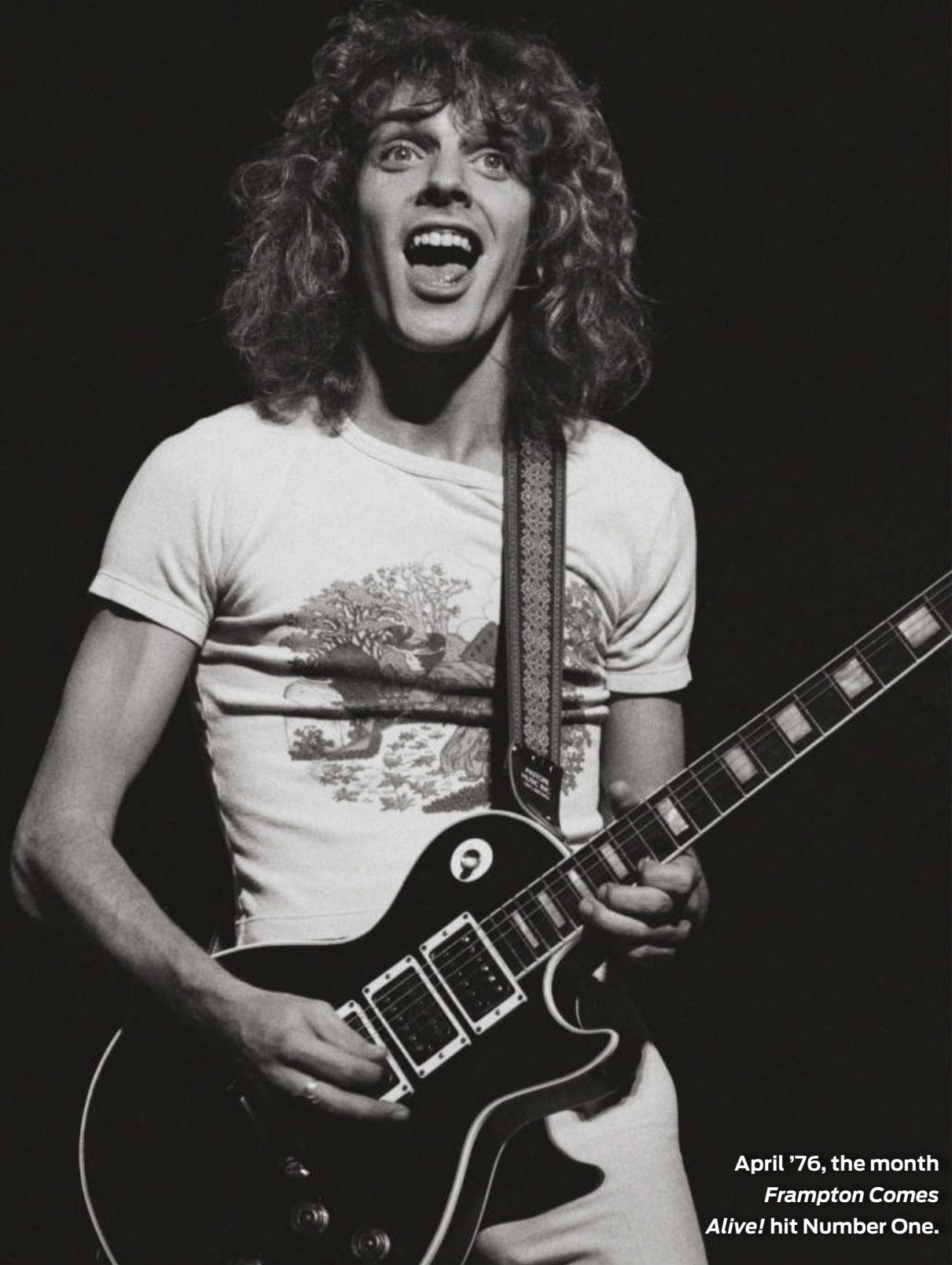
In the end, I gave Donald a healthy finder's fee/reward. Things like this just don't happen — well, they sure don't happen very often. I started calling my guitar the "Phenix" because this thing literally rose from the ashes. (I didn't want to use the conventional spelling, like the city, so the dictionary gave me the French spelling — I just wanted it to be different.)

I got the guitar back for the last couple days of rehearsal before the second half of the *Frampton Comes Alive!* 35 tour, but the band didn't know I had it yet. I had my back to them as I put it on. We never run through "Do You Feel" or any of the older songs we play every night, so I casually said, "Let's run through the beginning of 'Do You Feel,' just so I can check my sound." I counted it in, we started to play the intro, and I turned around — and I could see the



Onstage at the Red Rock Resort, September 28, 2019

ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES



April '76, the month
*Frampton Comes
Alive!* hit Number One.

MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES

band had a look of surprise in their eyes, which were now huge, “Hey what is that? It’s *the* sound. That’s the sound of the record! That’s your guitar!” They realized what it was just from listening to me play the intro; the difference in sound is that noticeable. And then we played through just about everything off *Frampton Comes Alive!* that afternoon. Now we all had shit-eating grins! That was a rehearsal I will never forget. Thank you, Curaçao!

I had to leave the guitar at Gibson so they could bring her up to speed. I wanted all the scars left as is, but anything that didn’t work properly, like the tuners or any bad electronics, had to be replaced. I can’t thank all my friends enough for donating original pieces for the guitar, like “Patent Applied For” pickups and ’50s capacitors and volume and tone knobs, some still in their new old boxes. We call those beautiful old parts new old stock — NOS.

There are still burn marks, dents and tons of other scratches, but that’s the way she will stay. I only wish we could sit down together, have a nice cuppa tea, and find out what, when, how, and where she’s been for the last 30 years!

It was finally ready by the time we played the Beacon in New York. Anthony Mason had already done an interview with me for CBS about the return of the guitar, so he was there that night, filming me on the bus before the show. He asked how I felt about playing it onstage, and I said, “I’m scared shitless that I’ll make a mistake!”

Right before “Do You Feel,” which is always the last number of the set, I walked off and the stage went dark. My tech brought out the guitar, placed it in the middle of the stage on a stand, pitch dark, and then all the spotlights hit it at once — bam! The crowd went nuts; she was the star of the show, they could see what she was. I picked her up

and we started to play “Do You Feel” — and I did make a slight mistake in the intro, but they edited it out of the *CBS Sunday Morning* piece. The Phenix wasn’t nervous, but I was. Thank you, Anthony.

Years after we had returned from South America in 1980, Barbara and I stayed over the weekend in New York, and on Monday morning, before we checked out, I had *Good Morning America* on and I heard my name. I sat up and it was the *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous* guy, Robin Leach. He said, “News has finally reached me. I now have the true story about Peter Frampton escaping from Panama and Noriega’s troops.” What? “Back in 1980, a well-placed call was made to the White House, as Frampton had connections there” — yeah, because I’d been to the White House once!

He said that a military jet with troops had been sent down to Panama, that there was a rescue mission and Frampton, his band, and crew had all been rescued by the CIA and brought back to Andrews Air Force Base. We were in hysterics! We had gotten out of there all on our own. The American consulate wasn’t a lot of help, if I remember. I just couldn’t believe my ears hearing him spew all this bullshit. It was pretty exciting stuff, but it was totally untrue.

It’s wonderful to have my old Les Paul back because for so many years after the crash, fans would ask me, “Is that the one you played on *Frampton Comes Alive!*?” and I’d have to say no. When I moved to Nashville in the ’90s, Gibson’s Mike McGuire suggested we work on a replacement. I was thrilled! He and I and many great people at Gibson worked for about a year on building one that was as close to the original as I could remember. I played it for years, but when the Phenix arrived back and I compared the old and the new, it was no contest. They both sounded great, but the Phenix just sounds and plays like the Phenix! When I announced her at the Beacon Theatre show, I could see this was her night in the limelight. ■



My Career in Five Songs

Jeff Beck was impressed to learn he was in *Spinal Tap*. But guitar legend **Danny Kortchmar** has been turning heads in sessions and onstage for the past 50 years.

BY JOE BOSSO

IN A REMARKABLE career that has spanned 50 years, Danny Kortchmar has recorded with an astonishing array of legends, including Carole King, James Taylor, Linda Ronstadt, Jackson Browne, Warren Zevon — and, as the saying goes, the list goes on! Hailing from New York City, the guitarist cut his teeth in the late 1960s playing Greenwich Village clubs in such groups as the King Bees and the Flying Machine (which featured a pre-*Sweet Baby James* James Taylor) before he headed to Los Angeles to try his hand at the studio-session scene. As he explains, his timing couldn't have been better.

"Things were changing right as I got to L.A.," Kortchmar says. "The Wrecking Crew were still cutting records, but there was this new batch of players coming in — friends of mine, like Waddy Wachtel. We were different; we were rock and blues guys. And we were perfectly suited to the kinds of records that were coming into fashion."

As Kortchmar describes it, during most of the '60s, L.A. sessions were business-like affairs, at which songs were cut in three-hour morning and afternoon blocks. "Everybody was punching the clock, and most of the action revolved around producing singles," he

says. "But in the late '60s and early '70s, the emphasis shifted to albums, so you had producers like Peter Asher and Lou Adler making records with Carole King and James Taylor. They would bring us in for what turned into complete projects. It was an exciting time. I got to be deeply involved in the creative process." He laughs. "And I got my name in the credits! That never happened with the Wrecking Crew guys."

"TAPESTRY IS SUCH A CLASSIC, BUT AT THE TIME NOBODY HAD BIG EXPECTATIONS FOR IT"

Kortchmar admits the demand for session guitarists isn't what it used to be. "It's a whole different lifestyle these days," he says. "You've got people making records at home, and they're doing things remotely. A lot of the studios are gone." But he does have some advice for younger players hoping to get into the game. "Learn what a good song is," he says. "Learn how to back up a singer. It's a skill

set that too many people are uninterested in. They want to shred as fast and loud as possible. That sort of thing won't get you hired. Give me George Harrison any day."

In addition to his session guitar credits, Kortchmar has distinguished himself as a songwriter and producer. His work includes co-producing a trio of Don Henley albums (*I Can't Stand Still*, *Building the Perfect Beast* and *The End of the Innocence*), for which he collaborated on the writing of such songs as "Dirty Laundry," "All She Wants to Do Is Dance" and "Sunset Grill," among others. These days, Kortchmar is back playing with some of his studio pals, including Wachtel, Leland Sklar, Russ Kunkel and Steve Postell, in a band called the Immediate Family. "It started out as a solo project, but it quickly became a band," he says. "We've done a lot of touring, and we have an album of all-original tunes coming soon. I'm prouder of it than anything I've ever done." But these five tracks collectively form a very close second.

"IT'S TOO LATE" CAROLE KING, *TAPESTRY* (1971)

"I knew Carole King's DNA as a songwriter. I had played with her long before *Tapestry*. In





Cutting *Tapestry* with Carole King in January 1971. (from left) Kortchmar, Russ Kunkel, King, Charles Larkey and Ralph Schuckett

JIM MCCRARY/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES

fact, I played on many of her demos for Screen Gems. That's largely how I learned how to be a studio guitarist. Carole was a brilliant teacher. Working with her was like going to Harvard. It's funny that *Tapestry* is such a classic, because nobody had big expectations for it. She had already made an album [1970's *Writer*] that didn't sell.

"For the *Tapestry* sessions, we were cutting three tracks a day at A&M studios. Everybody was in the room sitting very close together, playing live. For a lot of the songs we had chord sheets, but for 'It's Too Late,' Carole sat at the piano and played the song; I just had to absorb it. When it came to the solo, I was told, 'Play something melancholy.' I was using a Telecaster and probably a Princeton amp. I think I did two or three passes, and everybody seemed pretty pleased.

"I have to be honest: At the time, I wasn't feeling crazy about my playing on it. I thought it was kind of lazy. I had no idea that the song was going to be a Number One record, and that I was going to be listening to it in supermarkets and drug stores my whole life. Over the years, I've learned to dig the solo, and I realized that what I played was very authentic and fit the song perfectly."



With Waddy Wachtel (left) and the Immediate Family, in Los Angeles, June 29, 2018

ALISON BUCK/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES

"HURTS SO BAD" LINDA RONSTADT, *MAD LOVE* (1980)

"People called *Mad Love* Linda's new-wave record. There was some resentment about it from a lot of the L.A. people, but I didn't care. I loved the new-wave stuff. I was listening to the Clash and the Ramones, so when we went in to rock a little more, I was all for it.

"I knew this tune from the Little Anthony and the Imperials version. The original was all strings and kind of a pop arrangement, but when Linda decided to do it, we pumped up the jam and made it more rock. One of the things I did was mimic the Imperials'

background vocals with guitar parts. I would kind of answer Linda where the singers would have come in.

"I think we played everything live. The solo was fun. I always tried to fit the mood and the emotion of the song. I would listen to the lyrics and the context, so I just went with my gut and started blasting away. I had to match the power of Linda's vocals, so I knew I had to go big. It was all spontaneous. Linda and [her producer/manager] Peter Asher are both very astute and knew what they wanted. They were really happy with it, so I was thrilled. Linda has said in interviews that this is her favorite guitar solo on any of her records,



which is an incredible compliment. She certainly has a lot of great solos to pick from.”

“DRIVIN’ WITH YOUR EYES CLOSED”

DON HENLEY, *BUILDING THE PERFECT BEAST* (1984)

“Working with Don Henley has been such a pleasure. I knew him from his Eagles days. We all hung out together, smoked pot and had fun. Everybody knew one another back then. There was friendly competition, but we were all really digging what everyone else was doing. Don and I did three of his solo albums together. This one, *Building the Perfect Beast*, was the second.

“Don didn’t want acoustic guitars on his records. He wanted to get far away from the Eagles’ sound, so I used a lot of synths and drum machines. On this album, I would make demos at home. The next day I’d play what I had for Don, and if he liked it, he’d say, ‘I can

“JEFF BECK DIDN’T WANT TO TALK ABOUT HIS CAREER. BUT TALK ABOUT HOT RODS AND HIS EYES WOULD LIGHT UP”

sing to that,’ and we’d start recording right away. It was really a terrific situation for me as a writer and producer. On this track, I started a beat on the drum machine, got the guitar tuned to E-flat open, and I flew by the seat of my pants. The riff came about from the line ‘Drivin’ with your eyes closed,’ which was my only lyrical contribution to the song. I just grooved.

“There are two solos — one that’s short, and the end solo that’s a little longer. I enjoyed working with synths on this material, so I wove the guitars around them. I went for very spare solos — there’s a lot of space between the notes. I remember going for what John Lennon did on ‘Come Together’ — a very stinging, sinuous sound.”

“I WILL NOT GO QUIETLY”

DON HENLEY, *I WILL NOT GO QUIETLY* (1989)

“I’m very proud of this song. It rocks like mad. I



TIM MOSENFELDER/GETTY IMAGES

Performing with Linda Ronstadt
at the Greek Theatre in Berkeley,
California, on June 1, 1984

programed the drums with my Akai MPC3000, got a beat going and then started playing guitar parts. The opening guitar that you hear is me using a vibrato pedal. I always loved that Lonnie Mack-type sound, so I took that and pushed it further and further. It took a long time to put together — probably three days of continuous work.

“There’s a buzz-saw guitar that really tears it up, and there’s probably three or four more guitars in unison on which I’m using the whammy. I had a Stratocaster with a whammy bar that had two or three of the springs taken out, so it had a lot of play to it. I think I used a Paul Reed Smith on some of the lead stuff. It’s pretty killer.

“Axl Rose was a big admirer of Don’s singing. He had grown up listening to the Eagles, and he came in to sing on the track. I remember he was kind of a shy fellow, but not impolite, and he sang beautifully. There was one funny moment with me: He really loved the drum track, and he asked me who played on it. I had to tell him, ‘Well, me, but they’re not real drums. It’s all programmed on the MPC3000.’

“BLAZE OF GLORY”

JON BON JOVI, *BLAZE OF GLORY* (1990)

“This was Jon’s debut solo record, and I co-produced it with him and played on it. Jon and I got along right away when we first spoke on the phone. He’s a lovely fellow, very smart. We talked about how to proceed with the album, and the first thing he said was, ‘Well, I want Jeff Beck to play on it and do the solos.’

I said, ‘Great,’ but then Jon said that Jeff wanted to use his own band. I told him this wasn’t a good idea. These were pop-rock songs, and we should use guys who play that music. I convinced them both that I should use other people, so I brought in guys like Kenny Aronoff [*drums*], Randy Jackson [*bass*] and Benmont Tench [*keyboards*].

“We had the greatest time cutting the basic tracks. They tore it up, and Jon was astonished how soulful they all were. Then Jeff Beck came in to do the solos. Jon was on deadline to get the album finished, so he was in one room doing vocals and he said, ‘You work with Jeff to get the solos.’ So it was me, Jeff Beck and Robbie Jacobs, the engineer.

“Jeff wasn’t rude, but he wasn’t impressed by much. He didn’t want to talk about his career or anything, but if you talked to him about hot rods, his eyes would light up. He’s a car guy. I had mentioned that I was in the movie *Spinal Tap*, and that impressed him. So I called up Christopher Guest and said, ‘You’ve got to come down and say hello to Jeff.’ And he did. Jeff was delighted to see him. That was a funny event.

“When Jeff played, I was startled. I was watching the grand master of the Stratocaster. Jeff was very efficient when playing his parts. He would set up, I’d run the tune for him, and he’d play one or two passes. Each take was a keeper — just totally great. Watching him play was amazing. The way he used his thumb, his vibrato, how he messed with the volume or the whammy bar. I didn’t have to tell him what to do or belabor anything. He just knew.” ■

GUITARIST
OF THE YEAR
2020

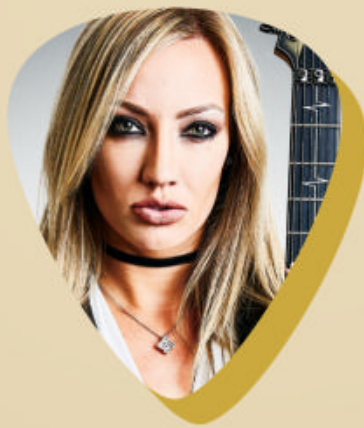
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Super Star

Favored by blues hounds and hard rockers alike, Fender's Super Reverb amp was no mere Bassman replacement but a fire-breathing wonder of an altogether different nature.

OFTEN VIEWED AS a tweed Bassman with reverb and tremolo, the iconic blackface Fender Super Reverb combo is really a model entirely unto itself, embodying elements from the musical-equipment maker's best designs of the late '50s and early '60s.

Amplifier development was moving at breakneck speed at Fender in the early '60s. In 1960, the company concluded its run of the tweed 4x10 Bassman combo, one of the greatest rock and roll amps of all time. Fender had already passed through its entirely new and short-lived line of brownface amps by late 1963 and early '64, when it launched a new range of what would become classic models. Among these, the 4x10 Super Reverb seemed to take on the mantle of the hallowed tweed Bassman. In fact, it was a different creation through and through.

The swift evolution toward the Super Reverb began with dramatic changes that took place throughout Fender's amp range from late 1959 through 1960. To introduce its

ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS

- > Dual channels with independent EQ and volume controls
- > Tube-driven reverb and opto-cell tremolo
- > Four 10-inch Oxford or CTS speakers
- > Approx. 40 watts from two 6L6GC output tubes
- > Four 7025/12AX7 preamp tubes and two 12AT7s (one for phase inverter)

new series of amps, Fender brought out the 1x15 Vibrasonic in late '59 and 4x10 Concert in early '60. Both were covered in a light-brown vinyl-backed cloth called Tolex, and featured dark-brown control panels in a revolutionary new mounting position: with the chassis at the top of the cabinet and the panel facing frontward. While the Concert model appeared to be stepping into the shoes of the tweed Bassman, which would be deleted at the end of that year, all brownface amps had considerably altered circuits, which gave

them a different sonic signature. In addition, the Concert lacked the Bassman's tube rectifier, and its tubes ran on higher voltages, making it a somewhat stiffer- and punchier-sounding amp. Meanwhile, the 2x10 tweed Super

transmuted into the 2x10 brown Super of '61-'63 and embraced many of the circuit changes adopted throughout the range.

Come late 1963, Fender was adding reverb to its core models, and the Super Reverb took on that lush effect, along with several other changes. It retained the GZ34 tube rectifier of the previous 2x10 Super but stepped up to the large, detailed soundstage presented by the 4x10 speaker format, making it one of Fender's most articulate and room-filling combos in the 40-watt range.

A FAVORITE OF MANY BLUES ARTISTS, THE SUPER REVERB HAS ALSO BEEN WELL SUITED TO ROCKERS, FROM THE MC5 TO TELEVISION

Aside from the obvious inclusion of reverb and tremolo, many significant differences between the tweed Bassman of '58-'60 and the blackface Super Reverb of the mid '60s will be obvious, even to those unfamiliar with Fender's circuit topologies of the day. These include the independent tone controls on the Super Reverb's two channels (with a middle control only on the Vibrato channel), its lack of a presence control and the additional bright switches on each channel. The latter pair of revisions provided a simpler and

cheaper way to get more high end from the amp when desired — and it often was back in the day.

In place of the tweed amps' 12AY7, the Super Reverb used a 7025 preamp tube (a more robust 12AX7) in the first gain stage of each

channel, and it employed these tubes differently as well. Half of each of the first two preamp tubes provided the first gain stage for each channel, while the second half was used as a gain-makeup stage following that channel's tone controls. And whereas the Bassman and other big tweed amps (as well as later Marshall and Vox amps) employed a cathode-follower tone stack, which used an entire preamp tube to drive the tone controls, the blackface amps sandwiched their tone controls between two more-traditional gain

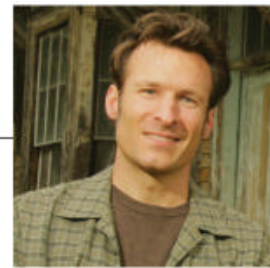




(top to bottom) The front and back of a 1964 blackface, and a 1968 silverface Super Reverb. (right) Television's Tom Verlaine (second from left) and Richard Lloyd (far right) perform with Super Reverbs at CBGB, New York City, 1976.

CLASSIC GEAR

BY DAVE HUNTER



stages within the circuit, and that EQ stage comes before each channel's volume control, rather than after it as in the tweed amps.

The entire configuration plays a big part in the archetypal blackface sound. Clear, crisp and articulate, yet with very playable dynamics and an appealing breakup when distortion sets in, the blackface sonic template is defined by a slightly scooped (midrange-recessed) voicing, with firm lows and somewhat glassy, sparkling highs. These characteristics not only make the Super Reverb great for twangy country or jangly West Coast guitar styles but also perfect for stinging blues and driving rock when cranked up, or even warm, rich jazz when reined in and EQ'd for a mellower voice.

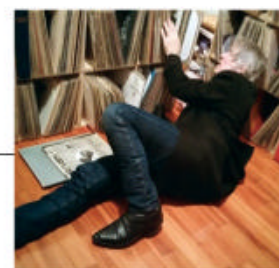
The Super Reverb's detailed soundstage and dynamic, articulate transition from clean into overdrive when played hard has made it a favorite of many blues guitarists throughout the years. Players like Muddy Waters, B.B. King, Mike Bloomfield, Robert Cray, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Derek Trucks and Joanne Shaw Taylor have plied their trade through the bold 4x10 beast. The amp has also proved surprisingly well suited to heavier rockers over the decades. Wayne Kramer and Fred Sonic Smith of the MC5 delivered the cranked-to-the-max fury of their 1970 album *Back in the USA* through Super

Reverbs, and Rush's Alex Lifeson often played his Gibson Les Paul and ES-335 through one. Tom Verlaine and Richard Lloyd of Television threaded their extended guitar duels through Super Reverbs, and indie- and alt-rockers from Lee Ranaldo to Johnny Marr to Ira Kaplan have also used this great blackface combo at various times in their careers.

Like the rest of Fender's amp line, the Super Reverb transitioned to the new silverface styling in 1968, consisting of a silver control panel and — for one year only — an aluminum “drip edge” trim around the perimeter of the grille cloth. Initially, the amp's circuit itself would change very little, making early silverface amps virtually the sonic equivalent of late blackface models.

Gradually, however, the now CBS-owned Fender company introduced circuit and component changes aimed largely at improving efficiency and creating greater headroom. According to many players, some of these modifications proved detrimental to the amps' overall tone. As a result, 1963–'67 models have earned vintage-classic status, inspiring the practice of converting later amps to blackface specifications. In 2001, Fender recognized this 4x10 combo's classic status by delivering the '65 Super Reverb Reissue, an appealing re-creation of the original amp. ■





Double Talk

Chet and Mark enjoy a six-string conversation on *Neck and Neck*.

RELEASED IN 1990 on Columbia Records, Chet Atkins and Mark Knopfler's *Neck and Neck* remains my all-time favorite Chet record. Although it's certainly not a quintessential example of his work and style, it's a world-class example of great craftsmanship and well-seasoned guitar playing. The masterful production was overseen by Knopfler.

Les Paul once said the first song of a set is when the audience is checking out what shoes you're wearing. In some ways, that's how I feel about the *Neck and Neck* opener, "Poor Boy Blues." Although this vocal track won Best Country Vocal Collaboration at the 1991 Grammy's, it's probably my least-favorite song on the record. That said, it's an easygoing invitation to the second track, "Sweet Dreams," which is so relaxed and lovely, it feels like one is laying on water while having a pleasant dream. The inventive arrangement exemplifies the powerful subtle touches all over *Neck and Neck*. The original tonic G major is prefaced by a B7 chord that pulls us to Em. Together with the following A7, this has a ii - V tonality, but the A7 still functions as the secondary dominant of the upcoming D7 chord. Forgive the theory analytics. More simply, Chet and Mark change one chord and the result is a whole new tonal landscape. It's a brilliant addition. Meanwhile the guitars play simple, captivating melody lines that I'd be hard-pressed to edit. I

couldn't veto one single note. Their musical lines are as memorable as the song's original melody. Underneath it all, the rhythm section softly percolates as Paul Franklin plays perfect steel pads and the legendary Floyd

Cramer brings his iconic stylistic piano fills. It's a little masterpiece.

