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JOE SATRIANI

Tommy Emmanuel

Family and Fingerstyle

'80s GUITAR HEROES

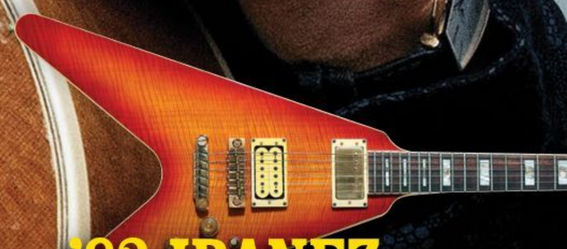
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| *By Ward Meeker*





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READER MAIL

RORY'S GLORIOUS STRAT

It was great to see Rory Gallagher's trusty Strat on the cover of the June 2020 issue. Believe it or not, that was the first "real" guitar I ever held.

Early in my career as a writer and author, I interviewed Rory post-show in 1976 at Philadelphia's Tower Theater. I'd noticed him reaching up to the headstock doing what I now know to be behind-the-nut bends, and asked him what he was doing. Rory logically assumed a technique question meant I was a guitarist, though I wouldn't take up the instrument for another few years. To my surprise, he handed me that well-worn Strat and reached around to show me how he executed the bends.

As Daniel Gallagher noted in your article, "It's lovely to the touch…" and it seemed to me a low heat was radiating out of it! I'll never forget how it felt, and the thrill of learning my very first guitar trick from a player who is justifiably honored as one of the all-time greats.

Frank Moriarty
New Castle, Delaware

VOXES VS. VIRUSES

The June '20 issue was a welcome pleasure and diversion in these self-isolated times. Of course, no gigs or in-person jams, but a lot of virtual playing and discovery of new ways to make music – players gotta play, and in tough times you can count on musicians to make things better.

Thanks for doing your part by keepin' on keepin' on.

I loved the Vox articles ("Before The Next Teardrop Calls: The JMI/Vox Mark Series" by Peter Stuart Kohman and "This Little Piggy: The Vox AC10 Super Reverb"), in particular, because like a lot of kids in '64, I was deeply affected by the Stones and Brian's guitars. I always dug his Vox, though I never owned one, and the Gibson Firebird, one of which I have long owned. Paul Revere and the Raiders also made a huge impression on me circa '66, with their Vox rigs on "Where The Action Is" – guitars, amps, *and* organ.

Now more than ever, I look forward to seeing *Vintage Guitar* in the mailbox. Best wishes and health to your staff and advertisers, and here's hoping we all come out on the other side.

William Nollman
Norwalk, Connecticut

CLAP FOR THE TIN MAN!

Thank you so much for the Tinsley Ellis interview (June '20). In 1978, I was 12 years old and would go see him play every week in a rock-and-roll cover band that played for teenagers. I would wait for them to take a break so I could ask him a bunch of guitar questions, ranging from technique to instruments and amps all the way to which guitarists he listened too. I also was very fortunate to be hired by him as his rhythm guitarist many years later. I can assure you he is the real deal.

Much like Gatemouth Brown and Albert Collins, Tinsley would drive 300 miles or more to get to the next gig, set up his own rig, and re-string his own guitars. Then he'd perform, giving 100 percent to the audience. And most importantly, he was a good business man, always making sure his band got paid.

Please keep up the good work.

Kenny Kilgore
Atlanta, Georgia

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I just renewed my subscription to *Vintage Guitar*; the articles are fantastic, and so are the advertisements.

In the midst of this virus, advertisers help to make *VG* what it is. I appreciate them, and look at all of the ads. From them, I've purchased a high-end amp, two guitars, pickups, a mixing board, and a pedal.

I am strictly an amateur player, and I've realized that the things I buy from your advertisers add to my enjoyment of what makes the guitar so special.

Tom Hallman
Portland, Oregon

KICK OUT THE JAMS

I want to applaud Sadler Vaden's (May '20) defense of his two-minute guitar solo on "Be Here Right Now," from his new album, *Anybody Out There?*.

It has long been the recording ideal to "do everything in service of the song," and eschew fully developed solos in the studio. The problem with this model is that being a great soloist does not make one a great composer or even the best at choosing covers. And, very few songs are good enough in their bones to carry the whole load – most need some serious ornamentation to shine.

I can't count the times I've been inspired to buy an artist's record by ferocious live soloing, only to be disappointed by sparse and circumspect 15-second solos on the album. I have also had the obverse experience, going to see a guitarist I thought was pretty good from his records only to find he's an absolute monster live.

Almost all of our guitar heroes reached that status by developing their skills as improvisers, not composers; so why do so many insist on focusing on their least-evolved abilities in the studio? Whether it's fear of arrogance, yearning for mainstream appeal, or an inherent drive to lean on our weak spots: Who doesn't know a bass player who grabs the guitar at every chance, or a guitarist who insists on singing despite a lousy voice? The end result is a loss for everyone. If a player made a name as a badass soloist, solos are what fans want to hear when they buy his or her records. As Vaden points out, "they want good songs, of course... but they also want to hear some guitar playing."

D. Scott Wilson
Grants Pass, Oregon

HEALEY HEIGHTS

I had the great privilege of seeing Jeff Healey ("Fretprints," May '20) with his original trio at a crowded headbanger club in Austin, Texas, touring in support of *See The Light*. He played lap style, he played *loud*, and he played *awesome* through a Marshall amp and sustainer-loaded Fernandes. It's impossible to forget the huge volume swell when, while prancing around, he wound into that killer solo on "Blue Jean Blues." My memory of this incredible musician is indelible.

Russell G. Osborn
Springfield, Missouri

APRIL ACCOLADES

Congratulations on the 400th issue of an outstanding magazine (April '20)! I was afraid that when computers became entrenched in homes, magazines like *Vintage Guitar* would become obsolete. So, thanks much for continuing to publish.

I enjoyed the interviews with Coco Montoya and Mike Pachelli – thumbs-up to John Heidt and Wolf Marshall. Also, great article on Living Colour by Oscar Jordan ("Pop 'N Hiss"); "Cult of Personality" remains one of my favorite rockers. Oscar's review of the Victoria Deluxe 1x12 was also informative.

In all, the issue was, again, a fine, insightful effort by everyone at *VG*.

Michael Padilla
Crestview, Florida

SEND LETTERS TO

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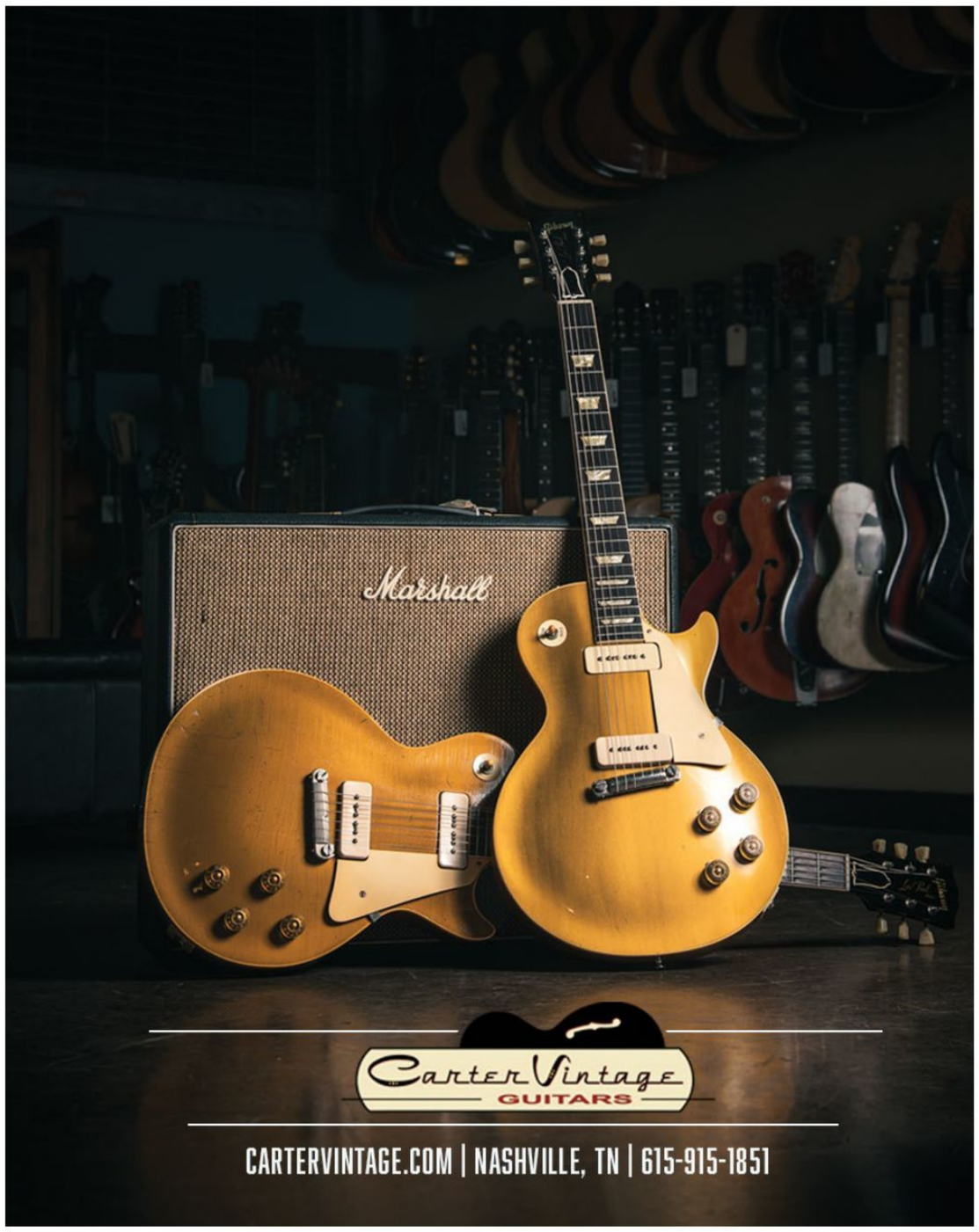
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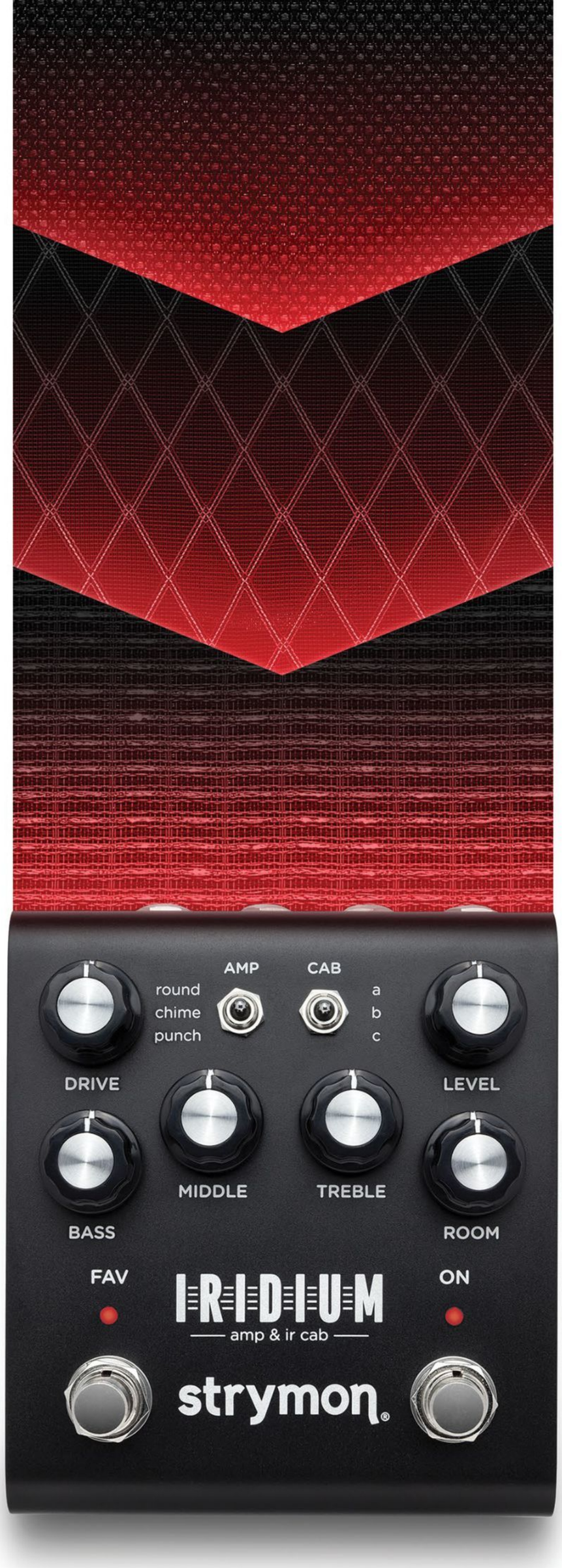
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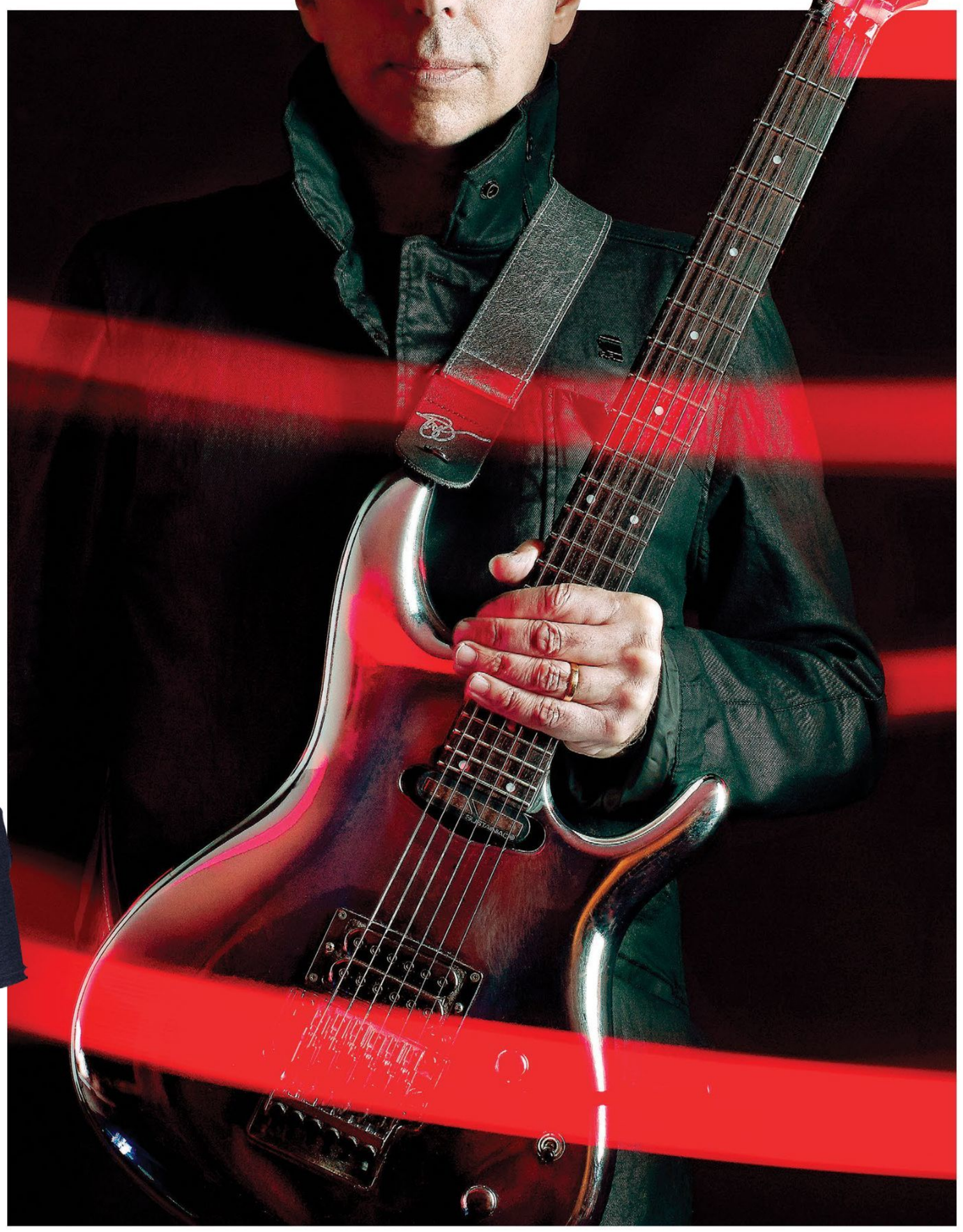
Our second issue amidst the coronavirus pandemic is again full of **great content including** advertisements from fine folks who depend on all of us – as we depend on them – in challenging financial times. Please continue to support them **along with all of your favorite musicians**. Let them know you'll be there when life returns to normal. Because **many** advertisers remain affected by business closures, this issue contains fewer ads, *however*, we are publishing the same number of interviews, features, columns, and reviews. Enjoy!

Start a Musical Revolution in the *VG* Rebel Rocker T!



Rebel Rockers T-shirt

VG's latest T-shirt features George Washington and his rebel friends, ready to rock on a pre-shrunk 35/65 cotton/poly Softstyle T in Heather Navy with vintage-inspired artwork. It's just $22.97 in M, L, XL (add $2 for XXL and XXXL). A limited-edition T-shirt, to ensure delivery by July 4, **we MUST receive your order by 9 a.m. CDT on June 8**. Shipping happens the week of June 22.



Joe Satriani: Joseph Cultice.

JOE SATRIANI

Incognito

The biggest challenge in creating amazing guitar music for 35 years is being able to keep things interesting. On *Shapeshifting*, Joe Satriani goes incognito to create fresh sounds with ungodly playing and a breathtaking panoramic journey. It's an album with a craftsmen's attention to detail and the artistic reach to make it a captivating voyage.

You have a lot to rehearse for this upcoming tour.

When you work on a record, your chops

shrink because you're working on a small number of songs. Then you crawl out of your album cave and realize you're going to be playing decades' worth of material in front of people. So, I have to get reacquainted with the ways I *used* to play. I'm deep in this 30-song setlist where I'm practicing four and five hours a day to get that all happening again. Then I remember, "This was never meant to be played while standing up in front of thousands of people," but here I am (laughs).

It takes you back to the writing process.

"Satch Boogie" was written after I got in a car accident in November of 1986. I had whiplash. They gave me a collar at the hospital, and some pills. I remember sitting in my apartment with a collar on, swallowing these wonderful pills, and not being able to look down at my guitar because of the collar. It crossed my mind, "Wouldn't it be funny if Gene Krupa was at the top of the stairs playing a swing boogie, and his drum kit fell down the stairs while he continued to play?" This is something you dream up when you're medicated (laughs). That's how I wrote "Satch Boogie."

Did the concept behind *Shapeshifting* shift?

Once I decided the concept was going to be my artistic license, it became a source of energy and inspiration to follow through on the promise. Every song can be a different style and require me to play like a different kind of Joe. "What if you were this kind of player? And wouldn't that be better for this type of song?" It's not like I have anything to prove. People know I can play, so let's concentrate on the quality of the music. It allowed me to stretch myself and create better songs.

You're a diverse songwriter, but "Perfect Dust" and "Here The Blue River" illustrate broader genres.

That's what we were searching for in the studio – "Let's not fall back on the familiar." On "Perfect Dust," my engineer Jim Scott said how happy he was that I was flexible enough to explore such a varied amount of guitar sounds. Guitar players usually change one guitar but insist on using their favorite amp. I'm just the opposite. I had 30 guitars and 50 amps – let's try all of them. "Perfect Dust" wound up with a lot of guitars that you wouldn't think would be there. I used my new chrome Ibanez JS1 guitar, but there's also a Gibson 335 mixed with a '97 Gibson Custom Shop Les Paul, and a bunch of different amps. The range of the material propelled us. We used it as a source of energy.

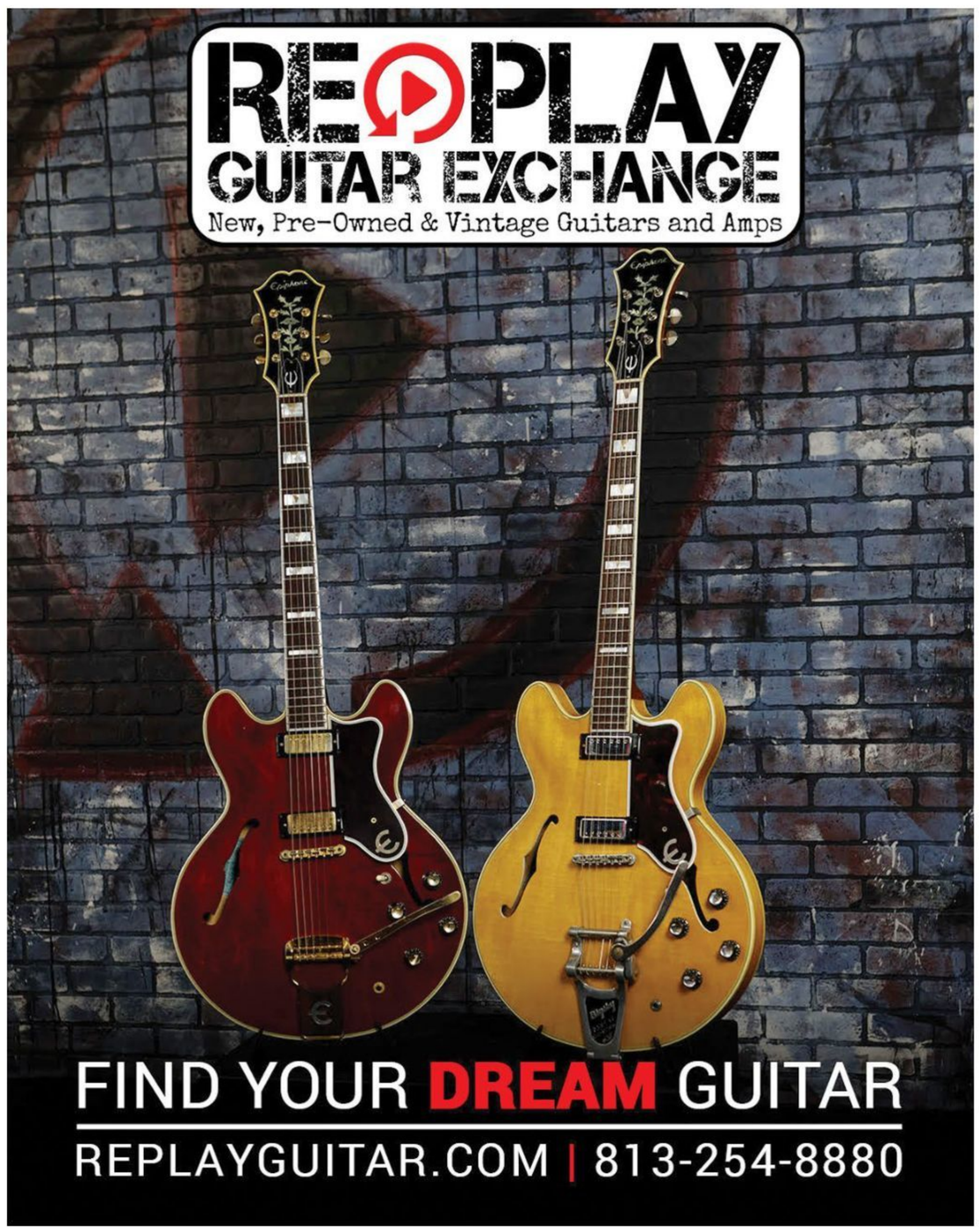
Did you use any new gear?

I've been on this funny kick for the last couple of years, getting rid of vintage gear I thought would connect, but didn't. I kept vintage gear that was special to me, but in the last 12 months I got rid of a lot of tweed Fender amps. I worked with some of it for a long time, but wasn't succeeding. I thought other people should have those amps, and I should find something I have more success with. Along came the Fender reissues, and I love what they've done – the Princeton, the Deluxe, and the Super Reverb, the '64, and the '68. All those little combos were used on the album. I was surprised by how my Ibanez sounded through them.

Congratulations on your induction into the Metal Hall of Fame.

I have a close connection to metal. Though my records may not support that observation, I grew up loving distorted, crazy guitar and Black Sabbath in high-school bands. When I accepted the award, I told this funny story about going to a Black Sabbath concert at the Uniondale Coliseum where everybody took off their coats and started a bonfire at the venue. It descended into a wild atmosphere of fire, smoke, and people throwing liquor bottles. It was total insanity. The fire marshals came out and covered us in fire retardant. I remember thinking, "This is so metal." Then Black Sabbath came out and they were amazing – so powerful. It changes you forever. ***– Oscar Jordan***







JOHN PRINE

1946-2020

John Prine, renowned for his matter-of-fact songwriting and everyman vocal delivery, died April 7 at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville. He was 73 and suffered complications from Covid 19.

Prine's music is revered by peers and lauded by critics for lyrics that are simple and relatable even as they tell complicated stories. In a career that spanned 47 years, he recorded 18 studio albums along with five live discs. And while he never scored a huge hit, the depth of his influence is evident in the list of artists who covered his songs, the best-known being Bonnie Raitt's version of "Angel from Montgomery" but also including Joan Baez, Johnny Cash, John Denver, the Everly Brothers, Carly Simon, Bette Midler, George Strait, Miranda Lambert, Norah Jones, and others. Prine also wrote songs that became hits for others, including "Unwed Fathers" (Tammy Wynette), "Love Is on a Roll" (Don Williams), "I Just Want To Dance with You" (George Strait), and "You Never Even Called Me By My Name" (David Allen Coe). In January, he was awarded a Grammy for Lifetime Achievement.

In the 1930s, Prine's parents moved from Kentucky to Maywood, Illinois, where his father took a job as a tool-and-die maker at the American Can Company and helped organize a local steelworkers' union. John took up guitar as a teen and learned basic chords along with Carter Family songs with help from his older brother, Dave, who took him for lessons at the Old Town School of Folk Music when he was 14. Employing a fingerpicking style influenced by Elizabeth Cotten and Mississippi John Hurt, he enjoyed playing Hank Williams songs for his dad.

After high school, Prine enlisted in the Army and was sent to Germany. His father mailed a guitar Prine would use to jam with a barracks mate from Wyoming, entertaining fellow soldiers after they returned from evenings in local beer halls.

Prine married his high-school sweetheart and, after his Army stint ended in the late '60s, they moved to Melrose Park, Illinois, where he took a job as a mailman. He would often spend evenings helping at the Old Town School, where, after lessons, instructors and students socialized at a nearby club called Fifth Peg.

Prine's insecurities about his voice and playing steered him away from cover songs. Instead, he used the guitar to create a backdrop for lyrics conceived on his mail route and influenced by his love of honky-tonk country, R&B, and upbeat folk (a la Johnny Cash and Bob Dylan). One night at Fifth Peg, Old Town students challenged him to take the stage during an open-mic. He got up and played his Vietnam-War ballad, "Sam Stone," along with two other tunes that would become signature – "Hello in There" and "Paradise" – which garnered a reception strong enough for the club owner to offer him a gig playing three nights per week, two sets per night. Pay was 50 cents for every person who came to watch; the first night, he made $3.

One Thursday evening in late 1970, *Chicago Sun Times* critic Roger Ebert walked out of a movie he'd intended to review and, seeking a beer to chase the salty theater popcorn, stepped into Fifth Peg while Prine was playing. Needing material to fill the next day's entertainment page, Ebert wrote a lengthy, glowing review of the performance; response prompted the club to move Prine to a weekend slot and bump his pay to $1,000. After watching Prine perform with his friend, Steve Goodman, Kris Kristofferson invited them to do a show with him in New York City.

Taking advice from Kristofferson, Atlantic Records signed Prine in early '71, and his self-titled debut album was released that August. Similar praise by *Los Angeles Times* music critic Robert Hillburn helped launch him on the West Coast.

In 1997, Prine was diagnosed with squamous cell carcinoma in his neck. Radiation and surgery in early '98 severed nerves in his tongue and damaged salivary glands, forcing him to undergo speech therapy to remedy slurring of his words. It took him a year to recuperate and left him with a disfigured jaw. In 2013, another procedure removed cancer in his left lung. With therapy, he was back to touring within six months. His final album was *The Tree of Forgiveness*, released in 2018 and became his first to reach the *Billboard* Top 10.

"I had the privilege of knowing John for over 40 years as a customer and a friend," said vintage-instrument dealer and *VG* contributor George Gruhn. "He was a great poet and a very perceptive and compassionate person. He treasured each day and extracted the greatest possible appreciation for the pleasures of life and fellowship with the people around him."

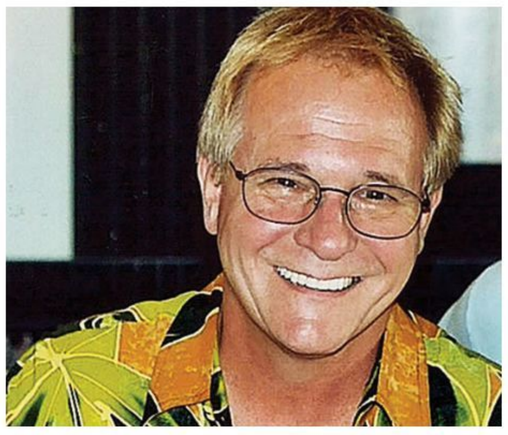
Prine had an affinity for vintage Martin dreadnoughts and new Martins from the company's Custom Shop. In 2017, Martin marked his 70th birthday with a limited edition of 70 signature dreadnoughts that sold out during their debut at winter NAMM.

"He also appreciated fine vintage Gibson acoustics and had several J-200 models as well as baritone ukuleles and electric guitars," Gruhn added. "He was adding to his collection as recently as late December, when he visited my shop to buy a '46 Martin herringbone D-28 and a '69 Martin D-35 that had been customized at the Martin factory. He used those guitars on his New Year's Eve show at the Grand Ole Opry, and continued to be active until he contracted coronavirus."

Prine is survived by his wife, Fiona, and three sons. ***– Ward Meeker***

John Prine photo courtesy of Oh Boy Records.

IN MEMORIAM



KEITH OLSEN

Keith Olsen, bassist in the Music Machine and a renowned record producer, died March 9. He was 74.

