

GUITAR *GRL* MAGAZINE

TRIBUTE TO ALL-FEMALE "TRIBUTE" BANDS

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Issue 15 | \$14.50

ELECTRIFIED

PRS
BOSS
SNARK
FENDER
RED PANDA PEDALS

Nancy *Wilson*

LARI BASILIO | ANDIE ARONOW | PAULA BOGGS | THE WARNING | ALLY VENABLE | SOPHIE BURRELL | PLUSH
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A woman with long dreadlocks is sitting in a modern, ribbed armchair. She is wearing a dark blue jacket with floral embroidery and dark pants. She has her hand near her face, looking thoughtfully at the camera. The background features a large potted plant, a warm-toned lamp, and vertical blinds, creating a cozy, bohemian atmosphere.

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*Singer-Songwriter
Shevonne Philidor*

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ROCKS
INSPIRES**



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Featured Artist: Nikki Stringfield



Photo by Jack Lue



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TARA TALK

Remember *The Washington Post* article that talked about the death of the electric guitar? Guitar sales have skyrocketed during the pandemic as more people are picking up the guitar and learning to play. Manufacturers have been scrambling to keep up with demand.

Fender's 2018 study "Illuminating the State of Today's Guitar Players" shed some important insights into today's buyers—"Women continue to define the emerging guitar market, accounting for fifty percent of all beginner and aspirational players." Based on our twelve plus years in business in the retail and media industry, we continue to see a rise in young women interested in playing guitar. Today, there are many organizations empowering women in the music industry, not only as musicians but as producers and engineers.

And manufacturers are taking notice. Fender has rolled out over the past several months signature models for H.E.R., Billie Eilish, and Chrissie Hynde, with possibly more on the way. Gibson this year released models for Nancy Wilson and Orianthi, Ibanez released the LB1 for Lari Basilio, and Brian May introduced the Arielle signature guitar designed after the musician's own "Two Tone" guitar she made with a friend.

In this issue, we highlight the "electric" guitar and the many musicians who have chosen this as their instrument of choice. There's just something magical about the electric guitar—the many body shapes, the tone it creates, the feel of the neck, and the music it inspires.

We chatted with **Nancy Wilson** and **Lari Basilio** on their new signature models. **Paula Boggs** was introduced as the first Black female to sit on the Board of Fender Musical Instruments Corporation, and she talked with us about her impressive background and inspirations. We heard from **Helen Ibe**, **Ivy Ford**, and **Ally Venable** on their music. The new all-female rock band from New York, **Plush**, filled us in on the band members' backgrounds in music and how it was formed. The sister trio from Mexico, **The Warning**, is releasing a new album and chatted with us about working with producer David Bendeth.

When it comes to tone, **Kiki Wong**, **Jess Garland**, **Sophie Burrell**, and **Kanami Tono** talk tone and guitar gear. We're paying tribute to all-female "tribute" bands with interviews from **Judas Priestess**, **Priss**, **Zepparella**, **Iron Maidens**, and **Ballbreakers**. Woman That Rock founder **Andie Aronow** shared with us what it takes to succeed in business, and **Abigail Kirwan** of Secret Swan Custom Guitars in the UK explained how she began creating the most gorgeous and unique custom guitars.

Check out our features section, where we cover the 2021 She Rocks Awards, Believe in Music Week, the opening of the National Museum of African American Music in Nashville, and share new announcements here at *Guitar Girl Magazine*.

For reviews, we checked out the Red Panda Tensor Pedal, the BOSS Pocket GT Effects Processor, a PRS SE 24 Custom in a gorgeous Bonnie Pink, the Snark Silver tuner, and two Fender instruments from the American Professional II Series—Precision Bass and Jazzmaster. Get ready to play these babies with lessons on rock guitar and mastering the minor scale. And, of course, we offer insightful tips and other fun stuff like our Gig Gallery, music announcements, mind games, and more.

Read on and enjoy it!

~ Tara Low

GUITAR GIRL MAGAZINE ENCOURAGE. INSPIRE. EMPOWER.

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ISSUE 15 | SPRING 2021

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GUITAR GIRL MAGAZINE 2021 CALENDAR

Guitar Girl Magazine's 2021 calendar is a beautiful wall calendar. This 11 x 8.5-inch calendar features the extremely talented Soleil Laurent on the cover, followed by 12 months each showcasing a fabulous female guitar player followed by a bonus four-month pre-planner for 2022 and two pages for notes.



JANUARY
Nikki Stringfield



FEBRUARY
Alex Nicole Windsor



MARCH
Guitar Gabby



APRIL
Madeline Rosene



MAY
Serena Laurel



JUNE
Aliah Guerra



JULY
Holly West



AUGUST
Moriah Formica



SEPTEMBER
Anna Sentina



OCTOBER
Tiffany Lloyd



NOVEMBER
Nikki O'Neill



DECEMBER
Jessica Kaczmarek



PREPLANNER
Indigo Una



NOTES
Jimena Fosado



NOTES
Mean Mary James



Order yours today for \$14.99 on our site at GuitarGirlMag.com.

Beverly "Guitar"
Watkins performing
at Sweet Georgia's
Juke Joint -
February 2013

Photos by Tara Low



BEVERLY "GUITAR" WATKINS

Born April 6, 1939,
in Atlanta, GA —
Deceased October 1,
2019

Self-taught on
guitar.

Performed
with Piano Red
under various band
names during the
1960s.

In 1998,
performed as
part of the Women
of Blues "Hot
Mamas" tour.

In 2001, performed
as part of the Blues Al
Feminile tour in Italy,
which honors American
women in blues, jazz,
and gospel.

Did not record her own
music until she was in
her 60s.

Performed with
James Brown,
Ray Charles, and
B.B. King.

Discovered by
Music Makers Relief
Foundation in the early
1990s.

Could be seen regularly
throughout Atlanta at
Blind Willie's and Sweet
Georgia's Juke Joint
until her passing.

Released
debut solo
album *Back in Business*
in 1999, which earned
her a W.C. Handy Award
nomination in 2001
in the "Best New
Artist Debut"
category.

Released *The Feelings of
Beverly 'Guitar' Watkins*
in 2005 and *The Spiritual
Expression of Beverly 'Guitar'
Watkins* in 2009.

Known for
slinging her guitar
over her head and
playing it upside
down!

THE NINTH ANNUAL SHE ROCKS AWARDS CELEBRATES OUTSTANDING WOMEN IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

Nancy Wilson, The Go-Go's, Cherie Currie, Cindy Blackman Santana, Amy Lee, and many other music and audio industry professionals were honored at the prestigious ANNUAL event.

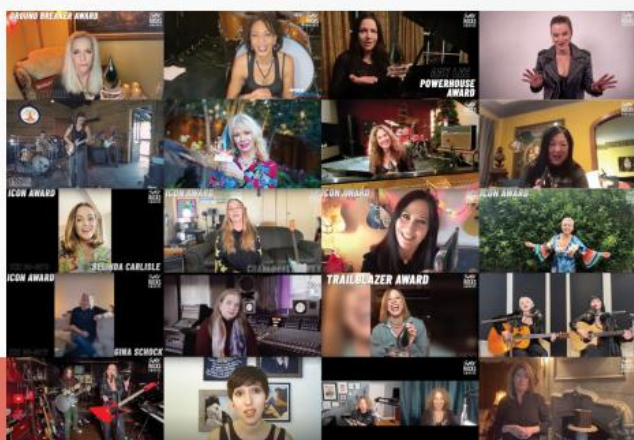


Photo credit: She Rocks Awards

2021 She Rocks Awards honorees, performers, and hosts include L to R: Cherie Currie, Cindy Blackman Santana, Amy Lee, Lzzy Hale (host), Magnolia Boulevard, Nancy Wilson, Starr Parodi, Margaret Cho, Belinda Carlisle, Charlotte Caffey, Kathy Valentine, Jane Weidlin, Gina Schock, Ann Mincieli, Gwen Bethel Riley, Command Sisters, Lzzy Hale performing with Halestorm bandmate Joe Hottinger, Kim Warnick, Laura Clapp Davidson, and Laura B. Whitmore, Sharon Hennessey

Among many other events to be held virtually due to the pandemic, the ninth annual **She Rocks Awards** held their first virtual show on January 22, 2021. The annual awards show is held during the National Association of Music Merchants convention, which was also virtual this year and called Believe in Music Week, more on that later. Founded by Laura B. Whitmore, the Women's International Music Network (the WiMN) celebrates and honors the outstanding contributions of women in the music industry.

A virtual red carpet hosted by **John Stapleton**, Senior National Artist, MAC Cosmetics, presented the event in a Q&A format. Yahoo Entertainment music editor **Lyndsey Parker** handled the pre-show countdown, and **Lzzy Hale** hosted the show. Kicking off the evening's performances was the Kentucky-based band **Magnolia Boulevard** singing "Ride," followed by **Lzzy Hale** and **Joe Hottinger** performing "Rock Show."

Other performances for the evening included **Cherie Currie** with special guests **Suzi Quatro**, **Jake Hays**, and **Nick Gilder**, performing "Roxy Roller." Hale added that Suzi Quatro was "not only one of my personal inspirations, but she is one of the original trailblazers. She wrote the rule book for how to be a great

rock n' roll frontwoman." **Amy Lee** of **Evanescence** performed their new song "Use My Voice."

The Go-Go's performed their new single "Club Zero," and **Nancy Wilson** and her band covered Bruce Springsteen's "The Rising." More performances were sprinkled throughout the evening.

There were uplifting and encouraging messages from current and previous honorees, and it was great virtually to step inside the homes and studios of all involved.

Honorees:

- **Nancy Wilson**, Legend Award – co-founder of the multi-platinum, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inducted band **Heart** – "Thank you for supporting me and for lifting me up."
- **The Go-Go's**, Icon Award – the first all-female band to top the Billboard charts that both wrote their own songs and played their own instruments – "It's amazing and really wonderful to be recognized." – **Belinda Carlisle**
- **Cherie Currie**, Groundbreaker Award – founding member of the pioneering all-female rock band **The Runaways** – "Thank you She Rocks for this honor, I will cherish it for the rest of my life."
- **Cindy Blackman Santana**, Inspire Award – respected jazz and rock drummer with **Santana** and **Lenny Kravitz**, among many others.
- **Amy Lee**, Powerhouse Award – co-founder and lead vocalist for the rock band **Evanescence** – "To all of the women being honored tonight. You ROCK!"
- **Margaret Cho**, Dreaming Out Loud Award – Emmy and GRAMMY-nominated stand-up comedian, actress, fashion designer, author, and singer-songwriter – "I'm so honored, it's very exciting, we ROCK."
- **Starr Parodi**, Vision Award – composer, pianist, conductor, arranger, music director, and president of **The Alliance For Women Film Composers** – "This award means

so much to me, especially for what it represents – all the women who have lifted each other up in the past so that this can even exist."

- **Ann Mincieli**, Mad Skills Award – GRAMMY-winning recording engineer, studio coordinator for Alicia Keys, and co-founder of NYC-destination studio **Jungle City** – "Thanks very much and keep dreaming big and hustling hard."
- **Sharon Hennessey**, Excellence Award – President of **On-Stage, The Music People** (a division of JAM) and the driving force behind the company's two brands, **On-Stage** and **TMP-Pro** – "There has never been a better time to follow your heart, do what you love. Your passion will always lead you to your purpose."
- **Gwen Bethel Riley**, Trailblazer Award – Senior VP of Music for **Peloton Interactive** – "I get all of my energy and inspiration from all of you who kick ass on stage."
- **Kim Warnick**, Warrior Award – Executive Director of **Calling All Crows**
- **Laura Clapp Davidson**, Champion Award – singer/songwriter and Retail Market Development Lead at **Shure Microphones**

Closing out the evening were the Canadian duo, Sarah and Charlotte Command, the **Command Sisters** with their acoustic cover of the iconic Go-Go's song, "We've Got The Beat."

Kudos to Laura for pulling off a fantastic event! 🎉



Watch the 2021 She Rocks Awards, the pre-show and virtual red carpet [HERE](#)

NAMM GOES VIRTUAL WITH BELIEVE IN MUSIC WEEK

Like so many others joining the virtual conventions arena due to the pandemic, was the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM). The annual trade show navigated new territories this year with a week of virtual events called Believe in Music Week via Swapcard. The week included educational sessions, performances, awards shows, discussions by music industry leaders, and manufacturer announcements and new gear demos. Those individuals who have always dreamt of attending NAMM to check out all the latest and greatest in musical instruments, had front row seats for free via the web—what a great opportunity to be part of the exciting NAMM Show to partake in all that it offers.

According to NAMM, the event held 983 special sessions and events, including 611 hours of live-streamed and programmed

content, nearly 200 education, training, and professional development sessions presented by 391 speakers, and new product announcements from 1,227 participating brands.

Some standout moments from the week:

- » Fred and Dinah Gretsch, the Gretsch Company, and Jerry Ash and the Ash Family announced the creation of the Bernice Ash Memorial Scholarship Fund as part of The NAMM Foundation. This charitable organization funds grants, research, and advocacy in support of music education. Bernice is the wife of Jerry Ash, the eldest son of Sam Ash, and served as Vice President with the company. She passed away on December 1, 2020.
- » Some of our favorite artist interviews were of CAM, Cherie Currie, Lzzy Hale, and Orianthi.



- » Melissa Etheridge was presented with NAMM's "Music for Life" Award, where she accepted the award virtually from her home studio—what a treat!
- » The She Rocks Awards show was also streamed via the app.
- » Check our New Gear page to see our top picks.

I must say NAMM did a great job this year pulling together the

virtual show, and it opened up so many doors for manufacturers and retailers to connect to a worldwide audience. There's talk that the future will hold a combination of in-person and virtual events. Personally, nothing beats the energy and excitement of the real deal.

If you missed it, many of the events and manufacturers' new product announcements can be seen on YouTube. 📺—

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC OPENS IN NASHVILLE



It's been a long time coming. The National Museum of African American Music held its virtual ribbon-cutting ceremony on Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Hosted by NMAAM President and CEO H. Beecher Hicks III, government officials and community leaders joined in. Inspirational messages from donors and partners of NMAAM were offered, followed by Kane Brown singing "Stand By Me" and Willie Jones performing his new single, "American Dream."

Showcasing over fifty music genres and African American music styles from its roots to the modern-day, it is the only museum today bringing forth this important history. The various galleries offer film, photographs, artifacts, clothing, and other objects telling the story of music from the early 1600s to today.

The museum is now open with limited capacity. Plan your visit at nmaam.org. 📺—

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS AT GUITAR GIRL MAGAZINE

Photo by Jawan Scott

Diversity Editor. Logan is currently writing a twelve-part series titled "Being a BOSS," where she walks us through her journey as the TxLips Band, LLC founder and shares insights and tips for other women to pursue their dream of becoming a boss.

"I am excited to join GGM as the Diversity Editor. The mission of GGM is to represent all womxn and girls worldwide, and I am looking forward to continuing that mission in creating spaces for all womxn of color to shine the best way they know how; by being themselves."

Gabriella "Guitar Gabby" Logan is an Atlanta Native and proud graduate of Spelman College and Vermont Law School. Her environmental and music law background fueled her desire to start and manage the international touring collective, TxLips Band, LLC. Logan believes it is important for artists to be well-rounded and versed in many areas of the music business, thus inspiring women and Black musicians worldwide to be an unstoppable force. In addition to her contributions here at *Guitar Girl Magazine*, she is currently the Board Chair of Girls Rock Asheville.

When it comes to overseeing gear review requests, **Vanessa Izabella** has taken on the role of Gear Editor and will be writing a column called "Vanessa's Vibe."

"I am very excited to be taking on the role of Gear Editor.

I get the opportunity to combine my love of writing and exploring new musical equipment. Music technology is constantly evolving, and it's exciting to see innovative gear being developed that can inspire and expand musical possibilities."

Vanessa Izabella is a professional guitarist that started playing music at a young age. Progressing through high school, Vanessa was playing and performing on multiple instruments, including guitar, piano, and trumpet. She was awarded a scholarship to attend Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA. During her time there, she studied the guitar playing of such influences as Pat Martino, Slash, Pat Metheny, John Scofield, Eric Johnson, and many others. After graduating with a degree in Music Business, she went on to work with such artists as Pat Metheny and Christian McBride. Vanessa has traveled the world playing guitar, visiting countries such as France, Germany, Egypt, Italy, Japan, South America, and the Caribbean. She has performed on the bill with such renowned artists as Darius Rucker, L.A. Sno, KISS, Skid Row, Paramore, and Joan Jett. She is currently recording and performing as the frontwoman for rock trio BAST.

As we continue to grow and expand, we have tapped into two of our current contributing editors' skills and talents to expand their roles.

Guitar Girl Magazine is excited to announce two leading ladies who rock the world in their own very special way. These talented women have played music worldwide, which has allowed them to tap into their diverse backgrounds in music education and business. In addition to playing some great music and leading the way for women and young children, they make an impact here at *Guitar Girl Magazine*, enlightening us all to the empowerment of what it means to be a female in the music industry.

We are pleased to announce that **Gabriella Logan, aka Guitar Gabby**, will be assisting in our diversity and inclusion efforts as our



Photo by Jack Lue

INSIDE THE INDUSTRY

MUSICIAN, LAWYER, ENTREPRENEUR PAULA BOGGS: SHATTERING GLASS CEILINGS FOR WOMEN OF COLOR

By Guitar Gabby

Born in Washington, DC, Paula Boggs found her passion for music at a very young age. She was born to two HBCU Howard grads, both of whom had the drive to succeed. She describes her road to music, business, and law as "a stitching of quilts." She began writing music shortly after picking up the guitar at the age of ten. She began to find her identity and other passions that eventually led her to become the first Black woman to join the Board of Directors at Fender Musical Instruments Corporation, as announced by the company effective 2021.

"Though Fender's products touch every corner of the globe, I also can't think of a brand more reflecting America's rich musical traditions from the Delta, to Appalachia, to Kansas City jazz, to Carnegie Hall to Seattle's grunge," said Paula Boggs. "As a longtime fan, customer, and working musician, I'm excited by Fender's dynamic present and future. It's an honour to join the Fender team."

"I'm thrilled to welcome Paula to FMIC's board. Paula's impressive professional experience, coupled with her passion for music brings tremendous value to FMIC's management team as we enjoy record company growth," said Andy Mooney, CEO Fender Musical Instruments Corporation.

"I am excited for Paula to join the FMIC Board. Her business and legal expertise combined with her passion for music and philanthropy will be invaluable to the overall vision of the brand," said Mark Fukunaga, chairman of Fender Musical Instruments Corporation.

Paula has had an extensive legal career. She served as the Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary, Law and Corporate Affairs at Starbucks Corporation from 2002 to 2012. Before Starbucks, Paula served as an Assistant US Attorney, an attorney for the US Army, and as a partner in private practice.

Among her many accomplishments, President Obama appointed her in 2013 to the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. She was also among America's first women to receive Army Airborne wings and a Congressional appointment to the US Naval Academy.

Eventually, Paula left the legal field to pursue other music, business, public speaking, and charitable work opportunities. One of the things I loved about interviewing Paula was her transparency in feeling a slight loss of passion for music near the middle stages of her journey. She says, "With a lot



of people, you think you are on a path, and then something comes and bumps you off that path. It isn't something you necessarily anticipate, but it sometimes just happens." For Paula, an unexpected death of a family member interrupted her life flow. Learning how to grieve in a different way allowed her to take a look in the rearview mirror and reconnect with a passion that was truly never lost—music.

Today, Boggs lives in Seattle and, among her many endeavors, fronts the Paula Boggs Band

(vocals, guitar, ukulele) with fellow bandmates Mark Chinen (guitar, banjo), Marina Christopher (bass, vocals), Tor Dietrichson (percussion, vocals), Paul Matthew Moore (keys, accordion, vocals), Jacob Evans (drums), and Darren Loucas (mandolin, guitar, harmonica, fiddle, lap steel, vocals).

These monumental accomplishments speak volumes to her family hustle and commitment to education in every facet. Paula's father, Nathaniel Boggs, Jr., was a biology professor at Virginia State University and her mother, Janice Barber, was a certified teacher who many years later would "take herself and her four children out of the segregated South to Europe where she became a teacher in the Department of Defense school system."

Stemming from the strength of her enslaved ancestors, Paula's great grandfather, Robert H. Anderson, Sr., showed the determination and will to fight for things he wanted and knew he deserved. Despite every measure put in place to prevent slaves from learning, growing,

and owning, her grandfather persevered and was able to own his own home by the early 1900s. This family hustle never died down; instead, it grew.

Paula's mother was an exemplary model of a woman who "demonstrated courage with no road map," a woman whose tenacity and endurance would demonstrate what courage really looked like, giving Paula and her siblings the confidence to pursue their dreams—and they all continue to do just that. Paula's existence and contribution to Fender have been and will continue to be a major push in the narrative that Black women do exist, and representation does matter. Paula's advice to young artists out there pursuing their dream is simple: "Continuing to ask yourself what do you want to do with music? Through every opportunity and setback that happens, what do you want to do with your music, and why are you in this? Never lose sight of what is in front of you. Remain authentic; that is the key."

To learn more about Paula Boggs as the business leader of Boggs Media, philanthropist, and public speaker, visit PaulaBoggs.com. To learn more about the Paula Boggs Band, visit PaulaBoggsBand.net.

Photos by Tom Reese



INSIDE THE INDUSTRY

WOMEN THAT ROCK

FOUNDER ANDIE ARONOW:

DOING WHAT IT TAKES TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS

By Tara Low

Passionate about the music industry, Andie Aronow has taken the skills and knowledge that she has developed over the last decade working in the music industry and her entrepreneurial drive to create an organization dedicated to promoting women in music. Aronow fills us in on her background and what it takes to navigate and make it in the industry.

You started your career in music when you were just eight years old. Has working full time in music always been what you wanted to pursue?
Absolutely! Though the area of focus in music has changed tremendously. As a kid, I started my musical career as a professional voiceover artist/jingle singer. I envisioned myself pursuing a long-term career as a singer and recording artist. That said, as I got older, I found myself wanting to perform less and instead becoming more and more interested in the business of music. As a

freshman at USC in Los Angeles, I discovered that the Thornton School of Music had a Music Industry major, and it felt like a lightbulb went off. I started studying music business there and ultimately transferred into NYU Tisch's Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music, where I really started to hone in on my interests and skills. But it became absolutely clear to me by the middle of college that working full-time in music and pursuing a career journey in the music business was my path!



Can you tell us a little about your work on the GRAMMY U program at The Recording Academy (TRA)?
While I was a student at the Clive Davis Institute, my mentor Lauren Davis recommended me for a job with The Recording Academy—they were

looking for a new GRAMMY U rep. I jumped at the opportunity, of course, and worked for that full year (while I was a college sophomore) for The Recording Academy's New York chapter. TRA has chapters all across the country, and their GRAMMY U program is guided by a network of 'reps' from all of the national chapters. GRAMMY U is essentially a collegiate-level membership program that allows young aspiring musicians and music entrepreneurs to become student members of The Recording Academy and offers a host of incredible events, networking opportunities, and other cool perks. I was responsible for all GRAMMY U member recruitment (which meant doing a ton of tabling and outreach at various universities in the tri-state area) and helping to plan cool music and music-industry events for our GRAMMY U members to attend—concerts, panel Q&A's, private soundcheck experiences (we did one during my time with Taylor Swift!), seminars, etc. It was a very cool and challenging experience, and I became a part of the NY Recording Academy chapter's staff family, which was one of the very best parts for me!

Did your time heading up that program help you realize your passion for entrepreneurship, or has it always been an interest of yours?

I would say that I've always had a bit of an entrepreneurship bug. I've always had really big dreams, and I actually think my time at the Clive Davis Institute was what helped empower those dreams and make me feel that striking out on my own to create something amazing and impactful might really be possible. After graduating and working for a number of companies and learning the industry ropes, I started to really have the itch to work more for myself and create something of my own.

Between your 2011 graduation and your 2018 founding of the organization Women That Rock, you worked primarily in music marketing. What were some of the tools you learned during that time that helped you in founding Women That Rock?

Well, first and foremost, I learned about relationship-building in the music industry and the importance of strong connections and building strong relationships. During my time working at TouchTunes (a very cool digital jukebox network), I really developed a knowledge of social media and digital marketing (everything from how to manage posts to optimizing visuals to creating engaging and message-driven copy). I learned how to work with major labels and their release priorities, I learned tools in how to effectively communicate with graphic designers—I even got some live event production experience there, as I got to work onsite at a number of festival events (TouchTunes' annual pop-up event at CMA Fest in Nashville, for example). Post-TouchTunes, I did some music supervision for TV, A&R, and executive production work with a recording studio.

During that chapter, I learned the tools of communicating effectively with artists and producers about musical direction, optimizing music for advertising, and relationship building with bands and emerging artists!

As mentioned, you founded the music discovery platform Women That Rock in 2018. Where did you find the inspiration for that venture?

Right before I started Women That Rock, I was working with a recording studio in NYC doing some A&R/artist outreach and executive creative production work, and I started to develop a network of emerging musician friends. Knowing about my background in the business, these artists started coming to me for advice about all kinds of career-related things—how to navigate a single release contract with a small label, how to strategize around an upcoming album release, branding and marketing advice, etc. Many of these artists were womxn, and I saw how hard these indie artists work and how tough it is to break into the industry. Women That Rock started off as just an Instagram page for spotlighting up-and-coming womxn musicians, and the inspiration came from two things: first, my desire to launch something on my own, and second, my desire to help support these amazing emerging womxn artists trying to get their music and their voices out there.