Neck and Neck has many other high points. Chet displays his vaudevillian charm

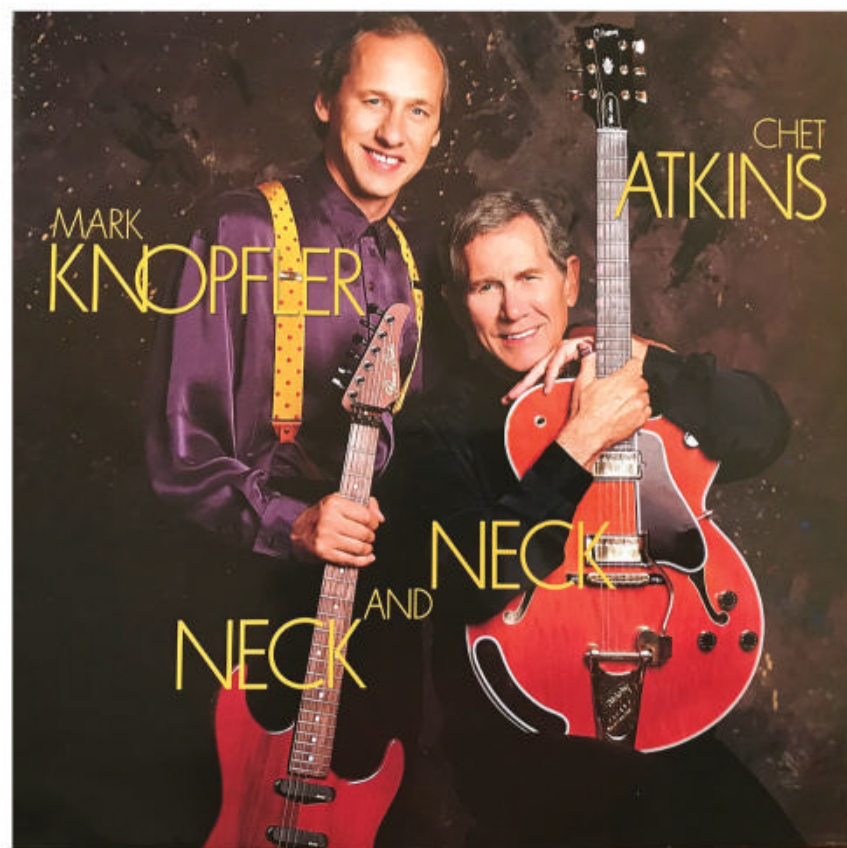
on "There'll Be Some Changes Made," and it's hard to believe the banter is anything but off-the-cuff. It's never tedious upon repeated listenings (see *Chester & Lester*). I chuckle every time Knopfler mumbles, "A little old?" when Chet sings about updating his style to fit current rock trends. What follows is a tour de force of guitar trade-offs, including double-stops, chicken picking, open-string cascades and the six-string kitchen sink. The result is a perfect conversation between these two guitar masters, without ego or sweaty ambition. Chet and Mark are simply speaking to each other while we voyeuristically eavesdrop.

Some classic Chet Atkins style is showcased on "I'll See You in My Dreams." The Chet two-beat serves as a canvas for 64th-note arpeggios, 6th chords and open-string ring phrases, while retaining an effortless, relaxed cool. There's a great version of Django Reinhardt's original composition "Tears," and while its changes

are necessarily easy for mere mortals, Chet and Mark make it sound like a nursery rhyme filled with a melancholy introspection. Mark O'Connor's fiddle dances playfully over the melody while the two guitars sound

simultaneously stark and huge.

To me, the great Ray Flacke original "Tahitian Skies" is the perfect guitar composition. On this track, the guitars'



sounds are perfectly clean but still have a depth of character, and sometimes join forces with pretty harmonies. The melody is something you think you've heard before but can't place. Truth be told, I've tried to rewrite "Tahitian Skies" numerous times: "Maceo" on *Orange*, "Alana" on *Dream Dictionary*, "Molly Harvey" from *Last Night, This Morning* and "D'Boat" from *Table for One* all owe a serious nod to "Tahitian Skies." I still haven't been able to seize the poignant beauty Chet and Mark seem to have effortlessly captured on the gem, but I keep trying.

Aside from being a great listen, *Neck and Neck* serves as an example of how a well-crafted guitar record can be totally satisfying. It never overexerts itself, and it never leaves the realm of trying to be beautiful. Moreover, Chet and Mark have nothing to prove. Every sound is in service of the songs. It's not a guitar record about guitar — it's a guitar record about music. 🎸

Look for Jim Campilongo and Luca Benedetti's new release, *Two Guitars*, at cityhallrecords.com on CD and vinyl.

**NECK AND NECK IS
AN EXAMPLE OF HOW
A WELL-CRAFTED
GUITAR RECORD CAN BE
TOTALLY SATISFYING**



WHACK JOB

BY TERRY CARLETON



PHOTO BY MAY YAM

Cloud Nine

This new, crowd-sourced Eastwood Devo guitar is a heavenly re-creation of Bob Mothersbaugh's original.

AS A GEAR collector and trader, Michael Robinson lamented that so many cool guitars from the outskirts of the electric guitar's Golden era are either rare, unplayable or both. As the head of the Eastwood Guitar Company, which he founded in 2001, Robinson remedied the situation by creating beautiful and — just as important — excellent-playing re-creations of electric guitars from storied brands like Mosrite, Teisco and Valco. More recently, he launched Eastwood's Bring It Back program to crowd-source limited-edition re-creations of vintage classics. Customers request a guitar they'd like to see revived, and if a model makes the list a few times, Robinson lets interested buyers pony up a refundable \$150 deposit. If enough deposits are received, the model goes into limited production. Once it's ready, buyers are billed, and the guitars are shipped.

When this Devo Cloud Guitar was proposed, I was among the folks who decided to make it happen. Now that I've got it, I couldn't be more thrilled. Robinson's on-demand system can put a brand-new whack job in your hands. And as whack jobs go, this guitar is pretty awesome.

WEIRDO FACTOR

The Devo Cloud is based on a custom Ibanez created for Devo guitarist Bob Mothersbaugh, a.k.a. Bob 1, in 1979. His spec called for a guitar

shaped like a potato, with loads of electronic features, including an onboard distortion circuit. Unfortunately, the finished instrument was blue and looked more like a cloud. Undaunted, Bob played the so-called Spud guitar — it can be heard in the opening riff to "Girl U Want" and seen in the song's music video — before eventually selling it. While Eastwood retained the original's bizarre-looking body shape, that's the only thing weird here.

PLAYABILITY AND SOUND

The Devo Cloud was impressive right out of the box. Its lightweight mahogany body is capped with a maple top, the double-bound maple set neck plays fast and smooth, and it has 22 polished medium-jumbo frets laid into a nice slab of rosewood. The enclosed tuners are reminiscent of Grovers and work smoothly. The Cloud shipped with GHS .010s, and no setup was necessary.

The electronics are where the guitar really shines. The pickups are tapped — pulling the tone knob up splits the coils — and can be played as humbuckers or single-coils and out-of-phase. Each unit has its own volume

control and phase selector, and the active tone control is global. These choices sound great clean or with distortion. The clean tones vary from jazzy and full to a thinner, almost Fender-like sound, thanks to the coil taps. With distortion, the humbuckers sound like you'd expect. It's in the tapped and/or phased positions that the fun begins, allowing scooped tones somewhere between dual- and single-coil territory. And while Eastwood omitted the distortion circuit found in the

original, it did include its WarpDrive, an aggressive treble booster that beautifully overdrove my Vox AC30.

VALUE

Remarkably for a limited-edition guitar,

the Devo Cloud was priced at just \$749.95, and it came with a gig bag.

WHY IT RULES

The Devo Cloud's odd shape makes it stand out, but belies the serious musicality that it offers. Visit eastwoodguitars.com to see the guitars currently offered through Bring It Back, and by all means, tell Robinson other vintage dreams you'd like to see re-created. As for Bob 1, you'll be happy to know he and his Spud guitar were eventually reunited.

Got a whack job of your own? Feel free to get in touch with me at rtcarleton@gmail.com. Who knows? Maybe I'll write about it. ■

UNFORTUNATELY, BOB'S GUITAR LOOKED MORE LIKE A CLOUD THAN A POTATO





GUITAR PLAYER EXCLUSIVE

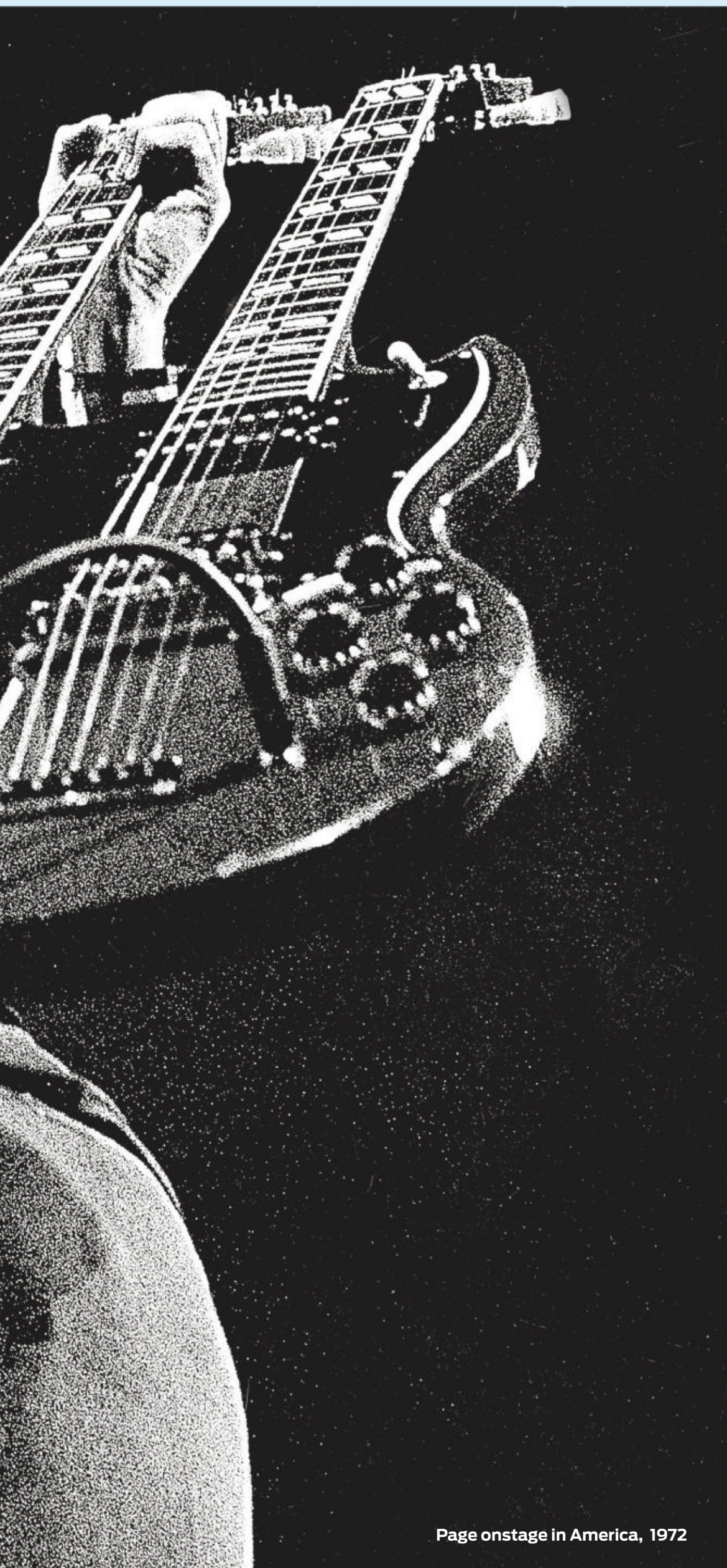
PAGE *in* HISTORY

In his 60-year career, **Jimmy Page** helped define the guitar's role in British pop and forged the sound of heavy metal. In this new interview, he reveals the roots of his six-string passion and the driving goals that made Led Zeppelin a defining force in rock and roll.

BY IAN FORTNAM

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROSS HALFIN





Page onstage in America, 1972

ROBERT KNIGHT ARCHIVE/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES



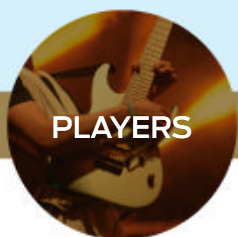
HE BELONGS TO an exclusive group of guitarists who rose to prominence in the 1960s and became the leading influencers of modern music for decades to come. But Jimmy Page looks back on his nearly 60-year career with a simple appreciation for the fact that it happened at all.

“I’m just blessed to have had a life where I was able to make my living out of my passion,” Page says today. “Not only that, but to have been able to have made some important musical statements along the way in various genres, and to have made people happy and inspired people in the way that I was inspired. And that passes on the baton to the next generation.”

Reflection has been on Page’s mind quite a lot lately as he’s prepared a new book for publication. Titled *Jimmy Page: The Anthology*, the new tome from Genesis Publications finds the former Led Zeppelin guitarist delving into the iconic guitars, stage costumes, vinyl records and other mementos from his long career. The book is the follow-up to his Genesis book of 2010, a photographic autobiography that presented a visual history of his musical life.

In the same way, *Jimmy Page: The Anthology* is a personal journey through the objects and artifacts of one of rock music’s most important guitarists, narrated entirely in Page’s own words, and with contextual photography spanning six decades. Beyond the photos of Page and his various groups, photos of his guitars — including his “Dragon” Fender Telecaster and “Number One” Gibson Les Paul Standard — are what stand out. As Page notes, “I was seduced by the beauty of what a six-string instrument could do, whether it was acoustic or electric, and I was never happy to stay in one style for too long. I always wanted to challenge myself.”

As the book came toward its release date, we were fortunate to speak with Page about the book, his career and the insights that led him to lay the foundation for what became heavy metal. He was generous with his time and memories. As you’ll read in the following extensive interview conducted by contributing writer Ian Fortnam, Page touches on many aspects of his career, from his nascent interest in rock and roll to Led Zeppelin’s influential reign in the 1970s, with plenty of discussion along the way about guitars, production and the concepts that led him to forge the sound of heavy metal.



The first image in *Anthology* is a photograph of you singing in the choir at St. Barnabas

Church in Epsom, presumably your first experience of public performance. Were you a willing chorister, or did you need coercion from your parents?

No, not at all from my parents, actually. I voluntarily went to the church and joined up with the choir. I was compelled to. One reason why I would do that is because, in those days, rock and roll appeared on the airwaves and then it was stamped on by the BBC, et cetera, so you would find ways to actually hear music. We were lucky in Epsom, because there was an external swimming baths, and it had an area where there were amusements — pinball machines and a jukebox. It was like a pilgrimage to the jukebox, but the big boys used to go there, and I was quite young at that point. The church had a youth club where there'd be a dance and they'd play records, but to be in the youth club, you had to be in the choir. And I enjoyed being a choirboy, actually. I really did.

And you got to wear the surplice [the white linen vestment worn by choristers]. It must have been your first excuse to wear fancy clothes.

Absolutely. You're right. You can see a connection, can't you, decking oneself out for the performance? *[laughs]*

As a child, you experienced hi-fi sound for the first time courtesy of your neighbor's stereo. It seems that from the very beginning you weren't just entranced by music but by the process of capturing sound, because, in many ways, therein lies the magic.

Yes. Thinking back to write the book, I thought about pivotal points. And when I lived in Feltham [*Page's home prior to Epsom*], my parents and I were invited to someone's house just down the road, and he had this stereo setup. What he played at the time were some sound-effects



With Carter-Lewis and the Southerners, one of the British rock groups Page (center, back) performed with, in 1964

records, the classic one of course being of the train going across the speakers — that sort of thing. And for a young boy, this was pretty amazing stuff. I was probably about eight, and he played some classical music. So you really felt the depth of it, and there's absolutely no doubt that had a serious effect on me.

What is interesting in the equation is that there wasn't anybody in my family who played guitar. I had an uncle who played pub piano. He could play various songs, but he never taught me anything. He wasn't actually willing to teach, but when we moved from Feltham to Miles Road, in Epsom, there was a guitar left behind in our new house by the

previous owners. And that was like a really weird intervention, where the guitar sort of found me.

That is such a great Excalibur story.

It honestly is. It's like, whether I wanted to be a musician or not, I was going to be one. But yes, I was fascinated by the whole process of being enveloped by sound and being part of it. And also, being in a choir, there's the whole ambience of it. It's funny how I was picking it up as a kid. And once it came to the point of hearing rock and roll

coming from America, it was just a youth explosion of music. I'm so fortunate to have been born at that time, to witness that moment. It was like a line: On one side of it, everything is very quaint and old-fashioned, and suddenly there's this whole explosion of adrenaline, music and attitude. And of course we got skiffle as well, so you're listening to all this stuff, and it's like it came from another planet. With skiffle, Lonnie Donegan made it look like it was possible to access the music. And I had a guitar sitting in the house untuned; nobody had ever played it. And then there was a

connection I made with this friend Rod at school, who showed me a few chords. And that was it. Once I heard rock and roll, I was infected by it, really, and there wasn't going to be a cure. I didn't wanna be cured.

When your Excalibur guitar outlived its usefulness, it was your parents that bought you your first proper guitar, your Hofner. They appear to have supported your musical endeavors from day one.

They certainly did. I always had to do my schoolwork as well, but they could see that all of the rest of the time I was

obsessed with the guitar. And when I started playing songs that they'd heard

on the radio, they were like, "Wait a minute — he's really getting into this seriously!" I don't know where it ever went, but that original guitar wasn't the easiest to play. The strings were miles away from the

fingerboard — not too far away that they would inhibit one from wanting to play it, but my parents said, "We'd like to get you a better guitar," and the Hofner was the particular one they agreed to get. My dad could understand that, suddenly, his son's playing the guitar that was left behind in the house, and Christmas is

"THERE WAS A GUITAR LEFT BEHIND IN OUR NEW HOUSE. IT'S LIKE, WHETHER I WANTED TO BE A MUSICIAN OR NOT, I WAS GOING TO BE ONE"



coming, and my birthday wasn't far away, so the Hofner came as a multiple present. [Page was born January 9, 1944.] And boy, oh boy, I was really thrilled to bits to have that.

But then it got to the point where all the music I was listening to was being played on solid-bodied guitars, and so I said, "I need to trade in my guitar." And their attitude was, "You can do that, but you're going to have to pay for it." In those days, up to the age of 21, your parents had to sign for you to pay on an installment plan, and so my dad said, "I'll be the guarantor, but you'll have to pay for it." And that was fine. Those were the rules, and I stuck to them.

So from your early teens, you were devoted to the guitar. Other than those first few chords, you were largely self-taught, with a certain amount of help from Bert Weedon's *Play in a Day* guitar guide.

Yes, you'll find all the guitarists of that day had that book, because it did literally what it said. You could play in a day, or two, once you got the guitar in tune, and it was just a really useful thing.

Equipped with your solid-bodied Futurama, you graduated through the Paramounts to Red E. Lewis and the Redcaps at the age of just 15. Both groups seem very much based in rock and roll and rockabilly, somewhere between Johnny Burnette's Trio and Gene Vincent.

Yes, it's definitely that sort of thing. I was listening to Presley, obviously, all the stuff that Scotty Moore was doing, and I was listening to Ricky Nelson for James Burton, and, quite right, Johnny Burnette and the Rock and Roll Trio. When I heard that, that seemed to be totally in another zone from any other rockabilly I'd ever heard. The guitar playing was so abstract compared to any guitar playing I'd heard. At that point, I hadn't really come across the blues; all those early sets with the Paramounts were definitely rock and roll and not skiffle. I was playing with a band as an opening act on a Friday or Saturday night and I got headhunted by Red E. Lewis to



BOB KING/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES

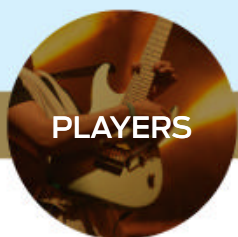
Page onstage with the Yardbirds playing his 1959 Fender "Mirror" Telecaster with a bow, Sydney, Australia, January 1967

go and play in London, which was pretty amazing for somebody who was still at school. And then I was asked to join Neil Christian and the Crusaders, and there's quite a lot that goes on at that point, because by then I'd found the [Gibson Les Paul Custom] Black Beauty.

Simultaneous with your musical journey, you were graduating through epic mythology and poetry, from *The Odyssey* and *Beowulf* to *On the Road* and the Beats — literary influences arguably as essential as the blues to the band that Led Zeppelin became.

Well, yes, I guess so. I see your point, but how it works is by the time Red E. Lewis becomes Neil Christian, I've got a

pal who was collecting rock and roll records, and then he stopped buying all his White records and only bought Black. So it was gospel, R&B and blues, and he was getting records from the States. So I fell into it really luckily. He was living literally just down the road from me, so I could go and listen to this amazing stuff. I soon realized that there's a poetry within the blues as well. The path to that was that Presley had covered a number of blues artists on his early Sun records, and that was really great. But during the process of that, people were going, "Who is Sleepy John Estes? Who is Arthur 'Big Boy' Crudup?" So my friend was getting all of these sort of things in, and that's where I



heard everything in advance of what was coming later. I couldn't necessarily play it, but I started to get my head around it. So I had rockabilly and rock and roll, Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis, and then it started moving into the blues: Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Albert King...

You went to the American Folk Blues Festival in Manchester in 1962, which seems to have been a pivotal moment. [The event featured Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, Memphis Slim, Willie Dixon, T-Bone Walker and many others.] Blues seemed to usurp rock and roll in your affections and indirectly led you to art school in 1963.

Well, in the Neil Christian and the Crusaders set lists, we were doing "Train Kept A-Rolling," "Honey Hush" and that sort of thing, but we were also doing Chuck Berry's "No Money Down" and Elmore James' "Dust My Broom." But when you were playing dance halls, which we were, they just wanted Top-20 material, and you can tell that from the Beatles' first album [1963's *Please Please Me*]. They were covering the Tamla stuff, "A Taste of Honey" and the like. But I was really keen to play the blues. And when I say "the blues," definitely the Chess catalog, and it was in advance of everything that was going to come.

And down south, obviously, it was the Stones who really brought that into the spotlight, but we were in advance of that. At the Manchester festival, I met Mick and Keith. They didn't have the Stones then; they were just blues enthusiasts on a pilgrimage, like all of us, and we were in a house where the guy had just got the Howlin' Wolf album with the rocking chair on the cover [Wolf's eponymous second album of 1962, a collection of 12 previously released Chess singles]. Nobody had heard it up until then, but we all heard it that day. So yes, that was one life-changing thing, but everything is changing your perspective on things, broadening your outlook and opening it out.

Around this time you also had your first taste of production with Chris Farlowe and the Thunderbirds. How did that

come about? You were able to finance the session, so clearly Neil Christian and the Crusaders were starting to bring home the bacon by then.

Chris Farlowe and the Thunderbirds were one of the bands that used to come down from London and play at the Ebbisham Hall in Epsom every now and again, certainly once a month if not once a fortnight, and they were phenomenal. Their musical taste was fantastic, and I always thought they were an incredible band. They had an upright bass, drums, and this guy Bobby Taylor on guitar, and he was something special. I always had a thing for that band. I had a little bit of

money, not much. We went into a demo studio, and they had about an hour. Instead of doing a couple of songs, we got the whole album done. Even though I was paying for it, technically it's my first production. I know that Chris Farlowe got a record deal on the strength of that, because his first record was called *Air Travel* [a play off the name *Thunderbirds*], and I'm pretty sure that was a result of somebody going, "My god, we've got to have this singer!" But they did the classic thing of sticking him in with studio musicians, pretty much the same way as they did with Neil Christian. We weren't even there.

GIJSBERT HANEKROOT/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES



Onstage at Oude Rai, Amsterdam, May 27, 1972

Soon enough, you became one of the most in-demand session players. Aside from your obvious technical chops, what setup constituted the signature Jimmy Page sound palette that kept producers coming back?

The electric guitar that I've got at that point is the Gibson Black Beauty [*Les Paul Custom*], so the combination is the Black Beauty and the DeArmond foot pedal [*the 610 Tone & Volume Pedal*]. I'd worked out a whole style around that, so that was my signature.

The bottom line is that, in the studio world, all the musicians were considerably older than I was. The youngest one would have been seven years older than I was when I first ventured in there, and their points of reference would only have been more or less back in the Bill Haley days — maybe a bit of Eddie Cochran with Jim Sullivan, but they weren't cutting their teeth on all the blues stuff and the R&B and everything else.

So, suddenly, I come in as this new kid on the block, and I've got all of these strings to my bow. I was playing fingerstyle guitar and slide, and I was playing harmonica. I look back at this period and I think, How the hell did I do that? How did I manage to go in there, faced with nothing but a chord chart? It wasn't music to begin with, and if you made mistakes or you mucked about, you would never be seen again. So clearly I was able to deliver. And if they asked me, "Can you come up with something on this?" I'd say, "Sure!"

With music changing so rapidly in the early to mid '60s, I imagine you were unique in the session world for your ability to speak this new musical language. You had the blues in your vocabulary, while your contemporary veteran players were essentially products of Tin Pan Alley.

Yes, I think you've hit the nail on the head. I could fit in right across the board in the session world, and I was really, really in there. There's no doubt about it — I was officially in.



Led Zeppelin in 1968 (from left) John Paul Jones, Robert Plant, John Bonham and Page

And your taste stretched into areas that were almost uniquely exotic for the early '60s. You had a sitar very early on. You listened to Alan Lomax's field recordings, flamenco, and Indian and Arabic music, elements of which you'd later incorporate into your recordings with the Yardbirds and Zeppelin.

I'd listened to Indian music. I'd accessed that on the radio, and this was way in advance of the Beatles. My father worked in a factory near Heathrow where they made wire and cables. Not guitar cables — big industrial stuff. He was the personnel manager, and there were a lot of Asians working there, and I said, "Dad, would you ask around and see if anyone there knows anything about sitars? See if anyone can access one from over there." And there was a guy who said he's going to get one sent over, and it arrived in this makeshift plywood box. In those days you could freight things and people would take care. Now it would probably be smashed to pieces. It had loads of straw in the box, and I took out the sitar, and there was this beautiful thing. I had absolutely no idea how to play it. There are all these sympathetic strings on a sitar, so as I plucked one string, the

whole thing started to resonate and I thought, Oh my God!

Sonically, all my learning was from listening to things and making my own interpretations of what I heard, but this was something else! Of course, later I got to meet Ravi Shankar at a concert in London. My friend and I were the only two young people there, and he gave me the tuning for the sitar.

Now, this is how the weird synchronicity happens: The maker of this particular sitar was Rikhi Ram, and it wasn't an expensive, top-of-the-range sitar. But when I went to the musical instrument exhibit at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art [Play It Loud:

Instruments of Rock & Roll, which was on exhibit from April to October 2019], they had a beautifully crafted sitar of Ravi's, and there was the same name of maker: Rikhi Ram! Can you imagine what an experience it was to actually see that? Because I had no idea who makes sitars. So, oh my God, what a moment that was. I've had a bit of a charmed life, no doubt about that.

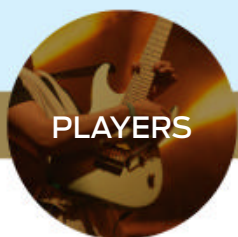
Of course, as far as the 1960s went, your work with the Yardbirds and Led Zeppelin is just the tip of the iceberg. Presumably you could have subsisted very comfortably on session and production work alone whether you'd joined a band or not?

Yeah, but when I'm in the Yardbirds, I'm still having to do sessions at that time.