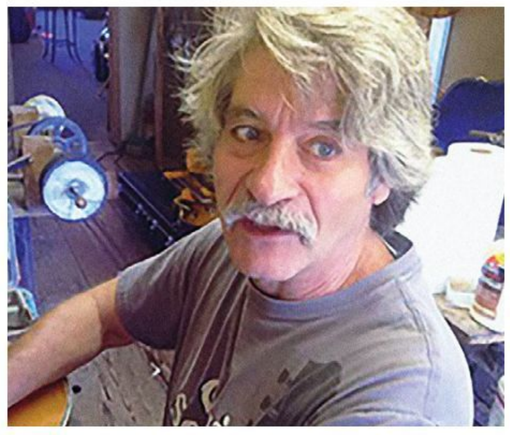
Olsen first gained notoriety as a musician in the mid '60s, when Music Machine hit with "Talk Talk" and the follow-up single, "The People in Me." The band dressed in all black, including dyed hair and each member wore one black glove in public, even when not performing.

He transitioned to production in the late '60s, and by the early '70s was working on albums such as *Buckingham-Nicks* and the James Gang's *Passin' Thru*. He produced Fleetwood Mac's self-titled 1975 album, followed by albums with Santana, the Grateful Dead, 38 Special, the Babys, Pat Benatar, Sammy Hagar, Heart, Whitesnake, and others. His work earned six Grammys.

"Keith changed my life," said former Music Machine guitarist Mark Landon, who knew Olsen for 55 years. "We met in a music store, then jammed... I became lead guitarist, and within months we became the Music Machine. He was a brilliant producer, engineer, bassist, and just a really great guy. "

38 Special founding guitarist Jeff Carlisi became close friends with Olsen during the making of *Strength in Numbers*.

"I learned a great deal working with him, and was fortunate to take that knowledge and put it to good use on future works," he said. "He will be missed."



SCOTT FREILICH

Scott Freilich, proprietor of Top Shelf Music, died April 15. He was 66 and battled cancer.

Raised in Lake Ronkonkoma, New York, as a high-school student he worked at WSHR radio and spent his spare time repairing guitars and amplifiers for friends. He also built basses he used while playing in local bands.

In 1971, he moved to study electrical engineering at S.U.N.Y at Buffalo. There, he connected with the local folk-music scene and began performing in clubs around campus. After graduating with a B.S. in Management in '76, he focused on expanding his budding guitar-repair business while continuing to gig and record. He'd also taken to buying used instruments locally and flipping them to dealers in New York City, Boston, and Nashville. In '79, he teamed with Russell Steinberg to open Top Shelf Music, which specialized in repair and had an initial inventory of about 60 instruments.

In '84, the shop moved to new space with double the square footage. Freilich's repair and restoration work was becoming highly regarded and clients included Taj Mahal, Van Halen, ZZ Top, and Randy Bachman. Touring musicians who needed repairs or had a taste for vintage instruments made Top Shelf a regular stop.

Growth continued, and in '89 the shop was moved to Hertel Avenue. There, it produced its first mail-order catalog and created The Buffalo Friendship Guitar Show, which was held for 10 years. Freilich's knowledge of vintage instruments led to serving on the panel that determines values for *The Official Vintage Guitar Price Guide*, and contributions to several authoritative books on various guitar brands.

In 2004, he was inducted to the Buffalo Music Hall of Fame. In '13, he closed Top Shelf to spend more time with family.

Bruce Diamond, who operates the vintage-instrument shop Diamond Strings, met Freilich while shopping at Top Shelf in 1988.

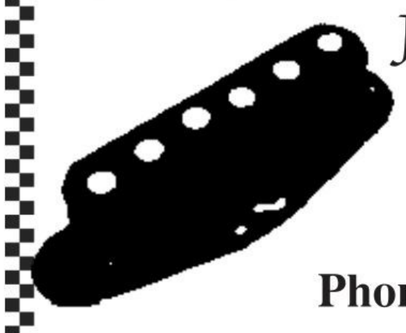
"Once he realized that I, too, was crazy about oddball vintage instruments such as Wandré and Höpf, and took instrument repair as seriously as playing the bass, we established a bond that turned into a friendship," Diamond said. "By 2014, he and his wife, Gail, had moved to Rochester and he became very active in our local music scene. He opened up more, laughed more, and embraced his last years. It was great to see him at gigs."

"I met Scott in 1983, when he held his first guitar show at Top Shelf. He picked me up at the airport and took me to his shop and his home," said friend and fellow dealer Timm Kummer. "He taught me so much about this business and his appreciation of the great off-brand things that rounded me very early on. Before everyone was an 'expert,' Scott was a connoisseur, and an exceptional teacher and coach. I'll miss seeing him at shows"

Freilich is survived by Gail, along with one daughter, two grandchildren, and a brother. ***– Ward Meeker***

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ERIC JOHNSON

Soul-Deep

For more than four decades, Eric Johnson has been wowing audiences with sophisticated compositions and dazzling musicianship. His artistry goes beyond his influences, to his desire to connect to the human spirit. *EJ Volume II* is an intimate portrait of an artist digging deep to create a musical tapestry that touches the soul.

There's a perfect balance between acoustic and electric instruments on *EJ Volume II*.

When it started, I had these songs I knew I wanted to lay down on piano and acoustic guitar. I just let the songs dictate where they wanted to go. Some were written during *Volume I*, but I didn't have good recordings of them. "Gift Of Love" is about being grateful for having people in your life and how everything else pales in comparison. With "Lake Travis," I called it that because it starts with this little riff that I used to play when I was a kid at the lake with my guitar. The rest of the song is what I wrote to go along with the riff. It's an instrumental palette cleanser between side one and side two of the record.

Where did you get the idea to cover "You've Got To Hide Your Love Away" by The Beatles?

It's a great song. I would never try to do it exactly like those guys did (laughs). They're the pinnacle of songwriters. Sometimes you're able to take a song like that and do it differently. I've always liked that song. I fiddled around with a rearrangement of "Norwegian Wood." I had already done a piano version of "The Wind Cries Mary" in that style. I thought it would be cool to do it differently.

Your records have a sense of spirituality. Are you conscious of it?

Yes, a lot of my favorite artists give me a good feeling when I listen to their music. It has some kind of emotional connection. That's an area that I would like to improve or strengthen in the music that I make. It's always been important to me, but I don't think it's been a priority. I get distracted or consumed with everything being technically right. Baring that in mind, I want to make sure I keep it as a priority through the process. There are so many valuable things about making a piece of music. You'd be hard-pressed to challenge the most important thing – having some emotional connective quality. I thought maybe I should try to keep that right on the tip of my consciousness. It's a narrative I need to strengthen.

You have a new Fender signature Strat for 2020.

I've been playing it exclusively for this tour. It's a copy of my original '54. There was a certain thing with the way my original was set up that worked really well. I think the size of the neck made a difference. Using its particular DiMarzio HS-2 pickup in the bridge made it sing. That, and the way I wired the neck and middle pickup together, and the fact that I used a different Volume pot.

Luthier Mike Stevens pointed out to me that the wood on my '54 was sassafras. I thought, "*Really*?" So we did a prototype at Fender, and sure enough, it had some of the aspects of the tone on my original. It still sounds like a Strat when you play clean stuff, but as you turn it up, it seems to hold together the fundamental harmonics better, and has more headroom. As you saturate it with distortion, it has a smoother sound. It becomes even more apparent as you crank it up with distortion.

What do you think when people copy your guitar style?

It's flattering. I'm glad to be part of the chain that contributed something. I don't think about it that much. It's not like you can go around suing everybody (laughs). If you look at people who say they have an original style, it's made up of the people they copied. I went through a period where I would copy Eric Clapton note for note. That's how you build your thing. The best use of that is when you add your own thing to it. If you just copy, I think there's only so much distance you can get on that.

What's your next record going to be like?

I want to pursue a blues-rock project. The blues-rock thing is my excuse to go, "I want a guitar with one or two pedals, straight into the amp. What can you do with that?" I want to get back to that raw simplicity. I want to explore the freedom you get from limitation.

– Oscar Jordan

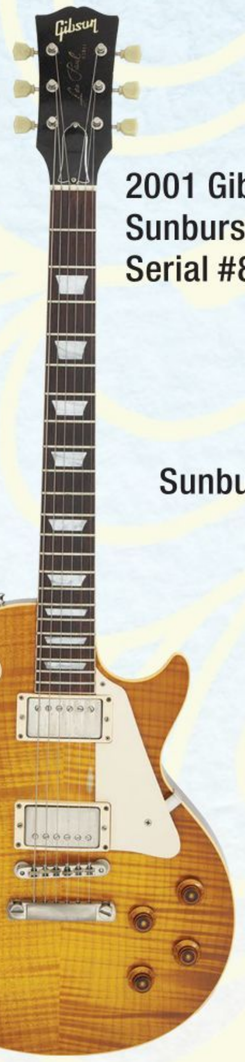
Eric Johnson: Max Crace.

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1982 Gibson ES-335 Dot Natural Semi-Hollow Body Electric Guitar, Serial #83192510.



2001 Gibson Les Paul R-8 Sunburst Solid Body Electric Guitar, Serial #81837.



2014 Gibson Les Paul R-9 Sunburst Solid Body Electric Guitar, Serial #942158.



1958 Gibson ES-125T Sunburst Semi-Hollow Body Electric Guitar, Serial #T5952 22.

Circa 1972 Gibson Les Paul Custom Black Solid Body Electric Guitar, Serial #969204.



1967 Epiphone Riviera Sunburst Semi-Hollow Body Electric Guitar, Serial #871424.



1964 Gibson J-45 Sunburst Acoustic Guitar, Serial #245213.



1964 Fender Showman Guitar Amplifier, Serial #A00250.

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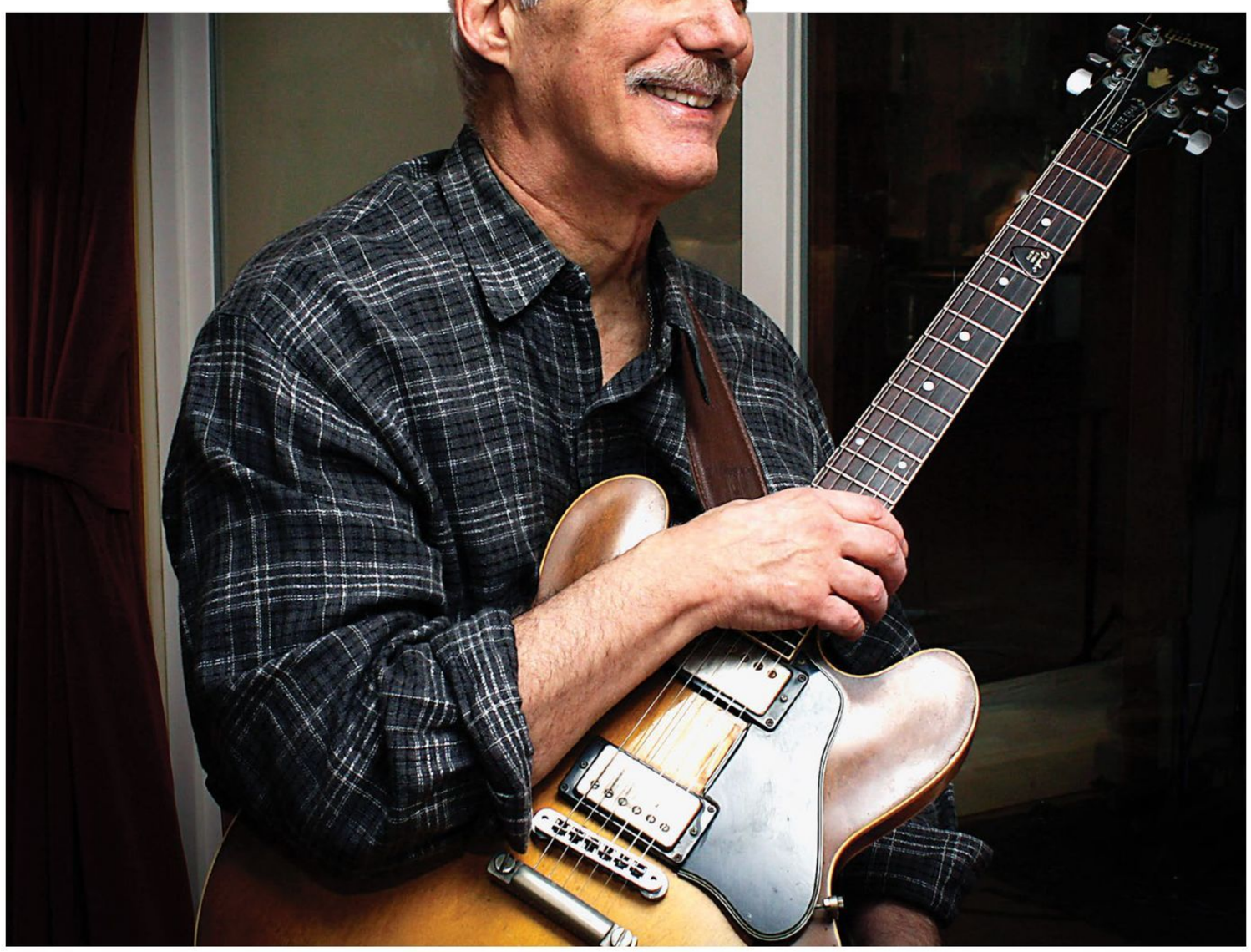
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STEVE KHAN

Latin-Jazz Crusade

Forty years ago, Steve Khan was among New York's hottest jazz-fusion players, releasing hip solo and ensemble albums. In the past decade, he has created a four-album arc of Latin-jazz outings, the latest being *Patchwork*, which mixes intricate guitar improvisations with percussion and grooves.

As always, Khan's complex-yet-sweet-toned guitar leads the way. We caught up with the fusion ace to discuss this rich, sensual recording.

Many musicians use Latin percussion as a background garnish, but you put it front and center on *Patchwork*.

What I initially wanted to do with these recent recordings was integrate the looseness of the musicians heard on my '81 album, *Eyewitness*, with a real Latin percussion section. From that point forward, through the albums that followed, I just wanted to play Latin jazz as I heard it, with the guitar as the main voice. I wanted the full complement of Latin percussion – timbales, conga, bongó, and all of the hand percussion, plus bass and drums. In my view, this is what Latin music – whether it's salsa or jazz – should sound and feel like.

Your tone on *Patchwork* is so fat and rich.

Everything on the guitar is all about touch, where the flesh meets the string and gently pushes it into the wood. That's where your tone is going to be defined. Because I use Dean Markley .009 strings – which people never believe when I tell them – I have to make up for that in other ways. The most obvious is to darken my tone by backing off the Tone control. When I am playing live, the Tone can be as low as 4. But when one is recording, you can't do that – any good engineer will tell you that. The solution is that it's always better to record yourself a little brighter than you'd like, then darken it up a bit when mixing.

Which guitars did you use?

My gear hasn't changed all that much since the early '80s. I've been playing the same '82 ES-335 from Gibson's Heritage series. My guitar "orchestrations" are done with my ESP Strat with EMG pickups and a simple Ernie Ball volume pedal. On the new album, I also played my Martin MC-28 steel-string for "Bouquet," and a Yamaha APX-10N nylon-string for "The Journey Home" and "Huracán Clare."

What about pedals?

There's a ton of gear info on my website, but the essence of my sound remains the Ibanez DCF-10 chorus/flanger pedal. My pedalboard changed when Tom Peck modified it for me several years ago. Basically the DCF-10 is on all the time, and I have two Ibanez digital delays ping-ponging left and right in a most subtle way. The other device that has become a signature part of my setup is the Korg DVP-1 harmonizer. For amps, there's a Walter Woods stereo power amp/preamp and two Marshall 1966A 2x12 bottoms. Though my overall sound might be perceived as clean, I'm actually playing *really* loud.

You played on Steely Dan's last great album, 1980's *Gaucho*.

I played on several tracks, including the solo for "My Rival," using my Telecaster Custom. I remember when they called me to play the solo and it was obviously after they had tried several other guitar players. The solo section travels from E7(9) to D♭7(13), G♭m7, D7(9b5), D♭m7, and eventually builds up to A/B. During the session, [Steely Dan singer/keyboardist] Donald Fagen said to me, "I want you to play as if you were Howlin' Wolf's guitarist, but could play through those chord changes." Those were my precise instructions, so that's what I did.

In a sense, those elements are a healthy part of my playing, anyway, though Albert King was always my personal favorite! In the end, the blues were very important to both Donald and Walter when it comes to the guitar.

In the late '70s, there was a distinct jazz-fusion sound from New York City, less about chops and more about groove. What do you remember about making your albums *The Blue Man* and *Tightrope*?

The main thing was that I wanted to keep alive the sound of the original Brecker Brothers, with the three horns of Randy and Michael Brecker, and David Sanborn together. It was just in a bit more *guitar*-centric presentation. I still get beautiful feedback about these records from older fans, who have been with me all of these years, and there are also new, younger fans, which is heartening.

When you were getting started as a player, which legendary guitarists did you see live?

Growing up in Los Angeles, mostly in the '60s, I was fortunate to have seen many great artists and bands playing. Of course, I went to hear Wes Montgomery playing whenever he would come to town – that was simply awe-inspiring. At the Shrine Auditorium, you could see three amazing bands for very little money. I remember seeing Albert King, the Electric Flag with Mike Bloomfield, and, of course, Jimi Hendrix. Those were such great years to be young. ***– Pete Prown***



BUCKY PIZZARELLI

1926-2020

John Paul "Bucky" Pizzarelli, veteran New York studio and session guitarist who moved to a solo jazz career in the 1970s, died April 1 of complications of Covid-19. He was 94.

An elder statesman of jazz guitar and father of fellow jazz guitarist John Pizzarelli, he was among the few of his generation still active and prolific. His style reflected techniques developed prior to World War II – clean single-string lines, pulsing rhythm accompaniment, and rich chord melodies and solos. His relentless energy and inventiveness, however, demonstrated the continued durability and vitality of those sounds even in the 21st Century. One of the first to embrace and master the seven-string guitar developed by George Van Eps, it became his instrument of choice.

In his mid 80s, Pizzarelli continued touring, recording a steady string of solo albums and collaborating with his family onstage and on records. Recovering from a 2015 mini-stroke and a subsequent bout with pneumonia, he played occasionally around New Jersey before retiring in '18.

Pizzarelli was born in Paterson, New Jersey in 1926. His father, a mandolin-playing grocer, so loved the cowboy lifestyle he nicknamed his son "Bucky." His mother's brothers, Pete and Bobby Domenick, were accomplished banjoists and guitarists who taught him fundamentals (as they later did for an adolescent John). Bucky learned single-string soloing and rhythm guitar as played by Freddie Green and Barry Galbraith. Initially, he played in bands around Paterson.

Except for two years in the Army, he spent 1944 through '53 in the popular orchestra backing singer Vaughn Monroe before beginning two decades as a Manhattan studio guitarist and staff musician at NBC. In '56-'57, he toured with the instrumental trio the Three Suns under the name "Johnny Buck."

In the studios, Pizzarelli recorded with scores of singers and instrumentalists spanning all genres. He played ukulele on Tony Bennett's "In the Middle of an Island," rhythm guitar on Dion's "Runaround Sue" and Ray Charles' "Georgia on my Mind." At NBC, he was part of Doc Severinsen's orchestra on "The Tonight Show" until host Johnny Carson moved to Hollywood in '72. Afterward, he played with the band on ABC's "Dick Cavett Show."

Transitioning from studio player to jazz artist, he performed in a duo with jazz-guitar pioneer George Barnes, then from 1961-'85 toured and recorded with swing legend Benny Goodman. Goodman and other top jazz players, Zoot Sims and Joe Venuti among them, became regulars at Pizzarelli's home in Saddle River, New Jersey, enjoying his wife's Italian dinners. Informal jam sessions exposed the four Pizzarelli kids to the best of the idiom.

He taught daughter, Mary, to play jazz guitar before teaching John, and with both he stressed feel and instinct over reading charts. When John, who began as a rock player, heard Django Reinhardt's recording of "Rose Room," his dad challenged him.

"I'd give him five bucks if he learned how to play the chorus," he remembered in 2010. "From then on, he started playin' Chick Corea's 'Spain' and all that stuff."

In the '80s, John began accompanying Bucky on club gigs, later joined by son Martin, who played upright bass.

As John established his own jazz identity, Bucky often joined him onstage and in the studio, playing rhythm guitar. That reached a pinnacle when John accompanied Paul McCartney on his 2010 pop standards album, *Kisses on the Bottom*. Bucky came in to play rhythm on two songs.

Over the years, Bucky's solo albums featured him in various (and not always predictable) settings. He teamed with pedal-steel great Doug Jernigan for a 1978 album of pop and jazz favorites, and later recorded two country/western swing albums as Buck Pizzarelli and the West Texas Tumbleweeds, accompanied by John, other jazz players, and steel guitarist Tommy White.

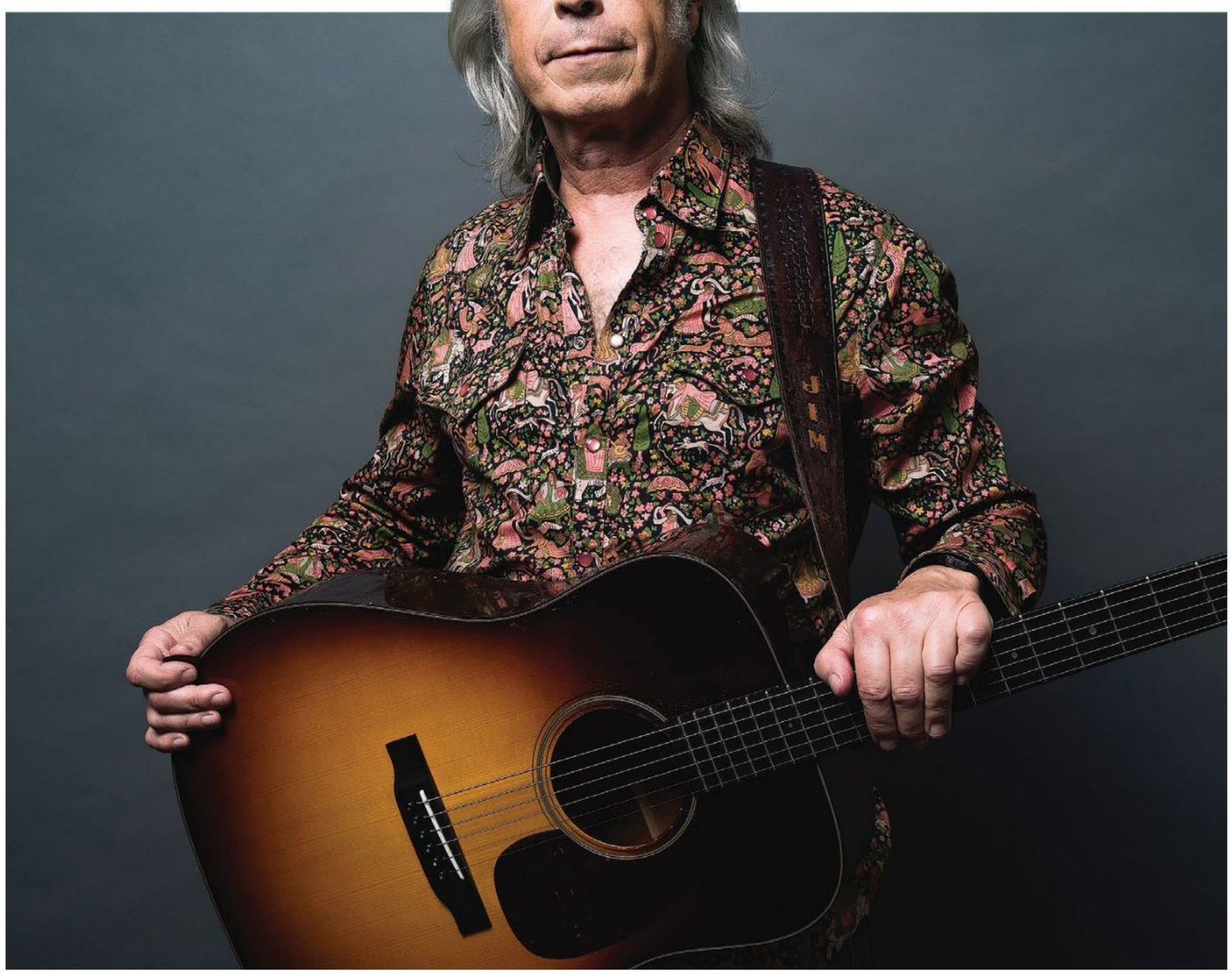
Frank Vignola, a friend who frequently performed and recorded with him, admired his work ethic. "One thing that I always treasured about Bucky, and Les Paul for that matter, is they practiced every day. Literally, every day they practiced new songs and materials. Jazz guitar would not be what it is today without Bucky Pizzarelli. He was a gem of a person."

Joe Negri, best known for his work on "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," knew Bucky since the late '50s, when he replaced him in the Three Suns. They later played together twice in Pittsburgh.

"I think he brought a sense of rhythm a la Freddie Green," Negri noted. "He was a really good accompanist for everything. He played wonderful chord solos, like the jazz guitar pioneers did. He was very well-rounded."

In many ways, Bucky humbly (but accurately) summarized his artistry in 2010, saying, "The whole thing is being inspired by somebody. With me, I listened to Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Freddie Green. I said, 'I want to do that!' I aimed everything – all my know-how – at playin' in the band." ***– Rich Kienzle***

Bucky Pizzarelli: Heritage Image Partnership/Alamy.



JIM LAUDERDALE

Carolina Roots

On his latest album, North Carolina native Jim Lauderdale honors his state's rich musical heritage with songs stemming from well-aged work – the title track of *When Carolina Comes Home Again* was co-written years ago with John Oates (of Hall and Oates).

Long before he teamed with Daryl Hall, Oates (a Philadelphia native) began as a folkie and Doc Watson disciple. Other songs originated from Lauderdale's teaming with fellow N.C. native, singer/songwriter Si Kahn, after both attended the annual Merlefest, in Wilkesboro.

"We talked about doin' something together, and he had this idea for a song called 'Cackalacky' – a nickname for Carolina," Lauderdale said. He recorded those two tracks when North Carolina proclaimed 2019 the Year of Music, hoping to expand to a full album.

Bluegrass albums are familiar territory for Lauderdale, who won Grammys for two previous efforts, one with Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys. Two others were filled with tunes he co-wrote with yet another North Carolina native, the late Grateful Dead lyricist Robert Hunter.

A force in roots/Americana music since the '90s, Lauderdale established himself as an admired singer/songwriter who records in traditional country and bluegrass settings. While most of his albums are solo efforts, he has collaborated with Donna the Buffalo as well as old friend Buddy Miller and his studio band, the Dream Players, which includes James Burton and pedal-steel great Al Perkins.

As *When Carolina Comes Home Again* took shape, Lauderdale added two more numbers co-written with Hunter, and decided to record with the state's top bluegrass bands and musicians, starting with his friends, Steep Canyon Rangers; he co-wrote "It Takes Just One to Wander" with banjoist Graham Sharp, and recorded with the band at Asheville's Echo Mountain Recording, where he completed the rest of the album.

After co-writing with N.C. musicians, Lauderdale brought in popular regional bands – Cane Mill Road, Town Mountain, Songs from the Road Band, Fireside Collective, Balsam Range, and guitarist Jon Stickley's trio. Each song, he said, was tailored to the group.

"Oftentimes with my country stuff, I'll hear the parts and write (the song) around the players I'm gonna go in with," he said.

Cane Mill Road, for example, inspired "Moonrider." "There's no shortage of great young and not-so-young acoustic players," he noted. "I was afraid I might have been going too far out of bounds with 'As A Sign' and 'Moonrider,' but they're pretty traditional-sounding. That's what I gravitate toward."

That approach also applied to two guitarists, each featured on one song; the storytelling anthem "Spin a Yarn" showcased Asheville's Nick Dauphinais, while "Mountaineer" features teenage flatpicker (and Doc Watson disciple) Presley Barker. He'd seen Barker perform at Merlefest.

"He just really knocked me out, and I wanted to get him some attention."

Lauderdale's acoustic-guitar choices have evolved over time. Early in his career, he favored a '77 Martin D-28 until he bought a Collings Brazilian rosewood D2H sunburst at Gruhn Guitars in 1994.

"I got into the sunburst kick when I got the first Collings," he explains. It became his primary touring instrument until, "I cracked it on the road and thought I'd better not take it out so much."

Tom Glazer repaired the damage.

Other favorites include Collings CJ models, and his current road guitar is a D1A with an Adirondack spruce top that he keeps in a Calton case.

"I've been using that a whole lot, flyin' around," he said.

"Some guitars, so far as writing, just have this magic in them. It's been that way with that '77 Martin, the first Collings I got, and the D1.

"I've got several vintage Martins," he added. "I don't have any pre-war, [but] I've got a nice '55 D-18 and a beat-up '59 D-18 I got from Tony Williamson, which is great for writing. I have a nice, worn Brazilian D-28 sunburst without a tongue brace."

His refinished '44 Gibson SJ-200 came from Carter Vintage, in Nashville, and was bought while he was recording with Buddy Miller, who's a fan of the model.

To add local flavor to *When Carolina Comes Home*, he played instruments by Pre-War Guitars, which specializes in models with '30s specifications, typically with Brazilian rosewood.

It's true that Lauderdale's hardcore traditionalism informed the sound on *Carolina*, yet he hints at ideas for a future, non-country project.

"Someday, I'd love to do more acoustic-jazz stuff... a whole album." ***– Rich Kienzle*** **VG**

Jim Lauderdale photo courtesy of Yep Roc Records

Collings

JULIAN LAGE

Signature **OM1**

A 1982 Ibanez RR400CS Rocket Roll II and its page in the Ibanez catalog (right). The '83 edition added the "wrinkled" RR550 and RR150 (below).





BLAST OFF!

The Ibanez Rocket Roll II

BY MICHAEL WRIGHT

THE DIFFERENT STRUMMER

With the growing popularity of hard-rock pop and the New Wave of British Heavy Metal, guitar players were hot stuff in 1982, and a lot of them were bolstering their in-your-face playing with non-traditional guitars like Gibson's Explorer and Flying V. Ibanez prepped for the surge by dusting off a couple stalwarts from the '70s.

Ibanez was one of the stars of the "copy era," which originated at the end of the '60s – a period now recognized as the end of America's guitar hegemony, and the beginning of globalization. The strategy of Japanese manufacturers making copies of popular American guitars was pretty clever (if a bit annoying) since their buyers were far more likely to be customers of Harmony and Kay. But then, even Gibson, Guild, and Martin dabbled briefly in copy guitars. For America's big builders, though, the *real* problem was that Japanese luthiers were using the experience to fortify the quality of their instruments.