Can you tell us about the mission of Women That Rock?

Absolutely! Women That Rock is a music curation and discovery company dedicated to amplifying the voices of the best rising womxn in music. Through femme-focused live and virtual music events, Women That Rock connects artists, fans, and brands and creates safe spaces for womxn on stage. Women That Rock also supports and spotlights rising womxn artists through dedicated features on its digital promotion platform, building community and promoting gender equality in the music industry. WTR also celebrates diversity, representing womxn artists of all musical genres, locations, ages, nationalities, and skill sets, and prioritizes the amplification of BIPOC and LGBTQ+/GNC voices.

In addition to your position as the founder of Women That Rock, you're also an adjunct instructor at NYU's Clive Davis Institute (CDI) of Recorded Music. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

First, I'll say that I never envisioned myself being a college professor! It's honestly been one of the most incredible surprises that's happened during my career thus far and an ENORMOUS gift. I absolutely love working with young aspiring music moguls and emerging artists. The student talent at CDI is mind-blowing, and to be honest, the students inspire me constantly in my own work and my own goals. What I enjoy most about teaching is, in a way, what I also enjoy most about my work with WTR—supporting the dreams

and careers of young emerging talent. Helping students to learn new things and put those skills into practice right before my eyes is unbelievably rewarding, as is sitting down with a young artist and mentoring them on how to take their art and their career to the next level. I also LOVE being back at my alma mater and re-connected in such a profound way with the CDI community, which really does feel like my family.

Do you have plans to go full time with one role or the other in the future, or are you happy with your current balance between the two?

Currently, I'm loving doing both! Who knows where the career journey will take me, but as of now, I'm fully committed to both roles. And frankly, I feel that one role supports the other and vice versa—my work at CDI supports and informs my work as founder of WTR, and my work with WTR supports and informs what I bring to the table as a professor at CDI!

What advice do you have for young women that are hoping to get involved with music and entrepreneurship as careers?

This is a HUGE question, of course, and I could go on forever! That said, here are a few key advice nuggets:

1. FIND A MENTOR - find someone a few (or many) steps ahead of you that's doing what you want to be doing in the industry (either as an artist or as a businessperson) and learn from them! Outreach and build one or more relationships with people you can look to for advice, inspiration, and mentorship. Having someone to learn from is key, and if you're great, that person will likely start to help you or advocate for you as you demonstrate your reliability, candor, and talents!
2. ASK - otherwise known as, "Don't be afraid to ask!" So many of the opportunities and successes I've achieved have been a result of my boldness in going for it and asking for what I want. Once, I found a company I was super interested in and grew the courage to write a thoughtful email to someone in a position of power at that company (who I completely didn't know) via LinkedIn, and it landed me not only a meeting with her but ultimately a role with the company! If you have an idea or something you want or need, go for it, and ask!
3. LEARN by DOING - whatever it is that you want to do in the music industry, START DOING IT! If you want to be an artist manager, find a young indie artist whose talent you believe in and who needs help, and start to help them! Work on your management skills and make them your first client! If you want to put on live music events, put on a live event! Tap into your community and your networks and figure out how to make it happen! Start DOING the work rather than waiting for the "right" or "perfect" job to come along. 🎸

Photo provided by artist with permission to use.

PLUSH

THE ALL-FEMALE ROCK BAND READY TO TAKE THE MUSIC INDUSTRY BY STORM

By Tara Low

Pictured L to R: Bella Perron,
Brooke Colucci, Moriah
Formica, Ashley Suppa
Photo by Elissa Ebersold

Plush is a new all-female rock band from New York, with members all below the age of twenty-one. Don't let their ages fool you—they are a group on a mission to take an all-female rock band to the forefront of the genre. Plush consists of **Moriah Formica** on vocals and guitar, **Brooke Colucci** on drums, **Ashley Suppa** on bass, and lead guitarist, **Bella Perron**.

The band's frontwoman, Moriah Formica, was a contestant at NBC's hit reality show, *The Voice*, during Season 13 when she was sixteen. Moriah is remembered as the girl who got all four judges to turn their chairs with her stunning cover of Heart's "Crazy On You." The judges of the competition, Miley Cyrus and Adam Levine, openly expressed their fascination and expectations with Moriah joining Team Miley.

During the pandemic, Moriah has been busy on social media taking cover requests from fans and releasing those covers on her platforms. Several of them have received millions of views. One of those covers was "Barracuda" by Heart, performed on social media by Moriah and drummer Brooke Colucci. That performance garnered 7M views across both of their social media platforms. That left Moriah with the desire to create an all-female rock band. "I've always, always wanted to be a part of a band, not just Moriah Formica or the Moriah Formica band. I wanted to be a part of a cohesive band where we all work together. And boom, the idea of an all-female band came up," says Moriah. "I just started going after it. I had met Brooke, our drummer, through Instagram and found out that she only lived like forty minutes away from me, and I was like, 'Well if that isn't fate, I don't know what is.' The two of us had jammed a little bit and were ready to find some other players."

They added a friend of Brooke's, Ashley Suppa—who has been dubbed the "female version of Cliff Burton"—as their bass player. Moriah shared, "We had a little jam session together—me, Brooke and Ashley, at Brooke's house, and it just felt right. I couldn't believe it. It just felt so perfect."

So, a lead guitar player was all that was needed. Moriah's management company, Surface Management, placed an ad on social media. As fate would have it, one of Moriah's biggest influences and supporters, Lzzy Hale of Halestorm, saw the ad and reposted it on her platforms.

That post caught the eye of Berklee College of Music freshman Bella Perron. Bella shared her experience. "That's how I found out about them, actually. I saw it on her [Lzzy Hale's] Instagram. I've been a huge fan

of Halestorm since I was like ten. When I saw it, I thought there's nothing to lose from at least just reaching out and sending my information and an audition video. And it all just worked out."

Bella has a passion for rock. Coming from a family with a musical background. Her father plays guitar and owns a music shop. She began playing the guitar when she was five years old. "When my dad got me into bands like the Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Kiss, and Black Sabbath, I was just hooked on guitar. Like I thought, Ace Frehley really was the absolute coolest. I'd watch their concert videos and say, 'that's what I want to do.'" She recalls her first guitar, "My first guitar was a Squier Bullet Strat. It was bright pink—the Hello Kitty model."

Together, these four young and talented musicians formed Plush. Despite the soft and cutesy name, don't think for a moment that these young, talented women aren't serious. Fusing the sounds of rock bands like Aerosmith, Evanescence, and Halestorm, they released their first single, "Hate," which is garnering rave reviews and airplay—most recently, SiriusXM Octane added the single to their playlist. The song has also gotten spins from iconic stations like 95.5 KLOS and 95 WIIK Rock.

Moriah describes the band's new single as "pretty heavy-hitting. It's not like metal, but it is. It's just straight-up rock and roll. I guess that's a good way to describe it. It was inspired by a person that I really, really cared for and loved. Then they betray you in the worst way; it's really what it is—typical heartbreak and all the emotions and all the hate and pain that comes with it. At the same time, you want to hate that person, but you love them. And that's what you hate."

When it comes to songwriting for the band, Bella shared, "Usually, Moriah comes up with a song idea, she'll send it out, and we'll practice with it. We'll learn the parts or make our own adjustments, and then when we do get together about once a month, it's like we're all prepared." Moriah filled in, "For me, I may have a riff pop up in my head, or maybe I'll start writing like a verse and a chorus or whatever. Then, I show the other bandmates some ideas and say, 'Hey, what do you think of this?' We kind of just kind of go from there."

Speaking of guitar riffs, Bella has a few that inspired her. "I feel like there's a lot of those moments. I mean, I still get them. But one of the first ones was 'Shock Me' by Kiss. There's a lot of blues licks, but it's also super melodic. And I remember my dad telling me once that it's one of their best solos because everyone can sing it too. Another big one for me, too, was the first time I listened to Joe Satriani's *Surfing with the Alien* record—actually, the title track because I hadn't really listened to a lot of instrumental stuff yet. That was another one my dad got

me into. I just thought it was so cool how not a single word has been said—a forty-minute album, and it's all this guitar. You feel like you've been on a whole journey."

Like all aspiring musicians, the Plush members have their female role models they look up to for inspiration and hope. For instance, Moriah names American rocker Lzzy Hale from the hard rock band Halestorm and Amy Lee of Evanescence. She also loves Nita Strauss, Joan Jett, and Lita Ford.

"Lzzy Hale, I love her. She's amazing. I really, really love Nita Strauss, too. I'm not going to lie—I mean, she's just ridiculous; she just looks so powerful when she plays too—you look at her, and there's like some sort of power. It's like, 'Wow, I want to be that.' I really love Joan Jett too. I always just really, really respected that she always had her guitar with her. And honestly, Lita Ford too because I would see her '80s pop-up videos, and I thought she was so badass and so cool."

Just like Moriah, Bella also sought inspiration from Lita Ford and Nita Strauss.

"Growing up, the whole female aspect wasn't even something I really thought much of until I was probably twelve. It was like, 'Wait a second, I don't know any other girls that play guitar, at least in my community.' But then, when I was around 12 years old, I saw Nita Strauss live. She blew my mind. Alice Cooper was opening up for Mötley Crüe, and I was right towards the stage. Just seeing a woman that's empowered and just badass going for it—an insanely talented player on a stage full of guys. It was just cool, and it's awesome. So, she's definitely been like my main female influence. Also, Lzzy Hale too. I actually saw Lita Ford once opening up for Halestorm. And it was another show that just like blew my mind; they're both so powerful."

When it comes to gear, Moriah plays and is endorsed by ESP Guitars. "I just love them. I honestly won't play anything else. I just think that they're beautiful and they sound great. I love that they're compact—not all of them, but the ones that I play. I love their size. It's perfect because I'm a small girl, so it's super, super refreshing to have a light, smaller guitar, especially as a lead singer."

For Bella, it's Ibanez. "It's my go-to. It's special to me because it's not really an Ibanez model. It was my dad's Prestige back from the '90s. It's special to me because

it's been through so many modifications that it's not really a specific model." Being a huge Steve Vai fan, he put the body with the monkey grip on, and then he stopped playing. So I took it and put some DiMarzio pickups along with a new pickguard on it, so it would all be white. And then my other one is my blue RG as well—which feels super comfortable for me. I have small hands, so I love the super thin necks; they are really fast and comfortable to play on. And I also have a Washburn Nuno Bettencourt model, the N1, and an Epiphone Les Paul. But I'd say the past two years, Ibanez has kind of been my main tool."

Plush wants people to be able to connect to their music. They want their songs to resonate in people's minds. Moriah shared, "Honestly, my dream has always been to help people. I want to give them something to resonate with. When I first heard a song that could put exactly how I was feeling into words, that was life-changing for me, and it still is." As someone who has struggled with mental health issues, she understands. She went on to tell us, "I've struggled with mental health my whole entire life, and it's a daily struggle, and it's going to be there for the rest of my life. But sometimes, knowing that you have somebody who understands is enough to keep going and stay alive. So, I hope to be that—that's one of the many things that I hope to do for people with this band. And with the help from the other girls, it'll just be huge."

And to all the aspiring young female musicians out there, Plush says to be able to take constructive criticism. Also, "follow your gut" and "go for an opportunity," no matter how cliché it may sound. —



ALLY VENABLE

has a *Heart of Fire*

By Alex Windsor

Some musicians gradually ease into their sound, while others kick down the door at a young age in a fiery blaze—Ally Venable is very much the latter. She released her debut EP, *Wise Man*, at just fourteen years old and quickly climbed the Texas blues scene ranks, which is no small achievement at any age. Now in her early twenties, with multiple ETX Music Awards under her belt, she is already a force to be reckoned with and just getting started. Much as her 2019 single “Texas Honey” implies, Venable’s sound is dripping with tasteful vocal melodies and juicy guitar riffs.

After navigating a music industry devastated by a pandemic, Venable decided to turn up the heat with her fourth release: *Heart of Fire*. From powerful blues-rock anthems to soft tributes, *Heart of Fire* is the perfect record to lift our spirits as we prepare to face the new normal. With talented artists like Venable fanning the flames, the future of guitar music is bright.

What inspired you to first pick up a guitar?

I started singing at a young age in my church choir. It wasn’t until I was twelve years old that I took an interest in playing guitar. I was really into country music at the time. I really loved listening to Miranda Lambert and Carrie Underwood. What got me actually playing the guitar was hearing Stevie Ray Vaughan for the first time.



Photo by Lindsay Steele

Has your tone evolved at all since you started playing?

My tone has definitely evolved over time because I've learned so much since I first started to play. I'm still trying to discover what "my" tone is, but I feel like there are times when I get pretty close to getting what is in my head through to my fingers.

Tell us about your newest album, *Heart of Fire*, and what sets it apart from your previous albums?

I really enjoyed making this album. I think what sets this album apart from the other albums I've put out is just the maturity and growth shown within my guitar playing, songwriting, and overall structure of the album. I really tried to focus more on the actual songs while still having that nice guitar solo on top of them and trying new sounds on guitar and in the studio.

Did you write these songs in any particular order?

The songs weren't written in any order, really. When I write songs, I try to write about what goes on in my life because I know that whatever I went through, someone else can relate to that story or situation. We are all human. It's okay to feel a certain way at times, and to know someone else has gone through some similar struggles can help us regain the strength to push past them and meet our goals.

***Heart of Fire* features a beautiful tribute to the legendary Stevie Ray Vaughan. How did that song come to fruition?**

Thank you, I must say SRV has been a huge part of why I play the guitar, and I just wanted to have a tune on the album that salutes to him in some way. We recorded that song with Jim Gaines as a one-take in Tennessee, which is where he recorded Stevie's *In-Step* record (which has "Riviera Paradise" as a track on the album). Hearing him say it had that similar aura as when he recorded Stevie was really cool. My band has played that song live for some time now, so it was nice to put that on the record.

How does the songwriting process flow for you? Do you start with vocal melodies, guitar riffs, etc.?

It really just depends on the moment; my approach is really scattered. The song could come from an idea such as a title, riff, an old melody I've sung into my recorder; the possibilities are endless with this one. Again, I really just like to touch on my life experiences because as I grow, mature, and experience things throughout my life, my music will follow suit.

Do you have a specific approach when it comes to recording songs?

I find that recording a live track to get the drums and bass solid on the track and then layering from there with guitars, keys, vocals, and other sounds/instruments really

works for me. I've done that with all of my albums actually.

What gear did you use on *Heart of Fire*, and why?

In the studio, I just used my live setup because that is what I really love using, and I'm comfortable with that, and I know what I can get out of it. I used a Category 5 Tube Amp with my Keeley Super Phat mod pedal, Dynamic Distortion from Vertex Effects, and MXR Carbon Copy Delay. We actually printed the delay with the solos. What I really liked that Jim did was he let me listen to my guitar through the room speakers instead of studio headphones. I feel like that helped elevate my playing because I could really hear the guitar within the song come through the room. As far as guitars go, I brought them ALL with me. I even used my 1930s National Dualion Dobro on the track, "Played The Game"—solo and all. I really loved the raw sound. Of course, I had my Gibson guitar arsenal with me to get the job done! I used my limited edition magenta Gibson Les Paul for most of the tracks, and I have a Custom Shop I used as well.

What advice would you give other aspiring guitarists?

Be yourself. Play the music you want to play, write the songs you want to write, and don't be afraid to put yourself out there and keep doing it no matter what. Follow your passion. —

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Be yourself. Play the music you want to play, write the songs you want to write, and don't be afraid to put yourself out there and keep doing it no matter what. Follow your passion.



IN CONVERSATION WITH HELEN IBE

PHILANTHROPY, CREATIVITY, AND INDIVIDUALITY

By Marissa Bergen

Helen Ibe is a Nigerian guitarist, performer, songwriter, guitar teacher, and humanitarian. She has established herself as one of Nigeria's top classical guitarists and regularly performs at Lagos venues. She writes original songs, sits in with other performers, and has her own online guitar teaching platform.

As a philanthropist, she's been working through the Helen Ibe Hope outreach programs and recently started an online organization to help widows deal with depression. She uses her music as a tool to connect and promote healing.

We recently caught up with Ibe to learn more about her background, music, and what she has coming up for the new year.



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Besides putting out more video content on YouTube and other social platforms, I am working on putting out some cool singles this year and working on completing my beginner's course.



What inspired you to start playing guitar?

I started playing the guitar in the church, so a major part of my inspiration and influence came from gospel music. I did not start playing the guitar initially. I was singing in the choir, and there was a need for choir members to learn to play an instrument because a lot of the instrumentalists we had on the ground were leaving one after another. I chose the guitar and fell in love with it immediately! I loved how it looked and how it sounded. Then I started to explore other genres like smooth jazz, blues, reggae, plus other styles, and I knew there was no going back.

Do you feel you are treated any differently as a female musician? How do you feel attitudes towards female musicians have changed over the years?

I used to feel like people would patronize me even when I didn't play well because I am a lady and they think I am fragile, so they let me "get away with it," but if a guy played the exact same thing, he would be shamed for it. I have mixed feelings concerning this, but maybe that was all in my head—LOL. The attitude towards female musicians is changing drastically; there is a lot more recognition as so many amazing female players are springing up and redefining things! Nowadays, regardless of your style, if you're not a good musician, you won't get away with it because you are a woman. Female guitarists are being a lot more respected and appreciated, as well as featured in more music than they used to be. That is a very good thing; we certainly make the guitar industry a lot more colorful.

I see that you also teach guitar. Can you tell me more about what you offer? Do you provide lessons online only? Are there any specific styles or levels you teach?

Yes, I do teach guitar, and I love to teach! My focus is mostly on beginners and intermediates. I also offer private lessons, but that usually has limited slots. I'm currently working on my beginner guitar course; I have tried to study the things that I think beginners struggle with and the tools that would help them start their journey right. I'm trying hard to put out content that would benefit people that want to start their guitar-playing journey. I also have free lessons on my YouTube channel.

As a teacher, what tips would you give students working on their guitar skills?

There is always so much to learn! I think it is important to take it one step at a time rather than overwhelm yourself trying to learn everything at once. Start things slowly and build up speed. Do not underestimate the importance of consistency. Practice! It builds your confidence.

I see you describe yourself as a humanitarian. What causes do you feel most strongly about?

My father died when I was a young child; it was

a very tough time for me, my siblings, and my mom. I feel very strongly pulled to fatherless children, orphans, and widows. When the man of the home passes away, there is a void and destabilization in the family, most times financially. That is why a big part of my heart always goes towards helping this cause. I have been there; I've experienced it firsthand, and trust me, it is not a good place.

In your bio, you describe your live performances as being unique. What elements do you add that sets them apart?

My live performance is quite different from performing in front of my camera or performing at home. When you perform live, you're more expressive (after overcoming the stage-fright) because you are inspired by the audience's energy. When they resonate with the music, it excites me knowing how happy I'm making people (which is one of the big reasons why I make music). I like to make my live performances as engaging as possible and make it a win-win situation by making myself happy as much as I'm making my audience happy. I think a lot of musicians also feel this way; you want your live performance to be an unforgettable experience for your audience.

How do you feel your Nigerian background has inspired your style and creativity?

My Nigerian background does influence my style and the way I make music, especially my original compositions. The kind of music we listen to influences our creative ideas as musicians, and it's important to me that I showcase my roots in my sound by incorporating local instruments. African music is generally rhythmic; this makes me have quite a good feel for time and rhythm, and I am very thankful for that.

Your bio states you are also a commercial model. We all know fashion and music go hand in hand. How do you feel your work as a model has influenced or helped your music career?

Yes, I do model sometimes, face modeling especially. It is such a fun thing for me. I think fashion and music have always gone hand in hand because they represent expression, creativity, and individuality and showcases your uniqueness—core elements that I try to include in my creative process.

What's coming up for Helen Ibe? New music? Any performances planned post-COVID?

Besides putting out more video content on YouTube and other social platforms, I am working on putting out some cool singles this year and working on completing my beginner's course. I'm really excited about all the great things this year has to offer. I am looking forward to playing and going to watch live shows when we can do that again in full. —

Photo by @tobi_skillful

NANCY

Wilson

on her debut solo album, Epiphone Signature Fanatic guitar, Eddie Van Halen tribute song, classic Heart, and that “Crazy on You” intro

By Caroline Paone

“A good song lives on—it lives and survives fashions,” says Nancy Wilson, co-founder of Heart, whose songs “These Dreams,” “Barracuda,” and “Magic Man” are indeed timeless gems. One of today’s most accomplished artists, she helped crack the glass ceiling for women in rock music.

Born in California, the daughter of a United States Marine, her family eventually settled in the suburbs of Seattle. Along with sister Ann, she got hooked on groups of the 1960s, especially the Beatles.

“Once the Beatles emerged, we were like, ‘We’ve got to get guitars and start a band, and sing harmonies better, and write songs!...I was trying to do all that and was sort of self-taught,’” she says with the youthful idealism of a kid wanting to be like John Lennon rather than hold his hand.

Later on, Led Zeppelin hugely inspired the sisters as well. In the early ‘70s, Heart built a reputation as a great live act on the Vancouver club scene doing Zeppelin and other covers. With the siblings front and center, they quickly became a formidable ensemble as well as innovative songwriters. Ann’s powerhouse vocals and Nancy’s virtuosic playing set the stage for a long and dynamic career. Heart sold over thirty-five million records and have been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

As a guitarist, Wilson has a style all her own, both aggressive and graceful—the epitome of leather and lace—navigating complex acoustic



Photos provided by Gibson Brands





Photo by Kirk Stauffer

July 1, 2014 at
Marymoor Park in
Redmond, WA

arrangements and heavy riffing. For texturizing Heart's catalog over the years, she played an array of acoustic and electric guitars, twelve-string—even a mandolin or two along the way.

Today, Wilson's a combination of her influences: a child of the Laurel Canyon singer-songwriters, a whole lotta rock, classical, and a touch Seattle grunge.

The legendary guitarist's first solo album, *You and Me* (Carry On Music), showcases both her singing and guitar voice. The music varies, traveling from an uplifting version of Bruce Springsteen's "The Rising" to the symphonic-stringed "Walk Away" and an impressive version of Pearl Jam's "Daughter."

Wilson collaborated with a great cast of musicians for her self-produced album, which has eight originals and three covers. Guest artists include Sammy Hagar, Duff McKagan (Guns N' Roses), Taylor Hawkins (Foo Fighters), and Liv Warfield (Roadcase Royale).

Additionally, Heart band players were on board (Ben Smith, Dan Walker, Ryan Waters, and Andy Stoller), among other

musicians such as bassist Tony Levin. For mixing the album, Wilson brought in Tim Palmer (David Bowie, Robert Plant, Pearl Jam) and Matthew Sabin (Heart and Roadcase Royale, among many).

In the guitar department, Wilson relied on her trusted '63 blue Telecaster and her go-to Martin acoustic (Martin HD-35 Nancy Wilson Dreadnought Signature Edition), which she used on "4 Edward"—a stirring instrumental tribute to Eddie Van Halen.

A guitar devotee of the first order, she also has two signatures via the Gibson Brands: the Gibson Nancy Wilson Nighthawk Standard and, newly released, The Epiphone Nancy Wilson Signature Fanatic. The new guitar's a stunner with a Fireburst gloss finish and a sweet, curved cut-away. Wilson says it's big on tone and playability. Indeed, with ProBucker™ humbuckers, a 5-way pickup selector, and rounded "C" profile neck.

Working from home is working out for the guitarist. With her solo album out in April, receiving a She Rocks Legend Award, and music scoring on the horizon, Wilson's still the reigning queen of guitar.

Take me back to your early days learning guitar and getting into music.

Yeah, I came from a musical family, and my mom showed us some piano playing, and we all had ukuleles. And then, once the Beatles emerged, we were like, "We've got to get guitars and start a band, and sing harmonies better, and write songs." At twelve years old, I was trying to do all that and was sort of self-taught. But I always had an ear for creating and learning and just producing stuff by ear. Though I forgot the piano lessons where I briefly learned how to read music—if you don't use that language, you lose it.

You're a big lover of acoustic guitar, but when did you start on electric?

Well, I played a lot of electric even early. Somebody actually gave me an electric guitar that they built, and Ann was playing electric bass. I played a lot of electric growing up, just making stuff up. But I was mostly drawn to acoustic because I could take it anywhere; I didn't have to plug it in or find an outlet. It was ready to go and easy to travel with it. So, yeah, that's kind of my main man, but I love playing electric, I always have.

When it comes to playing, you're so versatile and a strong rhythm player—love a great rhythm player, like Chrissie Hynde and Malcolm Young.

Oh, me too. Yes. John Lennon was an incredible rhythm player. There's something about being a rhythm player that I love so much, which is, basically, you're part of the rhythm section with the drums. Acoustic guitar is very much a percussion instrument, the way I use it. I put it to use on this album; it was really fun to play both acoustic and electric a lot.

Has writing helped maintain your sanity throughout these strange times?