For example, I did the Joe Cocker *With A Little Help From My Friends* album [recorded early 1968, and released in 1969]. But once it gets to the point of Led Zeppelin and I know

what I want to do as far as production goes, I don't do any more sessions, and I don't want to do any more productions for anybody else. What I want to do is have everything that I can possibly bring to the party totally in-house.


**"ONCE I'D HEARD
ROCK AND ROLL, I WAS
INFECTED BY IT. I DIDN'T
WANNA BE CURED"**



Obviously, you played on a succession of historic sessions with everyone from Tom Jones through the Who, the Rolling Stones and Cliff Richard to David Bowie. What was the most valuable lesson you learned during this period?

Whenever I listened to recordings, whether they be classical or electronic, Little Richard or Howlin' Wolf or Johnny Burnette, I'd always been interested in listening to the ambience of the room and how people would record. So I would listen to Les Paul and get a real master class in how things are done there. I'd done home recordings, but after a while, once I got into the studio, I could talk to the engineers in between sessions and ask, "How's this done? How's that done?" After a year or two, it eventually got to the point where I could play them records and ask, "How is that literally done?" I'd have my own idea of how it was done, but I would learn how it was done technically.

So, bit by bit, I was learning that aspect of it during what I would call my self-taught apprenticeship of being a studio musician. I learned the whole studio discipline of how quickly and efficiently you could do things and still be able to keep making things up on the spot, instantly. But then I also learned how to record and produce sessions, and how *not* to record and produce things. So it really was a great apprenticeship.

With all that studio experience you picked up along the way, might the Yardbirds have lasted longer with you in the production chair rather than Mickie Most [the British pop producer behind many successful English acts, including the Animals, Herman's Hermits and Donovan]?

Well, look, Mickie Most was really, really good in his field. He knew how to do singles. We could list so many artists that he was really marvelous for, but when there was this break within the


**"WE'D GO OUT ONSTAGE
EVERY NIGHT NOT
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COMING OFF AT THE END"**

Yardbirds, he was given a package of Jeff Beck and the Yardbirds [*Beck and the Yardbirds split in 1966, leaving Page as the group's sole guitarist*]. So he had two artists that he needed material for. He clearly saw Jeff on an instrumental path, which was right, but for the Yardbirds, the singles started to grate. Up to this point, the Yardbirds had had such a

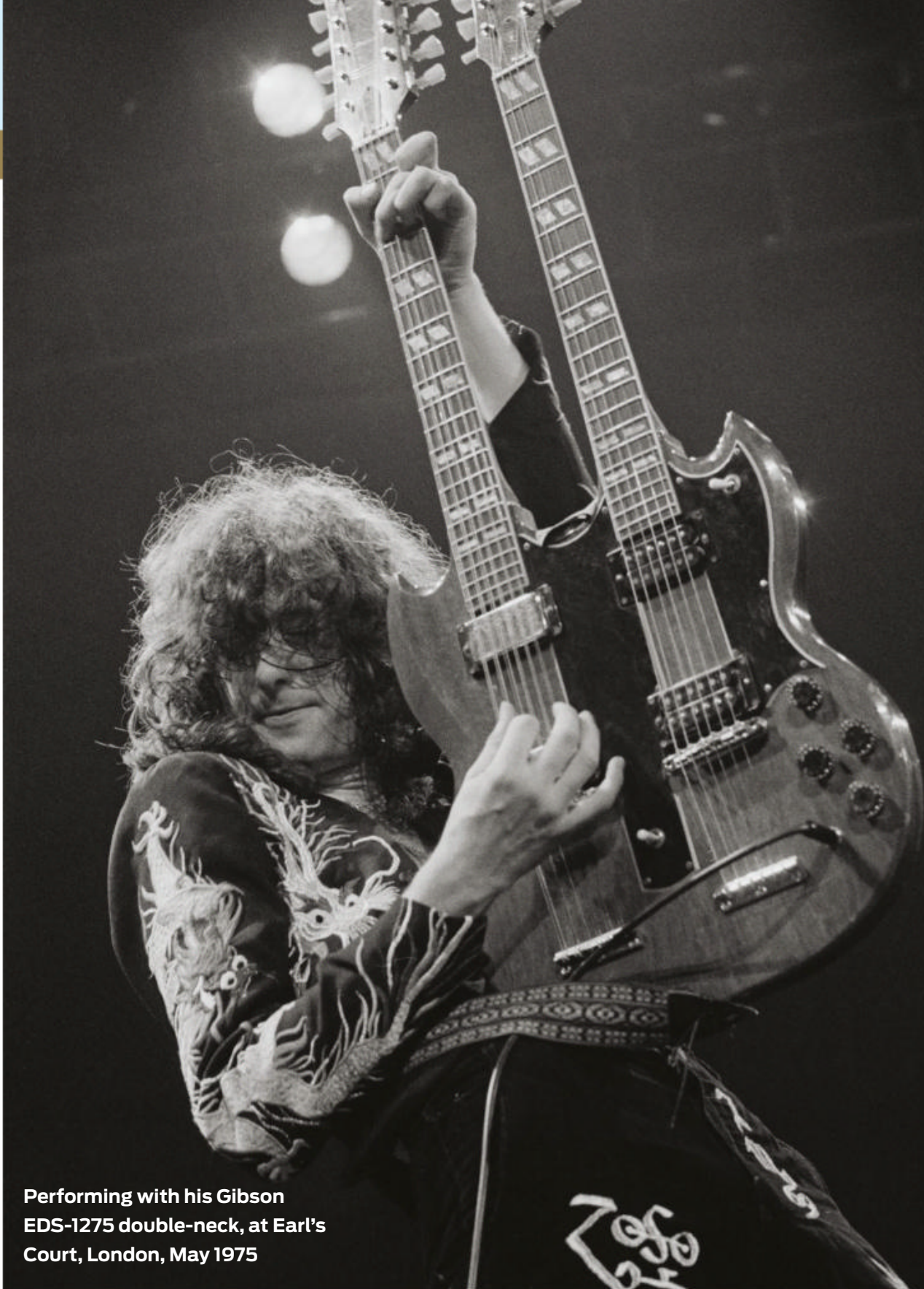
wonderful catalog. When Jeff and I were in the band, we did "Happenings Ten Years Time Ago," which was pretty cool. But when we did an album, it was really telling, because Mickie wasn't interested in

albums; he was only interested in doing singles. So, bit by bit, we started to record tracks which we should never have done. The Yardbirds had done all of this magical stuff, and then to do things like "Ten Little Indians," it was just absolutely wrong. I'm just really annoyed that they're even out there. It was said that they wouldn't be released, and they were. I don't think that helped the spirit of the band. I did help put things together on the *Little Games* album, because Mickie wasn't there a lot of the time, but I wasn't officially in a production role.

The more I listen to Led Zeppelin, the more I reach the conclusion that the heaviness of those recordings isn't about volume but the richness of the

MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES

Performing with his Gibson EDS-1275 double-neck, at Earl's Court, London, May 1975



guitar tones and the method of recording the drums, especially on the recordings made at Headley Grange. [Parts of Led Zeppelin III, Led Zeppelin IV, Houses of the Holy and Physical Graffiti were composed and/or recorded at Headley, a former English workhouse.] As the band's producer, what influenced you when you were mapping out the Zeppelin sound? Or was it a simple flash of inspiration when faced with the potential of those four musicians?

I would say the first album has got so many ideas in it, and you can hear that those ideas develop through the second album, the third album and all the rest of it. So it becomes a point where I've tried with "Babe, I'm Gonna Leave You,"

with the power of John Bonham, to build the drama of the song. I was using the same aspect with things like "Ramble On," with "What Is and What Should Never Be," and that sort of thing, where you have these choruses which are not really super loud, but it's really the intensity that gives it the drive. So you can start playing with the dynamics of everything. I got this right from the early days of the first album. It seemed to be ahead of the game of what others were doing, and that's always good, because you're turning people on, musicians as well as the listening public.

When people talk about the birth of heavy metal, they always focus on

people turning the amps up. That heaviness is purely a product of volume, but listening to early Zeppelin, you can hear that the hugeness of the drums is enhanced by the ambience of the room.

Well, John increased the size of his drum kit, so by the time you get to, say, Headley Grange and another drum kit arrives, the drums were larger sizes. But even with the smaller kit for the first album, he had volume to his drums. It didn't sound like a little jazz kit. He knew how to play with his own dynamics. To get more level out of the drums, he would do that with his tuning. As we were playing, he'd hit a heavy bass drum — just one beat — and you'd feel it go through your body. He was such a technician. He was absolutely unbelievable. He was somebody who could do a roll on bass drum with one foot. I mean, it's just unheard of! People say they can do it, but you see how long they can do it for.

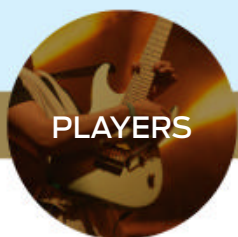
You've never made life easy for yourself, using the violin bow in tandem with the Echoplex and Sonic Wave Theremin. There are a lot of variables in there, but like the intrinsically improvisational nature of Zeppelin, you're constantly challenging yourself. Was the magic of playing with Zeppelin in the fluid nature of what would happen from performance to performance?

I was always trying to improvise, even in the days of Red E. Lewis and the Red Caps. I'd try to play faithful reproductions of the solos on those records that we'd cover, and then I'd put in my own little interpretations. Being a session musician? It was improvising all the way through, and then it comes to the Yardbirds — same deal. But then it comes to the point in Zeppelin where you've got a tour de force like "Dazed and Confused," and it's 25 or 27 minutes long in concert, but it's only two verses. There's literally only two verses to it!

So yes, it was challenging, but it was fun. Plus, you had the musicians who were really up for it as well. John Bonham was super up for all this stuff, and it was great for Robert because he could call out for a number at any point



ROBERT KNIGHT ARCHIVE/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES



that he wanted to. And John Paul Jones was great. We had a great rhythm section there, and it was a great power trio for Robert. And yeah, we could go through all these great phases of different styles and attitudes to music. But yes, the improvisation — that “Dazed and Confused” thing — we’d go out onstage every night not knowing what was going to happen between going on and coming off at the end. Every night was different, and it was brilliant.

How did you come to use the Parsons-White B-Bender, which makes a big appearance on *In Through the Out Door*?

I heard the Byrds’ [1970] *Untitled* album — it’s a live album — and I thought, What the hell is he doing? And it turned out it was Clarence White playing on the Gene Parsons and Clarence White invention, which was his idea to make the string pitch up. You can hear Clarence use it on the Byrds’ *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*, but the live album is where I first heard it and thought, I can’t fathom this out — I don’t know how it’s done.

Albert Lee was the first person I saw using the string bender, when he was playing with Eric Clapton. I was chatting with him, and he said, “I’ve got one of these.” He let me have a go on it. I managed to get one, and then I started playing it in the days of Led Zeppelin. There’s a lot of it on the ’77 tour. It’s featured all over the Stockholm material, the stuff that occurs on *Coda* and the *In Through the Out Door* album.

When John Bonham died, Zeppelin were about to embark upon rehearsals for an American tour, your first in three years. Obviously, the tour never took place, but what were your feelings leading up to those fateful rehearsals at Bray Studios? Would Led Zeppelin have continued to make further albums, or were you already itching for fresh challenges?

John Bonham and I discussed what sort of shape the next album should be, because each album was different to the last. It just so happened that *Presence* was basically a guitar album, so as John Paul



Jones had his Dream Machine [*the Yamaha GX-1 synthesizer, used extensively on In Through the Out Door*], it was only right to do a keyboard album. So we had been discussing what we’d do for the next one, and there were definite ideas of what we could do.

You worked more than most with guitar synthesizers, especially on the soundtrack to *Death Wish II* [Page composed the soundtrack to this 1982 Charles Bronson action film]. You’ve always embraced innovation, but am I right in thinking that you’d rather simply investigate the possibilities of a guitar, a valve amp and some old-school effects pedals?

Yeah, that’s true. I do like the sound of a guitar coming through an amp. I don’t like all that sort of rack equipment — the digital stuff. I’d much prefer to plug a guitar into an amp. Say you’ve got three amplifiers you’ve never played through before. You plug into one: “Oh, that’s good.” You plug into another and

say, “Oh, dear, no! Gosh, what’s the third one?” And suddenly the third one just sings. It’s pushing the sound back at you, and there’s an interaction between the pickups of the guitar, and there’s this sort of loop that just inspires you to be playing. You know what I mean? So, yes, I do prefer that. There are so many ways to do it, of course. You get different effects and you make up things around those, but I do prefer the raw edge of actually playing straight through an amplifier. Yeah, I do.

In 1981, you, Chris Squire and Alan White teamed up as XYZ. The recording sessions seemed to bear significant fruit, yet the music remains unreleased. In *Anthology*, you teasingly hint that it might come out one day. Have you any plans to return to the recordings any time soon?

It was the very first thing that I did after a break of not playing the guitar after losing John. I got the guitar from storage and started playing it again, and it was



Page and Plant at Led Zeppelin's trouble-plagued Live Aid reunion, in Philadelphia, July 13, 1985

EBET ROBERTS/GETTY IMAGES

an instant connection. I had a studio, and because I'd been very friendly with Chris Squire, he said, "We've got some stuff. Let's come together and see what we can do." And he had this novel name: Because there were two former members of Yes, he thought it should be XYZ, as in ex-Yes and Zeppelin. Which was a bit of fun.

And they were such great musicians that it really did me a world of good. I had to be on exactly the same level as they were, so the level of concentration and commitment to it was really great. But what I don't know is what bits and pieces they brought to the party that may have ended up on Yes records. One that we did there as an instrumental eventually came out as "Fortune Hunter" with the Firm.

But those guys were just in a league of their own. So it's really good music. I haven't actually returned to it yet. I will, because I know how darn good it is, and then I suppose one would just have to speak to those that were involved, and

families and stuff, and see whether it could come out one day. I hope it does. There is a cassette version of it that is terrible quality, and it's out there on the internet. Nevertheless, it's fascinating to listen to.

Led Zeppelin reunited in 2007 for the Ahmet Ertegun Tribute at the O2. In *Anthology* you reveal that you would like to have done two nights, but might you have actually preferred to do 10?

Initially there were going to be two nights, with us on one night, along with other Atlantic artists. The idea was that we would do a half-hour set, but I said, "I'm not rehearsing to do a half-hour set! We've got Live Aid to correct, and the Atlantic 40th." [Led Zeppelin's reunion performance at Live Aid on July 13 1985, was marred by a lack of rehearsals, Page's out-of-tune guitar and Plant's hoarse vocals. Their Atlantic 40th Anniversary performance on May 14, 1988, suffered from a disagreement between Page and Plant as they walked to the stage about performing "Stairway to Heaven," and Jones' keyboards were missing from the live television feed.] I thought, We're gonna go out there and stand proud, you know? So that means we've got to do a proper set, and that's what we did.

So, yeah, a second night would have been really, really good. In fact, the following day, I started to get really jittery at 7 o'clock, and I thought, I know what it is. It's because I'd paced myself toward doing the O2, and now there isn't an O2 to do!

With Led Zeppelin being such an instinctively improvisational beast, I'd imagine that when it's roused into full wakefulness, it's not easy to put it back to sleep without running its full course.

I think that's true. We'd had a lot of fun up to that point in the rehearsals, because mainly it was the three of us. There'd be Jason [Bonham], John Paul Jones and myself, playing together so

that Jason felt really part of the band, as opposed to like he's there because he's John's son. He was there because he was a damn good drummer, and it was right that he should be sitting in that seat. But he needed to know that. And yeah, a lot of rehearsals went into it. We were ready for it. It had been said that there was going to be a tour. There weren't any dates put in, but obviously we had honed ourselves to the point where we were ready. But then there has not been any discussion about any tour ever since, nor will there be. So there you go. It's just one of those weird, odd things in the world of Led Zeppelin — really, another part of the Led Zeppelin phenomenon.

What's next? Are you working on any projects at present?

One of the things I was complaining about before we all had to lock down was that I wasn't having enough time to play guitar. I was able to actually say,

"Well, this is it. You can do it every day now." So it's given me an opportunity to reconnect properly with the guitar.

Anything solid you can tell us about, the sort of ideas you're playing with?

No, not really, but obviously I'm never

not doing something, and I'm never not doing something that's going to surprise people. It's like when I did a spoken word project with my girlfriend [2019's *Catalyst*, with poet Scarlett Sabet]. Nobody was expecting me to do that, because nobody had done that before. It was really wonderful to do. But I've always got ideas, and the day that I wake up and haven't got any ideas of what to do and how to do it, that for me will be a very sad day. And that day looks like it's some way off yet.

Deep down, are you still that enthusiastic young lad who's curious to unlock every new possibility that lies within your guitar?

No. But I'm his great-grandfather. ■

"THERE HAS NOT BEEN ANY DISCUSSION ABOUT ANY TOUR EVER SINCE, NOR WILL THERE BE. SO THERE YOU GO"



JAZZ MESSENGER

ON *ANGELS AROUND*, KURT ROSENWINKEL RETURNS TO THE TRIO SETTING AND REMINDS US WHY HE REMAINS ONE OF TODAY'S MOST INFLUENTIAL JAZZ GUITARISTS.

BY BILL MILKOWSKI

PHOTOGRAPH BY RENATO NUNES

EVERY GENERATION OF jazz guitar has its magnet — that unique, new voice so powerful that its gravitational pull becomes unavoidable. Pat Metheny was the magnet for aspiring guitarists coming up from the late '70s to early '80s. Wes Montgomery and Jim Hall both exerted a profound pull on the previous generation of guitarists, including Metheny himself, and Charlie Christian's influence was all-pervasive before Wes and Jim had come along.

Certainly one of the most influential jazz guitarists of the past 20 years has been Philadelphia-born Kurt Rosenwinkel. His impact can be felt throughout the country's conservatories and music schools, and his signature warm-toned, reverb-drenched legato lines can be detected in the playing of several rising star guitarists. The Berklee College of Music grad apprenticed with vibraphonist Gary Burton, then joined drummer-composer Paul Motian's Electric Bebop Band before coming to wider attention



with his own releases as a leader on Verve Records, which include 2000's *The Enemies of Energy*, 2001's *The Next Step* and 2003's genre-defying Q-Tip-produced *Heartcore* (all of which paired him with kindred spirit and fellow virtuoso, tenor saxophonist Mark Turner). While 2008's *The Remedy* documented Rosenwinkel's dynamic working quintet in a two-CD set from New York City's hallowed Village Vanguard, his 2009 followup, *Reflections*, was a more intimate outing with his Standards Trio of bassist Eric Revis and drummer Eric Harland.

Rosenwinkel's latest outing, *Angels Around*, on his own Heartcore label, is a return to the trio setting (with the brilliant Italian acoustic bass guitarist Dario Deidda and all-world drummer Gregory Hutchinson) and a

re-examination of jazz standards. It comes on the heels of his joyous 2017 Brazilian-flavored album, *Caipi*, and 2019's ambient/experimental outing, *Bandit 65*, both on Heartcore. The guitarist spoke with *GP* via Skype from his home in Berlin.

"I ALWAYS FELT LIKE THE PICK WAS INTERRUPTING THE RHYTHM OF THE LINES"





PLAYERS

Your very first recording as a leader, 1996's *East Coast Love Affair*, was a trio standards project. Here we are nearly 25 years later and you're still dealing with that same format and re-examining jazz standards once again.

The standards trio has always been present and developing alongside everything else I've been doing through the years. My first standards trio was meant to document that really cool chemistry I had between [bassist] Avishai Cohen and [drummer] Jorge Rossy. Likewise with Eric Revis and Eric Harland, that group chemistry felt magical, so I wanted to document it too. And I continue to do that when something feels special, as it does now with Dario and Greg. We had wonderful times on the bandstand playing concerts around Europe and the States, including a couple of times at the Village Vanguard. So I just felt like it was a really cool trio to document. I also love being able to bring Dario a bit more exposure to my audience, because he's such an incredible musician. And Greg, of course, is one of the greatest living drummers. He and I go way back to the '90s in New York, so there's that connection too.

Talk about your own connection to playing standards when you were coming up in Philadelphia.

I started to go to jam sessions in Philly when I was about 16. I'd go to clubs like the Blue Note and Slim Cooper's, mostly all Black clubs. Those were some of the last few places where jazz was a community music and not an academic music. So I would learn a couple tunes out of *The Real Book* during the week, and then my mom would drive me to the Blue Note every Monday for the jam sessions run by the saxophonist Tony Williams, who is a very important figure in the Philadelphia jazz community. I'd get up onstage and

JORDI VIDAL/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES



Rosenwinkel performing with his Yamaha SG200

"THE SHAPES AND CHORDS IN MY HEAD ARE OFTEN MORE COMPLEX THAN I CAN EASILY PLAY ON GUITAR"

I'd call "Stella by Starlight," or some other tune from *The Real Book*, and they would launch into an intro with rhythm-section kicks and a full-blown arrangement that they had learned just from the oral tradition, from what's been passed down. And I'd be up there, like, Oh, my God, what's going on? And that's when I really became a part of it, where it became part of me, where I received the music and felt what it felt like to play those tunes in those places and with that feeling.

That's what started my love of jazz and performing jazz standards. At home with *The Real Book*, it seems so skeletal. There's just chords and a melody; that's all you get when you read the chart. But when you go up onstage and you're playing with the cats, it's this whole entire world of amazing creativity and deep feelings. And it just makes you realize that there's a whole lot more to the music than what you see on a sheet. So as a teacher and as a professor in Germany, which I was for 10 years, I

tried to give that feeling of joy, or community and rapture, with the music. I tried to get off the page and give my students this feeling of togetherness that I felt, and convey that.

How did your piano studies early on with Philly jazz pianist Jimmy Amadie affect your guitar playing? You seem to have a very pianist approach to the fretboard with regard to chording and

simultaneously playing bass lines and single-note lines.

Yeah, piano is definitely my first love, musically. It's my mother instrument, you could say, and I've never stopped playing it. I've always felt a kind of ease with piano that I don't always feel with the guitar. When I hear music and I feel what I want to play, it's usually heard and felt in terms of the piano. It's a full feeling of music, and the shapes and chords that I have in my head are often more complex than I can easily play on guitar. I think that's why I've tried to find as many ways as I can to achieve that kind of sound with the guitar. That's why I really love the freeze pedal, because you can play a couple of notes, put it on freeze and then play notes on top of that. [Rosenwinkel has been using Gamechanger Audio's Plus pedal.] I've also studied a lot of ways of using finger mechanics to get those kinds of pianistic approaches. I'm constantly thinking and working on ways of breaking up what you're doing into left-hand and right-hand functions on the guitar, like comping for yourself. That's one thing that I guess guitarists ask me about most: How do you comp for yourself when you're soloing? And that's just my attempt to play pianistically.

That pianistic approach comes out on the harmonically rich Charles Mingus tune from the new album, "Self-Portrait in Three Colors." That seems like it's pretty challenging to play on guitar.

Yeah, I love that song so much. On *East Coast Love Affair*, I had this kind of dual thinking going on at the time with the

fretboard, where I'd play left-hand chords in the middle register and then melody up top. I'd play a little bit up top and then go down and play a couple of chords to support it, and then keep going back and forth between those two functions. Over the years, it's come together more organically, having both of those functions going on at the same time when I'm just playing wherever I am on the fretboard. It's not that dual-function thing anymore, but it's been infused into one thing that contains both of those functions now. I've figured out how to achieve both of those desires with one thing. So I might play a really fast run, but the intention of that run is meant to be harmonic, like sheets of sound or something, in lieu of playing a voicing. So it's both melody and harmony. I'm implying the contour of the harmony with lines, like what saxophone players do.

On *East Coast Love Affair*, you had a distinct picking sound. Since then you've

moved to where you've now eliminated that picking sound altogether, à la Allan Holdsworth. What possessed you to develop this approach on the guitar?

I always felt like the pick was interrupting the rhythm of the lines. And I don't really like the sound of every note having such a big transient to it. I have a smoother sound in my head. When you sing a melody, the voice doesn't have any percussive element. That's where I live in the melodies — after the transient, or after you start easing into a note. I've really developed a strong left hand so that I don't even have to pick many of the notes. If I'm playing, I can bring them out with my left hand. And so I developed a physical technique to just be able to play. And this is like Holdsworth, where his left hand is really playing the notes, and maybe his right hand is just being used for articulation here and there, or just to help interface with what you get when you only use your left

“I MIGHT PLAY A REALLY FAST RUN, BUT THE INTENTION IS MEANT TO BE HARMONIC, LIKE SHEETS OF SOUND”

hand, just to bring some things out or to help the shape of it along.

And then I started realizing I could also help attain that goal with gear. I started messing around with

compressors and gates in order to shape the transient portion of the attack. I'm always trying to get closer to the sound that I've always had in my head, and all of these different iterations are just attempts to try to get toward that. So *Angels Around* is just

the latest iteration of my never-ending struggle to manifest what I really hear. And I feel like now I can actually express myself a lot more than I could before.

The result is that you're getting this incredible flowing sound on uptempo swinging numbers like Paul Chambers' "Ease It" or Joe Henderson's "Punjab," where it sounds like you're blowing over the changes like a sax player.

Yeah, that's exactly what I'm going for. I'm always in my laboratory trying to work with sound. It's like Ornette Coleman said: "Sound is the key that unlocks the door to music." You know, the sound comes first. And if you have a good sound, you can play anything.

What effects do you rely on throughout *Angels Around* to attain this sort of flowing legato sound?

I'm using the Fractal Audio Axe-Fx III. I go direct into that and have a pretty

complex signal path that goes to a compressor and then to a filter, a gate, another compressor and all the delays and reverb. And it's also going through a model of the Fender Twin Reverb amp. And for me, a major factor of the sound is that I can get an amp to respond really quickly. So the way I have it set up, if I just play a tiny thing very lightly, it'll jump out of the speaker. That's a major part of my sound.

What guitar did you use throughout *Angels Around*?

I pretty much used my Yamaha SG200, which is a really cheap guitar. I traded a guy in Berlin a couple of distortion pedals for it. I had been thinking about SGs for a long time, because I love the way they sit on the body and the access you get to the high register. When you have the guitar strapped on, your natural hand position will rest at the 12th fret; whereas, with other guitars, because of the way the body is and where the strap is, your hand will rest much lower, which means it's harder to play higher. But the way the SG is laid out, your natural position is a higher position, so you're more naturally going to be playing in the higher register.

