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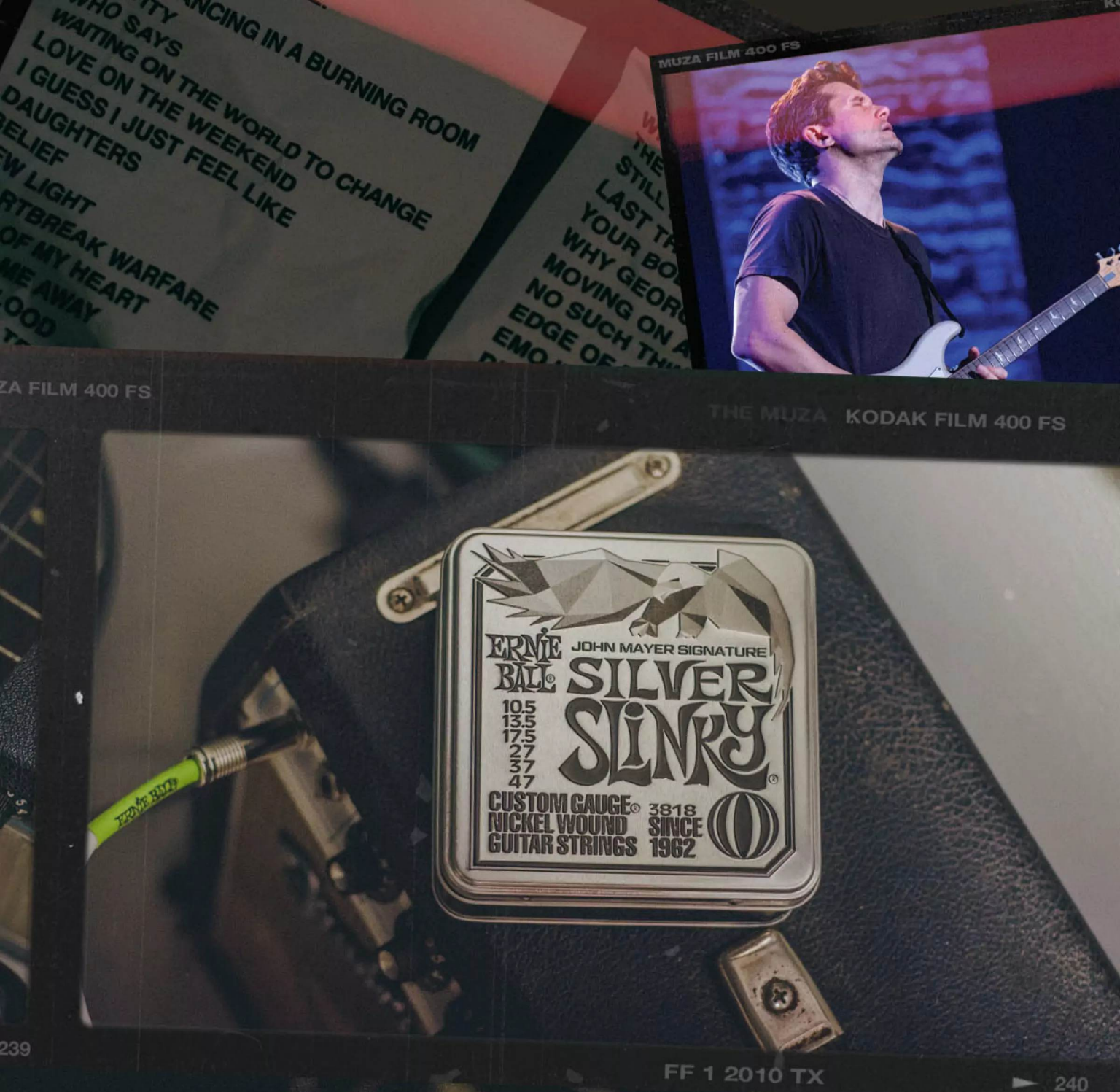
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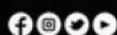


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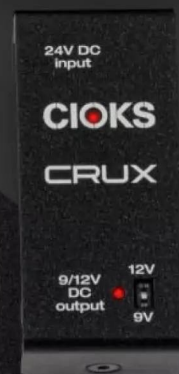
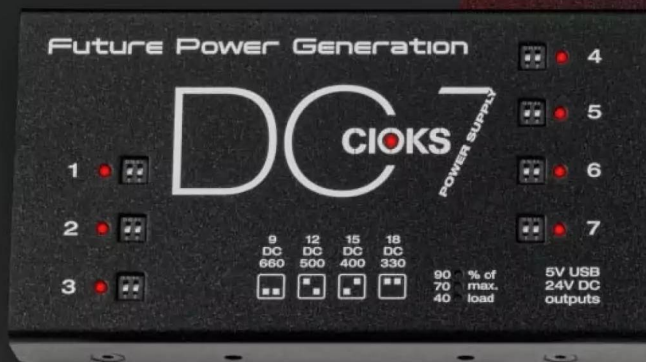
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PASSING THE TORCH

▶ ANOTHER MONTH, ANOTHER major guitar auction. It seems they're cropping up all over the place these days, doesn't it? The David Gilmour auction is still fresh in our memories (OK, *my* deranged memory), and — more recently — we saw Rory Gallagher and Mark Knopfler's collections go "the way of the hammer" (both in 2024). And let us not forget about George Harrison's Hamburg-era Futurama, which sold for \$1.27 million in November; John Lennon's *Help!*-era Framus 12-string, which went for \$2.8 million in May; Eddie Van Halen's "Hot for Teacher" Kramer (\$3.9 million in 2023); Kurt Cobain's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" Fender Mustang (\$4.5 million in 2022) and Eric Clapton's "The Fool" Gibson SG (\$1.2 million in 2023). Hey, I could go on; I haven't even mentioned the Fender American Special Telecaster I sold on eBay in 2021! Anyway, I think I've made my point. And that point — believe it or not — is *not* that millions upon millions of dollars are perpetually buzzing around overhead while masterfully avoiding my personal airspace (and my checking account). It's that — and yes, this has been said before — we're all just the temporary stewards of our guitars. No matter who you are, that Strat, Les Paul or Powers Electric A-Type that you cherish so much right now will eventually be "passed down" — one way or another — to (hopefully) another guitar player. So it's like anything else in life; get out there and enjoy it while you have it! Busk that Kinks tune on Bleecker Street. Record that album of Shawn Lane covers on GarageBand. Master King Crimson's "Fracture." Put that thing to ultimate use — just as Jeff Beck did with his guitars.



A FEW FACTOIDS:

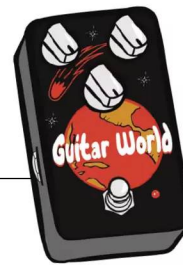
- >>> Reader Art and Defenders of the Faith are taking a little winter vacation and will return in the next issue.
- >>> It's a total fluke that the Kustom "The Bag" talk box is mentioned on pages 51 and 68 — in completely unrelated stories. I love when that happens!

— *Damian Fanelli*

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GUITAR WORLD (ISSN 1045-6295) is published 13 times a year, monthly plus Holiday issue following December issue, by Future US, INC., 135 West 41st Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10036. Phone: 212.378.0400. Fax: 917.281.4704. Web Site: www.futureplc.com. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Newsstand distribution is handled by CMG. Subscriptions: One-year basic rate (12 issues) US: \$26.95. Canada: US\$26.95. Foreign: US\$42.95. Canadian and foreign orders must be prepaid. Canadian price includes postage and GST #R128220688. PMA #40612608. Subscriptions do not include newsstand specials. POSTMASTER: Send change of address to Guitar World, P.O. Box 2024, Langhorne, PA 19047-9957. Ride-along enclosure in the following edition(s): None. Standard enclosure: None. Returns: Pitney Bowes, P.O. Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2, Canada. Entire contents copyright 2025. Future PLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited. Future PLC is not affiliated with the companies or products covered in Guitar World. Reproduction on the Internet of the articles and pictures in this magazine is illegal without the prior written consent of Guitar World. Products named in the pages of Guitar World are trademarks of their respective companies. PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. **SUBSCRIBER CUSTOMER SERVICE:** Guitar World Magazine Customer Care, P.O. Box 2024, Langhorne, PA 19047-9957. Email help@magazinesdirect.com. **BACK ISSUES:** www.magazinesdirect.com **REPRINTS:** Future PLC, 135 West 41st Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10036.



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GUITAR WORLD EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING OFFICES

347 W. 36th St., 17th Floor/Penthouse, New York, NY 10018

FUTURE US, INC.

135 W. 41st St., 7th Floor, New York, NY 10036, www.futureplc.com

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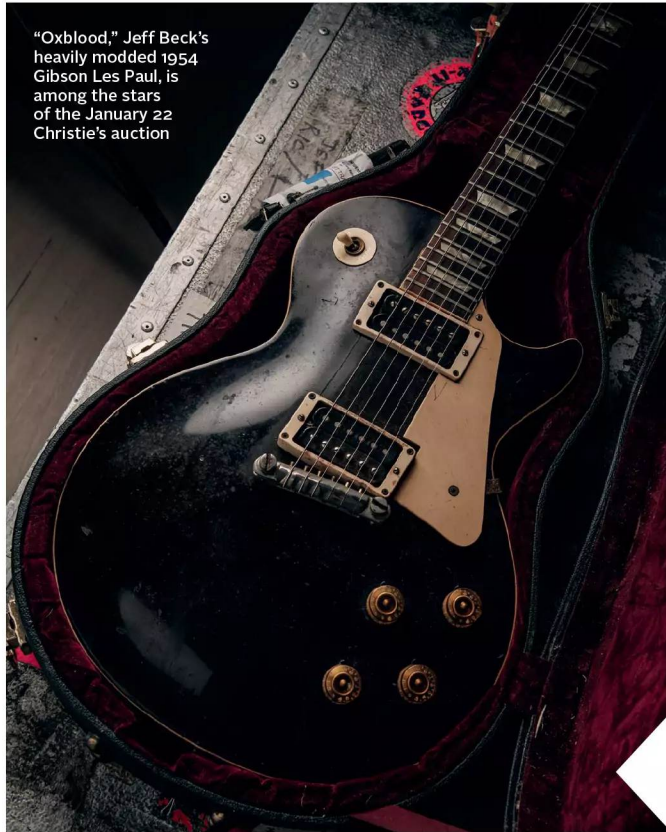


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CONTENTS

VOL. 46 | NO. 3 | MARCH 2025



"Oxblood," Jeff Beck's heavily modded 1954 Gibson Les Paul, is among the stars of the January 22 Christie's auction

22 THE GEAR HUNTER: KNAGGS GUITARS

"Steve Stevens wouldn't play our guitars if he didn't love them."

26 LARKIN POE

Rebecca & Megan Lovell up the ante of their blues-rock sound.

30 JOHNNY MARR

Just in time for NAMM, the Smiths legend has a pair of new Martin signature models — but there's an octave-G twist...

34 MARTY FRIEDMAN

An exclusive excerpt from his new autobiography.

40 HERE COME THE SONS

Meet six guitar heroes who followed in their dads' footsteps, escaped their family legacy and forged paths of their own.

46 JERRY CANTRELL

The Alice in Chains man talks stolen guitars and his new album.

52 JEFF BECK

Everything you need to know about the upcoming auction of the late legend's guitars — plus the making of *Blow by Blow*.

TRANSCRIBED

"Jaded"

by Spiritbox

PAGE
84

"Here I Go Again"

by Whitesnake

PAGE
92

"Peace of Mind"

by Boston

PAGE
98

DEPARTMENTS

15 TUNE-UPS

Tetrarch guitarist Diamond Rowe tells us about her new history-making signature Jackson Pro Series model. We also catch up with JD McPherson (veteran of a career-changing tour with Robert Plant and Alison Krauss), plus Aryan King, Billy King & the Bad Bad Bad's William "Billy" King Reynolds and Deep Sea Diver's Jessica Dobson.

71 SOUNDCHECK

- 71 **TC Electronic** Plethora X1 TonePrint Loader
- 73 **Xotic** XSS Super S-Style electric guitar
- 74 **Caparison** Dellinger-JSM V2
- 76 **Tallon Electric** "The Noise" pedal
- 77 **Martin** D-X2E Brazilian 12-String

78 COLUMNS

- 78 **The Woodshed** by Andy Wood
- 79 **Tales from Nerdville** by Joe Bonamassa
- 80 **Tele-pathy** by Jim Oblon
- 81 **Hardwired** by Jared James Nichols

83 PERFORMANCE NOTES

110 POWER TOOLS

The first commercially produced solidbody electric guitar, the Fender Esquire, can still kick some serious butt today. Featuring just one single-coil pickup in the bridge position, a volume knob and a tone knob, the Esquire seems like a no-frills minimalist design...

SOUNDING BOARD

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In search of a very rare “Rhino”

For as long as I have been subscribing to *Guitar World* (which would be decades), I’ve waited for a piece on one of the most unsung and unmatched string slingers in rock history, the great “Rhino” (Larry Reinhardt) of the unbelievable Seventies “supergroup” called Captain Beyond, a band consisting of an Iron Butterfly bassist (a band Rhino joined toward the end of the band’s career), a singer who fronted the Mark I version of Deep Purple and the drummer from Johnny Winter’s early band (called “And”). But it is Rhino’s playing on Captain Beyond’s 1972 debut that is simply on fire. That album remains in my top 10 of all time. Sadly, he is gone, but I know you guys could put together a great feature on this underrated six-string hero.

Another band of that era was Florida’s Bang, who are even less-known than Captain Beyond. Their debut album on Capital Records in 1972 is a classic of heavy Sabbath-like riffing and Ozzy-ish vocals, with lots of melody to boot. They have been called “America’s Black Sabbath” ever since. They are still active (with a new album just last year), so it would be easy to contact them for an interview with their excellent guitarist, Frank Gilcken.

Last, but not least, I’ve seen very little mention in *GW* over the years of Buck Dharma of Blue Öyster Cult, easily one of the greatest guitarists in history. They just released an album called *Ghost Stories*, so it might be a good time for an extended article.

You’ve been covering a lot of new bands. It’s time to delve back into history for some forgotten gems like the above-mentioned.

— Dave Parker, Burlington, VT

Some Jon Suh and Al Joseph, please!

As a younger subscriber (and a guitarist), I’m considering ending my subscription because I feel like there aren’t enough younger people represented. No disrespect at all to the guys in the older bands; I just think there are plenty of awesome guitar players out there that are doing so much for the scene that seem to go unnoticed. A few of my favorite guitarists were discovered on the internet, and I think that it is such a useful tool for reaching out to musicians. Two examples

are Jon Suh from Harmless Habit and Al Joseph. I found both of these guys on YouTube; they are so useful to watch because of the free mini lessons they give in each video. The music they put out is refreshing and interesting.

Another favorite is Matt Heafy from Trivium. I’d love to see an article on him. He has been such an inspiration because of how much discipline he puts into his playing. When not on tour he practices while streaming on Twitch and posts full playthroughs of songs onto his YouTube channel. However, I was happy to see Jason

Richardson make an appearance in the December 2024 issue, even if it is just in an ad. I hope there will be more appearances from younger players.

— Justin Stapert

Shorthorn thoughts

Regarding Chris Gill’s piece on the Danelectro 3021 Shorthorn in the July 2024 issue, specifically Jimmy Page’s black one... Page acquired his Danelectro in 1965 during his time as a session musician and performed live with his 3021 with Zeppelin in 1969.

— James Pratt



RANDOM PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Blackberry Smoke main man **Charlie Starr** plays his Gibson Music City Jr. with B-Bender at Zilker Metropolitan Park in Austin, Texas, October 10, 2014. Only 750 of these guitars were unleashed into the wild in 2013; Starr had one — and I had one. (But I can’t account for the other 748!) I kept mine until May 2024, when I handed it over to the gang at Maxwell’s House of Music in Jeffersonville, Indiana, as part of a trade for a ’66 Fender Jazzmaster. Anyway, for a classic Charlie Starr B-bender track, check out Blackberry Smoke’s “Pretty Little Lie” from 2012’s *The Whippoorwill*. “The main riff is based on a movement from Em to G, which is very ‘bender friendly’ — lots of open strings and a minor-to-major change,” Starr told me a few years ago. “If memory serves, that was my Nineties [Fender American Nashville B-Bender] Tele through a Plexi.” — **Damian Fanelli**

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TUNE-UPS



18 ARYAN KING

19 BILLY KING & THE BAD BAD BAD



Surf Noir

STOMPING GARAGE AND SURF SOUNDS COLLIDE
ON JD McPHERSON'S LATEST LONG PLAYER, *NITE OWLS*

By Jim Beaugez

▶ **FOUR ALBUMS INTO** a music career built on reviving the trappings of traditional, old-time rave-up rock 'n' roll, JD McPherson gave himself one directive for the songs that ended up on his latest album, *Nite Owls*.

"I love guitar music, and I love busy guitar players, but my favorite players have either a thing that they've invented or keep it pretty sparse, like Bo Diddley, Daniel Ash [*of Love and Rockets and Bauhaus*] and

Ricky Wilson from the B-52s," he says. "I love when the guitar is distilled down and focuses on a sound."

The particular sound in McPherson's head as he set out to make *Nite Owls*, his "surf-noir" record, was based around a motif of single-note riffs with a generous helping of spring reverb. "How many sort of different ideas can you convey with that being the glue that holds everything together? In my mind, that was obviously

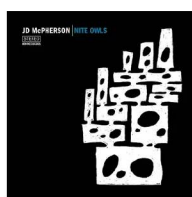
surf guitar, and Duane Eddy and [*Ennio*] Morricone spaghetti Western soundtracks, and even a wee bit of Depeche Mode — Martin Gore and the big Gretsch hollow-body stuff," he says.

But much to his frustration, it took three tries to finally get *Nite Owls* right.

McPherson first began recording the songs pre-pandemic, but when Covid restrictions and life changes splintered his longtime band, he was left at square one. "The pandemic happened and everybody started to rethink their priorities in life," he says. "Restaurants closed down, bands broke up — that's a pretty universal story. But it happened, and I was sitting with this unfinished thing."

After another false start in 2022, ➔

"If I don't limit my palette a little bit, I'll get really distracted," McPherson says



McPherson shelved the project and signed on as guitarist and opening act for Robert Plant and Alison Krauss on the duo's first tour in 12 years. The opportunity to walk away from his solo career and do something completely different, where he describes his role as being "a rubber mallet in a drawer full of scalpels," arrived at the perfect moment.

"I really can't overstate what they did for me," he says. "They grounded me at one of the worst, darkest times in my musical life and handed me this incredible gift, to be able to commune with those musicians and with Robert and Alison. Playing Zeppelin songs and playing songs from the *Raising Sand* record, which is one of my favorite records of all time, with Marc Ribot, another one of my very favorite guitar players. It was just bananas."

The trek allowed him to road test the songs he'd been trying to record, such as "Just Like Summer" and "Sunshine Getaway," which McPherson says became favorites for the crowd and band alike during his opening sets. It also reset his thinking about how to record them for *Nite Owls*.

"I was wrestling with whether or not I was even gonna finish it and keep doing music, honestly," he says. "And then I got the call from the Plant/Krauss crew to come play — and talk about a shot in the

"Then I got the call from the Robert Plant/Alison Krauss crew to come play — and talk about a shot in the arm"

arm. Just playing other people's music for a while with one of the greatest bands ever put together, real icons of music, was exactly what I needed at the time."

Inspired by the musicianship and spontaneous live setting, McPherson gathered a few trusted musicians from his inner circle, including his musical director Doug Corcoran, and returned to Reliable Recorders (formerly Hi-Style) in Chicago, where he recorded his 2011 debut, *Signs & Signifiers*. The sessions reunited him with another frequent collaborator, Alex Hall. "Alex is one of my favorite engineers and a fantastic drummer. I wanted those drums."

The skeleton crew committed the 10 songs on *Nite Owls*, his first proper studio album in seven years, to analog tape with as much recorded live as possible using only a small stable of guitars, amps and effects.

"If I don't limit my palette a little bit, I'll get really distracted and waste a lot of time,

and on that third attempt at making the record, time was of the essence," he says. "We had to knock it out pretty quick, so I kept my arsenal pretty low — just a couple of amps, a couple guitars and a spring reverb unit, and off to the races."

McPherson limited his focus to playing a Fender Jazzmaster and a Gretsch White Penguin reissue through vintage amps like a 1940s Epiphone and a National that were kicking around the studio. For the all-important reverb, he went with a Surfry Industries SurfryBear Reverb. "If you've ever played like a real old Fender reverb tank, it's exactly that," he says. "Those are insane amounts of money now, but the SurfryBear is worth every penny."

The guitar sounds on *Nite Owls* are classic surf rock, especially on the instrumental track "The Phantom Lover of New Rochelle," with blistering single-note lines finding space alongside simple garage-rock riffs designed to land with maximum impact under McPherson's tuneful vocal melodies. The stomping "Sunshine Getaway," built around a riff plucked with his fingers, is one of his favorites.

"That riff is really fun," he says. "I have a habit of playing with my fingers on pretty heavy tunes, like peddling away with my thumb on the lower strings. It's just a real old blues move, but it's sneaking its way into a lot more songs these days."

Deep Sea Diver

PEOPLE ARE DEFINITELY PAYING ATTENTION TO THIS SEATTLE BAND — WHETHER OR NOT JESSICA DOBSON IS PLAYING SMOKING LEADS ATOP HER EYE-CATCHING “GUITAR SOLO BOX”

By Gregory Adams

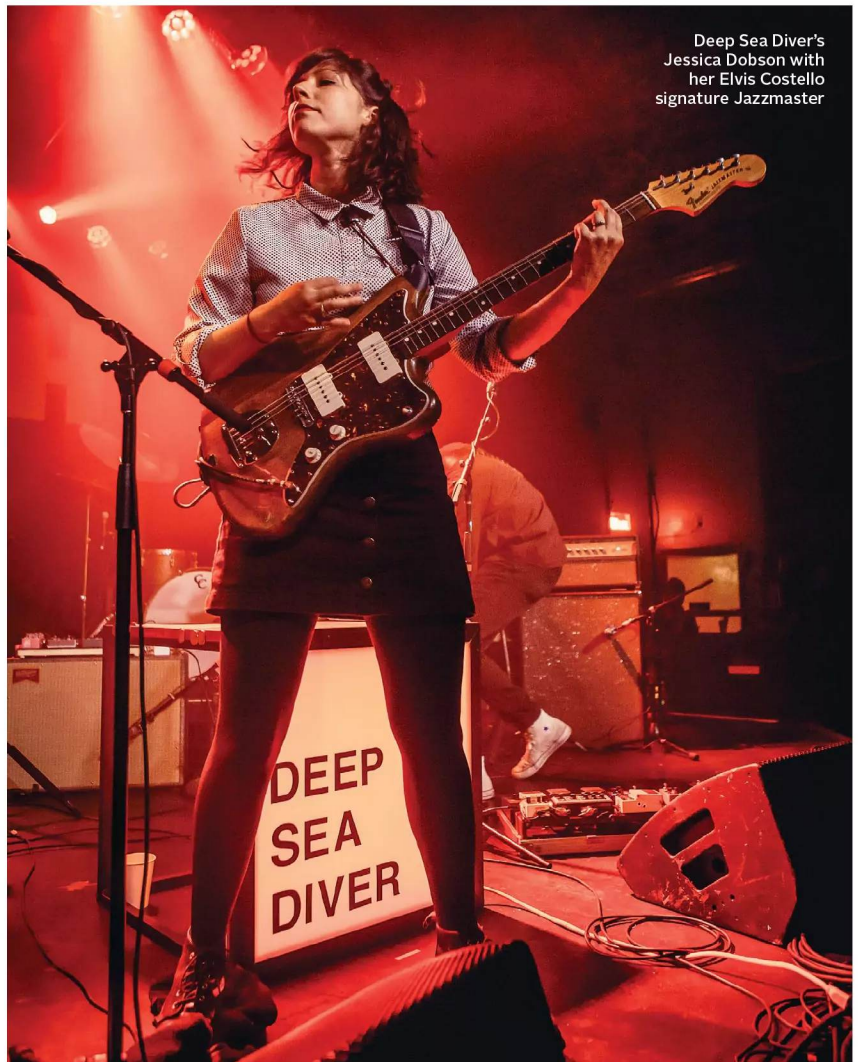
▶ **DEEP SEA DIVER'S** “Billboard Heart” music video is pure eye candy. Filmed out in the wide-open expanses of eastern Washington state, it finds guitarist-vocalist Jessica Dobson wandering deserted highways framed by cerulean skies and a stunningly panoramic mountain view. Another sight to behold is the vintage Silvertone S-shape the bandleader is strumming unplugged throughout. How the thing actually sounds is anybody's guess — Dobson's included.

“I got that the week before we made the video,” Dobson says. “Peter [Mansen, drummer] found it in the back of a very large Seattle Goodwill that's like a warehouse. It was all beat up on the back, but everything else was intact. I actually have literally never plugged that guitar in. I probably should!”

When it comes to Deep Sea Diver's forthcoming, as-yet-untitled fourth full-length — due in early 2025 through Sub Pop — Dobson instead turned to a mix of Fender offsets to get through early tracking at her home studio in Seattle before the full band hit various West Coast facilities with producer Andy D. Park. The songwriter notes, however, that she also was craving sonic and situational “newness” to push her long-running indie-rock force into bold, vulnerable directions. She notes that “Billboard Heart” begins with a familiar, Tom Petty-anthem feel, but the group then kept the tape rolling for an unplanned, prismatically heady and mostly improvised two-minute outro.

The record's “Emergency” likewise came out of stream-of-conscious circumstances. Its garage-chunky walk-up riff arose off the cuff one day while Dobson was rearranging her pedal chain at home. They tested out

“‘Emergency’ is probably the most ‘rockiest’ rock riff I’ve ever written”



Deep Sea Diver's Jessica Dobson with her Elvis Costello signature Jazzmaster

the song live during a 2023 tour with Pearl Jam but fully rewrote the chorus shortly after facing their biggest crowds yet.

“Emergency” was a really great one to try out in an arena, because it fell in the family of songs that could be potentially well received by a Pearl Jam crowd,” Dobson says. “It's probably the most ‘rockiest’ rock riff I’ve ever written.”

The upcoming album also finds Dobson dynamically diving from lightning-quick hammer-on sections toward epically slow-fuzzed feedback solos, all of this ripe for future performances atop the musician's current go-to stage prop: a glowing crate she climbs onto that literally reads, in boldface print, “GUITAR SOLO BOX.”

“I almost didn't do it because I thought it might've been too lame to write ‘Guitar Solo Box’ on it,” she says, though the ingeniously goofy, Chekhov's Gun-like presentation of the prop has led fans to feverishly anticipate those moments where Dobson

literally steps up to rip leads. “What we said [when we first built it was], ‘Well, that is truly going to set people up to want to pay attention.’ It's great!”

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** Fender Elvis Costello Jazzmaster, Trent Model 1 w/P90s, Bilt S.S. Zaftig, Fender Starcaster w/Lollar Wide Range humbuckers, 1964 pre-CBS Fender Jaguar, 1974 Gibson Hummingbird
- **AMPS** Benson Chimera, Benson Vinny reverb, Supro Thunderbolt, Vox AC30, 1972 Ampeg B-15
- **EFFECTS** Sarno Earth Drive, Chase Bliss Brothers, Benson Germanium Preamp, Diamond Memory Lane Jr., Hologram Microcosm, Dualtone Pleasure Trem 5000, 29 Pedals EUNA, Electro-Harmonix Memory Man, Electro-Harmonix Pog 2, JHS Pulp 'N' Peel V4 Compressor, Strymon El Capistan, Strymon Blue Sky

5 FIVE QUESTIONS

ARYAN KING

THE RISING INSTAGRAM STAR — AND BIG-TIME GIBSON FAN — EXPLAINS HOW HE LOST ALL HIS GUITARS IN THE WAR IN UKRAINE, AND WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

By Andrew Daly

REGARDLESS OF PERSONAL struggles, coping with the war-torn streets of Ukraine or trying to make a name for himself in Nashville, guitarist, producer and Instagram star Aryan King always had a dream: to own a real-deal Gibson — and to make it sing.

“Gibson had always represented a dream from my childhood,” he says. “A Gibson is like a ’69 Dodge Charger; it’s a beautiful, high-quality classic that can handle just about anything you throw at it.”

Beyond his love for Gibsons, King — who was born in Spain and spent time in Poland, loves rock and blues, and was immersed in flamenco guitar from a young age — spent his life bouncing from place to place in the name of protecting his family. Music often took a backseat, but a Berklee education and a six-string dream kept his hopes alive.

“Guitar is the only way I can truly share what’s inside me — my thoughts, feelings and everything in between,” he says. “It’s where I get to be completely honest about what I’m going through, whether it’s pain or joy. It helps me remember who I am and how much I’ve grown from that five-year-old kid who just wanted to play. Playing the guitar turns all those emotions into music, letting me connect with the world in a way that feels deeply personal and real.”

Q: Why do you love Gibsons so much?

My mother owned a music store, and on display were two beautiful Gibsons — a Black Beauty and a Tobacco Burst. The store was filled with posters of artists, but the one that captivated me the most was Slash with his iconic hat and his Gibson.

Q: You went through a lot of hardships early on. How did they impact your journey?

My family emigrated and started from scratch, and I lost interest in playing because I couldn’t have the guitar I truly wanted. But I never lost my dream of owning a Gibson. As a teen, my mother



It's a love story...
Aryan King and his
treasured ES-335

saved enough money and gave me \$220, telling me to buy the guitar I always wanted. That act of love and sacrifice was a turning point.

Q: How did the war in Ukraine lead to you achieving your dreams?

I lived in Ukraine. When the war broke out, I lost my guitar collection, my home, everything. My friend [guitarist] Joanna Connor asked if I had contacted Gibson to tell them about my situation. I hesitated because I didn’t want my first conversation with Gibson to be me asking for something. Later, while backstage at a GN’R show in Poland, I saw a Les Paul with a Ukrainian flag. I learned that there were only [a limited run of these guitars] — one owned by Slash and one by Paul McCartney — made as part of the Guitars for Peace project to support Ukraine.

A few months later, while working with the Ukrainian presidential office to support Ukraine through art, DHL knocked on my door. When I opened it, I couldn’t believe my eyes — it was a Gibson. I was overwhelmed and cried for hours. I reached out to the Gibson team

to ask if this meant I was a Gibson artist. The answer was “yes.”

Q: What led you to Nashville?

I connected with many people at Gibson, including master luthiers, the Custom Shop and international distributors. Their kindness impressed me. I met Gibson CEO Cesar Gueikian, whose vision brought Gibson back to life. I also met Jim DeCola, Mark Agnesi and others. They showed me the factory, the Gibson Garage and some of the most iconic guitars in history. Their hospitality made me fall in love with Nashville and intensified my passion for Gibson.

Q: Now that you’ve got your dream guitar, what’s next?

I’m working on an album of remakes and remastered versions of my older demos with new tracks. I’m excited to collaborate with Jack Moore, the son of Gary Moore. We’re aiming for a release in early 2025. I’m also working on a podcast called *Secrets*, where I’ll be interviewing industry professionals to explore behind-the-scenes stories, like the sale of “Greeny.”