Oh yeah. I wouldn't want to just do jigsaw puzzles all the time. I mean, I like to do them. [Laughs] We moved up to Northern California, and there's a beautiful music space, a creative space like I've never really had before. And with all this time in lockdown, it's really comforting, and it really inspires sanity in a big way to be able to just wrestle these songs to the ground and record them. I have good equipment and a friend who's COVID-free, obviously, and she's a great engineer for me. She knows the interface and which settings are good for which microphones and the rightamping technique, and mic positions on the acoustic guitar, or the amplifier, or what have you. How to run, direct, and mic at the same time, so you have the stereo image of the recorded guitar part. There's all that, that I really don't like to have to know how to do because I've been really spoiled for a long time. You mean, "I have to put strings on my own guitar? What? Or tune it even?" [Laughs].

And you're collaborating virtually to create the songs and record them?

Yeah, we have what I call labs; these files are being sent to various labs. It's the Seattle lab, the Denver lab, the Austin lab, and the California lab. My band players (from Heart) and then there's Andrew Joslyn from the Seattle Symphony. He did some strings for me, and we're planning to do a livestream concert from the Benaroya Hall (Seattle) in April. By then, we'll probably have our vaccinations and be able to be on stage, probably still distancing, but we'll have the strings and the rock band. I may come out and do acoustic stuff first, just myself, and then add to the structure of the show as it gets larger and more players come out. Pretty excited about that; I think April is going to work out for that.

Who else is making appearances on your new LP?

Sammy Hagar is singing on a song, and Taylor Hawkins from the Foo Fighters did a bunch of singing and playing, and so did Duff McKagan from Guns N' Roses. I'm singing along with them. Also, Liv

“
We were dogged to do
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music and write songs about
things poetic and
romantic—not just ‘boyfriend-
girlfriend’ stuff.”

Warfield, who was in my previous band Roadcase Royale, is singing on one with me, too.

They would give me a jam then I'd finish writing. It's fun stuff. The lab Austin, they're amazing players; we did a Pearl Jam song called "Daughter" with Tony Levin, who's an extremely great bass player. And Eric Tessmer, who's an insanely great guitar player, and David Rice, and Billy West. Tim Palmer mixed it, who did a bunch of the Pearl Jam stuff. There were all these labs at work passing the files around. Then, I took the files and approved them and made notes. Then it was mastered in Austin by Justin Sturtz of Sterling Sound.

Tell me more about the title track "You and Me" and what inspired that song?

"You and Me" is a song I worked on with Sue Ennis, who's been a longtime collaborator with Heart. We both lost our moms a while back, and this song is a universal mom song. It's about what you go through, and how your mom has molded your reality, and how she's still in it, even if she's not physically around. It's a conversation with your mom—you can talk to them; they're there. I mean, they're in the DNA because they gave you birth, gave you life, and you own the same DNA together. There's times when you have a dream with your mom in it, you wake up and feel like, "I got to see her again. It was so nice."

I've had dreams where I've felt my mom's presence like nudging me.

Yeah, sometimes you feel that touch. There was one dream I had on a tour bus, my mom hadn't been gone that long, and I was in a terrible situation with a relationship I was losing, a lot of it was because of my partner's mom, who was just kind of a pariah. And I had this dream on the tour bus as we were coming into Eugene, Oregon, not far from where my mom grew up, and where a lot of our family used to live in Oregon City and around those

parts. I had this dream where she was yelling, "Don't you dare do this to my daughter anymore," and it was so vivid. And I woke up going like, "Oh my god, she's protecting me." She's watching over me and protecting my broken heart. And so, then I realized, yeah, I'm in Oregon, so of course she's around here somewhere.

Backing up some, your writing has always been so diverse. Albums *Dreamboat Annie*, *Little Queen*, and *Heart* are literally soundtracks for people's lives. But specifically, *Dreamboat Annie* (1975) was filled with all these rich, textural elements. Right. It was sort of a concept album. We intentionally wanted it to be like a concept album, where you have a little journey at the beginning that is echoed at the end. So, you're heading out into the sun, and you're taking a trip across the ocean to the other side, to another continent or something. And in between, you encounter all these characters, and there's a motif that comes back a couple of times in the ending.

At the time, did you realize the impact *Dreamboat Annie* would have?

We were always wild-eyed Pollyanna's. [Laughs] We always had the intention that it was going to affect people and do something good in the world. We didn't know how much that would happen. Coming, I think, from a military background and the Marine Corps, we were always real tight as a family and weathered a whole lot, as far as moving around the country and staying tight-knit with each other. We were dogged to do something big and something with rock music and be creative and write these songs and sing about things poetic and romantic and not just 'boyfriend-girlfriend' stuff. I think with all that intention, we were able to wrestle

it to the ground in such a way that people really noticed.

And the production was really nice for its time, too—the stereo aspect of it. It was a well-produced, well-recorded album. Actually, we got an audiophile's award for it. We're like, "Okay, we'll take it."

And then, *Little Queen* had so many creative elements like the double-tracked mandolins and all that.

Right. "Dream of the Archer" is still one of my favorites. The whole gypsy ethic really worked out for that one. The cover for *Little Queen* was done in Elysian Park in Los Angeles. We rented a gypsy wagon, we rented a goat, we rented a bunch of costumes, and we rented a bow and arrow and the archery stuff. We brought a few things of our own onto the set, but it's funny when you think we rented a goat.



Photo by Kirk Stauffer

July 1, 2014 at
Marymoor Park in
Redmond, WA

It's like, can you rent a goat?

Can you rent a goat? Well, you can. You can rent herds of goats to trim your yard or something, for that matter. [Laughs]

Of course! But you'd never know that album cover (*Little Queen*) was shot in LA. You know, how you would pore over album covers?

Oh yeah, I miss album covers.

It took me to a whole other world.

We invited you into our gypsy camp, and you got in the wagon with us through that journey—it wasn't a dreamboat; it wasn't a boat journey; this time, it was a wagon journey.

Photo by Kirk Stauffer

August 31, 2013 at
Bumbershoot in Seattle, WA



But it was inspiring; it showed you had permission to be anything you wanted.

That's what it was all about. No, it's true. It felt more restricted that way in the '80s. The mid-to-late '70s and part of the early '80s were still less confining for us as writers and as imagers—imaging ourselves. But the '80s got so corporate and was all about MTV and da, da, da, and everybody had the same blond, huge hair. We all got sort of standardized out of existence. There was some great stuff in there, too, but it was interesting how a flash mob happened in the early '90s, and it was all over so fast. The cultural psyche just shifted off it, and it was like, "Wow." When I first heard "Smells Like Teen Spirit," I knew this was the future. It was just one too many power ballads and one too many big hair statements.

Guitars were flashier in the '80s, too. You played some Explorer-style guitars.

Exactly, flashier guitars. Even when we were recording in those times, the producer said, "We don't want any acoustic on these songs because it's so outdated. It just sounds so folky. And we don't want any acoustic on this album." But I kind of wasn't allowed to. So, I'm like, "Okay, well, then I guess I won't play. For that matter, I won't play much of anything." I'll just do oohs and aahs and electric power cords. Then I got the flashy electrics in the videos and stuff. It was like the cast of Ben-Hur in some of those videos, I tell you. [Laughs]

Everyone was making crazy videos in the '80s. You can have a laugh about it now.

Oh, I know. There was the welding scene and all the extras. I don't know. We'll never live it down. [Laughs]

But you know what, the music was the real deal.

Well, the music survives. Yes.

I still love all those songs.

Me, too. Last time we went out on tour, we were doing "What About Love," "These Dreams," "Alone," "Barracuda," and stuff, and just those songs, they live. They live, and they survive the fashions, the various eras in fashion—they were

never too shallow. We never were trying to imitate what was current at the time. A good song lives on.

Precisely. And, by the way, if Led Zeppelin can have acoustic guitars on their albums, it's never outdated.

I know. We have to limit the number of Zeppelin songs we allow ourselves in a given set, [laughs] because we know so many. We were playing lots and lots of Zeppelin in clubs and cabarets up in Vancouver, but it's like, "Okay, only two per show are allowed." Because we can do "Going to California," we can do "Battle of Evermore" and "Black Dog" and "Kashmir" and "Whole Lotta Love"—all of it. But we didn't want to be known as a tribute band either.

"Crazy on You" (*Dreamboat Annie*) is one of your signature songs, which has your landmark intro. How did you bring that song to life?

Oh yeah. Well, I was a young, young player when I started playing a lot of Simon & Garfunkel, a lot of fingerstyle. And there was an instrumental song on *Sounds of Silence* called "Anji," which is an amazing acoustic piece. Just instrumental acoustic. I learned it, and it's not very simple; there's a lot of elements. It's got a bass line and a melody going on at the same time. We were in Vancouver recording *Dreamboat Annie*, and we'd also done a bunch of Yes songs in clubs, too, and there was always an acoustic instrumental that would intro one of their songs.

I figured A minor is the key I'd learn "Anji" in. I was basically ripping off the "Anji" song in my own translation of it. And it doesn't really sound anything the same, but it's stylistically that. That's the well I was drawing from. I just sat in a couple of afternoons and made it up. It was fun being kind of bratty, feeling good about my playing—showing off a little bit. I was trying to be a showoff, and, hey, it worked.

It was the right key for "Crazy on You," too. And, still, a lot of people learn how to play it and show-and-tell themselves playing it on Instagram and stuff. And it's interesting because everyone plays it so differently. I mean, it still sounds kind of the same, but they have their different ways of approaching it and finger positions and stuff like that. But it's always a fairly cool feeling like, "Oh, people notice this, and they're learning this." And, musically, it's a really cool thing that people respond to it like that.

It's intense, the fingerpicking and percussive approach you lend it ("Crazy on You"). How did that come about?

I originally started with a thumb pick, but it kept going around in circles on my thumb; I had to learn how to play it with

a flat pick, which is a whole other technique, which I hadn't really developed until the thumb pick wasn't working out. Now, I can play all kinds of stuff with a flat pick. Or drop it to the ground and use fingers for some stuff or keep it in my mouth. On the song "4 Edward," I had to do that. The beginning needs to be skin, and then the pick comes in for the middle part. Then you have to put the pick back in your mouth, or if you drop it by mistake, you hear it on the recording— you have to remember to put it back in your mouth. Anyway, there were a few faux pas along the way, but I figured it out.

Do you still have your original guitars from the early Heart days, like your Ovation and Flying V?

My Flying V went to another home. I sold it to the guitarist for the Scorpions, Rudolf Schenker. He's got this huge collection of original Flying Vs. So, he's got my old V there with his stash. I have the blue carbon top Ovation from the mid-to-late seventies, and it actually went on tour without me. The guitar went to the "Play it Loud" exhibit at the Metropolitan in New York—there's all these amazing instruments and guitars. It was there for like six months; then they moved the entire exhibit over to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland (Rock Hall Museum). Now it's there for a few more months. I always said, "Oh, it's the only guitar that went on tour without me." But I don't have my first Flying V. I kind of fell on some financial hardship and wound up selling it to Rudolph (Scorpions). A friend of my guitar tech built me another Flying V that's incredibly great. It's kind of diminutive, slightly smaller, easier for a girl to play, but it screams just as loud as any Flying V. He made it from a piece of mantle wood that was salvaged from a burned-down house. I think it was an oak mantle, and he fashioned a Flying V out of it. I played that V with Heart most of the last tour, and it's so much fun. It's really loud. And then he went ahead and built me a twelve-string V, which is highly unusual. I don't think I've ever heard of that before. So, I'm going to have to take that one for a spin.

Some of the early Ovations, they don't really record as well because they're just a different, less wooden kind of a sound. I was playing a lot of Takamines for a long time, and then Martin approached me with a signature concept. So I worked with them on a signature Martin (HD-35 Nancy Wilson Dreadnought Signature Edition), which I love dearly, and I have a few of them. That's my main go-to now because I designed it to be Crosby, Stills & Nash-like, a three-piece back, dreadnought style. And it's got such a good, responsive tone, and it's lovely to play. I love playing it.

Do your guitars suffer a lot of wear and tear?

My guitars all get really scratched up. One of my Takamines is started to get a hole in it—probably from playing "Crazy on You." Kind of like Willie Nelson's guitar that has a hole on the top. Somebody over the break, between legs of the tour, had it filled and finished. I'm like, "Why didn't you tell me you were doing that? I wanted the hole in the guitar." More character

with the hole in it, right? But it's still one of my good practice instruments. You need one lying around so you can grab it if you think of something on the spot.

As a songwriter, when do ideas come to you?

A lot of times in bed before I fall asleep. I've been doing a lot of that lately. If you know music by ear, you can hear it in your head and easily figure out how to create and form the structural stuff—where the changes ought to come and how the sound is going to be from change to change.

But I've done a lot every which way; I used to have a piano next to my bed. I'd just sit up, hum some melodies or play a little guitar part and record it in my phone—then you can go back later and say, "What key was I in? What was that? That doesn't make any sense to me now." Sometimes it does, if you lay down enough context for what key and what tempo it is. But I just have to be creative. That's what I do. Especially now, gosh.

Your signature Epiphone Nancy Wilson Fanatic guitar is out; what's the story behind it?

Way back in the midst of time, in the middle to earlier '80s, Gibson approached me to work on a signature model. So, I designed the body for the guitar, which is the same shape now as the Fanatic.

The Nighthawk shape?

Yeah, the Nighthawk shape. But I wasn't fond of calling it the Nighthawk, I force-fed my idea on them to call it the Fanatic because we worked on an album called Fanatic close to the time, and I thought it was just a way better name. I mean, I should be able to name the guitar I designed. I kind of forced it on them.

I like that it's called the Fanatic, and it's got really good hardware, which I was real picky about, as well. It has a really strong voice and a lot of different tonalities; you can switch up some different tones. It's a screamer, and it's, again, a little bit more of a diminutive female-type shape. I designed the body to look like the silhouette of a nude woman's body so that there's a beautiful curve going on for the cutaway area. Like all cutaways, you can get up higher (on the neck). It's just one-of-a-kind.

The Fireburst gloss finish is beautiful.

The colors are great. I like that. They've made me a few of them, and I've been able to lay a couple on some really good players. I was doing a benefit with ZZ Top, and I gave one to Billy Gibbons, who was eyeing it—he was salivating over it. So I laid it on him, and he was like, "No way." Yeah, I'm sure he plays it when he's playing out—or when he can, anyway.

But yeah, I'm proud of it, and it plays and sounds really good.

That's the best part, right, the sound?

Well, without that, what have you really got?

For many years, you've scored music for films like *Almost Famous*, *Vanilla Sky*, *Jerry Maguire*, and others. Is that something you're still doing?

Not since I've been in lockdown, but I was about to start doing score work for the Muscle Shoals series, which of course, is that studio where "When a Man Loves a Woman" and all this amazing stuff happened down south by the big river there (the Tennessee River). Before the shutdown, we already had the first trailer approved for the series. Hopefully, that'll come back, and we can finish.

I was probably going to work on the Jimmy Carter documentary, too. (Jimmy Carter, Rock & Roll President). We just watched it the other night, and it was really cool. There's all this rare stuff with the Allmans and all these bands in the '70s that Jimmy Carter was tight with who basically got him elected because they shored him up, supported him, and did benefits to raise money. It's interesting; you should check it out on CNN.

A lot of exciting projects going on in your world, even during the pandemic.

Even during the pandemic, things can be inspiring and creative. Stuff can happen, even more than before, in a lot of ways.

Do you miss touring, though?

I miss touring. But, in a way, this has been a blessing to almost be forced to stay home for a summer and winter because I really have been able to. And right now, I don't crave the Red Roof Inn too much or walking into a hotel and hauling bags off a bus. Yeah, but probably in the spring, it'll come back. Everybody says once the vaccine's out.





One 4 the King: Nancy tributes EVH

Nancy's acoustic guitar and Eddie Van Halen

Back in the day, Nancy crossed paths with Van Halen and tells the now legendary story of gifting Eddie one of her acoustic guitars.

There's been a definite void in the music community since Eddie Van Halen passed. The man who changed electric guitar forever—from his innovative mod work to his trail-blazing technique and songwriting.

When heart toured with Van Halen in the late '70s, Wilson remembers Eddie complimenting her acoustic playing. "I said, 'Well, you don't ever play acoustic, do you?'" And he goes, 'Well, no. I don't have one.' I was like, 'What? You don't have an acoustic guitar?' So, I gave him one of mine because I had an extra one lying around. Then, before dawn the next morning, he rings my hotel room and plays this amazing, beautiful piece of instrumental acoustic

music that was kind of rock, and kind of classical, and kind of melodic, and definitely really beautiful. I like to tell that story because it's pretty sweet."

So, where did that elusive early morning music end up? It's a mystery.

"The music has got to be somewhere," she surmises. "I think it's going to be unearthed somewhere along the way in his massive body of recorded work. Hopefully, it will be uncovered."

"4 Edward" instrumental — EVH tribute song

"I decided to write an instrumental for my new album called '4 Edward,' and it's a tribute to Eddie Van Halen. I thought I would write something to tribute him because he was a sweetheart of a guy and, of course, he invented a whole thing that

nobody else could ever, ever do, only he could do. And everybody tried, but nobody really caught that spirit like he did. And the fact that he's no longer with us, way too soon, so I figured it's the perfect time to do an instrumental. I love it. I'm not sure where to place it in the sequence quite yet, but it could be the very last song even, which might be nice."

Nancy played her signature Martin for the all-acoustic song, which is a vivid, expertly played piece infusing classical elements over an ever-present warm tone. An exceptional tribute worthy of the guitar legend. "I planned the part out and plotted it (in my head)," she says. "If you have an ear for music, you can get a lot down without even playing."

A good ear—a talent she shares with the late virtuoso known for his impeccable ear. —



You and Me Track listing

1. You and Me
2. The Rising
3. I'll Find You
4. Daughter
5. Party at the Angel Ballroom
6. The Boxer
7. Walk Away
8. The Inbetween
9. Dreams
10. The Dragon
11. We Meet Again
12. 4 Edward

The Guitarsenal: NANCY WILSON

By Alex Windsor



Heart has been around since 1974, so it's no wonder that Nancy Wilson has an appreciation for vintage tone—and a lot of guitars to choose from. Here's a deeper dive into some of the guitars she has used throughout her career.

Ovation Adamas 1687-7

While touring with Heart in the late 1970s, Nancy was frequently seen playing a blue Ovation Adamas 1687-7. Made specifically for her in 1978, this Ovation was probably ideal for touring due to its resilient design; the top consists of carbon fiber and birch, while the back and sides are made of a patented "Lyrachord" fiberglass bowl. The internal piezo transducer pickups helped Nancy to cut through the rest of the band during their most iconic songs. She has since retired the Adamas, but it can often be found circulating around various museums.

1963 Telecaster Custom

For over twenty years, Nancy has sported a 1963 Telecaster in Lake Placid Blue finish. Apart from modified Sperzel locking tuners and a vintage PAF pickup in the neck position, this guitar remains true to the original Telecaster tone (with a little bit of added warmth from the humbucker). Nancy has also been seen rocking this guitar with other side projects such as Roadcase Royale, and it is still used today. As a matter of fact, it can be heard on her new solo album, *You and Me*.

1968 Gibson SG Junior

Another longtime favorite of Nancy's is her 1968 Gibson SG. It was purchased from a used guitar store and upgraded with graphite saddles and a Vibramate Bigsby accessory for faster string changes. This guitar is most often heard on "Barracuda," especially the Bigsby vibrato on the intro. The modified Kent Armstrong single P90-style pickup in the bridge position gives this guitar a simple yet punchy tone. In honor of her father, Nancy placed a Marine Corp logo on the back.

Martin HD-35 Nancy Wilson Dreadnaught Acoustic

It's no surprise that Nancy wields her own signature Martin acoustic guitar onstage. She collaborated with Martin to select the premium solid tonewoods used on this model, featuring a top made of Englemann spruce (a tree found in her native Pacific Northwest), East Indian rosewood back and sides, and a brilliant red ("Heart") African Bubinga center wedge. The powerful Fishman Aura pickup system delivers clarity even at high volumes. Additionally, the upgraded titanium bridge pins not only secure the strings but add another layer of sustain.

Gibson Nancy Wilson Nighthawk Standard

Nancy's signature Gibson was first introduced in 2013, exactly twenty years after the first Nighthawk model was born. While this Gibson has a familiar Les Paul body shape, it boasts a ribcage contour for added comfort. The pickups consist of a Nighthawk Mini Humbucker in the neck (rich, full sound) and a Nighthawk Lead Humbucker in the bridge (bright and crunchy). Nancy often brings multiple Nighthawks on tour in order to quickly play in different tunings. Gibson recently launched the Epiphone Nancy Wilson Fanatic in January 2021, giving even more players access to her iconic Nighthawk design.

Photo by Kirk Stauffer

September 10, 2012 at the
Puyallup Fair in Puyallup, WA
(now known as the Washington State Fair)

THE WARNING

TALKS NEW MUSIC, WORKING WITH DAVID BENEDETH, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

Photo by Jeff Shreiner/Spector
Pictured L to R: Dany, Ale, Pau



Daniela, Paulina, and Alejandra Villarreal are three sisters from Monterrey, Mexico, who make up the heavy-hitting rock band, **The Warning**. Formed in 2012, these young siblings have figured it out—their skills, their songwriting, and their communication. All under the age of twenty-one, older sibling Dany is the lead singer and guitarist, Pau plays drums, and the youngest sibling Ale rounds out the trio on bass.

The Warning released their debut album *XXI Century Blood* in 2017, followed by *Queen of the Murder Scene* in 2018. They recently finished their third album due to drop soon via their new label LAVA Records. While it's the band's third album, it's their first working with producer David Bendeth. Because of lockdowns during the pandemic, studio access was limited, so the sisters recorded in several different studios in New Jersey for three months. They visited iivii Studios for drums, Magic Door for bass, Sound on Sound for guitars and lead vocals, and their friend Mike Ferretti's "Self Titled Studio" for the final overdub guitars and backup vocals.

It was The Warning's cover of Metallica's *Enter Sandman* on YouTube in 2014 that went viral, launching their career and landing them a spot on *The Ellen Show* in 2015. To date, the video has over twenty-two million views! They have had the opportunity to open for Def Leppard, Alice Cooper, Aerosmith, and more bands in major rock festivals through Mexico and Latin America.

Growing up in a household playing video game games and watching concerts by Queen, Pink Floyd, AD/DC, and other hard rock bands, Pau said, "We would watch them all the time, but I think one of the

reasons why we really fell in love with rock especially was through the video game, *Rock Band*. We got that game at a very young age, and we just fell in love with all the music that was there, with the energy that we could feel while playing a video game." Dany chimed in, adding, "And it was the visuals. You could see the character just killing it on stage." Coincidentally, their love of the video game translated into them having two songs featured on the game.

The pandemic brought about the cancellation of live music performances. The trio "had a North American tour planned and a couple of shows in Europe, and we had to postpone them indefinitely," Pau tells us. "That's the first thing that we would do when we are able to perform, I don't think that's going to be any time soon, honestly, but when it's all safe and everyone is healthy, it's the first thing that we'll do. We miss it so much." Dany adds, "So, they're the first on the list" when live performances return.

To stay connected with fans during this difficult time, Pau said, "We've been constantly doing activities and keeping in touch with everyone on all of our socials, all the time, like every week. And we're always trying to be very innovative with it because we know that people really can't go outside either right now. To be that comfort place and that place of solace that they can fall into."

Outside of music, the sisters like to read, draw, watch anime, listen to music, and play video games. Pau says it best, "We're normal teenagers—we're on Tik Tok and Instagram. Almost all of our free time kind of revolves around music. I have an obsession with making Spotify playlists. My Spotify is always so organized, and I'm so proud of it."

We spoke with the sisters while they were in New Jersey putting the final touches on their new album due out soon.

So this was your first time working with David Bendeth. How was that experience?

Dany: He is an amazing producer, and he has worked with a lot of successful bands. He's so, so, so amazing at what he does. It's been an honor working with him. And he was very open to hearing us out as artists, as people, and we got to know each other before starting to work together. So it was incredibly amazing. And the way that he looks and interprets music, in general, is very unique. And we like his way of thinking that each song is a world of its own, and it has to really express that feeling in each and every one of the elements.

Pau: He's incredible. It was our first time working outside of our team. We were really nervous about working with him because not only is he David Bendeth, but it was our first time working with someone else. And the experience was just so good. We instantly connected. We had really good chemistry, and I think that will really reflect on the album. Like we had the same vision and the same type of sound that we wanted, and I think that we had really good chemistry because David has this old school vibe to his rock and roll sound. And we have a newer way to look at rock music. The blend that we brought together is just perfect. And once again, he was very open. Like everything that was said was always an opinion; it was something that was brought to the table, and we would all discuss and decide upon these opinions. It was never demanded or forced upon us, so we just had a really good chemistry with David.

How does the new album differ from your previous work?

Pau: Our first album, we made it when we were really young. I was fourteen. You were sixteen [to Dany].

Ale: I was nine.

Dany: So, it was a long time ago. From that point on to where we are now, we have changed a lot.

Pau: And I think the biggest difference between our past albums and the one that we're about to release right now is, I think we really grew as people, and we grew as songwriters, as performers, and as musicians. And I think that really reflects in the songwriting itself and also in the performance. And another thing that I really think is going to make a difference in this new album is David Bendeth. The mix that we're hearing right now is insane.

Dany: It turned out incredibly good.

Ale: It's so good.

Pau: I have never been more proud of something that we've made. It's really good. It's us upgraded!

Dany: And even though it changed, it changed for the better. There's still that "The Warning" essence at its core. It's very much us still.

Tell us about your songwriting process.