I played this SG almost exclusively on the album, much to the chagrin of my endorsers [*Westville* and *D'Angelico*]. But they've been coming up with some answers to this feeling of mine, and I think we're going to produce some new guitars that might give me the kind of things that I like about the SG, but with more of an acoustic sound. So we'll see where that goes. ■



LARRY BUSACCA/GETTY IMAGES

Onstage with Allan Holdsworth at the 2013 Crossroads Guitar Festival



PLAYERS

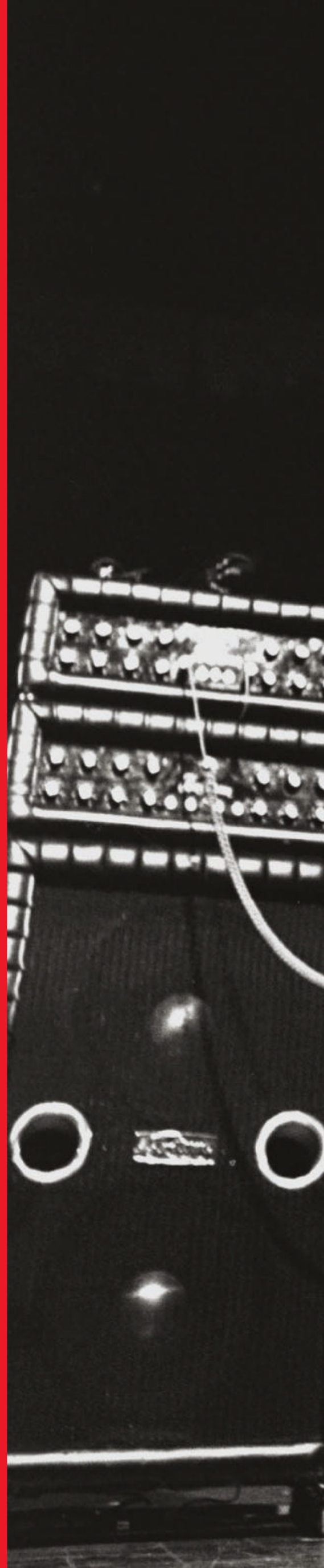
PEAK POWER

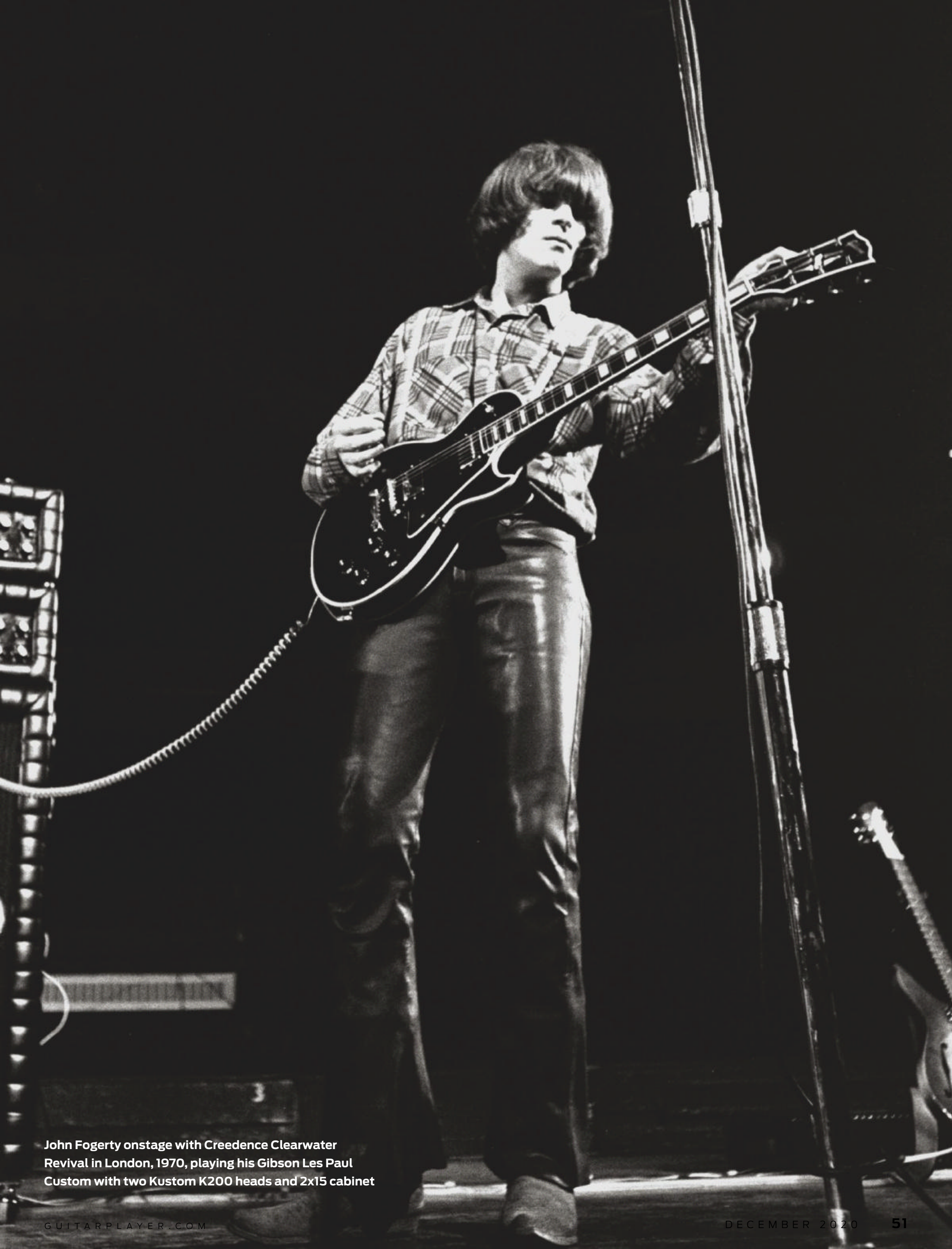
John Fogerty pushed **Creedence Clearwater Revival** to the top of their creative output. The result was the group's finest album: *Cosmo's Factory*.

BY JOE BOSSO

LIKE EVERY OTHER working musician on the planet, John Fogerty was forced to scrap most of his 2020 tour dates once the coronavirus pandemic hit. For his first few days of self-quarantine at home, the 75-year-old singer-songwriter and guitarist was content to bide his time — happy to indulge in a little unplanned vacation, in fact — but his wife, Julie, had other ideas. “She said, ‘You should record something and put it online,’” Fogerty relates. “So I sort of grudgingly went along with it.” After filming a solo acoustic video of his classic Creedence Clearwater Revival hit “Have You Ever Seen the Rain,” Fogerty figured he could go back to hibernation.

CHRIS WALTER/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES





**John Fogerty onstage with Creedence Clearwater
Revival in London, 1970, playing his Gibson Les Paul
Custom with two Kustom K200 heads and 2x15 cabinet**



PLAYERS

That's when Julie said, "Why don't you get the kids involved?" This was an idea Fogerty immediately sparked to. His two sons, Shane and Tyler, both guitarists, perform together in their band, Hearty Har (Shane is also part of his father's touring band), and his daughter, Kelsy, plays guitar as well.

Dubbed the Fogerty Family, the foursome pounced into activity, playing CCR gems on NPR's *Tiny Desk Concerts*, taping a segment for *The Colbert Report*, debuting a SiriusXM show

called *The Fogerty Family Rockin' Family Hour* and releasing a string of pleasing videos on their own *Fogerty's Factory* YouTube channel.

"It's beyond an earthly delight," Fogerty enthuses. "Just the fun of setting a song in motion, and then we get the rhythms going, and I get to perform these songs with my kids. It's almost indescribable how wonderful the whole thing is. And to think it was sitting there under my nose all this time and I didn't even know it."

Fogerty's Factory is also the name of the band's recently released EP (among its seven tracks are versions of the CCR hits "Fortunate Son" and "Bad Moon Rising"), for which they re-created the iconic album cover of *Cosmo's Factory*, Creedence Clearwater Revival's celebrated 1970 album. "That was Julie's idea again," Fogerty says, chuckling once more. "Lo and behold, she dragged in all this furniture, and then the motorcycle arrived. I looked at everything and said, 'This is kind of cool. It looks like the cover of *Cosmo's Factory*. I can go along with this.'"

For many fans, *Cosmo's Factory* is the quintessential CCR album. Newly released in a 50th anniversary half-speed master vinyl edition, it's the record that documents the band — Fogerty, rhythm guitarist Tom Fogerty, bassist Stu Cook and drummer Doug Clifford — operating at the peak of their powers.

"STARTING WITH 'PROUD MARY,' I HAD MADE UP MY MIND THAT I WASN'T GOING TO HAVE AN ORDINARY BAND"

"I would totally agree with that, because that's what was in my mind at the time," Fogerty says. "It was kind of the culmination — or the realization — of what I had always dreamed about. I worked hard at music, and we were having some luck. 'Susie Q' [the group's 1968 single] was a hit, and there was an

album, and then another album. We went to Europe and played the Royal Albert Hall. Finally, in 1970, I started thinking, Well, jeez, we're getting really good and really popular. I kind of want to do a

culmination of where we're at, because I think we should evolve and kind of go on to something else."

Packed with wall-to-wall smashes, including the double-sided hit singles "Travelin' Band"/"Who'll Stop the Rain" and "Up Around the Bend"/"Run Through the Jungle," *Cosmo's Factory* is a remarkably diverse collection of styles, some experimental in nature. There's the loose Bakersfield shuffle of "Lookin' Out My Back Door," the elegiac soul balladry of "Long As I Can See the Light" and spirited takes on rockabilly and R&B covers — "Ooby Dooby" and "My Baby Left Me," respectively. And on two extended tracks — the orchestral rocker "Ramble Tamble" and a mesmerizing, 11-minute version of Marvin Gaye's "I Heard It Through the Grapevine" — Fogerty distinguishes himself as a master guitar soloist on par with the celebrated six-string greats of the day.



MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES (LONDON)

Astonishingly, the album was the band's fifth full-length release in a 24-month period, a time in which Fogerty had already penned the likes of "Proud Mary," "Fortunate Son," "Green River," "Down on the Corner" and "Lodi." But the guitarist downplays the notion that coming up with the band's



Creedence Clearwater Revival onstage in London, 1970.
(inset) The *Cosmo's Factory* cover. (left) CCR in 1970: (from left) Tom and John Fogerty, Doug Clifford and Stu Cook

original material — to say nothing of their hits — ever felt like a burden. “I never looked at it that way at all,” he says. “I was doing what I wanted to do, so it wasn’t hard.”

He points to the writing of the band’s first original hit, “Proud Mary,” in 1968, as a moment of self-discovery, one that opened up the floodgates for his output. “How do I say this? It was a vindication — a validation,” he says. “I had been watching other people’s careers, most notably Lennon and McCartney, but also Hoagy Carmichael and [Jerry] Leiber and

[Mike] Stoller. What they did seemed so undoable, but when I wrote ‘Proud Mary,’ I realized that it was doable. I knew the song was a classic, so after that it became the idea of furthering that achievement. How do I push us even further toward the top of the mountain? And that’s what I kept trying to do.”

Indeed he did. The album’s title refers to the Berkeley, California, warehouse that served as the group’s rehearsal space early on. It’s there that Fogerty made them practice nearly every day, leading Clifford to dub it “the

factory.” Clifford’s own nickname, Cosmo, would form half the name of CCR’s commercial zenith.

When asked if there is anything about *Cosmo’s Factory* that he wishes he had done differently, Fogerty laughs. “I don’t know if it’s perfect, but I never considered that I would want to change anything,” he remarks. “It’s a picture of where I was at the time, or where we were. My way of thinking was always, Okay, that’s there, but I’m just going to worry about what’s in the future. I’ll write another song.”



PLAYERS

On *Cosmo's Factory*, the band seemed to be getting away from the "swampy" sound of the earlier records. There's raging rock, psychedelia, rockabilly, folk and R&B. Were you listening to all of those genres while you were writing these songs?

I listened to that all my life. I very much wanted that album to represent all of us, meaning all of what we knew. My musical interests were not necessarily the same as the other guys in the band. I think I had a much deeper knowledge of country music, let's say. Tom and I very much shared rhythm and blues and rock and roll, of course, and Doug and Stu were very much rock and roll — not so much stuff before that, meaning rhythm and blues or gospel.

I had kind of been inspired by Tom and our older brother, Jim, because they were ahead of me. I was probably eight when they were already listening to R&B. Rock and roll hadn't been invented yet. So I kind of came upon Muddy Waters and gospel music pre-Elvis, and they were listening to that. Anyway, there's a lot of diversity on the album. It sort of reflected the whole of what I had listened to.

In some ways, the album seems like the Beatles' White Album in that, while there was growing tension in the band, you guys still managed to produce some of your best work.

I would agree with you. I'm trying to think of when the tension came to the fore. I can remember certain times when Tom would say something strange. It's all hindsight today, but I realize now that Tom had some issues. I didn't know it was jealousy — it hadn't been formulated — but my wife, Julie, heard me talking about it and she said, "They were just jealous of you, John."

Like I said, I hadn't formulated it. It came from Tom — he would say these

**"I WAS THAT GUY
YELLING, 'FOLLOW ME,
BOYS! WE'RE GOING
UP THE HILL!'"**

dark things once in a while, but Doug and Stu were a bit louder about it. They had this invisible bond. I was definitely aware of tension. I would hear people say things, but I adapted. I would lower my head and be like, I didn't hear that.

There were times when I wanted to say something back, but if I had a cartoon bubble over my head, it would say, "I didn't come here to fight. I came here to make a record." My job was to figure out whatever I've got to do to make it.

We tend to focus on the drama around the time of *Cosmo's Factory*, but were you guys still having fun?

Most of the time we were. Let's face it: You're standing on the stage at Albert Hall and you're getting these encores,

and that's just a wonderful thing. Even checking in to a hotel, we were like, "Oh, my God. Did you see my room?!"

There were fun times, absolutely. We were on good terms. It started to change around the time of [*the Cosmo's Factory follow-up*] *Pendulum*. It's just a simple thing of, yes, I could be a tyrant, a dictator. I was that guy yelling, "Follow me, boys! We're going up the hill!" I couldn't entertain a side variation for very long, because it wasn't taking us over the hill. The journey to success is always the most fun. It starts to erode as you accomplish your goals. As you get to the two-yard line, things become more difficult.

But I don't want to focus on negative things. It's just not on my radar anymore. It is what it is. My job was to be like the quarterback, and I could see that. At the same time, I was very much a team player. Even naming the album

GIJSBERT HANEKROOT/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES



Performing live in Rotterdam,
Holland, April 1970

EWD CARAEFF/GETTY IMAGES

Cosmo's Factory. We literally referred to the place where we rehearsed as "the Factory," but calling the album that was my little attempt to make Doug famous.

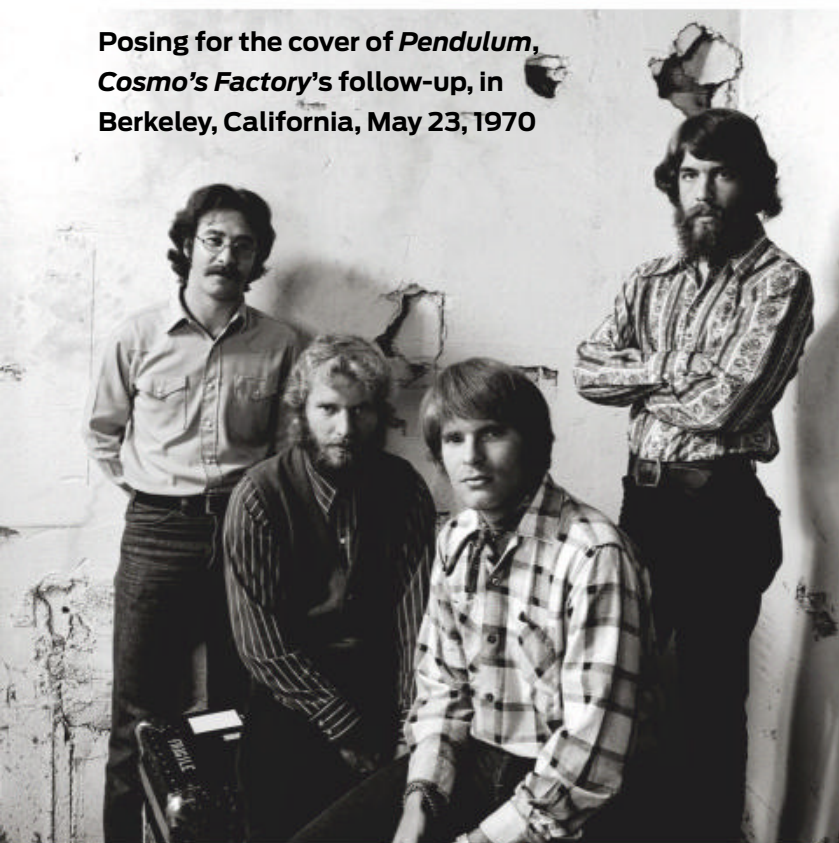
Certainly, the album cover conveys the idea that you guys were enjoying yourselves. It's a fun cover.

I asked the guys to bring to some of their favorite things, with no qualifications: "We'll arrange everything in our factory." I thought it was fun, but some people thought it was clunky. I had this nagging idea to present ourselves as being normal. I didn't want us to seem arrogant. I hate that.

Like CCR's other albums, *Cosmo's Factory* had double-sided hits — "Travelin' Band" and "Who'll Stop the Rain"; "Up Around the Bend" and "Run Through the Jungle." Was it a problem to decide on the A-sides?

I think there were times while I was making the songs, I certainly knew what I thought the A-side was. Starting with "Proud Mary," I had made up my mind that I wasn't going to have an ordinary band. I wanted to have the greatest band there ever was, so I insisted on going with the best music. That was my commitment. Other bands would put album cuts or filler on the B-sides.

Posing for the cover of *Pendulum*, *Cosmo's Factory*'s follow-up, in Berkeley, California, May 23, 1970



I didn't want to do that. I wanted to put out the very best. I'd waited my whole life to have a career. This wasn't my career; this was *our* career. I was like the coach of the team, or whatever, and I was doing everything I could to make our team — our band that I believed in — everything it could be. I was using all of it, the best of it. I wasn't holding anything back.

Did you have any kind of roadmap for arranging your guitar parts? The midsection of "Ramble Tamble" is like orchestral guitar.

What I did was make a literal roadmap, as if you were starting in California and you're going to drive to South Carolina. I remember taping a whole bunch of pieces of binder paper together with Scotch tape. As I say, I started in California and I went from left to right. A lot of it was more mental, although I probably had a few days, if not a week's worth, of jamming with the fellas. Then I was back home, and I probably had my Rickenbacker in hand, working out the parts: "Okay, we'll do

this, and then there will be a little solo here, and then we'll come back and do another verse. Okay, what are we going to do here? Oh, I like that thing I was doing where I went to D and G. Yeah, that's cool." So I would write all of that down to help guide me.

When you were cutting the track, were you conducting the guys?

Kind of. I always did that. There were always a lot of head shakes and shoulder moves. With a real band, back in the day at least, one of the things you had as your fingerprint was dynamics. You could get louder and softer, and hit a certain phrase harder and then back

off for things that came later. Those are nuances. Those are things that happen when you're all there together, and you're going to do this right as it's happening. It's just the coolest thing.

Was it loud in the room? It sounds as if it was.

Absolutely, yeah, because I was using those Kustom amps. It was rockin'. It was loud enough that we couldn't have talked to each other, and they couldn't hear me singing. By the way, we tended to learn most the songs as instrumentals, and therefore I wasn't singing at the same time I was playing. We learned "Up Around the Bend" as an instrumental.

Let me ask you about the riff to that song, which is such a cool, hair-raising

opener. How did that come about?

I had always loved the lick in the [Marty Robbins] song "A White Sport Coat (and a Pink Carnation)." There's also "You're So Fine" by the

Falcons, which had a similar kind of lick. I know I would play that from time to time, or the lick from "White Sport Coat." And then one day I was in just the right mood, and I was playing it but doing it in a different way. I hit the A string and let it resonate. It sounded really cool, and I thought, What would it sound like if I tried it in a different key? And I was like, Hey, that's awesome!

"Lookin' Out My Back Door" was your tribute to the Bakersfield sound.

Yeah. I had a Gibson J-200 acoustic. I had bought it because it was big — I wanted a dreadnought. I'm pretty sure that's the guitar I used for the scratching on that song. It was a tribute to the Bakersfield sound, but it was more a tribute to a sort of country-style rock and roll. I do love Buck Owens, and I was a fan of Don Rich. He played such great guitar on all of Buck's records. I considered him country, but I didn't consider me country.

"I DIDN'T WANT TO BE LES PAUL OR JOHNNY SMITH. THAT STUFF IS SO GOOD, YOU ALMOST DON'T EVEN THINK A HUMAN DID IT"



Were you surprised when people said you had written a drug song?

Yeah. Even though I was young and considered myself a hippie, I wasn't a real hippie. The song was supposed to be a kid's song, kind of like Dr. Seuss. I remember reading a review that said, "You know what he means by 'dancing on the lawn'? That's his coded way of saying 'grass.'" I read that and went, What?

And the flying spoon was supposed to be a cocaine spoon.

I just pictured a tablespoon with wings on it, like it was flying in the sky. I didn't know what drug you would take with a spoon. I really didn't. I was just thinking like a kid.

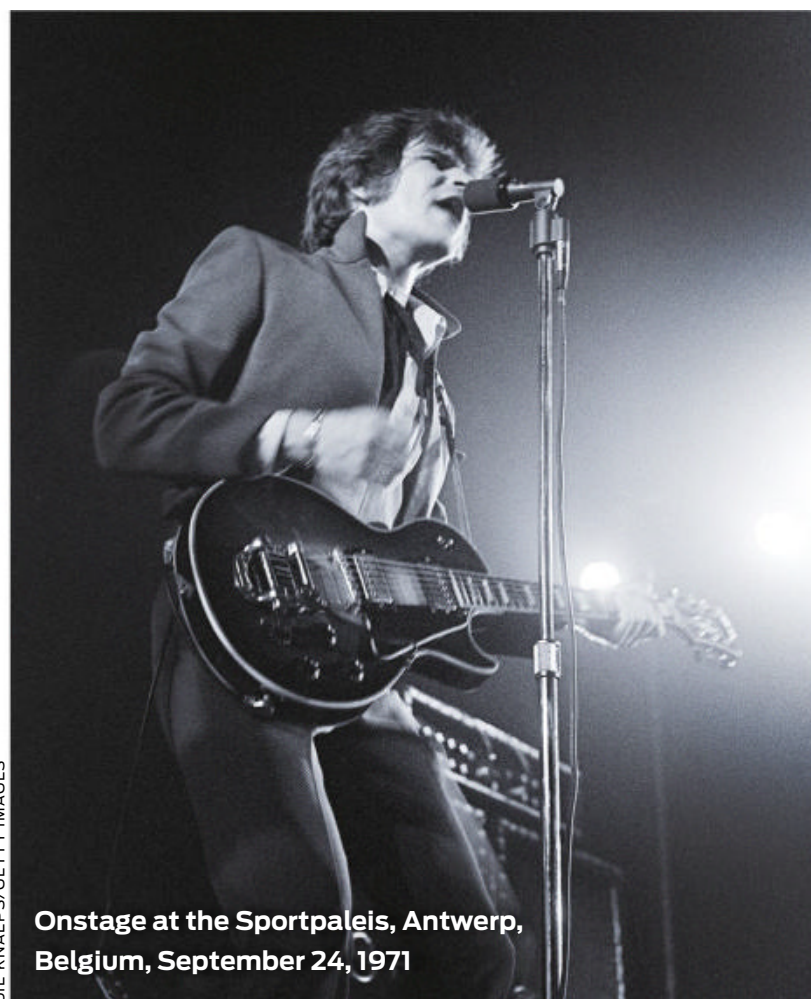
You mentioned how the band would learn some songs as instrumentals. Did you not have words at the time?

Sometimes, sometimes not. Sometimes I couldn't even tell them the title of a song. I believe it was "Up Around the Bend" and "Run Through the Jungle": We were leaving for Europe on a Tuesday, so I had to go home on a Friday and write the words to both songs so that I could record all the vocals and backgrounds on Monday. And I had to overdub any other parts. I had to do all that so we could send it off as a single. There was a lot of pressure.

Throughout the CCR years, you were using Rickenbackers and Les Pauls — you had your black '68 Les Paul Custom. Are those the main guitars you played on *Cosmo's Factory*?

Yeah, other than the acoustic J-200. A lot of the time I didn't even have a backup guitar. When I recorded "Proud Mary," I had a Gibson ES-175 — I wanted an acoustic-electric sound. That guitar got stolen out of a car, so I had an emergency, because we were going to record "Bad Moon Rising." I started thinking about Les Pauls because I had a Les Paul pickup on my Rickenbacker. So I went to this guitar store run by a fella named Jimmy Luttrell, and I said, "Do

GIE KNAEPS/GETTY IMAGES



Onstage at the Sportpaleis, Antwerp, Belgium, September 24, 1971

you have any Les Pauls?" He pointed to this black Les Paul Custom. So I tuned it down and plugged into a Fender Twin, and I strummed a chord. I'm sure my eyes crossed with ecstasy: That's it! That sound!

Those big Kustom amps on the album cover — you were one of the few guys using them.

I might have been the only one. It's kind of funny, because I would get a handful of letters from people over the years, saying, "Hey, John, I went and bought a Kustom amp just to be like you. [sourly] Thanks." It wasn't a compliment. Mine was a '68, what they call a K200 [see *Classic Gear*, October 2020]. It had a tremolo/vibrato circuit, which was magnificent. You could blend them. I thought that was unbelievably beautiful.

It had reverb on it, but I never used that, because when the reverb was on, the volume of your guitar went down. Besides the tremolo/vibrato, the best thing about the amp was its harmonic clipper. It had a fuzz tone that really worked. Maybe I just got the best amp of the batch. I had a backup that was a little inferior to the one that was my main rig.

The amps did look pretty cool, with that Tuck 'n' Roll Naugahyde covering.

And the sound of the box was big. They had 15-inch speakers. Every other lead guitar player was using 12-inch speakers, which are great, but the 15-inch had its

own thing. When I played a D chord on my black Les Paul into the vibrato of my Kustom, the sound out of those 15-inch speakers was absolute heaven. I mean, you couldn't match it. You have to have every ingredient to make that sound.

When people talk about guitar heroes, they mention Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck and Eric Clapton, and, of course, Hendrix. But your playing on "I Heard It Through the Grapevine," or even earlier on "Susie Q," ranks right up with those guys.

You know, I thought I could play pretty well, but at some point after our big success, I began to realize there was some things I couldn't do. Among my generation, Clapton, Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page are often mentioned as the three greatest guitar players of their time, and I've always thought so too. I greatly admired them. And obviously there's Jimi Hendrix, who was probably the best of all. No one could even get near him as a guitar player. He was like Zeus on Mount Olympus.

I thought I was a hotshot, but I never put myself in their league. I knew I wasn't as good as James Burton. And I have to mention Chet Atkins, whom I considered the greatest guitar player in the world. I wanted to grow up and be as good as him, but I knew I couldn't. And, of course, my rock and roll idol was Duane Eddy. I knew I wasn't as good as James Burton. I knew I couldn't do anything like what Les Paul or any jazz guy was doing. I didn't want to be Les Paul or Johnny Smith. That stuff is so good and well done, you almost don't even think a human did it.