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D-42, D-18 Authentic, OM-18 Authentic, 000-28K Authentic, Etc.
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D-42 '95, exc+ cond, beautiful & great sounding, $3850
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OM-21 '12, exc cond, K&K pure mini, $1995

ELECTRICS - VINTAGE/USED

Gibson Les Paul Std, 1961, T-tops, Bigsby, no breaks, $6500
Gibson Les Paul R6 '97, exc cond, $2850
Gibson Les Paul 'Nitro makeover by JW Black – inquire, $2650
Fender P-Bass '68, good cond, natural wood finish, $2750
Fender Mustang '65, Red, vgd original cond, $1850
Suhr Custom Classic, '10, White w/ matching headstock $2150
Suhr Standard '00, Lefty, aged cherryburst, quilt top, exc, $2350

ACOUSTICS - VINTAGE/USED

Gibson Custom Shop Hummingbird New Vintage HG '11, $2950
Breedlove J25/MP 12 string, '01, custom woods, exc cond, $2250
National El Trovador '09, Mike Dowling Model, exc+, $2350
Kay K-22 Jumbo, late '50's, reset/refret/pin bridge, super! $1000

ARCHTOPS - VINTAGE/USED

L-5 Premiere '47, Sunburst, exc cond, $12,500
Stromberg G-3 '32, Sunburst, exc cond, $7500
Gibson L-50 '42, sbst, good cond, $1250
Heritage David Becker '16, exc cond, $2100
Heritage H550 '95, exc cond, $2295

COLLINGS/WATERLOO - NEW & USED

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Currently in Stock: 01-T, D2H-T, 002H, OM2H, D2HA, OM1DB, 02H, OM1A, OM2HASB, D1, MF Blacktop, MT 'burst, CL Goldtop, CL Aged Burst, 360 LT M Doghair & more
C10-35 G SB '15, German Spruce top, near mint, $3750
OM2H, '15, exc cond, 1 3/4" nut, $3250
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290 DC-S w/Bigsby, '11, TV Yellow, exc cond, $2395

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Charlie Hunter 8 String, 2003, Sbst, handmade, near mint, $4500
Slimline Jazz Deluxe, 2012, Sbst, exc cond, handmade, $5000
Award Special 'late '90's, 2 H/B, exc cond, $1650

MANDOLINS, BANJOS, STEELS, UKES

Gibson F-5 Loar, signed Feb. 8, 1923, exc cond. $135,000
Serious inquiries call for complete description and information.
Martin Style 1-T Tenor Ukulele, '50's exc cond, $1250
Martin Style 3 Ukulele, '20's, good cond, repaired cracks, $1500

AMPS

Dumble Concert Reverb (shown) '73, Santa Cruz era custom build, Provenance & paperwork, call for complete info, $25,000
Fender Tweed Champ '59, vgd cond, sounds great! $1750
Gibson GA30 Invader '60, Tweed, 1 repo spkr, vgd, $1450
Aiken Invader '02, 1x12 Combo, 18 watt, Red, exc cond, $2150



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Ibanez electrics were almost exclusively made by FujiGen Gakki, in Nagoya, and they paced the pack. In '71, Hoshino Gakki Ten, the trading company that owned the Ibanez brand, established a partnership with Pennsylvania-based Elger Guitars. By '74, "Ibanez" cataloged a mind-boggling array of copies. Many, like its version of the Flying V, were offered in budget bolt-neck (No. 2387) and upscale set-neck (2387DLX) versions. By the end of the year, Ibanez had added the set-neck model 2387 Custom in "Korina," replicating a '58 Flying V, including the smaller pickguard and "boomerang" tailpiece. In advertising, the Custom would be called the Rocket Roll Sr. – "Senior" probably because it was based on the vintage (not the current) model. Calling the V copy a "rocket" was obvious, given its shape.

There's a dash of irony in the competition between the builders, given that guitars were influenced by the "space race" between the U.S. and the Soviet Union; the U.S.S.R. launched Sputnik 1 in October of '57, and the U.S. followed with Explorer 1 in January, '58. Guitar builders started down the path in '54, when Fender introduced a sleek "modern" guitar with a name that sounded rather stratospheric, and Gibson's Ted McCarty responded by commissioning graphic artists to develop new concepts before tasking guitar designers Larry Allers and John Huis with building prototypes. They emerged with three – the Moderne, Explorer, and Flying V.



None, though, really made it into orbit.

Twenty years later, the improving quality of Japanese copies began to cause panic among the dominant American makers. Just before the summer NAMM in '77, lawyers at Norlin (the corporation that owned Gibson) filed suit against Elger in U.S. Federal Court, alleging trademark infringement for copying their headstock design. The intent had been to march into NAMM and confiscate all Ibanez guitars with a Gibson-like "open book" head.

But, Norlin hadn't been paying attention. Import builders were well aware the action was pending, and Hoshino had already redesigned the headstocks on its Gibson copies, so there was nothing to seize! Elger/Ibanez then agreed to cease and desist copying headstocks, and the "lawsuit" became enshrined in guitar mythology.

However, it also backfired. Freed from focusing on copies, when emerging music such as heavy metal created new tastes in guitars, Japanese makers were ideally positioned to pounce.

In 1980, Ibanez teamed with Kiss frontman/guitarist Paul Stanley to develop the signature

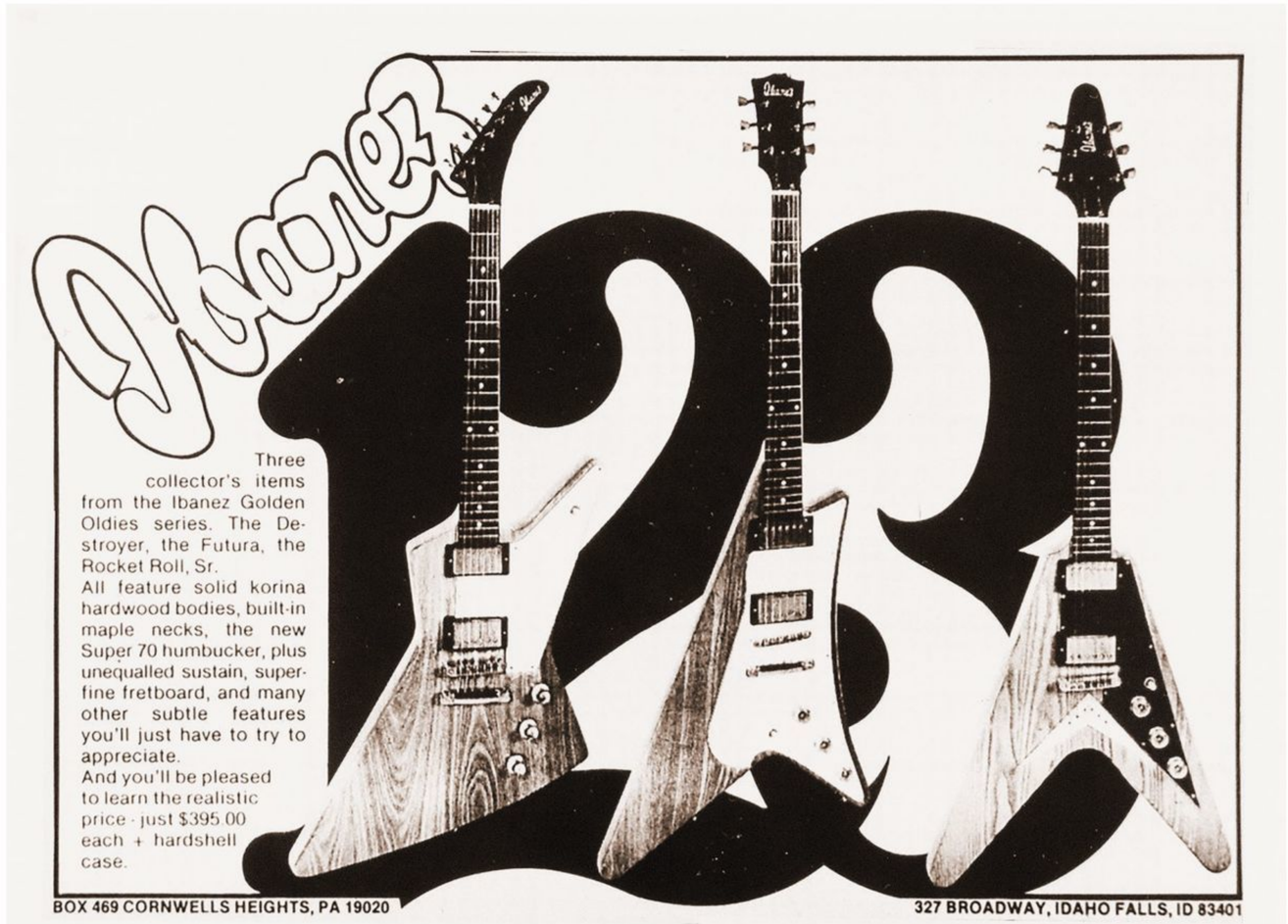


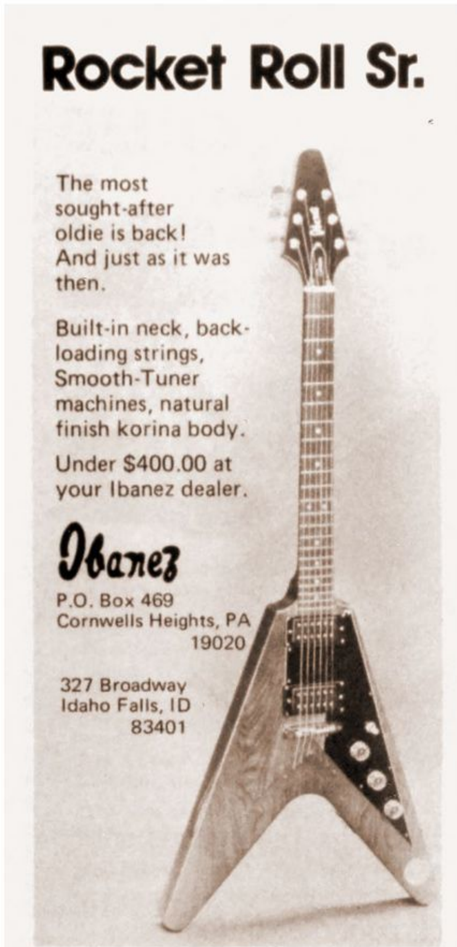
Sal & the Holmes Gang appeared in this 1974 "Golden Oldies" ad that was shot in Atlantic City. The Rocket Roll II's catalog companion, the Destroyer II (left, in Fire Red).

PS10, based on its Iceman and dressed with overwound open-coil V-2 pickups developed a year earlier for the Studio Series.

In '81, Ibanez brought back its Explorer copy, the Destroyer, with a couple of angled hooks, a new head, and the new Super 58 replacing the Super 70 humbucker at the neck. In late '81, FugiGen started making the Rocket Roll II, and two versions were introduced to the U.S. in '82 – the RR400CS and the RR50FR.

The RR400CS is a set-neck with basswood body (capped in flamed maple) and a three-ply maple neck. The pickups are a V2 at the bridge and a Super 58 at the neck. The bridge is Ibanez's Gibraltar with a Quick-Change stud tailpiece that loads from top slots rather than holes, making string changes much easier. Controls are an unusual (but useful) two Volume/one Tone. They were offered in one finish – Cherry Sun-





A circa-'74 ad for Ibanez's versions of Gibson's late-'50s classics, and the stand-alone for the '75 Rocket Roll Sr.

burst. The RR50FR (metallic Fire Red) differed with its bolt-on neck, but also a basswood/birch body, the same unbound fretboard with dot inlays, a Super 70 at the neck, and chrome hardware.

If you like a basic twin-humbucker guitar with a wide ($1^3/_4$"), flat fretboard, jumbo frets, and great access complemented by drop-dead gorgeous looks, the Rocket Roll II is for you! They aren't rare, but only 827 were made in 1981/'82 (along with 1,661 RR50FRs), and a few variants (RR50WH, RR50BK, RR400S) were produced for non-U.S. markets. In '83, Ibanez added a couple squiggles to the edge profile and made just slightly less than 500 each of the RR550CS and RR150BY (Burgundy finish, vibrato, maple fingerboard).

That was the end of the Rocket Roll. More-radical pointy guitars (and the "superstrat") would soon follow, but heavy metal had only so much staying power as music began to devolve into what would become the fragmented world of today, where *any* guitar player is a welcome breath of fresh air! **VG**





GRAND OPENER

The Premier 120R

BY DAVE HUNTER

If anything stands out about vintage Premier amplifiers, it's their red control knobs and two-tone cabinet coverings. But there's a lot more to these New Yorkers than some players realize, especially considering their status as "B-list" gear.

1962 MULTIVOX PREMIER 120R COMBO

- Preamp tubes: four 12AX7, one 6EU7, one 12AT7, one EL90
- Output tubes: two 6V6, cathode-bias.
- Rectifier: 5Y3
- Controls: Volume, Bass, Treble, Reverb for each channel; Tremolo speed and intensity
- Speaker: Jensen C12RL
- Output: 15 watts RMS

Premier amps were manufactured by the NYC-based Multivox Corporation of America for East Coast distributor Sorkin Music, and arrived early enough to rival

Amp courtesy of Marc McElroy/Gary's Guitars.

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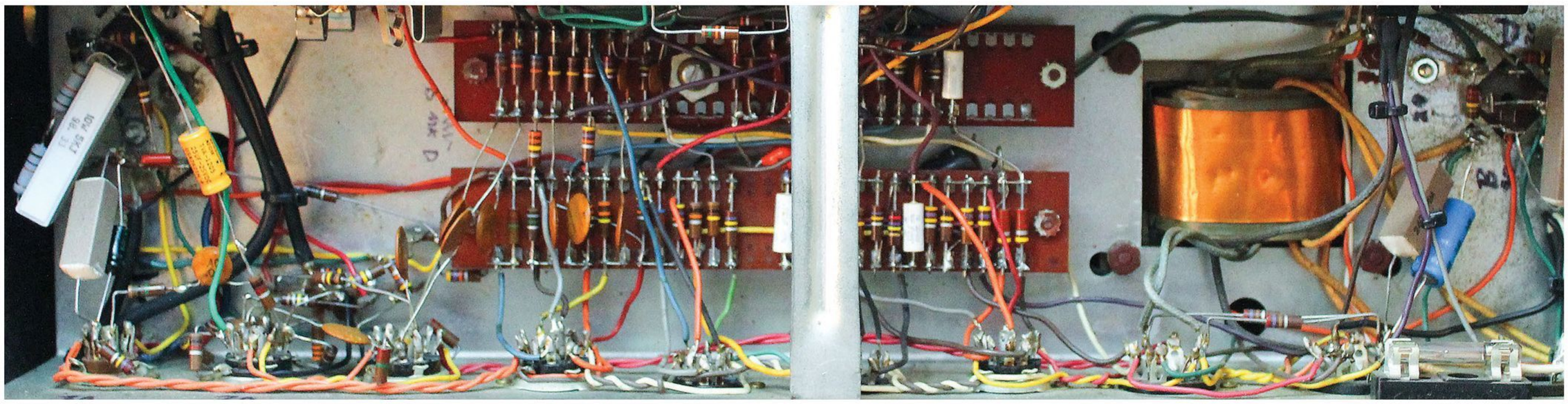
The 120R takes a lot of tubes to get the job done; note the feet on the outside of the lower back panel. Removing the panel reveals the isolated spring pan (left) and die-cast footswitch for engaging reverb and tremolo. The Weber speaker is a modern replacement.

Fender's first serious efforts of the late 1940s. The flagships of the '50s lineup were the complex Premier 88 "suitcase" amp (a whopping $350 at the time) and the Twin 12, with widow's-peak cab front. In the early '60s, the Premier 90 Reverberation outboard reverb gave Fender's Reverb Unit a run for its money.

But, even before Leo and company got that springy, surf-infused sound into a combo amp, Premier was on the case with the 1962 120R. Less seen than other Premiers, one might assume it was designed to go head-to-head with Fender's Deluxe Reverb… except it was offered a year or more before the Fullerton classic.

As it stands, the 120R is a little closer to the size of Fender's late-'50s tweed Deluxe – about an inch taller and a quarter-inch wider – and is laid out much the same. Other than that, it's a complex creation, with two channels, each with independent controls for Treble, Bass, Reverb, and selectable Tremolo. Channel one has high and low inputs, but channel two adds something labeled "Two Chan Input." While we might assume this jumps the two channels (as players will do with 5E3 Deluxes or many early Marshalls to achieve





The control panel (top) is a busy affair, with dots, lines, and legends – and of course, those nifty red knobs.
The dual circuit boards (above) are laid out neatly, though the wires coming from them are rather chaotic in places.

a beefier overall sound), it's actually a TRS/stereo jack to receive input from one of the stereo guitars that were popular at the time, and feeds the signal from each pickup to its individual channel… from whence it does *not* proceed in stereo, since it all ends up through the same mono output stage and single speaker! Still, it's a thoughtful inclusion, and one reminiscent of an era when manufacturers – for a brief time, at least – must have figured everything had to have a stereo feature.

As with most Premier amps, none of the circuit stages are like anything seen in rivals of the day, though they're also not particularly outlandish or complicated. Gain stages are provided by 12AX7 preamp tubes, with just one stage in Channel 2, but two in Channel 1. The bonus triode makes Ch 1 a little hotter and helps its signal better survive the insertion loss of having Bass and Treble potentiometers in-line, which follow after both gain stages, with the channel's Volume control last in line before it all heads to the tremolo circuit. Output is a modest 15 watts from a pair of cathode-biased 6V6GTs, with a 5Y3 tube rectifier in the power stage.

Premier clearly prided itself on its reverb, and another nifty feature of the 120R involves its implementation. While the tube-driven reverb circuit is different from that of other early reverb effects of the era (using one EL90 tube and two halves of a 6EU7), it also feeds a spring pan that's used in a manner we've never seen elsewhere – the pan is mounted inside the amp's lower-rear panel, which includes four "feet" of its own and can be removed via a latch/hinge and laid on the floor, removing it from vibration when you're cranked-up and wailing.

The two-button footswitch is also an impressive creation; a robust die-cast metal disc with orangey-copper textured finish, it uses a buckled strap attachment at the bottom of the cabinet to hold it in place during transport. Otherwise, as with most Premier models, construction is a curious blend of outright cheapo and well-executed. The cabinet is made from solid-pine sides, but with chipboard speaker baffle and rear panels, and it's all covered in thin self-adhesive paper. Further juxtaposition arrives with surprisingly neat tag-board circuitry and the pell-mell wiring emanating from it. And there's something else we haven't seen in another guitar amp – the insides of the cab are lined in thick felt, like some kind of hi-fi-inspired effort to mute its resonance.

This example is in impressively clean condition overall, though some repairs have clearly been made in the name of keeping the amp functional. The original 12" Jensen C12RL speaker has been replaced with a newer Alnico Weber, a handful of signal capacitors on the circuit board have been replaced with white Mallorys, and some of the larger resistors in the power supply have been replaced.

Aesthetically, like so many Premier amps, the 120R is kind of a jumble, but appealingly so. Its brown-and-cream look is redolent of the tweed era, and the cane speaker grille sets it off nicely (plus, there's a finer mesh underneath for added protection). The control panel is rather busy – some young product designer clearly went to town, given the melee of dots and lines and legends – but it's charmingly evocative of a bygone era (and one that had largely gone by even by the time this amp was released). In all, the looks really enhance the fun side of this off-brand combo's collectibility, as a bonus to the sub-$1k prices these generally go for today (sub-$700 with a little poking around).

In person, the 120R is a joy to play. There's not a ton of volume, but the headroom is surprisingly good up until about 1 o'clock on the Volume control, and it's clearly predisposed to jazz and pop playing. Dig in at that level, though, and there are some tasty edge-of-breakup tones alongside a lush, plummy richness. Pushed harder (with humbuckers, in particular), it starts to grind with a somewhat raw, blocky, slightly raspy distortion that works best in gnarly garage rock or smoky lo-fi blues – which is to say, the old 120R is no end of fun. **VG**

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1



2



3



4



5



6

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2 | CF MARTIN

It's time to rethink what an acoustic-electric guitar can do. Martin's SC-13E was designed from the ground up to remove the limitations of a conventional cutaway acoustic electric guitar. Now you can play leads all the way up the neck, play longer, and play louder without limits. Learn more at **www.martinguitar.com/nolimits**.

3 | PRS GUITARS

The S2 McCarty 594 is a versatile, vintage-inspired instrument in a modern, reliable package. Featuring a maple top and mahogany back, a bound 22-fret Pattern Vintage neck, and 58/15 "S" pickups, the S2 McCarty 594 can seamlessly master both humbucking and single-coil tones thanks to dual volume and push/pull tone controls. A zinc two-piece bridge and vintage-style tuners anchor this guitar and stay true to the promise of the McCarty family. MAP: $1,699 **www.prsguitars.com**.

4 | STRYMON

Now there is a pedal that truly delivers the sound and feel of a world-class tube amp driving a perfectly matched speaker cabinet in a great sounding room. Place Iridium on your pedalboard and send gorgeous stereo amplifier tones, stunningly realistic cabs, and lush room ambience direct to a recording interface, PA system, or headphones. $399. **www.strymon.net/products/iridium**.

5 | CARR AMPS

The Carr Telstar blends the sinewy harmonic assertion of EL84s with the deep full control of 6L6s in a new and unique push pull recipe. Our Lean/Lush switch tailors the body of the tone while the 53/58 switch changes the overall gain structure and the frequencies the Tone control emphasizes. Sonically treading the years from early Fullerton 50s roundness thru late 50s proto British bite. **www.carramps.com**.

6 | ZT AMPS

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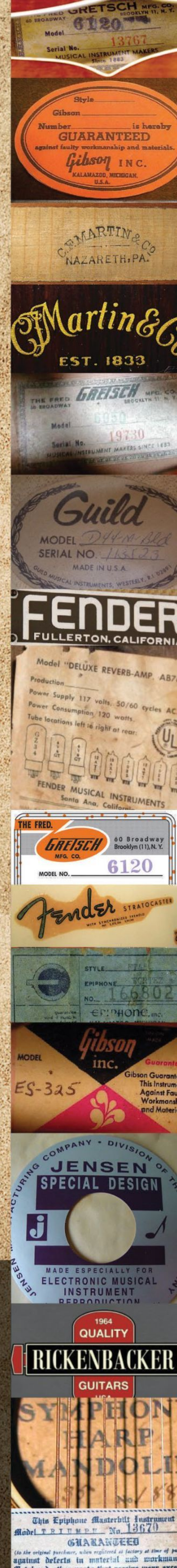
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Price Guide

By Alan Greenwood & Gil Hembree



1955 Gretsch Chet Atkins 6121

NEW & UPDATED LISTINGS

YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND. LOW	EXC. COND. HIGH
1961	Ampeg ET-1 Echo Twin Amp	30 watts, 1x12	$850	$1,100
1977	Ampeg V-4 B Bass Head Amp		$700	$900
2005	Campellone Special		$4,300	$5,700
2005	Charvel EVH Art Series	Black/white	$1,050	$1,400
2005	Charvel San Dimas Reissue (FMIC)		$525	$975
2012	Collings OM-2H	Indian rosewood	$2,600	$3,400
2002	Collings OM-3	Indian rosewood	$3,000	$3,900
1968	Coral Hornet 3N	3 pickups, black or red	$1,050	$1,400
1968	Danelectro Cadet Amp	1x6	$150	$225
1962	Danelectro Deluxe Triple Pickup		$1,075	$1,400
1940	D'Angelico Excel (Non-cut)	Sunburst, std F-hole	$13,500	$17,500
1956	D'Angelico New Yorker Special	Sunburst	$25,000	$33,000
1969	D'Aquisto Excel (Cutaway)	Sunburst	$29,000	$38,000
1920	Epiphone Black Beauty Tenor Banjo		$375	$500
1959	Epiphone Broadway (Electric)	Natural	$2,100	$2,700
1959	Epiphone Crestwood Custom	Cherry, NY pickups	$2,400	$3,150
1965	Epiphone Excellente	Brazilian rosewood	$5,400	$7,000
1945	Epiphone FT 110	Square shoulder	$3,600	$4,700
1968	Epiphone Riviera	Walnut	$2,600	$3,350
1964	Epiphone Sheraton	Sunburst, mini-hums	$6,700	$9,000
1952	Epiphone Zephyr Regent	Natural	$1,750	$2,300
1967	Fender Coronado II	Solid colors	$1,475	$1,900
1991	Fender Montara	Black	$350	$475
1982	Fender Standard Stratocaster	Smith Strat	$1,550	$2,050
1975	Fender Starcaster	Various colors	$3,275	$4,275
1955	Fender Stratocaster	Sunburst, ash body	$30,000	$41,000
1961	Fender Stratocaster	Sunburst	$17,000	$22,000
2008	Fender '51 NoCaster	Relic	$1,900	$2,450
1957	Fender Telecaster	Blond, back loader	$18,000	$24,000
1968	Fender Telecaster Custom	Custom color	$10,000	$17,000
1996	G & L ASAT Custom		$900	$1,175
1994	G & L Climax Bass		$750	$975
1981	G & L L-1000 Bass	Mahogany	$750	$1,000
1939	Gibson EM-150 Mandolin	Charlie Christian	$2,050	$2,650
1937	Gibson ES-150	Charlie Christian	$4,600	$6,000
1956	Gibson ES-225 TN	Natural, 1 pickup	$2,300	$3,000
1957	Gibson ES-295	P-90s	$5,000	$6,500
1972	Gibson ES-320 TD		$1,400	$1,800
1977	Gibson ES-325 TD		$1,600	$2,100
2005	Gibson ES-335 Andy Summers		$2,900	$3,750
2014	Gibson ES-335 Rich Robinson	Bigsby, cherry, small blocks	$2,700	$3,500
2013	Gibson ES-335 Rusty Anderson	Natural, figured maple	$2,900	$3,750
1972	Gibson ES-335 TD	Walnut finish option	$2,800	$3,600
1968	Gibson ES-335-12	Sunburst	$2,500	$3,200
2000	Gilchrist Model 5 Mandolin	Sunburst	$18,000	$23,000
1961	Gretsch Chet Atkins (6120)	Single-cut	$5,700	$7,500
1958	Gretsch Chet Atkins Country Gentleman (6122)		$7,500	$9,900

FEATURED SURVEY PARTICIPANT



Gary Dick and Rick Hogue, at an recent Fort Worth Show.

YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND. LOW	EXC. COND. HIGH
1955	Gretsch Chet Atkins Solidbody (6121)		$8,000	$10,500
1960	Gretsch Jet Firebird (6131)	Single cut	$4,500	$5,800
1954	Gretsch Round-Up (6130)	Pine	$9,900	$12,900
1998	Gretsch Silver Falcon G7594SL		$1,500	$1,975
1940	Gretsch Synchromatic 400	Sunburst, 18”	$3,300	$4,300
1977	GTR F-Style Mandolin		$1,850	$2,400
1978	Guild B-302 Bass	2 pickups	$750	$925
2010	Guild D-55		$1,600	$2,100
1984	Guild G-45 Hank Williams Jr		$925	$1,200
1988	Guild JF-30	Jumbo, lam-maple body	$925	$1,200
1989	Guild JF-55	Jumbo	$1,200	$1,575
1971	Guild S-100 Standard	Adj-O-Matic & vib	$1,325	$1,775
1972	Guild Standard F-112 12-String		$675	$875
1963	Hagstrom Coronado IV Bass	Bi-Sonic	$875	$1,150
1969	Harmony H72/H72V Double Cutaway Hbody		$975	$1,275
1988	Heritage Golden Eagle	Mounted pickup	$2,200	$2,900
2010	Heritage H-150 C/H-150 CM	Flamed	$1,400	$1,800
2005	Hofner Model 500/1 Cavern Bass		$1,350	$1,800
1983	Jackson Randy Rhoads (USA)	Mid serial #11+, no trem	$2,500	$3,500
1932	Kel Kroydon KK-1	Stencil	$2,625	$3,375
1981	Kramer DMZ Custom Series	DMZ-6000	$1,200	$1,600
1969	Kustom K100-2 2-12 Amp Set	Black, 50 watts, 2x12	$250	$325
1988	Larrivee L-0 Standard Series	L-09	$1,050	$1,350
1967	Marshall Model 1992 Super Bass Amp Head	Black, plexi	$3,700	$4,900
1938	Martin 000-21	Early ‘39, 1.75 neck	$20,700	$27,500
2019	Martin 000-28		$1,725	$2,225
1950	Martin 00-17		$2,350	$3,050
1917	Martin 00-21		$4,825	$6,225
2020	Martin 00-42JM-C John Mayer Crossroads		$5,500	$7,200
1990	Martin 0-16NY	20 made	$1,300	$1,675
1940	Martin 0-17T	Tenor 4-string	$1,250	$1,600
1917	Martin 0-18	Brazilian	$3,200	$4,100
1937	Martin D-18	14-fret	$45,000	$58,000
1978	Martin D-19	Walnut stain	$1,700	$2,200
1969	Martin D-45	Brazilian rosewood	$29,000	$38,000
1967	Mosrite Combo Mark 1	f-hole	$1,500	$1,975
1934	Oahu Style 65M		$475	$625
1977	Ovation Preacher 1281		$550	$725
2004	Parker Mojo	Singlecut	$900	$1,200
1974	Rickenbacker Model 4001 Bass	Various colors	$2,100	$2,700
1985	Rickenbacker Model 4001 V63 Reissue Bass	Figured top	$2,400	$3,200
2004	Rickenbacker Model 4003 Bass		$1,350	$1,775
1968	Rickenbacker Model 4005 Bass	Fireglo	$8,400	$11,000

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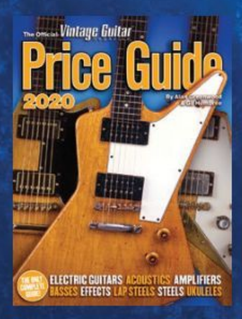
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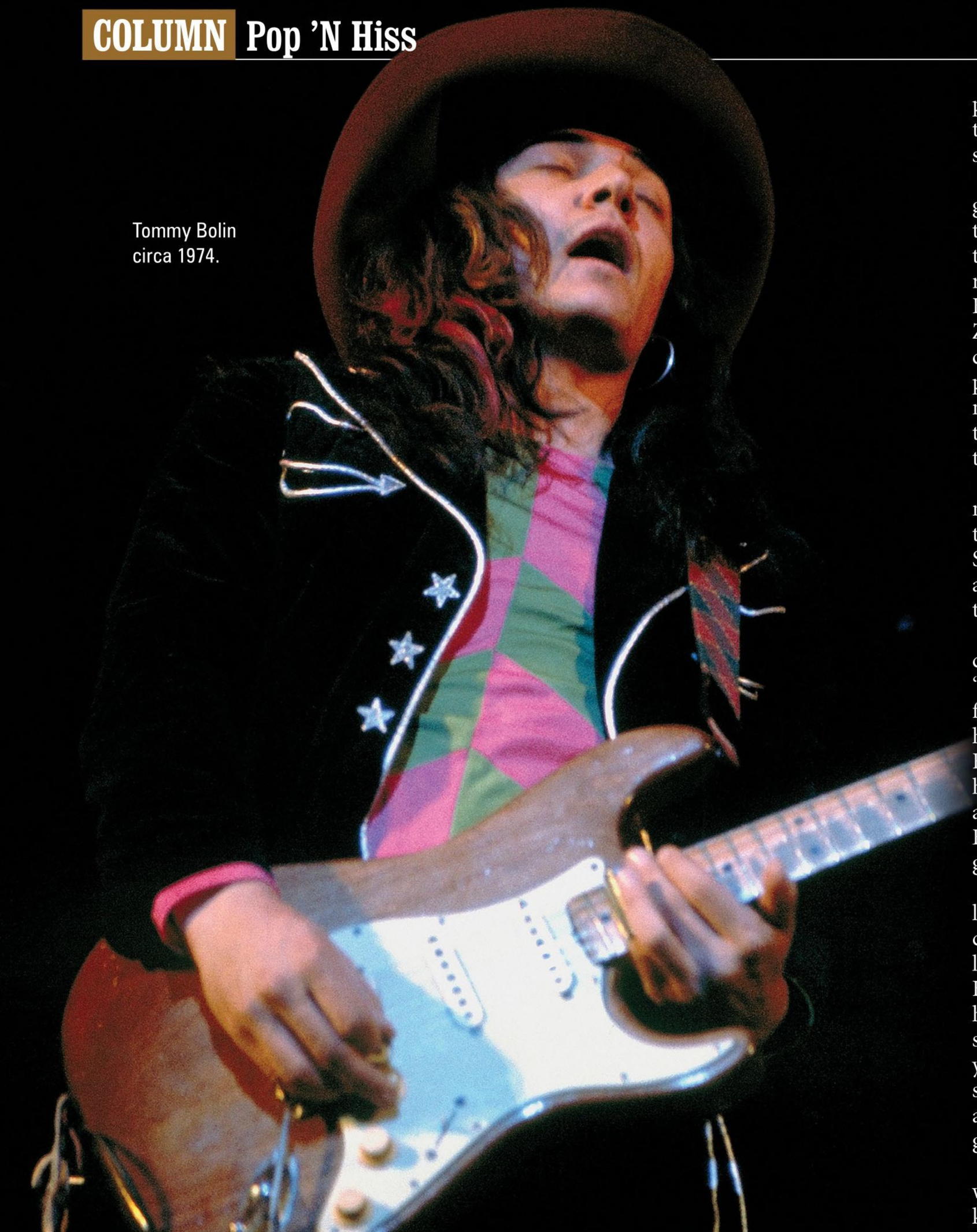
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Tommy Bolin circa 1974.