Dany: The way we write is very—it may change from song to song, but it usually starts with Pau on the piano. And she's our main creative mind. It's crazy how she does this, but she starts on a piano and with an idea for the lyrics and an overall theme for the song. And when she gets all excited about it, she will come to us, "I have this song," and we would just work on it together to get the bass lines, the guitar parts, the drum parts, and just literally match everything together. We like to do our own demos of our work and really get picky about how they sound, even though it's just a demo.

Pau: We get so picky! For us, it's not just laying an idea of what it should be, but a replica of what it should be. We really produce—over-produce our demos. So, when we step into the studio, you have a really clear idea of what we want. In this case, working with David Bendeth on the third album, we went into the process with really well-done demos, but they were six months old. We had lived with these songs for a really long time. Going into the process and starting over again with those songs that we already had, really thought out and planned out, it was kind of hard to force yourself from that marriage that you had with these songs.

Now, as far as the instruments, what instruments do each of you play? What brand, and why?

Pau: I play DW drums. The hardware, the pedals, everything is just so comfortable for me when I play live. And I really love my drum set. I'm a Sabian artist. I've been using Sabian since I started playing when I was six years old, so I'm really proud to be part of the Sabian family. And I also use Vic Firth.

Dany: As for me, I'm the guitar player, and I am an Orange Amplifiers artist as well. They have been really supportive and really cool throughout the whole journey. And, same, I started out with Orange since I was tiny, tiny, tiny. As for guitars, I love all types of guitars, but right now, my main guitar is from a luthier called Rick Toone. It's a crazy, crazy guitar that he's made, and he generously gifted it to me when he saw one of our videos. So, yeah, it's super, super cool. I've also been exploring different guitars in the continuous search for my sound, so I'm currently trying PRS and Fender guitars but continue to use my Rick Toone.

Ale: I'm the bass player. And as Dany said, we're both Orange artists, and they're great amps. And for my bass, I am a Spector artist, and I use my new, custom-made, five-string US Bass, which is amazing. Spector basses are just—the way they sound—amazing.

How about tone?

Pau: It's more than individual tone. We search for harmony between the three of us.

Ale: Yeah, it's the band tone. So, when we practice individually, I look for a different sound, but we all look for a specific sound from each instrument when we play together.

Dany: It has to complement each other.

Pau: Yeah, and usually it's something very heavy and deep, and it has depth in it because again, we're a trio, so we need to pack some punch with what we're doing. But yeah, it's usually like a deep, heavy sound.

Dany: And we go all out.

What does a normal practice session look like for you?

Dany: We definitely know that we have to rehearse as much as we can to be better. And that's something we strive for every day, to become better musicians and better within ourselves. And actually, this recording process of the new album has helped us grow immensely.

Pau: Every day, we practice individually. We practice technique, and then we practice, sometimes, reading. I practice independence, that type of thing. And we all do that individually so we can be better

at our technique individually. When we practice together, we practice our show, our songs, and have different group rehearsals.

One of them is for the actual technicality of it, musically, being very in sync, in the pocket, being very tight with each other. And the other one is performance because it's a very big part of what we do. Our shows are very energetic, so we also practice our performance a lot and our moves and what type of things we could do. That's kind of like a normal day, practice-wise.

It's been a while since live performances due to the pandemic; what do you miss most about performing?

Pau: The people.

Ale: The energy.

Dany: Yeah, what's not to miss? Every single thing, but mostly just sharing that energy with the people who come to see us.

Pau: We still have our instruments. We can still play, but I really miss getting that energy and seeing people. I think there's nothing more satisfying than seeing someone who clearly doesn't know you, and then at the end, you can clearly see that they've become a fan. I miss doing that.

Dany: And it's also a very big sense of community and that moment where you're all doing the same activity together. It's just out of this world.

You all started out in this business very young. What's been the most important thing that you all have learned so far?

Pau: Well, I think the most important, well, I'm going to speak for myself. I don't know what's the most important thing you've learned [to sisters], but since we work as a family, I think that one of the most important things that we've learned with work, in general, is that work is not personal in a sort of way. Like when we say things about our music, when we're working, we're not attacking each other personally, as people, as sisters. And I think that really helped us, working with other people, because sometimes people—every person is different. So, people communicate in different ways. People think in different ways, and sometimes their way of thinking or speaking is not the same as ours.

Also, communication—communication is key! That's our motto.

Dany: Communication is really important, really important. Say what's on your mind.

Ale: When we were working with David, we were always like "communication." Let's communicate.

What would you like to tell your fans?

Pau: That we miss them. They're the ones that got us here to a certain degree. And just that we miss them, but we wish them a lot of health and that they should keep rocking, and that the new album is coming soon and that we're very excited for it. And we really, really, really do hope they like it.

Dany: Yes, and also that we're super grateful for them. I think that's something that we'll never get tired of saying since all this is happening because they listen to our music, and something as simple as hitting a like button or a share button, that's still amazing to me. Keep rocking! 🎸—



The way we write is very—it may change from song to song, but it usually starts with Pau on the piano.



IVY FORD



Photo by Jeni Ensslin,
fotojenic photography

“... performing is who I am, and the music I write is my truth.”

By Marissa Bergen

We recently caught up with Ivy to learn more about this “Chicago Blues Kitten’s” career and what we can expect from her in the coming year.

What inspired you to start playing music, and what made you gravitate towards the blues?

I’ve loved music as my way of expression since I was two or three years old. When I was five, I performed my first school talent show, and from then on, I always knew music was not only important to me but what I was meant to do. My mom is Norwegian American, and my dad is African American, so I grew up with an eclectic array of music which was predominantly roots or “ethnic.” HOWEVER, I remember hearing Billie Holiday records at age nine and automatically feeling a connection. So, technically, that was my early introduction to blues and roots music. Moving forward, blues and roots had a natural pull for me, and as I’ve grown and developed in not only my performance of it but listening to it, my attachment grows stronger all the time. Blues is a social commentary. Music as a whole is really a language, but when it comes to blues, the genre is a much more transparent and raw type of music that is by nature more embracing and reflective of humanity.

I see you started out playing in bands at a very young age. Did you encounter a struggle dealing with people in the industry because you were so young? How did you handle it?

I believe I was maybe twelve the first time I sang with a live band and that was before I was really playing any instrument but singing. There was a healthy amount of “tough love” that would have made grown men hang it up, let alone a twelve-year-old girl. Absolutely being so young, you’re underestimated, and it’s easy to not be taken seriously. Folks think you haven’t lived enough to know anything. I’m happy to say that that kind of judgment and discrimination hasn’t given me reason to be discouraged; actually, on the contrary. If someone thinks I can’t do something, it’s extremely

Ivy Ford is a force to be reckoned with. An old soul with a penchant for traditional blues, you can find her leading her own band or collaborating with other musicians. She has opened for Buddy Guy and Chicago Blues Hall of Famers, J.B. Ritchie and Joe Moss, sat in on high profile events, and guested on several radio shows.

satisfying and necessary to prove them different. I am grateful too that I've had support from the right people in my personal circle when I've needed it the most, like my mother and my bandmates, so that eases the blow, I guess. Don't get me wrong, I'm human, so there are times that I feel a bit defeated, but really, it's a fleeting thought. Once I get it out of my system, I'm ready to get back to work. That's when I feel my best—keep moving onward and forward. Kind of like some types of sharks. You know they always have to keep swimming in the water to stay alive and breathing.

How do you think attitudes towards women have changed in your years in the music industry?

I think there is still some amount of underestimation of women in the industry, and I think people in "high" places tend to second guess a woman's entertaining and professional value. I think it's very easy for a female to be an afterthought, say with booking entertainment. Or (and I say this from my own personal experience), that when conducting business, I get mistaken for not being the one who handles all of my business affairs because I am a woman (also for me because of my young age too). I don't lose sleep over it, but I will say it's probably one of my biggest aggravations when I'm in that situation. It's not all bad, though, because there is definitely a general attitude shift as well that has been very empowering for women in the industry. I think that has to do with a lot more of us fellow women entertainers SUPPORTING, COMPLIMENTING, and LOOKING out for one another as well. Shoot, don't get me wrong, there's still a fair share of ladies that get a little twisted if they feel some kind of threat from another woman artist. But I will say for the group of us that don't "play that," I think we try to shut that down right away. I think audiences and patrons also as a whole appreciate the female artist and the many facets she has both on and off stage. For example, although still NOT AS often, there's definitely more acceptance for women to have families—to be mothers and musicians and entertainers—that I don't think was as common before, mainstream or otherwise.

The blurb on the front page of your web site describes you as an "Indigo" artist. Can you tell us more about what that means?

So the "indigo" was actually short for when I was under eighteen and I guess a child because the term usually comes as "indigo children." Which by some definitions, include having traits of being strong-willed, free-thinking, non-conforming, and having an old soul. They also possess a certain human social connection that tends to be a bit deeper on a personal and intimate level, making them more magnetic for people.

I say this with the utmost humility, that even when I'm not performing and as a very young child, people have always kind of come to me, and actually the Indigo Child (or person, artist) term was presented to my mom and me when I was a kid before we had ever really heard of it. As a young child and even into adolescence and high school, I was always around older people, adults. I could "conform" to the social circles based on my age, but it's never been very genuinely fulfilling or connecting for me. All of my friends, peers, and colleagues have been and are older, so that's a point-blank example. And, saying with humor but honesty, I think if you looked up 'strong-willed' in a book, my picture would pop up. That's just who I am as a person. And getting back to me realizing at five years old that music is what I'm supposed to do and also who I am, the Indigo Artist term kind of revealed itself. Because my performing is who I am, and the music I write is my truth.

Like so many people, you've been doing livestream concerts as a way to connect with your fans during the pandemic. What can people expect when they tune into your livestream, and how do you do create an interactive experience?

Technology and social media are great, and being able to be on camera in real time makes it easier for people to comment and chime in, and I can respond right away. It's not as good as the real thing but considering it's a nice alternative since live shows are limited. When they are existent, the audience and performers are really at a distance.

I'm actually planning on taking a break from the livestreaming. I might post one song here and there, but I'm focusing on the handful of live shows that are coming to fruition. Also, the primary reason for myself and of a lot of artists doing the livestreams, is to stimulate revenue, and lately, it hasn't been as much of a good day's work. I know I don't need to remind everyone, but I think it can be easy for viewers and listeners to forget that being a musician is our profession. It is our job, how we earn a "paycheck" and sustain our livelihoods. With the internet, apps, social media access to music, art, etc. comes very easily and many times "free" for the consumer. Which, I'll let you in on a little secret, when it's FREE to the consumer, a lot of times the artist/worker/employee sees very little to nothing for their work that they've clocked in. It's kind of like, going to a restaurant, eating the complimentary breadsticks, water with lemon, and then not ordering anything or having a tab because you've gotten your fill on the free stuff. Or put it like this, even with a lawyer, you have to pay a retainer fee just to say you do want to hire them, and you would never get their services for free. Because our industry and profession are not conventional, it's really easy not to think about it like that. I do

want to educate not only my patrons, fans, and supporters but also other musicians so that we can all do better.

I see you've worked with a lot of impressive musicians and participated in many esteemed events. This can be overwhelming in any circumstance, but it can be even more challenging considering you have to perform. What do you recommend musicians do to calm their nerves so they can put on a great performance when working with 'the greats'?

Well, first off, if something doesn't make you a little nervous and scared but still excited, then it's probably not worth doing. Now for me, that type of adrenaline really is something I thrive on. I don't want to say that I don't get nervous, but I think nervous is the wrong word; it's more like hype to get ready to do my thing.

Also, for anyone who's second-guessing themselves, more likely than not, you would not be put in a situation to play with "the greats" if you weren't wanted.

I see you are a multi-instrumentalist and didn't start playing guitar until the age of twenty. What other instruments do you play, and why do you think the guitar became your 'go-to'? Do you play any other instruments when writing and performing?

The first instrument I learned to read music and theory on was piano. I recommend anyone who wants to pick up an instrument, even if it's just to learn the basics, that they choose piano. It makes for a great foundation to go to any other instrument. I picked up the alto saxophone in junior high and high school. I picked up the guitar at about twenty and then bass and drums, and specifically, bass guitar was out of necessity to give me more working opportunities. But I will admit I think bass guitar is my favorite when I do get to play. Grabbing the guitar was a must for me because I wanted to sing what I wanted to sing when I first started going to local open jams. Not playing guitar really kept me at the mercy of whatever everyone else wanted to sing. So, I said, 'I want to sing what I want to sing, so I'll play [the guitar] my d-n self.' It's humorous but true. And I really just stuck with it, and it became second nature. Plus, let's face it, there's something rad about a chick who can play electric guitar.

I write a lot of my music on guitar primarily because I always have easy access to at least my acoustic. However, there are times in my writing that I hear a specific groove rather than lyrics, which I'll punch out on the bass. I also write on piano, and a lot of those songs I stick to piano. I stick to playing guitar primarily for most of my live shows for the sheer logistics of it—I don't feel like bringing a keyboard and another amp on the road. Sad but true, when you make a living out of this stuff, you try and work smart and not hard. So, not to tell any secrets, but the least I have to bring the better, ha, ha!

Tell us about what fans can expect from Ivy Ford in the coming year.

Ya'll are the first to officially hear, but I am working on my fourth album. I hope to release it come summer 2021 and am very glad to showcase an array of facets that blues and roots music have with my original work. I don't want to say too much about it, but I will say the album to come is titled **HARDLOVE.**

“The first instrument I learned to read music and theory on was piano. I recommend anyone who wants to pick up an instrument, even if it's just to learn the basics, that they choose piano.”

ABIGAIL KIRWAN

OF SECRET SWAN CUSTOM GUITARS:

"We are only limited by our imagination."

By Tara Low



Second project - Owl



Swamp Ash S-Type



Chinese Dragon Bass

An unfortunate accident would take Abigail Kirwan on a journey to create the most beautiful, intricate custom guitars. Secret Swan Custom Guitars, located in Newbury, UK, began when Kirwan discovered her woodworking skills after a motorcycle accident left her unable to return to the workforce. Taking inspiration from the sky's northern lights, the American flag, leaves, and mythical creatures, Kirwan carves guitar masterpieces.

"What started out as carving Celtic knots into old tree logs soon turned into small commissions for friends. For every piece that I do, I like to try something new and challenge myself, experimenting with new techniques to come up with a unique look and feel to any piece that I create. The first guitar I made was another challenge I set for myself, and I immediately fell in love with the process and the possibilities. The rest, as they say, is history."

Tell us a little about your background in music and what instruments you played as a young child.

From the age of seven, I learned to play the piano. I was at the age where I wanted to copy anything my sister was doing, so learning was inevitable. I added the flute and double bass to the list (I

had to go bigger and more inconvenient than my sister's violin) at the age of nine and ten. I was fortunate to secure a music scholarship to a local private school at the age of eleven. From there, I continued with my individual lessons, adding in groups like choir, orchestra, flute ensemble, and jazz band. I continued playing right through my school career, achieving grade eight in both piano and flute.

As a creative individual, you were drawn to art. Do you have any formal art training, or is this a creative passion?

I always struggled with the drawing side of art but loved anything creative with different materials. I studied art textiles in school, and at home, I was always out in the workshop, tinkering on projects with my dad, who enjoys carpentry as a hobby. Other than that, I have no official training.

Originally working in a marketing position for a scientific company, events occurred that brought you back to your creative side. Share with us the transition.

I had always thought I would keep my artistic side as a hobby. I have a degree in Genetics from The University of Liverpool and quickly went on to work in marketing in the pharmaceutical industry.

Unfortunately, in September of 2010, I had a life-changing motorcycle accident. The recovery took a lot longer than expected, and I was unable to go back to my previous job for both physical and mental reasons. During this time, I was stuck at home on my own for long periods of time. I would try and keep myself occupied with things like cross-stitch, jigsaw puzzles, knitting, and painting by numbers, but I quickly became bored by them. As rehabilitation went on, I would go for walks with my husband, and as I couldn't walk very far without needing a break, we would take a couple of knives and do some wood whittling. I found I had a bit of a flair for it (much to my husband's annoyance), and I started to make more complicated pieces. That was where the woodworking began for me as I kept challenging myself to do more difficult things.

What was one of the first pieces of art you created?

Once I got the hang of the wood whittling, I had two projects that I wanted to master. The first was creating a small train set from an old branch for a Christening gift, and the second was creating an interesting spoon for a craft swap somebody had set up on a Facebook group. I chose to do an owl, highlighting the details with pyrography (wood burning).



Autumn Leaves Telecaster



Skulls and Roses



How did you get into crafting guitars?

I had developed my basic whittling into creating decorative wall hangings and picture frames. At the time, I was trying to get into the wedding industry with table plans, but I wasn't having any success. I casually mentioned to a friend one day that I would love to carve an electric guitar, but I would need a guinea pig to commission and just pay the cost of materials, as I couldn't afford this. She was engaged at the time and asked me to make a guitar as a wedding present for her husband. It went better than I could have hoped for, and that propelled me into making more, trying out different techniques to see what was possible and how far I could take it.

Where do you find the inspiration for your pieces?

A lot of my inspiration comes from tattoos. People spend a lot of time and money on their tattoos, so these images must be important to them. I thought it would be interesting to be able to pair what somebody has on their body with something physical they are playing in their hands.

All of your designs are very creative and artistic. Is there any one in particular that speaks to you?

My favorite changes depending on the mood I'm in, I think. I will always have a great love for the Spriggs Swamp Ash as it was my first and what got this whole journey started. I find the Autumn Leaves really intricate, and it always makes me smile when people ask if they are real leaves. That feels like a massive compliment to both my carving and my painting. I find the Chinese Dragon bass really striking, and when I'm trying to explain

to people the kind of things I make, that is always the first picture I go to. However, I'm always most excited by my next project, whatever that may be. I always think it has the potential to be my best yet, and I love seeing it emerge from the wood.

What has been one of the most difficult guitars you have crafted?

Each of the guitars offers its own unique challenges. With those I've done so far, each has had a new process to master, providing new difficulties. I think the most challenging aspect is the sanding. Once the basic shape has been carved out and refined, getting into the small spaces to sand to a fine grade is particularly challenging. This difficulty was probably most prominent in the Chinese Dragon bass and the Skulls and Roses Tele that I am currently working on.

When working with a customer, how do you approach the design process?

I start by asking the customer if they have any particular images they want to be included. If they are struggling for ideas, we talk about their hobbies and interests, eventually deciding on a theme. I then create scale drawings of different designs, going back and forth between myself and the client until we land on a design they are happy with. The initial design process is no obligation and free of charge until the final design is signed off.

Is there a particular type of wood that you prefer?

The type of wood I use depends on the finish we are aiming for at the end. If I am painting the wood, I prefer to use Sycamore, as this is nice to carve

and gives a light base color for the paint color to go on to. If there is no painting, then I really don't mind. I love wood with a beautiful grain and preferably a bit of a story (some of the Spalted ash I've used came from less than ten miles from my house). It all depends on the finished color, though, and what the client would like.

Your designs are for the body of the guitar. Who do you partner with to do the finishing work and set up of your instruments?

So far, my designs have been for the body of the guitar, but I am excited to now be creating my own necks as well. This gives me a lot of scope for more creativity, coloring even further outside the lines of convention. I work with a local luthier called Mark Silk of M Silk's Guitar Works, who advises on technical details and puts everything together for me, ensuring the guitar is not just a work of art but something any musician would love to play.

What do you want your customers to take away from your designs?

I would like my customers to take away that we are only limited by our imagination. I believe anything is possible if you put your mind to it. These guitars have the potential to show so much personality, and I would love that to be embraced wholeheartedly.

Photos provided by artist with permission to use.

LARI Basilio

on why her signature Ibanez LB1
has so many features, working with Joe Satriani, and
achieving her fluid, colorful playing style

By Caroline Paone

Brazilian guitar instrumentalist Lari Basilio is always smiling. It's evident she's elated playing guitar—adventurously improvising, letting the melodic energy flow, tone for days. Yeah, that's Lari Basilio. In her words, "I'm always searching, always learning, and always growing."

Songwriting is an artistic journey. And creating instrumental guitar music is a true art. It's a canvas speckled with unique phrasing, bends, vibrato, leads—splashed with other techniques and nuances along the way. Basilio's guitar is her singular voice. The paintbrush: her hands/fingers, sometimes a pick, sometimes a combination of both, highlighting her fretboard with every shade in between.

The guitarist's songs are technically proficient, but she always lends this underlying, natural feel. Her instrumental EP, simply titled *Lari Basilio* (2011), set the stage for her melodic elegance. On *The Sound of My Room* (2015), she fused instrumental guitar with a visual experience, debuting it in a movie theatre.

Always growing as a player, people took notice. She was the first female guitarist invited as a counselor at the G4 Experience (2019)—an instructional event led by Joe Satriani, which gathers the best of the best for a few days of guitar clinics.

Basilio mastered another art, and that's a knack for holding her own clinics and lessons. What's so cool is that she does them in a fun, easy-to-comprehend way, which really fosters learning.

On Basilio's last album, *Far More*, her instrumental style soared to new heights as she collaborated with top session players for her inspiring compositions.

A big part of her style is an underlying melodic sensibility and smoothness. "A good melody is what can make a song remarkable," says Basilio. "Since I started playing, I've always tried to work on that. It's great being led by melodies, but more than thinking about it, I try and let it flow and play what I'm feeling."

Born in São Paulo to a musical family, she had a natural ear for melody. She started playing the organ at age four, and at eight years old, her father showed her a few guitar chords. Later, enrolling in private lessons, she followed her passion for guitar playing as a lifestyle.

Andy Timmons and Paul Gilbert are two of her biggest influences (she's opened guitar clinics for both). Along her journey, some other pretty cool fans arrived, having traded licks with everyone from Joe Satriani to Steve Vai—recently, Steve Lukather praised her on social media as a top guitarist.

Currently in pre-production on her next album, she's writing songs and setting the stage for another guitar journey. You can listen to her new song called "Sunny Days" played on her Ibanez signature LB1—a special guitar for a unique voice—on YouTube.

Alternate picking is a big part of your playing style. How did that start for you?

Yes, I play with both, with a pick and fingerstyle. I would say that it's 50/50. Both are very present in my playing, and I switch between them a lot within the same song. When my dad put an acoustic guitar in my hands for the first time, he didn't give me a guitar pick and taught me how to play without it.

Did you evolve from there, and what did it offer your playing?

Because I started without using a pick, at some point, it became very natural for me to experiment with fingerpicking



Photo by Eduardo Orelha

on the electric guitar. I switch a lot between pick and fingerpicking because I'm always trying to achieve different dynamics and expression and get different tones. I felt early on that fingerpicking allowed me to have extra control over those things, and I love it. Practicing it over the years, I ended up finding my own way of playing fingerstyle. I only use three fingers on my right hand to fingerpick: thumb, index, and middle. The ring finger I use to hold the guitar pick while I'm fingerpicking. That's my approach, but there are many different ways of doing it, and I think everyone should find what's most comfortable for their playing.

On *Far More*, you really took guitar in a new direction. There's always a creative element in your projects. Where does this come from? It doesn't seem all about shredding for you.

My team and I are always trying to do something new and different. One of our favorite things to do over here is brainstorm. [Laughs] So, for every release, we try and bring a new concept or idea that would complement the project and make it unique somehow. What I always try to do is be as versatile as possible but always have a melodic element in my songs. In the future, I hope to improve on that and keep making music.

What's your approach to soloing?

I usually try to be more expressive than fast. I'm always trying to improve my playing through bends, vibrato, and the dynamics of my sound. I'm trying to do it all with meaning, so it makes sense to the listener. Technically, I try to achieve all of this by playing with a guitar pick but also fingerpicking. It's an endless search for new things on the guitar, but I love it—that's what keeps us growing as guitarists.

Tell me about your new Ibanez LB1 guitar. How involved were you in its design?

I was 100 percent involved, and Ibanez gave me the freedom to choose everything I love and need as a guitar player. But it was definitely a team effort, and together we were able to get an amazing result. It's called the Ibanez LB1, "LB" stands for my initials, and the number 1 is because it's my first signature guitar.

What was the process working with Ibanez and creating your LB1 guitar?

It was such a fun process. A while ago, Ibanez presented me with a new project that they were working on, the AZS model. T-style guitars have

always been my favorite, and I knew that the AZS would be the ideal project for me to base my signature guitar on.

That's great. Were there specific features and attributes you envisioned?

The LB1 has some very personal touches like the Roasted Birdseye maple neck and fretboard, compound radius fretboard, S-S-H pickup (Seymour Duncan Lari Basilio S-S-H pickups) configuration (my signature set from Seymour Duncan), gold Gotoh (Gotoh T1702B bridge) hardware and tremolo, and the violet finish.

Nice. How does the guitar feel?

Oh, great. Not only does it give me the comfort I'm looking for, but it also has the versatility in tone that I need as a player. I'm so proud of it and happy to have collaborated with such a legendary brand as Ibanez.

Specifically, what does the guitar offer in sound and tone?

It's a very versatile guitar. With the S-S-H pickup configuration and the dyna-MIX9 (switching system with alter switch), we have up to nine different tone options. My goal was to have everything I needed in one guitar so I can perform my songs and feel inspired to create new ones.

Tell me more about the different pickups because you have a few, and why? I know you're big on a T-style.