Billy King & the Bad Bad Bad

"I WAS SITTING IN AN INNERTUBE, FLOATING IN A CIRCLE, AND THEN THAT LITTLE WALKDOWN CAME TO ME." HOW ONE OF OUR FAVORITE RIFFS OF 2024 WAS BORN ON A RAGING RIVER IN TEXAS

By Gregory Adams

INSPIRATION CAN STRIKE a songwriter at the damndest of times. That's certainly been true for William "Billy" King Reynolds, guitarist-vocalist for Austin rockers the Bad Bad Bad. Take the fluid and groovy, Southern-rock walkdown he crafted for his band's "Alright (Believe in What You Say)," which he thought up and quickly sang into his phone amid an especially slippery situation — while running the rapids on an inflatable donut.

"The lick came to me while I was floating the river in Texas," Reynolds says. "The river was flooding, and the water was flowing over the dam so fast that it was creating a whirlpool effect. I was sitting in an innertube, floating in a circle, and then that little walkdown came to me. I recorded [the melody] on my phone, and as soon as I got home, I played it out and was like, 'This is going to be something for sure!'"

When Reynolds and co-guitarist Cameron Wren co-founded the Bad Bad Bad, the group specialized in feverish, Roky Erickson and Pentagram-inspired

"It was difficult to relinquish some of my guitar duties to somebody. But it was also exciting"

psych-rockers that tended toward the supernatural (check out "Werewolf of Love" from 2017 debut EP *Fever Dreamin'*). Their new album, *Introspective Resolute*, keeps up that awesomely eerie energy — the Lovecraftian punk-sneer of "Re-Animated" is a highlight, while opener "There's an Evil at Camp Creek" has Wren lunging into a ferocious solo between Reynolds' beastly sung "Awoos." But Reynolds suggests that the good-spirited "Alright (Believe in What You Say)" and acoustic finale "Uncertainty" are also pushing the Bad Bad Bad's overall sound into a bolder, big-picture era.

Nevertheless, some of Reynolds' favorite

moments on *Introspective Resolute* are still the nastiest-sounding. Take the burly bass tone Riley Sklar barrels into on "That's Just Who I Am," which he'd dialed up using Reynolds' home-brew Fuzz War clone pedal ("I call it the 'Fuzz Invader,'" the guitarist says).

Reynolds got grimy on the record while pairing a Park Fuzz with a Fender Hot Rod Deville and a vintage custom Gretsch, but more and more he seems to be scaling back on his onstage six-stringin'. As Reynolds put his focus on singing to the fans, they drafted guitarist/keyboardist Brett Marcom into the live lineup in 2024 to cover their bases.

"It was interesting at first, just because I felt it was difficult to relinquish some of my guitar duties to somebody. But it was also exciting in its own way," the Bad Bad Bad bandleader says. "Once I felt comfortable getting Brett and Cameron up to speed with my parts, it allowed me to step out and do more of what I wanted to do, which was to be more of an entertainer... and the crowd feeds off of that!"

Diamond Rowe with her signature Jackson Pro Series in Dark Rose



Queen Diamond

TETRARCH CO-FOUNDER DIAMOND ROWE DISCUSSES HER HISTORY-MAKING SIGNATURE JACKSON PRO SERIES GUITAR. "AND IT ALL COMES FROM JUST BEING DIAMOND"

By Richard Bienstock

DIAMOND ROWE CO-FOUNDED heavy metal band Tetrarch with high-school friend Josh Fore when they were still teenagers in Atlanta. At the time, Rowe could only imagine the type of success the band has now experienced, which includes a string of well-received albums and EPs

and sharing stages with the likes of Avenged Sevenfold, Sevendust and others. "As a kid you're like, 'That would be so sick,'" Rowe tells *Guitar World*. "But it's all just a dream."

Another thing that was just a dream? Having her own signature guitar model. But like many things in Rowe's musical life,

that dream is now reality, in the form of the Jackson Pro Series Signature Diamond Rowe DRI2MG EVTN6. "I'm honored," she says of the impressively spec'd electric. "To see it come to fruition is really, really cool. Because it's always been a goal of mine."

The reason why, she continues, "is that I've always loved guitar players that had a very big guitar presence. When you look at Slash or Dimebag or Kirk [Hammett], they were never just 'the guitar player,' you know what I mean? You know them by name, you go to the show to see them. I knew I wanted to be that type of player, and I knew that I wanted a signature as well."

For Rowe, it was important that her signature model embodied her distinct personality and playing preferences. "I think some people look at a signature model and think, 'I'm gonna put everything I've ever wanted to try into this guitar,'" she says. "But for me, I looked at it more like, 'No, I want it to be what Diamond plays.' So anyone picking up this guitar is getting something I truly believe in."

In this case, that means a single-cut body design (based on Jackson's Monarkh shape) fitted with a set of active EMG 81 and 85 humbuckers, features that have long been foundational to her guitar makeup. "I've been playing single cuts since I was very young," Rowe says. "I got my first 'pro' guitar for Christmas when I was 13, a Gibson Les Paul Standard, and ever since I've been playing single cuts. So I knew my guitar had to be that shape. And pickups, a lot of people are using Fishmans and stuff like that, especially in modern metal, but I knew mine had to be the EMG 81 and 85, because that's what I've been playing for so long. It's a big part of my sound."



The single-cut guitar is fitted with EMG 81 and 85 pickups



Jackson-branded locking tuners come standard

That said, Rowe also experimented with a few out-of-the box ideas, among them employing a 25.5-inch scale length, unusual for a single cut (designs like the Gibson Les Paul and the Jackson Monarkh employ a shorter 24.75-inch scale). “It’s more associated with Fender-type guitars,” Rowe acknowledges of her signature model’s scale length. “But I was talking with my tech, who’s a bit of a guitar geek, and he was just like, ‘You need to try a 25-and-a-half.’ So I asked Jackson if they would send me a prototype with that scaling, and it was awesome. It felt good, it sounded good. In Tetrarch we tune to drop A, which isn’t super low for modern metal, but is pretty low on a six-string guitar. To me, the longer scale just added a little bite. So we kept it.”

Rowe also ventured outside the norm on the visual side of things, working with Jackson to craft an entirely new headstock shape. Many Jackson models, including the Monarkh, employ what she describes as the “candle flame” design. But, Rowe says, “I knew I wanted to do something different. And Jackson were really awesome about it. They said, ‘Send some options, even if it’s just a drawing on a piece of paper, and we’ll mock it up for you.’”

Which is exactly what happened. “We took the candle-flame design and kind of scooped off the point and squared it up a little,” she continues. “It came out so cool, and it’s something that isn’t on any other Jackson. It’s new to my guitar and is only on my guitar.”

As far as materials used in the build, the Diamond Rowe signature boasts a Nyatoh body and three-piece neck, as well as a 12-inch-radius ebony fingerboard with 24 jumbo frets. That board, she notes, is

“I’m not playing the Eagles, so this is probably not the guitar for that”

free of fret markers. “It’s a missed opportunity for me to do something diamond-related,” she acknowledges with a laugh. “But everything I tried just looked gaudy to me. So I just wiped it completely and we added Luminlay side dots, which is great for when I’m playing on a dark stage.”

There’s also an EverTune bridge (“I’ve been using those for years” she says), Jackson-branded locking-style tuners and a three-way toggle and dual volume knobs for the EMG pickup set. And it’s all presented with a gorgeous Dark Rose finish that, Rowe says, she and Jackson worked hard to perfect. “Most people would probably say the finish is the easiest part of making a guitar, but it was actually what took the longest for me,” she says. “Because I didn’t want to do a regular flame top or a regular quilt maple, like you see on pretty much every single-cut-style guitar. I told Jackson I wanted to try something different. So I looked around at other finishes and found one that I really liked — it’s kind of smoky and not as ‘linear’ as a flame top or quilt maple.”

From there, Rowe continues, “it was just a matter of figuring out the hue. I like guitars to have a little color, but I’m not a person who’s into, like, bright pink. I said, ‘I want to keep it dark.’ What we came up with is a really deep red, which almost

looks black sometimes. I think we got it pretty cool.”

As for the name of the finish? “My middle name is Rose,” she says. “So Dark Rose was a nice nod to that.”

It all adds up to an instrument that is built, much like Rowe, for modern metal mayhem. “I’m not playing the Eagles, so this is probably not the guitar for that,” Rowe says with a laugh. “But it’s perfect for me in my musical world. I think it would be for anyone else in that space as well.”

Another thing that’s special about the Jackson Diamond Rowe? It represents the first signature guitar model for a Black female heavy metal artist, a distinction that is not lost on her. “I say this a lot: When I started playing guitar at 12, I didn’t have any influences like me in metal or hard rock. I looked up to [Korn’s Brian ‘Head’ Welch] and Dimebag and Dan Donegan, and I just wanted to play guitar like these guys that I loved a lot,” Rowe says. “People would say to me, ‘You’re doing something different, you look different,’ but when I was younger I didn’t want to be different. I just wanted to be like my heroes.”

Nowadays, she sees the value in standing out. “I get messages all the time from people who are like, ‘It’s so awesome to see someone like you doing this, because I didn’t have anybody to really look up to when I was younger.’ That’s the thing that I feel most honored about. I never tried to be something I’m not, and I was able to accomplish all these things organically on my journey. And now, something like getting a signature guitar winds up having a bigger impact than maybe I could have even anticipated. That’s a cool thing. And it all comes from just being Diamond.”



KNAGGS GUITARS

Having cut his teeth working at the PRS factory, rising from finishing assistant to production manager and head of Private Stock, **Joe Knaggs** is easily one of the most talented luthiers in the game. Here's his story...

By Amit Sharma



Knaggs Guitars namesake Joe Knaggs carves a top

IT WAS PURE chance that led to Joe Knaggs becoming a guitar builder. He started his career working at a finishing plant, overseeing the final touches for everything from cars and hospital ductwork to furniture for the White House. Then one day he got the call that changed his life — an offer from Paul Reed Smith to join the finishing team at his boutique workshop. It was an opportunity too good to refuse. Knaggs' responsibilities exponentially grew within the company, until one day he decided to part ways and start his own brand.

Since launching in 2009, Knaggs Guitars has become one of the most respected independent luthiers in America, highly lauded for their ability to create bespoke instruments that look every bit as good as they sound. Have a quick look through photos of Steve Stevens over the last 15 years and you'll struggle to find a shot of him holding an electric made by anyone else. And then there are the other signature artists, such as rising blues hotshot Eric Steckel and Grammy winner Larry Mitchell, proudly bringing what is referred to as "the Knaggs ring" to stages around the world. As the founder explains to *Guitar World*, the only way to succeed as a guitar manufacturer is to build something that artists want to play more than whatever else they have lying around.

How did you get into guitar building?

Like most people in this industry, I started out as a player. Paul Reed Smith and I grew up on the same street in Bowie, Maryland. He was six years older than me, but we would hang out together. As we grew up, we had a mutual respect for each other as musicians. He knew I was finishing guitars in my spare time and one day asked for help. Soon I started working for him, starting in the finishing room and then running it. Eventually I felt like we needed somebody to head up the factory, and Paul basically said, "You're it."

For a few years, I was running the finishing room, the wood shop and the final-assembly area. Then I wanted to focus on building. Paul gave me a new job looking after the artist models — with all the extra attention to the neck shapes and things like that.



[from left] A Knaggs Eric Steckel Kenai T/S Black with 3HB; a Knaggs Influence Kenai in Crème; a Knaggs Steve Stevens SSC in Purple

**"A GOOD
DESIGN,
WHETHER
IT'S A CAR,
A GUITAR OR
WHATEVER,
WILL LAST
FOREVER"**



Then we started Guitar of the Month. Paul wanted to get back into building because the business side was taking over, so we were doing that together. We'd come up with a guitar out of the blue and build it, which led to the Private Stock department.

So what was it that made you want to start your own company?

In the Private Stock years, I designed new inlay patterns and all kinds of models. Then I was running the R&D department and designing things like the Mira, the Starla, the Gary Grainger bass and the Singlecut. I would draw and build a prototype, then bring it to the new product meetings to decide whether we wanted to make more with engineers involved for full-on factory production. Around 2000, our contracts changed and many of us didn't like it. I stayed on for a while, coming up with more designs, but I eventually left to start my own business.

What sets Knaggs apart from all the other guitar companies?

I want to make guitars with the highest amount of sustain and harmonic information. We call it "the Knaggs ring" — it's a guitar with as much energy coming out of it as humanly possible. It all comes down to the little elements: the bridge, the assembly, the cut of the nut. It's those tiny nuances to get all the extra vibration. The very first Knaggs guitar was like our Severn model but a little different, like a thick Stratocaster but hollowed out. I made it in my garage by hand but ended up trading it to a friend for a set of golf clubs.

Which models are you most proud of?

The three we make the most are the Kenai, the Steve Stevens SSC — which is like a Kenai but with Steve's



**"MY MAIN
GOAL WAS
TO MAKE
THE SOUND
TRAVEL
THROUGH
THE BODY"**

customizations — and the Severn. The Severn has a 25.5" scale and was originally made with three single-coils. The treble pickup is usually not on a plate in a Stratocaster-style guitar but I chose to do that, which almost gives it a Tele sound; it's a cross between the two. I took my Chesapeake bridge and cut it in half for the tremolo version, so that the bridge works on a hinge and produces more sound while also being more dependable for tuning. It's stable and screwed down to the body, while most tremolos are a knife-edge design, like Strats or PRS guitars. My main goal was to make the sound travel through the body. What gets created at the break of the saddles gets transferred into the middle of the guitar. You make the most of that high-end coming from the bridge, because that's where a lot of the upper harmonics come from, as well as beyond the nut.



[clockwise] Peter Wolf, Steve Stevens, Billy Morrison and Joe Knaggs work their way through the Knaggs workshop; a Knaggs Steve Stevens SSC in Fireburst; a Knaggs Severn X Tremback in Black with red racing stripes

"STEVE STEVENS WOULDN'T PLAY OUR GUITARS IF HE DIDN'T LOVE THEM"



Steve Stevens is the biggest name on your roster. What does he look for in a guitar?

If you make Steve Stevens a guitar, you will need to create something he wants to play over his other guitars. That's the only way he will do it. He is not

interested at all in endorsing something he doesn't love, whether it's a pedal, amp or guitar. Our co-founder, Peter Wolf, knew him from the Hamer days. And it was as simple as a Facebook message from Peter where he suggested trying out our models and Steve was open to it. We built him a couple of things and went back and forth a lot. He liked what we made and chose to work with us as a signature artist. There have been a few versions of his model, from the SS1 to the SS2 and then the SSC. We also had the SSXF, which is a guitar he wanted for Billy Idol songs like "Eyes Without a Face," where he needed a Floyd Rose. But honestly, he wouldn't play our guitars if he didn't love them. He wasn't interested in any kind of overseas knock-off brand. It had to be U.S.-made... as good as it gets.

What's next for Knaggs?

It's our 15th anniversary, so we've just launched a Navajo Sun inlay for our Kenais and Chenas. We recently finished the Chena A, which is a completely hollow archtop version of that guitar. There are different versions of every model coming, with new things added — like the baritone version of the Severn X. We might even do a seven-string. I also build up to 15 acoustics every year; maybe we'll start producing more. I guess my dream is to get one of my guitars into the hands of Pat Metheny or George Benson.

Whenever people ask me why they should play a Knaggs, I tell them the differences in tones and harmonics will inspire them in new ways. For example, I love my 1961 Strat. But I also love the Severn, because it has what I like about the '61 and also gives me something different. It's its own animal. We're not different for the sake of being different. I don't want to do weird shapes to stand out. A good design, whether it's a guitar or a car or whatever, will last forever. Our goal is for you to look at the guitar, fall in love, then you play it and fall in love some more. **GW**



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IF GUITAR GOD IS A WOMAN

With renewed confidence and a slew of new guitar-forward songs, **Larkin Poe's** Rebecca and Megan Lovell are upping the ante of their blues-rock sound once again on seventh album *Bloom*

STORY BY JIM BEAUGEZ PORTRAITS BY ROBBY KLEIN

FOURTEEN YEARS INTO their career making bluesy roots rock as Larkin Poe, sisters Rebecca and Megan Lovell had their biggest 12 months yet in 2024. Coming off an album cycle that saw their sixth full-length studio release, 2022's *Blood Harmony*, earn their first Grammy and third Number 1 on *Billboard's* Blues Albums chart, the Lovells walked away with confidence and swagger to spare.

"It does give you a little bit of a confidence boost to say, 'Okay, my opinions are valid,' so then the next time you go in the studio, you hold that in your head a little bit," Megan says.

For Rebecca, the takeaway from those experiences — plus a world tour, a plum spot on Slash's S.E.R.P.E.N.T. Festival and winning the Americana Music Award for Duo/Group of the Year — was that the confidence was there all along. "You realize the stuff that actually makes you feel fulfilled as an artist has been there the whole time," she says.

All the while, the old-time and bluegrass music scene the Lovells left behind to form Larkin Poe in 2010 has officially gone mainstream. Bluegrass revivalist and picker Billy Strings regularly sells out multiple nights at hockey arenas and amphitheaters. Molly Tuttle has reached top billing at festivals across the U.S., and not just those associated with Americana music. Rootsy

singer-songwriter Zach Bryan even sells out stadiums. So, during their downtime, Rebecca and Megan reacquainted themselves with the bluegrass scene.

Rebecca, who won a MerleFest mandolin contest at 15, set aside her Strat and dusted off her old instrument for their run of dates with T Bone Burnett. Megan dipped back to her Dobro-slide days for their work on Ringo Starr's new country album, *Look Up*, which also happens to feature Billy Strings and Molly Tuttle.

The duo rode those waves of success and inspiration into recording sessions for *Bloom*, their new album. While they're still deeply rooted in the blues — particularly the loose, hypnotic strain native to Mississippi's Hill Country — the Lovells have steadily sharpened their songwriting chops and sense of melody.

Backed by their muscular live band again on *Bloom*, they've doubled down on their excursions beyond the traditional blues-rock idiom. Of course, the feverish guitar fretwork listeners expect is there, like the thunderous riffing of "Bluephoria," the Black Crowes-inspired slide on "Mockingbird" and the R.L. Burnside nods on "If God Is a Woman." But the success of *Blood Harmony* led them to dream bigger and build their bulletproof riffs into massive crescendos and choruses.

GW recently caught up with the Lovell sisters to talk about their evolving approach to guitar and songwriting, and how it led them to *Bloom*. ➔



Sister act: Larkin
Poe's Rebecca [left]
and Megan Lovell





Blood Harmony marked a transition in terms of how you record. Was the approach similar here, or did you take another left turn?

REBECCA: We definitely stuck the landing with *Bloom* in keeping the ethos that we've been developing the last few years in our self-production, trying to maintain as much of the humanity as possible while also recording in our home studio. Some of our capabilities in terms of tracking straight-up live are limited, just due to space; it's a very cozy little space in which we've been making records. But I'm really proud of some of the songwriting and lyrical advances that were made on this record.

I think a lot of the status quo was maintained in terms of not doing a ton of overdubs, not a ton of bells and whistles as per *Blood Harmony*, which clearly served us so well. But I think we made some new leaps in the artistic message.

Fender-loving Rebecca [left] with her one of her choice Strats; Megan is holding her signature Beard Electro-Liege lap steel

"ON THIS RECORD, I'M MORE FOCUSED ON THE EMOTION IN MY PLAYING, AS OPPOSED TO HOW FAST IT IS"

How did you carry out the theme of *Bloom* in your guitar work?

REBECCA: *Bloom* is all about acceptance of situations and allowing yourself to bloom within those parameters. I think that carries over into playing, because as the years go by, we're becoming more and more comfortable with what we offer when it comes to playing, singing and writing, and you can kind of relax into yourself and your own sound and be the best version of yourself as a player. So, on this record, I was a lot more comfortable in the creation of solos and being able to focus more on the emotion that was coming through in the playing, as opposed to how fast are the notes or how much am I shredding — and feeling maybe uncomfortable and a lot of tension around that — instead of relaxing into it and trying to create something I liked.

The confidence around self-acceptance turned into confidence all around.

REBECCA: Confidence is a universal theme for the majority of people. Trying to find and then maintain that confidence is probably one of the hardest things any of us do. Especially today, on social media; being able to create highlight reels of our own life experiences and then post it, and then check on all of your friends and what the highlights of their life experience are... It's so easy to get disillusioned.

I don't feel like I've arrived at that total of where I'm at as a player, as a songwriter, as a person, as a performer, but it's like trying to write the mantra to remind yourself, to train yourself, to get back to that headspace of, you deserve to enjoy your life, to relax into your experience. You shouldn't always be at war with yourself and your surroundings. Sometimes enough is actually enough. Just relax, let it go. It's important to try and habituate seeking out the joy and the moments where you have peace. We don't need to throw ourselves into chaos or strife.

A lot has been said about your Hill Country blues influence, but what contemporary music inspires you as guitar players?

MEGAN: We grew up playing bluegrass, and it's really cool to see it coming back around in our lives. Seeing Billy Strings, Molly Tuttle and Sierra Ferrell — that's been inspiring us to revisit our past and bring some of those acoustic moments into our show. Being willing to go out and play some of these bluegrass festivals harkened back to our past in a way that's been very fun for us. Picking up the Dobro again and delving back in has been really great.

REBECCA: We feel like we can re-embrace those parts of ourselves that — for quite a while — sat dormant. In the mid 2000s, we were touring as an Americana string band and we couldn't pay our bills. Sort of out of necessity, we did pivot and find new vistas in ourselves. It was like, "Cool, this can inform who we are now as well." But [it's great] to be able to re-embrace that and have it be something that can be married back into our sound with these newer records.

MEGAN: I'm inspired by a lot of classic rock. Just using tone as a way to inspire is a little new for me, because I've always found my tone and then stuck with it and not played around too much. With this record, we were actually really inspired by trying to seek out David Lindley's tone, specifically that "Running on Empty"



guitar solo tone. We were like, “Well, we should try out some Dumble-clone stuff,” and that was really inspiring because there were a couple of moments where I was like, “This is it. I hear it.” I found that inspiring with some of my solos, specifically “Fool Outta Me.” I feel like I was channeling a little bit of Lindley in it. It’s probably my favorite solo on the record.

This is the second album you’ve recorded with your live band. What have those live experiences taught you?

REBECCA: I think the live experience of a musician is the arena in which I probably learned the most about myself, because there are so many factors that are beyond your control. It’s like a hyperrealism version of reality, because you’re on stage and things are going wrong. Maybe you look out in the audience and you make eye contact with somebody who’s looking at you like, I’m so not entertained by you. There’s a lot of things that are trying to throw you off your game. And it is sort of like a trial by fire to continue to recenter yourself, stay in the moment, don’t think too far ahead. There’s that constant distraction that’s pulling you away from the music and the art and being in that flow with your instrument.

I think I have learned so much about my musicianship and the power of really being in the present through performing. I think, honestly, being on stage with a musician like my sister — because Megan is very fearless in the improvisation she will engage in on stage, specifically during her solos — and being able to have her showing me what’s possible as a player is like, go for it. And I’m like, “Let’s go for it together. Let’s try to do something new.” Even if it goes wrong, who really cares? It’s just a little bobble. It’s a wrong note that lasts for a millisecond. Let’s move on. So trying to be courageous [is important]. And then, of course, being off the road and learning covers



Larkin Poe perform at the inaugural Extra Innings Festival in Tempe, Arizona, back in March 2024

Larkin Poe’s seventh studio album, this year’s *Bloom*

and having that also inform the playing, to shake up our own perspective.

MEGAN: I’m an overthinker. So for me, if I’m thinking, I’m stinking. The less I can be in my own head, the better. And in that way, live shows are a bit like meditation. I try to just be aligned and keep in that zen moment. It’s fun; we learn a lot, and we take a ton of mental notes about our stage show and how to transfer that to the studio.

An offshoot of the confidence theme throughout the album — especially in songs like “Mockingbird” and “Bluephoria” — is being honest as a songwriter.

MEGAN: I think it is hard to be completely honest in songwriting. I think some people come by it very easily, but I think for Rebecca and me, it has been harder to be vulnerable in songwriting. I think we’re both introverted in ways, but we have a little bit of a shell that’s tough to crack. So, when we were writing these songs, we were really particular about line-by-line trying to make sure that what we were saying was honest, and at the very least, something real.

We haven’t completely gotten there — maybe we never will — but I do think there’s a lot of vulnerability in these songs, and I’m very proud of that. You can really put yourself into the lyrics, and you can look into somebody else’s eyes and know that what you’re saying is real. **GW**







MAGNIFICENT

Tearing up the blueprint with an octave G string, Johnny Marr's new seven-string Martin signature model is a distillation of all the British icon's most rebellious opinions on acoustic (and yes, there's also a six-string version)

WORDS HENRY YATES

IT WAS DECEMBER 2023, and backstage at Manchester's Aviva Studios, Johnny Marr was wrestling with a dilemma. Playing the same venue the night before with a 30-piece orchestra, he'd turned to a Martin D-28, of the kind that propelled him to Eighties stardom in the Smiths, and gifted him classics like "There Is a Light That Never Goes Out." Now, flanked by elite classical musicians and facing an expectant hometown crowd for the second show, Marr found himself debating whether to give a trial by fire to the prototype of his new signature Martin M-7, which was delivered half an hour earlier.

As the man who jumped from that most cherished of British indie-rock bands with no safety net in 1987, perhaps it's no surprise to learn that Marr took the leap of faith that night, walking from the wings with the head-turning seven-string model. "The minute I took it out, people noticed the tuning configuration and did a double-take," Marr tells us. "But the most striking thing is when you hear it."

Conceptually, the M-7 is not quite without precedent. Back in 2005, that other great master of crystalline chime, Byrds icon Roger McGuinn, launched a signature Martin that also offered a doubled G string. Even so, it's remarkable to hear how Marr's new model sings, its jangle-ready format accentuated by a wishlist of build features including an all-solid Grand Auditorium body, full-thickness mahogany neck and three-piece back (a regular six-string, the M-6, is also available). "It was all instinct for me," he says. "But the really exciting thing was whether all those different features would work together as one instrument."

"I'm au fait with 12-strings, but the seven-string is a different beast. It's much easier to negotiate"

Do you remember the first time you saw a Martin?

Yeah. It would have been Rory Gallagher in 1976, when he did that acoustic bit in his set. Before that, it was Neil Young, Stephen Stills and Joni Mitchell. I was just a kid then, but in the Seventies, it was mostly American artists who were playing Martins. It was the Californians' choice. I don't think John Martyn played Martins. And I think Bert Jansch would have played whatever he could get his hands on at the time.

I was always into D-28s — from before I could get one, really. A lot of my heroes were playing them and I thought they were dead cool. The first Martin I got myself was the 1971 D-28 that I wrote loads of the Smiths stuff on. I got some great songs out of it, straight out of the gate, and it recorded really well. I think the first song I wrote on it was "Well I Wonder," and I used it from the *Meat Is Murder* album onwards. It was from some hire company — I just refused to give it back! I did end up paying for it, by the way. And I've still got that guitar. →

ERIC DOWD

What was so good about that particular D-28?

Well, I think if it's a Martin from the early Seventies, it's gonna be a good instrument. We all know there'll be some narky idiot on the Internet who'll want to contradict me on that — but they're wrong. Every early- and mid-Seventies D-28 I've played has always been really musical. It seems an obvious term to use about a guitar, but that's the best way I can put it. I did notice that mine was a particularly good one. But I've got loads of mates who bought early-Seventies Martins, and they're all great.

Which other Martin models have been in your lineup?

Usually, I don't go for lots of pearl and fancy designs. I like things that feel a little more pragmatic and straightforward. So the D-28 appealed to me on that level. That was my main six-string until the early Nineties, when I got into D-35s with Electronic and Pet Shop Boys. I guess I just fancied a change. I also used a D-41 on *Strangeways, Here We Come*, so I would flip between that and the D-28.

Let's talk about the standout feature of your new M-7 — that octave G. Were you aware of Roger McGuinn's model?

No, I've never come across it, although I saw him talking about it once. I think the idea came out of conversations with my dear friend Bill Puplett. He told me about some obscure blues player in the early Sixties who played around the clubs in Soho with a seven-string.

Conceptually, it seemed like a good fit for me, because of the ringing thing I do. I just thought, "Seven strings are probably better than six." In that regard, anyway. I wouldn't be interested in a seven-string electric with the low B.

The M-7's tone has a 12-string flavor, but how does it compare to play?

With the way I play — which is a bit of a "one-man band" approach — I'm trying to play the whole song, a cross between rhythm and top lines. You can do that on a 12-string, but you have to apply yourself and you need a big breakfast. It's not for the faint-hearted. I'm really glad I persevered when I was younger and it didn't alienate me too much, because I know a few players who just don't want to know.

So I'm *au fait* with 12-strings, and the seven-string is definitely a different beast. It's much easier to negotiate, and in terms of technique and

application, it's hardly any different to a six-string, but sound-wise, it adds a new dimension. With some of my old riffs that would have been played on a regular six-string, it sounds more like the "deluxe" version. It's definitely different, particularly if you lean into it with voicings that have a lot of activity on the G. What can I say? Ring ring, y'know? But some of that sound is also down to the construction of the actual guitar, more so than just the extra G string. That's almost as significant as having that extra string, which is why we're also doing the six-string version.

You're known for using dreadnoughts, but this is a Grand Auditorium.

That's right. I wondered whether the narrower body would be more comfortable. Had that not worked, I would have gone back to a regular size. But it makes me want to play with more attack. I'm playing more like Pete Townshend, because my ear instinctively wants me to get more juice out of it. I think that's what certain players — some of whom are my friends — like out of [Gibson] J-200s and Hummingbirds, that are traditionally used for rhythm. This is a really strong rhythm guitar. I think it's the closest that Martin has got to those rock 'n' roll records that usually have J-200s on.

And you specified a full-thickness neck with gloss finish?

I have to try and talk about the neck without sounding offensive or angry. Satin finishes: Why? No need. You're really playing that fast that you need to have a satin neck? Really? Like, a beautiful glossy neck, that was on all the old guitars since time immemorial

Two views of the new Martin M-7. "The minute I took it out, people noticed the tuning configuration and did a double-take," Marr says



— your technique is so dazzling, or you're so uncomfortable putting your hand on that gloss, or you're so affronted by it, that we've had to have years of really bad finishes on necks? No need. Wear it down yourself, you lazy sod!

Why did you decide the L.R. Baggs Anthem pickup would bring out the M-7's voice?

It's a little bit of a throwback to the Baggs on my D-35 I used with Bert Jansch. Bert — who was a great lover of guitar technology — always remarked on my Baggs pickup. It was a coincidence that Baggs was the Martin company's pickup of choice anyway. So that was a lucky thing. It's really nice to calibrate, the preamp is great, and then, as I was saying, I got to try it out literally 30 minutes after it arrived with an orchestra. I wasn't sitting around for two weeks being conceptual, because there's no better test than getting up on stage in front of 2,000 people.

What was it about the acoustic that called to you as a teenager?