I remember one time I was in the studio with Gerry McGee, from the Ventures — a super guitar player. I told him about the solo in "Grapevine" and how I played the whole thing in the same position. I never even moved up and down the neck. He looked at me and said, "Well, we all thought you were pretty damn good!" [laughs] ■

FAMILY BUSINESS

Fogerty's Factory keeps CCR's — and Fogerty's — legacy alive.

DURING NORMAL TIMES, Shane Fogerty, 28, plays guitar in his father's touring band, and together with his brother, Tyler, 27, leads the band Hearty Har. These are not normal times, however, and for much of the past year the Fogerty boys, along with their sister, Kelsy, have been making music in quarantine with their famous dad.

Guitar Player talked to the Fogerty brothers to learn what it was like growing up with a rock icon for a dad, and how they're enjoying traipsing through their father's iconic catalog for a series of family-style videos.

Was your dad kind of a built-in guitar teacher for you two?

TYLER Yes and no. He didn't really push the guitar on us. If we ever asked him about something, he would kind of open up. We'd say, "What kind of guitar did they use for this song?" or "How did you get that sound?" If we opened the door a little bit, he would inform us, but he had a pretty hands-off approach. He followed our lead into his music, not the other way around.

Obviously, he knows the struggles of being a musician. Was he supportive of you two going into music?

SHANE He was definitely supportive. He tried to fill our imaginations, but he also stressed that we had to be serious. He let us know that we had to earn it and that nothing would come our way if we didn't work for it. We understood that, more than anybody, his knowledge and advice meant a lot. He knows that in order to succeed, you have to have real passion for what you do.

Your dad is a pretty hot guitar player. Is there anything you guys



Fogerty's Factory at home. (from left) Tyler, Kelsy, John and Shane

can do on the guitar that isn't in his wheelhouse?

SHANE I think our approach is a little different, especially when recording. We're a lot more experimental than he is at this stage in his life. I'd say something that we've got on him is alternate tunings, which he doesn't tend to do, although he goes a step down on songs like "Proud Mary" and "Fortunate Son." And I know that I do play more slide guitar than our dad does. I started playing slide when I was pretty young. I remember playing slide in the garage one day — I was playing open G on a Supro — and he heard me. After that, he bought the same guitar and started playing slide.

Shane, you play in your dad's touring band. Tyler, do you mainly want to focus on Hearty Har?

TYLER There were already three guitarists in his band, so it was a question of room. It was up to me, really, to make Hearty Har happen. I went headfirst into it and tried to figure things out.

I understand that your mother had to get everybody together to film the quarantine videos.

TYLER It happened super organically. Basically, she said, "You should really do something while we're all stuck here." I think the first song we did was "Down on the Corner," and she just whipped out the iPhone as we played it. Then we put it up and it got a lot of attention. So

we were like, Okay, let's keep it going. The next one we did was "Lodi." The whole thing kept growing, and we did different sets, like at Dodgers Stadium. It's been a lot of fun.

How did your sister get involved?

SHANE Kelsy's been playing guitar for a bit. Her interest in music and playing has grown steadily, and she's gained a lot of confidence doing these videos. She's thinking maybe she can do music in her life now. She never had a band, per se, but I can see that she feels pretty good doing this. So we're like, "If you want to keep doing this, go ahead."

When learning your dad's music over the years, has there been a particular song of his that gave you trouble?

SHANE When I first joined his band and we were doing "Ramble Tamble," I needed a bit of time to figure it out. It was a lot for me, given my lack of experience, as it's got a few different sections and time signatures. That one was kind of tough, but it is one of my favorites.

It's the 50th anniversary of *Cosmo's Factory*. Where would you rank that one in the CCR canon?

SHANE Oh, that's a great album. I think it's my favorite, actually. It climbs the highest.

TYLER There's so much depth to it. I think it's got a good variance of styles and influences, and it just sounds so great. That one is hard to top.



BLACK MAGIC

LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF THE 'BURST, THE GIBSON LES PAUL CUSTOM HAS NONETHELESS BEGUILED PAGE, FRAMPTON AND FOGERTY, AMONG COUNTLESS OTHER GUITARISTS. BEHOLD THIS MESMERIZING 1958 BLACK BEAUTY.

BY ROD BRAKES

PHOTOGRAPHY BY OLLY CURTIS

DAVID DAVIDSON IS no stranger to rare guitars. As the owner of Well Strung Guitars (formerly We Buy Guitars) in Plainview, New York, and COO and curator of the Songbirds Guitar Museum in Chattanooga, Tennessee, he's sourced vintage instruments for players and collectors for more than 40 years. His expert eye remains focused on rarities from the scarce to the absolutely unique, yet to this day he retains a soft spot for those all-time classics that piqued his interest in the beginning.

"It was the Les Paul Custom that did it for me," Davidson explains. "I remember watching Bill Haley & His Comets in [the 1956 film] *Rock Around the Clock*, and the guitar player, Franny Beecher, was playing a Les Paul Custom. I thought that was just about the coolest thing I'd ever seen. I said to myself, Wow! That is just beautiful. In that black-and-white film, it just bounced off the screen.

"I've opened up well over 10,000 guitars in my life," he continues. "It's a lot of fun, and I still learn something new every day. You never stop learning, and as an old hand, I love helping and teaching people about guitars. That's what the [Songbirds] museum was all

about in the first place. The educational aspect of guitars is very important to me and, at this stage in my career, it's about teaching the next generation before all this stuff turns into firewood."

Preserving vintage guitars is also about preserving our knowledge of them, and, in Davidson's case, his insight into what went on behind the veil at Gibson has always been rooted in a fascination with engineering.

"GIBSON WAS UNSURE WHETHER TO INTRODUCE THE CUSTOM OR THE JUNIOR FIRST. IT CAME DOWN TO DOLLARS AND CENTS"

"It always amazed me how guitar builders found their way through different problems with brilliant engineering and brilliant minds," he says. "I was intrigued about why their guitars were made the way they were and how that changed over time."

Historically, the world's most iconic guitar designs have always been, to varying degrees, works in progress, as manufacturers like Gibson and Fender

sought to narrow the gap between the art of music making and the art of mass production.

"Leo Fender's mantra was to give everyone a tool to work with," Davidson notes. "He made a workman's wrench of a guitar for people to go to work with, whereas Gibson was really looking for more of a dentist's tool, or a fine craftsman's instrument. The difference is that when Leo Fender made his first electric solidbody guitar, he mostly had it right, straight off the bat. In fact, you can walk into your local music chain store and buy a reissue Fender Telecaster that was made more or less in the same way it was originally, nearly 70 years ago. There's very little difference, and that's because they got it right the first time. But it took Gibson several years to develop their Les Paul guitars."

Indeed, the Les Paul Model was poorly planned. For example, the trapeze tailpiece that was on the debut 1952 guitar was a disaster in terms of playability. "But that was something Les insisted on," Davidson explains. "It was obviously a big downfall to begin with, and it wasn't until they used a wraparound tailpiece, then a stop tailpiece with the [Tune-o-matic] ABR-1 bridge, that the guitar was saved from an early extinction."



It would ultimately take years for the Les Paul Custom to gain widespread appeal following its initial appearance in 1953. Prior to its release, the future was uncertain, as Gibson tentatively began to test the solidbody electric guitar market with its new designs.

“Gibson was very unsure whether to introduce the Custom or the [*Les Paul*] Junior first,” Davidson says. “They had both guitars in prototype, but in the end, it came down to dollars and cents — how much profit they could make on it. The Custom was solid mahogany, and, as far as Gibson was concerned, not having to put a maple top on was a cost-cutting thing. They could paint them black and use virtually any piece of wood that didn’t pass the quality control for the body of a Les Paul Standard.”

It was the trimmings — the bells and whistles — that made it more expensive, although it was a bit of give and take. “All that binding work took a tremendous amount of time, and then there’s all that extra gold-plated hardware,” Davidson says. “But on the other hand, they didn’t have to bond a maple top on the guitar. Having said that, a lot of people didn’t think about the fact they weren’t getting a maple top; they just thought about a mahogany body, y’know? ‘If it’s mahogany, it’s good.’ But that produced a little bit of a darker, woodier tone. It didn’t spank as much as a maple top guitar.”

That said, Davidson is quite fond of the model. “I like the Les Paul Custom very much,” he says. “I like the ebony fretboard, the hardness of the wood, and the way the sound refracts, which makes the notes kind of hop off. Whereas when I’m playing a rosewood ’board, the notes tend to roll off. With a Custom, the notes are really bouncing, especially when you’re playing with modern round-wound strings and larger frets. Customs can sound very snappy.”

Originally billed by Gibson as the “Fretless Wonder,” the Les Paul Custom unexpectedly found favor with rock and roll guitarists whose blues-style string-bending techniques were often assisted by using larger frets. As Davidson recalls, “I’ve talked to old



timers over the years who told me they used to go into Manny’s [*Music in New York City*] to buy Les Paul Customs. They’d order them brand-new from Manny’s and get them refretted there before they’d even pick them up! These were rock and roll guys that were

starting to experiment with different kinds of playing, and they didn’t really like that big flat-wound sound and tiny little frets. Not everybody was looking for a fast-playing neck. Some people needed and demanded different things from guitars, and Les Paul Customs



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could provide some pretty interesting sounds when you could do things like bend strings by using lighter-gauge round-wound strings, as opposed to the heavy-gauge factory equipped flat-wound strings.”

The 1950’s creative explosion radically altered popular music and made rock and roll a dominant force in the guitar world. Big changes were afoot as Fender continued to lead the solidbody market, and with Les Paul sales dwindling, Gibson found itself right back at the drawing board once again in order to compete.

“Gibson was struggling in the mid ’50s, but Ted McCarty and Seth Lover’s humbuckers saved the company,” Davidson explains. “The PAF humbucker changed the guitar world forever. When I met Seth Lover, he told me he was experimenting and had many different pickups laying on a bench plugged in. Magnetically, one stuck to another and he noticed the hum went away. He said he ignored it at first — it didn’t mean anything to him. But I guess he just didn’t sleep on his discovery very well!”

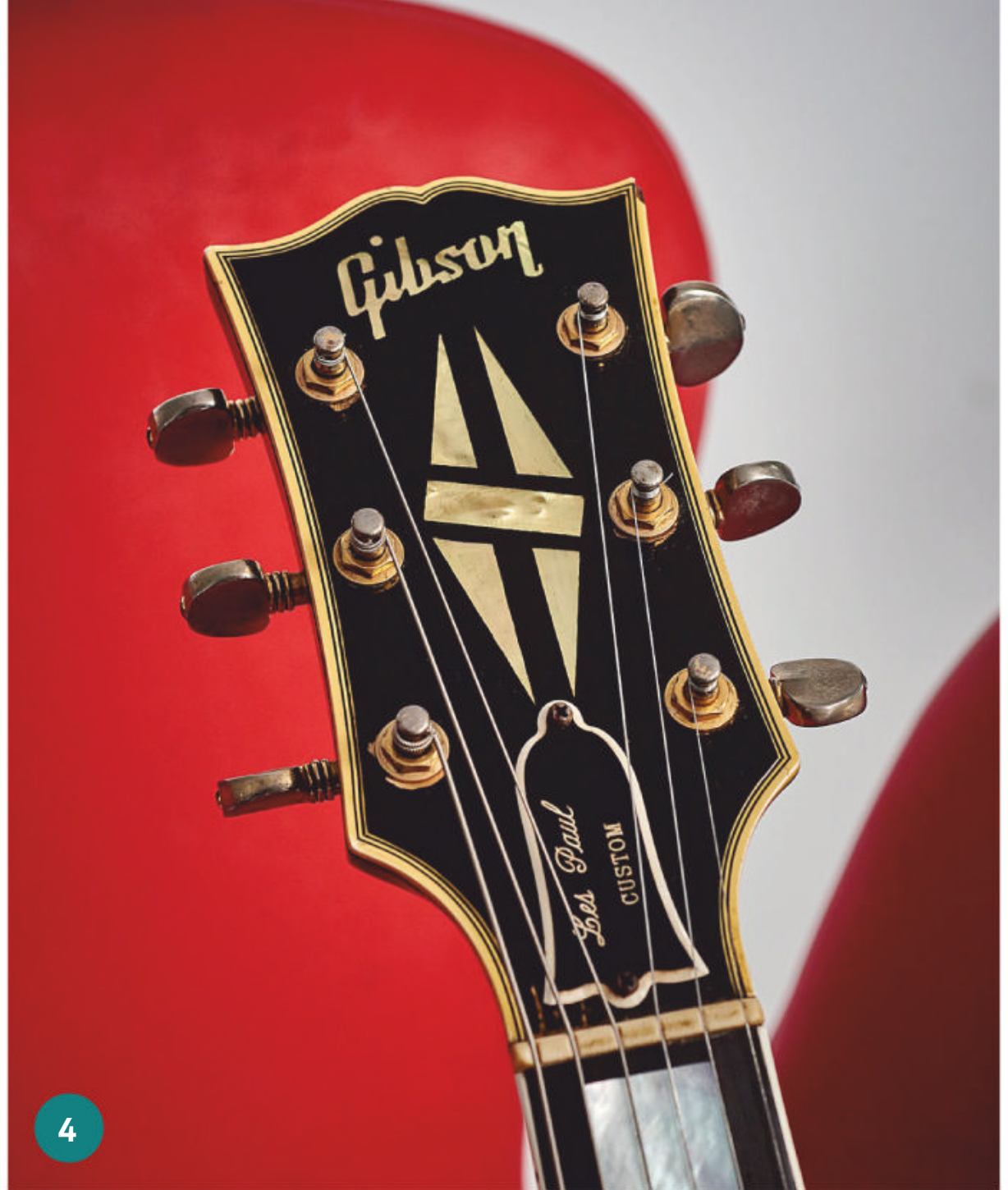
To Davidson, it’s “a musical big bang theory.” “Gibson hit a home run with the PAF,” he says. “No doubt, the whole idea that you could reduce hum was important. It was an amazing revelation at the time. Remember the first time you saw high-definition TV? That’s kind of what

“CUSTOMS DON’T SELL FOR THE SAME NUMBER AS THE STANDARDS. MORE THAN ANY OTHER REASON, IT’S BECAUSE OF THE TOP”

it felt like. There was nothing like that before. It was helpful for getting rid of 60-cycle hum, but it also meant you could turn the amp up louder.”

In tackling the practical issue of 50-/60-cycle hum, Seth Lover had inadvertently rewritten the rulebook for guitarists, particularly with respect to those rock and roll and electric blues players for whom volume, crunch and sustain had now become an integral part of their sound.

“It changed guitar music forever,” Davidson says. “It’s funny. A lot of things perceived as improvements were a happy accident. Things don’t always end up being used as they were intended. I mean, there are plenty of men taking Viagra, right? But Pfizer was trying to find a heart medication when it discovered the ‘side effect’ and later decided to market it in another direction. Quite often those



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1. In 1957, three of Gibson’s revolutionary PAF humbucking pickups were introduced on Les Paul Customs to replace the earlier standard configuration of Alnico 5 (neck) and P-90 (bridge) pickups.

2. “The three-way switch selects the neck pickup when facing up, and the bridge pickup when facing down,” Davidson says. “In the middle position, you have the bridge and center pickups working together. Most guitars were wired out of phase, but some were

originally wired in parallel.”

3. Mother-of-pearl block inlays embellish the guitar’s refretted ebony fretboard. In 1959, Gibson began to replace the lower, smaller Fretless Wonder frets with a larger type in response to customer requests.

4. The five-piece split-diamond, mother-of-pearl inlay on a black painted holly-veneer headstock is a hallmark of Gibson’s top-line models, such as the Les Paul Custom, Super 400CES and ES-355.



5. Upon its release, the Les Paul Custom received Gibson's new Tune-o-matic bridge and stop tailpiece. Gold-plated Tune-o-matic bridges were designated ABR-2 in Gibson parts catalogs, despite being stamped ABR-1 underneath.

6. Between 1953 and 1961, Gibson solidbodies received either a five- or six-digit inked serial number, with the first digit indicating year of manufacture. The Grover Rotomatic tuners pictured here first appeared on Les Paul Customs in 1958.

kinds of happy accidents are the mother of invention.”

While the PAF became Gibson's saving grace at the time, many other ideas either failed to hit the mark or remained under wraps at the factory. “In 1957, just before they were converting over to PAFs, some Customs came through with two P-90s, as opposed to one P-90 in the bridge and an Alnico 5 in the neck,” Davidson reveals. “As a matter of fact, I have a prototype in the museum that has a chambered body. It feels good, but it wasn't a hit with the representatives of the factory because of the amount it cost to chamber it and the fact that, tonally, it changed the sound of the guitar. It lost a lot of bottom end and was very midrangey.”

“I also have three double-PAF Les Paul Customs, without the middle pickup, from '59, and they're all good-sounding guitars, too. I've always really loved the sound of the center pickup selection on a triple-PAF guitar, with the bridge and center pickups working together, but the middle pickup was often an inconvenience for a lot of players, especially rock and rollers. For the jazz guys who picked lightly, it was often no problem to maneuver around, but I think for the rockers it was different.” For proof, Davidson points to Peter Frampton, owner of perhaps the most

famous Black Beauty, the 1954 Phenix. “Frampton said he took the cover off the center pickup first because he hated the way it sounded when his pick would hit it,” Davidson explains. “That was the first cover he took off, and he liked the look, so he took them all off.”

Despite the PAF humbucker's virtues, however, it seemed that no matter how hard Gibson tried, it couldn't get its Les Pauls to fly. By 1961, in a last-ditch attempt, the entire range was overhauled into the profoundly different SG-style body shape, after which a disgruntled Les Paul saw his name removed from

both the headstock and the model designation. It appeared all might be lost until a small circle of cutting-edge guitarists started bringing single-cut Les Pauls along with them into the limelight.

“Keith Richards played a 1959 Les Paul Standard on TV in 1964 on *Ready Steady Go!* and *The Ed Sullivan Show*,” Davidson says. “And by the time he had gotten back from the studio to his hotel, he'd received a message from Eric Clapton asking him about the guitar. Jeff Beck had also shown an interest, and that was just the beginning of it. People started contacting each other about Les Pauls and they suddenly started becoming the guitar to have. At that time, the price point was still very shallow: Back then, you could

get a 'Burst for \$700 to \$800. It was like that until the mid '70s, when prices started to pop. I've got pictures from my old shop, We Buy Guitars, where there's a whole row of them. You could have had any one for \$1,200.”

While the Custom wasn't nearly as popular, it was among the guitars played by Creedence Clearwater Revival's John Fogerty, who owned a 1968 model. It was also the guitar of choice for Jimmy Page for much of the 1960s. His 1960 Les Paul Custom was his main session guitar from 1962 to 1967 and during Led Zeppelin's early years. It was stolen at the Minneapolis-Saint Paul airport in April 1970 while Zeppelin were on tour. Page and the Black Beauty were reunited in 2015.

“Les Paul Customs don't sell for the same number as the Standards and, honestly, for more than any other reason, it's because of the top,” Davidson says. “People like the way 'Bursts age and fade. And it's because Customs are black and don't look so pretty when they get beat up. But as far as I'm concerned, there just aren't enough props given to the Les Paul Custom. I like them and I've always had one in my collection. The first one I got — a '57 — cost me \$350 in about 1981, and I've owned that guitar four separate times now! Maybe I should have kept every guitar I ever bought. I wouldn't have any money, but I'd have some great guitars!” 🎸

Guitar Player thanks David Davidson of wellstrungguitars.com and museum.songbirds.rocks.

“GIBSON HIT A HOME RUN WITH THE PAF. IT GOT RID OF 60-CYCLE HUM, AND IT MEANT YOU COULD TURN THE AMP UP LOUDER”



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RANDOM NOTES, PART 1

As he drops *Noon*, his long-time-coming reunion album with bassist Mike Gordon, acoustic icon Leo Kottke offers observations on miking and playing well with others.

BY JIMMY LESLIE

WHAT DO YOU do for a third act when you've spent three decades as one of the planet's most influential solo acoustic players, renowned for fingerpicking your signature Taylor 12-string jumbo with a thunderous tone in lowered tunings? How about forming a duo with a jam-band bass player who not only thumps in the low end but also tends to meander melodically up into guitar territory? What seems unfathomable to most mortals makes perfect sense for musical mutants like guitarist Leo Kottke and bassist Mike Gordon.

There's no one quite like Leo. It's been nearly 50 years since the improbable troubadour dropped the sound heard around the world via 1972's *6- and 12-String Guitar* on mentor John Fahey's Takoma label. Despite his gargantuan influence on countless would-be folk heroes, Kottke remains a singular figure on the acoustic landscape. The bone-dry wit in his stage banter is arguably as instrumental to his act as his fingerpicking prowess. He truly doesn't

need anything but his guitar and his creaky, bass-heavy voice to sing, play and spin endlessly entertaining anecdotes that can quickly win over practically any audience. Yet, the past two decades of the 75-year-old's career have largely been defined by his duo with Gordon, who is most famous for frying oodles of Phish-head brains with his Phil Lesh-like sense of bass counterpoint and funky, George Porter Jr.-inspired grooves. The Kottke & Gordon tandem has become like a bizarre musical version of *The Odd Couple*, with both men playing Oscar.

Noon (ATO) is the duo's third album, and comes a sloth-like 15 years on the heels of 2005's *Sixty Six Steps*, which was preceded by 2003's *Clone*. Interestingly,

Kottke hasn't released any new solo albums in the meantime either, but he has toured steadily. Gordon's Phish bandmate Jon Fishman brings drums to a handful of tracks on *Noon*,

and guests include pedal-steel player Brett Lanier (the Barr Brothers) and cellist Zoë Keating (Imogen Heap, Tears for Fears).

On *Noon*, Kottke and Gordon sound as if they are sitting right in front of you. The songs are a balance of instrumentals

**"WE WERE LOSING
THE AIR BETWEEN US.
THE SIMPLEST APPROACH
ENDED UP OPENING IT
UP THE MOST"**



— highlighted by the cheerful opener "Flat Top" and the dark and demanding "Ants" — and vocal tunes that include Kottke's plaintive rendition of the Byrds' harmonized classic "Eight Miles High," as well as Gordon's tongue-in-cheek take on Prince's "Alphabet Street."

What did you do instrumentally to create a cohesive sound on *Noon*? There is no 12-string on the new album because we get in each other's way. An electric bass with a guitar is a categorically difficult pairing, unless the guitar player is doing the responsible thing about playing with other instruments, which is to treat the guitar like a horn. It's considerate to be



Kottke (right) with Mike Gordon

more left-hand oriented, and it's a different kind of musicality. There's much more about placement to consider when you're playing in a band than there is for a solo guitar player. I'm a mess for bass players and piano players, because my style is crowded in the sense that it's baroque. There's a lot of stuff happening inside. It doesn't stand out on top like playing lines with a plectrum. When Mike and I play together sitting face to face, it locks well and we have room for each other. Recording is different.

How did you meet that challenge?

We recorded in several different settings using several different setups. Mike and I recorded together in New Orleans and Vermont. In Vermont, there was a room mic and a near mic on the guitar. In New

Orleans, there was a near mic or two, and a couple of room mics. I recorded some tracks in Burbank with another setup. I tracked a direct guitar signal in every place, just in case we needed it, and ultimately we did, because Mike and I like to play in the same range. It can sound great, but it can be technically tricky to capture. We were losing the air between us, which affects things like crosstalk, and you don't want that. We eventually got there. The simplest approach ended up opening it up the most. We found my sound by using a very crude, early form of occupying the stereo image with a guitar. You put the direct signal on one side and the mic on the other to varying degrees, and then the room mic, or mics, can be somewhere in the middle. There's one

track where the guitar sounds different in a very good way. "Noon to Noon" was done in Burbank with Paul du Gre, who mastered this album and produced our first album. I have two B&K mics with very small capsules. Paul had them out in the room, in addition to the close mics. I'm singing while playing that track as well, and the end result is essentially a multichannel evocation of mono. You can do that by paying close attention to the phase. Artists can also be our own worst enemies in the studio. I decided not to be and tried to stay out of it from a production standpoint.

The guitar on "Noon to Noon" sounds almost like a 12-string.

Yeah. And that sound is the extent to which the phase was not controlled. Just



lately I've started going back to the old bluegrass approach, using a single mic. I haven't done that live, and it's very unnerving, because I've played otherwise for a long time. But you do away with all phase issues and a lot of latency disappears. It flummoxes digital recording the least. Mike and I have recently made several videos independent of each other that are being synced together to promote the record. Using one mic has worked great in a lot of ways for me. It's probably the way to go. I've been told that Neil Young is a fan of mono, and I am too. I think stereo remains an effect. We don't really hear in stereo, we hear something more than that. Don't get me wrong: The sound Paul gets in Burbank is beautiful. But it's a lot of work on that end, and it leaves room for error up and down the line, all the way through to mastering.

In the one live video available so far, "Flat Top," there is a single mic in front of you and a direct line running from the guitar.

Paul asked me to plug in just in case we needed the direct signal for the transients, but we didn't. I've had that guitar for over a year, but I only recently started liking it, and now I like it a lot. It was made by a guy named Kevin Muiderman. The interesting thing to know is that he's a plastic surgeon who lives up near the Canadian border. His main thing is rebuilding guys who've suffered farm accidents, such as falling under their threshers — really nasty shit. When he's done doing that stuff, he builds guitars to unwind.

Can you detail the body style and what you appreciate about it?

It measures 14¾ inches at the lower bout, so it's not big. The back and sides are made of Central American sinker mahogany with a Sitka spruce top, and I believe the fretboard is ebony. It's got open-geared tuners because I don't like the weight of sealed tuners. When we began working together, I played a couple of Kevin's guitars with Kevlar sandwiched in the middle of the top, so the top wood was actually just a veneer. I



TIM MOSENFELDER/CORBIS/GETTY IMAGES

Kottke performs at the Austin City Limits Music Festival, in 2005

didn't like that. For this guitar, we went back to the solid-wood top, but the braces are made out of wood with carbon-fiber composite in the center. The braces don't look that significant; they aren't big, but the carbon fiber makes a big difference in terms of strength. Kevin is very into the science, which is to weigh everything. The braces are where they are because the weight distribution allows the top to be very thin.

Most of the new record sounds like you played in standard tuning, but it seems

that "Flat Top" is in drop-D tuning and played in the key of D?

That's right. So we're in a real happy place on a guitar. It can get too happy if you do that too much.

"USING ONE MIC HAS WORKED GREAT IN A LOT OF WAYS FOR ME. IT'S PROBABLY THE WAY TO GO"

"Flat Top" has a kind of magic that sounds complicated, even though it's based on a simple progression. I would say "chord progression," but I'm not sure you've ever

actually strummed a chord! How did you work that composition into a seemingly endless cascade of fingerpicked arpeggios that flow like a musical snake?