FUSION TOUR DE FORCE

Billy Cobham's Spectrum

By Greg Prato

Anyone searching for a missing link between the psychedelic stylings of Jimi Hendrix and the shredder pyrotechnics of Eddie Van Halen would do well to investigate Tommy Bolin's work on Billy Cobham's 1973 jazz-fusion tour de force, *Spectrum*.

As the drummer in Mahavishnu Orchestra, Cobham made a name for himself in the early '70s on the trailblazing jazz-fusion albums *The Inner Mounting Flame* and *Birds of Fire*. The group included guitarist John McLaughlin as the undisputed main songwriter, which left precious little room for collaboration. Looking to establish himself as a band leader, Cobham set to work on a solo debut.

Instead of connecting with an established guitarist for the sessions, Cobham enlisted the then-unknown Bolin, who had impressed the drummer with his contributions to demo recordings by flautist Jeremy Steig. At the time, Bolin had recently departed the blues-rock band Zephyr and was playing in a Denver-area group called Energy. When the Mahavishnu tour passed through Colorado, Cobham supposedly made a visit to Bolin's apartment and invited him to New York to provide guitar on the sessions that would result in *Spectrum*.

Despite Bolin presumably being the only musician on the sessions that did not read music, the main band – Cobham, Bolin, bassist Leland Sklar, and keyboardist Jan Hammer – worked at a breakneck pace, recording the album in a mere three days (May 14-16) at Electric Lady Studios.

Bolin's link between Hendrix and Van Halen can be heard in the album's raging opener, "Quadrant 4," which begins with fluid, rapid-fire keyboard by Hammer before Bolin makes his grand entrance just before the 2:00 mark. For the following two minutes, Bolin shreds on his Strat while testing the limits of its vibrato and creating laser-gun sounds with his trusty Echoplex. The result is one of the greatest rock-guitar solos ever committed to tape.

And while no other track brings intensity like "Quadrant 4," *Spectrum* is an extremely consistent album (though a few brief "interludes" disrupt its flow); "Taurian Matador" sees Hammer and Bolin exchange solos, "Stratus" has a killer groove and another extended Bolin solo, and the closer, "Red Baron," is laid-back, yet funky. Only two tunes do not utilize Bolin's six-string wizardry – the horn-heavy title track and "Le Lis" (which features John Tropea on guitar).

Sklar, who was on his way to status as a world-renowned A-lister, came into the sessions knowing nearly nothing about Cobham's plan; the two had never so much as jammed, though Sklar was familiar with Cobham's work with Mahavishnu because Sklar was in James Taylor's band when it opened a U.S. tour for McLaughlin and company.

"I was blown away by Billy – his taste and ability were something to behold; I was *amazed* every night by him and Jan Hammer, and I became friends with all the guys in Mahavishnu.

"When Billy got a record deal, he called and asked if I would do the album," he added. "I was a bit intimidated going in, until I realized we were doing more groove-oriented songs than odd-time material like MO. I'm at my best when I can hunker down and groove. It

Tommy Bolin: Jim Summaria.

felt very comfortable from the get-go; we went over the heads and structures, then just *went* for it!"

Sklar, who plugged his '62 Jazz Bass into a Univox amp for the sessions, had known Bolin since they'd been in bands that shared a management company in the late '60s.

"We did gigs together way back then," he said. "I had no idea Tommy was going to be on *Spectrum* until I walked into the studio, but I was *so* happy he was there. He was one of the greatest guitar players I've ever known.

"Everything on the album went down live and there are no overdubs – all of Tommy's solos are live. He even broke a string during the trade-offs with Jan on 'Taurian Matador' – listen at 1:45 and you can hear his string break, and he just keeps on blowing. The album was really just raw energy."



Interviewed for the 2008 book *Touched by Magic: The Tommy Bolin Story*, Hammer recalled what made the sessions so special for him.

"*Spectrum* was a real breakthrough; everybody was sharp and on top of things. Everybody was focused. A lot of it wasn't written, so there was no handicap for [Bolin] – you hummed whatever you had in mind, and it came together in rehearsal. Even though Billy *had* written some things down, they were for the type of sessions Tommy wasn't on – the more-jazzy things with the larger group. For the things with Tommy and the four-piece band, there was a one-off riff, and just *go*."

Released on October 1, 1973, *Spectrum* became a jazz-fusion classic that inspired some of rock's top musicians including Jeff Beck, as drummer Carmine Appice also remembered in *Touched by Magic*.

"That album is the thing that got Jeff Beck to move on to the *Blow by Blow* stuff. I was with Jeff in Beck, Bogert & Appice, I had Billy's album and the Mahavishnu album, and we used to drive in the cars together. Pretty much, we would listen to Mahavishnu Orchestra and the Billy Cobham album with Tommy on it. The whole vibe of that jazz-rock mixture, Jeff really liked it."

Bolin's friend (and eventual Peter Frampton bassist), Stanley Sheldon, explained the album's enduring influence on him.

"[It is] one of the major influences for all. Marcus Miller, the great fusion bassist, produced Miles' last records [*M Squared,* on which he] covered 'Red Baron' from *Spectrum*. When I tell a musician that Tommy was my friend, they'll quote the *Spectrum* album. It touched everybody... every *thinking* musician, anyway."

Due in large part to his playing on *Spectrum*, Bolin became a highly sought-after guitarist and went on to record with the James Gang (on *Bang!* and *Miami*), Alphonse Mouzon (*Mind Transplant*), and Deep Purple (*Come Taste the Band*), as well as issuing a pair of solo albums, *Teaser* and *Private Eyes*.

Bolin developed a drug addiction, and, sadly, died from an overdose on December 4, 1976, while on tour with Beck.

Years later, his work on *Spectrum* endures.

"That truly was the beginning of the instrumental jazz/rock-fusion movement – an astounding barrage of guitar riffs and melodies that are as memorable as any vocal melodies," said Greg Hampton, who produced the Bolin compilations *Whips and Roses I & II*, *The Definitive Teaser Collector's Edition*, and the Bolin tribute, *Great Gypsy Soul*. "It was so edgy and had such authority, and the use of the Echoplex with it... he opened my eyes to actually *playing* effects pedals and playing with natural dynamics – in the same breath, a machine-gun burst of unconventional notes with rock and jazz licks that would always land just *right*. Right on the edge. It was genius."

"*Spectrum* is a personal highlight for me," added Sklar, who's now working with Danny Kortchmar and Russ Kunkel, his bandmates from the James Taylor days, along with Waddy Wachtel and others in a group called Immediate Family. "Billy and Jan were coming at it from a jazz-fusion direction and Tommy and I were coming from a rock-fusion direction. The combination made for a special outcome. Whenever I see Jeff Beck, he looks at me and says, 'Stratus!' He loves doing it in his show.

"If I had to pick five records I'm most proud of having recorded, *Spectrum* would be in the list," he added. "Being in the studio with Billy, Jan, Tommy, and engineer Ken Scott was a once-in-a-lifetime experience."

Greg Prato is the author of *Touched by Magic: The Tommy Bolin Story*.

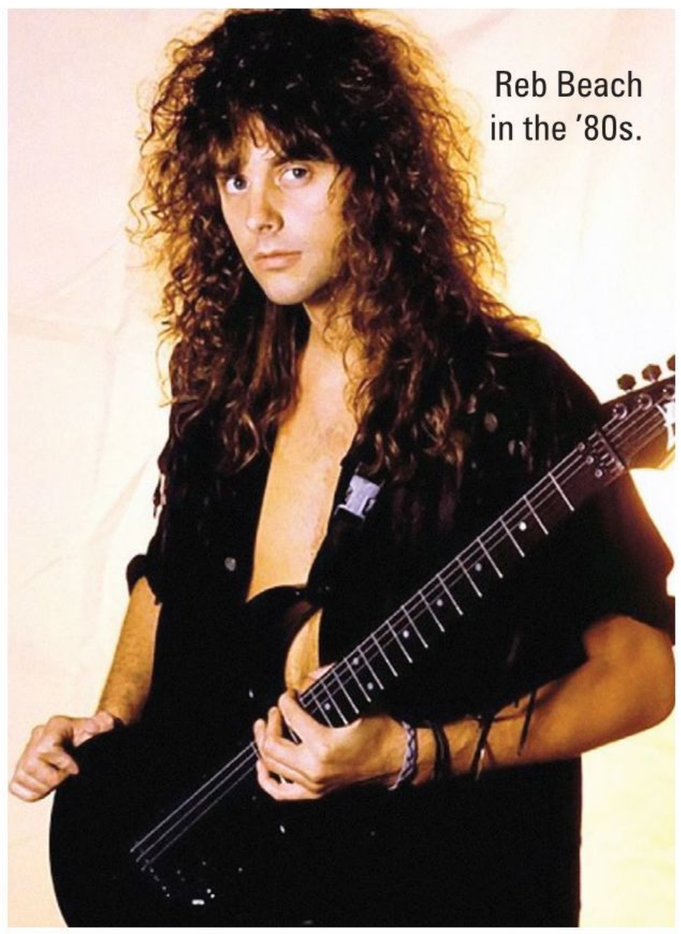




Vito Bratta onstage with White Lion in 1989.



Steve Lynch circa 2015.



Reb Beach in the '80s.

LYNCH, BRATTA, AND BEACH

Guitar Heroes of the '80s, Part One

By Wolf Marshall

The 1980s were the era of big hair, big imagery, big concerts, and even bigger guitar heroes. Pop and metal collided and flourished, opening the gates for guitar histrionics in a radio-friendly, media-savvy commercial environment. Though there were heavy guitar moments in preceding decades, nothing approached the strides and swagger witnessed between 1980 and '89.

The movement began at the close of the '70s, when Eddie Van Halen set the tone with fretboard heroics in catchy rock songs like "You Really Got Me," "Runnin' With the Devil," "Jamie's Cryin'," "Dance the Night Away," "Beautiful Girls," and "Somebody Get Me a Doctor," and as a result, a new guitar-defined genre was born where face-melting solos, whammy-bar antics, and finger-tapped flourishes reigned supreme.

Throughout the era, bands emerged, made their mark, and often disappeared quickly. This month, we celebrate the music of three players who helped define the times and music.

STEVE LYNCH

Autograph emerged in late 1983 as a four-piece backing group working in the studio with singer/composer/guitarist Steve Plunkett. Formed in Pasadena, California, with members of Silver Condor, Looker, Wolfgang, and John Doe, the quintet quickly morphed into a cohesive band and Plunkett chose its name, inspired by Def Leppard's "Photograph."

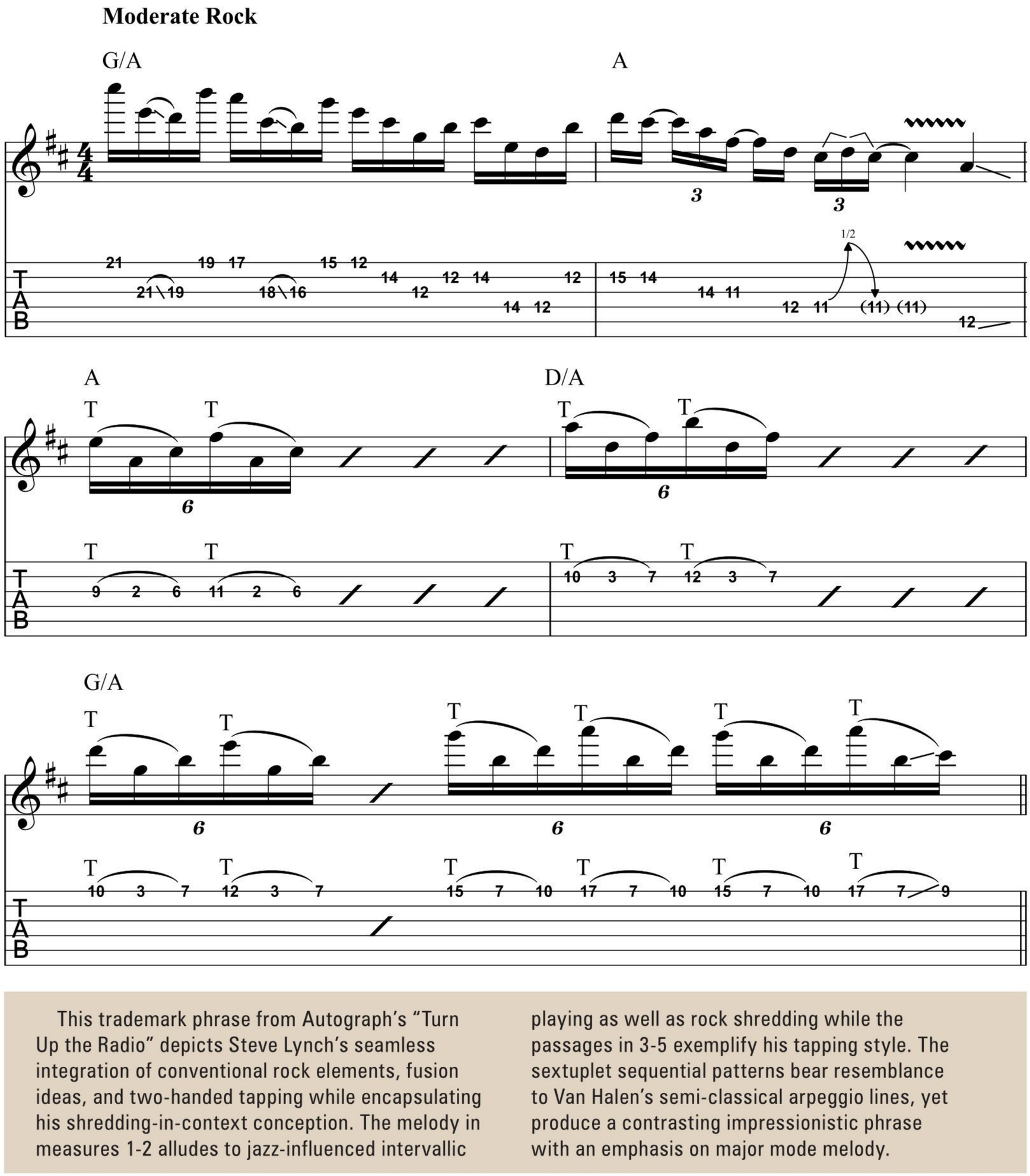
In the fold was Steve Lynch, a player with serious rock chops and an evolved two-handed tapping style.

Born in Seattle on January 18, 1955, Lynch began playing guitar the day Hendrix died. Inspired by Jimi's feeling and artistry, as well as the Beatles, Led Zeppelin, and Pink Floyd, he advanced rapidly on the instrument and gigged with cover bands in the U.S. and Canada. On the recommendation of his teacher, Don Mock, he moved to L.A. in 1977 to study at G.I.T. There, he learned theory while refining his skills. Exposure to Emmett Chapman and the Stick paved the way for his two-handed tapping style, which he developed years before he'd heard of Van Halen. After graduation, he performed with Savoy Brown, Greg Lake, Looker, and Wolfgang before joining the group that would become Autograph.

Autograph's notoriety led to a record deal with RCA in late '84, which garnered immediate success with *Sign In Please* and its hit single, "Turn Up the Radio" (#29 on the *Billboard* Hot 100, #7 Mainstream Rock). The song enjoyed crossover appeal and surprising longevity, thanks in part to being featured in "Miami Vice" and several movie scores. David Lee Roth invited the group to open for Van Halen on the *1984* tour, and legend has it Lynch was expressly forbidden to purvey his two-handed shredding on stage.

Lynch became a guitar hero with his intricate-but-melodic solo in "Turn Up the Radio" which *Guitar Player* readers voted Guitar Solo of the Year in '85. On it and

Vito Bratta: MediaPunch/Alamy. Steve Lynch: Joe Schaeffer. Reb Beach courtesy of Rebbeach.com.



This trademark phrase from Autograph's "Turn Up the Radio" depicts Steve Lynch's seamless integration of conventional rock elements, fusion ideas, and two-handed tapping while encapsulating his shredding-in-context conception. The melody in measures 1-2 alludes to jazz-influenced intervallic playing as well as rock shredding while the passages in 3-5 exemplify his tapping style. The sextuplet sequential patterns bear resemblance to Van Halen's semi-classical arpeggio lines, yet produce a contrasting impressionistic phrase with an emphasis on major mode melody.

other early Autograph tracks, Lynch used Charvel "superstrats" with the Autograph logo, Kahler locking vibratos, and EMG or Duncan pickups. His rack housed an Ibanez HD 1500 harmonizer, DM 1000 digital delay and UE400 multi-effects unit. He plugged into Carvin X100B heads (in stereo) and Carvin 4x12 cabs with Celestion speakers.

Autograph went on to record *That's the Stuff* and *Loud and Clear*, and toured with major acts before disbanding in '89. Lynch now resides in Florida, releases instructional guitar material on lynchlicks.com, and endorses Dean guitars.

VITO BRATTA

In 1983, White Lion was formed in New York by Danish vocalist/rhythm guitarist Mike Tramp and American guitarist Vito Bratta. The quartet (two guitars, bass, drums) achieved stardom in '87 with their first album, *Pride*. Bolstered by heavy rotation on MTV, its leading singles "Wait" and "When the Children Cry" reached the Top 10 in '88. A study in contrasts, the former was an infectious pop-metal outing while the latter was a gentle acoustic ballad.

White Lion grew its fan base while touring as opener for Frehley's Comet, Aerosmith, Ozzy Osbourne, Kiss, and AC/DC. The momentum continued with the more-eclectic *Big Game*, but *Mane Attraction* proved to be the band's final album before it disbanded in 1991. Tramp went on to form the heavier, darker Freak of Nature, while bassist James LoMenzo and drummer Greg D'Angelo teamed with Zakk Wylde in Power & Glory. Bratta briefly stayed with Atlantic Records as producer, but withdrew from the scene in '94 until 2007. As head of Vavoom Music, he remains the sole owner of the White Lion song catalog.
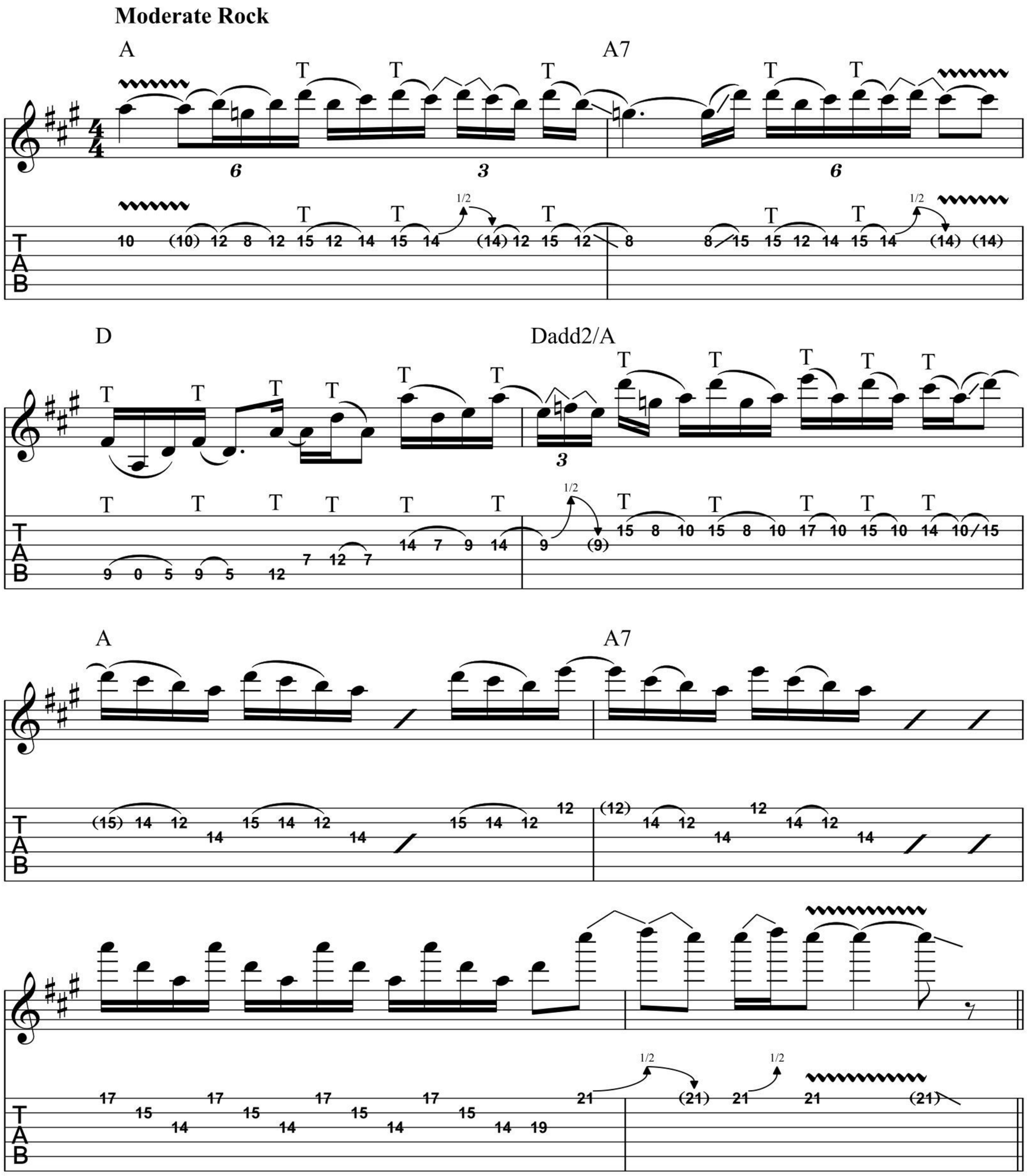
Born July 1, 1961, Bratta built his style playing with hard-rock cover bands in New York City. While reworking metal-tinged club fare via Scorpions, Van Halen, Judas Priest, and Iron Maiden, he forged a bold guitar presence with his 20-minute impression of "Eruption" and "Spanish Fly." Influenced by Peter Frampton, Jimmy Page, Joe Perry, Ed Van Halen, and Randy Rhoads as well as Prince, Elton John, and classical guitar music, he maintained a delicate balance between technical shredding and a simpler, more-structured melodic approach. He was adept at tapping, sweep picking, and high-velocity shredding, but preferred to merge the ingredients in a song-oriented style, evident in solos like "Wait." Apparently, he was on to something, as he won Best New Guitarist awards in all the right magazines in '89, and the solo has attained mythic stature.

On *Pride,* Bratta played a sunburst Strat with a Duncan humbucker. At the height of White Lion, he preferred ESP superstrats with 22-fret fretboards, a DiMarzio HS-3 in the neck and Duncan JB at the bridge, and Floyd Rose vibratos. He also played a Steinberger GM4 headless with three humbuckers, and used old Marshall 100-watt heads with Master Volume circuits boosted by an Ibanez Tube Screamer as his main lead/rhythm amp, along with a Roland JCM-120

for clean sounds. By ’89, he replaced both with an ADA tube preamp and a 900-watt power amp.

REB BEACH

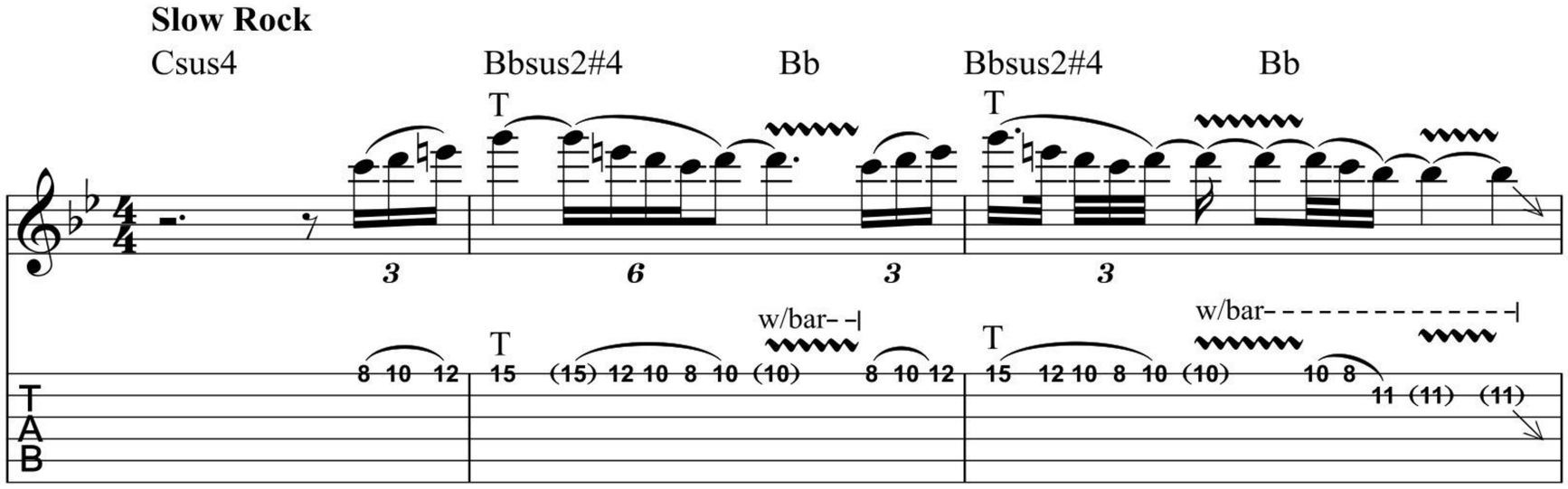
Winger never performed as a band prior to signing a contract with Atlantic in ’87, having been assembled from stage and studio luminaries drummer Rod Morgenstein and keyboardist Paul Taylor (from Dregs and Alice Cooper, respectively), bassist/vocalist Kip Winger, and guitarist Reb Beach (who met at a recording session for Fiona). When Kip joined Cooper’s road band, he made contact with Taylor and the two began writing together. The writing continued with Beach, and, on the strength of a demo and praises of producer Beau Hill, the group was signed. *Winger* was released in ’88, climbed to #21 in ’89, and yielded the hits, “Madalaine,” “Seventeen,” “Headed for a Heartbreak,” and “Hungry.” In ’90, the quartet was nominated for American Music Award’s Best New Heavy Metal Band. The second album, *Heart of the Young* (’90) attained platinum status and continued their upward trajectory. However, the rise was short-lived. The band’s musicianship, studio polish, and blend of commercial metal, glam, and progressive rock was no longer chic for a pop culture gravitating to thrash and grunge. MTV, once an advocate of the pop-metal movement, essentially derided Winger via the “Beavis and Butt-Head” series. Winger mocking became a trend, reinforced in “King of the Hill,” and Metallica’s “Nothing Else Matters” video, wherein Lars Ulrich throws a dart at a Winger poster.