Well, unlike my pals, I didn't feel the need to abandon the acoustic as soon as I could get an electric. It's partly the reason why I play electric the way I do, which is born out of moving first-position chords around the neck and finding melodies within those shapes. A couple of my pals wanted to be Ritchie Blackmore and Jimi Hendrix — and I get it. But I wasn't intending on forming a band that sounded like "Voodoo Child" or "Highway Star." I liked the sound of "Bus Stop" by the Hollies, and what Tony Hicks was doing on those records. Going even further back, to being a little kid, the first guitar sound I was hooked on was what Don Everly did on "Wake Up Little Susie," and those early Everlys records, because my parents used to play them at parties, very loud. And the acoustic overdubs on "C'mon Everybody" by Eddie Cochran.

You've talked about the Stooges' "Gimme Danger" as a key influence.

A hundred percent. That's a great example, now you bring it up. And Nils Lofgren — a big track for me is "Share a Little," off of *Cry Tough*. It's so compressed, and because he plays with a thumbpick, he's got so much attack on his downstrokes. The sound of that, for a long time, I thought was one of the best things I'd come across. He also had a band called Grin, and there's a similar sound on a song called "Love Or Else." You can hear the bridge rattling because he's hitting it so hard. And then, of course, growing up in the U.K. in the Seventies, you can't ignore the Who's "Pinball Wizard."



Marr on stage with the new M-7; [below] the six-stringed Martin M-6.

"There's no better test than getting up on stage in front of 2,000 people"

Likewise, you've said you wanted your Smiths acoustic parts to have attitude...

I was determined that this aspect of the band was going to get noticed. I was so proud for us to be an all-out guitar band, that I didn't want to be polite about those things. The songs I've mentioned — the Everlys, Eddie Cochran, etc. — were in the rear-view mirror in the culture of the early Eighties. But not in mine. So it was my agenda to push that. You know, like on the start of "Bigmouth Strikes Again," say, and "Unhappy Birthday." At the time, I was conscious that no one else was doing that, even after I'd been doing it for a few years. That was another one of the things I was proud of the band for.

Radiohead's Thom Yorke supposedly once said he considered the Smiths to be a powered-up folk band. Would you agree?

Yeah, I like that. I really liked Bert Jansch. And because of Bert, I listened to Martin Carthy, John Martyn, eventually Nick Drake

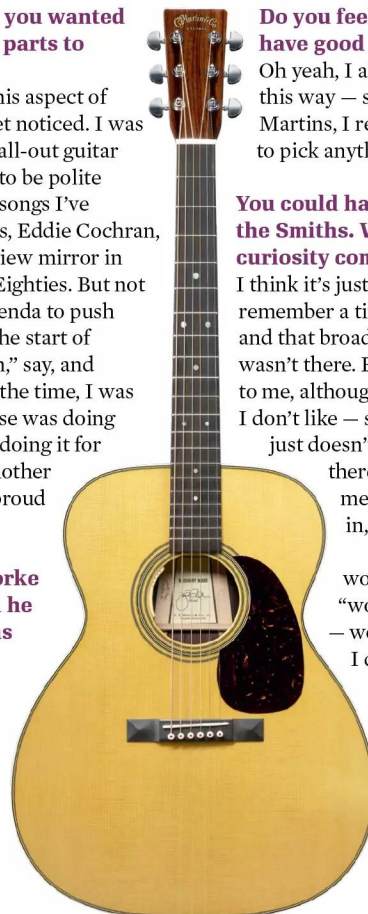
and Donovan. So folk is in there. I did go through a time where I thought of us exactly the way Thom puts it, a folk band but [fused with] the Patti Smith Group. I think I was pretty deliberate about that. And d'you know what? A lot of the Velvet Underground sounds like folk to me.

Do you feel like the M-6 and M-7 have good songs in them?

Oh yeah, I absolutely do. Let's put it this way — since I got my signature Martins, I really don't feel the need to pick anything else up.

You could have easily just stayed in the Smiths. Where did that musical curiosity come from?

I think it's just my personality. I can't remember a time when that impulse and that broad remit as a musician wasn't there. Everything was fair game to me, although there's definitely things I don't like — some classical music just doesn't resonate with me, and there's a lot of extreme metal I'm not interested in, obviously. For some reason, the only word I can find for it is "wonder." It's that, really — wonderment in music. I didn't know it was going to happen, but working with Hans Zimmer now makes total sense to me. I had to kind of beat through the undergrowth for that privilege. But it comes as no surprise to me. **GW**





TAKE NO PRISONERS

MARCH 2025

35

GUITAR WORLD

In this exclusive excerpt from *Dreaming Japanese*, Marty Friedman's new autobiography (co-written by frequent *GW* contributor Jon Wiederhorn), the ace guitarist details his auditions with Ozzy, Megadeth and — what's this about Madonna?

BY MARTY FRIEDMAN WITH JON WIEDERHORN

THE FIRST SHOT I had at joining a big act happened while I was living in San Francisco, sometime in the late '80s. Ozzy Osbourne was looking for a guitarist to replace Jake E. Lee, and someone recommended me to his wife and manager, Sharon. She called and offered to fly me to Los Angeles for an audition. I was thrilled that someone in Ozzy's camp had even heard of me and was willing to pay my airfare to hear me play.

As great as they are, Ozzy's and Black Sabbath's songs are way easier to play than anything by [my band] Cacophony. I had no problem learning them, and then I over-practiced until I was so confident I could have played the songs fluidly in the middle of an earthquake. I was looking forward to plugging in and showing Ozzy my chops, but when I got to the studio, neither Ozzy nor Sharon was anywhere in sight. Only bassist Phil Soussan and drummer Randy Castillo were there, which kind of bummed me out. But they were all set up and ready to play, and I was raring to go. I introduced myself and told them how stoked I was to audition.

Phil grunted. Randy shrugged. "Are we going to do this?" Randy asked as if he had somewhere to be in thirty minutes. From their bored expressions and the dozens of manilla envelopes and cassettes lying around, I got the feeling that they had already auditioned tons of guitarists. I played four or five songs with them and didn't miss a note. The musical vibe was great, natural and relaxed, and we sounded totally major league. And while Phil and Randy were polite and pleasant, it seemed like they would rather be sitting in a proctologist waiting room than auditioning me.

When I got back to San Francisco, I eagerly waited to hear back from Ozzy's camp. They never called. A couple years

"I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO SHOWING OZZY MY CHOPS, BUT NEITHER HE NOR SHARON WAS ANYWHERE IN SIGHT"

later, I learned that Zakk Wylde had gotten the gig. He was the perfect choice, a highly skilled player, who probably fit in with the guys better than I did. I don't think anything about my playing got me crossed off the list. It was all about the magic chemistry among the band members. Playing well is a given. Great players are a dime a dozen. It is the stuff on top that lands you the gigs. Ozzy's guys were wearing Sunset Strip regalia even at a rehearsal, and I wasn't even sporting a shirt with a band logo. They had a casual attitude about the music and plowed through it, yet I paid attention to every detail. Sometimes I wonder if Phil, Randy and I had immediately hit it off, joked around, went out and picked up some tarted-up girls, and partied ourselves sick after the audition, whether tales of our outrageous chemistry might have gotten back to the boss man and convinced him that I was "one of them." Either way, I think Zakk did a better job with the gig than I would have.

My next big audition came about a year later when I found out Madonna needed a guitarist. Being a pop singer, I didn't

TAKA AKI HENMI



Friedman gets a lift from his Hawaii bandmates

think she would hire a metal player like me, but pop music had started to feature guitar solos, so I thought maybe I had a tiny shot. It was an open-call audition, so I had no idea what to prepare. I decided to learn a bunch of Madonna's obscure songs since I could easily improvise my way through any of her hits, even if I didn't prepare. I really wanted the gig, not because I'm a huge Madonna fan, but because my resources were wearing dangerously thin. I was broke and getting desperate. I lived a couple blocks from Guitar Institute of Technology (GIT), which occasionally hired me to teach seminars and masterclasses. I was grateful for the work, but many of the students also lived in my dilapidated rat nest apartment building, so whenever I finished a seminar, I had to take the walk of shame back to my fleabag room with a bunch of starstruck guitar students following me. I felt like the Pied Piper in the slums of Hollywood. For a young, aspiring musician, releasing an album on any label is a dream come true,

so when these kids came in contact with someone like me, who had released a few records, received solid press, and toured the world, they assumed I was a rich rock star. Walking back home with them to the same squalid living conditions they were subject to was both demoralizing and embarrassing. I'm sure they were surprised and disillusioned.

Just a couple days before my Madonna audition, I received an interesting call from my good friend, heavy metal insider Bob Nalbandian. He told me Megadeth had been auditioning guitarists for a long time to no avail, and their manager, Ron LaFitte, had

asked Bob if he could recommend someone. Bob asked me if I was interested. I went from sitting around fanning my balls to suddenly having auditions for Madonna and Megadeth in the same week. I was not that familiar with Megadeth's music, but I knew I liked it a hell of a lot more than I liked Madonna's, which, to be fair, I also liked. And I was a more natural fit for Megadeth. I looked the part, and we shared many of the same influences. When Ron LaFitte found out I was interested in auditioning, he called me and told me to learn five songs: "Wake Up Dead," "In My Darkest Hour," "The Conjuring," "Hook in Mouth" and a cover of Alice Cooper's "No More Mr. Nice Guy."

I bought a couple Megadeth cassettes at a used record shop and learned the tracks note for note. I was confident. I was good to go. Then, Megadeth's management called again and told me to learn another few songs. I worked on those as well. More calls came. "Hey, Marty. Dave wants you to learn a couple more." This kept happening until it got to the point that they were asking me to learn songs from the debut album, *Killing Is My Business... and Business Is Good!*, which was on an indie label and hard to find. I couldn't track down a used copy and eventually found a new one, but I didn't have the \$12.99 that it cost unless I went without eating for the day. My stomach incessantly grumbled as I tried to master the last few of the thirteen or so songs that I prepared for the audition.

Unlike Madonna songs, Megadeth songs



Friedman hits the streets with a red Carvin V220



Marty — always an Elvis fan — poses with an acoustic long before he learned how to play



Friedman at home in Laurel, Maryland, with the Fender Strat he played with his first recording band, Deuce

are intricate and tricky and feature lots of rhythm and tempo changes, and even more solos than Ozzy tracks. I wasn't familiar with the band members and their playing styles, so I had no idea which solos were played by Dave Mustaine, and which were handled by the guitarist I hoped to replace. Up to that point, the mixes on Megadeth albums were somewhat muddy, and the guitars often lacked separation. I had no choice but to try to thoroughly learn every guitar part so I could rip through anything I might be asked to play. Mainly though, I was just happy for the opportunity to audition for such a cool band, so I dug into one song after another and learned them backwards and forwards. Learning all that material was exhausting, but I knew I could handle the playing part.

Megadeth was like [my band] Hawaii on

steroids. I was much more concerned about vibing with the guys. All I knew about Megadeth was that Dave Mustaine was an original member of Metallica, and I really liked Metallica's *No Life 'Til Leather* demo that he played on before starting Megadeth. When I lived in Hawaii, I got that primitive recording through underground tape trading and played it constantly. I'd pop the cassette in my Walkman when I went

"I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO THOROUGHLY LEARN EVERY GUITAR PART SO I COULD RIP THROUGH ANYTHING"



[Above] Friedman in the early days of his band Hawaii. "Megadeth was like Hawaii on steroids," he says

jogging through the lush, scenic Portlock area of Hawaii Kai, which overlooked the sparkling ocean. The demo was the ultimate contrast to the very un-metal Hawaiian vistas.

Listening to it made me feel like I had maintained my punk and metal roots. I had no idea that Dave was unceremoniously kicked out of Metallica just before they were signed and started on the path to becoming the biggest heavy metal group of all time. I feared a repeat of the Ozzy situation since, in established bands, the chemistry between members is far more important than actual playing ability. Mastering the music is a given, as it should be, but it's just a part of what it takes to join a band, which is like an exclusive club, or even a family. The chemistry between members involves intangibles like childhood background, personality, and common sense in an extremely uncommon occupation. These are elements that are impossible to prepare for.

I knew I had a better shot of landing the Megadeth job than the Madonna, or Ozzy gigs. But I still wasn't sure what to expect at the audition. Fortunately, what I lacked in familiarity I made up for in practical maneuvering. In what I must humbly admit was a stroke of genius, or a rare moment of common sense, I hired my good friend Tony DeLeonardo to tech for me. Tony and I were already good friends when he single-handedly took on all crew duties in Maryland for my old band Hawaii. Tony was now an in-demand tech in L.A. and had even done Zakk's tours with Ozzy.

I have always had a complete lack of interest in anything mechanical. I was never a gear guy. Not back then, not now. ➔

Megadeth in Los Angeles, October 3, 1991; [from left] Nick Menza, David Ellefson, Friedman and Dave Mustaine

[below] "Megadeth in the U.K. at one of the many EMI events we diligently showed up at," Friedman says



The thought of setting up the amps and making sure everything was running correctly sent chills through my brain. I just knew I wouldn't look cool humping gear, plugging it in, and setting the knobs to the right sound. I am not proud to say that to this day I don't have the slightest idea how to adjust the length of a guitar strap or roll up a guitar cable.

When I hired Tony for sixty-five dollars, I was living on ninety nine-cent bags of lollipops and white rice with La Yu chilli oil, so that money, a bargain for a pro tech, was extremely hard to part with. But something told me I had to do it, and I'm glad I listened to that little voice. Tony got technical details from Megadeth's crew, carted my gear into the audition like a boss, made sure my guitar was properly strung, intonated, and tuned, got a great sound from the amp in no time, and strapped the guitar on me when it was time to play. Before I hit note one, I looked like a pro. I'm sure this made a good impression, especially compared to how lame it would have looked had I been fiddling with knobs on the amps and schlepping in all my heavy equipment.

After meeting all the band members — the serious-faced ringleader Dave

Mustaine, diplomatic bassist Dave Ellefson, and loose-cannon drummer Nick Menza — Mustaine called out, "Wake Up Dead." Nick did a four count, and we dove in. Right away, the band gelled. We sounded like a unit already. I was so locked into this heavy groove that I hardly noticed there was a massive old-school video camera on a tripod right up in my face.

"Okay, that'll do it for now," Mustaine said as he put down his guitar. I asked if we would play "No More Mr. Nice Guy," and he said he hated that song. The rest of the band joked about not liking it either.

"NICK DID A FOUR COUNT AND WE DOVE IN. RIGHT AWAY, THE BAND GELLED. WE SOUNDED LIKE A UNIT ALREADY"

I remember thinking, "So why did you ask me to learn it?"

We wound up playing only the first batch of songs that I was asked to learn. Having auditioned numerous musicians for my various projects, I've realized that

countless factors go into what you ask people to play when they try out. So, having to learn an ever-growing laundry list of songs for the Megadeth audition made a lot more sense to me a decade-plus after the fact, but at the time I was kind of miffed.

"Stick around, man. Don't go too far away," Mustaine said, then walked off.

David Ellefson came back and told me, "I think that means you probably got the gig. Good going, man." I was elated but kept my cool. "Oh and by the way, Dave told me to tell you that you played many of the wrong guitar parts." My heart sank into my high-tops. "Hey, I wouldn't worry about it too much," he laughed. "You're good."

We can tell you know your shit." **GW**

This is an excerpt from Dreaming Japanese by Marty Friedman with Jon Wiederhorn (Permutated Press; December 2024).



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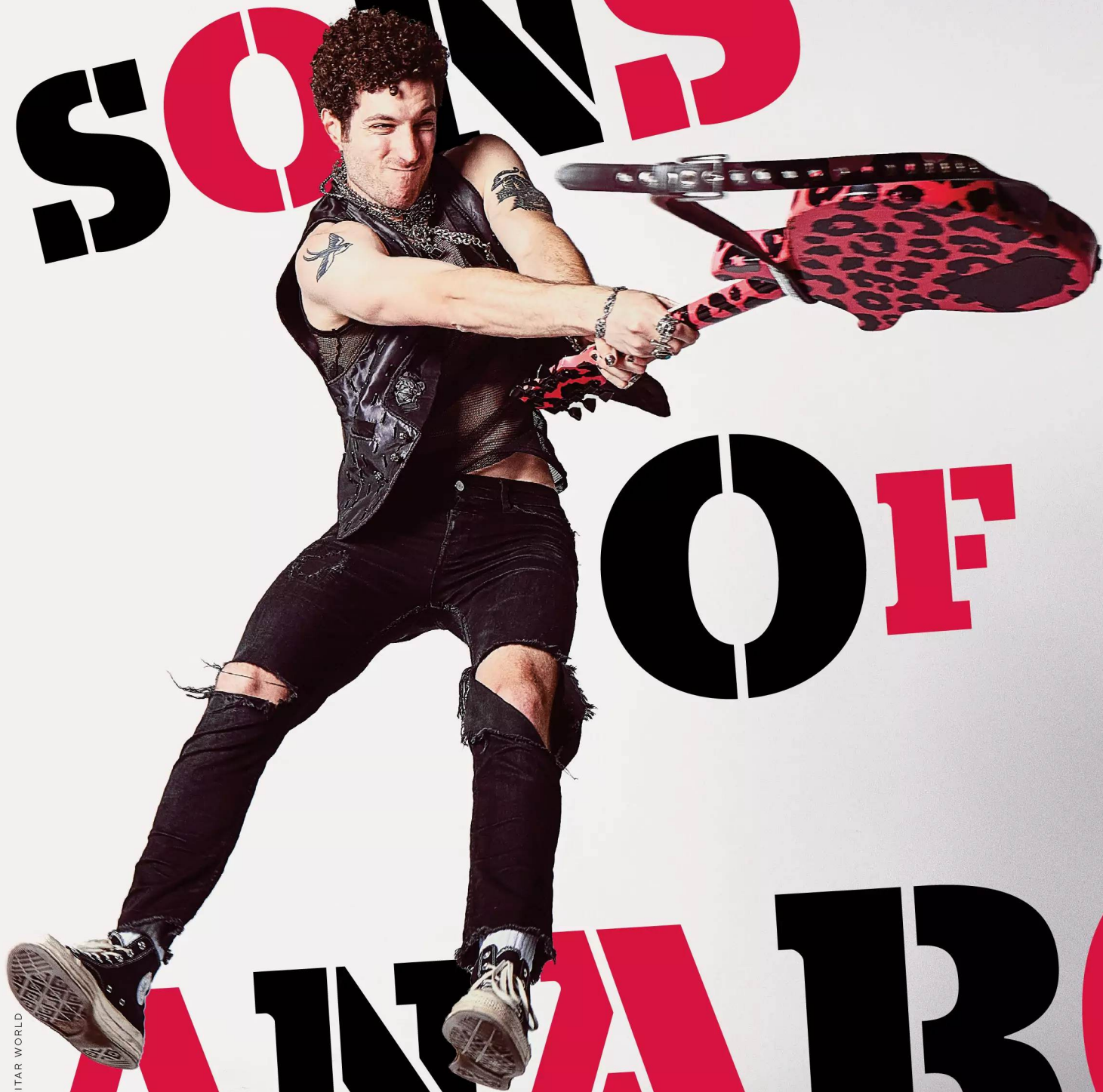
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SONS OF ANARCHY



STORY BY Andrew Daly

Like father, like son! We meet six guitar-wielding heroes who followed in their dads' footsteps, escaped their intimidating family legacies and forged paths of their own

IN YEARS PAST, when we journalists started an interview by asking, "Who inspired you to pick up the guitar?" the answer was often some combination of Jimi Hendrix, Jimmy Page and Eddie Van Halen. These days, a different response — "My dad!" — is cropping up more and more. This stems from a new generation of young guns who are brandishing six-strings — sometimes owned or passed down by their dads — and setting out in the same way they watched their fathers do it 20, 30 or even 50 years ago.

Of course, we're not ignoring the many musical daughters out there who have impacted music on a deep level, just as their famous dads did before them. A survey carried out by Fender in 2023 suggests that more and more women are playing a mean guitar these days, but also that this is a relatively recent phenomenon. Successful guitar-star daughters such as Frances Bean Cobain (who also has a famous mom as guitarist Courtney Love), Electra Mustaine, Sophie Simmons, Romany Gilmour, Grace McKagan and Norah Jones still tend to be singer-songwriters rather than guitarists. Fortunately for us all, that's likely to change over the next few years.

But whether they're sons or daughters, a whole lot of

people feel the need to compete with and outperform the older generation — you know how it is. Eventually, though, that impulse wears off and you settle into your own groove, which has definitely been the case with the half-dozen sons GW chatted with recently: Evan Stanley (pictured at left), Harrison Whitford, Micah Nelson, Tommy Prine, Greg Guy and Duane Betts.

This collection of offspring is especially interesting, as their dear ol' dads are a combination of recently passed, recently retiring or soon-to-be-retiring musicians, or ones that the younger guys are actually sharing the stage with, later in life. That is to say, this is a talented crop of young players who can shine a light on the deepest, darkest corners of this phenomenon of sons rising in the east — while their dads set in the west.

On the "recently retired from touring" side of things, the first one up is 30-year-old Evan Stanley, whose father Paul has long been the platform-boot-strutting, Ibanez-playing lead singer and rhythm guitarist of Kiss. With that band's performances steeped in fire and greasepaint, Paul showed Evan the ropes in grand fashion — and the younger Stanley even lent a hand when Kiss hung it up in December 2023 at New York City's Madison Square Garden. Evan's band, Amber Wild, opened the show, as they had for the entire final

CLY



Harrison Whitford performs in London, January 16, 2020

leg of Kiss's End of the Road Tour.

"It's interesting," Stanley says. "Growing up, Kiss was always 'Dad's work,' but don't get me wrong, it was the fucking coolest work around, with shit blowing up like crazy. I was really lucky when I first picked up the guitar, because my dad helped point me in the direction where if he heard me listening to something, he'd go, 'Hey, if you like this, you'll really like *this*.' But the big thing was the 'chase what you love' mentality; he told me, 'Find your people and stick with them'."

As far as Stanley is concerned, having a big-time dad in rock music hasn't been a hindrance — it's only helped him to grow, and continues to do so to this day. "I grew up on the road, running around backstage, and it's been really cool to share that with my dad," he tells us. "My relationship with it all is a lot different than most. I knew something was up when I moved to New York when I turned 18, and I was seeing my dad's face on billboards all the time. I quickly got the idea of how cool that was. Since then, I've met so many people who Kiss has touched, and it has been a big part of their lives. It's awesome, it's super cool, but at the end of the day, he's still just Dad to me — a great dad. We're super close. He's always around, and we're super-tight,

"HAVING TO FORGE MY OWN VOICE CAME THROUGH INTENSE PRACTICING" HARRISON WHITFORD

no matter how big or cool Kiss is."

In the ultimate passing-of-the-torch moment, just as Kiss has unloaded their road gear for the last time and finished their End of the Road Tour, Evan's career is kicking off with Amber Wild — like Kiss, a balls-to-the-wall rock band.

"Amber Wild has been a common denominator," he says. "We're both passionate, and we connect on that level, so sharing that has been incredible. The biggest similarity is the outlook, because my dad always told me, 'Chase and do what you love, and find the music that you love.' I'm sure there are plenty of similarities between me and my dad, and it's funny: When we played recently, a few people came up to me and said, 'It's crazy how much you sound like your dad; you even move like him.' There's no getting away from genetics, so I'm lucky that I lucked out."

Harrison Whitford, Aerosmith guitarist
Brad Whitford's 29-year-old son, can

definitely relate to that — although while Whitford's dad was surely an influence at some point, it was Harrison's older brother, Graham, who now plays in Tyler Bryant & the Shakedown, who first inspired him to pick up the guitar. Like the two boys' father, once Harrison had a six-string in hand, it was the blues that guided him.

"My primary source of musical inspiration was the blues," he says. "Of course, the blues is a super-common foundation for a guitar player, so having to forge my own voice came through intense practicing. They [*Brad and Graham*] are both such incredible rock guitarists, and I ended up finding myself connecting a lot more to quieter songwriting, and playing that could support that. I wanted to forge my path and find my voice in the instrument, but it's cool because of the respect the three of us have for each other."

Inspiration aside, Whitford remembers having an unusual childhood due to spending a lot of time in big venues. As time passed, he grasped the magnitude of the Aerosmith machine and his father's accomplishments. "It's so hard to know what it felt like as a kid," he says. "Because once you grasp a thing like that, you can't tell if your hindsight is polluting whatever your childhood perception was.

"The thing that impacted me most," he adds, "was just seeing that people could play music — and that it could be a job. I think that's a beautiful thing. Ironically, as I was getting older, I think my dad felt more pressure to want me to be more academic. There are clichés as parents, and maybe he missed out on certain aspects of life by committing himself to being in this band."

Whitford also makes the fair point that while it's tough for a kid growing up in the music biz, it's equally difficult for parents to balance life on stage versus what they've got back home. "It's a unique thing," he muses. "It's hard to know how strange it is when you're a kid because it's your world, but ultimately, it was a really beautiful and cool window into having a music career."

As Whitford watches his father close things out with Aerosmith, his sentiments aren't too far off from Stanley's. "It would only be a hindrance if I thought I had to do the exact same thing as my dad, or if I was going to play in that style and follow in his footsteps."

Anyone whose family creates tunes for a living will empathize with Willie Nelson's son, Micah, who, like Harrison Whitford, is a family-business six-stringer. Before him, and after his dad, came his older brother, Lukas. Micah is 34, two years younger than his brother, but unlike Willie and Lukas, he's strayed as far from country and roots-rock as possible with his solo work as Particle Kid. However, he revisited his elders' past as a recently inducted member of Neil Young's Crazy Horse band, who also played a large role in his life alongside his dad.

Although Nelson's music sounds nothing like his father's, the two performers share a similar mentality. "My dad was a trailblazer," Nelson says. "Against all the odds and despite the pressures of what was expected of country musicians, he always did his own thing. The best way to live up to that legacy is to do my own thing. That may not be exactly my dad's thing, but I love what he does, too."

"It's always a really bad thing for art if you're trying to do it for someone else," he adds. "I don't really think about that. I'm enjoying collaborating with my dad, and getting closer to him. I've toured with his band over the years, watching him upfront, playing his songs, and trading off and supporting him. We've had some really good times."

The normally even-keeled Nelson beams when speaking on his dad's chops, saying, "He's one of my favorite guitar players, maybe my favorite guitar player, with the way he brought Django Reinhardt's Gypsy-jazz style into country music. I don't



Micah Nelson performs during the 2023 edition of Willie Nelson's annual 4th of July Picnic in Austin

like to even use genre terms, because he's such a unique emotion of playing unto himself. It's hard to describe the way you love someone — you just have to experience it. He's my favorite type of artist; that's what I strive for. Like him, I'm trying to invent new emotions. I've gotten close here and there, but I don't know if I'll ever really achieve it. The way to do that is to be 1,000

percent yourself and do what feels cool. I've learned so many things from my dad, but maybe that's the biggest thing."

Like Micah Nelson, the late John Prine's 29-year-old son Tommy grew up watching his dad playing acoustic guitar while making waves on the country-folk scene. Also like Micah, he's managed to take the soul of what his father did and spin it in an entirely new and profoundly modern direction.

"When I was growing up, I didn't necessarily listen to the same things my dad did," Prine says. "The first albums I bought with my own money were by OutKast and Gorillaz." To that end, Prine's music generally leans more toward indie-rock

**"LIKE DAD, I'M TRYING TO
INVENT NEW EMOTIONS.
I'VE GOTTEN CLOSE
HERE AND THERE..."
MICAH NELSON**

Tommy Prine in action
in Franklin, Tennessee,
September 24, 2023



TIM MOSENFELDER/WIREIMAGE (BELOW)

than anything else, but that doesn't mean he's forsaken his father's influence.

"I've only really noticed his impact since I started doing this job as a working musician," he says. "For most of my life, the music industry being a focal point in my family seemed normal — but when I started playing music, touring and making records, the things my dad experienced became really helpful. I learned a little faster than I might have done otherwise, but I don't think his writing style and what influenced him are the same as mine. His stuff was more observations of the outside world, where I feel like my writing style and inspiration come from my emotional reaction to my observations of the outside world, if that makes sense."

So, is having a famous dad a blessing or a burden? "I think it's a combination," he says. "But I think what really matters is how you look at it. It's really about other people's thoughts. I just take it in my stride, but I'm proud of it. So, no, I don't see it as a hindrance. In the back of my head, I've always wanted to make every kind of record. One day, I think I'll make a straight-up country record. Maybe I'll be a little more specific on the next album;

I haven't quite figured that out yet."

We ask the same question of Greg Guy, who, at 53, has been around the block a time or three, and who grew up with a father in Buddy Guy, who made a career of spinning emotions into spur-of-the-moment reactions via a polka-dotted Strat. For Guy, the tutelage he received from his father was critical. He's a part of his band and is slowly but surely watching his

88-year-old father wind down his career as a touring musician. "His stage presence is still there — when he walks up there, he's always smiling," Guy says. "He could have a temperature of 106, and he'd still go out there and do a show and smile through it.

"My dad would play songs I hadn't heard or didn't know about," he continues. "The way he played them, I didn't know it was blues. He told me who to listen to — like

ERIKA GOLDRING/GETTY (LEFT)

Greg Guy performs
during the 52nd
annual New Orleans
Jazz & Heritage
Festival, May 4, 2023





Duane Betts performs at an Allman Betts Family Revival show in Denver, December 8, 2019

"DAD HAD A SPECIAL WAY OF PLAYING. IF I HAVE A LITTLE BIT OF THAT, THAT'S A GOOD THING"

DUANE BETTS

of having grown up in the thick of the Allman Brothers Band maelstrom.

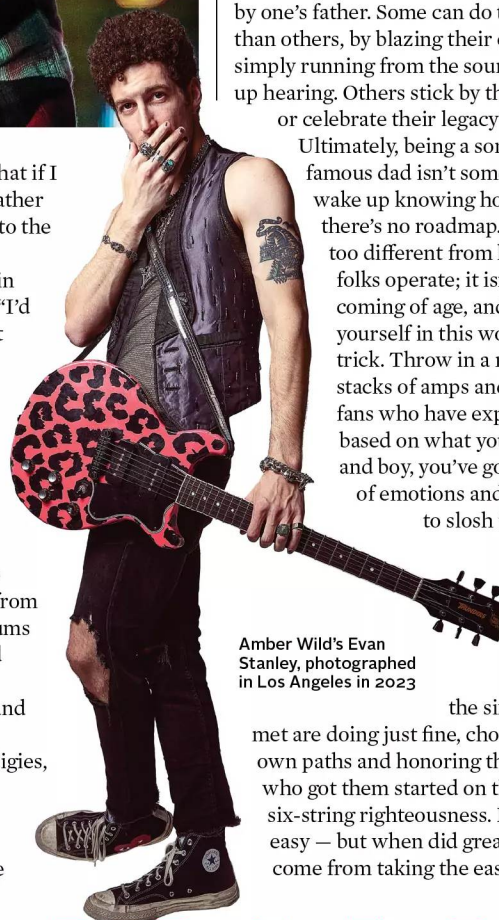
"It's a weight to carry, having a father who is a musician," he says. "But there's a lot to be said for growing up in a musical family. I grew up around it; I was homeschooled through high school. My schooling was basically being around music every night; it was just normal business. Once I took an interest in music and switched to guitar, I was off and running. My dad said, 'Don't be afraid to play as loud as you want to play, and don't ever apologize about it.' I loved that. There was a certain way he played where it was free, and he wasn't thinking about it, like a meditative state. You have to be a guitar player to know what I'm talking about, but he had a special way of playing, and if I have a little bit of that, that's a good thing."