True. I really love the tone from a T-style neck pickup, so it's an essential feature for me. I get a really vintage tone from my T-style neck pickup (Seymour Duncan Lari Basilio (S) neck pickup), and it has a lot of body. In the bridge, I went with a Humbucker (Seymour Duncan Lari Basilio (H) bridge). That's necessary for me, too, and the nature of some of my songs. Then the middle pickup is also a single (Seymour Duncan Lari Basilio (S) middle pickup). It's a really special touch that gives me a few more tonal options, and it's based on the tone of an S-Style guitar middle pickup. So, the LB1 offers me the best of both worlds—in every way. I want to be as versatile a player as possible and having a versatile tone is so essential. Also, it was such an honor partnering up with Seymour Duncan to develop and voice my signature pickups.

Switching gears, your last album, *Far More*, has been widely received. One of your great moments is the song "Glimpse of Light" (with Joe Satriani).

That must have been inspiring; how did you combine your solos/guitar parts?

I was so honored to have Joe Satriani play on the track "Glimpse of Light." I wrote the song, knowing it would be the one I wanted a guest to solo on. When I start composing a song, I never know where it's going to take me. Sometimes it's so surprising, and that's the beauty of it. But I wanted the whole second part of the song to be all Joe's. Towards the end of the song, I had this idea of us playing together somehow. Of course, Joe was totally free to do whatever he wanted to, and he surprised me in so many ways when I first listened to it! His approach is so unique and precise. It fits the song perfectly and full of his personality and his musical identity. The last part of the solo is where he surprised me the most when he

literally started to trade some licks with me. That was a touch of genius, and I loved it. Joe creates solos with so much attitude, and he's a source of inspiration for me and so many other guitar players.

On your song "Redeemed" on *Far More*, you have a lot of tone dynamics going on. How did you express yourself technically and bring it all together?

"Redeemed" is a song where I alternate a lot between using a pick and fingerpicking. Actually, I do that in most of my songs. I love the different dynamics and tone possibilities that I get by using both techniques. My choice to use one or the other during the song is always based on the intention of the sound, tone, dynamics, and, of course, feel. For the bridge on "Redeemed," it has to be done with fingerpicking. I play a lot of ghost notes in the middle, which brings a very cool rhythmic effect, a different accentuation and groove. The palm muting was also very important to make everything work and sound interesting.

What about your tunings?

Glad you asked. Another interesting fact about this song is the tuning I'm using. I tuned the sixth string to C. This tuning and Drop D are my favorite alternate tunings to use.

That can be a cool way to shake things up; how do you feel about alternate tunings?

I agree; switching between tunings always brings a different kind of inspiration.

It seems at this point you've really established "your sound" or tone. Does it feel that way to you?

Lately, I'm very happy where I'm at with my sound and tone, but at the same time, I think everything is a constant evolution, and I love it that way—always searching, always learning, and always growing.

How has Brazilian music influenced your playing?

In Brazil, we have so many different and original styles of music, and growing up, listening to all those different genres helped me seek more versatility as a guitar player.

Here's a bit of an offbeat one, but what's a favorite guitar lick or riff that inspired you?

I grew up sharing all things guitar and music with my younger brother; he's also a guitar player, Joe Basilio. The self-titled album *Avenged Sevenfold* from the band Avenged Sevenfold is definitely one that was always so remarkable to us, and my favorite riff from that album is the "Brompton Cocktail" riff.

What if anything have you had to overcome in your career? You left Brazil to live in the US; was that a challenge?

I already had a good career in Brazil. I was working a lot there, but I felt I needed to expand my career worldwide. So, I decided to come to the US, and it was definitely very challenging. Here in the US, it felt like a new beginning since not many people knew me, but I was pretty focused on my work, on making music, and I had a lot of faith and hope that everything would work out.

When did you move to the US?

Today, it's been four years since I came to the US, and I'm so grateful for everything God has done in my life and, most importantly, thorough my life. I also feel blessed to be able to make music, and I can't wait to release my new album and share more music with everyone! —



The Guitarsenal: LARI BASILIO

By Alex Windsor

When you can shred like Lari Basilio, you need equipment that can keep up. Here's a deeper dive into some of the equipment that she uses.



Photo by Eduardo Orelha

CURRENT GEAR

Ibanez LB1

Lari's self-described "dream guitar" was launched in January 2021, making her the third female artist to receive a signature guitar from Ibanez. The captivating violet finish is her trademark color. The electronics are stocked with Seymour Duncan Lari Basilio alnico pickups in the form of two single coils and one humbucker in the bridge, producing a sweet yet spicy tone. The combined Gotoh T1702B tremolo, dyna-MIX9 switching system, and compound radius fingerboard make the LB1 a fast and versatile guitar. Lari loves this guitar because "the playability is fantastic, and I love the modern feel that it has."

Ibanez AZ Custom

In addition to the LB1, another Ibanez that found its way into Lari's virtuosic fingers was the AZ Custom. With features such as the oval neck grip, the

balanced asymmetrical body, and the smooth neck heel, the AZ series provides players with unmatched playability. Lari's sparkle gold and black model is loaded with a hot combination of Seymour Duncan pickups: an STK-S7 in the neck pickup, an STK-S4m in the middle pickup, and a Seth Lover Trembucker on the bridge. The AZ Custom, Prestige, and Premium also come stocked with Gotoh hardware for improved sustain and secure tuning.

Laney Ironheart IRT-SLS

One amp favorite of Lari's is the Ironheart IRT-SLS by Laney Amplification. She describes this 300w tube amp head as having a "warm sound with lots of dynamics." The IRT-SLS gives players three channels to choose from: clean, rhythm, and lead, with separate EQs, boost, and two power modes. Another desirable feature is the USB Audio I/O and a RE-AMP send jack, which means that players can change the guitar tone of an original recording without having to re-track anything.

Laney CUB-SUPERTOP

Another Laney in Lari's arsenal is the CUB-SUPERTOP. This little boutique head delivers 15 watts of straight-ahead vintage tone. One special feature of this amp is the <1 watt input, which allows the player to drive the amplifier harder at lower volumes. Another feature is the foot-switchable spring reverb, which is based on the spring reverb algorithm of the SECRETPATH pedal from Black Country Customs.

Laney Lionheart L20H

Last of the Laney amp line (but certainly not least) is the Lionheart L20 all-tube head. Known for delivering a hot and smooth tone, the Lionheart L20H is a class A amplifier, which means the tubes are operating at maximum output the entire time. Those tubes consist of hand-selected ECC83 preamp and EL84 power tubes, providing a tone that lives up to its British name. The built-in FX loop gives players using time-based effects more delay sound options.

PREVIOUS GEAR

Suhr Classic T

Before switching to Ibanez, Lari could often be found playing Suhr guitars. Her most notable model was the custom Classic T in a sparkle pink finish with gold hardware, white binding, and a tinted maple neck. Founded in 1997, Suhr Guitars quickly became, and remains, a favorite among virtuosos, thanks to their superior construction. Her hot-rodded guitar was equipped with a single-coil neck pickup and bridge humbucking pickup for more tonal versatility.

DV Mark Multiamp

While recording her last album, *Far More*, Lari's go-to amplifier was her DV Mark Multiamp. This compact, versatile all-in-one amp allows artists like Lari to access a wide range of different preamps, power amps, and effects with ease. "In this single unit, I have everything that I need: speaker cabinets, different amps, and microphones," Lari tells her fans on her YouTube channel. One of Lari's favorite features of this amp is the user-friendly interface—"I can get great tones very quickly."

A "Tribute" to All-Female Tribute Bands

Hey, guys! Watch out. The womxn have you covered. We're paying tribute to the all-female "tribute" bands paying homage to their rock and heavy metal idols—think AC/DC, Iron Maiden, Judas Priest, Queen, Kiss, and Black Sabbath. These ladies are taking center stage to treat their fans to one heck of a show!

Australian rock band AC/DC has caught the attention of several tribute bands. AC/Dshe from San Francisco has been at it since 1997, covering the Bon Scott era. Hell's Belles launched in 2000 in Seattle. Mistress of Reality and Black Sabbitch take on Black Sabbath while the San Francisco Killer Queens belt out our favorite Queen tunes.

In this issue, we're paying tribute to several of our favorite all-female tribute bands: Judas Priestess, Priss, Zepparella, Iron Maidens, and Ballbreakers.

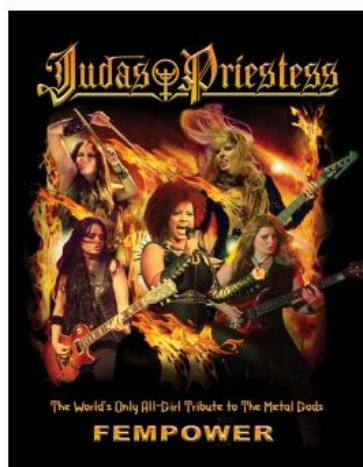


Photo by Gyda Gash

JUDAS PRIESTESS

Formed in 2009 in New York City, these talented women are the world's only all-girl band paying tribute to Metal God, Judas Priest, being recognized by major music magazines as one of the current top female bands in the world.

Clad in leather-studded clothing for their energetic performances, these multi-talented women have garnered worldwide status from music critics and devoted fans who pack their shows—even receiving approval from Judas Priest frontman Rob Halford on VH1 Classic's *That Metal Show*.

Band members.

Militia Vox – Lead Vocals
Josette – Lead Guitar
Rena Sands Petrucci – Lead Guitar
Gyda Gash – Bass, Backing Vocals
Hillary Blaze – Drums, Backing Vocals

What roles do each of you play?

Militia: I'm the Frontwoman and Music Director, so it's my job to lead the charge and make sure the band is giving everything they got and that the audience understands who we are, that we came to kick ass, and we're all going to *love it*.

How did you perfect your band character's style—some of those iconic moves and riffs?

Practice—and also making it our own! We're a tribute band, sure, but we've chosen to interpret the music of Judas Priest, not mimic. We don't play it note for note, and we add our own flair and swagger to the songs and the stage energy—it's 'ferociously feminine.' We don't look like them—why sound like them? Ultimately, we are honoring them, their incredible songs, and their iconic legacy.

Favorite song to cover?

"Painkiller"—because I love to watch the jaws drop!!!! It's mean, it's heavy, it shows off everyone in the band, and it's the most metal song ever.



PRISS

Priss prides itself in being the only Kiss tribute band to perform on the KISS Kruise & Kid Rock Cruise, and they have also performed on A&E's *Gene Simmons Family Jewels* and *Storage Wars*. Priss performs worldwide and also had the pleasure of performing with Bruce and Bob Kulick.

Band members.

Moa Munoz – Lead singer and guitarist
Jennifer Paro – Lead guitar
Andrea Zermeno – Bass
Rolly DeVore – Drums

What roles do each of you play?

Moa – "Doll Stanley"
Jennifer – "Lace Frehley"
Andrea – "Jean Simone"
Rolly – "Peter Priss"

How did you perfect your band character's style—some of those iconic moves and riffs?

Moa: Being a female singer, I am just never going to sound exactly like the original when the original is a man, so I think it has been a

mix of trying to get the vibe of Paul and try to copy some of his swag while still keeping it me. For some of the riffs, I actually got some help from Bruce Kulick himself! I was super nervous, but it was also super helpful and cool. As a band and as friends outside of the band, we simply have fun together, and I think that shows. Everyone can learn to play a song, but it's something different actually playing together. You know what I mean?

Joining Priss was my first gig after moving to the US from a small town in Sweden, and these guys really took me under their wings and helped and taught me so much. I am forever grateful to them, and for the day my guitar teacher, Lenny, recommended me for this audition, and almost eight years later, we're still going strong!

Favorite song to cover?

Moa: I love to play "Lick it Up." It has a great groove, and I love singing it. It always drives the crowd nuts! "Detroit Rock City" is also another favorite.

ZEPPARELLA

Founded by Clementine, the drummer, in 2005 in the Bay area, the Led Zeppelin tribute band has gone through several members. With one studio album and three live albums under their belt, the band continues to wow audiences with their high-energy, spot-on performances.

Band members.

Anna Kristina – Vocals/Harmonica
Gretchen Menn – Guitarist
Holly West – Bass
Clementine – Drums

What roles do each of you play?

Anna – “Robert Plant”
Gretchen – “Jimmy Page”
Holly – “John Paul Jones”
Clementine – “John Bonham”

How did you perfect your band character’s style—some of those iconic moves and riffs?

Anna: Lots of listening and watching and listening and watching and practice, practice, practice! In the very beginning, I did a really deep dive into the movie *The Song Remains the Same*. I watched it over and over to immerse myself in Plant’s stance, stage presence, musicality, and interplay with the band. But the learning and the studying never stops. I check out as many Zeppelin concerts as I can find, and I seem to continue to uncover different beautiful nuances every time I watch a live clip or listen to tracks in preparation for shows. The music is so deep, and Plant’s musicality is so rich that there is always something new to uncover. And I’m always listening for and watching for the inner expression that’s going on rather than just looking to accomplish only superficial mannerisms and mimicry. It’s an ongoing process.

Gretchen: I’m a work in progress, and the more I grow as a musician, the more I notice subtleties of aspects I thought I had down. That’s the endless beauty of the path of music—you never arrive. On a more practical level, I rely primarily on the app, Transcribe! It allows you to loop sections, control pitch and tempo independently, and adjust EQ so you can really hear what’s going on. I also study live versions of what Jimmy did, and I’ve even referenced good tutorials on YouTube to cross-check my ears with those of others. There are so many great resources available for anyone who wants to get seriously geeky—and get it right!

Holly: It takes a lot more listening than practice to get the riffs down. You really have to understand John Paul Jones’s techniques, and you get that by listening intently and then practicing them.

Clementine: I am still working to perfect Bonham’s style—it’s a life-long project! More than anything, I try to make the songs feel the way I remember them feeling when I was first listening as a teenager. Then, I work forever on getting the technique up to par. That involves a lot of woodshedding.

Favorite song to cover?

Anna: Whew, the constantly tough question to answer. It’s a good problem to have, but it’s so hard to narrow it down to just one. I’d have to say either “The Lemon Song” or “In My Time of Dying.” I lean towards both of them because they both take several different musical turns, and it’s fun to go into so many directions in one song. And both really showcase Plant’s wonderful rhythmic feel and phrasing. I really enjoy playing with those musical elements, where Plant is almost speaking and singing together. It rings the same cord in me as when I sing jazz in that it’s almost like scat singing—using the voice as a rhythmic instrument. And both songs embrace a wide dynamic range going from whispery soft to aggressively loud. I love the beautifully arresting a cappella moment in “In My Time of Dying” that then explodes into the groove that builds to the end. And similarly, I love the bass breakdown in “The Lemon Song” that then migrates to the intimate back and forth between the guitar and vocal and then explodes right into the pounding drums and guitar solo. And both songs have a super slinky swing inside the rhythm. That swing is my home. As with so many of Zeppelin’s songs, they are joyous musical journeys from top to bottom.

Gretchen: I can never pick a favorite. I tend to be partial to anything new, as that brings the aspect of excitement and novelty. I do always love playing “Dazed and Confused.” There is everything in that one—improvisation, dynamics, beating the crap out of a Les Paul with a violin bow.

Holly: Personally, I love playing “The Lemon Song” because it’s a huge challenge to get 100% correct. I also enjoy “Whole Lotta Love” because while we stick to the structure and riffs, we get to let loose a little and jam too.

Clementine: “In My Time of Dying” because it’s got so many different aspects to it, and I love the slide guitar.

“

I watch a live clip or listen to tracks in preparation for shows. The music is so deep, and Plant’s musicality is so rich that there is always something new to uncover.

Pictured L to R: Holly West, Gretchen Menn, Anna Kristina, and Clementine

Photo by Max Crace



“

Courtney: Why wouldn't you pay tribute to Iron Maiden? It is a no-brainer there. Timeless.

Nikki: I couldn't think of any better band to pay tribute to!

Wanda: We chose to pay tribute to Iron Maiden because we thought it would be fun! They are one of our favorite bands, and we enjoy playing the music.

Linda: I discovered the live album, *Maiden Japan*, while on a forced vacation from high school (hehe) and fell in love with the band and drums. Maiden music is permanently engrained in my being, so when the idea of playing in a tribute band to Iron Maiden arose, it was a no-brainer! To do a tribute band justice, you really have to love the music you will be playing because you'll basically be living with that music all the time! You really need to feel this music to perform it right. Aside from the epic tunes, they are also a complete blast to perform live for fellow Maiden fanatics! \m/

IRON MAIDENS

The Iron Maidens—the world's only all-female tribute to the heavy metal band Iron Maiden—was formed in the Los Angeles area in 2001 and quickly established themselves as one of Southern California's top tribute acts. The band covers repertoire from all eras of the Iron Maiden catalog, encompassing their greatest hits as well as more obscure works. Their stage show includes appearances by “Eddie” (Iron Maiden's mascot), the grim reaper, the devil, and more! Over the past two decades, the band has toured worldwide, developing an international following.

Band members.

Kirsten Rosenberg – Vocalist
Courtney Cox – Guitar
Nikki Stringfield – Guitar
Wanda Ortiz – Bass
Linda McDonald – Drums

What roles do each of you play?

Kirsten – “Bruce Dickinson”
Courtney – “Adriana Smith”
Nikki – “Davina Murray”
Wanda – “Steph Harris”
Linda – “Nikki McBURRain”

How did you perfect your band character's style—some of those iconic moves and riffs?

Kirsten: Still “perfecting” those vocals! Coming at it as a true (very) longtime Maiden fan, I've been practicing for years—and it never gets old. Vocal lessons help, too, lol. Oh, and my air guitar is tight! :-)

Courtney: I've been a fan of Iron Maiden and Adrian Smith before even picking up a guitar, so it was second nature to get in the “Maiden” zone and shred the tunes every night on stage. I have the time of my life from the intro note to the last. The minute our intro track starts, I'm taken over with such a wave of joy, and we all just bring it full force for the fans.

Nikki: I grew up listening to Maiden, and one of the first riffs I learned was “Two Minutes To Midnight.” Since Dave Murray has such a unique and identifiable sound with his solos and legato, I made sure to practice a lot to do him justice. Also, I really just love the music like the rest of the girls in the band, and I think that makes all the difference when you're in a tribute band.

Wanda: I've been a longtime Iron Maiden fan, so growing up, I would practice along with their recordings. I've also seen quite a few of their shows and videos and was already familiar with how Steve Harris dressed and moved on stage before joining the band.

Linda: The endless cycle of listening, listening, and practice, practice. :-) After a while, you really start to understand your band character's style and can feel where they are going to go next.

Favorite song to cover?

Kirsten: Must I pick just one? Today, I'd say it's “Flash of the Blade,” or is it “Moonchild”? Wait, maybe “Brave New World,” or....?

Courtney: “Sea of Madness.”

Nikki: It's so hard to pick, and mine usually changes with what set we're playing. Right now, I'd say “Powerslave.”

Wanda: It's hard to pick only one; some of my favorites include “Losfer Words,” “Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” and “Powerslave.”

Linda: My favorite Maiden song to cover at this moment is the “Phantom of the Opera.”



Photo by Jack Lue

BALLBREAKERS

✂ BALLBREAKERS ✂ Atlanta's own All-female AC/DC Tribute band showcases a hot rocking, authentic AC/DC experience from both the era of Bon and Brian! Started in 2014 by a group of fun-loving rocking girls who came together over the love of AC/DC, Ballbreakers gives fans a High Voltage AC/DC Tribute Concert Experience with an authentic reproduction of AC/DC's signature sound, full performance show, and their iconic looks. Lead singer Taylor Pierce brings an unmatched voice of early Bon Scott himself from the early roots of the band's Australian club circuit days up to the current superstar worldwide hits of Brian Johnson with an unwatchable raw vocal power and fun stage presence. The rhythm powerhouse section features long-time rockers Vanessa Izabella on rhythm guitar and Amy Epperley on bass, along with hard-hitting drummer Lindsey Tulkoff; they hold down AC/DC's quintessential wall of sound. Rounding it out is the ultimate ANGUS YOUNG, Linnay "Lyangus" Della Lucé, who delivers electrifying iconic solos and high energy performance, all for one unforgettable AC/DC experience. For those about to rock, We Salute You!!!

Band members.

Taylor Pierce – Vocals
Linnay Della Luce – Lead Guitar
Vanessa Izabella – Rhythm Guitar
Amy Epperley – Bass
Lindsey Tulkoff – Drums

What roles do each of you play?

Taylor – "Bon Scott/Brian Johnson"
Linnay – "Angus Young"
Vanessa – "Malcolm Young"
Amy – "Cliff Williams"
Lindsey – "Phil Rudd"

How did you perfect your band character's style—some of those iconic moves and riffs?

Each one of us spends a lot of time and attention on the sound and overall tone of each AC/DC member we are trying to emulate through the use of the same or very similar equipment and playing styles. Also, getting into character usually involves wearing versions of their iconic outfits but with our own spin on them and sometimes even sporting like hair cuts.

Vocally, Taylor has always been drawn to the early days of Bon Scott with his "cheeky lyrics, distinctive gravelly vocal edge, and hard rocker attitude," so our set includes many of these early '70s AC/DC cuts, but she can also match Johnson's own unique vocal compression technique and expansive range to give fans those huge arena rock hits too.

For Linnay to get into the Angus that everyone knows and loves, "I just have fun with it. I put on a schoolgirl outfit, plug in my Gibson SG into a Marshall JCM 2000 or a Marshall ORI20C for smaller venues, and rock out. Angus has a pretty easy setup. I'm looking to get the Solodallas Storm pedal that replicates Angus' wireless rig from the '70s and '80s. Other than that, I don't use anything else but an EQ boost for solos." Her journey into lead guitar began with this band, "I was looking to challenge myself more on guitar and learn lead. I thought this would be a great opportunity to push myself to get to the next level."



Photo is by Elevin Photography

Vanessa helps hold down the wall of sound of the tight rhythm section and is the most recent member to join the band. She uses a 1981 Ibanez Artist and a Marshall JCM800 head through an Orange 2x12. "As a guitarist, I always loved AC/DC. They wrote great songs and were a solid band. Finding out that Malcolm wrote most of their riffs was very cool. He was always in the background, but Malcolm, Phil, and Chris held it down so that Malcolm had a great musical platform to perform on. I've fronted a few bands, and I have been lead guitar, and this was a very nice change to just "Chug" in the background. I like to listen to some AC/DC and other hard rock before I hit the stage, even a little meditation to get me in the right headspace. Sadly, Malcolm is no longer with us, and I know that his musical legacy will live on in rock 'n' roll history. It's fun to get the opportunity to bring his guitar parts to life in our live performances."

For bass, Amy's playing style focuses on recreating the feel and details of Cliff's solid no-frills driving bottom layer for the band to ride on and uses the classic Ampeg SVT-810E cabinet with a SVT-7PRO Head and trademark Ernie Ball MusicMan StingRay strung with D'Addario roundwound XLs. "I never get tired of listening to AC/DC, and there's no song that I don't like; they all really rock for me, so I will often listen to an album back to back right

before shows to get into it. Because of my love of AC/DC, I thought this would be a really fun project to play in, so I quickly jumped at the chance to join the band when I was approached early on its inception. You gotta really appreciate a good rhythm section like AC/DC that carries the band. I love the way that Cliff plays; it's relentlessly driving and straight to the point, so I try to emulate all aspects as close as possible in sound, notes played (or not) in the pocket, that classic bass tone, and even the coordinated rhythm player's stage movements and outfits though I still add my own personal rocker stage performance flair to it sometimes."

Favorite song to cover?

As a band, our favorite song to cover is "Boogie Man." Not only is it a lost gem off the 2005 *Ballbreaker* album from which we got our name's inspiration, but all of us have a love of the blues and have been influenced by AC/DC. So, this song captures not only the essence, power, and electricity of AC/DC, but when paired with Brian's gritty vocals, there's those authentic slinky '70s smokey backroom stripped-down riffs on an old school tube amp for a classic feel. It was also a big favorite of long-time friend and occasional sub drummer for the band Douglas Hazelwood who recently passed away so we always keep it in a prime location within the live set. —

TONE TALK WITH KIKI WONG

Ever since Kiki Wong was a wee little girl, she had a passion for animals and music. Like many little girls, she dreamt of being a veterinarian, playing doctor on her stuffed animals.

At the age of six, she also discovered her passion for music and started classical piano lessons. When she was thirteen, her family gifted her father the first family acoustic guitar, a Yamaha Eterna, purchased from Costco. Her father taught her the first influential three chords G, C and D. She sought out the rest of her guitar education through the internet (yes, pre-YouTube days). She played in countless garage bands throughout high school with all types of music varying from indie to death metal. She also learned how to play the drums at the age of sixteen, followed by a bit of undeniable bass-slapping.

After graduating from the University of California, Irvine with a bachelor's in Biological Science/Pre-Medicine, she decided to take a break from the books and become a full-time guitarist with the all Asian-American girl band, Nylon Pink, and later became the lead vocalist.

She then had experience playing on stage with Taylor Swift at the 2014 VMA's and Usher at CBS's Fashion Rocks Fall 2014. She was also the lead guitarist of Bret Michael's band in a commercial for Nissan. She then joined the band She Demons, put together by Jerry Only's the Misfits, touring internationally and nationwide in the fall of 2015 as direct support. The band name was later changed to Hellfire Heart.