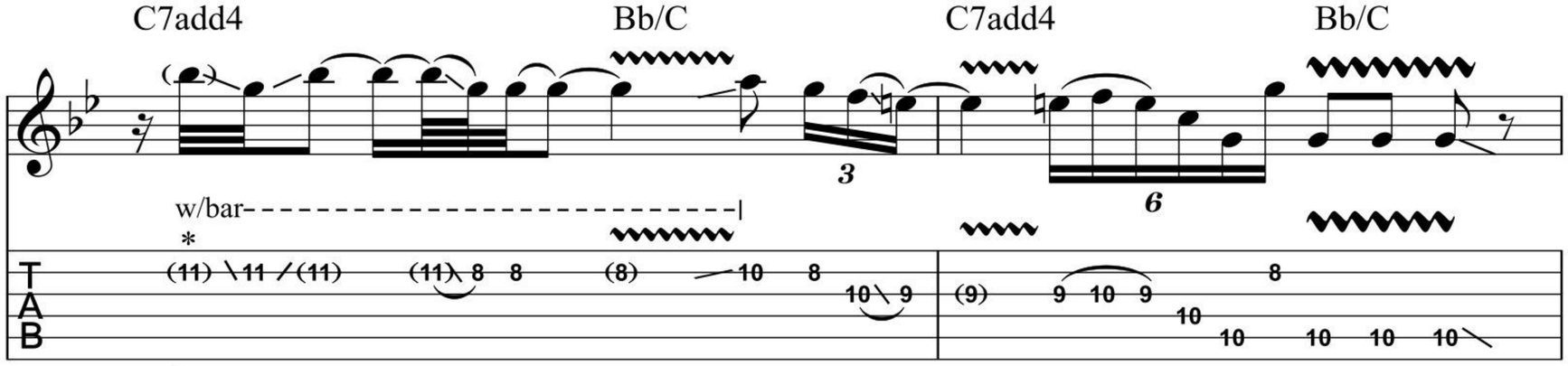


Vito Bratta’s solo in the White Lion megahit “Wait” is a career-defining moment – a song within a song. Though he employs extensive tapping throughout, it comes off as organic, lyrical, and melodically cohesive. This excerpt finds him integrating string bends with tapping in measures 1-2, playing a tapped interval-jumping sequence in 3, and juggling a tapped motive in 4. In 5-6, he develops a simple step-wise theme played with conventional technique, in 7 employs a three-note intervallic arpeggio as an ostinato (check out his effective rhythmic displacements of the figure), then wraps up the phrase with string bends and vibrato. Zakk Wylde has said Vito’s tapping style is the only one he enjoys and added “Wait” is one of the best solos he’s heard.

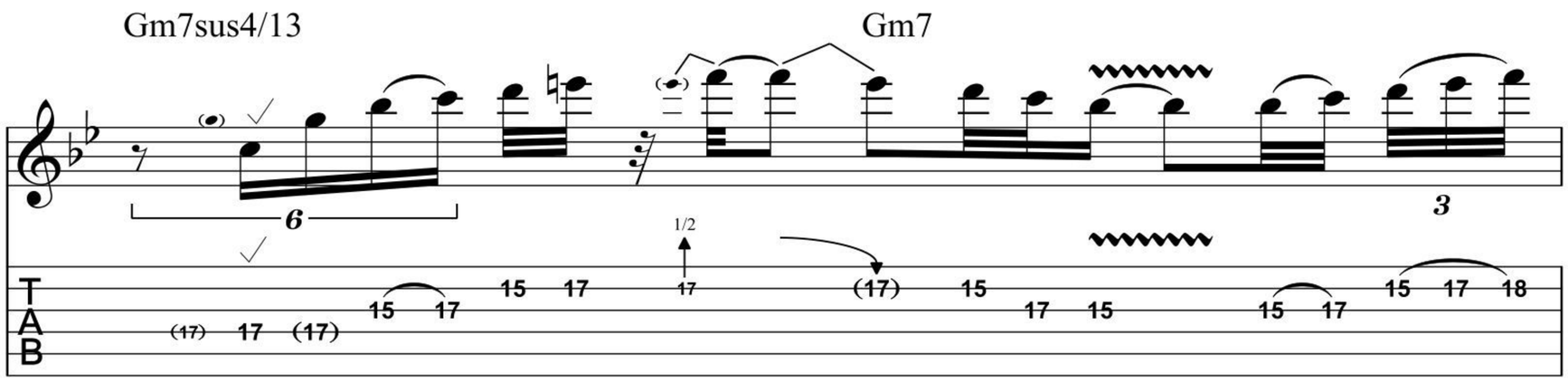
The band released one more album, *Pull*, before disbanding in ’94. It enjoyed temporary reunions in the new millennium, though an official reunion in ’03 was derailed by Reb’s involvement with other projects and touring with Whitesnake.

Beach was born in Pittsburgh on August 31, 1963. Raised on Ace Frehley, Aerosmith, and other ’70s rock, he enjoyed jazz and fusion music a la Larry Carlton, Allan Holdsworth, and Jean Luc Ponty. He played in local bands before moving to Boston to attend Berklee College, where he learned to read music, studied harmony, ear training, arranging, and

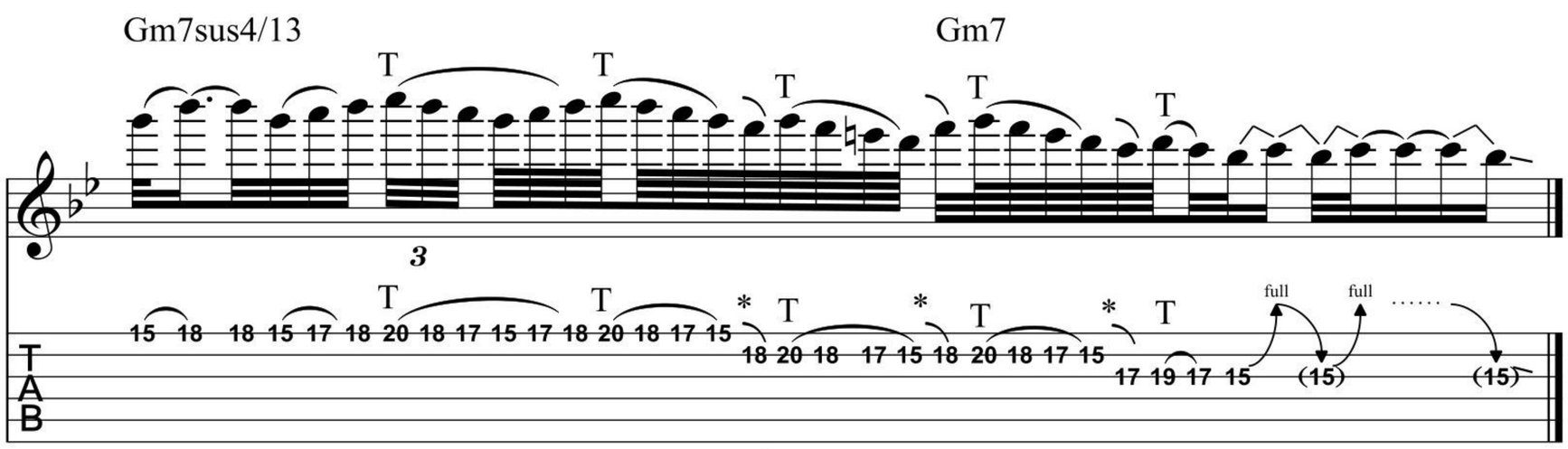




* Pre-bend



* Pre-bend



* Hammer on (left hand only)

Winger's "Headed for a Heartbreak" includes a landmark Reb Beach solo, and this example illustrates why. His shredding lines are played over enriched, sophisticated chords like Bbsus2#4, C7add4 and Gm7sus4/13 – hardly common metal sonorities. Check out Reb's allusions to Holdsworth's slippery legato style dressed up with finger tapping and whammy-bar vibrato in measures 1-3 and 7. Measures 4-6 depict his use of the whammy bar as a tool for vocalesque phrasing with pre-bent scoops and pitch changes. The intricate line in 7 contains two trademark ingredients – fast, imitative scalar passages articulated with tapping and legato technique, as well as notes hammered with only the left hand.

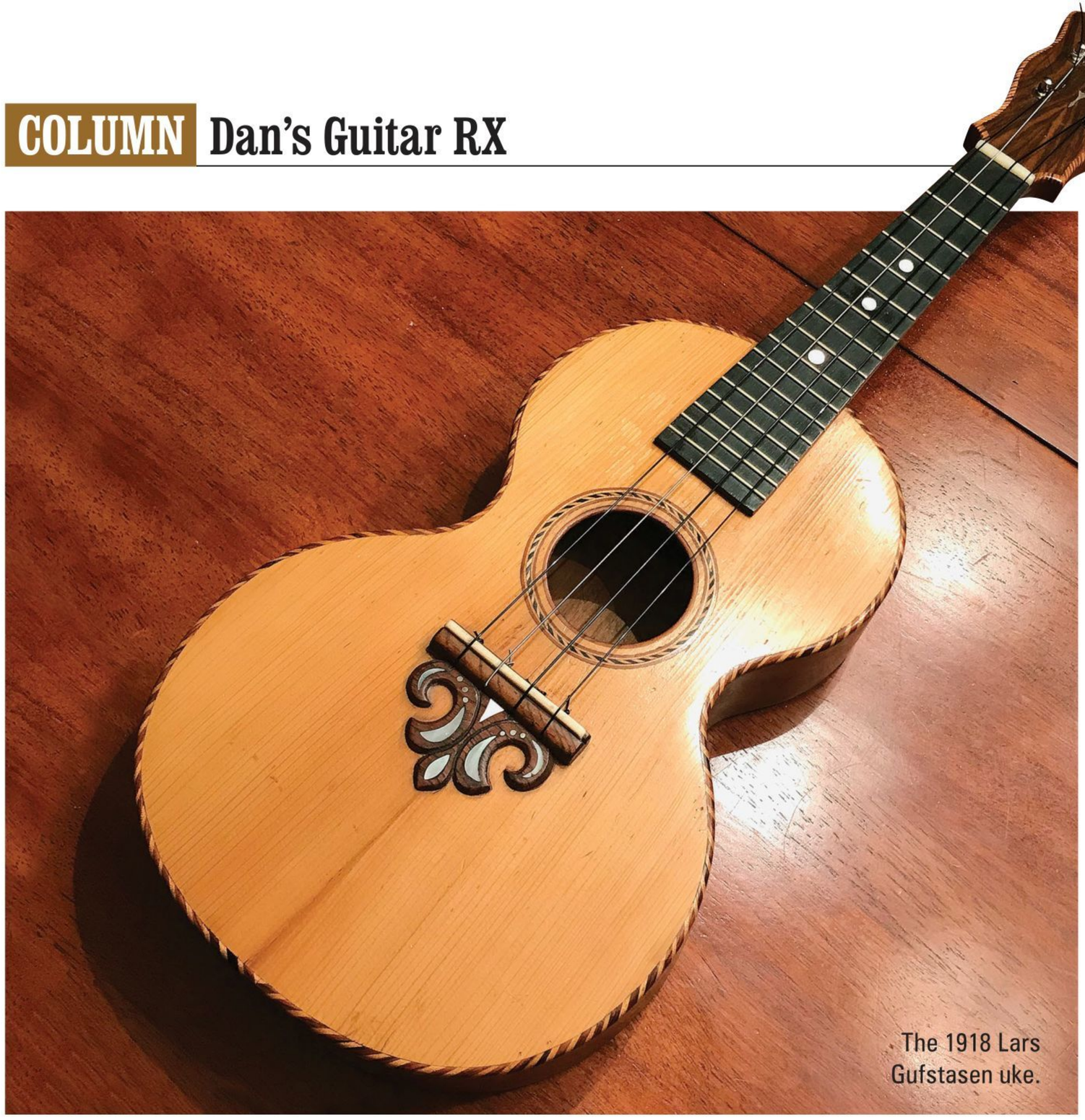
became interested in more-complex styles. He left school after six months and moved to Florida to work with Fortune, a popular cover band. In the early '80s, he settled in New York and scored a gig in Fiona's backing group. In that milieu and through his connection with producer Beau Hill, he became a first-call session player for rock and pop dates. A versatile musician, he recorded with Chaka Khan, Roger Daltrey, the Bee Gees, Twisted Sister, and others before joining Sahara, later renamed Winger.

Beach is proficient in metal, rock, fusion, reggae, funk, and blues, and worked those elements into the Winger repertoire, often colored with heavy distortion, whammy-bar flourishes, speedy technical runs, and finger tapping. Like many of his guitar cohorts, he composed songs with a signature, melodic rock solo over the chord changes. "Headed for a Heartbreak" is a case in point.

In Winger, he played Kramer Pacer and Pensa-Suhr superstrats fitted with Floyd Rose vibratos and EMG pickups in single/single/bridge humbucker configuration. He plugged into Kitty Hawk rack gear – Quattro tube preamps, a stereo 120 power amp, MIDI patch bay, FX Mixer, and 4x12 Kitty Hawk cabinets. His effects included a Digitech DSP-128, Roland SD-1000 delay, Yamaha SPX-90, and Rocktron Hush noise gate.

Look for more '80s heroes in a future installment.

Wolf Marshall is the founder and original editor-in-chief of *GuitarOne* magazine. A respected author and columnist, he has been influential in contemporary music education since the early 1980s. His books include *101 Must-Know Rock Licks*, *B.B. King: the Definitive Collection*, and *Best of Jazz Guitar*, and a list credits can be found at wolfmarshall.com.



The 1918 Lars Gufstasen uke.

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Digging Deep to Restore a Uke

By Dan Erlewine

Before I owned, played, and worked on so many guitars over the course of 60 years, I started playing on my father's Favilla ukulele in the late 1950s.

Brothers John (Giovanni) and Joseph Favilla were uke makers who, in 1890, opened a shop in New York City; their family had been making instruments in Italy before emigrating, and started building here in 1884. They made all sorts of plucked stringed instruments and violins before shifting focus and changing their name to Favilla Guitars, Inc. They remained in business until 1973. My father's uke was very well-made and because of it, I dedicated my life to the guitar business.

I recently repaired a lovely old uke made by Lars Gufstasen in 1918. It's been handed down through the owner's family and now belongs to a granddaughter who is learning to play. First, though, it needed a few repairs that become requisite on many old stringed instruments, including a neck set, new top bracing, replacement of missing pearl inlays, and new tuners.

This month, I'll show you the two most-interesting parts – installing the new brace, which required working through a *very* small sound hole ($2^1/_4$" compared to the 4" or more on a guitar), and installing new tuners to replace the rotted originals, which were no longer functional.

1) The brace will lend much-needed support to the top, and aligning/clamping it in place through that sound hole wasn't easy! To do it, I inlayed two $^1/_4$" magnets positioned to match two I would place on the outside to hold it in place while it was clamped. I had never before inlayed permanent magnets, and the photo shows my practice run without glue. Using tweezers, I could manipulate the brace through the sound hole, then get a finger inside to align it.

2) These magnets held the brace in place while I clamped it. After several practice runs, I glued the brace with Titebond.

3) The magnets did the job while I applied one clamp with a plastic caul to protect the top.





Photos: Kate Erlewine.

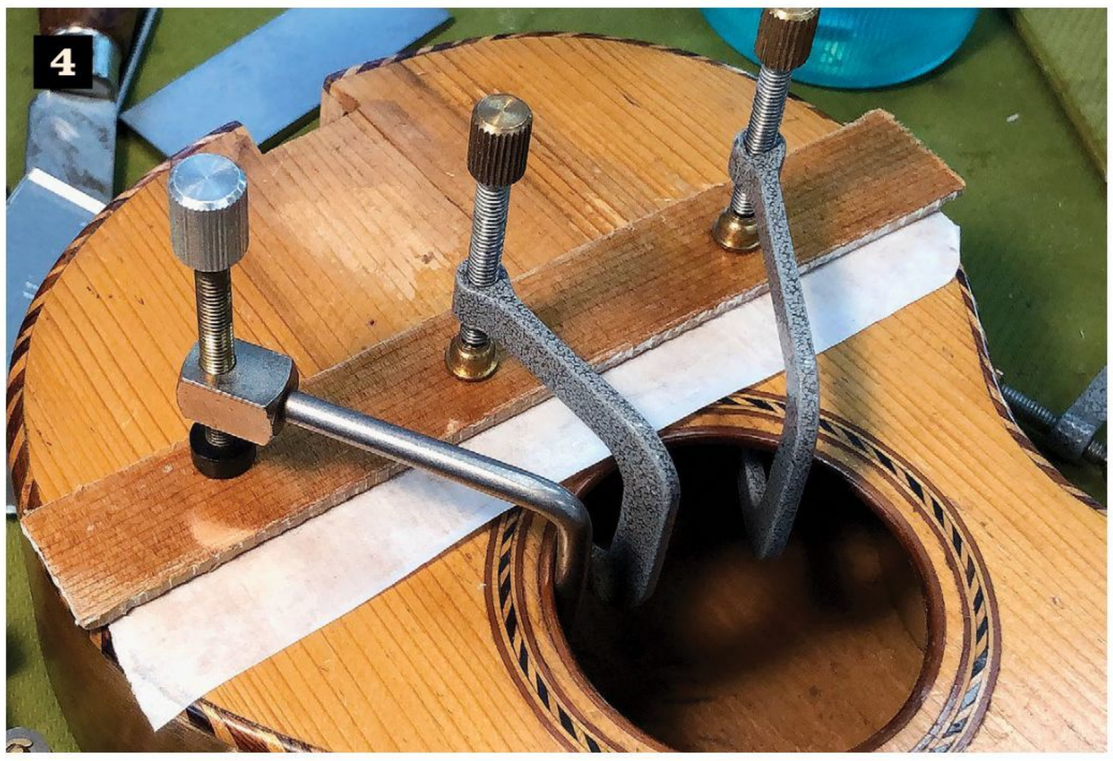
4) Once the glue tacked up a bit, I replaced the plastic with a wood caul that spanned the upper bout, then left it to dry while I went to work installing a set of Waverly friction tuners.

5) The original tuning-key holes were tapered and 1/4" at their widest; the peg shafts on the new Waverlys were smaller (.160") and not tapered.

6) I drilled the holes to 5/16", then made bushings from wood dowels; I drilled a 5/16" hole in a piece of hardwood, then tapped two 5/16" dowels into them, one at a time, holding them vertically under a .160" bit as I drilled through them.

7) Each dowel was long enough to cut in


3


4


5


6


7


8

half to make four bushings.

8) The Waverly pegs required beveled holes, so I used the drill press with a countersink to create a chamfer.

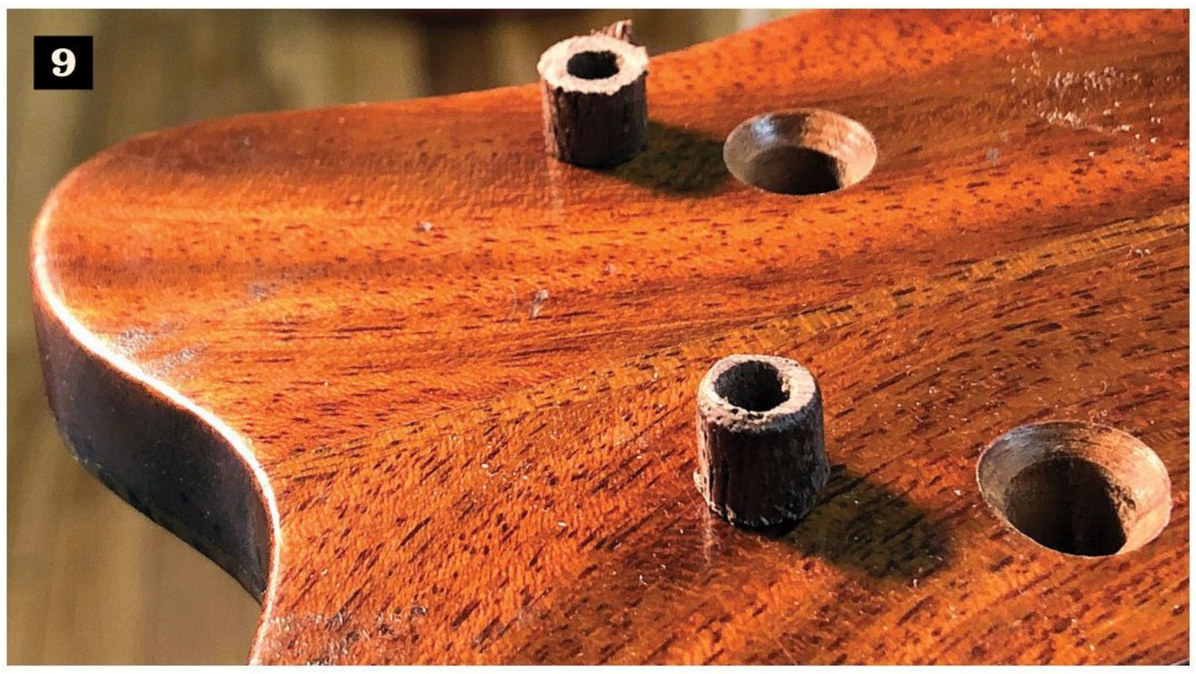
9) Before installing the tuners, I glued and pressed the dowel bushings into place.

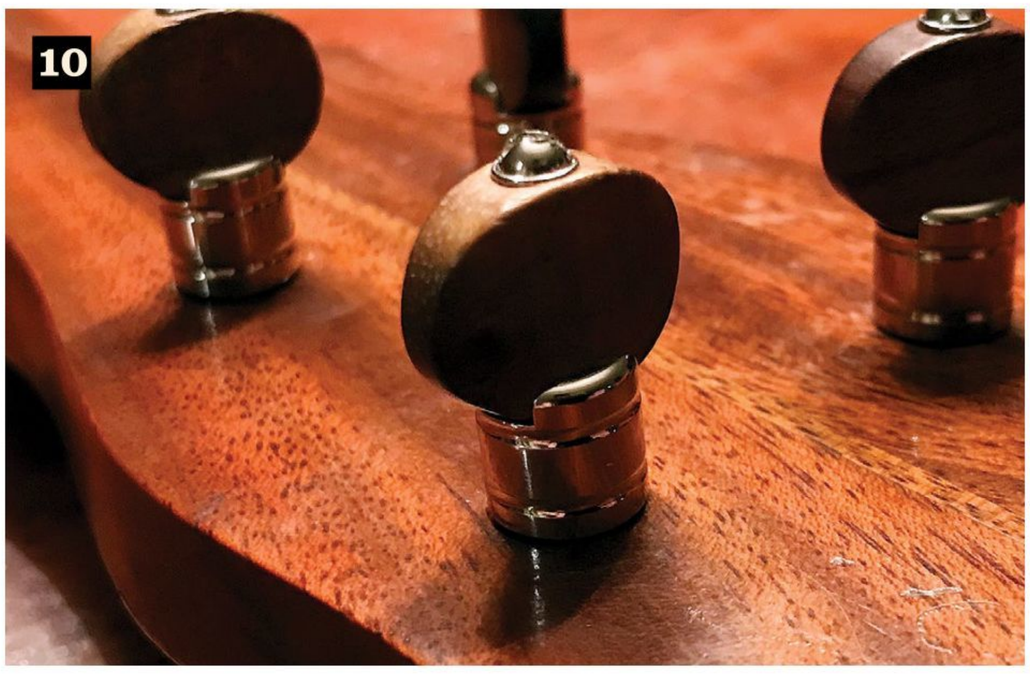
10) The tuners fit snugly in place with their chamfered housings (and note how the koa keys so nicely complement the mahogany neck), both in the back...

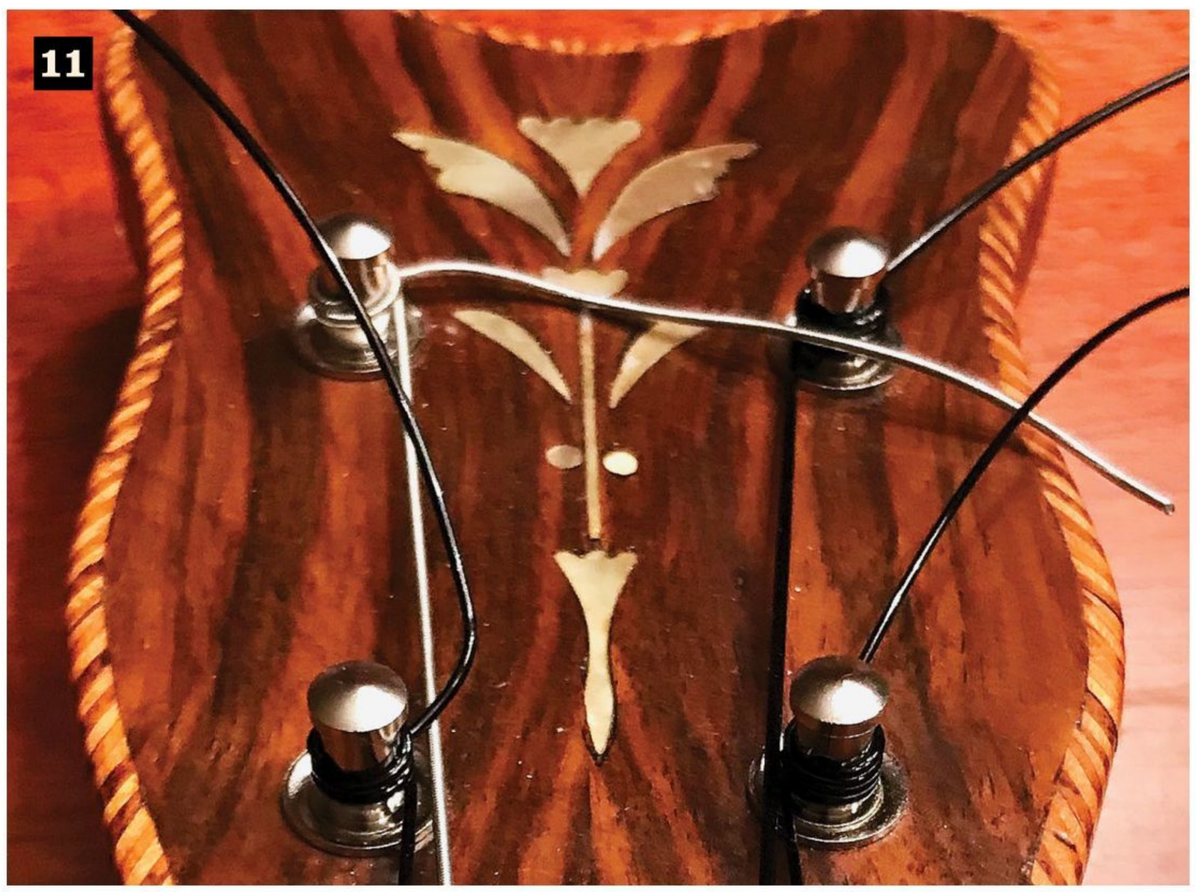
11) ...and face of the peghead.

12) I've had a lot of fun rediscovering my '50s Silvertone and 1930 Martin Style 1 – two little gems also made of mahogany!

Dan Erlewine has been repairing guitars for more than 50 years. He is the author of three books, dozens of magazine articles, and has produced instructional videotapes and DVDs on guitar repair. Since 1986, Erlewine has lived and worked in Athens, Ohio, as part of the R&D team for Stewart-MacDonald's Guitar Shop Supply. You can contact Dan at dan@stewmac.com.













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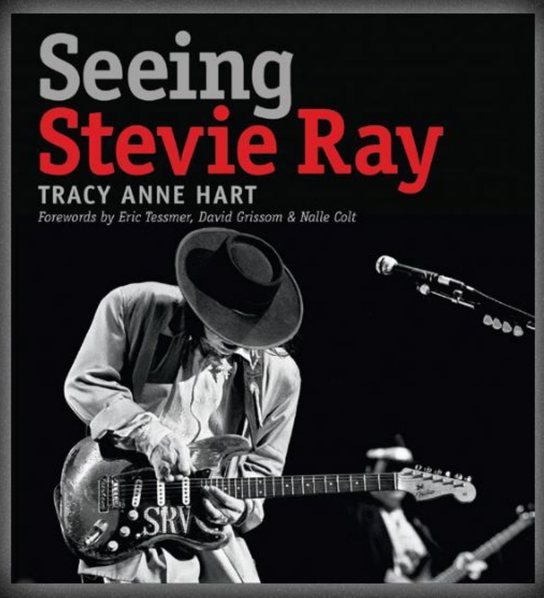
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SRV THROUGH AN SLR

Book Focuses on Texas Guitarists

The sounds of guitar are shaped by hands and ears. But the instrument and its players are also a visual medium, molded by imagery. For 40 years, Texas photographer Tracy Anne Hart has kept her focus on six-stringers like those in her new book, *Seeing Stevie Ray.*

BY WARD MEEKER

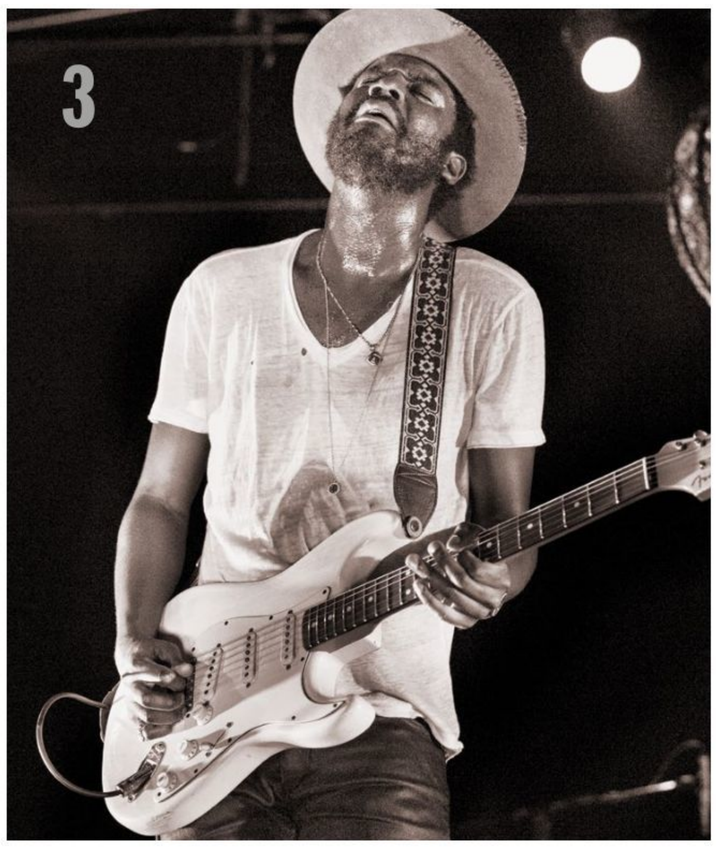


Vaughan playing "Pride and Joy" with a Strat in 1987. For his first Houston show after overcoming addiction, SRV wore a headdress given to him by his brother, Jimmie. "I used the warm tone for it in tribute to Edward S. Curtis' famous portraits of Native Americans," said Hart. "He was a big influence on my work, just as Jimi Hendrix was to Stevie."