To Betts' point, perhaps the greatest challenge of being a son in the music industry is stepping out of the shadow cast by one's father. Some can do that better than others, by blazing their own trail or simply running from the sounds they grew up hearing. Others stick by their dad's side, or celebrate their legacy after the fact.

Ultimately, being a son with a famous dad isn't something you wake up knowing how to handle; there's no roadmap. But that's not too different from how regular folks operate; it isn't easy coming of age, and finding yourself in this world is a real trick. Throw in a massive stage, stacks of amps and screaming fans who have expectations based on what your dad did — and boy, you've got a real swamp of emotions and thoughts to slosh through.

Not everyone can handle that process, but by the looks of it, the six sons we've

Amber Wild's Evan Stanley, photographed in Los Angeles in 2023



met are doing just fine, choosing their own paths and honoring the men who got them started on the route to six-string righteousness. None of this is easy — but when did great music ever come from taking the easy path? **GW**

Jimi Hendrix — and that was it, but there are differences between my dad and me; the biggest is that, well, I just try to be me. I don't try to play like him; I try to be myself. My dad does that, too, but we're different. I try not to repeat things that I do, but we're similar in that I take the things he showed me back in the day, and I'll combine them and kinda do a remix of what he does."

Unlike Stanley, Whitford, Nelson and Prine, Guy has been at it for some years, but his solo musical output has been limited. This could be attributed to his devotion to his father's legacy and keeping it alive as a band member. For some who have famous parents, it can be hard to step out of their shadow, but Guy is not one of these. "Actually," he says, "it's been a major help watching the way he plays. I'm working on new music with the downtime we're having, and he's been a huge help."

Duane Betts, Dickey Betts' 46-year-old son and a modern-day Southern rock superstar in his own right, agrees, though he's not so sure he would have played guitar without the impact of his late father.

"I'd like to believe that if I didn't know who my father was, I'd still be drawn to the music and discover it, because it's definitely in my blood," Betts says. "I'd like to believe that, but it's true that I was steered toward it because there was music all around. There were guitars in the house, although the first time he put one in my hands, I didn't want to play it. I turned away from it. I wanted to play drums because guitar seemed too difficult, but years later, I came back around to it."

Like our other prodigies, Betts understands the mass of the legacy his father left behind, with the added nuance



Out For Blood

Alice in Chains mainstay Jerry Cantrell explains why (and how) he swerved into “a much more aggressive lane” for his new solo outing, *I Want Blood*. Plus AI hysteria, misplaced G&L guitars and Jeff Beck’s bag...

STORY BY Gregory Adams PORTRAITS BY Darren Craig

WHEN *GUITAR WORLD* reaches the alternative metal icon — and founding guitarist of Alice in Chains — he’s been running the press gauntlet on a rare day off from his summer tour supporting U.K. rockers Bush. This is Cantrell’s fourth call in as many hours, and while he’s more than willing to dig into the meat of *I Want Blood* — the guitarist’s sensationally snarling new solo album — he also notes that talking about himself for so long has worked up an appetite. In an admission befitting the record’s insatiable title, he says he’s ripping into a steak the second he wraps the interview.

Sure enough, there’s a ton of bite to *I Want Blood*, too. That much was clear once Cantrell unveiled first single “Vilified,” a brooding-but-teeth-bearing attack on social media pile-on culture and the rise of AI. Sonically, the bruiser is fueled by wah-and-talk-box-brawny riffage, a 7/4 metal-funk pre-chorus that conjures both Alice in Chains’ *Dirt* classic “Them Bones,” and the murky bang behind Cantrell’s earliest solo releases, 1998’s *Boggy Depot* and 2002’s *Degradation Trip*. To be fair, that patented gloom wasn’t entirely absent on his last record, 2021’s *Brighten*, but that eclectic outing also found Cantrell parting the clouds with moments of pedal-steel-blaring Southern pop-timism. In a sense, *I Want Blood* taps back into Cantrell’s primordially heavy essence, and it quickly turns into an all-out bloodletting.

“On this one I was pretty pure,” Cantrell says of an inherently viscous and vicious drive that pushed *I Want Blood* into “a much more aggressive lane,” following the relatively sunny days of *Brighten*. “I love heavy music, and I love boiled down, minimal music... While I’m not

intentionally trying to guide it that way, maybe psychically that’s an itch that needs to be scratched every once in a while.”

After concluding *Brighten*’s tour cycle in 2023, a scabrous writing period yielded “Vilified,” as well as the moody Eighties metal grandeur of “Off the Rails,” the grunge-groovy quarter-note bending “Held Your Tongue” and more. Though the songs were more sinister-sounding than anything on *Brighten*, Cantrell notes that his pre-production ritual at “Casa de Cantrell” remained unchanged.

“For any record I’ve been involved with — whether I’m with Alice or on my own —

“I like working in tandem. I’m a team player. I’m more comfortable working in that regard”

there’s three or four months of demoing shit in my house, with a friend of mine running all the gear so I can just play guitar,” he says. “I’ve kept myself intentionally ignorant with recording gear, computers and ProTools so that I can have somebody fly that half of the plane while I’m doing all the other stuff. I like working in that way — in a tandem. I’m a team player. I’ve always been more comfortable working in that regard.”

Though Cantrell’s name is once again taking top billing, the guitarist graciously praises the crack team of musicians that helped him put together this latest release. This included the towering rhythm section

of Metallica bassist Robert Trujillo and Faith No More drummer Mike Bordin, who’d previously backed Cantrell on *Degradation Trip*. Longtime friend Duff McKagan likewise added low end. *Brighten* co-producer Tyler Bates returned to co-write Southern gothic stompout “Echoes of Laughter.” Joe Barresi, who’d previously worked on Alice in Chains’ *Rainier Fog*, manned the boards and lent out some crucial gear. Better Lovers vocalist Greg Puciato, who has been singing with Cantrell off and on since 2019, and Lola Colette, who likewise handles keyboard and guitar duties in Cantrell’s live band, added backups on a handful of songs.

Flanked by his friends, Cantrell came into *I Want Blood* with a prizefighter’s confidence. The title track, he says, is about “stepping into the middle of the ring” for an existential boxing match with the personification of Time. While he knows it’s a losing battle — for no one, Cantrell says, beats the “all-time champion” — the musician is still determined to fight tooth and nail, every step of the way.

Judging by Cantrell’s words on the just-as-uppercutting chorus to “Vilified,” no matter the outcome, he’s bound to put on “a hell of a show.”

“Vilified” has got some classic Jerry-sounding riffs to it — scary as hell; heavy, yet oddly funky. How did you go about building that one out?

It’s a gasser, is what it is. [Laughs] And I mean that physically — trying to sing and play that at the same time is pretty rough. A lot of the material on this album is me trying to hit a mark above where I normally think I can operate, and “Vilified” is a prime example of that. It felt scary. I felt like my face was smashed against the ceiling of ➔

my ability. That's a great place to operate from, though, because you're like, "I don't know if I can pull this off, but I'm going to try." And then when you come up with something like "Vilified," it's like, "Fuck yeah!"

There's a couple of songs off this record that are tough to pull off live. You talk about patting your head and rubbing your belly at the same time. *[Laughs]* It's like thinking in a completely different rhythm to what's going on musically. That's always interesting. Thankfully — both in Alice and also in the band I reside in for this tour — there's a lot of really talented people to lean on. It takes a team.

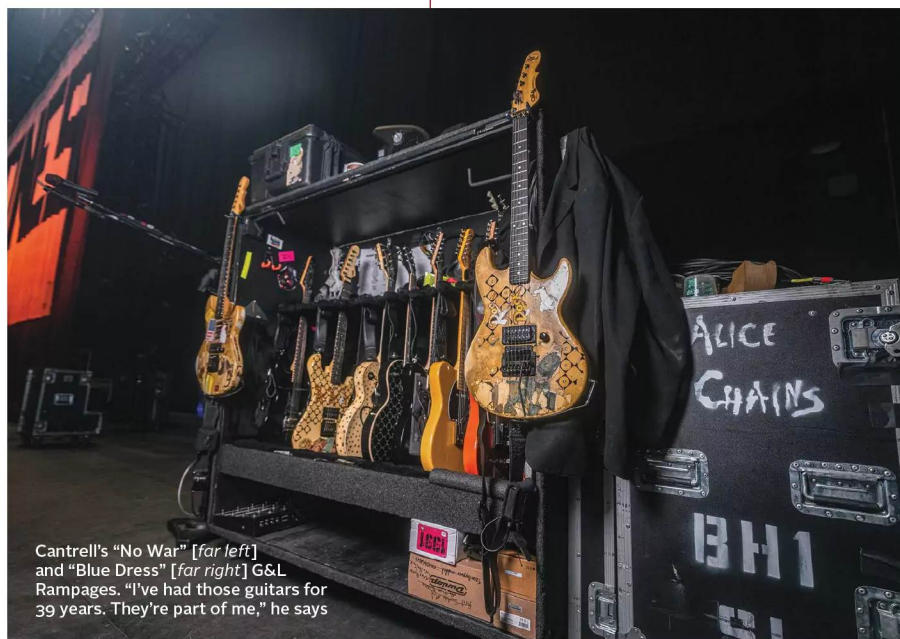
Thematically, "Vilified" is taking stock of AI, simulacra, digital assimilation, data mining and this downward slide toward technocracy. Seems like you've got a skeptical view on things. What are your general thoughts on AI, as it seems to be getting more and more integrated into our lives?

I put it in the song because there's been a hysteria about AI lately. It's interesting that everybody has jumped on that particular aspect of the song, though, because that's not the meat of it. It's the seasoning. AI is the pepper on the steak, but it's not the steak. The song is very human, actually.

Maybe it's a call to be better to each other. I think at times there's a rush for us to throw people under the bus, or to want to point the finger and say, "That's a horrible person; you don't get to play on the playground anymore." We all make mistakes. That's how you evolve as a human being, by making mistakes and learning from them. I think at times there's a bloodlust, where it feels like people are willing to round people up, put 'em up on a hill and start throwing rocks at them. That's what that song speaks to. The AI element is that the time that we're living in *[exists around]* the iPhone and social media; *[it's about]* how connected we are because of that.

Sticking with tech for a moment, there are AI engines that have studied the songwriting style of Jerry Cantrell, or the nuances of the vocal harmonies in Alice in Chains' music. People can feed their own songs into an engine and then make it sound like you or Layne Staley are singing it back to them. There are Alice in Chains lyric generators. What do you think of all that?

It's a facsimile. I've had a couple of buddies show that to me, though. I think Greg *[Puciato]* did it to me once when we were at Rainbow Bar & Grill *[in Los Angeles]*, having some pizza. My buddy *[stylist/designer]*



Cantrell's "No War" *[far left]* and "Blue Dress" *[far right]* G&L Rampages. "I've had those guitars for 39 years. They're part of me," he says

Kelly Cole was also like, "Check this out — you can make an Alice in Chains song!" I was like, "I don't think so." *[Laughs]* They would create a version of something through the engine, but then I'd listen to it, or I'd read the lyrics, and I would never fuckin' write something like that. It kind of sounds like me... but not really.

The thing about it is, AI's a tool. You can use a hammer to bash somebody's head in, or you can use it to build a house. It's really up to the user. Although it requires a lot of machines to make music sometimes — like mixing boards, guitars, amplifiers, cables, effects, batteries, ProTools and AI — it takes a human to put the emotion and the feeling into a song. I just don't think that can be replicated by a machine.

What can you say, then, about the human drive behind something like this record's "Off the Rails," which has this minor key, classic Eighties metal feel to it. There's a lot of gravitas to that pull-off intro.

I hear my influences come out every time I make a record. On that song in particular, that opening riff takes me back to listening to Maiden and Priest when I was in junior

high — I love both of those bands. And then when the power chords come in behind it, I hear AC/DC and Metallica. But throughout it all, I also hear me. It's cool to be able to hear those *[influences]* poke their heads through there, while your *[own musical]* identity is still just as strong as those, if not stronger.

There's a line on "Off the Rails" where you're singing about "heat distortion." We're taking this out of context, but this seems like a good spot to get into some of the gear on this record. What were you literally bringing the heat with in the studio, rig-wise?

I'll give you something that you didn't ask for first. I was stuck with that particular section of lyrics for a while. You know, you'll go through periods where you're writing music and then you hit a wall. Like, you've got a good bunch of words *[to start with]*, and then everything you come up with sounds stupid. Sometimes you need a palate cleanser, and a well-made film does that for me. On *[Brighten's]* "Siren Song," for instance, *[2019 psychological horror film]* *The Lighthouse* was that palate cleanser. The song is not about a lighthouse... but there is a mermaid character in it.

And with "Off the Rails," I was stuck — didn't quite know where to finish it — so I went and saw *Killers of the Flower Moon*. There's this scene where all of the workers are burning the fields, and they become distorted figures on the screen. That's where I got "heat distortion" from. Even though it has nothing to do with the film, specifically, Martin Scorsese broke me out

"I hear my influences come out every time I make a record. But throughout it all, I also hear me"

of my writer's block and I was able to get a second verse started.

But heat-wise on the record? I experiment with a lot of stuff. I've worked with a lot of great producers: Dave Jerden, Toby Wright, Nick Raskulinecz, Joe Barresi. They all have one thing in common: they're fuckin' weirdo, gearhead rock 'n' roll fans. They know things like, "Keith Richards used this effect and that cab and this amp." I'm not as knowledgeable, so I hang out with guys like that so that when I mention a song they go, "I know what he used on that!"

Actually, there's a Stones song in another Scorsese movie, *The Departed* [ed. "Gimme Shelter"], and Keith Richards uses an amazing tremolo effect on his guitar. I copped that. We found a 1958 DeArmond tremolo pedal, and I put it on "Echoes of Laughter" and maybe another song.

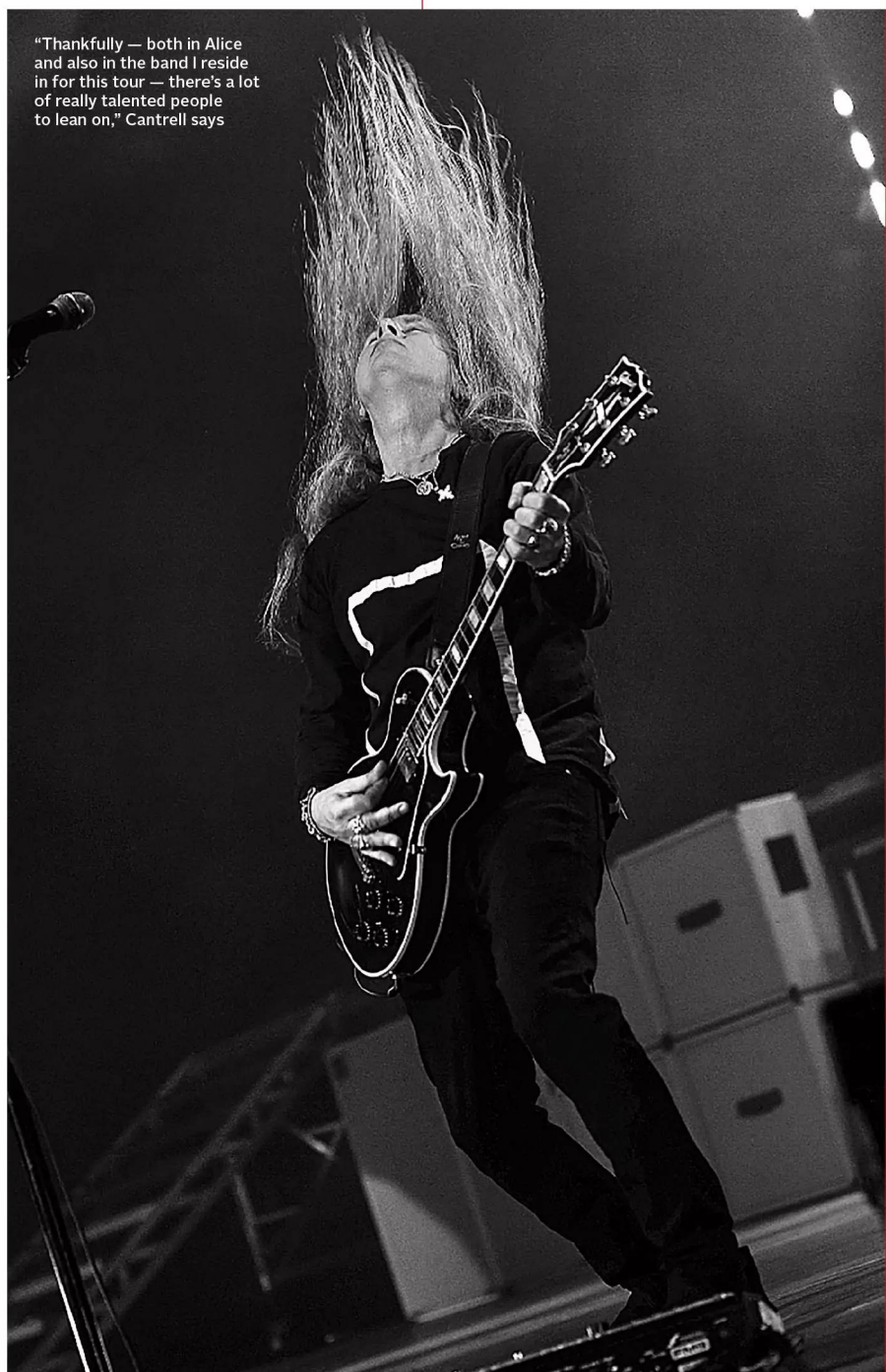
But in general, my gear remains the same. Guitar-wise you're always going to hear "Blue Dress" and "No War," my two O.G. G&L Rampages, and you're going to hear "D-Trip," the Les Paul I've had forever. Those three guitars are pretty much on every record. And you know... whatever other paintbrush we wanted to use: Flying Vs, SGs, Les Paul Juniors, Teles, Strats.

Amp-wise, I used the Friedman JJ [Junior], but we also really leaned on Bogners. The Bogner Fish is the main amp on this record. We also used some Snorklers. We also brought in some elements from my early recordings, from the [producer Dave] Jerden years. Joe was really taken by Jerden's way of layering, and recording different guitar frequencies on different amps. Like, the high stuff would run through a Rockman module, and the mids would run through a Marshall modified by Bogner, and then [there would be] another layer with another Bogner.

At the top of the spring there was a bit of a snafu with your "Blue Dress" Rampage. It got lost somewhere around San Bernardino — presumed to have been stolen at one point. You put the call out to social media to help you find it, but quickly retracted that when you'd figured out it was just misplaced. What all happened there? Was that during the recording sessions?

We weren't in session, but I was doing some photo shoots for album artwork. As the guitar was being moved around, it got put in the wrong place for a few days. The reason I acted the way I did was because a guitar that Eddie Van Halen gave me [went missing] for 18 years. I had a very personal guitar [ed. a 1992 goldtop Ernie Ball EVH] stolen from me during the making of *Degradation Trip* that somehow walked out

"Thankfully — both in Alice and also in the band I reside in for this tour — there's a lot of really talented people to lean on," Cantrell says



the front door of Henson Studios. I was lucky enough to get that back.

So, I guess that's why I was so quick to throw the call out there, just in case "Blue Dress" was missing. Very happy to say I cried wolf, and that I was mistaken. More importantly, I was appreciative that so many people rallied around me. So many of my brethren and sisters have had really important guitars stolen or disappear. We rarely get them back. Luckily this one was

just misplaced for a couple of days. I get to make another record on it. It's on tour with me right now, and I'm rockin' it as we speak.

There's obviously a panic that sets in when you think a guitar is gone for good. Did you play anything in particular once you had it back in your arms, to settle your nerves?

I was done recording at that point, so I was probably running rehearsals for this tour. ➔



But yeah... I bought that guitar in Dallas in 1985, when I was 19 and working at a music store called Arnold & Morgan Music Company; I bought "No War" a few months after that. I had both of those guitars while I was living out there and jammin' with bands, right after high school. I've had those guitars for 39 years. They're like a part of me, you know?

You're also playing bass on a few songs from this record. What are the nuances of your rhythm style, compared to Robert Trujillo or Duff McKagan?

I am a guitar player playing bass, and those guys are bass players. [Laughs] I can come up with cool bass riffs, and for certain songs I have a unique feel that maybe they wouldn't come up with. Like on *Brighten*, for instance, there were a couple of times where Duff and I would Frankenstein a bass part together, because he liked a couple of things I did, but was like, "I can't replicate that." It was kind of cool being produced by him, to become a better bass player through Duff McKagan — and Robert, too! Duff and I Frankenstein-ed a couple songs on this one, too, like "Afterglow."

I enjoy playing bass. I come from the kind of Mark Evans and Cliff Williams, AC/DC-fuckin' straight simple bass. That's my style — nice, solid and basic. I might throw a riff at you once in a while, but it's all in service to the song.

Thinking of some unique feels within *I Want Blood*, one of the wilder swings on the record is "Throw Me a Line," which has this heavy, almost rocksteady hypnotism to it. It's a different groove, compared to the rest of the album.

The best part of that song is when that main riff comes back. The chorus is good, the B part is good, and the solo section is cool, but the highlight is when it comes back to that intro riff. It's just relentless. I hear some Billy Gibbons in there. I hear some Tony Iommi in there. And I hear me, too. It's a really fun song to play, but even though that groove sounds very simple, it's tricky to sing that vocal line across that rhythm. I'm still working on that one.

Texturally, there's a lot of talk box going on in this song — and, actually, maybe through most of "Vilified," too?

There is a lot of Cry Baby and talk box on this record. We went heavy with those. We used two different kinds of talk boxes on "Vilified" and "Throw Me a Line." One is the Dunlop that I've been using forever, which is just the box on the floor and the tube coming up to the mic. But while we were messing around with talk boxes one

"If I'm with Alice and we're recording a song, then it's an Alice tune. If I'm not with them, then it's not"

day, Joe showed me a clip of Jeff Beck with a Kustom "The Bag" on. It's much smaller — like a bag that hangs over your shoulder, with a much smaller straw and a wood bead for you to hold onto with your teeth. It was a different feel, but it was so fucking expressive! I had never seen that clip of Jeff Beck before, and then Joe was like, "I've got one of these, man. We should try this!" So he whipped that thing out. I believe the Bag is what you're hearing on "Vilified" and "Throw Me a Line."

When it comes to solos on this record, you're really leaning into that dark, bluesy vibrato on "Echoes of Laughter." What do you recall about putting that song together?

That's a song that Tyler [Bates] and I wrote together; it's actually the one co-write on the album. Tyler's always a strong sounding board for me. I trust his opinion. Even if we're not actively writing a song together, I like to run things by him. He'll give me ideas on where to go with arrangements. We operate in a similar space — we like dark, atmospheric, cinematic rock 'n' roll. But we had also done *Brighten* together, and we of course toured together, too.

I'd heard him play that main guitar figure a number of times. You sit down and jam, and sometimes you drift back to a favorite riff that you haven't developed into anything yet. He was playing guitar with me one day and I was like, "That thing wants to be a song! Why don't we make



something out of this, because you've been playing it for two years now." [Laughs]

So, it was me, him, and Maxwell Urasky, the engineer on the demo sessions for this record. I just kind of blurted out one of the lines off the top of my head, just as a placeholder, but it ended up being a great chorus, word-for-word. [Bates] kept trying to pass the guitar off, like, "Here, you put something in there," but I was like, "Fuck it, dude, you're doing great. Keep going!" I added a few elements, musically, but basically Tyler wrote the music for that song, and I wrote the vocal. It was a great collaboration with my friend. He also helped me through the process of bringing *Brighten* into the world. Even though he wasn't as available, because he had other projects and commitments, he was definitely a guiding force on this record, too.

Is there any push and pull in your mind between what could make a good Jerry Cantrell solo riff and what might end up as an Alice in Chains song?

I think the only difference that really exists is the obvious one: if I'm with Alice and we're recording it, then it's an Alice tune. If I'm not with them, then it's not.

Alice in Chains is a really versatile band. It was important to us to have as much diversity as we could early on [to see] what people would accept from us. We took a few gambles between *Facelift* and *Sap*, and then between *Dirt* and *Jar of Flies*. You couldn't get more different — going from heavy, to acoustic, to even heavier, and then another fuckin' weird, ethereal kind of acoustic EP. We opened the playing field for ourselves so that we could go anywhere... we earned that for ourselves. But you know... it's really just that: if we're together recording songs, it becomes an Alice song. Doing songs with some other folks that maybe has elements of what I do with Alice? I carry that with me, but it's not an Alice thing.

It's been a few years since Alice in Chains put out *Rainier Fog*. We're here to talk about *I Want Blood*, but, respectfully, have you been working on any music with the band behind the scenes?

I'm just at the very beginning of the campaign for this record, so right now I'm committed to doing this. I began writing for this record last year, and I recorded the album this year. I'm already on tour for it. I'll probably wrap this thing up sometime next fall. That'll be the end of the campaign, but that's a long way to go. So, right now this is where I'm at — I want blood, man! **EW**

This interview has been edited and condensed for flow and clarity.

The Ultimate Guitar Shop

Christie's Jeff Beck Auction offers a revealing look at numerous iconic instruments from the legendary guitarist's entire career — from the Yardbirds to Johnny Depp

STORY BY CHRIS GILL

MOST SUCCESSFUL GUITARISTS inevitably become guitar collectors, eventually amassing dozens or even hundreds of instruments during

their careers. Many famous and acclaimed guitarists have owned some of the world's most impressive collections, such as legendary veterans Eric Clapton, David Gilmour, Mark Knopfler and Pete Townshend, as well as relative newcomers like Joe Bonamassa and Slash, who

acquired some of the rarest and most highly desirable vintage instruments.

These hoarding proclivities were expertly spoofed in the timeless rock mockumentary comedy *This Is Spinal Tap* when Nigel Tufnel showed off his guitar

“His collection was more about used and abused tools of his trade”

collection to director Marty Di Bergi and refused to let Di Bergi even look at a mint, unplayed Seafoam Green 1963 Fender Bass VI that still had its hang tags. But even though actor Christopher Guest based Tufnel on Jeff Beck, this was one of the few scenarios that wasn't very much like Beck at all. Beck certainly owned more than his fair share of guitars, but his collection was more about well-worn, used and abused tools of his trade than untouched trophies, consisting almost entirely of items that he played on stage and in the studio on a



nearly daily basis.

Recently, Beck's wife Sandra felt that his guitars had sat idle too long and she decided that they belong in new homes with players who can continue to make music with them. On January 22, 2025, about 90 guitars and string instruments and various amps, pedals and other music wares from Beck's collection — a total of 130 lots — will be sold in auction by Christie's in London.

"These guitars were his great love," said Sandra Beck. "But after almost two years of his passing it's time to part with them as Jeff wished. After some hard thinking, I decided they need to be shared, played and loved again. It is a massive wrench to part with them but I know Jeff wanted for me to share this love. I hope the future guitarists who acquire these items are able to move closer to the genius who played them."

"Beck's wife Sandra felt that his guitars had sat idle too long"

The variety of gear in the auction covers the guitarist's entire career from his early days in the Yardbirds through his final shows with Johnny Depp. In addition to truly iconic guitars like his 1959 "Yardburst" and 1954 "Oxblood" Les Pauls, his custom "Tele-Gib" assembled by Seymour Duncan, a 1954 Strat gifted to Beck by Steve Marriott and various prototypes of his Fender Jeff Beck Stratocaster signature model, the auction also includes numerous surprises like the Chapman Stick he was seen playing in the late Seventies, various acoustic guitars and Fender basses that he wasn't

known for playing, a 1957 Telecaster signed by the rhythm guitarist for Gene Vincent and His Blue Caps Paul Peek and several lap steels. Several of the more unusual and obscure instruments were likely gifts given to Beck over the last two decades of his life.

Two highly coveted Klon Centaur pedals are up for bidding as well as the custom J. Rockett Archer "klone" pedals that replaced them in his rig (a very strong endorsement if there ever was one) along with individual pedals, entire pedal board rigs and even custom Marshall floor wedges. Numerous Marshall, Fender tweed and Magnatone "Becktone" amps are also in the mix, along with the Fender Princeton II and Twin Reverb II amps he used to record 1989's *Guitar Shop*.

The following are a few highlights of the most famous and fascinating items from Christie's Jeff Beck auction. ➔

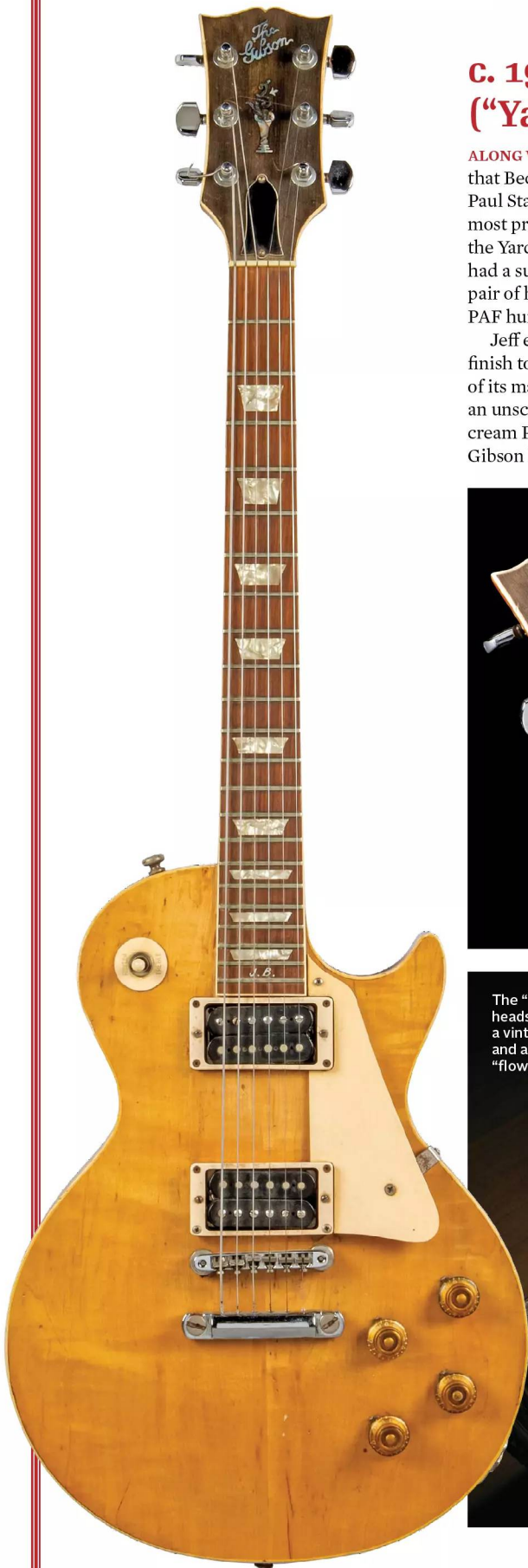
c. 1959 Gibson Les Paul Standard ("Yardburst")

ALONG WITH THE Fifties Fender Esquire that Beck bought from John Maus, this Les Paul Standard was one of the guitarist's most prized acquisitions while he was with the Yardbirds in the mid Sixties. It originally had a sunburst finish, black pickguard and a pair of highly coveted double-cream bobbin PAF humbuckers.