After music took a halt, she and former singer of Nylon Pink, Kaila Yu, decided to pivot their brand into a travel blog, which generated over 100,000 views per month in the first six months of release. They later co-wrote the best-selling book *30-Day Travel Challenge: How to Make Your Travel Dreams a Reality* and speak as travel experts on multiple news networks such as KTLA, CBS, NBC, and Fox News.

Wong currently plays guitar for the Los Angeles rock band Vigil Of War.

What is your definition of tone, and how has it changed over the years?

Tone has been a touchy subject ever since I've picked up a guitar. Growing up, I really loved metal—like really, REALLY loved it. I loved it so much that I didn't really like any other tones except for heavily distorted dirty chunky metal

chugs. This likeness still sticks with me to this day, though recently, I've been more interested in exploring cleaner tones as well.

Which guitars, amps, and pedals are you currently using and why?

For years, I've played Schecter guitars because of the heavy metal tones and body shapes. Recently, I have also been playing Zemaitis, and I'm absolutely LOVING their guitars. They put so much care into the craftsmanship and treat their guitar-making like an art. I'm so happy with my Zemaitis® Z22QQ TOB. I also play out of a Marshall JCM 2000 live and use really minimal pedals these days. However, in my guitar videos, most people would be surprised to find that I play out of a Line 6 Spider III amp and record it directly through the iPhone camera. I like how raw it makes the videos and to show some of the flub-ups; that way, people know it's not doctored in post-production.

Are there certain recording techniques you prefer in the studio?

When I played in a KPOP cover band, we did a lot of post-production and a ton of effects to make it sound more electronic. Recently with our new releases with Vigil Of War, we recorded at Barefoot Studios, where tons of Warped Tour band records were made. It was amazing to create all of our sounds direct from amps—no plugins, just raw tones. I loved that recording style.

How do you keep your sound consistent onstage?

Because I don't play with too many pedals, I honestly prefer just to get the tone perfect on my amp. I move around a lot on stage and have accidentally activated pedals on live shows, so I like to get it right and tight on my amp.

What does your practice consist of?

Scales, scales, and more scales with a metronome, of course. Then a few twiddly dees and twiddly dum stuff to warm up. Lastly, I run through the set, once sitting down and the rest standing up. I also mix in fun songs and covers that I like so that I don't feel like the practice part is too draining. It's always good to play stuff that you're passionate about and



Photo by Jack Lue

that you enjoy, so you feel more inclined to practice more.

Favorite guitar riff or lick that inspired you to play guitar?

My favorite lick is honestly "House of the Rising Sun." That was the first song that I learned to play, and my dad taught it to me. Whenever I hear it, it still gives me all the feels.

What is your advice for young women who hope to work in the music industry?

Be bold. Be brave. Don't let anybody tell you who you should be. Be yourself and own your s--t. You are a magical unicorn, talented and beautiful in your own way. That's what people want to see! 🦄—

TONE TALK WITH JESS GARLAND

Photo by Ash Gongora



Jess Garland is a Dallas-based singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, performing and recording artist, educator, film producer, composer, community organizer, and booking agent. She is a Southern Methodist University graduate with a BA in Political Science. Garland has played many music and art festivals and has opened for Madame Gandhi and Academy Award winner Gingger Shankar. Some of her musical influences are Alice Coltrane, Joni Mitchell, Sade, Erykah Badu, Björk, and Missy Elliott.

In September of 2019, she composed the music and co-produced a film titled *Their Lives Mattered: A Dialogue Honoring Stolen Lives* by Dallas law enforcement, followed by the release of her debut single "GLOW" in August of 2020.

Education is important to Garland. Her non-profit organization, Swan Strings, provides free music education and sound therapy services to North Texas individuals with limited access to resources. Her mission is to heal and promote self-love while representing Black women in

music. She continues to use her music and platforms to inspire those in this world to push forward in a positive direction.

What is your definition of tone, and how has it changed over the years?

My definition of tone is the voice of the sound and the balance to maintain it. Every guitar sounds different based on the kind of wood, strings, and materials used to make that instrument and how the musician/artist uses their voice. For example, I don't play with picks, and I keep my nails slightly longer on my right hand for tone. I also play with delay and reverb effects as it is essential to my sound.

Which guitars, amps, and pedals are you currently using and why?

I play harp and guitar in my set. I drive a sedan, so I need a small amp that packs a punch. If it's a DIY set up, I'll bring my Fender Mustang amp. At times, I'll bring it to music venues because sound guys usually freak out about how much gear I have or at the sight of a harp when I only need one channel for my instruments. Sometimes,

I'll have them just mic my amp if I'm not going direct to the PA. I used to play my Lucero classical nylon-stringed guitar on stage, but now I use my gold limited edition Epiphone Wildkat. I love the tone juxtaposed to my harp using the Way Huge Electronics Aqua-Puss pedal for both instruments. I also use a BOSS RC-1 Loop station for both instruments. I play different types of gigs, but I play Avant-garde/experimental music. So, for my solo performances featuring my music includes songs that are created with live looping.

What about strings?

I mostly use D'Addario strings, but I have used La Bella and Ernie Ball. I keep it normal/medium-light tension for my strings.

Are there certain recording techniques you prefer in the studio?

I prefer to record at night; I feel most creative after a long day, and it's easier for me to go within. I usually always record directly to the soundboard using a DI. For harp, I've done direct and have also used a vintage mic for recording.

How do you keep your sound consistent onstage?

I use the same gear when I'm recording as I do live to keep the sound consistent.

What does your practice consist of?

I teach every day, so I have to make sure I set aside time to practice what I preach. I play scales and chord progressions around the circle of 5ths and improvise with myself using the BOSS Loop Station. At times, I practice covers for ear training. If I'm practicing for a performance, I warm up with scales and run through my setlist. If I'm doing performance art, I run through my setlist and movements and different ways to be interactive with the audience.

Favorite guitar riff or lick that inspired you to play guitar?

I was raised on classic rock music, so it was probably the opening of "Little Wing" by Hendrix or Pink Floyd's "Wish You Were Here." This question also makes me think about the influence of nineties R&B/Soul, and I can hear the start of "Whatever You Want" by Tony! Toni! Toné! During high school leading into college, it was definitely India.Arie's "The Truth" and Lauryn Hill's entire unplugged album.

What is your advice for young women who hope to work in the music industry?

My advice for young women who hope to work within the music industry is to find their tribe, which can take time and patience. You'll find others that may be close to you who are extremely competitive that will attempt to sabotage your goals. Learn from those experiences but most importantly, stay focused. Practice and study your art, believe in yourself, and keep moving forward. 🎸



TONE TALK WITH SOPHIE BURRELL

My name is **Sophie Burrell**; I'm a guitarist/musician, songwriter, and teacher from the South Coast of the UK.

From a very young age, I've always known that music was what I wanted to do—and make! After watching *School of Rock* at age five, it was no question that my life would shortly become entirely focused around playing guitar! Now at twenty-one, I've been playing for twelve years and slowly working on making music (and all things related) my full-time career.

After growing up through my teens playing lots of shows in various bands, I decided to knuckle down and shift my focus to the online world. In 2019, I had been playing live shows almost every weekend for three years; as much as I absolutely adore playing live (it's by far my favorite part of being a musician!), I needed a break and a change of scenery—I desperately wanted to work on some new projects and develop my songwriting skills.

Making videos on YouTube and Instagram, teaching, and songwriting has been where all of my time has been going for the last year! In December 2020, I released my first single, "Tranquility," as a solo artist. Alongside working on solo guitar music, I've also been writing intensively for a band that will hopefully premiere this year!

What is your definition of tone, and how has it changed over the years?

To me, tone is a musician's identity—it's what makes you individual and unique. I feel like no one ever has the exact same tone. Influences play a huge part in people's tones for sure, but it's what makes YOU sound the way you do. It's no question that tone has become extremely diverse as the years have gone by. There are so many different ways of making tones—digitally, using pedals, tube amps, guitar pickups—ultimately, I believe it's in your fingers—and these additional "tools" just help to enhance your natural tone!

Which guitars, amps, and pedals are you currently using and why?

Oooh, at the moment, I'm using a variety of different things. My "last" live rig was an EVH 5150iii 100w, BOSS TU-3, BOSS NS-2, MXR Dyna Comp, MXR Micro Amp, MXR Black Label Chorus, TC Electronic HOF Reverb & Flashback Delay, and PRS Custom 24 Wood Library. This set up is absolutely killer, and I couldn't love it more; certain elements could definitely change around a little depending on what effects and tones I'm going to need for my new projects! At home, as I live in a small apartment, I've been rocking through various amp plugins for a while now!

Some of my favorites are Neural DSP (Archetype Plini specifically), BIAS FX 2, and STL Tones.

What about strings?

Strings—one of my favorite things! I use D'Addario NYXL 10-46 and D'Addario XT 10-46. They are hands down the best strings I have ever used in my life; having strings that suit you makes such a huge difference!

Are there certain recording techniques you prefer in the studio?

In my last band, we recorded two albums—both with different methods. The first album was recorded "live," where we would all play together and make comps of the best takes and then track vocals and solos separately. I loved doing it this way because it really captured the chemistry, but it wasn't as tight as recording separately. The second way was traditional—drums, guitars, vocals, bass, and production. I think this is my favorite way. More recently, I've been recording everything from the comfort of my desk. I like doing it this way because there's less pressure, but being all alone without any feedback from a producer or bandmates is difficult sometimes; there's no one to give you an immediate second opinion!

How do you keep your sound consistent onstage?

Being well prepared and practiced for sure. You want to be sure that you know your sound and your songs inside out so that you could pretty much play them in your sleep by the time you step on stage, hahaha. **What does your practice consist of?** My practice changes up a lot; it all depends on what I've got going on. Admittedly, for the last year, I haven't been focusing on techniques as much; my spare time has been heavily focused around songwriting. If I'm preparing for a video, my practice will be centered around whatever it is that I'll be playing in the video.

Favorite guitar riff or lick that inspired you to play guitar?

As I was inspired by a movie rather than a riff, that's a tough question! I'll have to go with one of the riffs from *School of Rock*—either "Immigrant Song" by Led Zeppelin or "Sunshine Of Your Love" by Cream!

What is your advice for young women who hope to work in the music industry?

My advice would be never give up, and never let someone tell you that you won't or can't. If music is what you want to do and it makes you happy, throw yourself at every opportunity with your instrument in hand and a smile on your face! You CAN do it. 🎸—

Photo by Ellie Godden



TONE TALK WITH KANAMI TONO

BAND-MAID is a band that cranks out hard rock sounds while we are adorned in cute maid outfits. My name is **Kanami Tono**. I play guitar, and I also write our songs. My favorite guitarist is Carlos Santana, and I often feel that it is his playing that supports me emotionally. My songwriting has been influenced by countless artists, both in Japanese and Western music.

What is your definition of tone, and how has it changed over the years?

To me, "tone" is a way for me to express my individuality, my character. In fact, sometimes, I think that tone may divulge too much of my personality. I have never given much thought to whether my perception of tone has changed; I imagine it has.

Which guitars, amps, and pedals are you currently using and why?

I play a PRS Customer 24 (Korina neck and body) and a Custom 24 (Mahogany neck and body). I think they are ideal for the BAND-MAID sound. I just feel so comfortable when I hold them, and they are very easy for me to play. I use a Mesa Boogie Triple Rectifier with a 4X24 Rectifier Standard cabinet. When we were searching for a new BAND-MAID sound, this is where our searching led us. Also, its three channels make it very versatile—I can use them in many ways.

Two of my many effectors are my Free The Tone ARC-3 Controller and the FT-2Y Digital Delay. The controller has no lag time when switching, and it is very easy to control and manage. The delay is also very convenient for me since it allows for so many settings to dial in the sounds that I want. I also find that FTT products are very reliable. I also use a DigiTech Polyphonic Drop Tune Pedal. When performing, I use it to drop down a semitone; while in the studio, it is handy when recording tracks in lower octaves.

What about strings?

Basically, I use 10-46 gauge. When recording, sometimes I will use 11-48 or 11-52. I prefer



strings that aren't too slick and produce a more natural sound.

Are there certain recording techniques you prefer in the studio?

We typically start with the backing track. Then we add a track to add fullness, followed by guitar melody tracks. Often, we add the guitar solo at the end.

How do you keep your sound consistent onstage?

I have my pedalboard set up so that my effectors and amps are always synced. Our basic sound and EQ is always the same, so we tweak it for each venue.

What does your practice consist of?

Every day, I do a fundamentals regimen for about an hour. Each month, I create a new menu for this regimen and make it a daily routine. Besides that, I work on areas that I'm not comfortable with in my own songs, or I copy phrases from artists that I like.

Favorite guitar riff or lick that inspired you to play guitar?

When I heard the phrases in Larry Carlton's "Room 335," that's when I decided to really get serious with my guitar playing. It really moved me.

What is your advice for young women who hope to work in the music industry?

To be honest, there have been a lot of difficulties and hardships, but they were easily offset by all the fun I've had. I know it takes courage to keep pushing and challenging and to stay the path, but you only live once! My suggestion is to just have fun, and together we can really stimulate the music industry for future women as well! 🍷

Photo provided by PRS with permission to use.

SHE SAID!



Photo by Jack Lue

"Protect your love of music ferociously. Keep in sight what drives you to play music, and align your practice with your goals."

~ **Gretchen Menn**

August 27, 2020

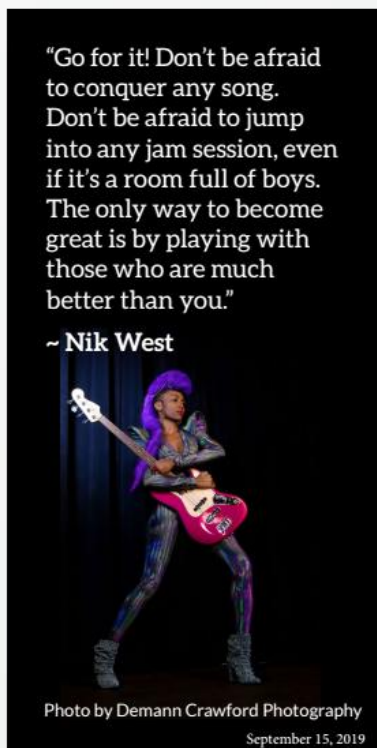


Photo by Demann Crawford Photography

September 15, 2019

"Go for it! Don't be afraid to conquer any song. Don't be afraid to jump into any jam session, even if it's a room full of boys. The only way to become great is by playing with those who are much better than you."

~ **Nik West**

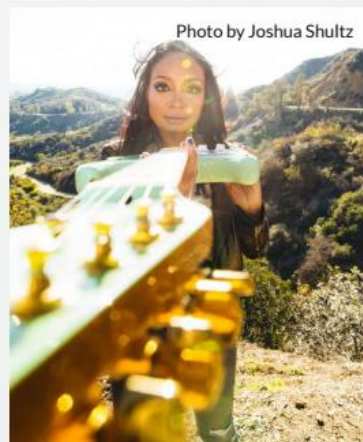


Photo by Joshua Shultz

"Practice, stand your ground, and get around players better than you and learn. Also, ask questions, and don't be afraid to fail."

~ **Malina Moya**

August 26, 2020

"If you are going to do it, do it right. If you play an instrument, play it properly. Be professional always. Focus. Give, give, give to the audience. Be prepared to let go of normal life—it is a full-time job."

~ **Suzi Quatro**

August 14, 2019

Photo by SPV/
Steamhammer



"Jump in. Now's the time. Thirty years ago, when I joined Michael Jackson, the industry was not friendly to females for the most part. But it's changed radically, especially in the last five to ten years with more and more women being seen online. That encourages other women to jump in."

~ **Jennifer Batten**

Photo provided by artist with permission to use.

December 31, 2019

All quotes are excerpts from interviews on **GuitarGirlMag.com**.

In addition to the great new guitars we featured and reviewed in this edition, check out some exciting gear and accessories recently announced.



Martin 00L Earth - FSC
Certified and Plastic-free



Martin T1
StreetMaster®
Ukulele



Sargeant Ted
Get'm Get'm
Guitar Strap
getmgetm.com



Martin
0XK Ukulele



Martin Concert
Ukulele FSC

martinguitar.com



BOSS TU-02 Clip-
on Tuner
boss.info/us



D'Addario
Accessories
Launches The
Chromatic Pedal
Turner+
daddario.com/

Electro-Harmonix
Nano Metal Muff
exh.com



Fender Boxer Series Stratocaster
fender.com



PRS Silver
Sky Limited
Lunar Ice



Studio Model Eriza
Verde



Special Semi Hollow
McCarty Burst



SE Custom 24
Bonnie Pink



SE Custom 24
Black Gold Burst



SE Custom 24
Charcoal Burst



SE Custom 24
Faded Blue Burst



Custom 24-08
Cobalt Blue

Updates to PRS Models

prsguitars.com/



Taylor GT 811e

taylorguitars.com



Taylor GT K21e



Luna Gypsy Exotic Black/
White Ebony A/E

lunaguitars.com



Gibson SJ-200 Cherry
Orianthi Signature

gibson.com

SIGNATURE MODELS FOR FEMALE PLAYERS ON THE RISE

By Vanessa Izabella

Some of the world's iconic guitar manufacturers are taking notice of women's influential purchasing power, and they are responding with new signature models for some of today's top female guitarists. Could this possibly be due to Fender's 2018 research study that revealed that new female guitarists are making up 50 percent of the guitar-buying market? This year at the 2021 Winter NAMM Believe in Music show, several new attention-grabbing electric and acoustic models were revealed.

Let's look at some of the models announced late last year and what's new for 2021.

Gibson Orianthi SJ-200 Acoustic Custom in Cherry

This collaboration has been in the works since mid-2020, and it was finally unveiled in January. The Orianthi SJ-200 features an ES-345-inspired neck, AAA sitka spruce top and maple back, cherry nitrocellulose lacquer finish, fingerboard mother-of-pearl inlays, and a lotus flower pickguard. For electronics, it is fitted with the LR Baggs Orianthi System, under-saddle piezo pickup, and soundhole mounted preamp and controls. With all this guitar has to offer, Orianthi really put her style on this model.

Epiphone Nancy Wilson Fanatic Electric Guitar in Fireburst

The new Epiphone signature model has the classic original Nighthawk mahogany body and a figured maple veneer top. It sports a pair of ProBucker humbuckers and a 5-way pickup selector switch that really allows you to dial in your tone. The neck is a rounded C-profile made of mahogany and an ebony fretboard. The finish is a stunning Fireburst Gloss.

Ibanez Lari Basilio Signature LB1 in Violet

Ibanez released the Brazilian guitarist Lari Basilio's new signature model during Believe in Music week. This LB1 has 22 jumbo frets, AZ oval C-neck in Birdseye maple, an ash neck, and signature Seymour Duncan Lari Basilio neck pickups. The violet gloss finish and gold hardware finish off this exciting model.

The BMG Arielle Electric Guitar

Singer-songwriter and guitarist Arielle collaborated with Brian May to create her signature guitar based on her love for classic 20th-century guitar design and her own "Two Tone" guitar she built with friend Patrick Yates. The 24" scale guitar has a retro-futuristic design in an orange and blue diagonal pattern, along with a raised center-strip. Made of limba wood, it has a mahogany neck, a vintage-styled two-piece pickguard, BMG Tri-Sonic style single coil pickups, and May's uniquely designed BM switching system. Chrome hardware, including Grover Tuners and Wilkinson WVP Tremolo finish off the overall beauty of the Arielle.

Fender H.E.R. Stratocaster in Chrome Glow

The H.E.R. Stratocaster model was released last year for the R&B performer and has the classic Stratocaster features, an alder body, maple mid-'60s C-shape neck, and an eye-catching custom Chrome Glow finish. Fender Vintage Noiseless Stratocaster single-coil pickups and anodized aluminum pickguard complete this model's custom look. H.E.R. made an appearance at this year's Superbowl with a stunning performance of "America The Beautiful."

Fender Chrissie Hynde Telecaster in Ice Blue Metallic

The Fender Chrissie Hynde Telecaster in Ice Blue Metallic is simply gorgeous. Launched by Fender in collaboration with the iconic rocker, the guitar mirrors many of Hynde's beloved 1965 Tele features. Boasting an alder body, custom mid-'60s C-shaped maple neck, upgraded locking tuners, a stainless steel 6-saddle bridge, custom Chrissie Hynde single-coil pickups, chrome mirror pickguard, and Fender's Road Worn hardware, this guitar is sure to please guitarists seeking the tone of a vintage Tele.

Fender Billie Eilish Signature Ukulele

Fender partnered with GRAMMY-award-winning superstar, Billie Eilish (who taught herself how to play) for her own signature concert uke. Made of sapele with an open-pore satin finish, the 15" scale uke has a nato neck, flat walnut fingerboard, white dot inlays, and 4-inline-Tele headstock. It comes equipped with a Fishman Kula preamp and built-in tuner. The nickel hardware, abalone rosette, and black matte finish showcasing Eilish's "blohsh" symbol make this uke a standout. 🎸

Epiphone Nancy Wilson Fanatic, Fireburst

The **Fanatic** is created and co-designed by **Nancy Wilson of Heart** and the luthiers at **Epiphone** in Nashville, Tennessee, and marks Wilson's first Epiphone signature guitar and her second guitar overall with **Gibson Brands**.



“

In the midst of the distant eighties, I was approached by Gibson to design a signature model,” says Nancy Wilson. “I put pencil to paper to first design the body shape and chose a curvy female diminutive silhouette for the cutaway. Many years later, the body shape remains exact, and the hardware I requested makes the Fanatic a solid citizen amongst the great rock guitar screamers.”

“We are proud to present the exclusive Nancy Wilson Fanatic guitar to the world,” says Krista Gilley, Brand Director of Epiphone and Kramer. “It’s such an honor to work with Nancy, an icon who has been instrumental and influential to generations of players around the world. She has paved the way for female musicians to believe in their passion, talent, and in music, and that comes with an obligation for all of us at Epiphone to pay tribute to Nancy.”

The Nancy Wilson Fanatic features a classic Nighthawk-shaped mahogany body and a figured maple veneer top. The Epiphone Nancy Wilson Fanatic comes equipped with ProBucker™ humbuckers, a 5-way pickup selector switch for a wide variety of tonal options, master volume and tone controls, a fast-playing rounded C-profile mahogany neck with an Ebony fretboard, and an attractive Fireburst Gloss finish and hardshell case. 🎸

Price: \$529.00
For more information and full specifications, visit Epiphone.com.





Ibanez Lari Basilio Signature Guitar LB1, Violet

“

Ibanez has beautifully brought to life my dream guitar,” says Basilio. “I am so in love with this guitar. The playability is fantastic. I love the modern feel that it has.”



Featuring an oval C S-TECH WOOD Roasted Birdseye maple neck and compound radius fretboard (228mm to 305mm), Gotoh® Magnum Lock with H.A.P. (Height Adjustable Post) machine heads and T1702B tremolo, Lari Basilio S-S-H pickups, dyna-MIX9 switching system with Alter Switch, and Luminlay side dot inlays.

Price: \$2,699.99

For more information and full specifications, visit Ibanez.com.

Photo by Eduardo Orelha



Photo by
Christie Goodwin



Photo by
Jill Furmanovsky



Fender Chrissie Hynde Telecaster®



“

My guitar tech, David Crubly, convinced me to launch a Fender Signature Telecaster by telling me it might encourage more people to get into bands and music. I hope that's true and know that those who do, won't look back,” said Chrissie Hynde, London 2021.

“We were honored when Chrissie Hynde agreed to work with us on an Artist Signature Series guitar,” added Neil Whitcher, Head of Artist Relations, EMEA. “The music that Chrissie has put into the world over the last four decades has helped shape the way thousands play guitar today and has defined the sound of the Fender Telecaster® forever. We can't wait to see what players around the world do with this guitar.”

With a Telecaster guitar in hand, Chrissie Hynde formed The Pretenders in 1978 and quickly established the band as a rock and roll powerhouse. Chrissie's churning Telecaster rhythms have been the heartbeat

of the band's sound since the beginning. In 2021, Fender and Chrissie Hynde launched the Chrissie Hynde Telecaster complete with an alder body finished in Faded Ice Blue Metallic RoadWorn® lacquer; vintage-style '50s single coil Tele pickups voiced to match Chrissie's original set; a 6-stainless steel barrel saddle bridge; and much more in an incredibly faithful recreation of one of the world's most iconic guitars—Hynde's treasured '65 model. An artist-requested, player-friendly update on the new Chrissie Hynde Telecaster® are locking tuners, which offer increased tuning stability and make string changes quicker. 🎸

Price: \$1,399.99
For more information and full specs, visit [Fender.com](https://www.fender.com).

Brian May Guitars

Arielle Model

Arielle has played guitar since she was ten years old and has had quite an extensive career to date filled with many highs and some lows. Influenced by rock icons Brian May, Jeff Beck, Jimmy Page, Slash, Tommy Emmanuel, Steve Vai, and many others, Arielle practiced and studied, and by the age of sixteen, she could shred with the best. Touring, a record deal, and disappointments followed.

After experiencing sexism in the music industry, Arielle sought her own musical path as an independent artist. Seeking her find her own tone, she designed and built a guitar named Two Tone. In our interview with her in 2015, she told us, "Two-Tone is my guitar you will see me play in just about every shot you can find. It's an electric guitar I built from scratch with a friend of mine, Patrick Yates. It has custom guitar pickups from Seymour Duncan. It even has crystals inside it. I refuse to play any other guitar. In fact, I always say that I would probably quit playing if I didn't have it. I guess that's a bit of an exaggeration, but it has shaped the way I play."