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That's just how I wrote it. There is an improvisational section, and it's kind of like a smell that you either like or you don't.

Mike and I have performed the song a couple times. We made a video of one that I believe is going to be an NPR *Tiny Desk* thing. We also did one for Stephen Colbert's show [The Late Show], and in the improvisational section we do strum. Actually, I strummed a chord and Mike played a double-stop.

Anyway, the idea is that I'll get lost for a while and hope to find my way out. That's part of the plan, and it's an old deal. Bach and a lot of baroque composers would leave long sections where they essentially tell you that you're on your own for X amount of bars, and then come back. A lot of cadenzas were improvised. I came to improvisation very late, especially as a player. I'm not really an improviser, but I

can make shit up for a while and hope not to ruin stuff.

Is "Ants" a classically influenced composition?

It is, and "Ants" is in the same neighborhood as "Gewerbegebiet" [from 2004's *Try and Stop Me*]. It's rare to play against a tuning, and in both songs the key is different from the guitar tuning. It's an open tuning, but it's played closed, in effect. I'm tuned to open G major for "Ants," but I'm largely playing in D minor. That makes it very hard. The reason I got into that was because I frequently have to play the "hits," like "Vaseline Machine Gun." I needed something that wouldn't require retuning the guitar but would take me out of that thing.

The real drawback of open tunings is that they sound like open tunings. You find one and it's okay for a while, but

then you've got to get away from that sound without boring the audience to death by tuning. So I decided, "Why don't I get out of it, but keep the tuning?" That's how "Gewerbegebiet" and "Ants" happened, and I love doing it because it forces you to rely on your own invention. All your habits and hiccups just collapse. [Kottke plays "Gewerbegebiet" on a 12-string in a tuning analogous to open G, but with all the strings slacked down a whopping four and a half steps, until the lowest open string is B $\flat$. The composition is in the key of B $\flat$ minor, so the root is on the bottom string, but watch out for the major 3rd on the open second third string. He'll often play "Vaseline Machine Gun" with the same tuning. The composition is then in the key of E $\flat$ major with the root occurring on the fifth string and the major 3rd on the second string, as is natural in any tuning analogous to open G.]  Look for Part II of *Random Notes* with Leo Kottke in next month's *Frets* feature.



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Bend Me, Shape Me

Learn how to make your ax wail and sing like the pros

BY TOM KOLB

THE GUITAR IS a very expressive instrument. In the hands of a master player, it can sing, cry, laugh, scream, hoot and holler, and generally display just about any emotion known to man or beast. And when it comes to nuances inherent to the instrument, few techniques are as emotive as string bending. From vibrato to half- and whole-step bends, extra-wide bends and pedal steel-style licks, they're all covered in this ambitious lesson. And to top it off, there's an extended solo at the end that's bursting at the seams with a variety of cool-sounding bends. So grab your ax with the lightest string gauges and let's get going.

BASICS

Just to make sure we're on common ground, this lesson will start with some bending basics. But have patience, things will start moving in no time.

Examples 1a–d show some of the most common bending moves. These are the platform maneuvers used to launch a lot of awesome bending licks. All feature the strongest bending finger — the 3rd, or ring — on the string that most often gets the lion's share of shoves and tugs — the G. With most bends, it's a good idea to wrap your thumb over the neck and squeeze it like a vice. When bending with the ring finger, also enlist the middle, or 2nd, finger to help push the string to pitch, while employing the index finger to nestle against the underside of the D string so as to preemptively mute any unwanted string noise.

Bending direction is a matter of personal preference. Many guitarists will usually bend the G string, or one of the other strings, up and away from the palm, using a pushing technique, while some like to pull the string down and in

toward the palm. The choice is typically made on a case by case basis, considering the musical context, and sometimes there is no choice in which technique to employ, as we will see.

Ex. 1a shows a *standard bend and release*, performed in an eighth-note rhythm. You pick the note, bend it up, “in time,” to a target pitch (in this case, a whole step up, from D to E) then release it to its original, unbent starting position. **Ex. 1b** illustrates a *grace-note bend and release*, which is essentially the same technique. The only difference here is that the bend is a grace note, which doesn't officially count as part of the metric rhythm of the measure and is quickly inserted right before the target note, “by grace of” the following beat. Grace notes are notated with a smaller size note head and tab number.

Ex. 1c is where things get a little trickier. Here, the same note is bent up a whole step, but it is muted and silenced before the string is released to pitch. To stop the sound of the release, you can mute the string with the side of your pick-hand thumb as you pick the next note. You can also mute it by simply relaxing your fret hand's “grip” on the string, meaning loosening the pressure applied to it, but without letting go of it. The ability to mute a bend before it is released is an extremely important technique and can be challenging to master. In blues-rock soloing it is often the deciding factor that separates the newbies from the pros. **Ex. 1d** features “choked” bends. Essentially the same as the non-release bend, a choked bend differs in that the bent note is stopped very quickly, resulting in the sound of a scream or yelp being choked off by throttling hands. Listen to Chuck Berry's guitar intro to “Johnny B. Goode” for a textbook example of choked bends.

Our next group of examples demonstrate an assortment of more advanced bending techniques. **Ex. 2a** is a pre-bend, for which the string is bent up to pitch before it is picked and sounded. (George Harrison's anchor riff in “Something,” by the Beatles, is a prime example of the pre-bend technique in action.) The pre-bend takes practice to master because the player needs to rely on muscle memory to instinctively anticipate precisely how much bending force is needed to achieve the desired

FROM VIBRATO TO HALF- AND WHOLE- STEP BENDS, EXTRA- WIDE BENDS AND PEDAL STEEL-STYLE LICKS, THEY'RE ALL COVERED IN THIS AMBITIOUS LESSON

target pitch without hearing it. Next, **Ex. 2b** is a held bend that morphs into a *bend vibrato*, which many guitarists regard as the sweetest-sounding and most-vocal-like vibrato there is. Hold the bend for two beats, as indicated, then proceed to repeatedly release it ever so slightly, by approximately a quarter step, which is half of a half step, then rebend it up to the target pitch, and do so in an even and fairly quick rhythm. This technique is easier said than done. Spend some time practicing different tempos of vibrato speed. Sometimes slow and wiggly fits the bill, while other occasions call for a quivery approach. (Listen to the opening bars of Eric Clapton's main solo

in the Beatles' "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" for an exquisite example of heavily-vibratoed slow-release bends.)

The next two examples feature a technique known as the *oblique bend*, where a dyad (two-note chord) is played on adjacent strings and one string is bent while the other remains stationary. **Ex. 2c** is a popular blues-rock oblique bend, called a *unison bend*, so called because the lower string is bent up to match the pitch of an unbent fretted note on the higher string, in unison. (Jimi Hendrix performed a melodic passage of unison bends in his main solo in "Manic Depression.") Be careful here not to bend the B string along with the G string. Concentrate on holding your index finger in place. **Ex. 2d** is a classic example of a harmonized oblique bend, featuring a different pitch on each string, which mimics a signature move often performed by country pedal steel players, who use knee- and foot-operated levers to bend notes up precisely a whole step. (Guitarist Bernie Leadon's first three bends in the intro to the Eagles' classic "Take It Easy" is a familiar example of this pedal steel-style maneuver.) Be sure to keep your pinkie planted firmly behind the B string's 8th fret as you bend the G string up a whole step with your ring finger, supported by the middle. (You can add your index finger too, for extra support and bending reinforcement).

Examples 3a–d present a series of drills designed to help develop your pitch accuracy when bending. **Ex. 3a** is a half-step bend exercise. The idea is to first focus on the pitch of the unbent E $\flat$ note at the 8th fret on the G string, then try to swoop up to that same exact pitch by bending to it from D at the 7th fret. Employ the same listening-and-mimicking tactic to play the whole-step bend in **Ex. 3b**, for which the goal is to bend from D up to E.

Examples 3c and **3d** feature "overbends," or bends beyond a whole step. These are not for the faint of heart and shouldn't be attempted until you're well accustomed to performing whole-step bends. (Light-gauge strings are recommended.) Some legendary players

Ex. 1a–d Common whole-step bends

Ex. 2a–d Other types of whole-step bends

Ex. 3a–d Pitch-accuracy exercises

Ex. 4a–b

D Dorian mode

D Dorian "trimmed" pattern

Ex. 5 D Dorian trimmed pattern, ascending with bends



known for their use of overbends are Albert King, David Gilmour, Richie Blackmore, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Jimmy Page and Edward Van Halen.

THE TWO-FINGER MODAL BOX

It's one thing to have a few bending licks in your arsenal, but it's another to have the creative freedom to come up with new ones on the fly. With that goal in mind, here's an intriguing system that exploits the potential of the mighty ring-finger bend.

Ex. 4a illustrates the 10th-position box pattern for the D Dorian mode (D, E, F, G, A, B, C), which is the second mode of the C major scale. Dorian is a

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popular scale choice among soloists in many styles, from rock, blues and funk, to country, metal and jazz. Play through this pattern a few times to get the tonality in your ear. Then look at **Ex. 4b**. This is a “trimmed down” version of the full pattern. Certain notes have been strategically shaved off, namely those at the 9th and 13th frets, to allow easy access to a compact range between the 10th and 12th frets and a two-finger method for navigating the melodic structure of the scale using bends.

Ex. 5 is an ascending line crafted entirely from the trimmed-down pattern in 4b and demonstrates how, by employing either half- or whole-step bends, it's possible to play every note of D Dorian in succession, without fretting more than two notes per string. Be sure to bend the low E and A strings

Ex. 6 Same pattern, descending with bends, releases and pull-offs

Ex. 7 Bridge & middle single-coil pickups

Ex. 8 Bridge humbucker

Ex. 9 Neck single-coil pickup

Ex. 10 G Mixolydian melody with bends (bridge & middle single-coil pickups)

Ex. 11a-c Neck single-coil pickup with distortion and delay

Ex. 6 employs the same two-digit box shape to descend the scale with a series of bend/release/pull-off sequences. (This is essentially the same technique described in Ex. 1b, but with a pull-off tacked on.) **Ex. 7** transforms the previous triplet-based exercise into a 16-note propelled lick, while **Ex. 8** isolates the lower strings for a hard-rock example reminiscent of Van Halen's "Jamie's Cryin'." **Ex. 9** features an intriguing double-stop bend on the G and B string set. Keeping both strings parallel (equidistant) while bending is key to achieving the proper pitches.

Our next batch of examples exploits the two-finger modal box while also attaching some neighboring scale tones. **Ex. 10** is a country-flavored outing derived from the relative G Mixolydian mode (G, A, B, C, D, E, F), which, like D Dorian is made up of the same seven notes as the parent C major scale. Bursting at the seams with pedal steel-style bending maneuvers, the passage cascades its way down the magic modal box inserting only one additional fretted note at the outset, F at the 13th fret on the high-E string. Take great care while performing this example. Be sure to let those sustained bends ring as you pick the fretted notes that are tucked between the bends and pre-bends.

The bluesy lick in **Ex. 11c** features a multiple, or compound, bend, wherein a fretted note is first bent to one pitch and then to another. Here, the 12th-fret G note is bent up a minor 3rd interval (one

Ex. 12 utilizes the D minor pentatonic (D, F, G, A, C) structure of the D Dorian pattern from Ex.4a for a Clapton-esque lick ending in a bent-note vibrato quaver (see Ex.2b). The Jimmy Page-inspired passage in **Ex. 13** is cast from the same scale mold, but carefully crafted half-step



bends imply a D blues(add 3) scale (D, F, F#, G, Ab, A, C) tonality.

The 10th-position phrasing in **Ex. 14** is in the style of master blues guitarists such as Albert King, Stevie Ray Vaughan, and Joe Bonamassa. The setting is an isolated section of an 8-bar blues in D, where the I chord (D7) moves to the IV chord (G7). Bars 1 and 2 stay put in the D minor pentatonic box, but a half-step bend at the G string's 10th fret creates a bluesy minor/major interplay over the D7 chord harmony (D, F#, A, C). Bars 3 and 4 stay in 10th position while segueing to a G minor pentatonic (G, Bb, C, D, F) box, again spiced with a minor/major (Bb to B) bendy rub over the G7 chord (G, B, D, F).

EXAMPLE 15c PERHAPS PRESENTS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE. THE D STRING CAN BE CUMBERSOME TO BEND, AND BENDING THE G STRING TOWARD THE FLOOR CAN FEEL A LITTLE STRANGE AT FIRST

CHORD-TONE BENDING

We've seen how bending techniques can be used to spice up scale-oriented licks and phrases. Now let's check out various ways in which they can be used to add pizzazz to basic chord shapes.

Examples 15a–c illustrate a pedal steel-style approach to major triad inversions using a variety of oblique-bend tactics. (For the sake of continuity and comparison, all three phrases are in the key of D, but feel free to transpose them to other keys.) **Ex. 15a** shows three different dyad shapes on the B and high E strings. The first one places the 5th of the chord, A, on top, then the D root and finally the major 3rd, F#. In all cases, the high-E string note is the fixed pitch and the B string receives the bend up to one

Ex. 17 Bridge single-coil pickup with mild overdrive and slapback delay

♩ = 138 D7

w/pick & fingers throughout

let ring

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of the other chord tones. **Ex. 15b** uses similar tactics but on the G-B string set, which are tuned differently, so the shapes are different. Be careful with the index-finger bends here. You need to develop pure brute strength and control to bend with your index finger alone, as you can't rely on any help from the other

digits. **Ex. 15c** perhaps presents the biggest challenge. First, the D string can be somewhat cumbersome to bend, and bending the G string toward the floor on the second dyad can feel a little strange at first. These are traditional moves for country guitarists, but for blues-rockers they can take some getting used to.

Ex. 16a raises the bar on the previous dyad-based maneuvers with a set of four triple-stop bending ploys. Each is constructed from a chord-tone dyad voiced on the B and high E strings with the G-string note receiving either a half- or whole-step bend to complete the triad voicing. **Ex. 16b** features two intriguing dyad bends that, when performed properly, imply the harmony of a D major triad and a partial D7 chord voicing. These are rather unorthodox moves, but hopefully it will whet your appetite to explore and discover what you can come up with in creating bendy chord shapes. With a little forethought, theory knowledge and ingenuity, the possibilities are, quite literally, endless.

IN THE HANDS OF A MASTER PLAYER, THE GUITAR CAN SING, CRY, LAUGH, SCREAM, HOOT AND HOLLER, AND GENERALLY DISPLAY JUST ABOUT ANY EMOTION KNOWN TO MAN OR BEAST

A BENDY SOLO

Let's take some of these bending maneuvers out for a test drive — see **Ex. 17**. The setting is a straight-ahead, southern-rock flavored groove over a D7 chord with occasional F and G chords thrown in to turn the dominant-7 tonality a bit toward the minor side.

The solo opens with a chromatic line (C, C $\sharp$, D), courtesy of a half-step bend from the 3rd fret on the A string followed by the open D string. This leads to a D-string bend similar to the first dyad shape in Ex.15c, and a sliding-6th interval culminating in a bluesy quarter-step bend that enters the ambiguous realm between a minor- and major-3rd tonality. Next up is the double-stop bend figure explained in the second bar of Ex.16b, except this bend is held while

The image contains two musical staves, labeled 14 and 17, representing guitar parts. Each staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff of each system shows string and fret information. In system 14, the top staff has a G chord in measure 14 and a D5 chord in measure 15. The bottom staff shows fret numbers and bends: measure 14 has a half-step bend on the A string (14 to 15) and a whole-step bend on the B string (14 to 15); measure 15 has a half-step bend on the A string (15 to 16) and a whole-step bend on the B string (15 to 16); measure 16 has a half-step bend on the A string (16 to 17) and a whole-step bend on the B string (16 to 17). In system 17, the top staff has an F chord in measure 17, a G chord in measure 18, and a D5 chord in measure 19. The bottom staff shows fret numbers and bends: measure 17 has a half-step bend on the A string (10 to 11) and a whole-step bend on the B string (10 to 11); measure 18 has a half-step bend on the A string (12 to 13) and a whole-step bend on the B string (12 to 13); measure 19 has a half-step bend on the A string (12 to 13) and a whole-step bend on the B string (12 to 13).

striking the same set of strings several times. This leads to bar 4, where we encounter another type of dyad bend. This one was explained in Ex.9. (Remember to keep the strings parallel to one another for both the aforementioned bends.)

Measure 5 hosts a couple of sneaky half-step bends that use *lower chromatic neighbor tones* to bend to the major 3rd (B) and 5th (D) of the G chord change. A classic oblique-bend figure casts an F major pentatonic (F, G, A, C, D) curtain over the F chord in bar 6, and the first section goes out on a couple of solid D blues-scale (D, F, G, A $\flat$, A, C) phrases.

Beginning in bar 9, section 2 opens with a call-and-response theme based on one of Billy Gibbons' catchy rhythmic motifs in ZZ Top's "Sharp Dressed Man." A stripped-down version of the first triple-stop bending maneuver in **Ex. 16a** (high-E string is omitted) provides the platform for the "call" phrase. The "response" in measure 10 employs a half-step version of the classic oblique bend from Ex.2d, creating a minor-3rd rub over the D7 chord. The "concluding" phrase in bars 11 and 12 starts with the full-on oblique bend from Ex.2d, followed by a variation on the pedal-steel phrasing introduced and explained in Ex.10. What follows is a Stevie Ray Vaughan-style triple-stop version of the classic oblique bend from

Ex.2d, creating an F triad tonality (F, A, C) in measure 13, and a G triad (G, B, D) in bar 14.

The finale is action packed, so let's break it down a bar at a time. Measure 15 is a D Mixolydian (D, E, F $\sharp$, G, A, B, C) version of the pedal-steel phrasing presented in Ex.10. But here we're in a different-shaped box pattern between the 15th and 17th frets. The trickiest thing here is the complex rhythm structure. Work through it slowly at first before you attempt to play it up to tempo. Bar 16 is the only measure (besides bar 7) that doesn't host a bend, but the line is interesting nonetheless: a trio of bookmatched minor-3rd dyad shapes that carve out a D major pentatonic/D minor pentatonic/D major pentatonic pathway as they zip down the fretboard along the G and B strings.

Measure 17 takes up the bending baton again with a crafty half-step bend at the 11th fret on the A string (causing yet another minor 3rd-major 3rd handoff, this time over the F chord), and a restatement of the 12th-fret parallel-string dyad bend from Ex.9. At measure 18 a double pull-off to the open D string allows just enough time to dive back down to the bottom of the fretboard for the solo-capper — a pair of half-step bends that resolve to their adjacent open-string counterparts, and a final open-position D5 chord. ■



Chord Soloing, Jazz Style, Part 2

We conclude our guide to soloing with chords in the style of the jazz greats.

BY MILTON MERMIKIDES

LAST MONTH, WE launched our lesson on how to solo with chords, a technique that blurs the line between lead and rhythm playing. As we discussed previously, soloing with chords requires both a knowledge of music theory and the fretboard in order to use it creatively and technically. However, as we saw in the first batch of examples, it's possible to develop knowledge and skill in this area through a series of conceptual and practical exercises.

Once again, our examples will focus on the genre of jazz, which will allow us to experiment with a wide range of melodic, harmonic and modal concepts and devices, from working with fundamental modes and harmonic contexts to resolving major and minor ii - V progressions. These approaches can also be applied to other styles, such as blues, rock, soul/R&B and pop, and can improve your soloing skills and offer greater harmonic support and independence, especially when playing in a small ensemble, such as a guitar-bass-drums trio, as well help you play lead using more than just single notes.

In this second and final part to our lesson, we'll look at six examples that demonstrate the following:

- How to quickly describe a variety of fundamental modes and harmonic contexts (Dorian, Lydian, Mixolydian and altered-dominant) wherever you are on the fretboard.
- Useful and harmonically appropriate solutions for navigating the essential major and minor ii - V progressions all over the neck.

We'll conclude this masterclass with an extended chord solo that demonstrates how all of these concepts and devices may be applied in a real-world musical context.

The examples presented here begin with Ex. 6, as they continue on from last month's five examples. As in part one, I'm using only one key center for each concept, for purposes of illustration and comparison, but transposing and applying these ideas to different keys and contexts is essential to properly absorb them, so be sure to do that on your own. Now dial in a clean, warm neck-pickup tone, and let's get started!

Rather than considering chords to only be unmovable blocks, it's liberating to think of a key area or tonal environment and use chords derived from a scale or mode in a more fluid manner, particularly when "hanging out," or vamping, on a single chord for several bars. This approach also offers more options for playing chords in conventional progressions. Such great guitarists as Pat Metheny, Bill Frisell, Joe Dioro, Kenny Burrell, Emily Remler, Scott Henderson and Allan Holdsworth have employed this modal approach with brilliant results. There are many modes and concepts to explore, but I'll narrow things down here and focus on the highly appealing and useful Dorian, Lydian and Mixolydian modes, as well as the very tense-sounding altered-dominant-7th tonality.

Ex. 6 presents a number of great-sounding chords, all over the neck, that effectively describe the sound of the D

Dorian mode (D, E, F, G, A, B, C), which is the second mode of the C major scale (C, D, E, F, G, A, B). The signature, or "character," note of the Dorian mode, which is one of the major scale's three minor modes, is its major 6th, which in D Dorian is B, and you'll see that note appear in many of these voicings.

In **Ex. 7**, the fourth mode of C major, F Lydian (F, G, A, B, C, D, E) — with its raised, or "sharped," 4th (#4), B, which may also be reckoned as the #11 — adds its characteristic beautifully "floating" quality to a major tonality. Lydian-based chord voicings and extensions work great when staying on a major 7 chord for two or more bars, and also for when the chord is not the "I" (one), and for ending chords too, even if it is the "I."

The Mixolydian mode, which is a major mode characterized by its lowered, or "flatted," 7th, is a top choice to play over a dominant 7th chord, with which it perfectly "agrees." The voicings presented in **Ex. 8** all live within G Mixolydian (G, A, B, C, D, E, F), which is the C major scale's fifth mode and is made up of the same seven notes as that scale, as well as those of D Dorian and F Lydian, which in this case are all the natural notes (no sharps or flats). The voicings shown here serve as useful chord-soloing options when playing over a stationary, or static, dominant-7 tonality, be it in a jazz context or a funk or blues setting.

In **Ex. 9**, the altered-dominant scale, also known as the super-Locrian mode, which is intervallically spelled 1, b2 (or b9), b3 (or #9), 3, #4 (or b5, or #11), #5 (or

CHRISTIAN ALMINANA/GETTY IMAGES



Pat Metheny at
Nice Jazz Festival,
July 24, 2010

Ex. 6 Dorian Fluency

Dm6 (Dorian)
 ♩ = 80 Jazz-Funk
 (swing 16ths)

F/A G/B F/C G/D Dm/F Dm7sus4 Dm⁶₉/C Dm⁶₉/F Em11 Dm11

1, 3

Ex. 7 Lydian Fluency

Fmaj7 #11 Lydian
 ♩ = 136 Latin Jazz

Fmaj9 #11 Fmaj7 #11 F/G G/A G⁶₉/B Fmaj7 #11/A Fmaj7 #11 Fmaj9 #11/E

1, 5

Ex. 8 Mixolydian/Dominant 7th Fluency

Bop G13 (Mixolydian)
 ♩ = 160

G9/F G13/F G13/B G9/B G13/F G9/F G9/A G13/F G13/B G9/B

1, 5

Ex. 9 Altered/Dissonant Dominant 7th Fluency

A7(alt) (Altered)
 ♩ = 112 Fusion

A7^b₉¹³/C# A7^b₉¹³/C# A7^b₉ A7^b₉¹³/G A7^b₉¹³/G A7^b₉/Bb A7^b₉¹³/G A13^b₉ A7^b₉/C# A13^b₉ A7^b₅/G

1, 5



$\flat 13$), $\flat 7$, creates maximum dissonance and tension without “breaking” the dom7 chord. It contains the root, major 3rd and $\flat 7$ th to define its essential quality, but all other scale degrees are altered from their natural position, hence $\flat 9$, $\sharp 9$, $\flat 5$ and $\flat 13$. The A altered-dominant scale is spelled A, $\flat B$, $\flat B\sharp$ (or C), $\sharp C$, $\flat E$, F, G. Some players also include the natural 5th (as I’ve done here in a couple of the chords), which in this case is the note E. I’ve also included the natural 13th, $\sharp F$, which creates a very John Scofield-esque sound, especially when paired with a $\sharp 9$ or $\flat 9$. These notes sound great over a dominant 7th chord with altered extensions and/or whenever you want to create heightened harmonic-melodic tension before resolving down a 5th or up a 4th to a major- or minor-type 7th chord. By the way, you’ll find it helpful to know that the altered-dominant scale, or super-Locrian mode, is the seventh mode of the melodic minor scale, which in this case would be $\flat B$ melodic minor ($\flat B$, C, $\flat D$, $\flat E$, F, G, A).

Let’s now turn our attention to the ubiquitous ii - V - I (two - five- one)

cadence, or mini-progression, which is a fundamental cornerstone of jazz harmony that warrants complete theoretical and practical understanding for any aspiring jazz musician. It’s defined as a type of minor chord (as indicated by the lowercase Roman numeral “ii”) going up a 4th (or down a 5th) to a type of dominant 7th chord, which in turn then moves up a 4th (or down a 5th) to a root chord — the “one.” There are two types of ii - V cadences: 1) major ii - V, which is minor 7 chord (m7), progressing to a dominant 7, and 2) minor ii - V, which is a minor-7 flat-5 chord ($m7\flat 5$) moving to a dominant 7, which usually has “altered” extensions, such as $\flat 9$, $\sharp 9$ and $\flat 13$.

Major and minor ii - V cadences expect resolutions to major and minor chords, but counterexamples of unresolved, “roving” ii-Vs are numerous and well established in many jazz tunes. In **Ex. 10**, I’ve used the repeating progression Dm7 - G7 - Cmaj7 - $Em7\flat 5$ - A7, which embeds both types of ii - V cadences very neatly and offers tons of scope for soloing. For this example, I

employed the voicings of Dm7, G7 and Cmaj7 from Examples 3–5 [see GP November 2020] to create a major ii - V - I and a minor ii - V (by altering the 5th of the m7 voicings) in four different positions on the fretboard with the chords $Em7\flat 5$ and $A7\flat 9$. These voicings are great for harmonizing solos (as Joe Pass and Wes Montgomery did so well) and interjecting little comping patterns between single-note phrases.

Ex. 11 takes the shapes from last month’s Ex. 5 and adds some extensions and alterations to create more flavor and flow. With these tools you can ultimately navigate a lot of standard jazz repertoire in any key and fretboard position.