Jeff eventually stripped off the sunburst finish to expose the natural grain and color of its maple top. During the late Sixties, an unscrupulous repairman replaced the cream PAFs with a pair of later-model Gibson humbuckers, which upset Beck and

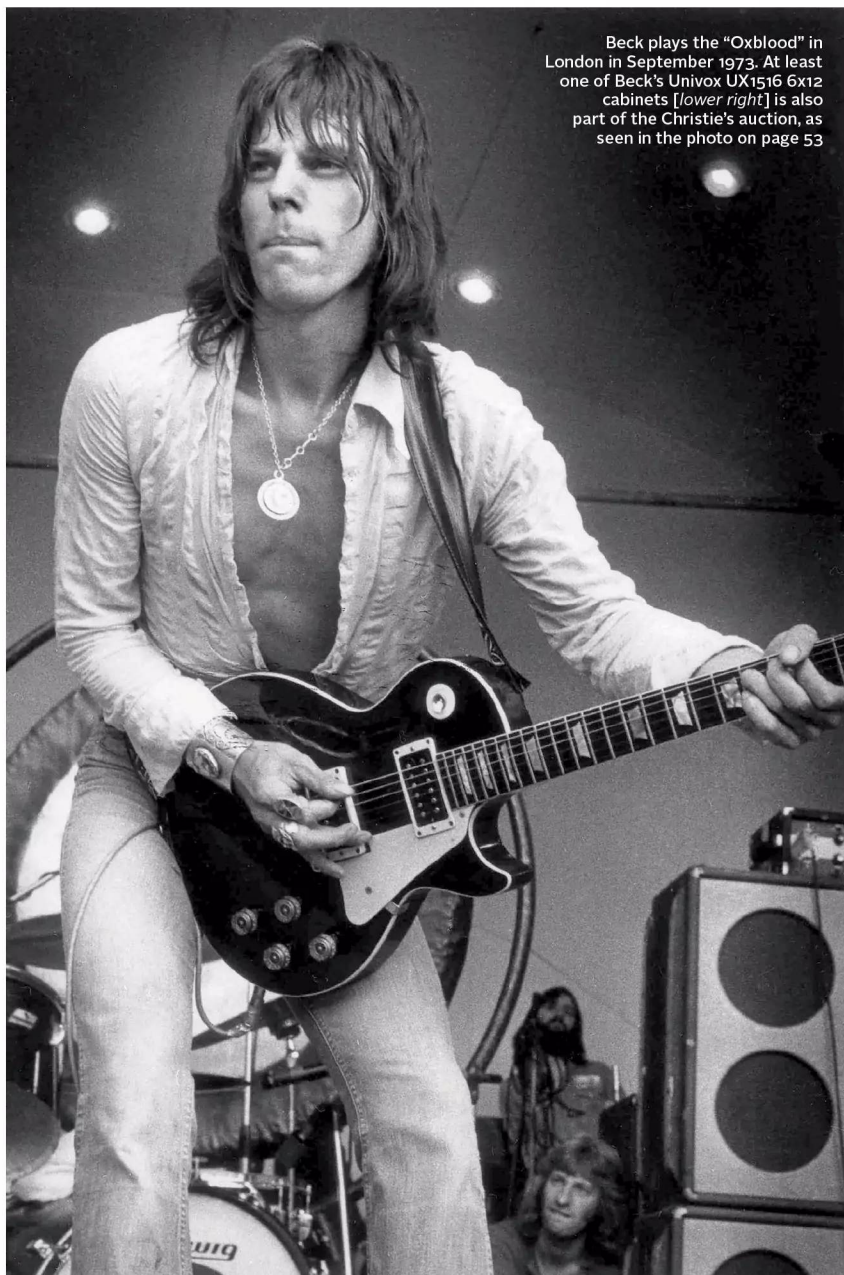
drove him to buy another 1959 Les Paul from future Cheap Trick guitarist Rick Nielsen. In the early Seventies after he broke the Yardburst's neck, a craftsman built a new neck featuring a vintage Gibson logo and L-5-style "flower pot" inlay on the headstock and the initials "J.B." between the 21st and 22nd frets.

This guitar appeared on numerous important Jeff Beck recordings during the Sixties, including the Yardbirds' *Roger the Engineer/Over Under Sideways Down* album, the Jeff Beck Group's *Truth* album and the "Beck's Bolero" single.



The "Yardburst" headstock features a vintage Gibson logo and an L-5-style "flower pot" inlay





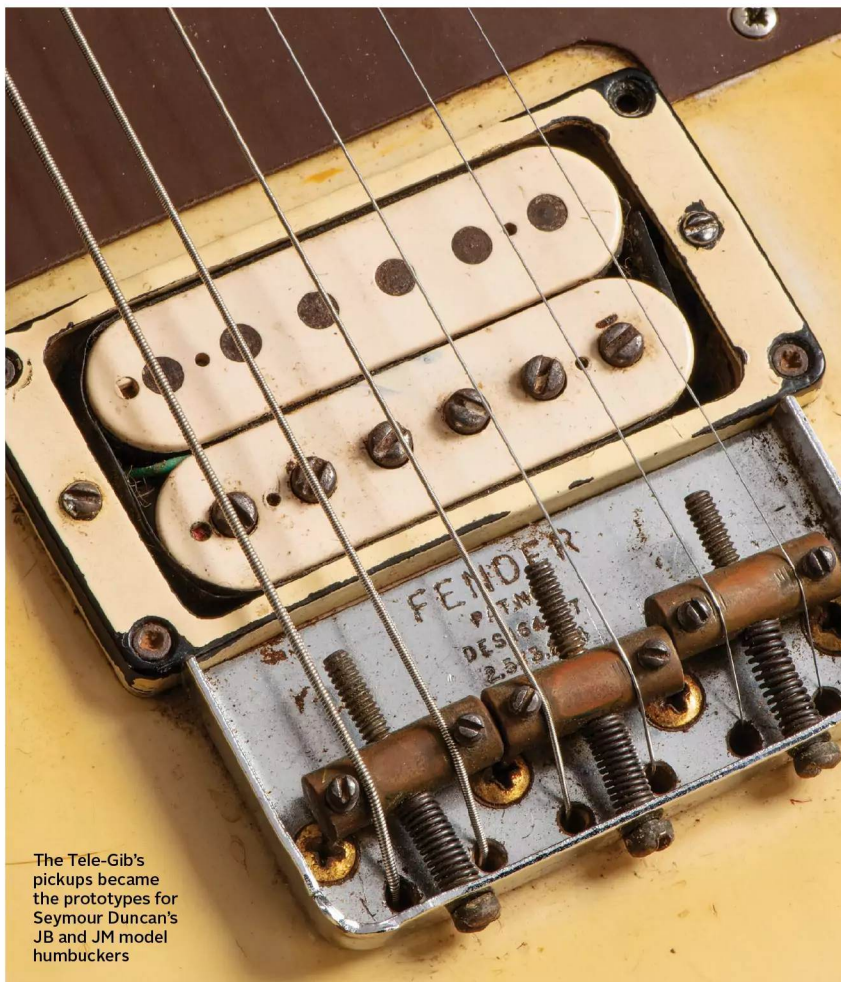
Beck plays the "Oxblood" in London in September 1973. At least one of Beck's Univox UX1516 6x12 cabinets [lower right] is also part of the Christie's auction, as seen in the photo on page 53

1954 Gibson Les Paul Model ("Oxblood")

THIS GUITAR ENJOYS immortal iconic status, thanks to its depiction on the cover of Beck's best-selling album, *Blow by Blow*. Jeff bought this 1954 Les Paul from a fan and friend named Buddy Davis in Memphis in November 1972. The Les Paul had already undergone several modifications when Beck acquired it, which included the replacement of its original P90 single-coil pickups with Gibson humbuckers and a refinish job with a distinctive deep dark brown color that inspired its "oxblood" nickname.

Beck was photographed frequently on stage with the oxblood Les Paul with Beck, Bogert & Appice, and it remained his main instrument through the mid Seventies, featuring prominently on his *Blow by Blow* album and 1975 tour with John McLaughlin. In 2007, Gibson made a highly detailed limited-edition replica of the Oxblood Les Paul, and one of the prototypes and a production model are also in the auction.





The Tele-Gib's pickups became the prototypes for Seymour Duncan's JB and JM model humbuckers

Custom Tele-Gib 1959 Fender Telecaster

IN EARLY 1974 when Jeff was in CBS Studios working on Beck, Bogert & Appice's ill-fated second studio album, Seymour Duncan approached the guitarist with a custom Telecaster/Les Paul hybrid instrument that he had assembled. It started as a butchered 1959 Tele with a rosewood neck, but Duncan routed out larger cavities for full-size humbucking pickups and replaced the battered rosewood fretboard with a maple fretboard and installed Gibson Les Paul frets. Duncan cut an early Fifties Tele bridge in half to accommodate a bridge humbucker, and he cut a new pickguard.

Perhaps the most important element of Duncan's custom Tele/Les Paul hybrid is its pickups. The zebra bobbin neck and

dual-cream bridge humbuckers were originally broken PAFs that Duncan salvaged from a 1959 Flying V that once belonged to Lonnie Mack. Duncan rewound the pickups, in the process creating the prototypes for his JB and JM model humbuckers. The finished guitar was nicknamed the "Tele-Gib" for its blending of Telecaster and Gibson features.

Duncan traded the Tele-Gib for Beck's iconic Yardbirds Fender Esquire, which Beck bought from John Maus of the Walker Brothers in the summer of 1965. Beck didn't seem to mind the trade (at first) and later that year he used the Tele-Gib while recording *Blow by Blow*, most notably playing it on "Cause We've Ended As Lovers." Beck also appeared on stage with this guitar during his 1981 performances alongside Eric Clapton for *The Secret Policeman's Other Ball* shows and subsequent concert film.



c. 1966-67 Marshall Model 1987 JTM45 MK IV Super Tremolo

IF YOU LOOK closely at photos of Beck's early concerts with the Jeff Beck Group in 1968 and 1969, you'll probably notice Beck plugged into one or more Marshall heads with eight control knobs instead of the usual six. These were Super Tremolo heads, and the two extra knobs controlled the tremolo effect's speed and intensity settings.

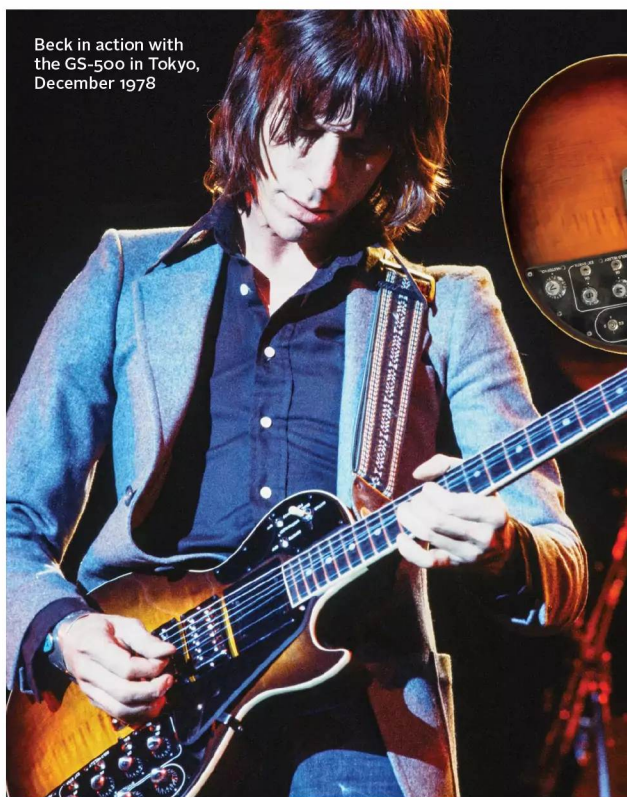
This Marshall Super Tremolo head is an unusual and rare early example, housed in a "small box" cabinet and marked JTM45 and MK IV on the front panel. Typically, the JTM45 MK IV designation was seen on the chassis for the Marshall combo model known as the "Bluesbreaker" combo that Eric Clapton used to record the "Beano" album with John Mayall and the Bluesbreakers. It's highly possible that this is the amp that Beck used in the studio to record tracks for the *Truth* album in May 1968.



1953 Fender Champion 600

ALTHOUGH BECK IS usually associated with using loud Marshall stacks on stage like the ones he was seen with in the late Sixties with the Jeff Beck Group, he often used much smaller amps in the studio. One can't get much smaller or more primitive than the 1953 Fender Champion 600 seen here, but surprisingly this was his main amp while recording his 2010 *Emotion & Commotion* album. During this period Beck even performed concerts using small 15-watt Fender Pro Junior 1x10 combos, with his Marshalls only appearing for show.

Beck in action with the GS-500 in Tokyo, December 1978



1977 Roland GS-500 Guitar Synthesizer Controller

ALTHOUGH BECK HAS seemed like a staunch traditionalist and even a minimalist at numerous points of his career, he could also be wildly adventurous with his gear. One example is the Roland GS-500 Guitar Synthesizer Controller seen here, which appeared on Jeff Beck's 1978 tour in Japan. This guitar, built by Japan's famed Fujigen Gakki workshop, controlled a GR-500 guitar synthesizer, which is not included in the auction. During this period Beck was heavily inspired by Jan Hammer's guitar-like synth work, so perhaps he adopted the Roland guitar synth to make his guitar sound even more like Hammer. His guitar synth work can be heard on bootlegs from the 1978 Japan tour where his band included the impressive lineup of Stanley Clarke (bass), Tony Hymas (keyboards) and Simon Phillips (drums).



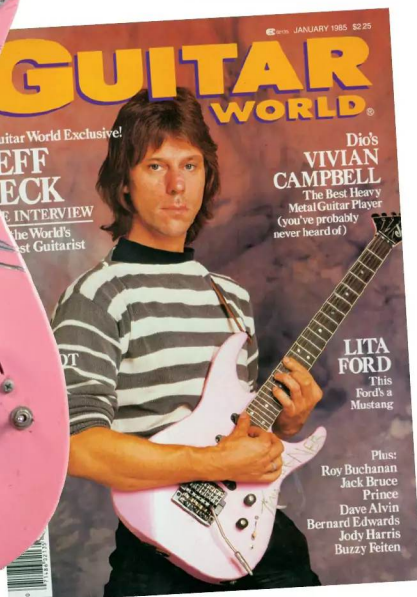


Beck's 1983 Jackson Soloist
— complete with Tina Turner's
switchblade signature — starred
on our January 1985 cover

1983 Jackson Soloist “Tina Turner”

FOR A VERY brief period in the mid Eighties, Beck was no longer a Strat cat or a Les Paul man but rather he favored Jackson super strat models, like this hot pink 1983 Jackson Soloist. Beck brought this guitar to the studio when he guested on Tina Turner's *Private Dancer* album. At the end of the sessions, Beck asked Turner to autograph the guitar, and she obliged by pulling out a switchblade and deeply scratching her signature into its top so it would be a permanent addition.

Beck also played this guitar at several ARMS benefit concerts and while recording “People Get Ready,” his reunion single with Rod Stewart. ➔



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C. 1960 Olympic White Fender Stratocaster

AN OLYMPIC WHITE Strat is probably the guitar most closely associated with Jeff Beck. His first one was a brand-new model that he played during the early Seventies. While he was touring with John McLaughlin in 1975, Beck loaned McLaughlin a Gibson Les Paul Deluxe after McLaughlin's famous custom double-neck Rex Bogue was mysteriously broken in two. In repayment for the favor, McLaughlin bought Beck a mid-Sixties Olympic White Strat from Norman's Rare Guitars. This is allegedly the white Strat seen on the cover of Beck's 1976 *Wired* album.

Unfortunately, the McLaughlin Strat was stolen after Beck absentmindedly left it in an open-top hot rod while he dashed in and out of the Soho London nightclub Ronnie Scott's. Beck bought a similar replacement, but that was stolen too by shift

airline baggage handlers in the U.S. while he was on tour. Beck promptly bought a third replacement, which is the 1960 model seen here.

This is the same guitar seen in photos of Beck's 1978 Japan tour with Stanley Clarke where it had a black pickguard with individual on/off switches for each pickup, which were Schecter models wound by Tom Anderson. That pickguard is still with the guitar but with Seymour Duncan Quarter Pound pickups, along with a white pickguard with custom pickups that Duncan gave to Beck in 1995. The pickups and pickguard currently on the guitar are its stock Sixties parts.

This 1960 Strat appeared on several Beck albums over the years, including *Crazy Legs* (1993).



1990 Fender Jeff Beck Signature Stratocaster prototype #2

ALTHOUGH BECK WAS seen on his 1989 tour playing several custom Fender Strat Plus models that were precursors to his signature model, the very first official Jeff Beck Signature Stratocasters were not delivered to Jeff until early 1990 while he was in the studio working on Jon Bon Jovi's first solo album. One of those prototypes

was a Seafoam Green model that became Jeff's main Strat through his 1995 tour with Carlos Santana, and it featured Little Richard's autograph scratched on its top similar to Tina Turner's autograph. This prototype is #2 and it is almost identical to Beck's favored "Little Richard" guitar.



1980 Ibanez Jeff Beck Signature prototype

WHEN BECK TOURED Japan in 1978, numerous Japanese companies approached him about collaborating on a signature model. Two unique Greco guitars given to Jeff in 1978 are part of the auction, but even more fascinating are nine Ibanez guitars that include a “limited edition” variant of an MC-400 Musician model and eight prototypes built during 1979 and 1980 that reveal Ibanez’s various and persistent (but ultimately futile) attempts to woo Mr. Beck.

The 1980 prototype seen here is from the very last run of

prototypes made in November of that year before Beck ultimately nixed the project. With its Fender-style tremolo, unorthodox roller string trees that pre-dated the Wilkinson roller nut he favored about a decade later, pair of humbucking pickups, set neck and white finish, it probably came the closest of Ibanez’s numerous attempts to make a Fender/Gibson hybrid that met Beck’s demands. However, the relatively complicated controls, which included coil-tap and phase switches, a built-in preamp and active EQ, never seemed to appeal much to Jeff.



1956 Gretsch 6128 Duo-Jet

ONE OF THE greatest revelations of the Christie’s auction was being able to finally see the progression of Gretsch guitars that Beck purchased while he pursued the sounds of his childhood guitar hero, Cliff Gallup of Gene Vincent and His Blue Caps. Gallup’s ax was a 1956 Duo Jet with a fixed Bigsby vibrato, but those are as rare as hens’ teeth. Beck did finally manage to get an exact dead ringer in late 1992, but alas, this was just after he had completed his Gallup

tribute album, *Crazy Legs*.

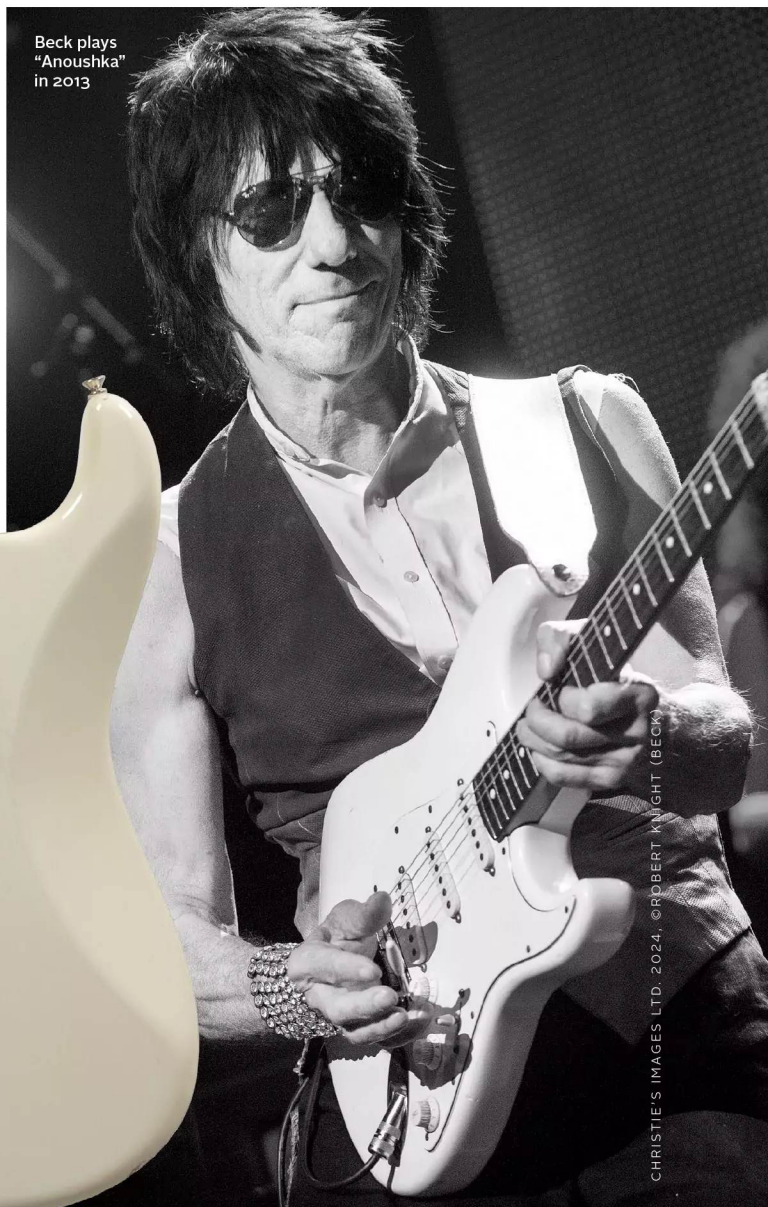
Other Gretsch guitars in the auction include the 1972 Roc Jet that was his first failed attempt at the Gallup sound, a 1955 Duo Jet with a swivel-arm Bigsby purchased in 1984 that was pretty close — and that Beck used on *Crazy Legs* — and a red 1963 Jet Firebird that is the same exact year and model as Malcolm Young’s number one guitar.

1990/1993 Fender Custom Shop Stratocaster “Anoushka”

JEFF BECK HAD numerous instruments that he considered his main guitar over his six-decade career, but none sustained that status longer than a Fender Custom Shop Strat nicknamed “Anoushka,” which was his main guitar for 16 years. It earned its nickname when Anoushka Shankar, sitar virtuoso and daughter of Ravi Shankar, autographed it. Beck used this guitar to record the *Who Else!*, *You Had It Coming*, *Jeff* and *Emotion & Commotion* albums and to perform hundreds of concerts, including the Red, White & Blues show alongside B.B. King, Buddy Guy, Mick Jagger and others at the White House on February 21, 2012, in front of President Obama.

Like many of Beck’s favorite Fenders, “Anoushka” is a mixed-and-matched composite of parts, with the body dating to 1990 built by Todd Krause and a neck from 1993 made by J.W. Black, both of the Fender Custom Shop.

Beck plays
“Anoushka”
in 2013



CHRISTIE'S IMAGES LTD. 2024. © ROBERT KNIGHT (BECK)



c. 1950s Mario Maccaferri G40

“THIS IS ONE of my prized possessions given to me by Jimmy Page,” Beck said in a video shot in 2010 that was included with the *Rock ‘n’ Roll Party (Honoring Les Paul)* DVD. “It’s the same brand of guitar used by the great Django Reinhardt [actually Mario Maccaferri only designed the Selmer Modèle Orchestre guitar with an internal resonator that preceded the Selmer Modèle Jazz guitar that Django played]. It’s a fantastic, sweet little thing. You can pick it up while you’re watching TV and noodling around. It’s a nice thing to have lurking

around and use as an exercise machine. It has a Django sound.”

Maccaferri developed numerous plastic products during the post-World War II years, including clothespins that sold extremely well and made him a fortune. He also developed a variety of affordable plastic instruments that included the G40 guitar seen here, which originally sold for \$39.95 and was produced from 1952 until 1969. Elderly Instruments acquired leftover surplus stock, which they sold during the Eighties and Nineties.

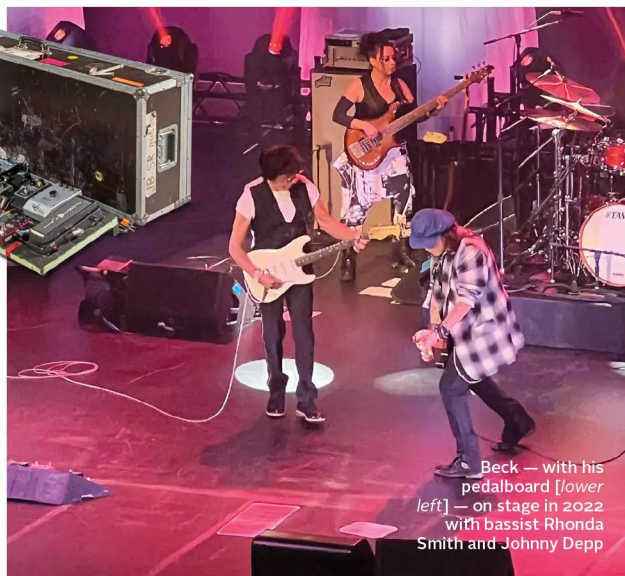
Stage performance pedalboard, 2022 tour

JEFF EXPERIMENTED WITH pedals often throughout his career — he was even one of the first British guitarists to use a fuzz pedal when he recorded “Heart Full of Soul” in April 1965 — but he almost never went whole hog when it came to using pedal boards full of effects on stage. Even in 1989 when he toured in support of his futuristic, high-tech sounding *Guitar Shop* album, the only effects he had on stage were a humble Rat distortion and a Boss DD-3 digital delay.

Beck’s pedal board remained pretty low-key even through 2018 when he usually gigged with nothing more than a Klon Centaur, Snarling Dogs Super Bawl Whine-O wah, Hughes & Kettner Rotosphere and Way Huge Aqua Puss analog delay. However, in 2019 his pedalboard suddenly expanded significantly, and on his final 2022 tour it somewhat resembled NASA’s Mission Control.

Beck’s 2022 pedalboard seemed to be configured to cover any sound from any song from his entire career. There’s an MXR M222 Talk Box for effects from his BBA and *Blow by Blow* era, an original vintage Maestro Ring Modulator for *Wired*, a Boss OC-3 Super Octave to fill in for his classic Mu-Tron Octave Divider, a Dunlop MC404 Custom Audio Electronics wah and an MXR M236 Super Badass Variac Fuzz to complete the Sixties- and Seventies-era sounds.

On the more modern side of the spectrum are a JHS VCR Signature PaxAm Modulation (with discontinued Ryan Adams graphics) for chorus and reverb, an Empress Effects Tremolo, Neo Instruments Ventilator II rotary cabinet simulator, MXR M117R Flanger and a Dunlop EP103 Echoplex Delay. A custom J. Rockett



Beck — with his pedalboard [lower left] — on stage in 2022 with bassist Rhonda Smith and Johnny Depp

Archer boost/overdrive pedal that was a prototype for the limited-edition Archer Jeff pedal with NOS components replaced the Klon Centaur that even Beck considered too expensive and rare to risk losing or damaging while on the road.

Functional accessories include a Radial Engineering Shotgun guitar splitter and buffer for driving several amps at once or freely selecting individual amps, two GigRig Loopy pedals to provide independent loop switching for his ring modulator, octave, flanger and delay pedals and On Stage LED pedalboard lights. **GW**



Jeff Beck on stage in the mid Seventies with his modified 1954 "Oxblood" Gibson Les Paul

Blown Away

Jeff Beck's landmark *Blow by Blow* dramatically transformed the future for instrumental electric guitar music. Fifty years later, it still remains an inspirational force

STORY BY CHRIS GILL

*The following is a preview of the upcoming Jeff Beck biography *Blow by Blow* by Brad Tolinski & Chris Gill, scheduled for release in October by Grand Central/Hachette Books.*

JEFF BECK'S *BLOW* by *Blow* shouldn't have been a success. By all accounts, it was a huge risk, even in the heady, more musically adventurous era of the mid Seventies. It was an instrumental album — an instrumental jazz album. Perhaps oddest of all, it was an instrumental jazz album by a rock guitarist, which meant that it ran a highly possible risk of alienating rock and jazz audiences alike. And even though Epic Records released separate singles of three songs from the album in Japan, the U.K. and the U.S., none of the songs became hits.

Yet audiences in the United States, United Kingdom and beyond enthusiastically embraced *Blow by Blow*. It peaked at a remarkable Number 4 on the

Billboard 200 album chart and earned Platinum certification, outselling every single album Beck previously released with the Jeff Beck Group and Beck, Bogert & Appice, which all managed to go Gold. In fact, *Blow by Blow* (along with its similar follow-up, *Wired*) remains the best-selling album of Beck's entire career.

However, the success of *Blow by Blow* was much wider reaching than mere chart positions and album sales figures. Beck's bold move opened up new possibilities for jazz and progressive guitarists like Al Di

“It opened up new possibilities for jazz and progressive guitarists”

Meola, Allan Holdsworth and numerous other musicians to release albums that appealed to jazz and rock fans alike. It also helped spark the instrumental shred guitar phenomenon that started a few years later in the early Eighties by proving that there was indeed a relatively sizable potential audience for instrumental guitar music. Its success even had a profound effect on Beck himself, giving him a sense of direction that influenced his remaining career by encouraging him to rely on his inner-muse. In celebration of the 50th anniversary of *Blow by Blow*, we're taking a look back at the history of this revolutionary album that changed the path and popularity of the electric guitar in a highly profound way.

FROM BLUES TO FUNK

During the early Seventies, Jeff Beck had earned a reputation as being difficult to →

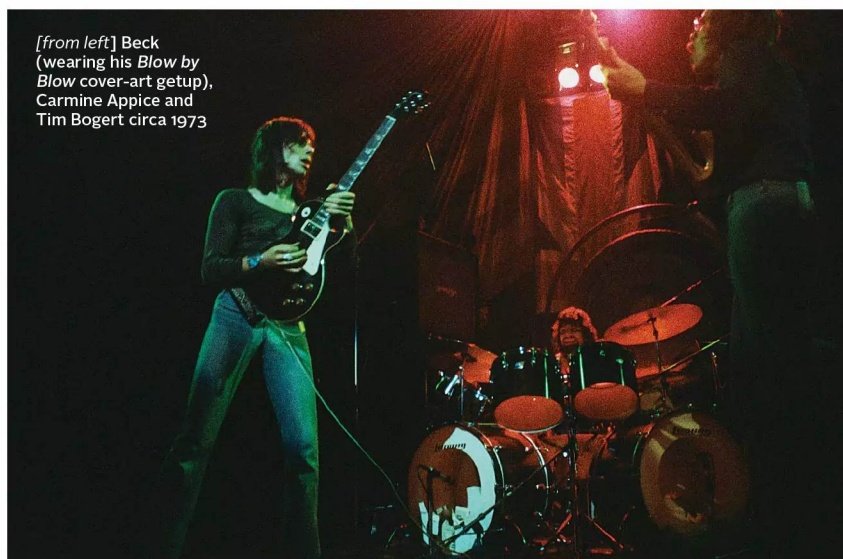
work with that was not entirely undeserved. Ever since being fired from the Yardbirds in November 1966, Beck seemed unable or unwilling to settle into any particular musical direction for a prolonged period of time. When Beck first put together the Jeff Beck Group with singer Rod Stewart in 1967, he went through a staggering variety of bass players and drummers before settling upon Ronnie Wood on bass and Micky Waller on drums just prior to recording their first album, 1968's *Truth*. However, Waller was gone by the second album (1969's *Beck-Ola*), and by the third Jeff Beck Group album the guitarist was accompanied by an entirely different lineup as Beck shifted from a hard rock/blues focus to a more funk and R&B-inspired sound.