1) Arguably the two biggest influences on SRV—his brother, Jimmie, and Buddy Guy—onstage at Antone's in 1984. **2)** A candid shot of Stevie Ray Vaughan backstage at Fitzgerald's, 1983. **3)** One of Hart's current favorite players is Gary Clark, Jr. "His latest album, *This Land*, explores different genres including blues and reggae," she said. "Music, like any other art, reflects the atmosphere in which it's created." **4)** The hands of SRV in their best-known environment, working on his #1 Strat.





A 168-page 10" x 10" hardcover published by Texas A&M University Press with 115 black-and-white and 53 color photos, *Seeing Stevie Ray* is not only Hart's tribute to the late guitar legend, Stevie Ray Vaughan, it's a reflection on a career spent illustrating the collaborative nature of music and photography.

Hart's path was largely forged by her father, Leonard Hart, a renowned medical photographer who invented techniques for capturing images of the inner eye. He loved his Leica, Linhof, and Zeiss cameras, and passed the passion along to his daughter, who took it all in while also discovering other parts of her identity.

"I was one of those kids who slept with a radio hidden under the sheets," she laughed. "I remember hearing 'Nightlife,' 'Rainy Night in Georgia,' and various blues and old country performers like Hank Williams and Johnny Cash on WLS, from Chicago."

In high school, her dad gifted her an Olympus Pen she learned to use by shooting architecture. While attending college in Austin, she met a musician who became a boyfriend, and he encouraged her to delve into music photography. It was a turn that shaped her life.

"He and his bands, along with a lot of other local Houston players, helped me learn the technical side of concert photography," she recalled. "Without technique, you can't properly use your creativity. Just like mastering the guitar, it requires a lot of practice and work."

As her imagery evolved, she explored Nikon SLR and Leica rangefinder cameras and lenses. After the switch to digital in

2011, she picked Sony mirrorless cameras with their Zeiss lenses, an easy transition since they combined many of the attributes of film cameras but also brought the advantage of higher ISO settings compared to 400 Ektachrome film, which produced grainy images in the challenging light of concert settings.

Her first assignment came in 1981, shooting Joe Ely for a local paper. By then using a Leica, she captured casual portraits while an associate conducted the interview. That night, she shot him onstage at Fitzgerald's. Jacked on adrenaline, Hart was nervous, but Ely's professionalism and stage charisma helped her produce fine images that gave her the confidence to continue. She later shot the Fabulous Thunderbirds at Rockefellers in '82, followed by Stevie Ray Vaughan at Fitzergerald's in March of '83.

"Those shows were huge turning points for me," she said. "I call them my 'Texas trinity.'"

Other highlights followed, including photographing Ian Moore, Charlie Sexton, and Jimmie Vaughan solo; a Stevie Ray shoot in September of '89 produced her "Texas Flood Triptych" – three frames



Tracy Anne Hart

of Vaughan playing the solo in that song. Vaughan himself chose them as favorites from her contact sheets.

The cover shot for *Seeing Stevie Ray* happened the last time she caught a full SRV show, in Austin on May 4, 1990. She conceived the book years ago and started choosing images for it in 2015.

"Stevie is the musician my photography is best-known for," she acknowledged. "He was – and is – such an important and inspiring artist, not just for his unreal prowess on the guitar, but his life – his journey to sobriety, his humility, and humanity remain *so* relevant to thousands, including me. I love his music so much, and his message and the ease with which that translated to film. It was a privilege to witness the last seven years of his stay on this planet. Telling that story through photos and my impressions became an obsession, and I hope the book will serve as my tribute and celebration of his life."

That passion has carried over to her work with contemporary guitar heroes Gary Clark, Jr., Lukas Nelson, Eric Tessmer, Nalle Colt (of Vintage Trouble), and others she sees as a spiritual link to Vaughan's passion.

"There will always be incredible music for me to capture," she said. **VG**

Tracey Anne Hart: Merlin Hampton.

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'59 Olympic White/Slab Rose neck
'59 Red/Slab Rose neck original custom color, 100% original
'59 Blond/Slab Rose neck, mint cond., perfect collector's piece
'60 Sunburst/Slab Rose neck, 3 in stock
'61 Sunburst/Slab Rose neck, 6 in stock
'61 Blond/Slab Rose neck, refret changed nut, 100% original parts
'61 Blond "Tortoiseshell Pickguard"/Slab Rose neck
'61 Sonic Blue/Slab Rose neck, 100% original, COOL!!
'61 Fiesta Red/Slab Rose neck 100% original, near mint
'62 Sunburst "Tortoiseshell Pickguard"/Slab Rose neck
'62 Olympic White/Slab Rose neck 100% original, Wild Flame neck
'62 Sunburst/Slab Rose neck 2 in stock
'62 Sunburst/Round Rose neck 100% original clean
'63 Black super rare!! 100% original
'63 Dakota Red super rare!!100% original
'64 Candy Apple Red 100% original, spaghetti logo, Black bobbin pickups
'64 Shoreline Gold ('63 Spec), perfect collector's piece!!
'64 Inca Silver ('63 Spec) perfect collector
'64 Sunburst spaghetti logo, perfect collector's piece!!
'64 Olympic White Transition logo, Mint-Green Pickguard
'65 Dakota Red Transition logo 100% original, near mint!!
'65 Sunburst Clean!! 100% original clean!
'65 Blond Super rare Maple body, 100% original
'65 Fiesta Red 100% original, near mint!!
'66 Sunburst, 4 in stock
'67 Charcoal Frost Metallic 100% original
'67 Sonic Blue 100% original
'67 Blond 100% original, well played but cool!
'67 Candy Apple Red, only refret and changed nut, clean!!
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Tommy Emmanuel

OF FAMILY AND FINGERSTYLE

Tommy Emmanuel's musical odyssey began the day his father, Hugh, a music-loving engineer with Australia's national science agency, brought home an electric guitar. While not a player, Hugh was keenly interested in its mechanical workings. But while he was day-jobbing, sons Phil and Tommy were sneaking off with it and teaching themselves to play. After debuting a rudimentary rendition of "Apache," their thrilled papa rewarded each with a Maton MS500 of their own.

BY WARD MEEKER

The quick-learning lads were soon teamed with eldest brother/drummer Chris and sister Virginia (following in her mother's footsteps) on lap-steel to become The Emmanuel Quartet, but the name was quickly changed to Midget Surfaries to avoid being confused for chamber music.

After winning a band competition in which first prize was a national TV appearance, producers told Hugh he should take the band on the road. A former Royal Australian Air Force airman who'd been shot down during the Battle of the Coral Sea, Hugh had just been diagnosed with an incurable heart disease and given a dire prognosis. Doctors told him he should make the most of his remaining time.

While keeping the bad news from his family, he took that advice. The family immediately sold their house, packed into two station wagons, and for the next six years traversed Australia as a road act. When his health prevented Hugh from traveling, Tommy and his brothers earned money by harvesting fruit. After Hugh's passing in 1966, their mother, Virginia, gave the kids the option of settling or staying on the road. They chose the latter – until the New South Wales Department of Education accused the family of child labor violations and forced the kids to attend school. They settled in Parkes, a small town about 220 miles from Sydney, and the brothers promptly formed a band to play pubs and dances. After finishing school, Tommy and Phil returned to the road, backing Anne Kirkpatrick and Goldrush (with Tommy on drums), as well as New Zealand/Aussie acts Tex Morton, Slim Dusty, and Buddy Williams.

In the '70s, Emmanuel mostly made his living in Australian recording studios, doing sessions for Air Supply (you'll hear his playing on "Lost in Love," "All Out of Love," "Every Woman in the World," and "Now and Forever"), Men at Work, and other acts, adding commercial jingles to fill his calendar. His hard work was rewarded with recognition as one of the best guitarists in Australia.

In '85, he joined a mainstream rock band called Dragon, which scored big with *Dreams of Ordinary Men* and its top-selling title track. But with that success came trappings good and bad – travel in chartered planes accompanied temptations like cocaine. It

Tommy Emmanuel: Alysse Gafkjen.

wasn't long before Emmanuel sought change and reverted to his early influences by focusing on acoustic music. But of course, he met with resistance.

"After I released *Up From Down Under* in 1987, the record company said, 'There's no market for that stuff.' So I told them I was going to *create* one."

He did just that, and two albums later, *Determination* became the biggest-selling instrumental album of all time in Australia.

The decades since have seen Emmanuel forge a path marked by perpetual musical growth and recognition as the world's foremost fingerstylist, along the way influencing players like Nashville-based superpicker Joe Robinson.

"I played a thousand gigs in Australia before I turned 18," said Robinson. "And at about every place, someone would say, 'I remember seeing Tommy and Phil in the '70s and '80s.' They'd recall some moment – could be Tommy playing a drum solo on the guitar or both of them playing Mozart on one fretboard, Phil playing distorted Bach on a Strat, or Tommy playing 'Yankee Doodle' and 'Dixie' at the same time, a la Chet.

"You wouldn't see an Angus Young or Eric Clapton poster in the Sydney Conservatorium of Music," he added. "But I saw a poster of Tommy. Back home, he's viewed as a maestro as well as a badass – the benchmark of a masterful player.

"Folks in Australia like to say we're a people allergic to BS. It's a rough-and-ready place; playing gigs as a kid, I saw teeth punched out, bottles smashed, PAs toppled, a Maton guitar broken over a biker's head – you name it (laughs)! These punters all know Tommy is the real deal. He's our own guitar legend."

We recently enjoyed an at-length discussion with the superstar.





Emmanuel at age seven with his first guitar, a three-quarter-size Maton MS500 (top). He laughingly notes his large "Frankenstein hands – they looked like they belonged to someone else." Above, Tommy takes a turn on lap-steel in The Emmanuel Quartet, with Phil (left) on his Maton, Chris on drums.

The story of your childhood reads like fiction; your family was essentially a bunch of gypsies thanks to you and Phil being guitar prodigies.

Yeah, by the time I was six, we were touring. The back seat of dad's car was my abode. I'd play guitar for half of the show, finish with a drum solo, then five minutes later be asleep in the car.

What was your first guitar?

My learner was a three-quarter-size Maton that in 1960 cost my dad £11 – expensive, but it was playable straight out of the box. At four years old, I had abnormally big hands, and I think that's how I was able to play at such a young age. I have a five-year-old daughter, and I got her a little guitar. She can't even push strings down, but she makes out like she's playing along with me, and she just *loves* it (laughs). I look at her little hands and think, "How the hell did I play when I was six?" And in those days, there was no one around to set the action or straighten a neck.

You and Phil used to sit with your backs to each other and guess the names of chords you were playing.

Yeah, that's how we trained our ears. We'd say, "That's B to B minor to G," and we made a game, competing to guess chords. But it was really helping us.

When did you first notice a song that had Travis picking?

I heard Chet Atkins first; by the time I was 10, I had the *Best of Chet Atkins* and *Reminiscing*, his album with Hank Snow. I literally wore them out. Life was exciting when there was a new Chet record; I'd break out in a sweat, putting the needle down, almost swallowing my tongue (laughs). That's what it was like for me as a kid! A new Chet record would be full of new melodies, new chords... *everything*. It was so exciting. Where I was from, there were no guitar teachers and nobody who could play like that, so we worked it out ourselves. Phil would learn chord progressions and show them to me, but the rest I had to figure out by my own ear.

Was it a challenge?

Well, being so young, I didn't hear all the detail and nuance. I heard the melody in the chords and I kinda fumbled through it thinking I was doing pretty well. But I was musically ignorant. I knew what a good song was and I didn't question anything. I just tried to sound like the record, and when I'd play for people, they'd be astounded. But I was just stealing from Chet.

What other forms of music were you absorbing?

Everything on the radio or jukebox. Jerry Reed changed my world. When his albums came out, it was just *unbelievable* what he was doing. It was fun, it was different, and it was so challenging, trying to work out what he was playing.

My mother tried to talk me out of listen-

ing to the Beatles. She'd say, "Don't listen to that rubbish." (laughs) Years later, when she came to see me once, I played "Michelle" and after the show she asked, "What was that beautiful song with all the harmonics?" I said, "That was a Beatles song, Mom!" (laughs). She sort of laughed it off, but she knew I remembered.

I was constantly trying to learn songs. It wasn't until I moved to the city that I was exposed to classical music, jazz, flamenco, and stuff like that.



The Midget Surfaries, with Phil (left) on guitar, Virginia on lap-steel, youngest sib Veronica on guitar, Tommy, and drummer Chris.

Few Americans realize that the mainstream bands you played in were a *big* deal...

Well, Dragon, was one of the biggest bands of all time in Australia, aside from Air Supply or AC/DC. We never really made it, internationally, but we played to thousands of people every night.

What was life like as a rock star?

Pretty amazing. I was young, we were making lots of money and doing lots of drugs. We'd fly a private plane to shows outside of Sydney, and fly back after. I didn't have an apartment at the time – I lived in a five-star hotel.

There's an interesting look at those days in a video of Dragon doing "Dreams of Ordinary Men" on an Australian TV show called "Hey, Hey, It's Saturday."

Good heavens.... (sings) "These are the dreams of ordinary men. This is the world we're living in..." I remember it well.

You're playing a rosewood Tele.

Yeah, I had that for years. I eventually sold it because I needed some money.

Which guitars did you use with Doug Parkinson's band, Southern Star?

The only electric I had in those early days was a '66 Telecaster Custom with active EMGs – Strat configuration in a Tele. That guitar is in a museum in the Australian Country Music Hall of Fame, in Tamworth. They have my first Maton acoustic and that old Tele on loan.

What sort of music did Southern Star play?

We played music for people to dance to in clubs and pubs around Sydney, everything from Sam & Dave to Marvin Gaye to Earth, Wind & Fire. We played funky music – funky R&B. And in those days you could take a solo for five minutes in a song. Doug Parkinson was a great singer – he's still is one of the best soul singers I've ever heard anywhere in the world.

At that time, I was a young man who'd moved to the city to play with the big boys. I was in deep water (laughs). It was great fun and challenging, learning Kenny Loggins songs and all kinds of music. It was a great period for me.

Which amps where your playing through?

I had a Peavey Mace in those days because Peavey wanted a poster boy. I was doing pretty well – we were on TV a lot, so Peavey gave me an amp. Before that, when I was in The Bushwackers with Phil, I used a Fender Super Reverb and a little Yamaha 1x12 with a parametric EQ that I slaved into the Super. It was a fabulous sound.

Using the Yamaha as a preamp and the power from the Super?

Yeah, four 10s. I'd crank it up and I put it right beside myself.

In Dragon, what were you going for, stylistically?

I was just trying to be a rock player. Some of my favorite guitar solos on rock records back then were by Steve Lukather, Larry Carlton on [Steely Dan's] "Kid Charlemagne" and stuff like that. But really, I was just trying to play the songs and maintain employment (laughs). I was also playing on a lot of other records, being a bit of a chameleon. I could imitate just about anybody – Wes Montgomery, Segovia – and that got me a lot of work. I was always busy; seven days a week, I was playing on something.

What moved you away from solidbodies and amplifiers?

Well, I was releasing albums under my own name and seeing a lot of success, especially for someone who didn't sing; I had three platinum albums and was shooting videos and shows for MTV [Australia]. I was the only person who wasn't a singer to be nominated for an Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) Music Award, as Male Artist of the Year – Australia's version of the Grammys. I got Chet's attention because people were sending him my albums and video clips where I'd brag about Chet and show people a bit of that style. I think he liked that I wanted to keep it alive, and in turn he became very supportive of me.

As a composer, your approach has always been to tell stories without words.

Well, back in the late '70s/early '80s, I was signed with ATV Northern Songs, Paul McCartney's label. They'd send me from Sydney to Los Angeles to co-write songs. I learned a lot, working with pop writers who had a track record of hit songs, so I started writing instrumentals that way; I never think like I'm writing a song for guitar. I'm thinking like a band when I write *and* when I play. I think that's why my music stands out a little.

While composing a melody, do words flow through your mind even if they're not going to be used?

Absolutely. Things like, "And tell me now, come to your daddy's arms. And tell me now, I'll keep you safe from harm..." (from "Angelina," a song written about his daughter). It works, and when I was writing songs back in the late '70s and '80s, I'd call Chet and say, "Hey, I've written this new song. Can I send it to you?" And the first thing he'd ask is, "Can you sing it?" So that was instilled in me, and because of where and when I was born, and music at the time. I was exposed to good melodies from the start.

Listening to your songs, it's easy to hear how words would fit.

Well, any time someone says to me, "Have you got words for that song,?" that tells me the melody is speaking to them, and it's important that people can latch onto my songs straight away.



'66 Tele Custom and Maton 808 courtesy of National Guitar Museum (Australia).

Emmanuel bought this '66 Tele Custom in 1976. Its mods and wear recall years of work on every session, song, album, and commercial until he turned to a solo acoustic act. His first Maton acoustic was this 808 he calls "The Mouse," used through his early years as a soloist.

***The Best of Tommysongs* includes new versions of 19 songs from your catalog, as well as five new ones.**

I mostly wanted to record the new songs I'd written – "Fuel," "Song for a Rainy Morning," "Timberland," "The Wide Ocean," and "Sail On." But also, there's a generation of young players who haven't heard my early stuff. Also, I'll never own the rights to my 1999 album, *Only*, so I wanted to re-record new performances – "Those Who Wait," "I've Always Thought of You," "Train to Dusseldorf," "Luttrell," and others.

When I recorded *Only*, it was a tough time. I had a baby on the way and a daughter dealing with epilepsy. I was broke and living in England, where nobody knew me. I could only afford two- or three-hour sessions, so everything was one take. I had to sell some guitars to keep going on that record, but I got there under all that pressure, and it brought out the best in me, I think. *Only* opened so many doors, especially in Europe. America exploded for me from 2003 onward.

Why do you think it helped widen your recognition?

Well, I think people loved the songs, the adventurous playing, and I think it came along at the right time because nobody else was doing that. In the '70s, you had Doc Watson and Leo Kottke, but there wasn't any others. I worked hard and I built an audience, by hand.

Are there any personal highlights among the new tracks?

Well, the first, "Song for a Rainy Morning," is a simple melody, but it really speaks to people, and I'm really glad about that. "Fuel" is an homage to "Classical Gas," like a bookend kind of thing – I'm trying to inspire young guitarists to be more adventurous, not just play like everybody else. Don't just copy, do you do your own thing.

There are a lot of songs people write to me about, like "Lewis and Clark," which was about the hardest song I've ever written, and it was the most simple... but that's *why* it was hard. It had to be right. It's easy to put a bunch of notes together and throw a few fancy chords around and have people say, "Wow! Listen to that!" But it doesn't mean much. It's hard to write something that evokes emotion *and* tells a story.

Broadly speaking, did you change much in the re-recorded songs?

Not a lot, but I play them better now (laughs).

Which guitars do we hear on the album?

The one I used most was the Maton TE Personal. The other was the cutaway TE Traditional. There's a bigger-bodied one on quite a few tracks, too. "Timberland" is a baritone made by Tony Karol, in Toronto. And I used my Larrivée C-10 on a couple tracks, as well.

What determined the guitar you would use on each track?

It depended on which sound I was looking for. The Maton just about does everything; it's an amazing little guitar, but the Larrivée has a different midrange that really suited some things.

When you play live, you don't use a setlist.

Yeah, that's just how I roll now. Back in the day when I had a band and a crew, I had 12 or 14 guitars and did the same show every night. When the lights went off at the end of each song, everything went black and I'd have a different guitar when they came back on. That was part of the show. But when I do my own thing, I see what I feel like playing and go with it, because there lies the adventure. Sometimes, the audience is shouting requests and I'll play six in a row and have a bit of fun with the crowd, and *that* becomes a different part of the show. I don't *always* do that because I don't want it to be expected, but I try to keep it interesting for me *and* my audience.

Speaking of interesting, you sing a cappella.

I do. Sometimes I sing "Secret of Life" – a James Taylor song. Or I might do "Lonesome Road," (sings) "Walk down that lonesome road all by yourself..." which James Taylor also did. Other nights, it's "Today Is Mine," (sings) "Today is mine, to do with what I will, today is mine, my own special cup to fill..." That's a Jerry Reed song. I *love* Jerry's writing.

You're sort of preaching.

Well, I just want to remind the audience that life is not a rehearsal, so you better get on with it! It's my way of saying, "Don't forget to live, get out there. You've got this one life, get at it."

So, as with the rest of the set, you're choosing on the fly?

Totally. *Everything* is on the fly. I had a sound man for years, and he knew me so well. Just before we'd start, he'd say, "So, what's first?" I'd tell him a song but of course change my mind at the last second (laughs). He's no longer on the crew, but remains a close friend.

Compared to 20 years ago, do you now approach playing differently?

No. Every time I go onstage, I floor it. That's how I've always been. I [meet] 30 or 40 people before a show, which is great fun for me, and I take their enthusiasm and energy and give it back from the stage. Just before the show, I'm tuning, playing, and being very calm – that's important to me. I call that time the "balm of calm," because I cannot play well if my mind is racing, heart's pumping, and I'm all excited. When I walk out, I'm as calm as I've been all day. People ask, "How do you get jacked up for a show?" And I say, "You don't *want* to be. If you want to play well, you want to be very calm and in the moment."

How long is the "balm of calm?"

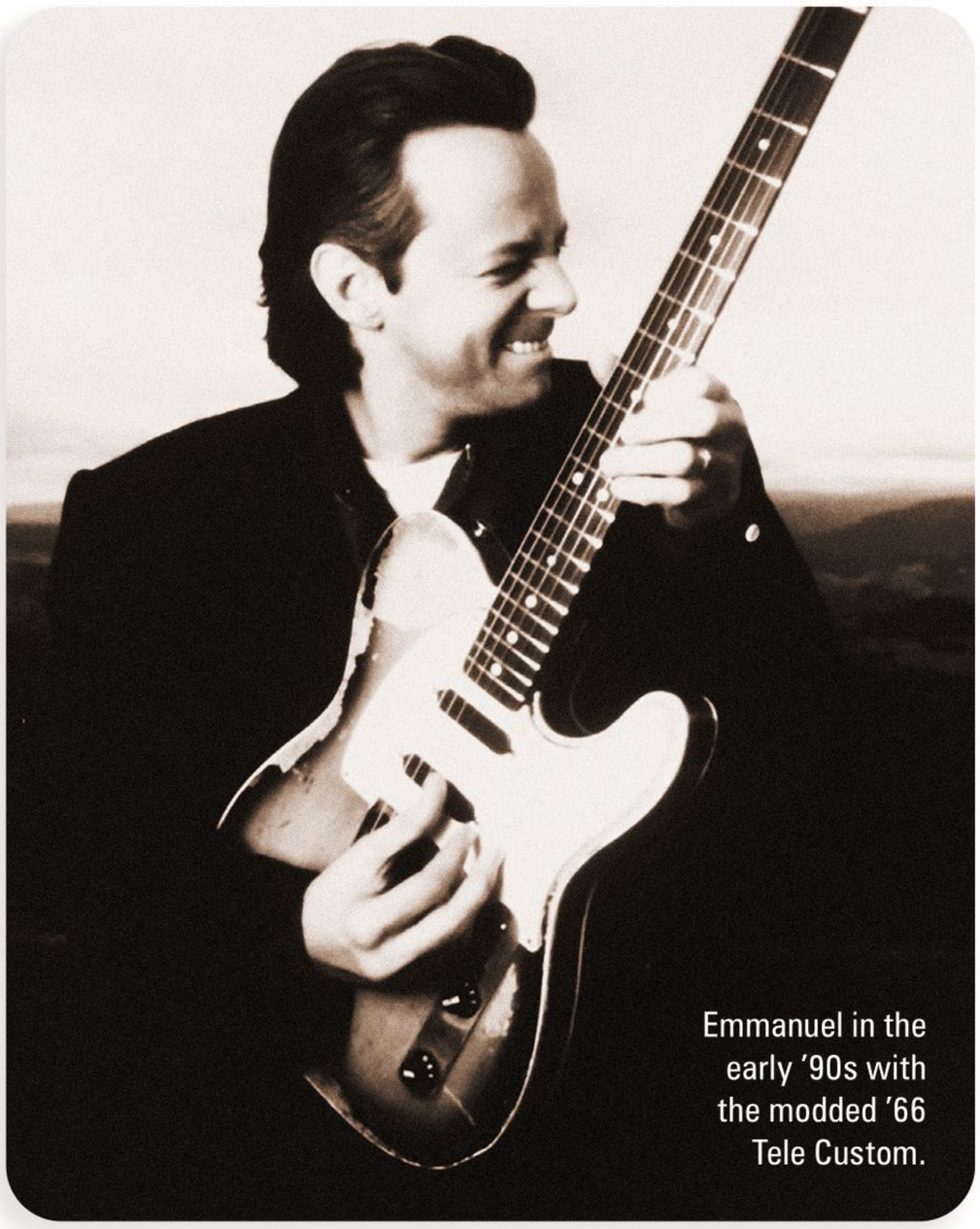
About 10 minutes. But really, I'm *always* relaxed. I don't let stuff stress me out.

Do you follow a dietary or physical regimen?

I just don't eat big meals. I eat *good* things. I drink coffee until lunch time, then don't the rest of the day. I like real simple things – good vegetables and fruit, eating healthy things. I don't eat donuts and s**t like that.

Not a lot of candy bars.

Well, I like chocolate, definitely. I'm an ice-cream addict. But I try not to eat too much of *anything*, really. A bit of this and a bit of that.



Emmanuel in the early '90s with the modded '66 Tele Custom.

"I rarely sit around listening to guitarists. I want to hear good *songs*, and some of my favorite music is everything from Merle Haggard to Sinatra to Joe Satriani."

Have you ever experienced carpal tunnel syndrome or other physical issues related to playing?

No, and in my opinion – which means *nothing* – people who get carpal tunnel or other repetitive-strain problems are probably doing something wrong – basic stuff. If I happen to play someone's guitar after they tell me about some problem they're having, it's usually difficult to play. Even Trey Hensley, who's a *brilliant* bluegrass player, good singer, and can play the hell out of the guitar. He said to me, "My hands are really sore and my forearms hurt when I play." I said, "Trey, have you actually *felt* your guitar lately?" The damn thing was so hard to play I couldn't even push the strings down. He plays it all day and all night, and plays *hard*.

I want my guitars to be beautiful to *play* and have a beautiful sound; you've *got* to have good action to get all the detail and nuance.

How are yours set?

I like it low, but not *too* low; I like to get under the strings a little. If you ask me measurements, I can't tell you, but I like a flat, low action.

Do you listen much to other guitar players?

Well, there are *many* great players out there, but I rarely sit around listening to guitarists. I want to hear good *songs*, and some of my favorite music is everything from Merle Haggard to Sinatra to Joe Satriani. I have wide, unusual tastes. My guitars are around me, and I'm playing a lot of the time, improvising and working on stuff. In the car, I listen to the Beatles channel or '70s on 7, '80s on 8, that kind of stuff – regular pop music for an old fart like me (laughs).

That '70s pop-folk – Poco, Seals and Crofts, and all that – had great melodies, which ties back to your approach to composition.

They sure did; (sings) "Summer breeze, makes me feel fine..." And my friends from the band, America – Dewey Bunnell and Gerry Beckley; (sings) "I've been through the desert on a horse with no name..." All that stuff. I *love* that music.

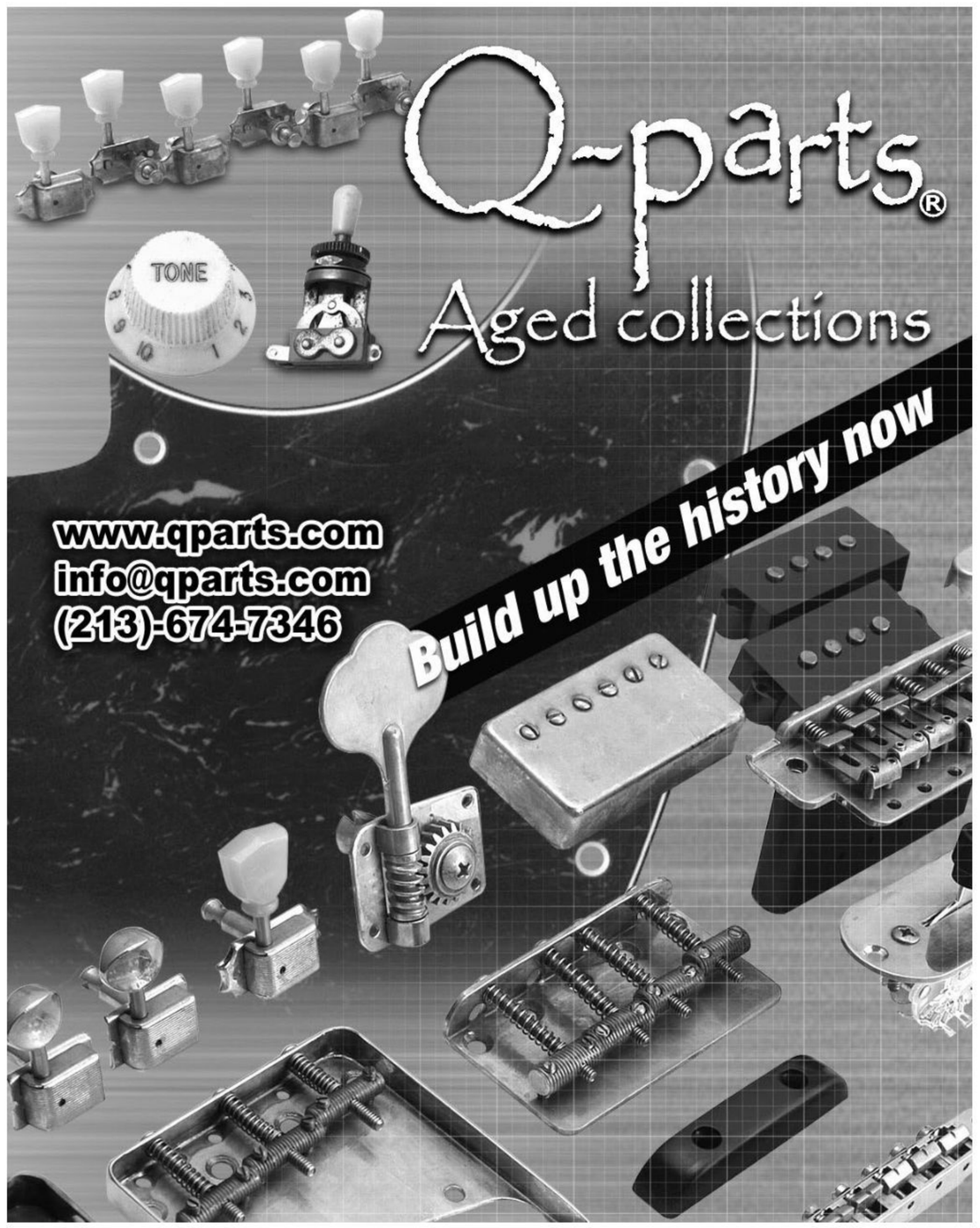
You're emblematic of artists who've had to postpone or cancel a tour due to Covid-19. When did you last play for an audience?