All the concepts presented in parts one and two of this lesson come together in the chord solo presented here in **Ex. 12**. This solo demonstrates just one of countless possibilities that are available using these approaches and harmonic devices. Once you’ve learned the solo, have a go at building your own original chord solos using the materials presented in this two-part lesson as starting points. ■

Ex. 10 Major and Minor ii-V-I in four positions

$\text{♩} = 140$ Swing

System 1 (Frets 1-7):

- Chords: Dm7 (Dm7/F), G7 (G7/F), Cmaj7 (C $\flat_9$ /E), $Em7\flat 5$ ($Em7\flat 5$ /G), A7 (A7/G).
- Fretboard diagrams show fingerings for strings E, B, G, D, A, E.

System 2 (Frets 9-15):

- Chords: Dm7/C, G7/B, C $\flat_9$ /A, $Em7\flat 5$ /D, A7/C $\sharp$, Dm7, G7/D, Cmaj7, $Em7\flat 5$, A7/E.
- Fretboard diagrams show fingerings for strings E, B, G, D, A, E.

Ex. 11 Elaborated Major and Minor ii-V-I in four positions

Ex. 11 Elaborated Major and Minor ii-V-I in four positions

♩ = 140 Swing

Chords: Dm9/F, G7^{b13}/F, G7^{b13}, C⁶/E, Em7^{b5}/G, A7^{b13}/G, Dm7/A, G7^{b9}/B^b, Cmaj9/G, Em7^{b5}/B^b, A7^{b9}/B^b, Dm9/C, G7^{b13}/B, Cmaj9/B, Em7^{b5}/D, A7^{b13}/C[#], Dm7sus4, Dm7, G13/F, G9/F, Cmaj7/E, Em7^{b5}, A7^{b9}/G, A7^{b9}/E

1, 3 5, 7 9, 11 13, 15

Ex. 12 Chord Solo Study

Ex. 12 Chord Solo Study

Jazz-Funk ♩ = 98

Chords: Dm7 (Dorian), Dm, Dm7sus4, Dm9/C, Dm7/A, Dm6/A, Dm7/A

1, 13 3, 15

Ex. 12

Dm7/F **Dm11/F** **Dm7/F** **Dm6/A** **Dm7/C** **Dm9/C** **D7alt**
D7^b13/c **#9**

E 5 3 5 3
B 3 5 7 8 10 12 13
G 3 3 3 6 6 10 11
D 3 3 7 7 10 10 11
A 3 3 7 7 10 10 10

6, 18

G7 Mixolydian **G13/B** **A^b13/C** **G13/B** **G13/F** **A7alt**
A7^b13/G **#9**

E 12 10 10 9
B 12 11 10 8
G 15 15 15 15 15 13 13 10
D 12 13 12 13 12 13 13 10
A 12 10 10 9 10 10 10 13

9, 21

Dm7 **G7** **Cm7** **F7** **Bm7^b5** **E7** **B^b Lydian**
Dm9/C **G7^b13/B** **Cm9/B^b** **F7^b13/A** **Bm7^b5/A** **E7^b13/G[#]** **B^bmaj7[#]11**

E 8 10 10 7
B 10 5 7 10
G 12 11 10 9
D 10 10 10 9
A 10 10 10 9

12, 24

25

B^bmaj9[#]11/A **B^bmaj7[#]11** **B^b/C** **C/D** **Dm7 Dorian** **Dm7sus4** **Dm7** **Dm9/C** **Dm7/C** **Dm7/A** **Dm6/A**

E 8 5 7 7
B 10 10 9 8
G 10 11 10 10
D 10 12 12 12
A 15 13 14 12

27

D^b7 Mixolydian **D^b9/C^b** **D^b13/C^b** **D^b9/C^b** **D^b13/F** **D^b9/F** **D^b13/F** **Cmaj7** **C⁶/G** **G/A** **C⁶/A** **Cmaj7** **C⁶/E** **Cmaj7 Lydian**
D/E **#8**

E 9 6 9 6 4 6 3
B 6 6 6 4 4 3 3
G 8 8 8 4 4 4 4
D 9 9 9 3 3 3 3
A 3 5 7 10 12 15 14

30

Path to Finger Freedom

Part 4: Essential elemental plucking patterns

BY JIMMY LESLIE

THE PAST FEW columns were designed to get all of your digits on deck. It can take a bit of time before you'll feel fully prepared to navigate the fingerstyle world, but we've addressed how to approach that, and exciting new opportunities now await us. Eager to take on fingerpicking patterns across multiple strings? Pluck it — let's do this!

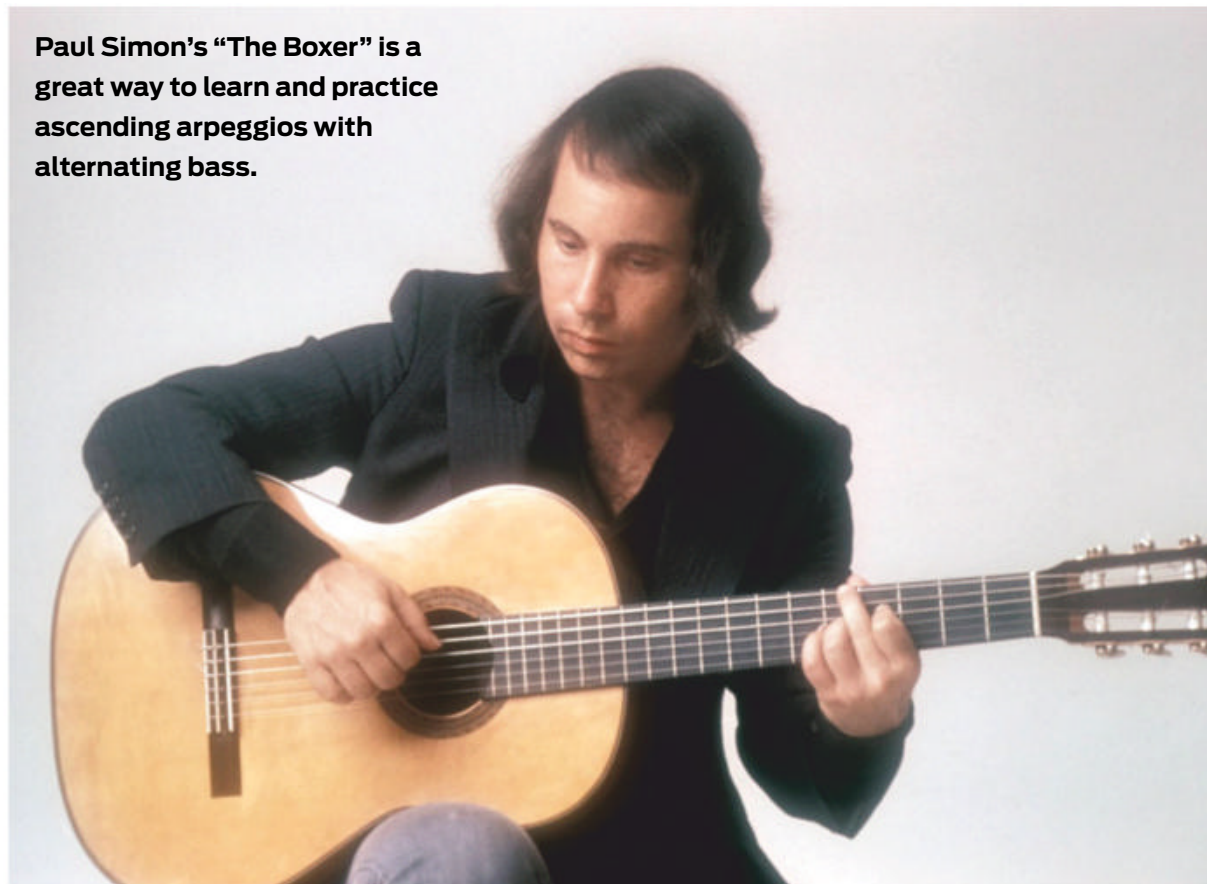
DEVELOP A CLEAN THUMB

The first exercise a fingerpicker needs to master is thumb jumping cleanly from one string to another, primarily the bottom three, within the framework of a chord. Let's work on a foundation within an open G. Practice jumping from the root on the third fret of the sixth string to the open D on the fourth and, alternately, the B on the second fret of the fifth string. Once you can do that cleanly in time, with a crisp attack, you're ready to move to the next challenge.

OUTSIDE/INSIDE: THE "DUST IN THE WIND" APPROACH

Kansas's Kerry Livgren famously created "Dust in the Wind" from a fingerpicking exercise, and it remains a fun way to develop technique, either in a hybrid or full fingerpicking style. We'll do three moves using three digits: thumb, index and ring finger. The overriding concept is an outside/inside approach. Start by simultaneously plucking the two strings that define the "outside" of the first chord, which in this case is C. Thumb the root at the third fret of the fifth

Paul Simon's "The Boxer" is a great way to learn and practice ascending arpeggios with alternating bass.



string while using the ring finger to pluck the octave at the first fret on the second string. The following "inside" moves involve hitting notes on the strings in between. Use the thumb to hit the E at the second fret of the fourth string, then pluck the open G string with the index finger. The last move is to work all four of those notes individually with the same digits outside/outside, and then inside/inside. Thumb the low C, pluck the high C, thumb the inside E, and then pluck the open G. Play the entire sequence repeatedly to achieve a smooth flow, then expand on it to play the rest of "Dust in the Wind," plus many more.

ASCENDING ARPEGGIOS WITH ALTERNATING BASS: "THE BOXER" APPROACH

One of the great challenges of cross-picking with a pick is to do it smoothly up and down an arpeggiated chord, and the same is true for fingerpicking. You've got a thumb plus four fingers to work across six strings, and we're not going to use the pinkie yet, so, clearly, it's not going to be a one-to-one relationship. The thumb generally covers the wound strings, while the fingers work the treble strings plus, perhaps, the fourth string, depending on the situation. We'll address ascensions with an alternating

bass line to get started in a practical and musical fashion.

The easiest example is an open D chord, as it covers just four strings. It's logical to make the chord shape and play an ascending arpeggio by plucking from the fourth to the first strings, starting with the thumb and then following with

THE THUMB GENERALLY COVERS THE WOUND STRINGS, WHILE THE FINGERS WORK THE TREBLE STRINGS

fingers 1 through 3, respectively. To get an alternating I - V bass line going, substitute the open fifth string for the open fourth string every other time you reach the bass note in the progression. Once

you've got the D down, try a C chord. The concept is the same; just ignore the top and bottom strings until the bass alternation, which happens every other time by hitting a G on the sixth string with the thumb.

Open G is a bit trickier, as it covers all six strings, but it's no biggie. Simply skip the fifth and fourth strings on the first time up. The bass note alternation for the second ascension is elementary, because it's an open D string, so you ultimately play the top four strings with the thumb, followed by the first three fingers. Simon & Garfunkel's classic "The Boxer" is a fantastic way to work through various incarnations of this common fingerstyle pattern, and it will unlock an infinite number of doors on your path to finger freedom. ■



Gibson

LUKAS NELSON SIGNATURE LES PAUL JUNIOR

TESTED BY ART THOMPSON

THE NEW GIBSON Lukas Nelson Signature Les Paul Junior is a replica of the “student model” 1956 Les Paul Junior singer-songwriter Lukas Nelson purchased in 2013 and has been playing ever since with his band, Promise of the Real. That guitar was recommended to Nelson by longtime Neil Young tech (and owner of Vintage Instruments Rental in northern California) Larry Cragg, and this dead-nuts recreation of it aims to capture the tone and playing feel of the original.

“Larry is a special guy, and he has been working with Neil for a long time,” Nelson says. “I took it seriously when he brought me this guitar. And he was right, it’s a fantastic instrument and it immediately spoke to me. Even before I started playing guitar, I was a

SPECIFICATIONS

Lukas Nelson Signature Les Paul Junior

CONTACT gibson.com

PRICE \$1,599 street, hardshell case included

NUT WIDTH 1.694” Graph Tech Nubone

NECK Mahogany

FRETBOARD Rosewood, 24.75” scale

FRETS 22

TUNERS Vintage deluxe with white buttons

BODY Mahogany

BRIDGE Vintage-style compensated wraparound

PICKUPS P-90 Alnico III dog-ear

CONTROLS Volume, tone 3-way

EXTRAS Orange drop capacitor in hardwired circuit

FACTORY STRINGS Gibson Vintage Reissue nickel .010–.046

WEIGHT 7.26 lbs (as tested)

BUILT USA

KUDOS A great sounding vintage-style guitar that plays superbly and looks righteous

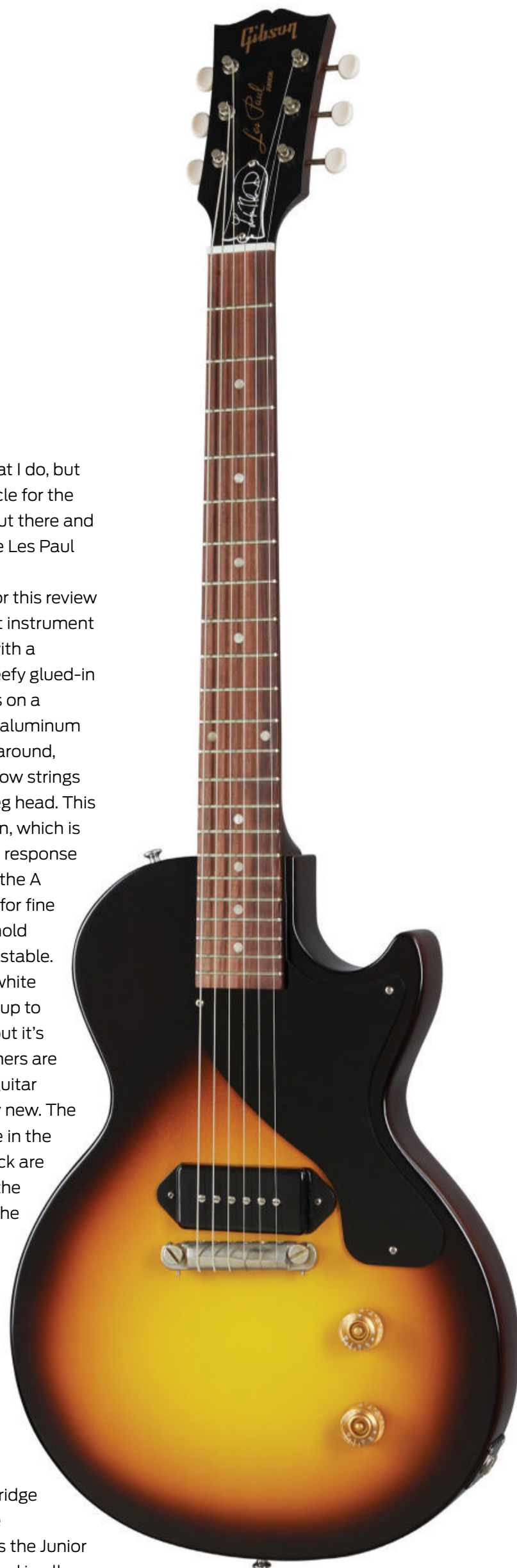
CONCERNS Some minor cosmetic issues

songwriter, so that’s generally what I do, but the guitar really provides the vehicle for the songs. I need a way to get them out there and in my own way, and that’s why the Les Paul Junior is so important to me.”

The signature guitar on loan for this review is a well-rendered and lightweight instrument that features a mahogany body with a two-tone sunburst finish and a beefy glued-in neck with 22 medium-jumbo frets on a rosewood board. The bridge is an aluminum vintage-style compensated wraparound, which is set at an angle, with the low strings spanning out farthest from the peg head. This also slightly increases their tension, which is noticeable in the snappy dynamic response when twanging on the low-E and the A strings. It also features setscrews for fine adjustments, and the studs that hold the bridge in place are height adjustable.

Vintage-style machines with white buttons pull the strings smoothly up to pitch. Just a cosmetic note here, but it’s interesting that the bridge and tuners are the only “relic-ed” pieces on this guitar — everything else looks spotlessly new. The only slight flaw is a noticeable line in the finish where the fretboard and neck are glued together. You can also feel the slight height difference between the two pieces when running a hand along the edges of the neck.

This guitar’s big neck feels awesome, and the playability is excellent, thanks to a sweet low-action setup, precisely worked Graph Tech Nubone nut and the smooth satin nitro-lacquer finish on the neck. Of course, one of the tests with any guitar equipped with a stop-tail bridge is intonation, and whoever did the adjusting took their time with it, as the Junior sounds tuneful and musically sound in all





regions of the neck. This is a guitar that's fun to play acoustically, as it sustains well and has an open and resonant tone. Weighing in at a tad over seven pounds, the Lukas Nelson Signature Les Paul Junior feels nimble and is lively and effusive, all of which portends good things when amp-ed-up.

In the electronics department, a single P-90 Alnico III "dog-ear" pickup feeds volume and tone controls, and there's small plastic plate on the back that covers a handwired circuit with silky Gibson-labeled CTS pots and a Sprague orange drop tone cap.

Plugged into a Fender Deluxe Reverb, and with a Fulltone OCD pedal for overdrive, the Junior had that uncanny blend of ballsiness and sweetness, delivering bright, fat tones that sounded righteous for anything from blues to hard rock, but also

surprisingly cool for country twanging and even jazzy stuff with the tone control rolled down. The circuit is voiced very well for this guitar, sounding bright but not harsh when turned all the way up, and dark but not overly muddy when rolled all the way back. A vocal-like inflection also makes its case when sweeping the control, which gives a cool presence to the tone for lead playing and slide work though an overdriven rig. The volume control also doesn't shave off the highs when you turn it down, so the tone remains clear at lower levels.



The bottom line is that Nelson was quite enthused about his signature guitar when I spoke with him prior to receiving the review guitar, which says a lot about not only the guitar but also its maker. "They did an incredible job," Nelson said. "They worked on it for two years, and they're very good. I A/B'd my original '56 with all the prototypes — and I got three or four — and Gibson was so responsive in terms of wanting to get it right. I'm so grateful to them." 🎸



Fender

AMERICAN ORIGINAL '70S TELECASTER CUSTOM

TESTED BY JAMES ROTONDI

WHILE DIGGING INTO chords and licks on the new Fender American Original '70s Telecaster Custom, one word kept coming to my mind again and again: *meaty*. With its fulsome alder body, substantial (though comfy) medium-C maple neck, broad 15-screw pickguard and — especially — its Tim Shaw–designed resurrection of the near-mythic Seth Lover CuNiFe Wide-Range Humbucker, this is a Telecaster on a diet of

SPECIFICATIONS

American Original '70s Telecaster Custom

CONTACT fender.com

PRICE \$1,899 street, with vintage-style hardshell case

NUT WIDTH 1.650" (42mm), bone

NECK Maple

FRETBOARD Rosewood, 25.5" scale, 9.5" radius

FRETS 21 Vintage Narrow Tall

TUNERS Fender Vintage F-stamped

BODY Alder with gloss nitrocellulose finish

BRIDGE/TAILPIECE 3-saddle Vintage-style Tele with slotted steel saddles

PICKUPS Vintage-style '70s Single Coil Tele (bridge); Tim Shaw Authentic CuNiFe Wide-Range Humbucking Pickup (neck)

CONTROLS 2 x volume (1 meg Ω , CTS), 2 x tone (250k, CTS), 3-way toggle pickup switch

FACTORY STRINGS Fender USA 250R Nickel Plated Steel (.010–.046)

FINISHES 3-color Sunburst (reviewed), Vintage Blonde, Mocha

BUILT Corona, California, USA

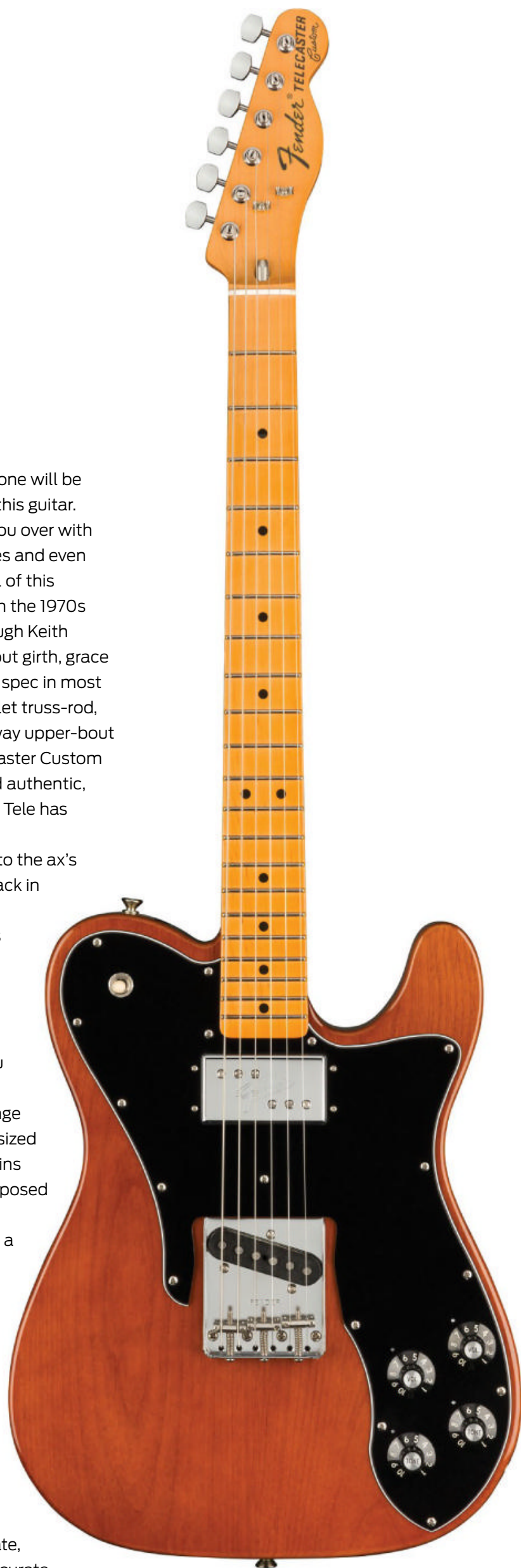
KUDOS Gorgeous aesthetics and tones, strong playability, and a classic pickup restored

CONCERNS PAF fans will find the CuNiFe neck-position humbucker a very different beast

porterhouse and pull-ups. No one will be kicking sand in your face with this guitar.

While some guitars bowl you over with their svelte contours, sleek lines and even sleeker sonics, Fender's revival of this oft-maligned cult wonder from the 1970s — given instant rock cred through Keith Richards' embrace — is all about girth, grace and a little gristle. Built true to spec in most aspects, even down to the bullet truss-rod, original body radii and three-way upper-bout pickup selector, the '70s Telecaster Custom feels and sounds big, alive and authentic, and it looks about as cool as a Tele has ever looked.

Much of this comes down to the ax's storied CuNiFe neck pickup. Back in the early '70s, in an effort to muscle in on some of Gibson's increasing market share in a rock climate suddenly ruled by humbucking pickups, Fender brought in none other than Gibson's own pickup guru Seth Lover to design what became the CuNiFe Wide-Range Humbucker, a distinctive, oversized hunk of metal with large bobbins and a three-by-three offset exposed pole-piece design that used threaded magnets made from a combination of copper, nickel and iron, a recipe previously favored for use in speedometers and tachometers. Frankly, the CuNiFe magnets were not quite as powerful as Gibson's — some have compared them to Alnico 3 magnets — but they did produce a rich and singular sound, one that would hibernate, albeit with some less-than-accurate





reproductions, for around 40 years, until Fender found a new forge to build them on just a few years ago.

You already have some idea of where the Wide-Range sits sonically by virtue of it being in the neck position. You won't be using this humbucker for your palm-muted crunch riffs and metal chunk. Like a neck-position PAF (though with less sheer output), the CuNiFe Wide-Range Humbucker responds to big, beady lines in the lower and middle zones of the fretboard, and it sings with a certain dark sparkle on those long D- and A-string bends and growling, guttural grabs at the low-E around the 3rd fret. What's more, it'll add character, snap, weight and a dose of

defiance to even delicate top-string partial chords and double-stops north of the ninth fret as well. Whether you're using amp saturation or overdrive pedals, do not expect an artifact-free '80s beer commercial studio 'bucker here. You're going to sound real with this pickup, and you're going to like it.

Here's what else you're going to like: While the medium-C neck shape offers plenty of old-school heft, it's still a reasonably modern, fast feel, and Fender judiciously opted for a 9.5-inch neck radius — akin to most contemporary Strats and Teles — rather than the vintage 7.25-inch spec, which, frankly, many modern players find limiting and cramped. And while it may not be quite as

back-breakingly heavy as its vintage counterpart, this American Original still feels strong and substantial around your neck. Another smart swap: Fender opted for a gloss nitrocellulose lacquer here, rather than the original's plastic polyurethane finish.

To best match the CuNiFe's unique qualities, and to meet the neck humbucker's increased strength halfway, Fender's Tim Shaw paired the humbucker with a slightly hotter-than-normal single-coil pickup in the bridge position. The result is not only snappy, super-present classic country Tele tones in the bridge position but also a sweet, woody pairing in the middle blend position. Using the individual tone controls for each pickup, you can find a variety of complex and grainy medium-body tones for those R&B figures, indie-rock patterns and faux-acoustic songwriter strums.

We ran our test model through a variety of amps, gain pedals and profilers, including a Marshall 2203x, a Fender Deluxe Reverb, amp models from Logic Pro X, Softube and others, and overdrives that include the Bogner La Grange, Friedman BE-OD and Xotic Labs SL. A few clear through-lines emerged in all these tests. The Fender American Original '70s Telecaster Custom will certainly work as an all-purpose Telecaster — that bridge pickup, paired with the three-saddle bridge, evokes all the compressed bite and twang you'd expect from a great Tele pickup. And even if standard Teles are more your bag, you're likely to feel quite at home, especially when playing through a clean Fender amp.

And while the CuNiFe humbucker can be a bit intense and wooly when run through overdrives, it sounds surprisingly jazzy, warm and full of detail through a clean amp, and fingerstyle players will love its fat but articulate voice. We were likewise pleasantly surprised at how good that bridge pickup sounded through Marshall-type amps, even with Tube Screamer or DS-1-style circuits engaged for extra saturation. Keep in mind that high-gain sounds here may also be a little gnarly — don't look to this Tele for manicured, EQ-friendly saturations. But if you're seeking a guitar that sounds big and rich in detail, lets each string speak and will surprise you with how well it responds to your touch and attack, this meaty, mighty revived cult classic may be just the expressive instrument you're looking for. ■





Taylor

GTe URBAN ASH



TESTED BY ART THOMPSON

THE DESIGNATION GT has long been applied to sports cars and other things that are agile and speedy, so it's appropriate that Taylor's new GT, or Grand Theater, is the sleekest model in the California company's line. Size-wise, it sits between the GS Mini and Grand Concert, which is the smallest of the company's full-size body shapes. Taylor's reason for creating the ultra-compact GT is simple: Today's guitarists are drawn to the playability of smaller flattops but don't want to compromise tone. And this is what prompted design chief Andy Powers to develop a new guitar that combines the inviting playability of a "parlor" instrument with the rich sound of a full-sized guitar. For this review, we looked at the GTe model, which adds Taylor's ES2 electronics system.