That second lineup managed to last two albums (*Rough & Ready*, *Jeff Beck Group*) before Beck threw in the towel during the summer of 1972. Retaining only keyboardist Max Middleton, Beck started a new lineup with Tim Bogert on bass and vocals and Carmine Appice on drums. This eventually became the hard blues-rock power trio Beck, Bogert & Appice, but that band was also short-lived and broke up in early 1974 after releasing one studio album and a live album released in Japan. In an interview with *Classic Rock*, Appice said, "Rod Stewart had told me long ago regarding Jeff: 'Don't do it. You'll do an album or two, and then it'll be over.' We didn't listen to that advice, but that's what happened. It ended up a mess at the end."

Reports of arguments and physical altercations suggested that Beck was nearly impossible to work with, which was partly true. However, the main reason why the guitarist went through so many different lineups is that he was still searching to find his own musical voice. It was particularly frustrating for Beck when his good friend Jimmy Page experienced greater success with Led Zeppelin using a similar heavy blues-rock formula Beck had pioneered on *Truth*, which preceded *Led Zeppelin* by about half a year. The fact that Zep also recorded a cover of Muddy Waters' "You Shook Me" further salted his wounds.

Looking to move beyond the increasingly crowded blues-rock idiom, Beck became attracted to the allure of funk and R&B. This led to a botched attempt to record an album at Detroit's legendary Motown studios in 1970 and the inspired, albeit ultimately underwhelming, hiring of Steve Cropper to produce the *Jeff Beck Group* album in 1972.

That album featured a cover version of Stevie Wonder's "I Got to Have a Song," which captured Wonder's attention. Later



[from left] Beck (wearing his *Blow by Blow* cover-art getup), Carmine Appice and Tim Bogert circa 1973

that year, Wonder invited Beck to participate in sessions at Electric Lady studios in New York City for the album *Talking Book*. Beck played guitar on "Lookin' for Another Pure Love."

During the sessions, Beck also inspired Wonder to write "Superstition" when the guitarist was fooling around on the drums and came up with a driving, funky beat. Jamming on a Hohner Clavinet keyboard, Wonder wrote what Beck called "the riff of the century." Wonder planned on giving the song exclusively to Beck as a gift, but Wonder's management quickly saw its potential as a hit single and demanded that he record it himself. Beck later recorded a heavy rock version of "Superstition" for the first Beck, Bogert & Appice album, but its impact was ultimately thwarted by the dynamic brilliance of Wonder's single. Apparently feeling somewhat guilty for the events that transpired with "Superstition," Wonder later eventually delivered another gift to Beck that proved to be even more beneficial to the guitarist's career.

ENTER FUSION

Sometime during the early Seventies, a mishap led to a profound life-changing event for Beck. While working in his garage trying to repair a car he had crashed, Beck had an epiphany.

"The ultimate turning point for Beck was seeing Mahavishnu Orchestra live in Central Park"

"I was looking up at the wreck of the car that I'd crashed, thinking I was finished," Beck wrote in his book *Beck01: Hot Rods and Rock & Roll*. "I was working underneath the car and could hardly move. My head was on the ground and water was coming down the driveway. A little transistor radio was playing Miles Davis's *Jack Johnson* [the track was "Right Off," which is the entirety of side one]. Lying there in the water, I realized I wasn't done yet, and this music was going to save me. I went inside and just sat there, sopping wet, listening to the album. I thought I'd been resurrected, like a phoenix. I went out and bought the record and then found out about [guitarist] John McLaughlin and [drummer] Billy Cobham."

Beck kept his newfound passion for this burgeoning style of jazz known as fusion, which added new exploratory elements of rock and electric instruments to the jazz vernacular, mostly to himself over the next few years. He was fascinated with the improvisational and rhythmic possibilities that jazz-fusion presented for expanding the rock repertoire, especially since he was beginning to grow tired of playing the same blues-rock riffs.

"A handful of tapes knock me out," Beck told Steve Rosen in the November 1975 issue of *Guitar Player*, "things like Billy Cobham, Stanley Clarke — all the great rock and rollers. I call Billy Cobham a rock and roller because he's so forceful. Rock's an energy to me. It's more complex now than it was, but it's rock just the same."

Carmine Appice later claimed that he introduced Beck to Billy Cobham's 1973 *Spectrum* album during their time together in Beck, Bogert & Appice, but by that time Beck seemed to already be familiar with

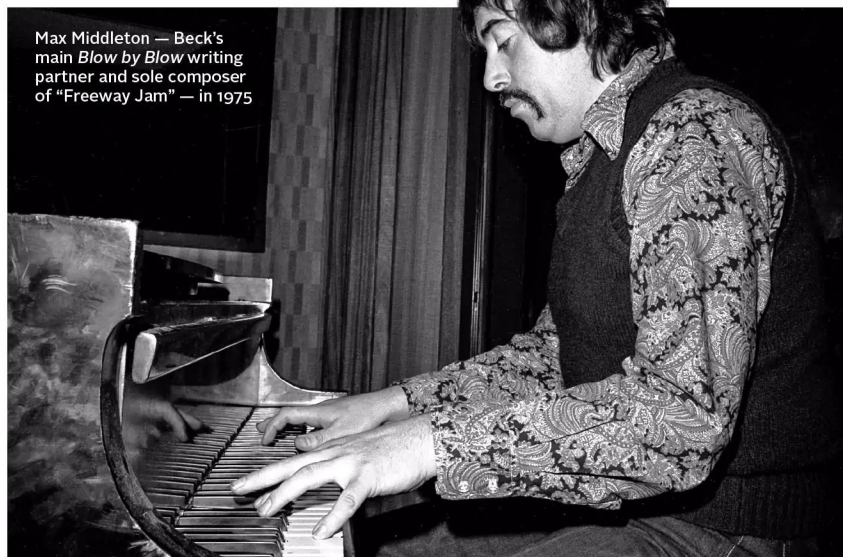
Cobham and McLaughlin's work together in McLaughlin's post-Miles Davis band, the Mahavishnu Orchestra. In fact, Beck allegedly cancelled shows by Beck, Bogert & Appice so he could attend the Mahavishnu Orchestra's concerts in New York's Central Park in August 1973. Even if Appice and Beck did share a common love of fusion music, that never emerged as a direction pursued by their band.

"I remember Mahavishnu Orchestra playing in Central Park at the Schaefer Music Festival in August 1973," Beck wrote in *Beck01*. "*Between Nothingness & Eternity* was the live album that resulted from that concert. There was something like 30,000 people watching this ridiculously high-powered music: jazz-rock fusion, furious playing and outrageous time signatures. I thought, 'This is more like it,' and that's where *Blow by Blow* came from."

McLaughlin's guitar playing with the Mahavishnu Orchestra was raw, exhilarating and blazingly fast, as were Tommy Bolin's guitar performances with Cobham on *Spectrum*. Both impressed Beck significantly, but the guitarist actually took more inspiration from the synthesizer player that both groups (as well as Stanley Clarke) shared in common: Jan Hammer. "Jan gave me a new, exciting look into the future," Beck told *Guitar Player* in 1975. "He plays the Moog a lot like a guitar, and his sounds went straight into me. So I started playing like him. I didn't sound like him, but his phrases influenced me immensely."

Possibly the ultimate turning point for Beck was when Mahavishnu Orchestra released *Apocalypse* in April 1974, which happened to be about the same time Beck disbanded Beck, Bogert & Appice and was seriously considering releasing a jazz-fusion album as a solo artist as his next career move. McLaughlin had assembled a new lineup for his group, replacing Cobham and Hammer with drummer Narada Michael Walden and keyboardist Gayle Moran, respectively, but Beck barely noticed the absence of some of his favorite players. Instead, he was particularly blown away by the dynamic blend of aggressive guitar accompanied by lush orchestral arrangements performed by the London Symphony Orchestra.

Apocalypse was expertly produced by Sir George Martin, who called it "one of the best records I have ever made" in his 1979 book *All You Need Is Ears*. The album's immaculate sound quality and energy convinced Beck that he needed to hire Martin to produce his solo album. "I turned up at George Martin's office with a diabolically bad demo," Beck recalled, "but he could see there was something there."



Max Middleton — Beck's main *Blow by Blow* writing partner and sole composer of "Freeway Jam" — in 1975

"Blow by Blow is less jazz-rock fusion; it's more of a jazz-funk fusion effort"

Martin agreed to sign on to the project, and in October 1974 work on *Blow by Blow* commenced at London's AIR studios.

THE LINEUP

Beck reunited with keyboardist Max Middleton to write material and record *Blow by Blow*. Initially Carmine Appice played drums on the early sessions, but he was fired after he insisted on having his name appear prominently alongside Beck's on the album cover. "Carmine kicked up such a fuss about him wanting it to be his album," Middleton told journalist Bruce Stringer in 2003, "so Jeff kicked him off and asked me if I knew anybody else. I brought in [drummer] Richard Bailey and [bassist] Phillip Chen because I knew them for some time, and that was how we did that album."

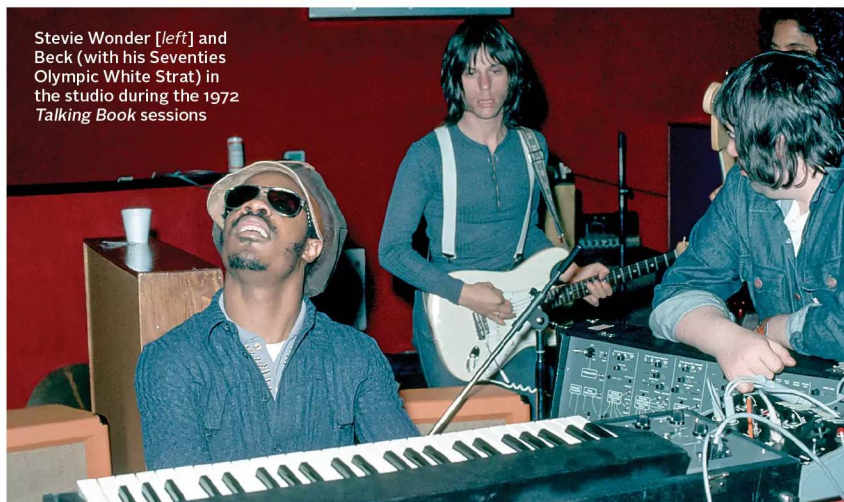
Although *Blow by Blow* is commonly described as a jazz-rock fusion album, it's really more of a jazz-funk fusion effort. "I was constantly trying to put funk into the record," Beck said. "I was influenced by Larry Graham's Graham Central Station, which I was listening to on a loop in my car at the time. I played George [Martin] a couple of tracks, and he said it was the worst-recorded sound he'd ever heard. George wanted Beatles-esque orchestrations and strong melodies. I didn't really appreciate what George was doing to the extent he deserved. I should've known

better than to underestimate him. I didn't take much notice of what he was gently trying to push me to do."

Beck won the argument, of course, since it was his solo album and his name appeared on the cover. The funk element is strong and present from the get-go, with scratchy funk chords that are more than obviously inspired by Jimmy Nolen's playing on James Brown's "Sex Machine" kicking off the album's first track, "You Know What I Mean," penned by Beck and Middleton. However, Beck's adventurous solos and complex lead melodies showed listeners used to his heavy rock bluster that he was venturing deep into new territory.

"That *Blow by Blow* opening is pure funk," says John McLaughlin, who co-headlined Beck's 1975 tour in support of *Blow by Blow*. "I'm sure that's why he hired [drummer] Bernard Purdie and [bassist] Wilbur Bascomb, who both came from James Brown's band, as his rhythm section for the tour. When we both got together to jam at the end of each show, we would be dancing on stage with that rhythm section just kicking our butts."

Allegedly George Martin was not the biggest fan of Middleton's reggae-inspired arrangement of the Beatles' "She's a Woman." Beck had actually publicly leaked this arrangement of the Lennon and McCartney tune earlier when he performed alongside the band Upp, who he was producing, on the BBC's *Five Faces of the Guitar* special broadcast in September 1974. The BBC broadcast possibly provides a glimpse at the main rig Beck used while recording *Blow by Blow*. Here the guitarist was seen playing his modified 1954 "Oxblood" Gibson Les Paul, an Ampeg VT-40 combo amp, Colorsound



Stevie Wonder [left] and Beck (with his Seventies Olympic White Strat) in the studio during the 1972 *Talking Book* sessions

Overdriver, Cry Baby wah, ZB Custom volume pedal and Kustom “The Bag” talk box, the latter heard prominently on “She’s a Woman.” Other gear that Beck is known to have used on the album includes two Stratocasters — an early Seventies Olympic White model and one with a stripped-finish early Sixties body and mid Seventies rosewood neck — and the famous “Tele-Gib” 1959 Telecaster with two PAF humbuckers assembled by Seymour Duncan.

The Beck composition “Constipated Duck” pulls the album back into funk territory with Middleton’s clavinet licks and Beck’s trippy double-stop echo tricks. The guitarist’s distinctive note bends offer the first glimpse at Jan Hammer’s influence. More Nolen-style chords kick off “AIR Blower” (credited to the entire band) before the song quickly settles into a funk-fusion groove. Beck’s gritty fuzz tone solos and harmonized lines in tandem with Middleton’s synth take the guitarist about as far away from his blues-rock past as Mississippi is from Manhattan, further punctuated by Beck’s jazzy lines around the 3-1/2 minute mark where a slow, loose tempo shift occurs.

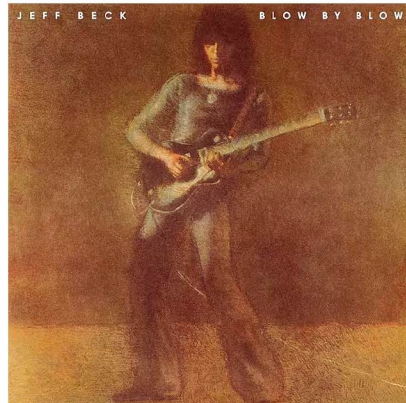
Side one closes with “Scatterbrain” co-written by Beck and Middleton, which sounds the closest to the reason why Beck hired Martin to produce the album in the first place. Here, the orchestral string section that Martin wanted all along finally makes an appearance, although it’s more subdued than the arrangements Martin employed on *Apocalypse*. Here the jazz fusion element is present and accounted for in full force, with some passages even bearing a slight resemblance to Mahavishnu’s “Vision Is a Naked Sword.”

Next up on the album are the “consolation gifts” Stevie Wonder gave Jeff

after what transpired with “Superstition,” and what gifts they were. “Cause We’ve Ended as Lovers” was a song that Wonder had originally written for his ex-wife Syreeta, who released it on the 1974 album *Stevie Wonder Presents: Syreeta*. However, Wonder thought it would be a good song for Beck to cover, and the guitarist agreed.

Beck’s emotional performance was particularly notable for the distinctive crying tones he summoned by manipulating the Tele-Gib’s volume and tone controls. This was inspired by Roy Buchanan’s technique, which Beck acknowledged by dedicating the song to him. The descending chromatic line around the 4:15 mark also seems to be a sly tribute to a very similar line he played on Wonder’s “Lookin’ for Another Pure Love.” In addition to being the album’s *tour de force* showcase performance, the song became a common beloved feature of Beck’s concert set lists throughout his remaining career.

Wonder himself makes an uncredited appearance playing clavinet on “Thelonious,” which he also wrote during the *Talking Book* sessions. This is arguably the deepest funk track on the album, with



grooves and riffs that *almost* match “Superstition.” Beck uses a Mu-Tron Octave Divider to summon a downright *nas-tay* horn- or synth-like tone, punctuated by talk box accents.

Next, “Freeway Jam” finally delivers the track that most closely fits the jazz-rock fusion description. This was also the album’s closest thing to a hit, receiving heavy rotation on FM album rock stations throughout most of the remainder of the Seventies. Here, Beck is definitely playing one of his Strats, liberally using the vibrato bar to accentuate notes with wild warbling bends and deep dives. Like “Lovers” it also became a fixture of Beck’s live set lists.

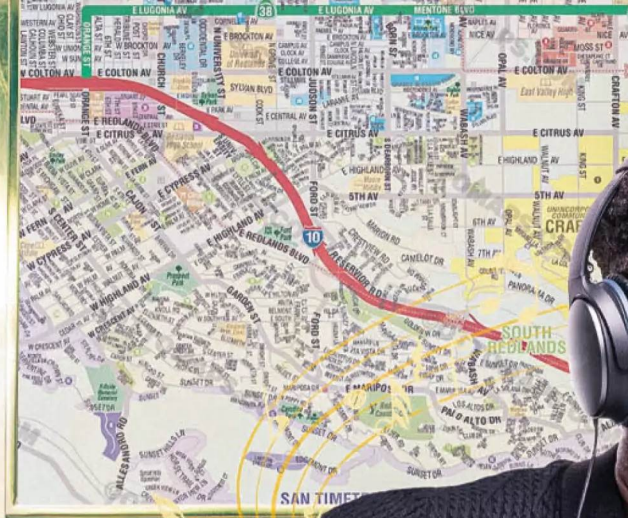
“Diamond Dust” ends *Blow by Blow* with the accompaniment of a second orchestral string arrangement by Martin. The song was written by Bernie Holland, who was the guitarist in the band Hummingbird, formed in 1974 by Middleton and other members of the second iteration of the Jeff Beck Group. The song is as much of a showcase for Middleton’s electric piano and synth playing as it is for Beck’s melodic motifs and soloing.

AFTERMATH

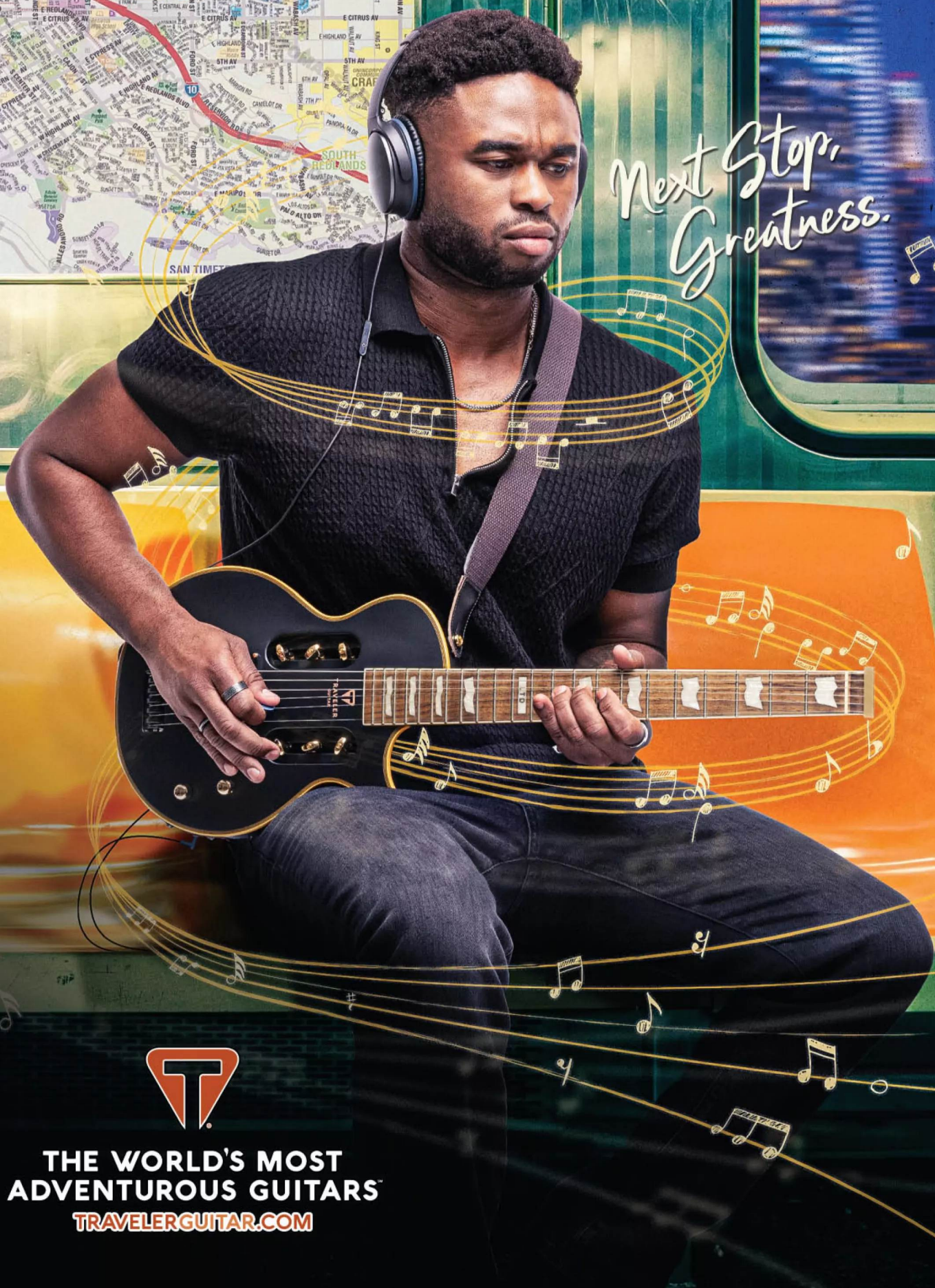
Beck acknowledged John McLaughlin’s profound influence by inviting the Mahavishnu Orchestra on a co-headlining tour in 1975. “We just wanted to see if it was going to work, and boy, did it work,” recalled Beck. “The next thing I knew I was on stage doing a double headliner with John. It was a bit barbaric and chaotic, but it was more music per square inch than I’d ever heard. When we opened the show, the audience went utterly berserk.”

Beck and McLaughlin’s cross-pollination of rock and jazz styles had made both outcasts of sorts from their respective main genres, but by banding together they helped lift each other up and beyond those restraints and biases. McLaughlin was particularly touched by Beck’s acknowledgement of the Mahavishnu guitarist’s influence on his playing style.

“When you have an impact on somebody who is already a very fine musician, it’s kind of a little humbling, isn’t it?” McLaughlin says. “Beck was kind of an outsider, and I got a lot of flak from the traditional jazz community where I was being told, ‘This ain’t jazz.’ But Jeff broke down those barriers, and now they’ve disappeared. Today it doesn’t matter what kind of music you play; it’s how you play it. When the spirit gets you, it doesn’t matter where you’re coming from — the spirit will be heard. Every musician that I know who heard Jeff loved him, and his spirit will live on forever.” **GW**



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SOUND CHECK



TC Electronic Plethora X1 TonePrint Loader

By Chris Gill

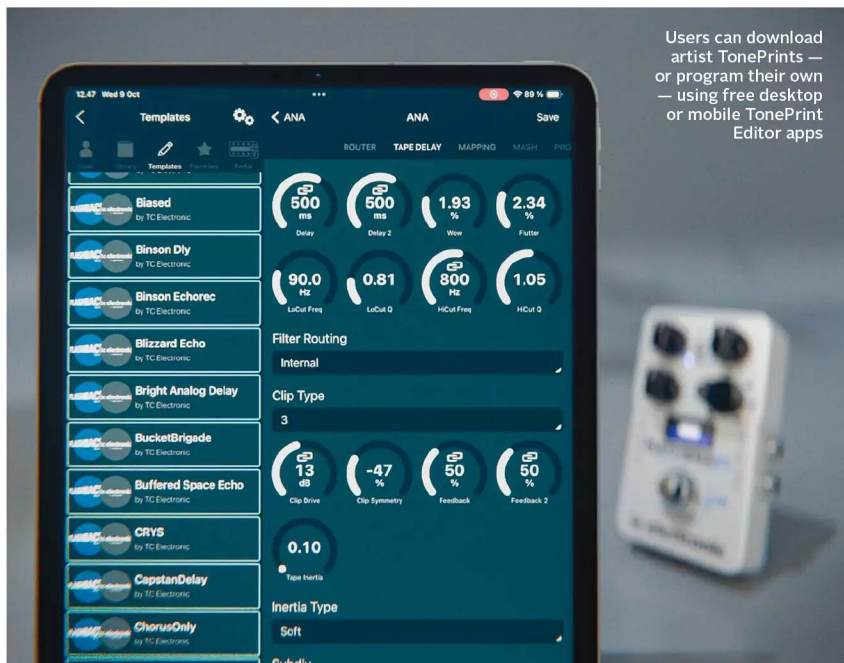
JUDGING BY THE abundance of effects that the TC Electronic Plethora X1 TonePrint Loader makes available to guitarists, it is obvious that TC knows what it means to have a plethora. Just the same, if having too much of a good thing brings you joy, then TC Electronic's Plethora will bring much delight with its many desirable and stellar-sounding effects — each offering a wealth of options.

The Plethora X1 is basically a single-effect version of TC's previous powerful and versatile Plethora X3 and X5 multi-

effects units. The X1 provides the equivalent of 15 different TonePrint pedals that can be accessed one at a time, consisting of compression, delay, gate, modulation, pitch shift and reverb (but no overdrive/distortion) effects, each complete with a full range of adjustable parameters. Three assignable parameter knobs allow adjustments on the fly — just like using a standard pedal — and users can download artist TonePrints or program their own TonePrints in greater detail using free desktop or mobile TonePrint Editor apps.

Usability & Build Quality

The Plethora X1 is housed in the same compact-size pedal enclosure as other TonePrint pedals like the Flashback 2 and Hall of Fame 2 and features the same four-knob control configuration. It's sturdy and roadworthy, with a high-quality no-click footswitch, and bulletproof side-mounted stereo 1/4-inch input and output jacks. The rear panel houses a 9-volt/250mA minimum power input jack, recessed Connect switch for linking the pedal with a mobile device via Bluetooth →



Users can download artist TonePrints — or program their own — using free desktop or mobile TonePrint Editor apps

pedal counterparts 100 percent. The reverbs are every bit as lush and three-dimensional; the delays are crisp and organic; and the chorus, phaser, flanger, tremolo and vibe have the same character and depth. All of the effects are highly useful on their own merits, although perhaps the Sentry Noise Gate seems a little underwhelming due to its “blue collar” tool functionality compared to the whiz-bang nature of things like the reverb and pitch shift/harmony effects. However, if you ever find yourself in a situation where a noise gate is essential, it’s nice to have this effect immediately on hand.

And that truly is the essence of the Plethora X1. It’s more of a chameleon-style effect that can be whatever you want it to be at a moment’s notice (as long as that isn’t overdrive or distortion). If you’re indecisive about the pedals you want in your rig or you may occasionally need a certain effect to temporarily spice up your sound, the Plethora X1 offers a cost-effective way to have it all. The X1 even makes it easy to switch to a completely different effect in between songs. You could also consider it a demo for other TC TonePrint pedals that can help you decide which dedicated pedals might work best as permanent additions to your rig before you decide.

Verdict

The TC Electronic Plethora X1 provides a true plethora of effects — 15 different TonePrint effects, to be exact, which would cost over \$2,000 if you bought each TonePrint pedal separately. If you’re on a budget but want to explore a full variety of high-quality effects or if you have ever-changing needs for your pedal rig, it offers a great way to get maximum bang for your buck in the effects department. **GW**

STREET PRICE: \$179

MANUFACTURER: TC Electronic, tcelectronic.com

PROS

- + Provides 15 different high-quality TonePrint effects with full parameter control
- + Three control knobs provide instant access to assigned parameters
- + Innovative MASH footswitch mode allows expressive parameter control by varying pressure upon the footswitch
- + Detailed programming via free TonePrint Editor app

CONS

- Only one effect is available at a time, although TonePrints can be changed quickly
- No overdrive or distortion effects

and a USB C jack for downloading firmware updates or connecting the pedal to a desktop computer for editing functions.

The pedal’s knobs consist of three assignable parameter controls (A/B/C) and the Board Selector rotary switch with seven detented positions. A mini-bat toggle switch allows users to scroll up or down through TonePrints (such as Hall, Plate, Room, etc. TonePrints for the Hall of Fame 2 Reverb pedal) or secondary footswitch functions accessed by also holding down the footswitch. Navigating TonePrints, footswitch settings and parameters is fast, easy and intuitive, helped considerably by the color display that packs a ton of info into its small, brightly lit space.

Users can easily customize

the performance/ functionality of the footswitch. Bypass modes include latching (typical on/off function), momentary (effect is on only when footswitch is held down) and momentary + MASH (effect on when footswitch held down,

“The Plethora X1 is a single-effect version of TC’s powerful and versatile Plethora X3 and X5 units”

selected parameter also responds to pressure upon footswitch). Secondary footswitch modes include MASH (pressure upon footswitch adjusts parameter settings), A/B (toggles between A and B TonePrint slots to access all 15 TonePrints), Tap Tempo (for Flashback 2 delay, Vintage Echo and Pipeline Tap Tremolo effects only) and Ramp (for morphing between Viscous Vibe rate settings).

Other settings like Kill-dry on/off and true/buffered bypass are accessible only via the TonePrint Editor app.

Sounds

All of the 15 TonePrints in the Plethora X1 match the sound quality, performance and versatility of their standalone





Xotic XSS Super S-Style electric guitar

By Paul Riario

AS FUNNY AS this sounds, when a brand sends me a new guitar model outfitted with only one pickup, I say to myself, “That’s bold.” Releasing a spartan guitar like the Xotic XSS Super S-Style seems like such a throwback to a time when a guy with the initials EVH changed the entire guitar-world landscape by playing guitar with a solitary humbucker and making every guitarist around the globe realize that might be all we need. Be that as it may, today’s players crave switching options and multiple tonal colors achieved by having more than one pickup.

That being said, I’ve spoken too soon. Even though the guitar I received is an H-model, fortunately, the Xotic XSS is also offered in two other pickup combinations (HSS and HSH) for the more discriminating players. But as it turns out — after putting this remarkable performance machine through its paces — the Xotic XSS Super S-Style guitar proves that one humbucker may be all I need. It’s that good.

Build Quality

Like a bespoke suit, Xotic’s XSS guitars are practically made-to-measure, and are mostly handmade in their Southern California facility. While the streamlined H-model I received might not be for everyone, you can custom order your preferred specs and finish by filling out their online checklist form. Yanking this XSS out from its deluxe molded case, it’s instantly clear everything about it appears premium regardless of its bolt-on construction, and frankly, it’s one of the top three guitars I’ve ever held where the fit and finish are flawless. The “flip-flop” iridescent colorway is captivating; transforming from sparkling green to shimmering purple as you shift it under lights. Its upgraded build includes a

lightweight alder body paired with a graphite-reinforced maple neck with a slightly enlarged headstock, rosewood fingerboard with a 12-16-inch compound radius and black dot inlays, 22 medium jumbo stainless steel frets (run through a PLEK Pro machine), heel-mounted truss rod wheel, locking Rotomatic 18:1 tuners, custom vintage-style vibrato bridge with Raw Vintage saddles and five visible RV tremolo springs on its plateless rear cavity, singular volume knob and a sole hand-wound Raw Vintage PAF pickup from Xotic.