After garnering Brian May's attention where she was invited to play a key role in his London-based musical, *We Will Rock You*, a relationship with the iconic guitarist was forged. The two have partnered together to release the BMG Arielle inspired by her beloved Two Tone guitar combined with May's core guitar design. As May says, it's the "Red Special in a parallel universe." Made of Limba wood, the 24-inch scale guitar features a mahogany neck, ebony fingerboard with abalone diamond snowflake inlays, a retro-futuristic asymmetrical body style in a two tone blue and orange finish, a two-piece 3-ply parchment pickguard, chrome hardware and contrasting switch plate, BMG Tri-Sonic style pickups, May's famous phase switching system, Grover tuners, and Wilkinson WVP Tremolo Bridge.



Stay tuned for Arielle's new music:

Arielle
Analog Girl in a Digital World
May 7, 2021

Photo by Caitlin Brady

“

I've been playing my primary instrument for the last fourteen years. I approached this opportunity with a clear vision of what I was after, but the experience was in many ways humbling. We found common ground over the course of three years in development designing specs that inevitably delivered a really fine playing instrument integrating shared vision.”

"This is the very first guitar that Brian May Guitars has ever offered that is not based on my original Red Special. Designed by, and named after, Arielle, it's a new dimension. To understand why this guitar was irresistible to me, you have to hold her in your hands. She's light, smooth, agile, and... she sings like a bird!" ~ Dr. Brian May

"Arielle's playing reaches places I never knew existed - I believe this guitar will do the same." ~ Dr. Brian May



Worldwide Price: £662.50
For more information and full specs, visit brianmayguitars.co.uk

The K3 Sisters Show Off the Guitars They Love Their Choice: Gibson

The **K3Sisters** of Dallas have been taking over social media by storm and raising eyebrows in the music industry. The fourth-generation musicians each began their musical journey learning the Suzuki violin method at the age of four and even joined the stage with their parents' band at that young age. The sisters shared, "Every time one of us turned four, we would go on stage with them and play a song on the fiddle with them and sing. It's just been something we've always enjoyed that we've grown up with it. We are fourth-generation musicians, so I guess you could say it's in our blood." Meet Kelsey, Kristen, and Kaylen Kassab. These multi-talented young ladies play many instruments and write songs of positivity and empowerment. Their latest album, *Silver Lining*, was released on February 14, 2021. The title track "Silver Lining" and the album are "about, COVID-19, how we've been able to prevail and how other people, if you take a look and don't give up so easily, you can also find a silver lining in something good out of this situation."

As their family has played Gibsons for many years, they are naturally drawn to the brand, but here they share with us their favorite Gibson guitars and why they are so special!

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As their family has played Gibsons for many years, they are naturally drawn to the brand, but here they share with us their favorite Gibson guitars and why they are so special!



Pictured L to R: Kristen, Kaylen, and Kelsey
Photo by Bruce Ray Productions

"Kristen is holding our 1954 Electric Gibson Mandolin, which we inherited from our grandfather. 'This mandolin not only has historic value but being able to back off on my flatpicking work on my leads because of the amplification and tonal variety controls makes it a perfect fit for our non-acoustic songs!' ~ Kristen (mandolin, banjo, bass, drums, percussion)"

"Kaylen is holding one of our three Gibson Les Paul Studio Guitars. 'I take most of the lead guitar rides during our shows, and what I love about this Gibson is the feeling of even string control as I move up and down the neck.' ~ Kaylen (electric and acoustic guitar, fiddle, harmonica)"

"Kelsey is holding our 1994 100th Anniversary Model Gibson Hummingbird, which she prefers over our newer Hummingbird model because 'Each Guitar has a different depth and width of the neck, and this guitar happens to have a very shallow neck which is a perfect depth for my hand and makes barre chording incredibly easy for me.' ~ Kelsey (acoustic and electric guitar, bass guitar, fiddle, percussion)"



Silver Lining Tracklist:

1. "Silver Lining"
2. "Green With Envy"
3. "Love Fever"
4. "Life is a Funny Thing"
5. "Just A Singer (In a Rock N' Roll Band)"
6. "Sticks and Stones"
7. "Weathertown"
8. "Possibility Girl"
9. "Livin' in the Nowhere"
10. "Yule Ball Blues"
11. "Dream Again"

Red Panda Tensor Pedal

By Alexx Calise

It's a bit hard to explain in words all that Red Panda's Tensor pedal does in that does a whole heck of a lot (really, you have to see it to believe it), but I'll do my best. The incredibly versatile multi-effects pedal, developed by Detroit-based engineer and music enthusiast Curt Malouin, is most certainly an audiophile's dream. Best described as a "sampler" pedal, this all-in-one pedal loops, pitch shifts, reverses, overdubs, warps, changes speed, and more. I imagine that Radiohead and Muse are drooling right now if they don't already have the Tensor in their arsenal.

I'll start by saying that this is not the pedal for you if you're a plug and play kind of person. Were it not for reading the enclosed manual and watching several demo videos, I would have had a rough time figuring this out just because of the sheer number of functions. However, once you overcome the learning curve, a whole world of possibilities opens up to you, especially if you're into creating spacey, otherworldly soundscapes.

The Speed knob works similarly to a tape machine—changing the speed and direction of your audio when you record a loop, and you can change playback speed from forward to reverse (a little "Are You Experienced?" anyone?). Pair it with the Blend knob to get a more wet or dry signal. The Time knob slows down or speeds up the audio without affecting pitch. The Pitch knob, in particular, is a favorite of mine in that you can shift the pitch up or down two octaves. This is great for soloing or glitchy production weirdness. However, the fun is really in playing mad scientist and tinkering with each function,

playing them against each other. If you're bored with "forward" mode, you can completely reverse your loop or alternate it between the two in "alt" mode. If you really want to throw caution to the wind, crank the Rand knob, which will randomize your settings, adding stutters, repeating certain segments, or shuffling bits of your audio.

There really is nothing this pedal can't do—just be prepared to do some homework if you want to maximize its potential.

I'd personally use this a bit more in the studio versus a live setting, in that there's a bit of knob turning depending on what you want to get out of it, and that may not always be conducive when you're playing a show. All in all, this pedal really is a great value considering all it does, and the quality of effects is top-notch. The Red Panda Tensor Pedal is fantastic, especially for gear heads and producers in that there is always something new to discover or play with. If tech doesn't turn you off, and you're looking for a boutique pedal that truly does it all and more, look no further than the Tensor by Red Panda.

Price: \$299.00

For more information and full specifications, visit redpandalab.com.



BOSS Pocket GT: Pocket Effects Processor

By: Lynnay Della Lucé



Do you travel a lot or have roommates (or parents) that don't want to hear you wailing on your guitar at 3 am? No problem! Just plug in your guitar, throw on some headphones, and you're ready to go!

The BOSS Pocket GT Pocket Effects Processor comes in handy if you don't want to unpack your amp and pedalboard and rather save time playing instead of setting up. It has over 100 BOSS amps and effects (that you can also access through an app on your phone or smart device), so you'll be able to find something for whatever playing mood you're in. You can tweak or edit the presets and save your own variations.

It is a great tool to spark creativity as well. I found myself re-inspired just going through the presets with the simple convenience of plug-and-play with all of the BOSS tones pre-programmed. I didn't realize how much help this little Pocket GT could change my practice habits. I found myself putting in more time on guitar because it was so easy. It is so awesome that you can get epic tones whenever you feel that

moment of inspiration, and you can do so without disturbing your household, hotel, or tour bus.

This is a wonderful practice tool for any guitar player. The BOSS Pocket GT Pocket Effects Processor is convenient, easy to use, and offers a variety of sounds so you can find your preferred tone easily. You can also connect via the Bluetooth Transport control to access YouTube video content so you can jam to your favorite songs, access lessons, or for recording. It comes with a built-in rechargeable battery to make travel light and simple. It's so handy; I didn't realize how much I needed one! It's a huge time saver and fits right in your pocket or gig bag if you want to take it on-the-go. It's really versatile, and no matter what level your guitar playing is, you will be sure to find a constructive use for the BOSS Pocket GT.

Price: \$256.99

For more information and specifications, visit boss.info/

PRS SE Custom 24 (updated model for 2021)

By: Lynnay Della Lucé

The PRS SE Custom 24 is the kind of guitar I wish I had twenty years ago growing up as a player exploring different bands and styles and learning various songs from different artists. Upon checking out this guitar, I love the versatility and simplicity the SE Custom 24 provides because you can play anything from Hendrix to Metallica.

Updated for 2021, the PRS SE Custom 24 features a new shallow violin-curved body shape, making this guitar extremely comfortable and easy to play. The pickup configuration of the PRS-designed 85/15 "S" humbucking pickups can do humbuckers or single-coil and everything in between with its push-pull capability. It's as simple as pulling on the knob to get a single coil, then pushing it back down to get the humbuckers. You can even have one humbucker and one single-coil configuration engaged, making for some great tonal variations and giving you Strat sounds with more body and depth.

The amount of twang from this guitar is unreal—it's snappy and has some bite to it. I don't think I've ever heard that much twang come out of a guitar that isn't a Tele. These pickups seem pretty hot to me—you can get a lot of different sounds just by using the volume knob. At ten, it has a lot of grit but roll it back to eight or nine, and there is a huge difference. Keep this in mind if you are trying one out, and make sure you take advantage of the sensitive volume knob.

The SE Custom 24 also offers three new beautiful bold colors for 2021: Black Gold Burst, Faded Blue Burst, and the Bonnie Pink finish, which looks absolutely remarkable. I fell in love with it as soon as I laid eyes on it. The body is made out of mahogany with a maple top and flame maple veneer finish. The maple neck provides a smooth and comfortable grip with its Wide Thin shape and rosewood fingerboard with the PRS old school "bird" inlays. Keep in mind this is the guitar that started it all for Paul Reed Smith back in 1985, so it has the nostalgia factor going for it too.

PRS is known for merging different types of guitars and combining them into one multifunctional tool. So, if you are looking for an eye-catching, roadworthy, versatile guitar that will grow with you and give you a wide range of options for tones and playability, pick up a PRS SE Custom 24 and try it out for yourself. It can be whatever you make of it—Strat, Tele, even a Les Paul—it offers many tonal options and is made with the exceptional quality PRS is known for. This guitar is perfect for the intermediate player who wants to play many styles but doesn't want to invest in three or four different guitars. 🎸

Price: \$829.00

For more information and full specs, visit prsguitars.com.



Snark Silver SIL-1 Clip-On Chromatic Tuner

By Amy Epperley aka Platinum Viking

When Snark, a manufacturer of one of the world's most successful portable compact clip-on tuners, released its new Snark Silver SIL-1 Hyper-Fast Clip-On Chromatic Tuner in October of 2020, we knew we had to check it out. What could this particular model offer that would go above and beyond what is considered an already popular industry-standard clip-on tuner used by millions?

The first thing we noticed is that the upgrade to the original design's overall look and function includes a color change to a light gray/silver that easily distinguishes itself from previous models and is easier to find on dark stages or in guitar cases. Another upgrade is the addition of new hard vulcanized rubber reinforcement collars on both connector joints, which claim to be "resistant to solvents and impervious to moderate heat and cold," making this even more indestructible and long-lasting with regular extended wear and tear. It also stops any unwanted head piece movement.

By far, though, the biggest advancement (this coming from a bassist who often down tunes and regularly plays multi-stringed basses with heavier gauge strings) is the newly designed onboard tuning software technology called 'Hyper-Snark,' which

is the most sensitive to date. The Silver Snark now easily and very quickly pinpoints the notes accurately for those lower registers and even through the (often) confusing overtones with no problem. This is a huge benefit to low-end and multi-stringed players and opens up a whole new market for Snark.

To extend the maximum lifetime and on-stage usage of your tuner, the Silver Snark now features an even longer extended battery life over previous versions that keeps its bright, clear, and sharp LCD screen working for you day and night.

In my opinion, no need to look further; this little tuner does it all and even better with laser speed and pinpoint accuracy for all instruments including multi-string basses for lower alternative tunings, baritone guitars, and even stand up acoustic double basses. So, grab the newest member of the Snark family of smart tuners for your gig bag, and let's go! 🎸

Price: \$19.99

For more information and full specs, visit snarktuners.com.



Fender American Professional II Precision Bass

By Amy Epperley aka Platinum Viking

The only thing better than a classic is taking that classic to a whole new level. Fender's new American Professional II Precision Bass series features some seriously smart, high-quality enhancements.

The Miami Blue solid body color with the maple fingerboard is show-stopping. Even after being shipped, the bass was in perfect shape; the neck was straight and true, the action was just right, and it was even in tune.

It fits well within that classic P bass look and feel with the warm maple "super-natural" satin finish neck, resonant alder body, gloss urethane finish, and bright solid body color with a three-ply mint pickguard. However, the biggest enhancement we found was the addition of the new state-of-the-art Single V-Mod II Precision Bass V split-coil pickups, which pushes clarity and punch to a whole new level. Rolling the tone control all the way up gives you a super bright tone (great for soloing or slapping and popping). You easily get that classic P bass mid-range punch in the mid position, but with a bit of bite and color. Rolling it all the way off smooths it out into a rich, warm, buttery tone that is just as clear and bright (great for grooving deep in the pocket behind a band).

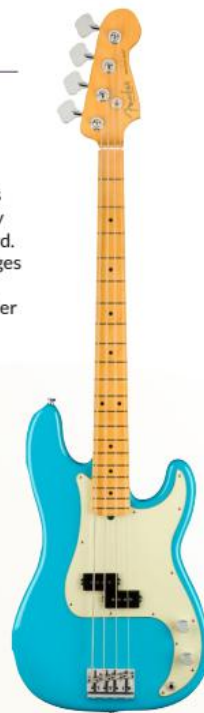
The addition of the HiMass Vintage Bridge gives you increased sustain, and with the classically thick 63" shaped neck, you have the option to top-load your strings or string

it through the bass. Additionally, this bass has amazing overall balance for the working player, not too heavy or too light. On the backside, it has a newly designed contoured heel, giving you easy access to all your upper registers on the fretboard. The neck also features rolled-off fingerboard edges so you can smoothly move, slide, and groove up and down the neck, a big improvement to the older chunkier necks.

The American Professional II Precision Bass is extremely versatile, covering the all-important and in-demand P-Bass perspective. The new pickup model can be further applied to many other genres. You just can't beat the sound and feel of a Precision Bass, and *this* one is a dream to play, looks amazing, and is of the highest premium quality. Fender delivers even more bang for your buck in its newest bass design for the modern working, serious, and loyal player. 🎸—

Price: \$1,549.99

For more information and full specifications, visit fender.com.



Fender American Pro II Jazzmaster

By Lynnay Della Lucé

Fender has me highly impressed with the new American Professional II series, taking their workhorse guitars and making them even better. The Jazzmaster has so many pickup options and tonal variations to explore, and it can harness almost any sound you dial in. When I think of Jazzmaster, "surf rock" is the first genre that comes to mind, but do not dismiss the versatility of this guitar. Obviously, it's known for its jazz tones, but it can mimic so many other styles.

Picking up the guitar for the first time, I noticed the fingerboard's rolled edges, which I love because it gives it such a comforting flow up and down the fingerboard. Its neck is sculpted at the heel, giving you more access to the upper register, and its modern 9.5" radius fingerboard makes big bends easy without fretting out. The body is alder wood with a gloss urethane finish. The V-Mod II Jazzmaster pickups have a warm vintage sound that is not at all muddy, and it has that sparkle and note clarity that give it a smooth, rounding punch. When engaging the push-push knob, it taps the bridge pickup, bringing even more bite to the sound. When the rhythm switch is up, the pickups are wired in series, so you use the two thumbwheels to control the volume and the tone. This is where you can get precise tonal control. When the slider switch is engaged, the tone and volume controls are bypassed except for the push-push knob.

Now for my favorite part—the Panorama™ tremolo! Fender really enhanced the tremolo system on this model to give you more range and motion. This thing can DIVE! It has that warm surf rock wobble vibrato, but then throw on some distortion and you can wail some Van Halen divebombs! Keep in mind this doesn't have a locking tremolo on it, so it will likely go out of tune if you try to do it too many times. The point is though that you can!

The versatility of the American Pro II Jazzmaster is definitely a guitar to have in your arsenal, especially if you play a wide variety of music or are just looking for some new sounds and tones to inspire you. Fender makes these guitars for the players who depend on quality and stamina from their instruments night after night and gig after gig. There are so many different sounds to explore with all of its tonal options that you will be sure to play for days before you discover them all. This is the kind of guitar you'll keep forever. 🎸—

Price: \$1,599.99

For more information and full specifications, visit fender.com.

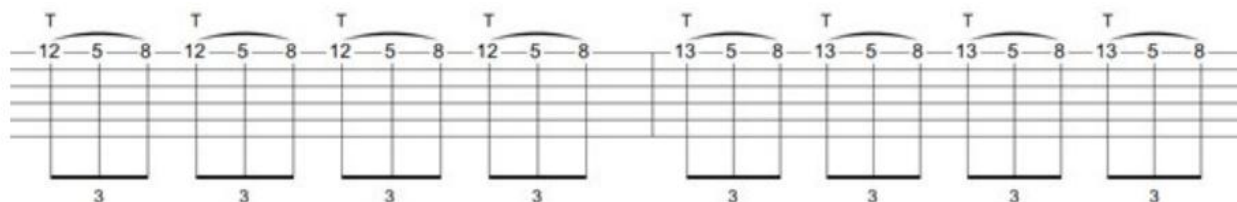


5 '80S ROCK GUITAR TIPS AND TRICKS

By Leigh Fuge

If you have ever wondered how you can take your guitar playing and transport it straight to the hair metal heyday of the 1980s, look no further. In this lesson, you're going to be learning five essential tips and tricks that are guaranteed to give you some major '80s vibes in your playing. Crank up the gain and grab your hairspray. We're going back in time to a period where the hair was big and the guitar riffs were even bigger.

Two-Hand Tapping



Two-hand tapping is a staple of any '80s guitar solo. It might look complex from the outside, but it's a fairly simple technique to get to grips with. Think of it as an extended pull-off and hammer-on combination.

With your fretting hand, you'll be hammering on from the fifth to the eighth frets of the E string. Before this hammer on, you're taking your fretting hand and tapping the twelfth fret.

This tap sounds the twelfth fret note, which you pull off to sound the fifth. Once you hear that fifth fret note, initiate the hammer-on, then repeat. Do this in a triplet rhythm, three notes per beat. Try alternating the note that you tap for some interesting sounds.

Tremolo Picking





Tremolo picking is a great way to add some instant speed to your playing. In this ascending run, pick each note for an entire beat. Try to pick each note four times on the beat before doubling up to a super speedy eight per beat.

Whammy Bar Harmonics

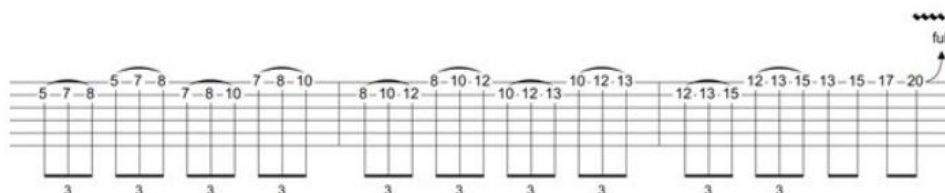


It wouldn't be an '80s guitar solo without some whammy bar and harmonics thrown in.

This idea is based around natural harmonics that you sound with your fretting hand by lightly touching above the fret wire on the notated frets. In the first and third bars, you want to divebomb the second harmonic note roughly two octaves. Don't worry about it being exact; it's more of a sound thing.

In the second and fourth bars, you want to rhythmically bounce the bar once per beat on beats two, three, and four, aiming for roughly one octave down, but again, don't worry too much about accuracy.

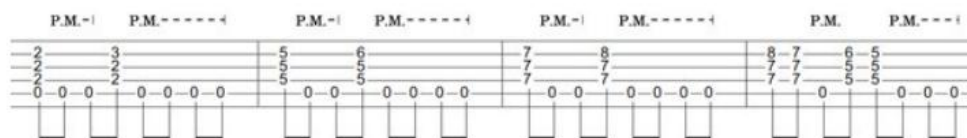
Fast Legato Runs



Most '80s guitar solos contain some form of speed, usually at the climax or end of the solo. It's not uncommon for a fairly melodic solo to ramp up the speed in the final few bars.

This fast legato run is based around pairs of ascending triplet hammer-on phrases. The phrases are identical on both the B and E strings, and this phrase comes from the A Dorian Mode and the A Natural Minor. Think of this as the key of A Minor with an F# note alongside your F note.

Riffs with Sus4 Chords



Sus4 chords are a great way to add an instant '80s flavor to any rock riff. You'll notice this riff is straight 8th notes, which makes it very easy to count along.

The sus4 chords take the place as triads on the D, G and B strings. Each bar starts with a major chord triad before adding the sus4 note (which is the highest note of the triad, raised a single fret).

Between each chord, you want to play a droning palm muted open A string.

MASTERING THE MINOR SCALE:

THREE NOTES PER STRING

By Alex Windsor

In the previous lesson (Issue 14), we discussed the major scale and how to play it in multiple positions on the fretboard. Now, we are going to identify the notes of the minor scale and learn how to play them in the same way. What is the difference between the two scales? To put it simply, the major scale has a "happy" sound and the minor scale has a "sad" sound. While you will see a lot of overlapping notes from the major scale, it is just as important to know how to recognize and play the minor scale—especially if you want to play such styles as blues, jazz, and rock.

Let's begin with the formula for the minor scale. We will be using the key of G Minor throughout this lesson, so our starting (root) note will be G. We can determine the order of the remaining notes by following this pattern (remember that a whole step is two frets and a half step is one fret):

whole step – half step – whole step – whole step – half step –
whole step – whole step

In the key of G Minor, the notes in this pattern are G-A-Bb-C-D-Eb-F-G. These are the only notes we will be playing in this exercise. Also, we will only be playing three notes on each string, then continuing with the next notes on the next string. Begin with the G note located on the third fret of the sixth (low E) string, followed by A on the fifth fret, and Bb on the sixth fret. Next, move up to the fifth (A) string and play the note C on the third fret, D on the fifth fret, and Eb on the sixth fret. Move up again to the fourth (D) string and play the note F on the third fret, G on the fifth fret, and A on the seventh fret. Continue this pattern all the way up to the note C on the first (high E) string and play the pattern back down. Use the tab in Example 1 as a guide.

Example 1

```

e |-----4--6--8-----|
B |-----3--5--7-----|
G |-----3--5--7-----|
D |-----3--5--7-----|
A |-----3--5--6-----|
E |-----3--5--6-----|

e |-----8--6--4-----|
B |-----8--6--4-----|
G |-----7--5--3-----|
D |-----7--5--3-----|
A |-----6--5--3-----|
E |-----6--5--3-----|
  
```

Before moving on, try playing the G Major ascending and descending, followed by the G Minor scale. What differences do you hear?

Next, we are going to shift up to the fifth fret of the sixth (low E) string and continue playing the notes of the G Minor scale, with three notes per string but beginning on the note A. From there, we play the note Bb on the sixth fret and the note C on the eighth fret. Move up to the fifth

(A) string and play the note D on the fifth fret, Eb on the sixth fret, and F on the eighth fret. Move up to the fourth (D) string and play the note G on the fifth fret, A on the seventh fret, and Bb on the eighth fret. Continue this pattern all the way up to the note D on the first (high E) string and play the pattern back down. Use the tab in Example 2 as a guide.