The last show was in the Tennessee Theater, in Knoxville, on March 12. Everything else had to be canceled or postponed, and I have no idea when I'm going to work again. So, I'm just playing every day and maybe writing. I'm also doing what I've never had the chance to do – be with my daughter every day. It's the greatest experience in my life, and means more to me than anything. In that way, I'm grateful to this pandemic.

What would you suggest other players do with their down time?

Learn some good songs. Make the most of this, and whatever you do, don't *worry*. Have fun with music. That's what it's there for. We all need to work on our skills, but that's not everything. Having a good song to play is just as important. VG


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Upcoming Events

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Lake County Musician's Swap Meet, second Sunday of each month at the Renninger's Florida Twin Markets, 20651 Hwy 441, Mt. Dora, FL. Hours 8-3. For more info contact Allen at info@lcmsm.com, (352) 735-0025 or visit www.lcmsm.com.

Tampa Bay Area Musicians Swap Meet, first Sunday each of each month, at the Big Top Flea Market, 9250 E Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL. For more info call Dave at (813) 324-6083 or visit www.tampamusicswap.com.

MAY

Dallas Guitar Show, May 1-3, **Postponed to July 31, August 1-2**. For more info visit www.guitarshow.com. **(See Advertisement on page 63.)**

Northeast Guitar Expo, May 3, **Postponed**. For more info contact NortheastGuitarExpo@gmail.com

Eastern Kentucky Guitar Show, May 3, **Postponed**. Contact Jeff Preston at prestonffh@aol.com or text 606-923-4130.

Oregon Guitar & Musical Instrument EXPO, May 3, **Cancelled**. For more info go to www.oregonguitarexpo.com or contact John Keaton at skyjohnk@gmail.com or 503-706-6821

Amigo Chicago Guitar Show, May 16-17, **Cancelled**. For more Dave at (417) 850-4751, davelcrocker@gmail.com, Ruth at (817) 312-7659, ruthmbrinkmann@gmail.com, Rob at (417) 869-3325 or visit www.amigoguitarshows.com.

Mountain Acoustics Luthier Invitational, May 23 & 24 **Postponed to Oct 23-25** at the Town Center, 6 South Main St., Burnsville, NC. For more info contact Chee at (706) 424-2700, info@mountainacoustics.com or www.mountainacoustics.com.

The Indiana Guitar Show, May 30-31, at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds, 1900 E Main St, Danville, Indiana. For more info visit https://minorprophetstudio.com/the-indiana-guitar-show

JUNE

Central Arkansas Guitar Show, June 6, at the Benton Event Center, 17322 I-30, Benton, AR. Hours 10-5. For more info www.arkansasguitarshow.com.

Grinning Elk Guitar Show, June 12-14, **Postponed to December 5-6**. For more info contact Lee at (678)-557-5641, lee@grinningelk@gmail.com or visit www.grinningelkguitarshow.com.

Summer Ohio Guitar Show, June 14, Makoy Center, 5462 Center St., Hilliard, OH. Show hours 11:30-5. For more info, contact Marc at (740) 797-3351, alexmack@ohio.net, www.ohioguitarshows.com.

Amigo Arlington Guitar Show Reunion. June 20-21 at the Arlington Convention Center (Now called Esports Stadium Arlington & Expo Center), 1200 Ballpark Way, Arlington, TX 76011. For more Dave at (417) 850-4751, davelcrocker@gmail.com, Ruth at (817) 312-7659, ruthmbrinkmann@gmail.com, Rob at (417) 869-3325 or visit www.amigoguitarshows.com

JULY

Great American Guitar Show (Summer Philly), July 18 & 19, at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, 100 Station Ave., Oaks, PA. For more info contact Bee 3 Vintage at (828) 298-2197 or visit www.bee3vintage.com.

Dallas Guitar Show, July31, August 1-2, at the Dallas Market Hall, 2200 N Stemmons Fwy, Dallas, TX, For more info visit www.guitarshow.com. **(See Advertisement on page 63.)**

AUGUST

Colorado Guitar Show & Custom Luthier Expo, August 2, at The Denver Mart, 451 East 58th Ave., Denver, CO. Hours 10-4. For more info contact Duane at (720) 432-1363 or guitarshow@excite.com.

Tacoma Guitar & Drum Festival, August 15-16, at 2727 E D St, Tacoma, WA. For more info contact Bruce at (253) 445-1973, bruce@adolphagency.com or visit www.tacomaguitarfestival.com.

***Carolina Guitar Show**, August 15-16 (originally March 14-15), WNC Ag Center, Davis Event Center Bldg., I-26, Exit 40, 1301 Fanning Bridge Rd., Fletcher, NC. For more info (828) 298-2197 or bee3vintage@hotmail.com.

Amigo, SoCAL Guitar Show, August 22-23, OC Fair & Event Center, Costa Mesa, CA. For more info Larry at (918) 288-2222, amigoshows@stringswest.com or visit www.amigoguitarshows.com.

SEPTEMBER

Jakes Guitar Show & Music Swap Meet, September 19 & 20, at the Indoor Treasure Barn, 1380 Rt 100, Barto, PA. Hours 8-1. For more info contact Justin at (484) 256-6515 or info@jakesfleamarket.com.

3rd Annual Shreveport/Bossier City Vintage Guitar, Musical Gear Show and Battle of the Bands, September 19-20 at Harrah's Louisiana Downs Casino & Racetrack, 8000 East Texas St, Bossier City, LA 71111. Contact John at 318-507-5096 or email jandwmusiccompany@gmail.com

OCTOBER

Fourth Annual Alchemy Audio Gear Swap, October 3, at the Plumber's Union Hall, 1340 W Washington St., Chicago, IL 60607. Hours 10-6. For more info visit https://recordfair.chirpradio.org/details or contact Johnny at 872-395-3899 or johnny@alchemy-audio.com

Amigo International Guitar Show, October 3-4, Will Rogers Memorial Center, Ft. Worth, TX. For more info Ruth at (817) 312-7659, ruthmbrinkmann@gmail.com, Larry at (918) 288-2222, amigoshows@stringswest.com, Dave at (417) 850-4751, davelcrocker@gmail.com or visit www.amigoguitarshows.com.

West Michigan Musician's Swap Meet, October 10 at the 4 Mile Showplace, 1025 4 Mile Rd NW, Grand Rapids MI. Hours 10-3. For more info contact Stan at 616-432-0719 or gr7ksilver@gmai.com

Mountain Acoustics Luthier Invitational, October 23, 24, and 25 at the Town Center, 6 South Main St., Burnsville, NC. For more info contact Chee at (706) 424-2700, info@mountainacoustics.com or www.mountainacoustics.com.

Rockford Guitar & Drum Show, October 31, 2020 at the Tabala Event Center 7910 Newburg Rd Rockford IL 61108. Hours 10am-3pm. $5 at the door. Contact Chip Messiner at 815-877-9678 or www.rockfordguitarshow.com **(See Advertisement on page 62.)**

NOVEMBER

Ann Arbor Music Instrument Swap, November 1, at the Webers Inn, 3050 Jackson Ave, Ann



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Great American Guitar Show (Fall Philly), November 7-8, Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, Rt 422 Exit at Oaks, 100 Station Ave., Oaks PA 19456. For more info call 828-298-2197 or visit www.Bee3Vintage.com

DECEMBER

Grinning Elk Guitar Show, December 5-6, at the Infinite Energy Forum, 6400 Sugarloaf Pkwy, Duluth, GA. For more info contact Lee at (678)-557-5641, lee@grinningelk@gmail.com or visit www.grinningelkguitarshow.com.

2021

JANUARY

***Orlando International Guitar & Music Expo**, January 29-31 at the Central Florida Fairgrounds, 4603 West Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL. Public hours Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4. For more info contact Morty Beckman at (850) 716-8411, guitarexpo22@yahoo.com or visit www.guitarexpo.net

If you have information regarding upcoming guitar shows or events, visit http://www.vintageguitar.com/guitar-show-submission or e-mail james@vintageguitar.com. All submissions must be received by the 10th of each month, or they will appear in the next available issue. This listing is done as a service to our readers and we reserve final determination as to its contents.



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"BEST'S" BEST-OF



Tommy Emmanuel
The Best of Tommysongs

The Australian acoustic ace is so routinely referred to as "the greatest guitarist in the world," it's almost become cliché. Yet, a few spins of his new *Tommysongs* seems only to confirm the point.

Re-recording many of his best instrumentals, here, Emmanuel proves that his mastery of the instrument is no fluke – he's firmly in command of melody, harmony, technique, and performance. The uptempo fingerpicking on "Halfway Home" is proof enough.

The original instrumental "Angelina" has all the heart-stopping power of a James Taylor vocal ballad, delivered purely with fingers, strings, and Emmanuel's soulfulness. The cascading artificial harmonics are out of this world. "It's Never Too Late" is a melodic gem, which is trademark Tommy – he makes it sound so natural and easy, but of course, it's anything but. "Lewis & Clark" offers faux-echo effects recorded in real-time.

Tommysongs also includes five new tracks, including "Fuel" which starts with wide, lush arpeggios and expansive harmony ideas. The melancholy "Timberland" sounds *huge*, its rippling chords having an almost-orchestral effect. In all, this greatest-hits set from one of the world's most-acclaimed guitarists is an easy buy – Tommy's pickin' has rarely been better. ***– Pete Prown***



Cindy Cashdollar
Waltz For Abilene

This worth-the-wait follow-up to 2004's *Slide Show* finds Cashdollar on pedal and lap steels, a Weissenborn copy, and steel-bodied resophonic baritones. She repeats the collaborations M.O., which makes sense considering her associations with Bob Dylan, Asleep at the Wheel, Van Morrison, Leon Redbone, Dave Alvin, Ryan Adams, and others. This time, she brings in guitarists Albert Lee, Ray Benson, Sonny Landreth, and Arlen Roth, harpist John Sebastian, acoustic-string player Larry Campbell, and keyboardists Marcia Ball, Floyd Domino, and Mike Flanigin.

Stylistically, Cashdollar shows why she's a go-to "sideman," as she shifts from Western swing to Chicago blues, Celtic folk, and gospel – covering everyone from Dylan to Bill Doggett. Vocals by Omar Kent Dykes and Amy Helm don't jar the instrumental continuity, though Rory Block's histrionic turn sticks out among so many tasteful displays.

But the centerpiece is Cashdollar's slide. Whether taking on the jazz standard "Skylark," giving a nod to Uncle Josh Graves on "Foggy Mountain Rock," or getting gritty with Howlin' Wolf's "How Many More Years," she never resorts to chops for their own sake.

Perhaps the standout amidst so many winners is her slow, unaccompanied arrangement of Stephen Foster's timeless "Oh Susanna." Simply beautiful. ***– Dan Forte***



David Grissom
Trio Live 2020

Is David Grissom a blues guitarist, rocker, country guy, or maybe even a jazzbo? (A *Jazz Guitar Today* interview was headlined "A Style that Takes No Prisoners.") Truth is, he's all of those things, and he often cross-pollinates genres and techniques within a single solo.

The veteran of tours and sessions with John Mellencamp, Buddy Guy, the Dixie Chicks, Joe Ely, Storyville, Robben Ford, the Allman Brothers Band, and Lou Ann Barton (to name a few) has been concentrating on songwriting and solo albums over the past 20 years. His compositions have been recorded by John Mayall, Trisha

Tommy Emmanuel : Alysse Gafkjen.


Pierre Bensusan

THE SOUND OF WOOD AND STEEL

By Dan Forte

Stuck sheltering in place, I've found myself reaching for one of my few acoustics, as opposed to the dozens of electric possibilities around the house. And as luck would have it, three excellent CDs of acoustic guitar came across my desk to keep me company.

Dublin's **John Doyle** has recorded with a slew of the top names in Irish music, including Solas, Tommy Peoples, Mick Moloney, Séamus Egan, Eileen Ivers, Mary Black, Aly Bain, and supergroup Usher's Island. His other collaborators include American artists Joan Baez, Tim O'Brien, and Alison Brown, whose Compass Records released his latest solo effort, *The Path Of Stones*.

When one thinks of "Irish music," the theatrical presentation "Riverdance" might come to mind, or flutist James Galway, or if you're old enough to remember, Dennis Day singing "Danny Boy" on "The Jack Benny Show." And of course there are Irish-born rock and pop acts like Van Morrison, Thin Lizzy, and U2. But if you've never checked out traditional Irish music, or revivalists like Planxty, the Chieftains, and Doyle, you don't know what you're missing.

Though he's considered an ace rhythm guitarist, the southpaw can definitely pick some melodies and solos. The program here is split almost evenly between vocals and instrumentals, all penned by Doyle, who plays standard, 12-string, and "high five-string" acoustic guitars, bouzouki, mandos, and fiddle, as well as harmonium. Whether it's spirited reels and slip jigs or the dreamy "Lady Wynde," this is music as pure and crisp as a still, chilly pond.

Producer Bob Cheevers describes the songs collected on **Dave Greaves**' *Still Life* as a "legacy collection" – the aim being to have the songs "transcend the life their creator," who suffers from Multiple System Atrophy (MSA). The double-CD's 22 songs impress, in terms of Greaves' singing and fingerpicking, the tastefully economical backing on some tracks (bass, percussion, synth, flute, sax, and harmony vocals), and most of all Greaves laser-focus songwriting.

All songs were written or co-written by Greaves; "Wild Card" has a Latin lilt, "From Cannery Row" features Steve Halliwell's electric guitar fills, "Fool's Gold" is reminiscent of early Jackson Browne, and "Rising Tide" flirts with Tom Waits melody and rasp.

But the best thing about Greaves is that he has a decisive voice of his own. I don't know if that description offers an idea of what you're getting into; all I can do is recommend it – strongly.

When Michael Hedges titles a composition "Bensusan," you know the inspiration behind it must be someone special, and **Pierre Bensusan** certainly is. Guitarists from Leo Kottke to Larry Coryell to Tuck Andress have sung his praises, and Steve Vai released three Bensusan albums on his Favored Nations label.

He's often classified under "world music," but I'm not sure why. Because he was born in Algeria and grew up in Paris? Because he speaks (and sometimes sings) in French? Or because his solo steel-string style sounds "worldly"?

The 62-year-old plays exclusively in DADGAD, which Davy Graham is credited for popularizing – which is ironic because Graham was possibly the most influential British folk guitarist but never achieved worldwide popularity. But while Graham was drawn to Moroccan and North African music, Bensusan's earliest DADGAD efforts were influenced by Scottish bagpipes and traditional Celtic music.

If DADGAD seems like a foreign term, I guarantee you've heard it. Jimmy Page's "White Summer" (with the Yardbirds) and "Black Mountain Side" (with Zeppelin) were in DADGAD – the former a straight re-write of Graham's arrangement of "She Moved Through The Fair," the latter shamelessly based on Bert Jansch's "Blackwaterside," both traditional folk tunes. Zep's "Kashmir" is also in DADGAD, and John Renbourn and Paul Simon also employed the tuning. For "Bensusan," Hedges altered it by tuning the first and sixth strings down to C, the fifth down to G.

But DADGAD is a modal tuning, and in a fascinating nine-minute living-room video on Youtube, Bensusan shows how one can sound virtually any chord in it, but often with more open strings. So it lends itself to open-string drones and (in Bensusan's hands) a flowing, legato approach. He sometimes sounds like a pianist using the sustain pedal. But as he says, "DADGAD is not playing the music; you are playing the music."

Azwan, Bensusan's 15th album, is primarily solo instrumental with some "vocalizations," although "Dia Libre" features violin and upright bass and "Balkangeles" adds a second guitar (Jean-Marie Ecay, who co-produced the album with Pierre). Throughout, the sound of his Lowden signature model flattop is both rich and articulated.

This may not be the perfect introduction to Bensusan's music (I lean towards the eclectic *Prés de Paris*, perhaps because the 18-year-old's 1975 debut was so impressive), but it should intrigue the uninitiated and provide a dose for longtime fans.

All three of these albums illustrate the stunning sounds that can be produced with just wood, steel, and, of course, hands.

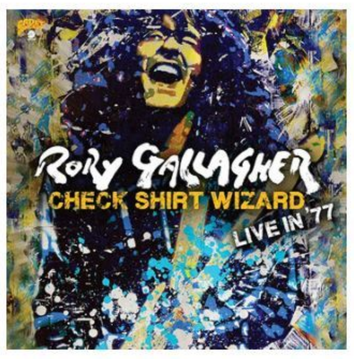
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Pierre Bensusan: Luke Hodgkins.

Yearwood, Lee Ann Womack, and others, and he's enjoyed a songwriting relationship with Chris Stapleton.

But it's in a live setting that the Louisville native and Austin resident flourishes most, as evidenced here. The sound of his PRS signature DGT model shines, although the crunchy-but-clean tone Grissom somehow gets obviously stems from his hands. The set of six instrumentals and two vocals includes three covers – nods to Albert King ("Crosscut Saw"), Albert Collins ("Don't Lose Your Cool"), and Freddie King ("In the Open").

Definitely a *guitar* record – one longtime fans will eat up, and a perfect introduction for the uninitiated. ***– DF***



Rory Gallagher
Check Shirt Wizard – Live in '77

Like many musicians, Irish guitarist/vocalist Rory Gallagher was often better live than on record. Not that his studio efforts were bad, but an energetic audience brought out his absolute best.

This album reinforces that notion with 20 previously unreleased songs from four concerts on his U.K. tour promoting *Calling Card*, often cited as one of his best studio works.

Gallagher's playing and tone are nothing short of breathtaking, and his backing band – pianist/organist Lou Martin, bassist Gerry McAvoy, and drummer Rod de'Ath – is crucial in making the music sizzle. "Do You Read Me" swaggers with a slow-burning bite, while a skittering riff, fluid solos, and underlying pop melody frame "Moonchild." Both "Bought and Sold" and "Calling Card" are fiery blues-based jams.

Gallagher's electric guitar stings mightily throughout, but several acoustic songs are revelatory, including the melancholy Lead Belly cover "Out on the Western Plain," the bouncy wind-ups "Barley & Grape Rag" and "Pistol Slapper Blues," and the oily slide of "Too Much Alcohol." The tough-as-nails "Jack-Knife Beat" and hyperactive '50s-style rocker "Bullfrog Blues" showcase all four musicians.

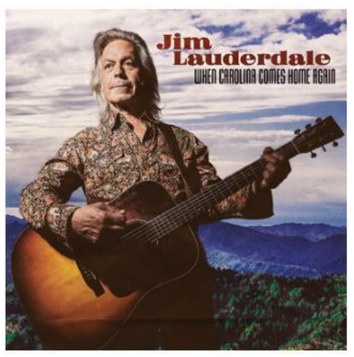
Twenty-five years after his death, this album will hopefully drop-kick Gallagher's cult status into a full-fledged religion. ***– Bret Adams***



Willie Nelson
First Rose of Spring

Following a trilogy of albums contemplating later life with a mixture of humor, reflection and defiance, Willie explores a melancholy perspective on aging. Two tunes are originals, others are by contemporary artists and writers along with vintage material, two older/non-Willie "outlaw" anthems, and a pop standard. His Martin nylon-string, Trigger, and longtime harmonica man Mickey Raphael are never far away, but the core band consists of Nashville session players, some involved with earlier Willie projects. Producer Buddy Cannon plays acoustic with electric/acoustic guitarist Bobby Terry and Mike Johnson's pedal steel.

Willie and Trigger add simple-yet-passionate solos to his ballad "Love Just Laughed," as well as to the Toby Keith cautionary "Don't Let the Old Man In" and the closing number, "Yesterday, When I Was Young," a French pop tune made famous by Roy Clark. Johnson adds color to Chris Stapleton's "Our Song," enhancing Willie's ballad "Blue Star" and genial, relaxed revivals of Jimmy Dean's 1953 hit "Just Bummin' Around" and Whitey Shafer's "I'll Break Out Again Tonight." On the most-aggressive tune, Johnny Paycheck's 1977 outlaw hit "I'm The Only Hell My Mama Ever Raised," Terry and Johnson bounce accompaniment and solos between them. ***– Rich Kienzle***



Jim Lauderdale
When Carolina Comes Home Again

Lauderdale's 1991 debut album, *Planet of Love*, reflected a flair for seamlessly merging contemporary original compositions with the instrumental sounds of classic country. Nearly three decades later, that skill remains a keystone of his style.

A pillar of the Americana genre, Lauderdale, a two-time Grammy winner, honors his home state with a bluegrass album largely created by North Carolinians. His co-writers on these 13 originals – John Oates, Si Kahn, the late lyricist Robert Hunter, and others – have roots there. His accompanists, among them members of Steep Canyon Rangers, Cane Mill Road, and other bands likewise have Tarheel ties.

Whether tackling ballads or upbeat fare like "Cackalacky" (a nickname applied to both Carolinas), Lauderdale's vocals are sharp, the musicianship around him solid regardless of the various lineups, including some dazzling guitar moments. Teenage North Carolina flatpicker and Doc Watson disciple Presley Barker provides intro and solos on the upbeat "Mountaineer." Cane Mill's Casey Lewis adds impressive interludes to "Moonrider," while Jon Stickley's playing on the ballad "I'm Here to Remind You" is both clean and elegant. On the gospel number "Better Than You Found It," the empathetic fingerstyle picking of Steep Canyon's Woody Platt opens the song, then percolates beneath the surface. ***– RK***



Joe Satriani
Shapeshifting

The latest offering from Satch reaffirms his remarkable consistency in the studio, creating precise-yet-thrilling music at a prolific pace. This all-instrumental album features legendary drummer Kenny Aronoff, whose distinctive signature is audible here. Based on melodies from his demos, Satriani's intention was to sound like different guitarists despite being the lone player.

"Shapeshifting" is the intentionally wild opener, with Hendrixian bluesy licks before evolving into a cosmic jazz whirlwind, while "All For Love" invokes blasts of Blackmore and Malmsteen. The arena-rock of "Big Distortion" has an upbeat guitar melody and Ace-Frehley-fueled power chords. "Ali Farka, Dick Dale, an Alien and Me" is a headspinningly exotic mash-up including Dale-inspired tremolo picking and Satriani's nuclear shredding. Most of "Teardrops" is an altered slow blues with a mournful melody, but the tempo gradually increases with speedy guitar lines. The propulsive "Spirits, Ghosts and Outlaws" includes an unrestrained, yet melodically tight solo. The warm, trance-like "Falling Stars" has more Hendrix-flavored touches.

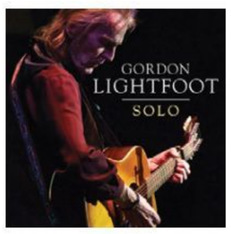
The single "Nineteen Eighty" is a nod to that era, mixing Van-Halen-style rock with a surfy bass lick. Joe even used a vintage MXR phaser as a tribute to EVH without resorting to clichés. Like the rest of *Shapeshifting*, it's a cooker. ***– BA***

extra EXTRA



JIM CAMPILONGO
The Best of Jim Campilongo Vol. 1

His reputation as a Tele giant long established, the 10 Campilongo gems on this vinyl span his career, reflecting various facets of his virtuosity. Among the selections are his spritely, Chet-Atkins-inspired "Awful Pretty, Pretty Awful," the aggressive "Twister," the acoustic ballad "Orange," and two unreleased ballads – the eerie "Coal" and jazz standard "In a Sentimental Mood." **– *RK***



GORDON LIGHTFOOT
Solo

Lightfoot is 81 and his singing sometimes shows time's toll, but the folk fire still burns on these songs written in 2001-'02 but newly rediscovered and recorded. "E-Motion" and "Do You Walk, Do You Talk" showcase his forceful rhythm strumming. "Return Into Dust" and "Just a Little Bit" spotlight fingerpicked melodies. Lightfoot's voice and acoustic guitar are the only tools needed. **– *BA***



DIO
Magica, Angry Machines, Killing the Dragon, Master of the Moon

Four late-era Dio albums are back on CD and vinyl with bonus tracks. With plenty of shreddy guitar, the music is predictable but right in the Ronnie James pocket. "Don't Tell The Kids" shows Dio exploring '90s grunge-metal churn, with Tracy Grijalva ripping a solo amidst the ex-Sabbath frontman's magnificent vocals. **– *PP***



THE M-SQUAD HOLLYWOOD SOUNDTRACK QUINTET
Live On The Sunset Strip

Surf guitarist Mike Vernon mines the overlooked-but-fertile genre of instrumental TV and movie "crime jazz." His group, 3 Balls Of Fire, takes its name from Count Basie's theme for the Lee Marvin '50s cop show. Alternating solos with keyboardist Ted Hamer on themes from *Goldfinger* and *The Pink Panther*, Vernon's twang is the epitome of hip coolness. **– *DF***



ROOKIE
Rookie

You can't fake good power-pop – you either get it right or you *don't*. Rookie nails it, evoking the snotty guitar-pop of Cheap Trick, Big Star, and the Raspberries. The chord riffs to "Hold On Tight" and hook-filled "I Can't Have You" are direct hits, featuring the triple-guitar threat of Dimitri Panoutsos, Chris Devlin, and Max Loebman. "Sunglasses" might be the trippy guitar single of 2020. **– *PP***



ALEX DIXON
The Real McCoy

To honor legendary Chicago blues bassist/songwriter Willie Dixon, his grandson authentically re-created the raw sound of Chess Records in the mid '50s. Assisting are singer Big Lew Powell along with fierce retro guitar from Melvin Taylor and Joey Delgado. Originals by the younger Dixon are mixed with venerable Willie compositions including "Spider in My Stew," "Groaning the Blues," and "Howlin' for My Darlin'." **– *RK***



NEKTAR
The Other Side

The '70s progressive rockers are back with a powerhouse album, featuring guitarist Ryche Chlanda replacing the late Roye Albrighton. Cue up the extended suite "I'm on Fire" for classic prog pomp, with dizzying guitar and keyboard lines galore. "Skywriter" resembles late-era Beatles for grandeur and adds a soaring slide solo. Forty years later, Nektar is back. **– *PP***



STEVE PURCELL
Ample'tudes

Purcell doesn't hide his serious chops or eclectic influences, from blazing Satch shred ("Hammer Down") to spaghetti-western twang ("Rattlesnake Road"). "Mouse in the House" displays Fender-fueled country pickin' in the Johnny Hiland vein, while "Bits & Pieces" suggests the electric-fingerstyle of Mark Knopfler or Brian Setzer. Steve delivers a little bit of everything, all well above average. The guy's a player. **– *PP***



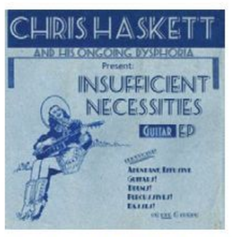
FUNKY CHEMISTS
Groove Generator

Daniel Nathan's Les Paul is front and center against the funky assault of organist Jeno Somlai and drummer Andy Blochowiak. Nathan plays with clean, melodic authority, pushing the organ trio format to rock. He turns up the grit on "Pirate's Alley" and "Salsa Shark." Eloquent 9th chords and adept soloing elevate a band with chemistry. **– *OJ***



REVOLUTION SAINTS
Rise

Featuring guitar ace Doug Aldrich (Whitesnake), drummer Deen Castronovo, and bassist Jack Blades, the band's third album keeps alive the heartbeat of '80s melodic-hard rock. Castronovo's vocals soar in the Steve Perry tradition as Aldrich kills with savage Les Paul tones. Journey and Night Ranger fans will dig the crushing fretboard antics over super-produced rockers and ballads. **– *OJ***



CHRIS HASKETT
Insufficient Necessities

An unabashed ode to fusion-era Jeff Beck, this EP finds the ex-Rollins Band guitarist blending jazz-rock and funk with wild abandon. Haskett captures a live-in-the-studio feel on "Ivy City," laying down heavy jams with string pops and a sick solo. There's no shameless shredding – just monster grooves and raw improvs, heard on "Dodge 'Em." No question, Haskett is *wired*. **– *PP***



THE SLEEP EAZYS
Easy to Buy, Hard to Sell

Joe Bonamassa's latest side-hustle is an instrumental tribute to Tele ace Danny Gatton. Bonamassa's riffs on Gatton's "Fun House" flutter smoothly. Link Wray's "Ace of Spades" romps along with slide, John Jorgenson's rhythm guitar, and Reese Wynans' organ. Joe and John share solos on Jimmy Bryant's rockabilly ripper, "Ha So," while JB's Telecaster bursts pierce King Curtis' simmering "Blue Nocturne." **– *BA***



Béla Fleck
Throw Down Your Heart: The Complete Africa Sessions

If you think an album of banjo – an instrument descended from western Africa – and other African instruments is too distant from the guitar to hold your interest, you might be pleasantly shocked. This set brings together Béla Fleck's 2009 documentary soundtrack with African musicians, plus a live album of duets with kora (an African harp) and a DVD of Fleck's journey. Together, it's something of a personal masterpiece for Fleck.

Beyond Béla's stunning banjo work, you can hear real guitar on "Kinetsa," played by Madagascar musician D'Gary, matched with fiddle, percussion, and banjo. "Ah Ndiya" is a string-laden feast of voices and instrument, while South African Vusi Mahlasela sings and plays guitar on the sweet "Thula Mama." From Mali, Afel Bocoum plays six-string with Fleck on the mesmerizing " Buribalal."

The Ripple Effect, recorded live, is stunningly beautiful, matching Bela's banjo picking with Toumani Diabaté's kora on "Bamako" and "Nashville." "Snug Harbor" mixes African rhythms with Western harmony and lightning-fast triplets. This whole project is fairly magical – and the video documentary only makes it better. This is a deep musical journey you don't want to miss. **– *PP***



The Everly Brothers
Down In The Bottom – The Country Rock Sessions 1966-1968

It's no surprise that a decade after they became rock-and-roll icons, a mature Don and Phil Everly re-imagined their deep country background in the style now viewed as early country-rock.

Their efforts blending originals with rock, country, blues and R&B came forth on three albums – *The Hit Sound, The Everly Brothers Sing*, and the concept album, *Roots*. This three-CD compilation assembles those and bonus tracks from the era, including both demo and the finished versions of their 1967 Top 40 hit, "Bowling Green."