Performance & Sounds

It’s undeniable that there are plenty of boutique brands fashioning amazing S-style guitars. Xotic is certainly one of those premium custom builders that’s often overlooked — and that’s a real shame because this is a guitar you’ll want to hang with all day and night. I’ve been known to use Xotic’s acclaimed pedals, but I had no idea how good their instruments are until the XSS Super S-Style found its way into my hands. Scouring its bare-bones build, I’m immediately struck by the pinpoint setup for its floating bridge dialed in for a fair amount of vibrato throw. Playability is effortless with its balanced tension and as long as you don’t aggressively dive-bomb the trem, the strings return to pitch courtesy of the locking tuners and the lack of string trees pinching them. Xotic states the XSS neck is a “standard C” profile; however, this carve is closer to a flatter “medium C” (think Gibson ’60s LP taper) that plays like a slim and fast-feeling neck. The stainless steel frets are superb; crowned and leveled to perfection, but if I’m being fussy, I’d point out that the black clay inlays disappear into the rosewood fingerboard yet look undeniably cool

“I’ve never heard Xotic’s Raw Vintage RV-PAF in action, but now I’m floored by its harmonically rich voice”

contrasted with the guitar’s chameleon-like finish. Saving the best for last, I’ve never heard Xotic’s Raw Vintage RV-PAF in action, but now, I’m floored by its harmonically rich voice. This hand-wound humbucker screams with responsiveness and clear articulation, all while adding proper doses of sustain and grit as you change its output by simply manipulating the volume control. It boldly cleans up as you turn down without losing any definition or clarity, and becomes a beast as you turn it up. It’s so responsive and satisfying that you won’t miss having other pickups to switch to, making you commit to one incredibly pure tone — and isn’t that the point?

Verdict

The Xotic XSS Super S-Style electric guitar is a crowning achievement in fit and finish for a streamlined guitar where every detail is positioned to elevate tone and performance. **GW**

STREET PRICE: \$3,600 (base H-model)

MANUFACTURER: Xotic California, xotic.us

PROS

- + Sleek and stripped-down design; eye-catching flip-flop finish
- + Fast-playing slim neck with 12-16-inch compound radius and stainless steel frets, bigger headstock adds resonance
- + Locking tuners
- + Hand-wound Raw Vintage humbucker produces rich harmonics and clarity

CONS

- Stripped-back design may be too limiting (but you can build to your spec)

Caparison Dellinger-JSM V2

By Chris Gill

WAY BACK IN the dark ages (a.k.a. the Eighties), there were two distinct types of guitar shredders who occupied opposite sides of the spectrum: the hard rock player whose weapon of choice was a super Strat versus the country picker who inevitably opted for a Telecaster. The lines were clearly drawn, and never the twang shall meet.

Over the years we've seen a lot of cross-pollination as far as players and styles go, but guitars that crossed that gap were few and far between... until now. The new Caparison Dellinger-JSM V2 is a signature model designed with Killswitch Engage's Joel Stroetzel that merges the sexy asymmetrical cutaway curves of a super Strat with Tele-style appointments like a fixed bridge, chrome control plate with three-way blade switch and master volume and tone controls, and signature Tele-style upper bout pickguard. A Fishman SSA single-coil neck pickup and a dual-voiced Fishman Fluence Ceramic Killswitch Engage bridge humbucker with coil tap deliver tones that range from cluck to clang at the flick of a switch.

SPECS

BODY: Australian blackwood with walnut top

NECK: Five-piece maple/walnut/maple/walnut/maple bolt-on

FINGERBOARD: Maple with Black Clock inlays

NECK PROFILE: Slim "D"

RADIUS: Compound 350mm-400mm

SCALE LENGTH: 25.5-inch

FRETS: 24 small Jescar stainless steel

NUT WIDTH: 42mm

PICKUPS: Fishman Fluence Ceramic Killswitch Engage bridge humbucker, Fishman SSA single-coil neck

CONTROLS: Master Volume (pull voice 2), Master Tone (pull coil-tap), three-way blade pickup selector

BRIDGE: Caparison fixed bridge

TUNERS: Gotoh SG381-07 MG-T locking

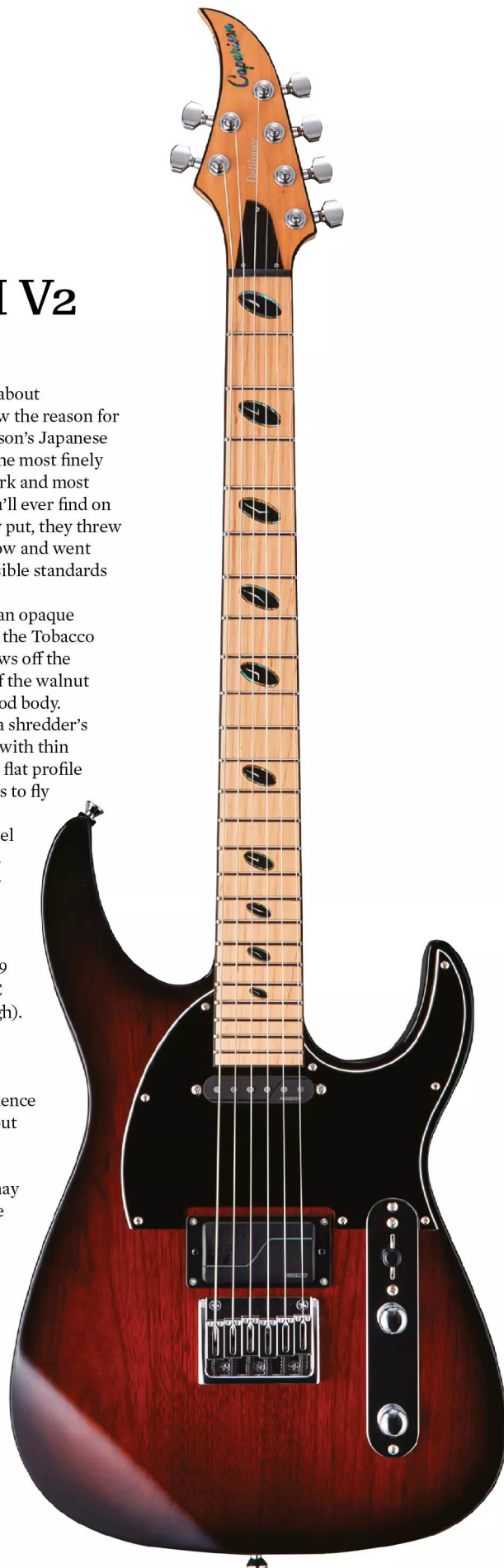
Playability

If you know anything at all about Caparison, you already know the reason for the five-star ratings. Caparison's Japanese craftsmen deliver some of the most finely detailed and meticulous work and most immaculate tone woods you'll ever find on a super shred guitar. Simply put, they threw the wabi-sabi out the window and went straight for the highest possible standards of perfection.

Our example came with an opaque Vintage White finish, while the Tobacco Sunburst finish version shows off the tight arrow-straight grain of the walnut top and Australian blackwood body. The slim five-piece neck is a shredder's delight, carved from maple with thin walnut "stingers" to a wide, flat profile that makes it easy for fingers to fly across the 24 vintage-style thin/tall Jescar stainless steel frets and maple fingerboard with its compound 350mm-400mm radius. Although the Dellinger-JSM V2 has a standard 25 1/2-inch scale length, it ships with .011-.049 and is tuned down to drop C tuning (CGCFAD, low to high).

Sounds

I've played many guitars equipped with Fishman Fluence pickups over recent years, but I think that the Ceramic Killswitch Engage bridge humbucker on this guitar may be my favorite yet. It has the stellar clarity and note-to-note definition typical of Fluence pickups, but the bass seems more robust and round and the treble is extra sparkly. The two voices accessible via the push-pull master volume knob have alluring midrange tones, with the "up" setting delivering more pronounced midrange





“It’s classic enough for adventurous country players who want to switch from hillbilly to heavy in a heartbeat”

body and slightly darker character. The master tone’s push/pull function activates the humbucker’s coil tap, which delivers shimmering single-coil spank but also typical single-coil noise. The Fishman SSA single-coil neck pickup produces delicious hot-wound Strat neck tones that can handle blues solos, country leads and Yngwie-style sweep picking with aplomb.

The Caparison fixed bridge with its individual steel saddles for each string is more refined than a typical vintage-style Tele ashtray bridge with three brass saddles, but it still delivers de rigueur twang with the bridge pickup in coil tap mode. However, it particularly excels at crisp, punchy down-tuned rhythms and riffs with walloping attack and supreme

clarity. This guitar sounds equally good with the most extreme high-gain distortion as it does through an ultra-clean amp.

Verdict

While the Caparison Dellinger-JSM V2 is mainly aimed toward metal players like Stroetzel who need killer distortion and clean tones, it’s also classic enough in appearance and tonality for adventurous country players who want to switch from hillbilly to heavy in a heartbeat. This may be the ultimate super Strat-Tele hybrid. **GW**

STREET PRICE: \$3,899

MANUFACTURER: Caparison Guitars, caparisonguitars.com

PROS

- + An alluring hybrid of super Strat/Tele features, style and sounds
- + The Fishman Fluence Ceramic Killswitch Engage humbucker delivers two excellent selectable tones with rich, expressive midrange
- + Craftsmanship and materials are exquisite

CONS

- Bridge humbucker can be noisy when coil tap is engaged
- Expensive





Tallon Electric “The Noise”

By Paul Riario

UNLESS YOU’VE BEEN living under a rock, you’ll know that collaborative pedals between artists and manufacturers are all the rage now. From EarthQuaker Devices to Keeley, the results are fruitful when brands enlist guitarists or bands for a twist on a popular effect or to ape their signature sound in a stompbox. Coming in as a relative newcomer in this arena, Tallon Electric — a pedal maker based in Columbus, Ohio — has released a bunch of joint pedal creations with members of mostly metalcore bands such as August Burns Red, Bilmuri and now, Alpha Wolf, for their newest one, “The Noise.”

As its name suggests, “The Noise” provides a novel and chaotic spin on the renowned Whammy pedal’s upper-octave sound. Simply tapping one of its dual momentary switches, the pedal unleashes pitch-shifted ricochets of +1 or +2 upper-octave pandemonium. As Alpha Wolf’s Scottie Simpson says, “We go to music shops and turn everything up to see how f#%ked up we can make it sound.” And if that’s your raison d’être in your musical approach, I can guarantee you that Alpha Wolf’s and Tallon Electric’s “The Noise”

is exactly the kind of disruptive pitch-shifter you need.

Build Quality

The pedal looks dauntingly on-brand in brushed black with metal graphics, an illegible spider and a cobwebbed heart for its face. But on the surface, “The Noise” seems to have more controls than needed to achieve its upper-octave sound. However, once you ascertain what each knob delivers, the tumultuous outcome becomes far more clear. The enigmatically named Panic and Chaos knobs will split the incoming signal sharp and flat for dissonance and introduce random and wavering pitch movement that shifts away from the center frequency respectively. Speed incrementally sweeps its all-pass feedback and amplitude modulation, becoming more warbly and pulsing as you turn it clockwise in conjunction with Chaos and Panic. The mini Rise knob adjusts the ramp-up time length to full pitch; with a rapid shot to pitch fully counterclockwise or a slower rise to the upper octave as you set it upwards clockwise. The dual soft-touch footswitches are momentary (left for

Octave up +1 and right for up +2) and meant for quick rhythmic stabs with your foot or held down until you let go (they cannot be set to be left on perpetually). The pedal features top-mounted ¼-inch jacks and only accepts a standard 9VDC center negative power supply with a rating of at least 200mA.

Performance

There are no sensible settings with “The Noise,” and I’m okay with that. Even with all the knobs fully counterclockwise, slamming down either Octave switch launches a strident projectile of upper-octave screech. Depending on where you set Rise, you can get a swift and jarring octave stab or a ramped-up air-raided siren as it ascends to its upper octave. But I know you’re not here for practical pitch shifting, because “The Noise” specializes in the art of caterwaul. Panic takes your incoming signal and makes it atonal, while Chaos adds more fluctuating and quivering discordance to your sound. When they are combined (no matter where you set them), you get a symphony of demonic dissonance with each stab of the Octave switches; and if you’re feeling particularly wicked, holding down one of those momentary switches will create a lingering, cacophonous chime. To that end, I will admit the most charming of anarchic sounds happens by holding the momentary switch till the note (or notes) begins to decay; it’s almost as if the shrieking demons begin their descent back to hell. Is it a one-trick pony pedal? For sure. But “The Noise” is just the pedal to deliver a payload of pitch-shifted havoc when you need it.

Verdict

Frenzied and random, Tallon Electric’s “The Noise” is a wailing upper-octave pitch-shifting stompbox where making clamor has never been this much fun. **GW**

STREET PRICE: \$245

MANUFACTURER: Tallon Electric, tallonelectric.com

PROS

- + Chaotic +1 or +2 upper-octave pitch-shifting
- + Panic and Chaos knobs provide jarring and tumultuous sounds made more dramatic by way of the +1 or +2 Octave switches
- + Ability to add upper-octave pitch shifting for rhythmic stabs and musical textures

CONS

- Pricey
- Pitch shifting only goes up
- Switches are momentary only (unable to leave on)

Martin D-X2E Brazilian 12-string

By Chris Gill

IF YOU WANT that “symphony orchestra in your hands” sensation that only a 12-string acoustic can provide, my mantra is “go big or go home.” That usually means a jumbo or dreadnought model. If dreadnought is your preference, a Martin 12-string is a wise choice as they not only invented and perfected the dreadnought acoustic but they’ve also been making 12-string acoustics longer than any other company on the market today — just over 60 years, as a matter of fact.

The Martin D-X2E Brazilian is an affordably priced 12-string acoustic-electric that delivers incredible value and should induce serious consideration from guitarists looking to add some 12-string magic to their stage and studio performances.

Build Quality & Playability

You may have read the word “Brazilian” then looked at the price and wondered if Martin have lost their minds by offering a Brazilian rosewood guitar for less than \$700. Actually, the back and sides are made of HPL (high-pressure laminate) formulated to provide performance similar to Brazilian rosewood as well as the uncanny look of Brazilian from its dark chocolate hues to distinctive stripe grain patterns. The money Martin saved using HPL gave them more leeway to build the D-X2E 12-string with an upgraded spruce top featuring a satin finish and scalloped spruce braces. Martin is more secretive about the material used for the neck, fingerboard and bridge, cryptically describing it only as “select hardwood,” but it looks and feels great and seems more than up to the job at hand.

The D-X2E 12-string comes strung with extra-light phosphor bronze strings, which play comfortably. The 25.4-inch scale length, 1 7/8-inch nut width and slim PA neck profile combine to provide comfortable playability with ample room between the individual string courses to facilitate clean chord fingering.

“The Martin D-X2E Brazilian is an affordably priced 12-string acoustic-electric that delivers incredible value”

Sounds

The Martin D-X2E 12-string delivers classic Martin 12-string dreadnought tone with full-bodied bass, rich mids, jangly treble and reverb-like resonance. It sounds equally great accompanying a solo folk singer as it does in a full band context adding sparkle when layered with an electric rhythm guitar, doubling melodic lead lines or taking an acoustic lead spotlight. The built-in Martin E-1 electronics are uncomplicated and deliver clear, natural amplified tones. Volume and tone controls are concealed within the soundhole above the low E string along with a phase switch and switch for the built-in chromatic tuner, with its display located below the high E string.

Verdict

The Martin D-X2E Brazilian 12-string is the perfect affordable choice for guitarists who want to add an acoustic 12-string with classic tone to their rig. The built-in electronics are an unexpected bonus that add even more value to the guitar’s studio and stage versatility. **GW**

STREET PRICE: \$699

MANUFACTURER: Martin Guitar, martinguitar.com

PROS

- + HPL back and sides have the natural, organic look of real Brazilian rosewood
- + String spacing is ideal for clean chord fingering
- + Built-in electronics system with tuner is easy to use and provides warm, natural acoustic tones

CONS

- Appearance is somewhat austere, but this model is more about performance and function instead of flashy looks





For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/march2025

HAUNTING MELODIES

Neo-classical, Danny Elfman-style arpeggios

ONE OF THE more difficult techniques to master on the guitar is performing fast arpeggios, often played as a series of single notes on adjacent, and sometimes non-adjacent, strings. The term “arpeggio” means “broken chord,” as the chord tones are played individually, in succession, as opposed to all at once. Arpeggios are found in virtually every style of music, from the classical études of JS Bach to blues, jazz, country and bluegrass. They’re especially integral to the Gypsy-jazz style, as exemplified by the music of Django Reinhardt and Stéphane Grappelli.

My latest album, *Charisma*, includes a track called “Master Gracey’s Manor,” which is built from a combination of classical-style arpeggios and Gypsy-jazz-flavored minor melodies. The tune was inspired by the music of film composer Danny Elfman, known for his work with director Tim Burton in films such as *Edward Scissorhands*, *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and *Sleepy Hollow*, as well as the music from the Mystic Manor in Hong Kong Disneyland.

FIGURE 1 illustrates the opening series of arpeggios, which I play as 16th notes in 6/8 meter. Bar 1 begins with arpeggios played across the bottom four strings, starting with a Gm arpeggio via the notes G, D, G and B $\flat$, followed by D/F $\sharp$ via the notes F $\sharp$, D, F $\sharp$ and A, and then a return to Gm. This two-bar phrase then repeats.

In bar 6, I switch to a Cm arpeggio, built from the notes C, G, C and E $\flat$, played on the middle four strings, then move back to the previous pattern that starts on Gm. I palm mute these arpeggios (P.M.), in order to give them a percussive quality.

FIGURE 2 presents the song’s initial theme, which may be analyzed as being based on either the G Aeolian mode (G, A, B $\flat$, C, D, E $\flat$, F) or the G harmonic minor scale (G, A, B $\flat$, C, D, E $\flat$, F $\sharp$), as the 7th is not used. The lines in bars 1-6 are played exclusively on the D, G and B strings and are also performed with palm-muting, except for the fast hammer-ons and pull-offs in bars 1, 2 and 6. For this part of the melody, I like to allow the string to ring a bit more, in order to emphasize the

FIG. 1 Gm D/F $\sharp$ Gm Gm D/F $\sharp$

1 P.M. throughout

FIG. 2 (Gm) (D/A) *P.M. throughout

*except during hammer-ons and pull-offs

FIG. 3

FIG. 4 Cm Gm (D7) Gm

articulation and sound of the hammer/pulls.

In bars 7 and 8, the lines change, in order to follow the progression of Cm - Gm - D7 - Gm. Starting in bar 7, I execute the Cm arpeggio by playing two consecutive notes on the G string, followed by single notes on the D and A strings. I then take this same approach with the Gm and D7 arpeggios.

FIGURE 3 illustrates the initial melody in a broken-down fashion: bar 1 indicates

the opening phrase, followed by the remainder of the line in bars 2-5.

FIGURE 4 delineates the arpeggios that outline the Cm - Gm - D7 - Gm progression. As you’ll find, it can be tricky to sound these arpeggios cleanly when playing them up to speed. I suggest using alternate picking throughout, and begin by playing each arpeggio individually and slowly until it feels comfortable under your fingers.

Andy Wood is an extraordinary virtuoso and master of everything from bluegrass to metal. His latest release, 2024’s *Charisma*, is available from andywoodmusic.com

TALES FROM NERDVILLE

by Joe Bonamassa



For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/march2025

SAILIN' WITH LOWELL

The great Lowell George and his Dumble amplifier

TODAY, I'D LIKE to talk about an unsung hero of rock and roll, the great Lowell George of Little Feat. This past summer, I was very lucky to have purchased his Dumble Overdrive Reverb amplifier. Its 4x12 cabinet came with Altec speakers, which I don't normally like, but when I plugged in my Strat and played some slide through it, that sound that Little Feat fans know and love was there.

Lowell had his own fantastic slide style, in the realm of my other two slide guitar favorites, Ry Cooder and David Lindley. All three guitarists have similar traits, in regard to their overall sound and mastery of a crystal clear, melodic approach.

For these examples, my guitar is in open A tuning (low to high: E, A, E, A, C♯, E). I use a Dunlop steel slide, which I wear on my ring finger. Lowell famously used a Sears Craftsman 11/16" sparkplug ratchet attachment. I also fingerpick exclusively when playing slide, which I think produces a warmer sound and greater tonal variety. When playing in this context, I like to use a Stratocaster with both the bridge and middle pickups on (the #2 toggle position).

FIGURE 1 begins with A on the open 5th string, followed by a slide up to the major 3rd, C♯, and then the open A on the 3rd string, followed by the open 5th string again. In bar 2, I move up to the D chord, sounded by laying the slide across the strings at the 5th fret, and emphasize the notes on top three strings, as these notes — D, F♯ and A — sound a D major triad.

In bars 3-5, I move back down and emphasize the open strings to allude to the I (one) chord, A. Notice that I switch between using the slide and fretting notes conventionally. Bars 6 and 7 bring in E and G major chords, and in bars 8-10 I play phrases around the 12th-position A shape.

FIGURE 2 presents a riff in A that begins with a nod to the classic Little Feat song "Dixie Chicken." In bar 5, I play raked "touch" harmonics: while dragging the pick downward across the strings, I lightly touch them with my pick-hand index finger exactly 12 frets above the slide position, which produces octave-higher harmonics.

FIGURE 3 begins over an A chord with

All examples are performed fingerstyle and in open A tuning (low to high: E, A, E, A, C♯, E).

FIG. 1

(A) D
w/slide, unless indicated otherwise

(A) B E

G A

C5 D5 (A)

FIG. 2

(A)
w/swing 16ths feel (♩ = ♩)

G (A) C5 D5 E5 G5 G A

** raked touch harmonics

FIG. 3

(A7) C5 D5

licks in 15th and 12th positions, before shifting down to open position in bar 2, and riffs over D in bar 3.

I say this to anyone who will listen: Little Feat belongs in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame! They are one of the most influential bands of all time, and it's

criminal negligence that they have yet to be inducted! Everyone from Bonnie Raitt to Jimmy Page and Robert Plant were all huge fans of the Feat. Lowell was a phenomenal singer and songwriter. Be sure to check out the band's early albums, *Sailin' Shoes*, *Dixie Chicken* and the live *Waiting for Columbus*.

Joe Bonamassa is one of the world's most popular blues-rock guitarists — not to mention a top producer and *de facto* ambassador of the blues.

TELE-PATHY

by Jim Oblon



For video of this lesson, go to
guitarworld.com/march2025

PENTATONICS PLUS!

Combining major and minor pentatonics with chromatics

LAST MONTH, I presented a shuffle rhythm pattern for a standard 12-bar blues in the key of G, with some inversions of dominant 7th chords that had the 3rd, 5th or 7th in the bass instead of the root, which create a harmonically rich sound. This month, I'd like to demonstrate a soloing approach over this rhythm part, using both major and minor pentatonic scales, as well as some chromatic notes.

FIGURE 1 illustrates the solo: bars 1 and 2 are based on the G minor pentatonic scale (G, B $\flat$, C, D, F) and the G blues scale (G, B $\flat$, C, D $\flat$, D, F) with the additional inclusion of the 6th, E and the 2nd, A. In bar 3 into bar 4, I switch to playing lines based on G major pentatonic (G, A, B, D, E), which yields a sweeter sound via the emphasis of the major 3rd, B, and the 6th, E.

Alternating between *parallel* minor and major pentatonic scales — based on the same root note — is a well-established approach to blues soloing, and one that you'll hear in the playing of all of the blues greats, from T-Bone Walker to B.B. King, Freddie King, Buddy Guy and many others.

FIGURE 2 shows the G blues scale in 3rd position. One could stick with this scale through the entirety of the 12 bars and create an effective solo. There are, however, musical benefits to be found by broadening your melodic palette to major pentatonic as well as the G Mixolydian mode (G, A, B, C, D, E, F) and the chromatic scale, which includes all 12 tones in an octave.

FIGURE 3 is a line that combines G major and minor pentatonic notes with a little bit of chromaticism. It begins with D, E and G, alluding to G major pentatonic; an E note is then bent up a half step to F $\sharp$, followed by a descent through D, C and B $\flat$, which references G minor pentatonic. The B $\flat$ then resolves chromatically upward, to B, followed by notes from G minor pentatonic into G major pentatonic.

A great way to utilize these ideas is to “blur” the lines between the different scales via string bending: in **FIGURE 4**, I begin with B $\flat$ -G-B $\flat$ then bend the minor 3rd, B $\flat$, up a half step to the major 3rd, B. In bar 2, I bend the 2nd, A, up a whole step, to B, which creates a different sound and feeling.

FIG. 1 (G7) fingerstyle, w/thumbpick

FIG. 2 G blues scale

FIG. 3 (G7)

FIG. 4 (G7)

Let's jump back to bars 5 and 6 of **FIGURE 1**. As the progression moves to the IV (four) chord, C, I modulate to lines based on C minor pentatonic (C, E $\flat$, F, G, B $\flat$) before shifting back to G minor pentatonic in beat 3 of bar 6 into bar 7, with the return to the I (one) chord, G.

In bar 9, I play D minor pentatonic (D, F, G, A, C) over the V (five) chord, D, with the inclusion of the major 3rd, F $\sharp$. Bar 10 is played over C, and the solo ends with straight chromaticism of E-F-E $\flat$ -D, resolving back to G major and minor pentatonic played over the final G chord.

Virtuoso guitarist/multi-instrumentalist Jim Oblon has toured and recorded with Paul Simon, Lucinda Williams and many others. His latest album is 2023's *I Wanna Be Loved*.

JIM OBLON

HARDWIRED

by Jared James Nichols



For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/march2025

HEED THE CALL

How to use “call and response” phrasing

ONE OF THE most important soloing approaches I rely on is “call and response.” The concept involves phrasing development: I’ll start with a simple melodic idea and then develop it and try to get the most musical mileage out of it. For me, it’s not enough to play an idea once and then move on to something else. I’d rather develop my initial phrase and then morph it into 10 different, thematically connected ones. Using call-and-response phrasing can help give a solo balance, direction, focus, and clarity of intent. I think of it as a way of having a musical conversation without abandoning the script.

FIGURE 1 offers an example of how to start with a simple idea and then develop it via subtle variations. Using notes from the E blues scale (E, G, A, B $\flat$, B, D), I start with a two-bar phrase that moves from 8th position on the B and G strings down to 5th position on the A and D strings. In bar 3, I present a melodic twist on the opening phrase introduced in bar 1, and in bar 4, I resolve the idea with a melodic “response” to the previous three bars.

In **FIGURE 2**, I twist the melody by starting on the upbeat of the pickup bar, so that by the beginning of bar 2 we’ve already established the direction of the line. On beats 3 and 4, I shift from 16th notes to eighth-note triplets, as the change in syncopation offers another aspect of musical development.

In these examples, I start off with the “call,” as shown in **FIGURE 3**, which is played on the B and G strings. The “response” is delivered via the phrases on the D and A strings that follow.

As these phrases develop, I try to make them more melodic and vocal-like. Once I’ve gotten these musical ideas in my ears and head, my intention is to continually morph them in the most natural way possible.

FIGURE 4 offers another example of this approach. Like **FIGURE 1**, it’s a four-bar phrase built from consecutive two-bar ones. The “call” is now the initial two bars, and the “response” occurs in bars 3 and 4.

FIGURE 5 demonstrates how I’ll take these ideas and continue to develop them in new melodic and rhythmic directions. Here, I start with an emphasis on even

FIG. 1 (E)

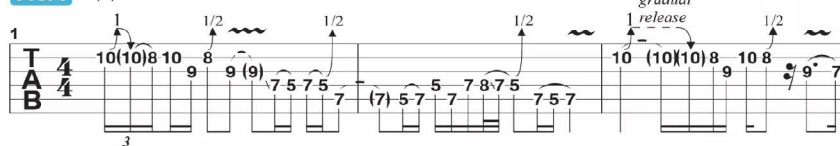


FIG. 2

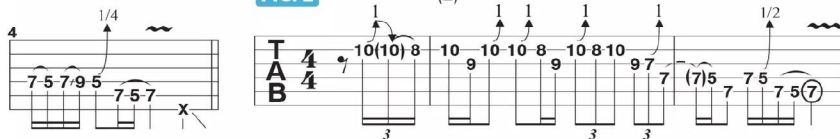


FIG. 3 (E)

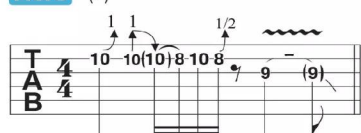


FIG. 4 (E)

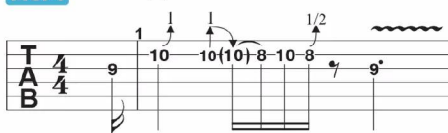


FIG. 5 (E)

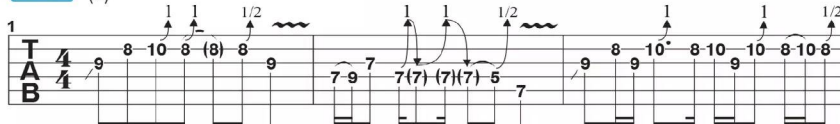
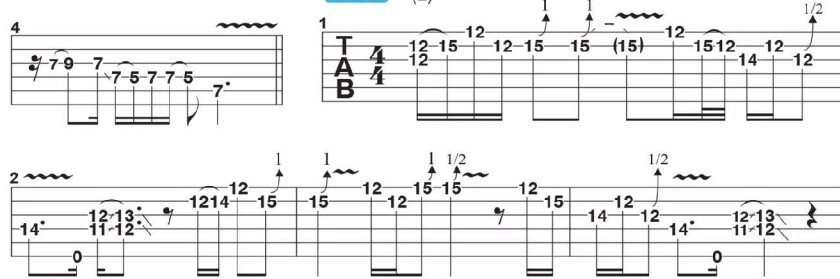


FIG. 6 (E)



eighth notes before continuing with variations played in a combination of eighth and 16th notes.

After hanging out between 8th and 5th positions for all of those licks, it feels natural to then move up to 12th position, as shown in **FIGURE 6**. These higher phrases add intensity to the solo as the lines become higher in pitch and also more rhythmically

complex, with emphasis on wide bend vibratos on the top two strings.

Once the sound and vibe of these phrases has been established, they become themes that I lean into in order to get the most out of them. This is a great way to build and develop a solo — gaining traction through repetition and familiarity — and one that will really hook and captivate the listener.

Jared James Nichols is a true blues-rock titan with two signature Epiphone Les Paul models (and a Blackstar amp) to his name. His latest album is 2023's *Jared James Nichols*. For more info, go to jaredjamesnichols.com

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HOW TO PLAY THIS MONTH'S SONGS By Jimmy Brown

“JADED”

Spiritbox



THE BRAINCHILD OF guitarist Mike Stringer and vocalist Courtney LaPlante, Spiritbox's distinctive brand of modern prog-metal has garnered wide appeal

among guitarists and non-guitarists alike. This dramatically powerful song features several highly syncopated and relentlessly intense riffs, all of which Stringer performs on his seven-string guitar, with its low B string tuned to “drop-A.” Additionally, he tunes all seven strings down a minor 3rd, or one and one half steps, resulting in a tuning that many refer to as “drop-F#” — low to high: F#, C#, F#, B, E, G#, C#.