Example 2

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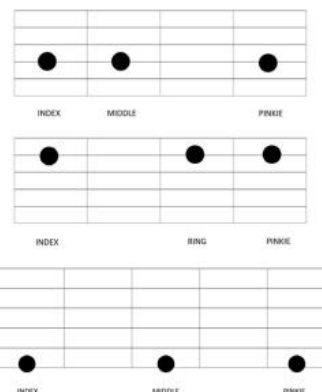
e |-----6--8--10-----|
B |-----5--7--8-----|
G |-----5--7--8-----|
D |-----5--7--8-----|
A |-----5--6--8-----|
E |-----5--6--8-----|

e |-----10--8--6-----|
B |-----10--8--6-----|
G |-----8--7--5-----|
D |-----8--7--5-----|
A |-----8--6--5-----|
E |-----8--6--5-----|
  
```

Next, move up to the note Bb on the sixth fret of the sixth (low E) string. We play the note Bb on the sixth fret, the note C on the eighth fret, and the note D on the tenth fret. Move up to the fifth (A) string and play the note Eb on the sixth fret, F on the eighth fret, and G on the tenth fret. Continue this pattern to the note Eb on the eleventh fret of the first (high E) string and play the pattern back down.

Keep moving down the fretboard by starting on the next note of the scale on the sixth (low E) string: C, D, Eb, F and finally back to G. Once you feel comfortable in this key, pick a different key and practice the same whole/half step pattern. For best results, try to use alternate picking and one finger per note on your fretting hand. See Example 3 for finger positioning.

Example 3



GUITAR GABBY ON BEING A BOSS: RELATIONSHIPS

By Guitar Gabby

Part six in a twelve-part series, where Guitar Gabby walks us through her journey of "Being a Boss" and shares insights and tips for other women to pursue their dream of becoming a boss.



Photo by Jawan Scott

One of the hardest things to accept in life is that every relationship may not last forever. Figuring out what that means in real life with friends you have had for a long time can be challenging, and one thing I have learned is that a healthy break from anything you have too much of can be a great thing for the longevity of your success.

A few weeks ago, I was talking to a friend of mine who does a lot of work with a very, very close homie in the music industry. We have both known this person for many years, but one day, things took a turn for the better and worst. On the one hand, I had a friend who was leveling up their business skills, their life trajectory, their music and marketing, and really was just working hard to secure, maintain, and grow their bag. On the other hand, I was looking at a friend that was an amazing person, made A1 music, and had a big heart, but they were not willing or ready to level up with us and take this game we call life to the next level and make it work to our benefit as we entered into a new level of life and maturity. I remember telling my mom about this, and her response was simple yet perfect, as it always is. She reminded me that sometimes you have to let go of things for a while in order for them to come back. She told me that what is and is not meant to be will be and that one thing I did have direct control over is the energy I put into the world, situations, and people.

Being an entrepreneur is not easy. It comes with many, many years of making no money, stress, heartache, let downs, and friendship losses. Many of these things are inevitable, but what you can control on that journey is what and who you surround yourself with from people, environments, food, music, etc.

How does this tie into your story, Gabby? Well, in this situation with our mutual friend, I reminded myself and my level up buddy that in order for us to get what we want in the goals we laid out for ourselves,

we had one of two options:

Option one. Be compliant with others not wanting/willing to grow and sacrifice the opportunities we had both been waiting for and were finally receiving in our respective rights. This means we would have to turn down things we had been hustling for and manifesting because a mutual friend got too familiar and comfortable with life as they knew it. They were expecting to be on the receiving end of our hustles and grinds, but what about the work it took to go into that? What happens to the principle of learning hard work and discipline in building your own thing?

Option two. Sow seeds of positivity and love into our friends' life and respectfully operate in a healthy selfishness and protection of our own energies and passions we built from the ground up. We had to move on to the next steps that being a BOSS had to offer. Now, I'd be lying if I said this did not hurt because it did and sometimes still does, but like the true Queen she is, my mom reminded me that "everyone can't go up with you. Some people will get left behind, and some people may meet you up there. But you can't spend your life being bogged down by people who do not have the same drive and/or mindset to win."

The truth is, it is very important to surround yourself with like-minded people while you continue to build. Those will be the people that understand the hustle and workflow. They would have or will accept the necessary sacrifices in order to win for everyone you came to fight for. Is it hard? Yes, 100%. But Cicely Tyson left us with one of the most powerful messages to move through life; "Challenges make you discover things about yourself that you never really knew. They're what make the instrument stretch—what make you go beyond the norm."

Rest in Power to one of the most iconic women of our time. Straighten your crown, Sis; you got this. 🏴‍☠️

SHEROES

LET YOUR MUSIC BE YOUR STORY

By Kathryn Cloward

When I was a little girl, the first albums I got were The Go-Go's "Beauty and the Beat" and "Vacation." I loved the Go-Go's. Their lyrics were catchy, and the cadence of the music kept me dancing around in my room for hours as I played their songs over and over.

"Vacation" was my favorite song when I was growing up. When I was a junior in high school, we had a hypnotist come to our school for a fundraiser, and I was one of the students who got hypnotized. With zero inhibitions, I sang some of the "Vacation" lyrics for the entire student body, which in hindsight was a disaster vocally. But the point is, when the moment came in my life to select a song to sing while in the state of hypnosis, my go-to song out of all the songs in the world was one written and performed by some of my sheroes, The Go-Go's.

That's how impactful their music was in my life. I was even a competitive water-skier for a few years during college, and while that was strongly influenced by my family's Colorado River vacations, I can't help but connect the dots to The Go-Go's "Vacation" album cover that sat perched on my shelf during my formative years.

Looking back over my life, it has always been female-led performances that have most captivated my attention. In addition to the fabulous-five female rockers noted above, I was inspired by Pat Benatar and the Wilson sisters of Heart. I wanted to be like them. They seemed fierce and passionate, and I wanted to be that, too. Then, a few years later, when I was introduced to country music, Wynonna Judd was added to my list of rad women crafting music, singing passionately, and dominating the stage.

As time evolved, when more and more female-led groups emerged and solo performers were elevated, I'd add more sheroes to my catalog of inspiring women doing what I dreamed of doing. Through them, I saw, heard, and experienced these women's joyful freedom—something that helped inspire me to know that I, too, could make my dream come true. I just needed to start doing it. And to be transparently honest, for many years, it felt way too far out of reach for me. I was scared. I didn't believe. But that still small voice within me would say, "you can do it"—a voice echoing through the ages, born from my female ancestors. It rose up, full of encouragement to simply step up and start.

Through experiencing the artistry of so many sensational sheroes, it's been their example, their work, their results, their grit, and their inclusivity that inspired me to believe I could lead my own artistry onto the stage of my life. Perhaps this is true for you as well. Our sheroes who came before us blazed the way for us to have careers as artists, musicians, engineers, producers, publishers, and label owners. I loved watching the 2021 *She Rocks Awards* because so many of the sheroes mentioned in this article were honored for their artistry and leadership in this industry—rightfully so.

Countless women have blazed pathways for all of us in the music industry. My personal sheroes have helped me feel brave within my own being to trust that the seeds of a desire planted in an imaginative little girl would and could be cultivated over time—helping me to have the courage to emerge from deep within myself to bloom into the artistry of my own life story.

This is what so many women are doing! This is what you are doing right now through your artistry. And guess what? Young girls and your own peers are



Photo by John Hancock

watching as you rise up in your artistry, and they are being inspired by you. Yes, you! Keep going, keep creating, keep dreaming, keep expanding, and keep experiencing your own dream-blooming moments.

One thing I have come to really understand and respect about so many of the sheroes I admire most is that they all let their music lead. Their music is their story. They didn't waste time talking about what they were going to do. No, they just did it and kept doing it. They wrote, practiced, performed, and keep reinventing themselves. And they keep doing it! They were, and they are music—and we know their stories because we know their music. Our sheroes showed us the way by doing it and by being it.

While the dial continues to move closer to the center of balance in the industry, I believe the way we continue to inspire other women and young girls to enter it is to show them it is possible. We do that by doing it and being it like our sheroes did and do. You are a shero to many, and you probably don't even know it.

Keep doing what you're doing! We need your talent, your music, your presence, and your artistry. Let your results be your resume. Let your music be your story. —

ASK ALEXX

Dear Alexx,

How do you deal with stage fright?

~Marc Becker

Dear Marc,

You know what? I actually don't deal with stage fright very often. I've been very lucky in that way, I suppose. It's almost as if I feel more at home on stage than I do in everyday life. A lot of other musicians will probably tell you the same thing.

I have definitely felt jitters in the past, though, before an important show or if I have to "show my stuff" for labels, judges, or industry peers. What I've done previously (and I don't necessarily condone this behavior) is take a shot of whiskey to calm my nerves, or I've really just tried to sink into the moment and give in to the power of the song. I forget all about being scared when I'm busy having a great time and rocking out.

Another thing that has given me "stage fright" is a lack of preparedness. I've definitely felt nervous if I didn't have enough time to practice or play a brand new song that no one has heard before. There are a lot of things

that can go through your mind, like "Are they going to like it?" or "I hope I don't mess up this one part." You can get tripped up, and your fear can ultimately take you down, causing you to muck up your own song. I try to eliminate any possible uncertainty by making sure I know my material inside and out. It's a sign of personal pride, and it shows that you care about yourself and your audience.

Other than making sure you know your songs cold, I would also recommend some breathing exercises before going on stage to calm your nerves. Remember that it's okay to not be 100 percent perfect, especially on your first try; just be yourself. Assert yourself, stand tall, and be confident in who you are. Smile and engage your audience in a way that feels natural and think of them as your friends. You're likely judging yourself far more harshly than anyone else in the audience. Eliminate any bad thoughts that may cause anxiety or fear by focusing on your greater purpose, which is contributing something of value to the audience.

Even if you don't give what you may think is an extraordinary performance, what's most important is that you put yourself out there and gave it your all. Ultimately, just have fun, and don't ever let your own fear get in the way of your happiness or success!

~Alexx Calise



Photo by Anabel DFlux

Have a question for Alexx?

She has an answer!

Email info@guitargirlmag.com.



Photo by Jack Lue

Vanessa's Vibe

By Vanessa Izabella

Early last year, before the pandemic shut down music venues and shows, I had the pleasure of being asked to perform with "Barracuda - America's Heart Tribute Band" out of Nashville, Tennessee. Their drummer at the time had seen my profile online and asked if I was interested in playing the role of Nancy Wilson. I was asked to submit a video of the acoustic intro for the song "Crazy on You." This is where my journey into the intricate and inspiring guitar work of Heart began.

First of all, learning the acoustic intro for "Crazy on You" was no small task. I had heard Heart songs for many years but had never attempted to perform one. I gained a totally new appreciation for Wilson's guitar skills and songwriting ability. I now find her to be one of the most underrated guitar players out there. Not only is she a great guitarist and songwriter, but she is also an amazing lead vocalist and backup vocalist.

When performing in a tribute band, the goal is to recreate the original band's show with as much accuracy as possible. For Heart, that

required learning the songs note for note, as well as singing all the parts that Wilson sings along with her sister Ann. I had to practice many long hours to get the intricate guitar parts down exactly while having to sing some backup vocals simultaneously. There are many harmony guitar solos in Heart's music, so those had to be spot on since I am playing along with someone else. The good news is that there were plenty of resources available to me. They have transcription books for some of the Heart songs, as well as some tutorials on YouTube, which I was very grateful for. When I learned them, I'd play along with the music to make sure I had my parts down. I also watched some of Heart's live performances to try and get some of the nuances down.

To summarize, it was a great learning experience. I definitely suggest learning some of your favorite artists' songs. I guarantee that you will learn something new on your instrument, as well as improve your skill set in the process. It is a lot of fun and a very rewarding experience in the end. On to the next song!!! 🎸

GIG GALLERY

With the cancellation of festivals and live performances due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we decided to go “back in time” and share a small sampling of past live performance photos from Southern California during Winter NAMM 2020. Looking forward to live performances again!

Photos by Jack Lue Photography



Nita Strauss at Winter NAMM 2020



Courtney Cox at Winter NAMM 2020



Tal Wilkenfeld at She Rocks Awards 2020



Alicia Vigil at Winter NAMM 2020



Kiki Wong at Winter NAMM 2020



Alex Nicole Windsor at Winter NAMM 2020



Nili Brosh January 2020



Melia Maccarone at Whisky A Go January 2020



Lizzy Hale at She Rocks Awards 2020



Suzi Quatro at She Rocks Awards 2020



Yuki of D Drive at She Rocks Awards 2020

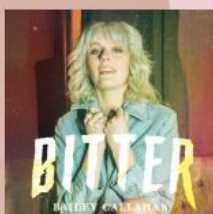


Iron Maidens at Winter NAMM 2020

MUSIC MAKERS



Joanna Connor
4801 South Indiana Avenue
February 26, 2021
Keeping the Blues Alive Records



Bailey Callahan
"Bitter"
March 1, 2021



Alyssa Trahan
Baby Blues & Stilettoes
March 5, 2021



Megan Lacy
Salvation
March 5, 2021



Jane Weaver
Flock
March 5, 2021
Fire Records



Valerie June
The Moon and Stars: Prescriptions for Dreamers
March 12, 2021
Fantasy Records



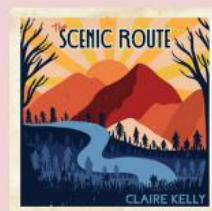
Loretta Lynn
Still Woman Enough
March 16, 2021
Legacy



BONZIE
Reincarnation
March 16, 2021



Alice Phoebe Lou
Glow
March 16, 2021



Claire Kelly
The Scenic Route
March 19, 2021



Lana Del Ray
Chemtrails Over the Country Club
March 19, 2021
Interscope/Polydor



Vallens
In Era
March 19, 2021
Hand Drawn Dracula



Ronna Reason
Ronna Reason
March 19, 2021
Damaged Disco



Noga Eroz
Kide
March 26, 2021
City Slang



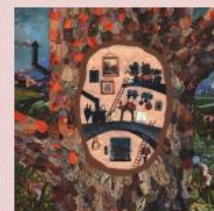
Carrie Underwood
My Savior
March 26, 2021
Capitol Nashville



Lost Girls (Jenny Hval & Håvard Volden)
Menneskeliklivet
March 26, 2021
Smalltown Supersound



Sunny War
Single Syntax
March 26, 2021
Hearth Music



Sara Watkins
Under the Pepper Tree
March 26, 2021
New West Records



Arizona Lindsey
The Process
April 9, 2021



Sarah Jarosz
Build Me Up From Bones (Reissue)
April 9, 2021
Craft Recordings



Jaguar Jonze
Anthemo
April 16, 2021
Network Records



Lauren Housley
Girl from the North
April 23, 2021
Lovebird Recordings



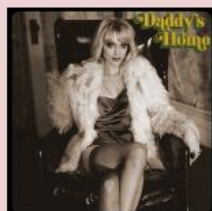
Nancy Wilson
You and Me
May 7, 2021
Carry On Music



Arielle
Analog Girl in a Digital World
May 7, 2021
The Orchard / Sony Music



Kira Skov
SPIRIT TREE (artwork TBA)
May 14, 2021
Stunt Records



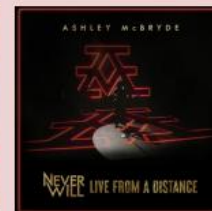
St. Vincent
Daddy's Home
May 14, 2021
Loma Vista



Juliana Hatfield
Blood (ARTWORK TBA)
May 14, 2021
American Laundromat



Imogen Clark
Bastards
May 21, 2021
MGM/Potter Entertainment



Ashley McBryde
Never Will: Live From A Distance
May 28, 2021

#GUITARGIRL

Every month, we select a guitarist from social media that has tagged themselves with #guitargirlmag to be featured on our website and here in our magazine. So, head on over to **Instagram** and tag yourself.

YOU MAY BE NEXT!

HALEE SMITH

About me: Hey! I'm Halee from California. I'm twenty-three years old, and I am a guitar player and owner of Rockit Music Gear (RMG). If I were to describe myself with one title, it would be an entrepreneur. I run every aspect of RMG that I started three years ago. I handmake guitar straps mainly, but I do have a wide variety of other music gear-related items, and I'm always making new items and straps for it! Instagram @rockitmusicgear. I've been playing guitar for ten plus years now and currently play locally in bands and do other projects/building on the side, which you can check out on Instagram @haleethings. Music-wise, I really enjoy playing a wide variety of genres and styles, from '80s rock, indie rock, pop-rock, and country-rock to blues, reggae, and a small amount of metal. Ha! You'll understand why my music choices are so wide in the next paragraph. They're inspiring to me and keep the creativity going.

My inspiration: Honestly, my guitar mentor Grant Mickelson is a BIG inspiration to me. He started mentoring me when I was sixteenish—I've grown out of the stage of the constant lessons and doing bigger things now. We still stay in touch, and he's always encouraged me to "put your hands in as many hats as you can." That has stuck with me between working my business, running wild with my creativity, being a guitar player for the night, or not worrying when I'm not a guitar player. Being a guitar player was my main goal, but my creativity and RMG have taken me to other places. That's why I have applied those words to everything I do.

My Gear: Guitars: Fender '50s Special Edition Reissue Stratocaster in Jetstream Blue with upgraded Tonerider Surfari Pickups (thanks to my guitar tech Brett Delmas), Duesenberg TV Fullerton, and Fender Mustang Bass in Olympic White.

Pedals: VOX Wah, Foxpedal Overdrive and Reverb, Fulltone Overdrive, Xotic Effects Compressor and RC Booster, JHS Clover and Emperor pedals, Keeley Phaser DD Artist Series, and TC Electronic Nova Delay.



Photo by Lindsey Patkos



Valiance Sapphire
Photo by Artist

Location: Southern California
Genre: Indie Rock
Go-to Guitar: Schecter Tempest
IG @rocknrollyogimama



Alison "AliT" Turner
Photo by Luke Awtry

Location: Royalton, Vermont
Genre: Indie-Pop
Go-to Guitar: My Taylor T5z
IG @alicatkittycat



Fianna Peppers
Photo by Jessica Lane

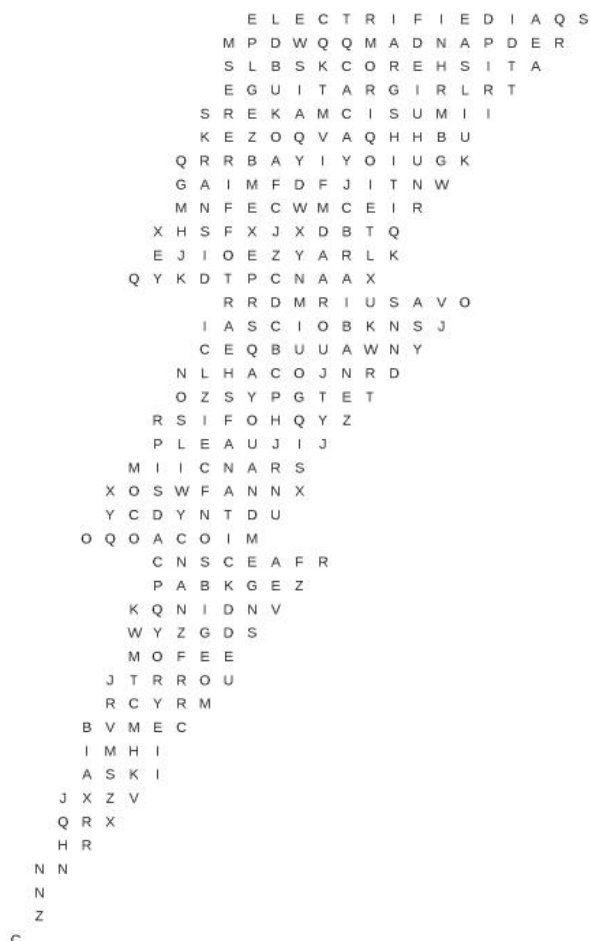
Location: Tulsa, Oklahoma
Genre: gospel, funk, soul
Go-to Guitar: Squier by Fender Bronco Bass
FB @FiFi-the-bassist



Ann Klein
Photo by Sadrine Lee

Location: New York
Genre: Whatever they pay me for!
Anything but be-bop and classical...
Go-to Guitar: "Rust" Strat (not pictured)
IG @annkleinmusic

Electrified



WORD LIST

Electrified
 Fanatic
 Fender
 Gibson
 Guitar Girl
 Heart of Fire
 Ibanez
 Jammy
 Lari Basilio
 Martin Guitar
 Music Makers
 Nancy Wilson
 PRS
 Red Panda
 She Rocks
 Sheroes
 Tribute Bands
 Women Who Rock
 You and Me

TRIVIA

1. Who authored the book *Fictional Blues*?
2. What is Nancy Wilson's new signature guitar?
3. Who won the Legend Award at the 2021 She Rocks show?
4. Moriah Formica was on what season of *The Voice*?
5. What are the two colors of Arielle's new signature guitar?
6. What company recently released a Lari Basilio signature guitar?
7. What artist is featured in the Artist Spotlight?
8. Who was recently named as the first Black female on the Board of Fender Musical Instruments Corporation?
9. What is the title of Nancy Wilson's new solo album?
10. What producer did The Warning use on their newest album?

→ Mind Game answers on page 73





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Rocks Awards, the pre-
show and virtual red
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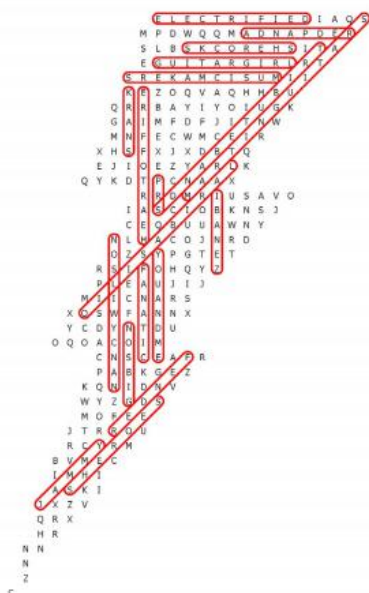
Contact media@guitargirlmag.com

YOUR AD HERE

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WORD SEARCH ANSWER

Electrified



1. Kimberly Mack
2. Epiphone Fanatic
3. Nancy Wilson
4. Season 13
5. Orange and blue
6. Ibanez
7. Beverly "Guitar" Watkins
8. Paula Boggs
9. You and Me
10. David Bendeth

Trivia Answers

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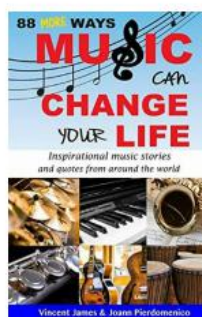
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WHAT WE'RE READING NOW!



88 More Ways Music Can Change Your Life
 Authors: Vincent James & Joann Pierdomenico
 Publisher: Keep Music Alive (Dec. 2020)

Following up on their original book, *88+ Ways Music Can Change Your Life* from 2016, the authors provide insightful and inspirational quotes and stories from people worldwide that have been impacted by music and how it changed their lives. Inspirational!



Fictional Blues: Narrative Self-Invention from Bessie Smith to Jack White
 Author: Kimberly Mack
 Publisher: University of Massachusetts Press (Dec. 2020)

Drawing upon real-life and fictional characters, the author tells the story of early American blues performers like Ma Rainey and Big Mama Thornton to modern-day musicians like Jack White, Rhiannon Giddens, and the late Amy Winehouse. Powerful and informative!

FAN FAVES

As Winter NAMM 2021 was held virtually this year, the annual NAMM Shreddelicious photoshoot adjusted accordingly! This year, photos were taken by Jack Lue at Studio III at the Brewery Arts Complex of Dystopian Studios for local musicians, while Laurie Monk of Shreddelicious collected selfies from players from the Shreddelicious community.

And the result...



**SHREDELICIOUS
2021**

Sonia Anubis	Anna Cara	Priya Panda*	Becca Scammon	Melissa K* Black Velvet	Juno DeVere	Roberta Raschella	Bruna Tsuruda	Ania Thomas	Christine Fullwood* Xtine Reckless	Jen Taylor Warren
Alicyn Yaffee**	Bella Perron	Keona Lee	Rissa Geez	Jen Majura	Katiusza Guerrero Medina	Rachelf	Kiana De Leon	Lulu Stroud	Sara Baldwin*	Shannon Wilk
Andrea Zermeno*	Moa Munoz*	Sarah JoAnne Draper	Nikki Stevens	Christina Pena	Vanessa Izabella	Rachel G	Amy Epperley	Shira Leigh*	Candice Levinson*	Phoenix van der Weiden
Kiki Wong*	Julia Kosterova**	Lexii Lynn Frazer*	Bruna F. Terroni	Nikki Stringfield*	Africa Swenson	Anastasia B	Brinley Amicon	Natalie Nova*	Sonia Loftish	Martina Blazeska
Marcela Campos	Martina Nixe Riva	Leanne Bowes*	Christine Lanusse	Jacqueline Rosina Mannering	Jackie Perry*	Liza Lyngdoh	Millisa Henderson	Harleen Kaur	Liza Lyngdoh	Brianna Alexis
Soumia Ghechami	Keira Kenworthy	Thalia Bellazecca	Sasha De Leon	BB Kates	Rose Cora Perry	Jessica Perry*	Zoe Flores	Anouck André	Jimena Fosada	Esani Dey
YOYO	Federica Golisano	Shani Kimelman	Irene Ketikidi	Kim Steele	Georgia Bell	Rose Deocampo	Sophie Burrell	Sybil Grace	Jessica Kaczmarek	Melia Maccarone

*Photos by Jack Lue

**Photos by Laurie Monk

Roberta Raschella - Photo by Daniele Mora

Rose Decampo - Photo by Scott Clift (deceased)

Vanessa Izabella - Photo by D. Avery

Amy Epperley - Photo by David Hobbs

Melia - Photo by C7 Photography

All other photos provided by artist with permission to use.

Lynnay Della Lucé was born in Morristown, NJ, and raised in northern New Jersey. In

Leigh Fuge is a professional guitarist and tutor from the UK. He works as a session guitarist, plays with several live bands, writes for various high-profile guitar publications, and works daily with his own music students to develop their skills and careers. He is passionate about sharing knowledge and

Vanessa Izabella is a professional guitarist that started playing music at a young age. Progressing through high school, Vanessa was playing and performing on multiple instruments, including guitar, piano, and trumpet. She was awarded a scholarship to attend Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA. During her time there, she studied the guitar playing of such influences as Pat Martino, Slash, Pat Metheny, John Scofield, Eric Johnson, and many others. After graduating with a degree in Music Business, she went on to work with such artists as Pat Metheny and Christian McBride. Vanessa has traveled the world playing guitar.

Alex Windsor is a passionate musician and educator with over sixteen years of experience. While she holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music with an emphasis in Jazz Studies (Bass), she has also extensively studied rock, blues, and classical guitar. She currently serves as the Educational Affairs Specialist for Guitar Center Lessons. Alex can be found regularly performing around the greater Los Angeles area. alexnicolewindsor.com

[illegible]

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CUSTOM GUITARS

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