The GT is designed from the ground up for playing comfort, and after taking it out of its brown AeroCase and tuning it up, I was

SPECIFICATIONS

GTe Urban Ash

CONTACT taylorguitars.com

PRICE \$1,599 street, brown AeroCase included

NUT WIDTH 1 23/32"

NECK Mahogany

FRETBOARD Eucalyptus, 24 1/8" scale, Italian acrylic Pinnacle inlays

FRETS 20

TUNERS Taylor nickel mini

BODY Solid urban-ash back and sides, solid spruce top with C-Class bracing

BRIDGE Eucalyptus

ELECTRONICS Taylor ES2 with volume, bass and treble controls

FACTORY STRINGS Elixir 012–.053

WEIGHT 3.7 lbs (as tested)

BUILT USA

KUDOS Innovative compact design with outstanding tone and playability

CONCERNS None

immediately impressed. It's one of the easiest playing guitars I've ever had my hands on. Weighing a scant 3.7 pounds, it's light as a feather, yet so dynamic and expressive. It has good sustain and pumps out a surprising amount of volume, all the things one expects from a standard-size steel-string flattop.

Powers developed the GT around several different design concepts. It has the basic body shape of Taylor's Grand Orchestra, but the proportions are smaller. So while the GT's 15-inch width at the lower bout is about the same as the Grand Concert's, its body is shorter — only about 18 1/2 inches long. The size comparisons continue with the neck measurements, where the GT's 24 1/8-inch scale length is in the middle between a GS Mini (23 1/2 inches) and a Grand Concert (24 7/8 inches). As Powers explained, the GT scale is like playing with a capo on the first fret of a 25 1/2-inch-scale guitar, so it has the same string tension as a 25 1/2-inch-scale instrument tuned down a half step. Although the GT comes with .012–.053 strings, it feels like it's strung with .011s.

Another reason the GT feels so compact and easy to play is that, between its shorter body length and shorter scale (which also slightly compresses the fret spacing), your hands are physically closer together when playing, so the guitar feels more nimble. Factoring as well into the playability equation is the GT's 1 23/32-inch neck width, which is right between between 1 11/16 and 1 3/4 inches, making it more comfortable for fretting, especially if you have smaller hands.



The GT is constructed of solid urban ash back and sides with a solid spruce top. Urban ash is a sustainable wood cut from Shamel ash trees slated for removal in city areas around Southern California. Taylor says its tonal qualities rival that of Honduran mahogany, offering a clear, woody sound, with plenty of midrange warmth. It's certainly a pleasing-looking wood, with a rippling grain that stands out nicely when bright light hits it. It also feels raw, tactile and woody thanks to the ultra-thin (2.0 mil) Urban Sienna finish.

Much has been made of Taylor's V-Class bracing, and for good reasons, but the GT uses new C-Class bracing, which Taylor describes as a "cantilevered, asymmetrical design that combines stiffness and flexibility in a way that helps accentuate the lower frequencies to produce a surprisingly warm bass response for such compact dimensions." We're told the bracing borrows some of the functional benefits of V-Class, however, including intonation stability and enhanced

volume and sustain, and that's borne out by the GT's solid intonation and notable lack of compression when playing it hard.

Cosmetically, the GT is a sweet-looking guitar with a three-ring rosette, tortoise-colored pickguard and black purfling on the top. The acrylic Pinnacle fretboard markers are another classy touch. Another alternative wood here is eucalyptus, which is used for the fretboard, bridge and headstock overlay. Its striped grain looks similar to ebony, and it has comparable density and weight.

It all adds up an incredibly fun guitar. The mahogany neck sits comfortably in the hand, and its soft V shape offers ideal positioning for chording and flat picking. The string spacing and lighter tension is inviting for fingerstyle playing, and the GT is

very responsive to the player's touch, easily steering through softer and louder passages while maintaining consistently sweet and focused tone. Since our test model was the GTe, it featured Taylor's Expression System 2 electronics. With the guitar plugged into a Fishman SA-220 system, there was no harshness, and the volume delivered without feedback was impressive.

Bottom line, Taylor's new GT Urban Ash has a big presence that belies its small size, and the GTe adds on a sweet-sounding electronics package. It's a natural for trips, but it's just as worthy as a studio and/or performance instrument thanks to its rich tone and full-bodied soundstage. It's well deserving of an Editors' Pick Award. 



**When aspirations
fall outside
the production model...**

LIEBERGUITARS.COM



Gibson

FRANK HANNON LOVE DOVE

TESTED BY JIMMY LESLIE

THE LAUNCH OF Gibson's Acoustic Custom Shop in Bozeman, Montana, was one of the most exciting developments in an otherwise relatively dreary year. The latest addition to its Artist Collection is also thrilling: It's a collaboration with Tesla guitarist Frank Hannon commemorating 30 years since "Love Song" became a radio staple and a must-learn song for any rocker with an acoustic heart. Once upon a time, Gibson chief merchant officer Cesar Gueikian was just that sort of guy. He and his wife chose "Love Song" as their wedding tune, and when Gueikian met Hannon and jammed with him at the NAMM Show, they set their sights on creating a signature model in the style of

SPECIFICATIONS

Frank Hannon Love Dove

CONTACT gibson.com

PRICE \$5,349 street

NUT WIDTH 1.72", bone

NECK Three-piece maple, 12" radius

FRETBOARD Rosewood, 25.5" scale

FRETS 20

TUNERS Grover Keystone Rotomatics, nickel

BODY Flamed maple back and sides, thermally aged Sitka spruce top

BRIDGE Rosewood with bone saddle and Tusq bridge pins

ELECTRONICS L.R. Baggs VTC with soundhole-mounted volume and tone controls

FACTORY STRINGS Gibson Coated Phosphor Bronze Strings .012—.053

WEIGHT 5 lbs

BUILT USA

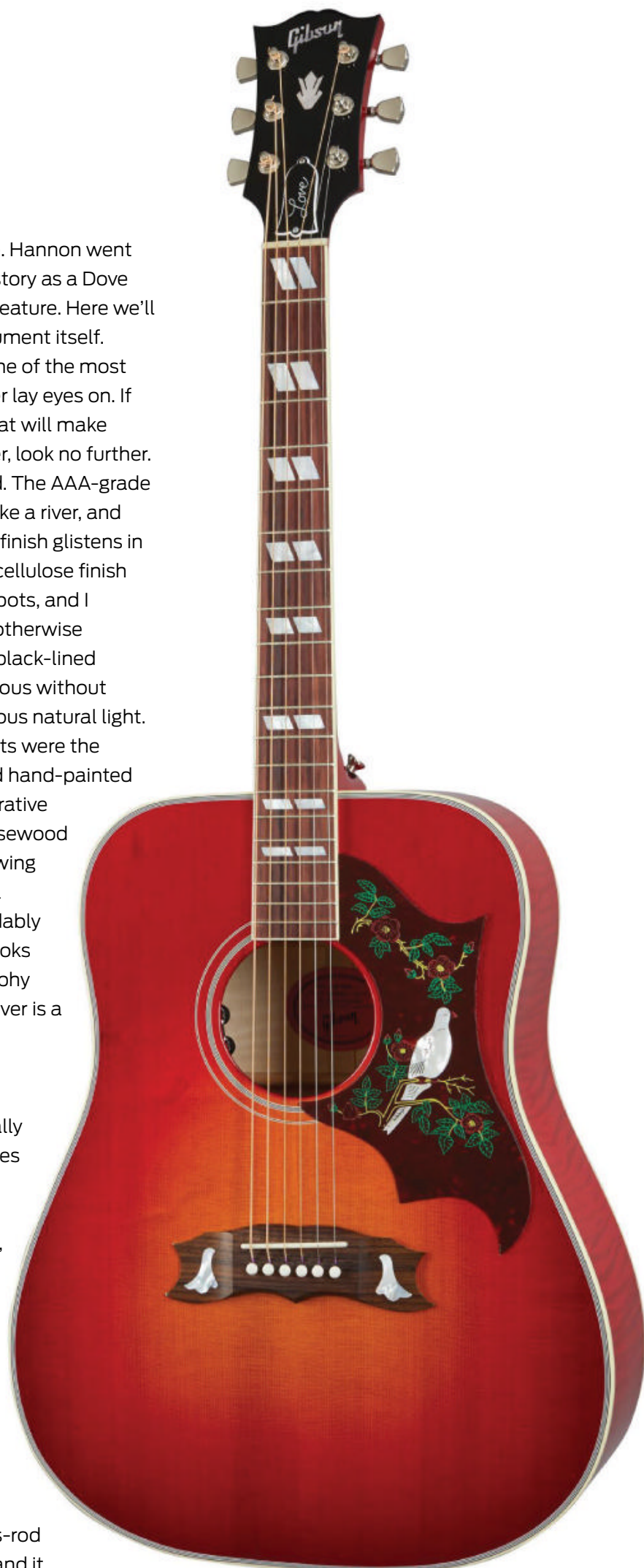
KUDOS Stunningly beautiful with elegant appointments including unbelievably cool pickguard and bridge. Bold and pleasant acoustic-electric tone

CONCERNS Slight craftsmanship imperfections leave something to be desired for a luxury handmade instrument

Hannon's cherished '76 Dove. Hannon went into great detail about his history as a Dove man in *GP*'s July 2020 Frets feature. Here we'll take a good look at the instrument itself.

The Love Dove is easily one of the most beautiful acoustics you'll ever lay eyes on. If you're after an instrument that will make heads turn and mouths water, look no further. The whole guitar radiates red. The AAA-grade flamed-maple back ripples like a river, and the Vintage Cherry Sunburst finish glistens in the sunshine. The thick nitrocellulose finish appeared to ripple in a few spots, and I caught a tiny blemish in the otherwise beautiful bright-white-with-black-lined binding, but neither was obvious without intense scrutiny under luminous natural light. The most noticeable elements were the exquisite hand-engraved and hand-painted doves and roses on the decorative pickguard and bridge. The rosewood pickguard is carved in a bat-wing style, as on Hannon's original favorite Dove. He understandably had to have that here, as it looks damn cool. The *Love* calligraphy engraved on the truss-rod cover is a nice touch too.

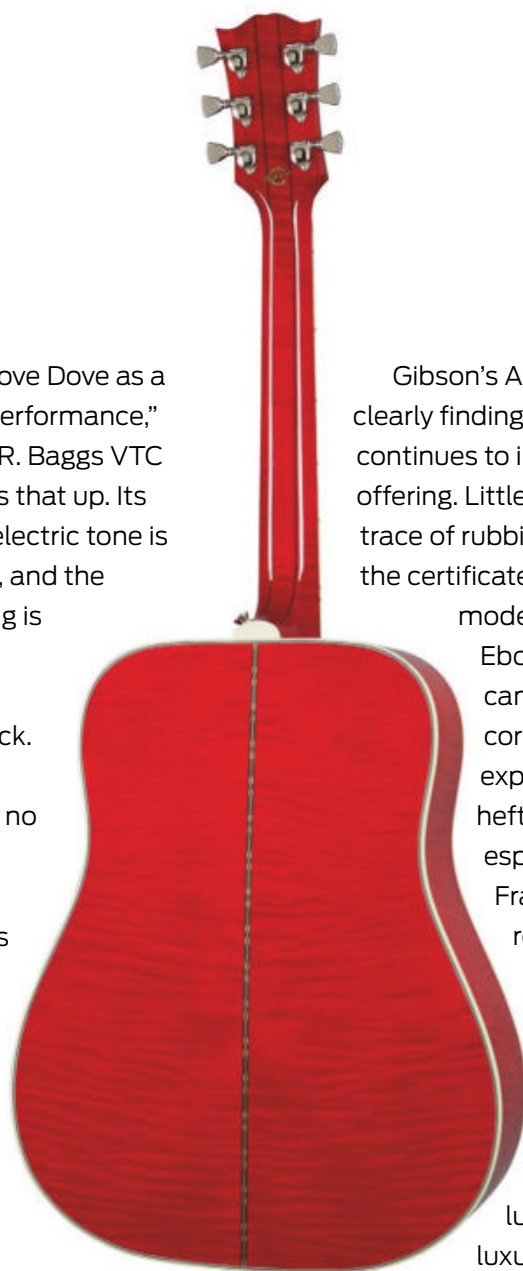
The Love Dove's round three-piece maple neck is comfortable in hand, especially down near the nut. It measures 1.72 inches — not 1.75 or 1.69 — which is narrower than some modern dreadnoughts, but not as much as many traditional dreadnoughts. The rosewood fingerboard looks and feels high quality. I found the action a bit lofty in the upper register and felt the frets could be smoothed out a bit as well. The action was easy enough to adjust with a truss-rod tweak via the included tool, and it



improved playability tremendously across the board. The Dove is particularly adept for strumming chords and picking licks in lower positions.

The Dove body style is a square-shoulder dreadnought similar to its cousin, the Hummingbird. It has a back and sides of maple, rather than mahogany, and a longer scale length than the 'Bird. Its tone sounds sexy in the mids and high mids, and its full 25.5-inch scale contributes to plenty of snappy volume. The tone disperses well from the sound hole, and with nice sustain, considering the inherent dampening that comes from a serious paint job with a generous finish, as well as the giant pickguard. Playing with a plectrum accentuates the highs, but this particular Dove is not especially bright for a maple model. In fact, it packs a bunch more balmy bass than one might expect. Perhaps that's due to hand-scalloped X bracing and the warmth of a thermally aged solid Sitka top.

Gibson markets the Love Dove as a "'70s-era Dove built for performance," and the sound from its L.R. Baggs VTC pickup and preamp backs that up. Its plug-and-play acoustic-electric tone is pure and straightforward, and the sound from string to string is even and true, with zero compression even when played with a strong attack. Hannon says he plugs it straight into the P.A. with no processing, and I believe him. He played the Love Dove prototype on Tesla's latest album, *Five Man London Jam*, and the sound is comparable to what I heard from this review unit through an AER Compact 60/3 TE (only my playing wasn't quite as fluent!).



Gibson's Acoustic Custom Shop is clearly finding its stride. Craftsmanship continues to improve with each new offering. Little issues as simple as a stray trace of rubbing compound or as silly as the certificate of authenticity listing the model here as "Hummingbird Ebony" rather than "Love Dove" can be easily cleaned up and corrected. It is reasonable to expect perfection to warrant a hefty price tag in any market, especially right now. Overall, the Frank Hannon Love Dove represents a significant step forward. It's a dynamite-looking and -sounding instrument that will appeal to most, and it will surely be a prized possession for any Tesla or Dove aficionado lucky enough to afford such a luxurious item. ■

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Eventide

BLACKHOLE REVERB

TESTED BY CHRISTOPHER SCAPELLITI

MOST REVERB PEDALS shine when creating small-to-large spaces, but they don't give you much at the extremes, where the imagined space is cramped or, conversely, infinite. For that kind of sonic sculpting, I've often turned to Eventide's Blackhole reverb plug-in, a favorite in my DAW. It's a classic reverb from Eventide's rackmount DSP4000 processor that's capable of cathedral-type ambiences, tightly gated and pre-delayed reverbs, and even freeze effects. Until now, performing guitarists could get Blackhole as an algorithm in Eventide's powerhouse H9 stomp box, but the new Blackhole pedal puts this amazing reverb into its own sleek and compact box, with a full complement of control and switches, making it the perfect addition to your pedalboard.

Like all Eventide pedals, Blackhole lets you fine-tune every aspect of your sound. The controls include mix, to set the dry/wet level, and five others that have primary and secondary functions, selectable with the toggle near the upper right corner. And these are not your standard reverb parameters. For

SPECIFICATIONS

Blackhole Reverb

CONTACT eventide.com

PRICE \$279 street

CONTROLS Mix, gravity/delay, feedback/Q (resonance), size/mod depth, lo EQ/mod rate, hi EQ/output level. Active button/LED, Freeze button/LED. Foot switches for active/bypass and freeze/preset. Rear panel: mono/stereo input selector, guitar/line level selector
I/O In, out 1 and 2, expression, mini USB and 9-volt DC power input

KUDOS A fantastic range of otherworldly reverb effects, including modulation parameters. Compact size yet has full-featured control panel

CONCERNS None



example, gravity affects the reverb's decay, making it longer as you turn it clockwise, and reversing it as you move counterclockwise to create decays that swell from the void, while the size knob adjusts the reverb from ridiculously small to astonishingly immense. There are also controls to boost and cut the effect's lo and hi EQ, and the secondary modes let you introduce modulation to create hyperrealistic (or totally whacked-out) reverbs, add up to 2,000 msec of predelay, and adjust the filters' Q, or resonance. In primary mode, this last control is the feedback knob, which determines how much of the reverb signal is fed back into the circuit. Turning the knob clockwise takes you to two reverb modes: Infinite, which layers new sounds on top of a suspended reverb, and Freeze, which holds the effect in stasis, allowing you to play over it.

Freeze is Blackhole's standout effect, so it's great that you can instantly access this mode with the right-side foot switch. This switch also doubles as the selector for Blackhole's five user-adjustable presets (you can load up to 127 presets via USB with the Eventide Device Manager for Mac or PC). The left foot switch activates and bypasses the pedal and is used to load whatever preset you've selected. Even the two status LEDs serve dual functions for saving presets and toggling the action of the Active foot switch, making the compact panel very user friendly.

Blackhole accepts mono and stereo signals on TS and TRS plugs, respectively, has mono/stereo outs and a level switch for use

with guitar or line-level devices and effects loops — a nice feature we'd like to see on more pedals. The expression input accepts pedals, auxiliary switches or TRS MIDI, and an expression pedal can be used to change any grouping of knob parameters in one gesture. There's also a mini USB for software updates or to send MIDI over USB, and an input for a nine-volt center-negative adaptor.

As for its sound, there is plenty of extreme fun to be had, from vast, warbling vertigo-inducing effects to harshly gated reverbs and eerie ambiences that bloom forth like spectral voices. One of my favorite creations was a long-tail reverb that trilled wildly off-pitch, like a drunken Leslie speaker. But Blackhole is also capable of subtle, musically pleasing effects, including lush hall reverbs with lingering harmonic tails, and tight chorusing 'verbs that add a bit of angelic shimmer to your sound. It was also great fun to freeze the effect and use it as a bed for some out-of-this-world improvising. All in all, Blackhole can be an inspiring and useful addition to your effects arsenal, whether you want your tone closer to home or over the event horizon. 🌌





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Fender

MTG TUBE TREMOLO

TESTED BY ART THOMPSON

CO-DESIGNED BY FENDER'S Stan Cotey and amp guru Bruce Egnater — as are all models in the MTG line — the Tube Tremolo brings a high degree of control and flexibility to what could be the oldest electronic effect in the history of guitar sound modifiers. Tremolo has typically involved tube circuitry (at least in guitar amplifiers), so it's fitting that the Tube Tremolo incorporates a NOS American-made 6205 tube, which is gripped on a small PC board that's affixed to the main glass-epoxy board carrying the majority of the circuit components. The metal enclosure is comprised of an orange-color anodized-aluminum upper section with a steel bottom plate, and it comes apart easily after removing four machine screws. Besides input and output jacks, there is a 2.1mm jack for the nine-volt power supply of your choice (200mA minimum), as well as a small recessed switch on the front that lets you turn on or off the blue-lighted indicators on the knobs. For some reason the indicator on the intensity knob wasn't working, but it was no big deal, and the warranty would cover it.

SPECIFICATIONS

MTG Tube Tremolo

CONTACT fender.com

PRICE \$199 street

CONTROLS Wave, 3-position mode switch (triangle/sine/square; ramp/triangle/sawtooth; adjustable square wave), speed, intensity. Bypass and tap foot switches

TUBES One 6205 preamp tube

I/O input, output, 2.1 mm jack for 9-volt power supply (not included)

KUDOS Rich sound and great range of tremolo textures that can be tweaked to the nth degree. Dedicated level control. True-bypass

CONCERNS Tempo subdivision function was puzzling on our unit

The bypass and tap foot switches have amber LEDs, and the latter blinks in time with the tempo, which can be set with the tap button or the speed control. Furthermore, pressing and holding the tap switch while turning the speed knob supposedly allows you to select between seven different beat subdivisions: quarter note, dotted eighth, quarter-note triplet, eighth note, dotted sixteenth, eighth-note triplet and 16th note. I went through all of the selections (which are labeled on the speed control) without finding anything that sounded subdivided, so I wasn't sure if the pedal had a problem or I was missing something. As it happened, Fender explained that we somehow received a very early unit before the software features were completed. The subdivision function does indeed work and will produce any of the subdivided values from a quarter-note tap.

One of the key features of the Tube Tremolo is the mode switch, with its three distinct settings — triangle/sine/square, ramp/triangle/sawtooth and adjustable square wave. These, in combination with the wave control, make it possible to get a broad range of tremolo textures, from smooth sine-wave pulse to staccato square-wave effects and all points in-between. Tested with a Fender Deluxe Reverb, which has a nice-sounding trem to compare with, the TT was easily adjusted to cop that type of smoothly rounded volume modulation by using the triangle/sine/square position with the wave knob set a little south of halfway and the intensity at around noon. Turn the wave control up, and the response gets progressively tighter and more bouncy as more square-wave signal is blended in. In order to deal with any volume loss that may occur at higher intensity settings, the pedal's



level control adjusts the volume of the effect. It's very handy, and it doesn't affect the sound when the unit is bypassed, so you always get that "boosted" sensation when the effect is clicked on.

The middle position (ramp/triangle/sawtooth) works sort of opposite and delivers a choppy response when the wave knob is turned to the left, becoming smoother and a little brighter (and perhaps more solid-state-like) when turned to the right. A blend of the two with wave set in the middle and intensity at nine o'clock or so was great for creating beautifully swampy rhythmic effects with the speed set on the low side.

For super-staccato sounds, the third position (adjustable square wave) delivers the helicopter chop in a big way with the intensity at about two o'clock and the wave knob all the way up. What a great effect for giving machine-like drive to a deep rhythm groove or for accenting a break with jackhammer intensity! Back off on those controls, however, and there are many other shades of square-wave tremolo that sound cool for styles that benefit from its tight-tracking response.

Kudos to the Tube Tremolo for its warm tone, wide speed range (0.1 Hz–10 Hz) and multitude of ways to shape the modulation. Anyone seeking a do-it-all trem pedal should give it a try, and it's cool that Fender and the designers made such an effort to put a modern spin on this age-old effect. 🎸

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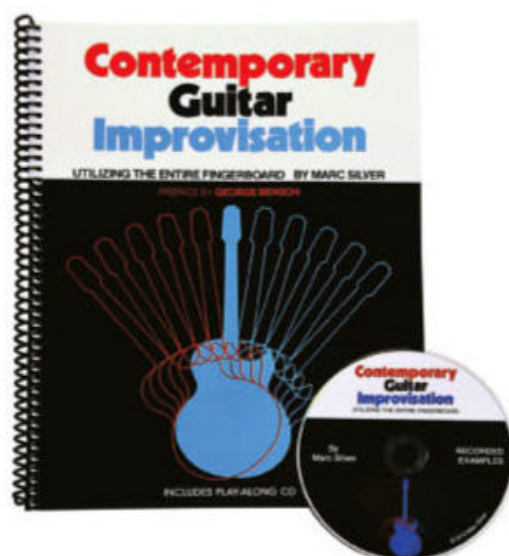
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How I Wrote...

“Rebel-’Rouser”

Rock and roll legend Duane Eddy reveals the inspiration and session behind his 1958 string-twanging instrumental hit.

BY MARK MC STEA

DUANE EDDY HAD scored his first hit with the guitar instrumental “Moovin’ n’ Groovin’” when the master of twang got the inspiration for his second. “I was playing a rock and roll show in L.A. and thought I needed something that I could play as I was walking out to the stage, with the lights coming on,” he recalls. “Then, when I got to the center, the band could kick in.”

From this small notion came the big reverb-laden track “Rebel-’Rouser,” Eddy’s enduring 1958 hit single. One of rock and roll’s pioneering guitarists, Duane Eddy influenced countless famous players over the years, including George Harrison, Bruce Springsteen and John Fogerty. And “Rebel-’Rouser” is the song of his that many of them heard first.

NO SAINT

Though it sounds loosely based on “When the Saints Go Marching In,” the melody to “Rebel-’Rouser” was inspired by the folk song “Who’s Gonna Shoe Your Pretty Little Feet,” which Eddy had heard performed by Tennessee Ernie Ford. “I’d had the melody going around in the back of my mind, and I just had the drummer

playing an offbeat,” he says, explaining the song’s genesis. “But when I finished the verse, I couldn’t think of any way to get into a bridge, so I modulated it — I moved each subsequent pass through it up by a half step.”

“WITH THE VOCALS AND SAX LINES, I DIDN’T HARDLY RECOGNIZE IT”

GRAIN REVERB

As Eddy explains, the writing took place at the recording session, held at Audio Recorders in Phoenix. “We spent about two hours, starting at 9 a.m., working on the melody and how it would move through the keys before we recorded it,” he reveals. “In those days, the equipment was very primitive, and we only had three tracks. I used my Gretsch 6120 on that, and I was plugged into a souped-up Magnatone amplifier. It ran at 100 watts and had a JBL speaker and a tweeter. It stayed clean and wouldn’t break up no matter how hard you hit the note.” As for the song’s thick reverb, it came courtesy of an empty grain silo that served as the studio’s echo chamber.

Though the track features a distinctive saxophone part and background vocals, neither was added at Eddy’s request. “I did think about using a sax player, but we didn’t have one in Phoenix,” he says. It was famed producer Lee Hazelwood who embellished Eddy’s basic take when he brought the track to Gold Star Studios in L.A. He had Gil Bernal overdub his howling sax

lines and added singing and handclaps performed by the Sharps, a vocal group that would change its name to the Rivingtons and have hits of its own, like “Papa-Oom-Mow-Mow.” “With the vocals and sax lines, I didn’t hardly recognize it,” Eddy says, laughing. “Lee would often come up with ideas for titles and suggestions for arranging the songs.” Indeed, Hazelwood even renamed the tune, though it was inadvertent. Eddy originally called it “Rabble Rouser,” but “Lee somehow got the title mixed up,” he explains. “He was from Texas and probably thought ‘Rebel-’Rouser’ made more sense. It was a great title anyway.”

REBEL WITHOUT A PAUSE

“Rebel-’Rouser” has lost none of its string-bending appeal for Eddy since it reached Number Six on the charts. “I love to play it, even now,” he says, “and I always play it like it’s the first time. It was my career record for a couple of years and really set the foundation for everything that has followed since. ‘Rebel-’Rouser’ had been a hit all over the world and established me as an artist. I had a few more signature hits after that with ‘Peter Gunn’ and ‘Forty Miles of Bad Road,’ but ‘Rebel-’Rouser’ opened up doors.”



Duane Eddy strums his stuff in New York City, 1958.

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