If you watch the highly revealing play-through video of “Jaded” that Stringer posted on YouTube, you’ll see that, amazingly, he down-picks/strums most of the song’s riffs, which demands a great deal of pick-hand agility and stamina. The only exceptions are 1) the pairs of palm-muted 32nd-note “gallops” on the open 7th string during section B, which he picks *down-up*, and 2) the two clean-tone, octave-doubled intro parts in bars 1-4, labelled *Riff A* and *Riff B*. These enigmatic-sounding riffs involve the use of *crosspicking* — picking only one note per string, with continual string crosses — and are based on a repeating five-note sequence, which Stringer picks *up-down-down-up-down*, deviating from the pattern only during the last two beats of bars 2 and 4. Use whichever pick strokes work best for you during these final two beats.

Another challenge is negotiating the many quick position shifts and “leaps,” as well as the numerous string skips, such as those during section B, which preview the pre-choruses at sections D and G. Practice the trickiest parts separately and slowly at first, striving for clean execution as you acquire the muscle memory and coordination between both hands, then gradually increase the tempo while trying to maintain accuracy and relaxed control.

There’s a “stacked 5ths” Dsus2 chord played during the choruses that requires a wide fret-hand stretch. Ease into this shape and allow your wrist to rotate as needed, in order to reach the outer notes.

“HERE I GO AGAIN”

Whitesnake



WHITESNAKE'S DEFINITIVE 1987 re-recording of this song, with guitarists John Sykes and Adrian Vandenberg, features hot-rod'd rhythm

and lead parts that epitomize the swagger of Eighties hard rock/hair metal guitar, with beefed-up high-gain tones, chunky palm muting, sexy chord shakes, howling string bends and a flashy, melodic solo from Vandenberg.

The first 1:15 of the song, however, up until the first chorus, is all synth keyboards, which we’ve adapted here for a clean-tone electric guitar, performed fingerstyle (sections A, B and C). To best emulate the dreamy synth keyboard sound heard on the recording, use a generous amount of hall reverb, or better yet, “shimmer” reverb, which includes octave-up pitch doubling.

Notice, in the first row of chord frames at the beginning of the transcription, that we’ve included two alternate fingerings for the 8th- and 10th-position C and D barre chords, for the keyboard part. Either fingering for D will work throughout the arrangement, as the 5th-string note is never played, although the fingering that does not include the 5th string will allow you to hold all the notes in bar 3 while performing the 12th-fret sus4 pull-off. The fingering for the C chord that does not have the 5th string fretted makes it easier to reach the F# melody note on the G string’s 11th fret with your pinkie in bars 6, 20 and 22. But in bars 2 and 8, you’ll need to use the full C barre chord fingering, in order to play and hold the G note at the 10th fret on the A string. You will, however, need to let go of the C note on the D string’s 10th fret, as you borrow the pinkie for the F# melody note.

The key to cleanly performing Vandenberg’s solo at section G is to palm mute the bottom three strings throughout the entire six bars, even when playing the un-muted melody notes on the G, B and high E strings. Practicing good “muting hygiene” like this will help suppress unwanted sympathetic vibrations on the unplayed low strings and make everything sound cleaner and tighter. This is something all pro rock and metal players do.

“PEACE OF MIND”

Boston



THIS IMPECCABLY PRODUCED third hit single from Boston’s landmark 1976 debut album showcases the crafty songwriting, guitar playing and

arranging talents of the band’s mastermind, Mr. Tom Scholz, as he tastefully layers acoustic and electric rhythm and lead parts to create rich, full-sounding riffs and melodies that are never cluttered or too thick.

Scholz kicks off the song with a feisty acoustic strum riff, for which he makes great use of fret-hand muting, to perform the pitchless, percussive “chuk” and “chuk-a-chuk-a” rhythms, indicated by X’s. When playing these muted strums, simply loosen your fret hand’s grip on the strings momentarily, without letting go of them, as you switch to the next chord shape.

Scholz’s solo at section J features the guitarist’s distinctive bold, polished *bend vibrato* technique, specifically in bars 51, 53, 55 and 59. In each case, push the string upward with both your 3rd and 2nd fingers, to raise the note’s pitch a whole step, then proceed to shake the bend, by repeatedly releasing it by about a quarter tone and rebending it up to pitch. Strive for a smooth, even modulation, with a 16th-note rhythm. Also, you’ll find it helpful, when bending in general, to hook your thumb around the top side of the fretboard.

Although Scholz punched-in his solo phrases on two separate tracks (Gtrs. 4 and 5.), there’s only a little bit of overlap between the phrases, so recreating the solo live on one guitar is totally doable. And while the harmony leads interlude that follows at section F certainly sounds sweeter with two single-note guitars, both parts can likewise be played on one instrument, as all the note pairs are *diatonic 3rds* apart, staying within the E major/C# natural minor scale (E, F#, G#, A, B, C#, D#), which makes fingering them fairly easy, for the most part. The only exceptions are the bends in bars 62, 66 and 69. Instead of trying to perform them as double-stop bends, which can be difficult to do with good intonation, slide up to the intended target pitches, one or two frets higher.

"JADED"

Spiritbox

As heard on **THE FEAR OF FEAR**

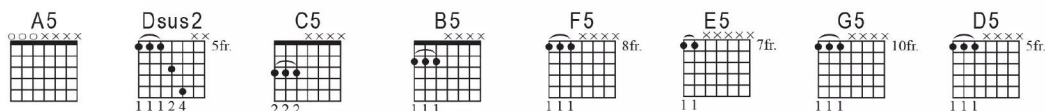
Words and Music by DANIEL BRAUNSTEIN, COURTNEY LAPLANTE and MICHAEL STRINGER • Transcribed by JEFF PERRIN

All guitars are 7-string instruments in Drop-A tuning, down one and one half steps, also known as "Drop-F#" tuning

(low to high: F#, C#, F#, B, E, G#, C#).

5-string Bass tuning (low to high: F#, C#, F#, B, E).

All music sounds in the key of F#minor; one and one half steps lower than written.



A Intro (0:00)

Moderately Slow ♩ = 85

(segue from "Cellar Door")

*Am(♭6)

Gtr. 3 (clean elec.)

Riff A

let ring throughout

Asus4

Asus2

1

fret-hand fingering: 1 1 3 1 1 3 1 3 1 1 3 1 1 1 1 2 1 2

*Chord symbols reflect overall harmony.

Am(♭6)

Gtr. 2 (clean elec.)

Riff B

let ring throughout

Asus4

Asus2

3

1 1 3 1 1 3 1 3 1 1 3 1 1 1 1 1 1 1

B (0:22)

N.C. (Am)

Gtrs. 1 and 2 (elec. w/dist.)

5

5-string Bass
Bass Fig. 1

Figure 1: Musical notation for the first figure. The notation is presented in two staves. The top staff is labeled "P.M." and the bottom staff is labeled "end Bass Fig. 1". Both staves end with a double bar line and a 5/4 time signature. The notation includes fret numbers (15, 12, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0) and phrasing slurs. The top staff has a phrasing slur over the first two measures, and the bottom staff has a phrasing slur over the first two measures. The notation is in a 5/4 time signature.

I feel alone

9

5/4 12 24 0 24 24 24 24 24 24 24 24 24

5/4 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12

4/4 4/4

C 1st Verse (0:37)

in my body I feel a silence underneath In these valleys of blood In these

Am

Am(b6)

Am/G

Gtr. 3 (clean tone w/reverb effect)

10

Gtr. 5 (clean tone w/reverb effect)

⑤

⑤

③

*Chord symbols reflect overall harmony implied by keyboards and bass guitar.

Bass

5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 0 3 | 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

rivers of rust

Shoulder all the blame again

Mirror

Fmaj7

Am/E

Am

Fill 1

w/dist. and delay effect*

P.M. _

13

1

0

P.M.

8 7 6 5 8 7 6 5 8 7 6 5 8 7 6 5

*Delay effect set to 50/50 dry to wet signal mix with a 264 ms delay time, to create a dotted 16th-note effect.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5

locked until the end It was violent and rough I was never enough But what if I

Am(b6)

Am/G

Fmaj7

Am/E

Gtr. 3 plays Fill 1 three times (see bar 14)

Bass

15

D 1st Pre-chorus (0:59)

was stable enough to wind me down the road

Like a remora

N.C. (Am)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

18

Bass

Bass Fig. 2

swims But what if I

was inside a thousand

lives to give my

(D5)

(E5)

(C5) (B5) (Am)

21

end Bass Fig. 2

ghost

It's never enough

It's never enough

And I've

(D5)

(E5)

(B5) (C5) Am(b6)

24

G 2nd Pre-chorus (2:12)

was

(What if

I

was)

What if I

N.C. (A5)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M. -

P.M. - - -

P.M. - - -

P.M. - - -

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 18)

was

(It's never enough

It's never enough)

And I've

(D5)

(E5)

(C5) (B5)

w/prod. filter effect - - - - -

H 2nd Chorus (2:24)

always been ashamed that I wanna fall into a dream with my honour desecrated

Blood is jaded I've

A5

Dsus2

Gtr. 3 plays Riff A three times (see bar 1)

41 Gtr. 4 plays Riff B three times (see bar 3)

(repeat previous bar)

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 27)

never found a way to be honest All I know is a place where I haunted memories faded

Blood is jaded

A5

Dsus2

A5

Gtr. 3 plays Riff D (see bar 57)

45 Gtr. 4 plays first seven beats of Riff B (see bar 3)

* - - - - -

*w/prod. filter and panning effect

I Bridge (2:46)

A5

B5 C5

Gtr. 3

Riff C

Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M. - - - - -

Bass

Bass Fig. 4

*omit notes on Bass Fig. 4 recall

A5

51 *end Riff C*

P.M.

end Bass Fig. 4

I know where I wanna go But you know that it's too close

Gtr. 3 plays Riff C (see bar 49)
Gtrs. 1 and 2

B5

53 P.M.

Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 simile (see bar 49)
**production edit*

And you know that it's too late this time And I've

A5

55 P.M.

J Breakdown (3:09)

1. 2.

always been ashamed that I wanna fall into a dream with my honour I've

Am(b6)

Asus4

Asus2

Asus4

Gtr. 4 plays Riff B (see bar 3)

Gtr. 3

Gtrs. 2 and 3 end Riff D

57 *Riff D*

K 3rd Chorus (3:20)

never found a way to be honest All I know is a place where I haunted memories faded Blood is jaded (And I've)

A5

Dsus2

Gtr. 3 plays Riff A six times (see bar 1)

Gtr. 4 plays Riff B six times (see bar 3)

60 *Gtrs. 1 and 2*

Bass plays first four bars of Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 27)

A5 G5

64 Gtr. 3 (w/dist.)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass

desecrated memories faded Blood is jaded Ooh I've
Blood is jaded

*play top notes 2nd time

D5 F5

66

1/2

L **Outro (3:54)**

N.C. (A5) What if I

Gtrs. 1 and 2

68 P.M. 7 P.M. --- 7 P.M. 7 P.M. --- 7

was

70 P.M. 7 P.M. --- 7 P.M. 7 P.M. --- 7

Orangewood



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As heard on **WHITESNAKE**

Words and Music by **BERNIE MARSDEN** *and* **DAVID COVERDALE** • *Transcribed by* **JEFF PERRIN**

Bass is in drop-D tuning (low to high, D, A, D, G).

G 10fr. **D** 10fr. **C** 8fr. **D** 10fr. **C** 8fr. **G/B** 7fr. **Am** 5fr. **Em** 12fr. **Am** 8fr. **Em** 7fr. **D/F#** 9fr. **C** 13 3 3 3
D 13 4 2 1 1 **C** 13 4 2 1 1 **D** 1 3 2 1 1 **C** 1 3 2 1 1 **G/B** 1 4 3 1 2 **Am** 1 3 4 1 1 1 **Em** 1 3 4 1 1 1 **Am** 3 2 4 1 **Em** 1 3 4 2 **D/F#** 1 4 3 2 **C** 1 3 3 3
D 5fr. **G5** 5fr. **Am7** 5fr. **G5** 5fr. **G/B** 5fr. **Dadd4** 5fr. **C** 5fr. **D/F#** 5fr. **E5** 5fr. **E5** 5fr. **A5** 5fr. **E5** 5fr.
D 1 3 3 3 **G5** 2 3 4 **Am7** 1 1 **G5** 1 4 **G/B** 1 **Dadd4** 2 1 **C** 2 1 **D/F#** 1 4 **E5** 1 **E5** 1 1 3 4 **A5** 1 1 **E5** 1 3 4

Moderately Slow = 88

G D C

Gtr. 1 (clean elec.) (keyboard arr. for gtr.)
(play fingerstyle)
let ring throughout

1

T 4/4
A 4/4
B 4/4

12 12 10 10 11 12 10 11 12 8 10 10 11 11 8 10 12 12 10 10 12 12 10 10 12 11 8 9 10 8

Bass (keyboard arr. for bass)

T 4/4
A 4/4
B 4/4

3

I don't know where I'm going

5 G D C G D C

12[•] 10 10 8[•] 11 (11) 8 10 12[•] 10 10 8 10 12[•] 10 10 8 10 12[•] 10 10 8 10

Bass Fig. 1

5[•] 5 5 3 5[•] 5 5 3

Fill 1 (2:34)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Gtr. 5 (elec. w/dist.)

4/4

5 5 7 9

7 9 7

9

7 9

8

3

(Gtrs. 1 and 2)

Fill 2 (2:58)

Grtr. 5 N.H.

T
A
B

12
12
12

"HERE I GO AGAIN"
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Hanging on the promises in the songs of yesterday

And I've made up my mind

9

G D C G/B Am D

end Bass Fig. 1

I ain't wasting no more time

Here I go again

13

Am D Em

Here I go again

16

Am C G Em Am C D

C 2nd Verse (0:49)

Though I keep searching for an answer

I never seem to find what I'm looking

19

Gtr. 1 G D C G D

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 5)

for

Oh Lord I pray you give me strength to carry on

22

C G D/F# C G/B

'Cause I know what it means

to walk along the lonely street of dreams

(and)

Am D Am D C D

25 Gtr. 1 Gtrs. 1 and 2 (w/dist.)

Bass

D Chorus (1:17, 2:10)

Here I go again on my own

Goin' down the only road I've ever known

Like a

29 G5 C D C D G5 C D

Gtrs. 1 and 2 P.M. ₁ P.M. ₁

Bass

*Note played first time only.
(play repeat simile)

drifter I was born to walk alone

And I've made up my mind

33 G5 C D N.C. (C5) (G/B) Am7 D

P.M. ₁ 1/2 P.M. ----- P.M. ₁ P.M. ₁

Bass

*Note played first time only.

2nd time, skip ahead to **F** Bridge (bar 49)

I ain't wasting

no more time

(2nd time) but here I go again

37 Am7 D C D

P.M. ----- P.M. -----

Bass

Gtrs. 1 and 2 substitute Fill 1 second time (see below bar 5)

Waitin' on love's **sweet charity**

C

Dadd4

G/G

Dadd4

C

Dadd4

Gtr. 3 (clean elec.)

Rhy. Fig. 1a

39 *let ring throughout*

G5
Gtrs. 1 and 2
Rhy. Fig. 1
P.M.

Bass
Bass Fig. 2

And I'm gonna hold on for the rest of my days

'Cause I know what it means

G/B

Dadd4

C

G/B

Am7

43

end Rhy. Fig. 1a

[illegible]

Go back to **D** Chorus (bar 29)

to walk along

the lonely street of dreams

(and)

D

Am7

D

C5

C

D

46 Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.1

P.

P.

[illegible]

F Bridge (2:37)

Here I go again

Here I go again

49

E5 A5 E5 A5

P.M. P.H. P.M. P.M.

pitch: E

Here I go

53

E5 A5 E5 A5 C5 D5

P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

G Guitar Solo (2:58)

G5

Gtr. 5 plays Fill 2 (see below bar 7)

Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 1a (see bar 39)

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 39)

Gtr. 4 (elec. w/dist.)

57

1/2

+

P.M.

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 39)

*Notes played slightly 'ahead' of beat.

60

G5 D/F#

*2nd string 'caught' under ring finger.

E5 N.C.(C5) (G/B)

62 P.M.

H (3:14)

'Cause I know what it means

to walk along

the lonely street of dreams

(and)

Am7

D

Am7

D

C5 C D5 D

Gtr. 4

63

19 (19)

19

Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M. ---

P.M. ---

P.M. ---

P.M. ---

P.M. ---

Bass

I Outro (3:25)

Here I go again on my own

Goin' down the only road I've ever known

Like a

G5

C

D

C

D

G5

C

D

C

D

67

Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M. ---

P.M. ---

Bass

drifter I was born to walk alone

{ And I've made up my mind
'Cause I know what it means

G5

C

D

N.C. (C5) (G/B)

Am7

71

Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M. ---

1/2

P.M. ---

P.M. ---

Bass

(play 3 times and fade out 3rd time)

I ain't wasting no more time
to walk along the lonely street of dreams

(and)

D

Am7

D

C5

C

D5

D

74

Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M. ---

P.M. ---

P.M. ---

Bass

“PEACE OF MIND”

Boston

As heard on **BOSTON**

Words and Music by **TOM SCHOLZ** • Transcribed by **ANDY ALEDORT**

A Intro (0:00)

Moderate Rock ♩ = 132

C#m

A

E

B5

C#m

A

E

B5

Gtr. 1 (acous.)

Rhy. Fig. 1

Rhy. Fig. 1

T	5	X	6	(6)	6	X	X	X	X	9	9		5	X	6	(6)	6	X	X	X	X	9	9	
A	4	X	7	(7)	7	X	X	X	X	9	9		6	X	7	(7)	7	X	X	X	X	9	9	
B	4	X	5	(5)	5	X	X	X	X	7	7		4	X	5	(5)	5	X	X	X	X	7	7	

Gtr. 2 (elec. w/dist.; double-tracked)

TAB					9:11-9-7
-----	--	--	--	--	----------

Bass (w/pick)

TAB	4	-	-	-	-	9 11 9 7
	4					

(0:07)

C#m

A

E

B5

C#m

A

E

B5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice simile (see bar 1)

Gtr. 2

5 

Bass

The first system of the musical score for 'The Rose Tree' consists of four measures. The first measure contains the notes 4, 4, 7, 5 (5), and 4, with a slur over the last three notes. The second measure contains the notes 6, 7, 7, 7, 9, 7, (7), 9, 11, and 9, with a slur over the last five notes. The third measure contains the notes 4, 4, 7, 5 (5), 5, 4, and 2, with a slur over the last four notes. The fourth measure contains the notes 0, 0, 4, 7, (7), 6, 7, and 6, with a slur over the last four notes. The notes are written on a single-line staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C).

C#m

A

E

B5

C#m

A

E

B5

9

9[•] 9 (9) 9 6 7 9 6 (6) 7 6 7 9[•] 9 (9) 7 9 11 12 9 (9) 11 9 11 9 7

4 7 5 (5) 4 6 7 7 7 9 7 (7) 9 11 9 4 7 5 (5) 5 4 6 7 7 7 9 7 (7) 9 11 9 11 9

B Pre-verse (0:22)

1. Now if you're

*E

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Rhy. Fig. 2

13

Gr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)

Rhy. Fig. 2a

Bass

*Chord name represents overall tonality.

C **Verses** (0:30, 1:13, 2:55)

	feelin'	kinda	low	about the dues you've been payin'
(2.)	climbin'	to the top	of the company	ladder
(3.)	body's	got advice	They just keep on	givin'

Future's comin' much too slow
Hope it doesn't take too long
Doesn't mean too much to me

And you
Can't you

F5

D5

A5

E5

Gtr. 2

let ring

17 *let ring*

(Bass plays simile on repeats)

wanna run but somehow you just keep on stayin'
see there'll come a day when it won't matter
Lots of people have to make believe they're livin'

Can't decide on which way to go
Come a day when you'll be gone
Can't decide who they should be

whoa

whoa
whoa

yeah yeah yeah

E5

D5

A5

B5

[illegible]

D Chorus (0:47, 1:30, 3:12)

I understand about indecision But I don't care if I get behind
(1st time only) (I understand but I do)

C#5 A5 E5 B5 C#5 A5 E5 B5

Rhy. Fig. 3

26

People livin' in competition All I want is to have my piece of mind

C#5 A5 E5 B5 C#5 A5 E5 B5 A5

30

(1:06)

Yeah

E

(Whoa)

2. Now you're

36

2, 3.

E Bridge (1:49, 3:30)

Take a look ahead

Take a look ahead

A5 B5 A5 C#5 E5 B5 A5 C#5 E5 B5

Gtr. 2

40

Gtrs. 3 and 4 (clcc. w/dist.)

pick scrapes, 2nd time only, on each bridge

Gtr. 3 Gtr. 4 Gtr. 3

Bass

Yeah yeah yeah yeah
A5 C#5 B5 E

Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 2a
(see bar 13)

(feedback, fade in)

Gtr. 4 (elec. w/dist.)

46

F Guitar Solo (2:11)

D5 A5 E5 D5 A5 E5

Gtr. 4

51

Gtr. 5 (elec. w/dist.)

Gtr. 3

Bass

D5 A5 E5 D5 A5 B5

55

G Harmony Leads Interlude (2:28)

C#5 A5 E5 B5 C#m A5 E5 B5

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 twice (see bar 26)

Gtr. 5

60

Gtr. 4

Bass

C#m A5 E5 B5 C#m A5 E5 B5 A5

64

Gtr. 5

Gtr. 4

Gtr. 2

Bass

H Pre-verse (2:48)Go back to **C** 3rd Verse (bar 17)

3. Now every-

E5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 13)

Gtrs. 4 and 5

70

Bass

I (3:44)

Look ahead (Whew)
A5 C#5 B5 A5 C#5 B5 A5 C#m B
Gtr. 2 *Gtrs. 2, 3 and 4 (elec. w/dist.)

75

*Composite of rhythm and lead guitars; Gtr. 2 plays low, two-note power chords while Gtrs. 3 and 4 play higher single notes.

(Whew) (Whew)

A C#m B A C#m B A B

78

J Breakdown/ Re-intro (3:57)

C#5 A5 E5 B5 C#5 A5 E5 B5
Gtr. 2

82

K Outro (4:05)

C#5 A5 E5 B5 C#5 A5 E5 B5
Gtr. 2 Rhy. Fig. 4

86

C#5 A5 E5 B5 C#5 A5 E5 B5

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 until fade (see bar 86)

90

Bass

C#5 A5 E5 B5 C#5 A5 E5 B5

*Gtr. 3 plays Riff A until fade (see bar 86)**Gtr. 4*

94

C#5 A5 E5 B5 C#5 A5 E5 B5

Riff B

98

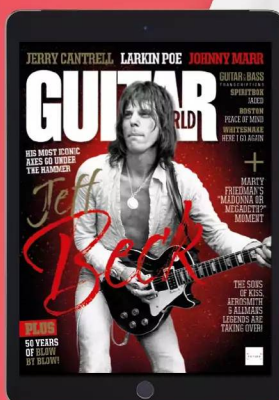
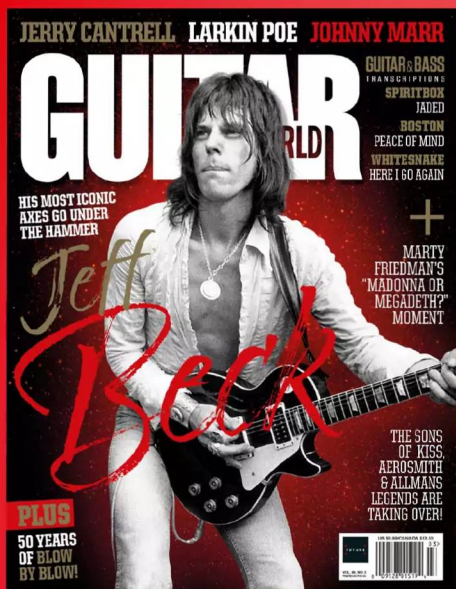
*Begin gradual fade**Fade out 2nd time**Gtr. 5**Gtr. 4 plays Riff B until fade (see bar 98)*

102

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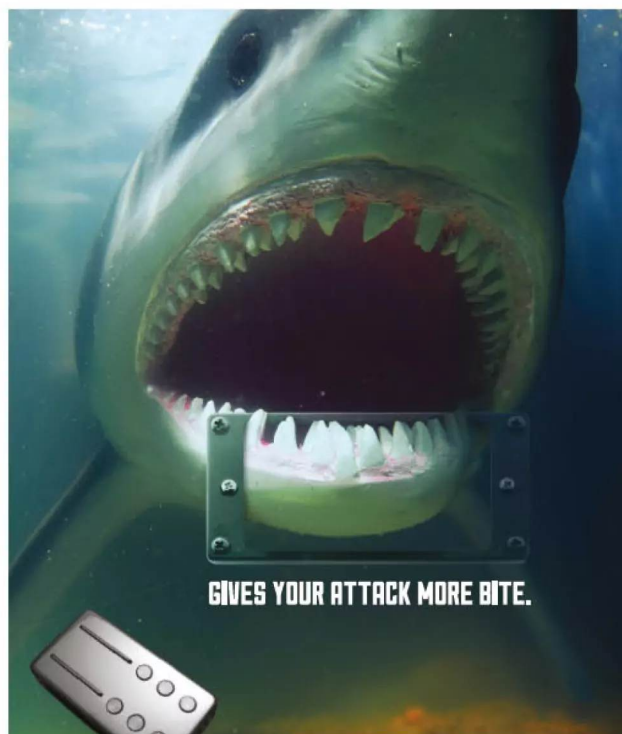
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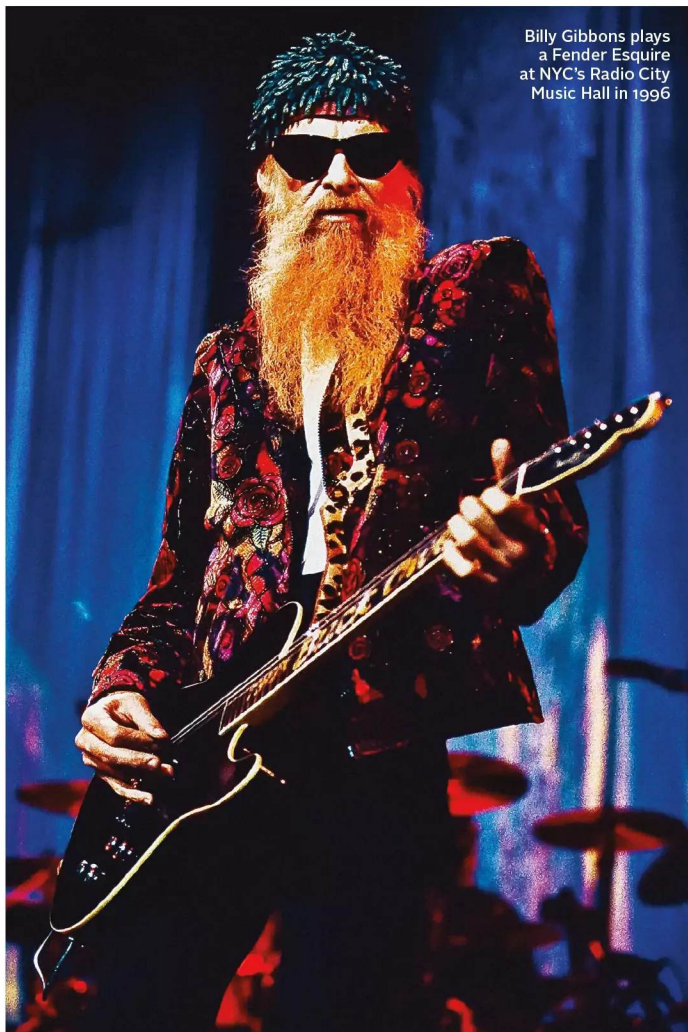
CATEGORY: SOLIDBODY ELECTRIC GUITAR

IT'S PRETTY DAMN cool that the very first commercially produced solidbody electric guitar, the Fender Esquire, can still kick serious butt today; you can't say that about too many 75-year-olds. Many guitarists often forget that the Esquire came before the Telecaster and that a two-pickup version of the Esquire, which came a few months after the single-pickup version, was essentially the first Broadcaster/Nocaster/Telecaster. But here I'm just going to focus on the single-pickup version.

Featuring just one single-coil pickup in the bridge position, a volume knob and a tone knob, the Esquire seems like a no-frills minimalist design. However, if you look closely you'll notice it also has a three-position blade switch. Instead of the usual pickup switching function, this switch ingeniously provides access to three different wiring configurations that enable it to maximize the potential of its otherwise minimalist design. As a result, the Esquire also provides distinctive tones that aren't available from the Telecaster.

In position one (switch all the way back pointing to the bottom of the guitar) the pickup is wired to the volume control only, taking the tone potentiometer and capacitor out of the equation. This is a bright and bold setting that's perfect for loud solos that cut right through the mix. This is basically the single-coil equivalent of what Eddie Van Halen did in 1977 when he wired a humbucker directly to the volume control on his legendary Frankenstein guitar, but pre-dating Eddie's feat by 27 years.

In the middle position the tone pot and cap are added to the circuit, resulting in the same setting and similar tones as a



Billy Gibbons plays a Fender Esquire at NYC's Radio City Music Hall in 1996

Telecaster's bridge pickup-only setting. The third position (full forward) was something Leo Fender designed so the Esquire could be used as an ersatz bass (mind you this was before he invented the Precision Bass). Here, the tone pot is bypassed again, but a

"This is basically the single-coil equivalent of what Eddie Van Halen did when he wired a humbucker directly to the volume control on his Frankenstein guitar"

capacitor and resistor are wired to the switch to provide a bass roll-off function.

The original Esquire with its butterscotch blonde finish, maple neck and black pickguard still looks as cool as it did in the mid Fifties when a young Jeff Beck was seduced by the instrument in the hands of Gene Vincent's and Little Richard's guitar players in *The Girl Can't Help It*. When Beck got his own Esquire in late June/early July 1965, he showcased its versatility on Yardbirds tracks like the howling train whistles and grinding riff of "The Train Kept A-Rollin'," the psychedelic squall and feedback experiments of "Shapes of Things," the percussive rave-up of "I'm a Man" and much more.

Other notable artists and recordings featuring the Esquire include Johnny Cash's early Sun singles with Luther Perkins, Steve Cropper on Booker T. and the M.G.'s "Green Onions," Syd Barrett and David Gilmour with Pink Floyd, Paul McCartney with the Beatles, Bruce Springsteen throughout his entire career, Brian May on Queen's

"Crazy Little Thing Called Love," Billie Joe Armstrong with Green Day and many others. Billy Gibbons is a particularly notable connoisseur par excellence who has brandished many dazzling custom Esquires with ZZ Top over the years.

Today, Fender/Squier offers a variety of Esquire models updated with bridge humbucking pickups as well as the super-cool Brad Paisley Esquire, which sort of "cheats" with its hidden Seymour Duncan Secret Agent neck pickup and bridge/both/neck Tele-style wiring. But whether it's a vintage version or a modern update, nothing quite defines the phrase "less is more" than a Fender Esquire. **GW**



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