Members of L.A.'s Wrecking Crew accompanied them on nearly every track, often with a guitar trifecta of Glen Campbell, James Burton (on guitar or dobro), and Al Casey. Ry Cooder's slide work can be heard on two bonus tracks, one being Howlin' Wolf's "Meet Me in the Bottom."

Roots emphasized the Everlys' country side, beginning with a 1952 air check of the brothers performing on their family's radio show. That album also mixed traditional ballads and standards by Merle Haggard, Jimmie Rodgers, and George Jones with the Everly original "I Wonder if I Care as Much."

Given the era, occasional psychedelic overtones appear, such as the prominent wah guitar on "T for Texas." **– *RK***



Eric Johnson
EJ Vol. II

Eric Johnson has earned the right to put aside the Joe Sixpack aspects of his guitar talents to explore deeper facets of his artistry, as he does on *EJ Vol. II*.

The follow-up to 2016's *EJ*, it makes ample use of Johnson's renowned violin-like Strat tones, but here, they're surrounded by opulent piano, pristine acoustic guitar, and his soothing vocal style. Original compositions and covers give insight to the mind of one of our most-compelling guitar stylists.

EJ Vol. II is a spiritual record that warms the heart like a sermon. "Waterwheel" and "Gift of Love," with their synergy of electric and acoustic instruments, captures Johnson's feelings regarding love and universality. With a masterful arrangement, acoustic guitar, and piano interplay, his cover of the Beatles' "You've Got To Hide Your Love Away" is breathtaking.

Johnson's pedal-steel swells and facility with acoustic country guitar are displayed on "Charldron's Boat" and "Lake Travis," but the core of the record is comprised of deep meaning, mindfulness, compassion, and love. Songs like "Divanae," "Golden Way," and "Hotel Ole" blend transcendent electric-guitar tones with acoustic piano. *EJ Vol. II* is another fine release from a true artist. **– *Oscar Jordan***



Sons of Apollo
MMXX

After a sigh of relief, the term "supergroup" isn't misused on this album like it was on 2017's *Psychotic Symphony*. Instead, Sons of Apollo is back and burning even hotter, with fretless-guitar wunderkind Bumblefoot, keysman Derek Sherinian, drummer Mike Portnoy, bassist Billy Sheehan, and singer Jeff Scott Soto. Serving a fresh dish of progressive metal, with classical flourishes, the band hits the ground running with epic arrangements, twisted keyboard solos, and soaring shred guitar.

Aggressive vocals, soft piano interludes, and a pummeling rhythm section are in great abundance for prog-metal aficionados. Escapist lyrics that conjure images of dystopian landscapes paint a dark portrait, and Bumblefoot distinguishes himself via slippery fretless lines, odd-metered riffs, and searing solos; check his mind-boggling turns on "King of Delusion" and "Fall to Ascend."

The eight-song track list is a compendium of ideas that echo Deep Purple, Dream Theater, and Planet X. The intensity of "Resurrection Day" displays the band in full ensemble mode, while "New World Today" congeals great ideas into a solid unifying vision. *MMXX* is a beast of an album. **– *OJ***



King Crimson
In the Court of the Crimson King 50th Anniversary

In 1969, this album was a veritable "shot heard 'round the world." Never before had there been anything of this instrumental caliber in rock. It also introduced us to quirky guitar genius Robert Fripp, singer/bassist Greg Lake, and a cast of jazz-stoked British musicians.

In this three-CD set, there are full remixes as well as a remastered original '69 mix. The new mixes are fuller, brighter, and more-detailed than the original, which is a plus or minus depending on your audio preference. There are multiple versions of "21st Century Schizoid Man," including a mashup featuring a 1969 take combined with new playing from current guitarist Jakko Jakszyk (*VG*, March '20), who trades solos with Robert Fripp – 50 years apart.

Elsewhere, listen for the ringing minor-9th chords on "Epitaph," the basis of future ELP classics like "The Sage" and "C'est La Vie." You will witness studio banter as Crimson recorded "In The Court of the Crimson King." In one instant, the 23-year-old guitarist snarkily mumbles, "Let's make a hit waxing," before the tape rolled. To everyone's surprise, the album *was* a hit.

As evidence of King Crimson's staying power, Fripp and company are still on the road a half-century later. **– *PP* VG**

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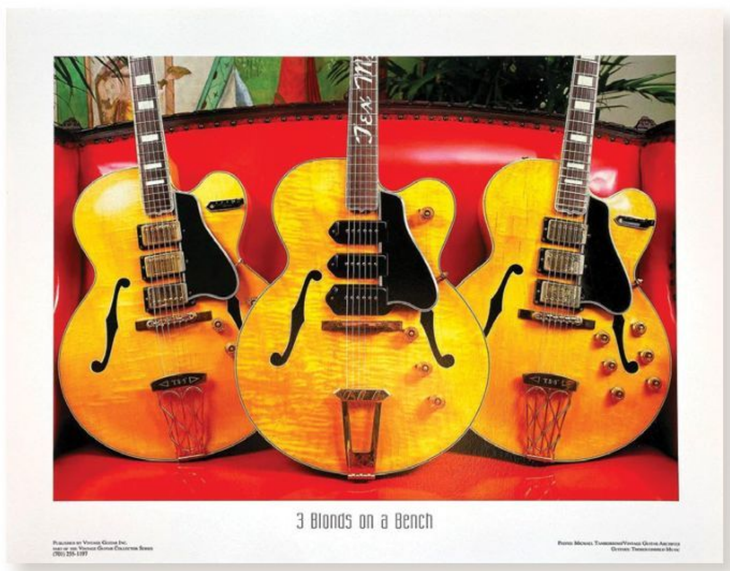
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STOLEN INSTRUMENTS

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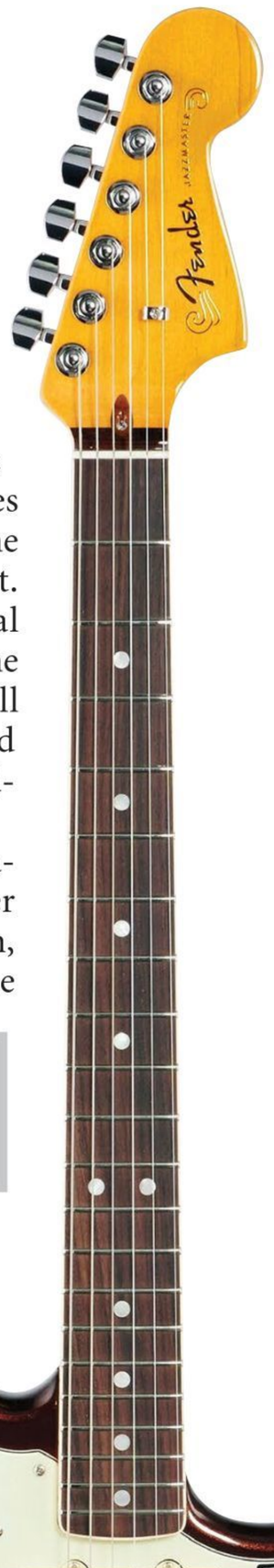
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OFFSET EXPECTATIONS

Fender's American Ultra Series Jazzmaster



Fender's Ultra Series is an attempt to hot-rod classic Leo designs to modern specs. Thanks to touches including an advanced electronics array, it's clear the Ultra Jazzmaster ain't your grandpop's offset double-cut.

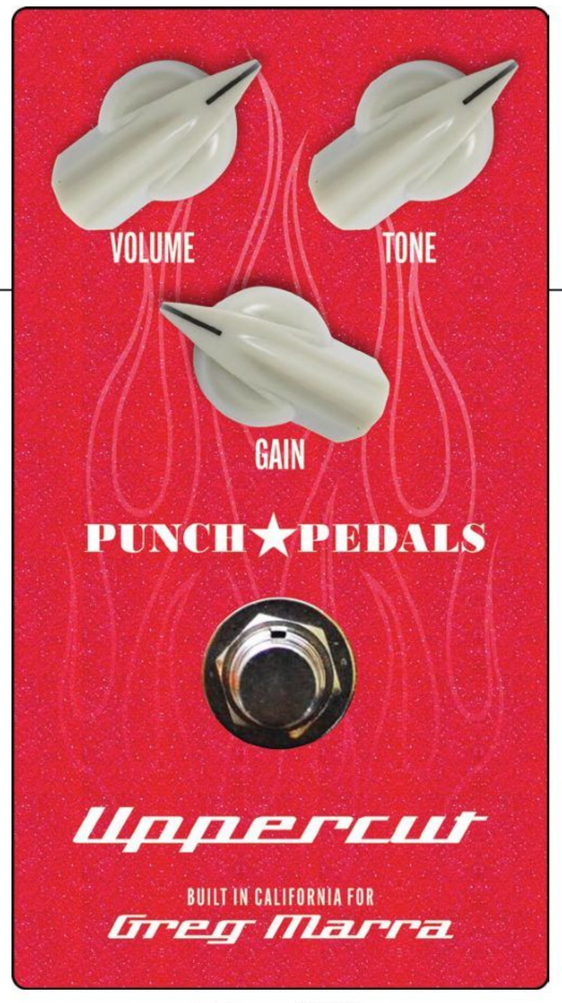
In hand, the Ultra *feels* different than a conventional Jazzmaster. There's the comfortable D profile (versus the classic C) with a compound radius from 10" to 14". You'll also note the upper-fret access on the bound rosewood fingerboard (maple also available), thanks to a slimmed-down heel and contour cut on the back.

But the real story is under the hood. Instead of traditional single-coils, this Jazzmaster has two Fender Noiseless pickups, allowing players to crank the gain, yet retain a degree of twang. Close inspection of the master Volume knob reveals a push-button center called the S1 switch, which takes the pickups from parallel to series and delivers a beefier tone – not quite a humbucker, but with the gain revved up, you can inflict some heavy damage.

Price: $1,999.99
www.fender.com

More sonic magic resides in those switches and thumbwheels north of the neck pickup. This famous system was originally devised to conjure darker tones resembling an archtop (hence Jazzmaster), but here, Fender has tweaked them. Put the pickup selector in the middle and flip the slide switch up, and the pickups go out of phase, adding a new EQ dimension. The two thumbwheels are volumes for each pickup; adjust them in combination to create an array of tones (think Strat) in the middle and upper ranges.

Who's going to want the Ultra Jazzmaster? With the S1 circuit and phase-tweaking section, it's a wildly versatile, contemporary instrument that blends vintage looks with advanced EQ that can handle pretty much anything thrown at it. Sure, there are more-affordable (and traditional) Jazzmasters, but this is the state-of-the-art "modern offset." ***– Pete Prown***



Price: $150
www.gregmarra.com/shop

MARSHALL LAW

Punch Pedals' Greg Marra Uppercut

When guitarists hit the "road" for fly-in dates, they need to carry big sounds in a small package. Dialing-in quickly in front of mysterious and unsavory backlines is the name of the game. Greg Marra has the routine sussed.

Designed by tone wizard Robert Ardent at Punch Pedals, Marra's signature Uppercut unleashes some intense sounds. Built to Marra's specs to achieve the "...teeth of a Marshall and the smoothness of a Mesa Boogie," the Uppercut was also designed to plug in and crank in front of any clean amp. The result is a hybrid high-gain stompbox with singing sustain, charismatic chunkiness, and tonal clarity.

Hand-wired in Southern California, the Uppercut has Volume, Tone, and Gain chicken-head knobs, and a bright-red LED. First impressions fall between Gary Moore's high-gain Soldano blues-rock tones, Randy Rhoads with thicker lows, and musical compression. The Tone control is the passport to acquiring old-school "woman tones" with grit or modern saturation that cuts like a hot samurai sword through ice cream.

The Uppercut's slightly scooped character yields beaucoup gain and the ability to contour warmth or pierce the heavens. It compels the user to shred like no one's watching or create epic riffs with perky harmonic overtones. In short, the Uppercut offers sizzle without fizz, and straddles the past and the present. ***– Oscar Jordan***

CHERRY ON TOP

The Epiphone Joe Bonamassa 1960 Les Paul Standard

When you think of Joe Bonamassa, you typically think of Les Pauls – particularly vintage models worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. For the rest of us, Bonamassa has partnered with Epiphone on an army of value-oriented Gibson models.

The latest is a replica of his "Norm Burst," a dead-mint 1960 Standard he discovered at Norman's Rare Guitars with its original paperwork, hang tags, and nary a sign of ever being played. This homage offers a pristine cherry-sunburst reissue at a mere fraction of the original's price. No kidding... it's a quick way to save $250,000.

Part of the allure is that the Epiphone does *not* have an aged or distressed finish. Like the one Joe found, it's a super-clean solidbody ready to go, right out of the box. The finish is a cherry sunburst that resembles, as Bonamassa says, the hue of "tomato soup," which is a slightly orange-tinged variation from that final year of first-gen Standards.

The Epi has a highly flamed maple-veneer cap on a mahogany body and neck, with a lighter Indian laurel fingerboard in lieu of harder-to-find rosewood. Other accoutrements include tulip-shaped buttons on the tuning machines, LockTone ABR tune-o-matic bridge, and Mallory tone caps. For candy, there's a brown Gibson-style case adorned with "Bonamassa, Nerdville, CA," plush pink interior, and a certificate of authenticity signed by Bonamassa.

Price: $599
www.epiphone.com

Powered up, the 1960 stands out for its '60s SlimTaper neck and ProBucker pickups. Clean, overdriven, or loaded with crunch, the Bonamassa sports all the signature Les Paul girth you would expect. It's especially adept at digging into the heavy bends and riffs Les Pauls are known for, from Paul Kossoff's work in Free to the famed fretmanship of Joe B. himself. The SlimTaper neck's comfy D-shape profile proves a nice compromise between beefy and slimmer shapes, delivering a fine playing experience.

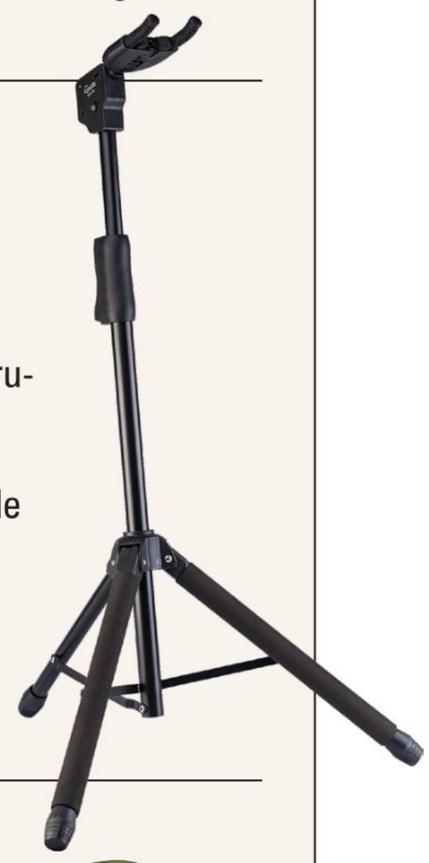
In fact, it's difficult to argue with any aspect of this particular J.B. Les Paul Standard. It's a well-made solidbody that, other than the headstock, looks like a vintage Standard. Its fat, beautiful tone checks out 100 percent, and the playability is on par with other LP-style axes in this price range. If you need to rock as only a Lester will but you don't have a cool quarter-mil lying about, the Bonamassa 1960 "Norm Burst" has you covered. – ***Pete Prown***

GEARIN' UP



CHARVEL DK24 HSS

Charvel's USA Select DK24 HSS has an alder body with sculpted heel, maple neck with compound-radius maple fretboard, 24 stainless-steel jumbo frets, pearl dots, and Tusq nut. Other features include Seymour Duncan pickups with five-way selector, Bourns pots, Gotoh 510 bridge, and Sperzel locking tuners.



GUITTO GGS-06 STAND

Guitto's GGS-06 guitar stand is adjustable for use with electric, acoustic, and bass instruments. It is self-locking and adapts to different headstock shapes. Made of polyamide with steel tubes, its steadying bars are covered with silica gel to protect instrument finishes.



VOLT REVERSE

Volt Electrics' The Reverse has an ash body, bolt-on maple neck with medium-C shape, compound-radius fretboard (maple, rosewood, blackwood, or ebony), 25.2" scale, and a 1.67" bone nut. Other features include Sheptone Tribute pickups and a brass ABM bridge with reversible brass saddles.

Got something new and cool? Let us know at www.VintageGuitar.com/Gearin-Up-Submission

LOTTA STOMP

The Boss ME-80

Price: $299
www.boss.info

The folks at Boss are known for packing a ton of features into a small box, as we saw with their impressive Katana 100 Mk.II amp (*VG*, May '20). The ME-80 multi-effects pedal continues that M.O.

Deriving sounds from Boss' GT-100 and Multi-Dimensional Processing (MDP) effects, coupled with Composite Object Sound Modeling (COSM) preamp modeling, the ME-80 offers 59 effects laid out like a row of stompboxes on a pedalboard, but unified in one chassis. The eight-pound unit also has a 38-second looper, a tuner, stereo outputs, and a USB jack that lets users access Boss' Tone Editor software to tweak effects, download new sounds, and store both in a library. Via USB, the ME-80 can serve as the front-end of a home studio. Whew!

From an interactive standpoint, the ME-80 is stone-simple. It has seven stompbox sections – Preamp, EQ/FX2, Reverb, Compressor/FX1, OD/DS, Mod, and Delay – with an expression pedal for wah and volume-pedal effects. Thankfully, Boss doesn't make players dig into deep menus. Instead, there are grab-and-go knobs, just as with standard pedals. Dial-in the effect in each section, including Boss goodies like T-Wah, Octave, and Tube Screamer, and adjust to taste. Eight foot-friendly pedals in the front of the ME-80 turn each effects section on and off.

In rehearsals with a jam band, the expression pedal delivered seamless volume swells (you can also use the Slow Gear effect for that slow-attack sound). And a section called FX2 provides a workaround if you want to use two effects from the same section. For example, if you want Phaser *and* Uni-Vibe (both in the Mod section), you can access a second phase-shifter circuit. Same if you want Turbo OD *and* Boost (both in OD/DS).

At a street price of $300, the ME-80 offers an absurd amount of effects and amp-modeling power, as well as stone-simple operation without much learning curve. Sure, it's fun and challenging to experiment with individual pedals and build your own board, but for 1/10 of the price, Boss has bundled a universe of effects ready to go, right out of the box. That should be serious incentive for any guitarist. ***– Pete Prown***





Price: $169.95
ww.tru-fi.com

SHINE ON

The Tru-Fi Colordriver

For aficionados, the topic of fuzz can lead to a deep dive into myriad historical references, transistors, and personal preferences. Tru-Fi is adding to the conversation by re-creating the legendary Colorsound Overdriver.

Popular in the early '70s, the Overdriver was the fuzz of choice for David Gilmour, Jeff Beck, and others; its distinct personality can be heard on Pink Floyd's "Shine On You Crazy Diamond" and Jeff Beck's *Blow By Blow*.

Offered in nine- and 18-volt versions, the Tru-Fi Colordriver is loaded with BC109 transistors and has controls for Treble, Drive, and Bass along with a side-mounted Volume knob, like the original.

Like all fuzz pedals, its application depends on the user. In some hands, the Colordriver will be used as a gritty clean boost. Others will have it slam the front end of an amp with full-blown fuzz, complete with sizzling single-note brutality. In our testing (we had the nine-volt), it sounded best with a slightly dirty amp, but it will happily add saturated mayhem to the cleanest rig, as it can yield a shimmering boldness and thickness. Essentially, it allows the player to traverse the sonic landscape between fuzz and overdrive without sacrificing either. Functionally speaking, the Bass and Treble knobs are perfect for adjustments on the fly within a mix, and the side Volume is just what the doctor ordered.

The Colordriver is powerful, adept at classic sounds, and, perhaps best of all, easy on the wallet. ***– Oscar Jordan***

TEXAS FINERY

Marchione Guitars' Master Burst



Refining his craft in a New York atelier before relocating to his hometown of Houston, Stephen Marchione has introduced a new model with an original design in tribute to a classic.

A single piece of silver maple – a timber with extraordinary figure – forms the top of his Master Burst, while the carved back and neck are each cut from one-piece Honduran mahogany, the latter topped with a 12" radius/24.75"-scale ebony fretboard. Single-ply binding surrounds the top and headstock, the latter with its inlaid pearl logo, providing plenty of eye candy. The Vintage Cherry Sunburst nitrocellulose finish over the dramatic carves is molten perfection in a warm, subtle shade. Marchione employs hot hide glue assembly.

Price: $16,500
www.marchione.com

Though hardly a copy, the Master Burst has the features found in a vintage sunburst LP, but on steroids. Hardware includes locking Sperzel tuners and a familiar and functional Gotoh bridge and tailpiece. The Tone Specific PAF humbuckers are "Parker-mounted," that is, rigidly attached to the body, an improvement over the typical plastic hardware/spring mount. The refined body lines, cutaway, and back carve help keep the weight to about eight pounds.

The Master Burst experience may start with the visuals, but the setup is right on. The inviting stainless-steel frets promote an easy whole tone and a half bend. And, yes, Les Polfus, you *can* play jazz on it. Clean, the Tone Specific neck pickup is warm and inviting, while the bridge pickup offers spank and snap. Dial-in overdrive, and the Master Burst hits its stride with expansive, expanding tones. Control manipulation and pickup combinations serve up "woman tone," rockabilly spank, and the classic rock and blues sounds that helped inspire its creation.

The Marchione Master Burst is more than a nod to an icon. It's a contender in a new and progressive age of luthiery. ***– Chip Wilson***

GEARIN' UP



ZVEX FUZZ FACTORY 7 RAW

The ZVex Fuzz Factory 7 is hand-assembled in Minnesota using two NOS '60s 2N404 germanium transistors, a nine-position rotary switch to adjust frequencies, and an independent passive Tone control. It's housed in unpainted aluminum.



MOJOTONE 44 MAGNUM

Mojotone Pickups' 44 Magnum is a passive humbucker wound to deliver broad frequency response and gain with no loss of clarity or detail. It's four ceramic magnets are wound with 44-gauge wire to measure 15.5K (neck) and 21K (bridge). It's hand-wound in the U.S. and can be coil-tapped.



DAREDEVIL PEDALS HYPE

The Daredevil Pedals Hype is a hand-wired/high-output FET boost made in Chicago with true-bypass footswitch and no knobs. Output is adjusted with an internal trim pot.



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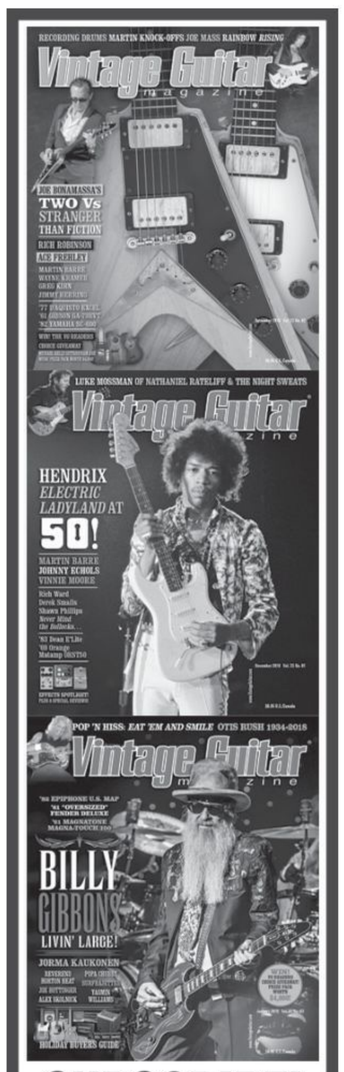
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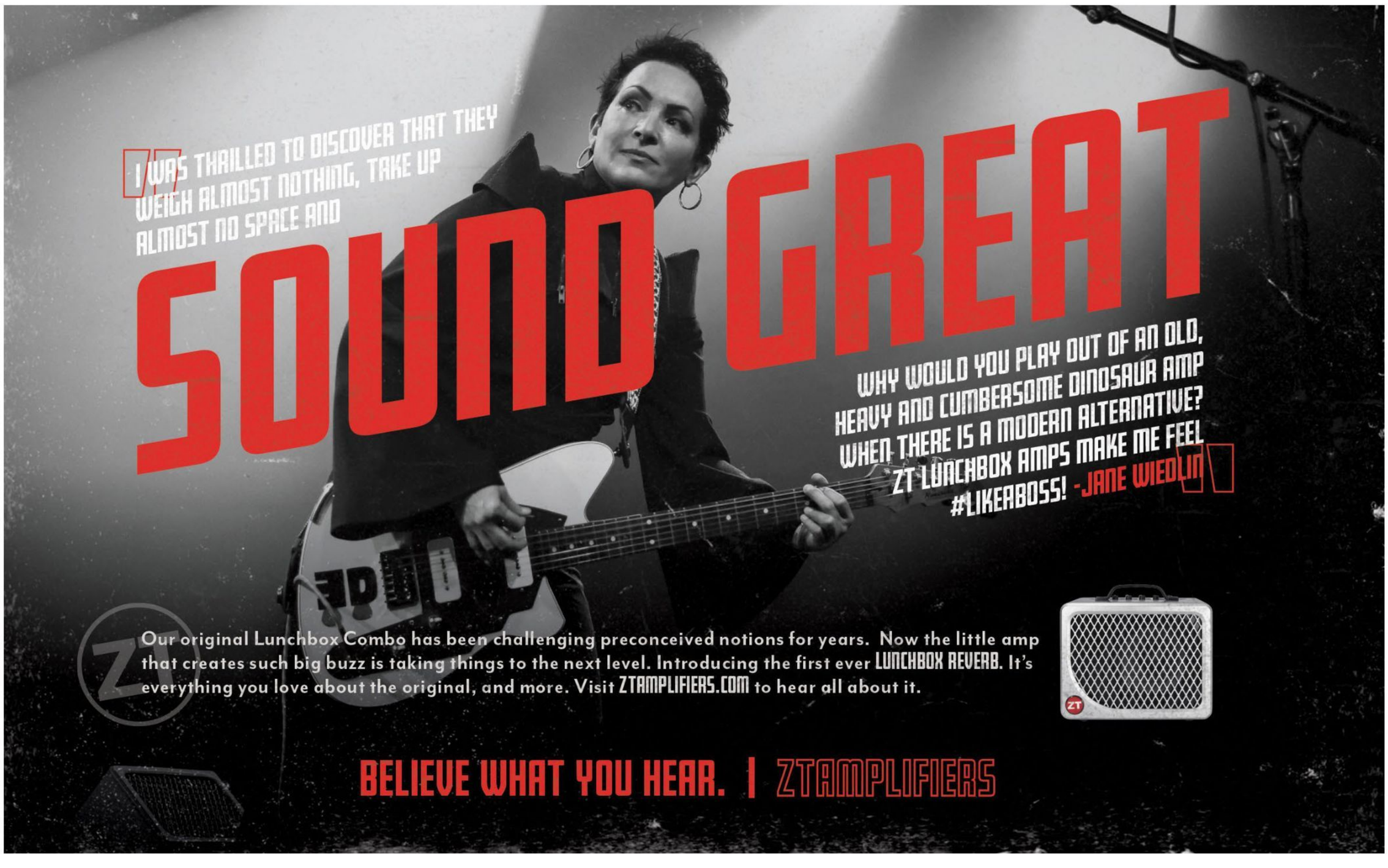
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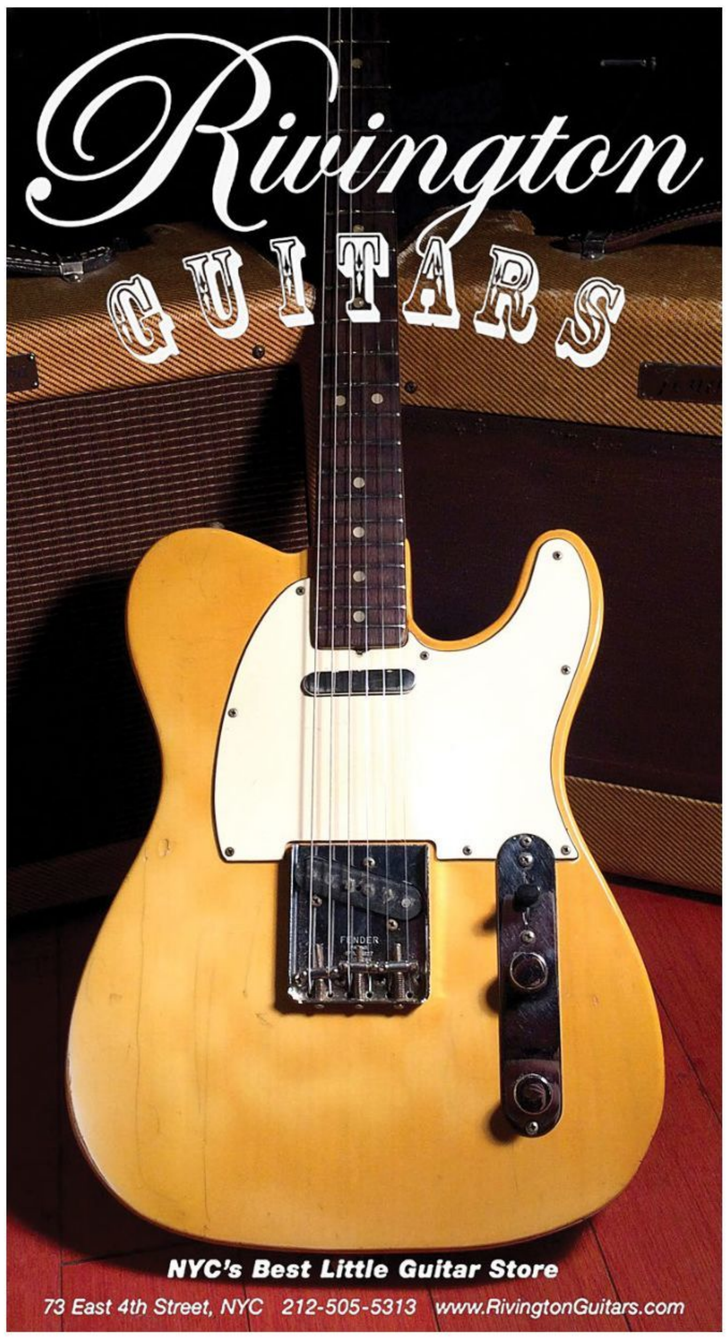
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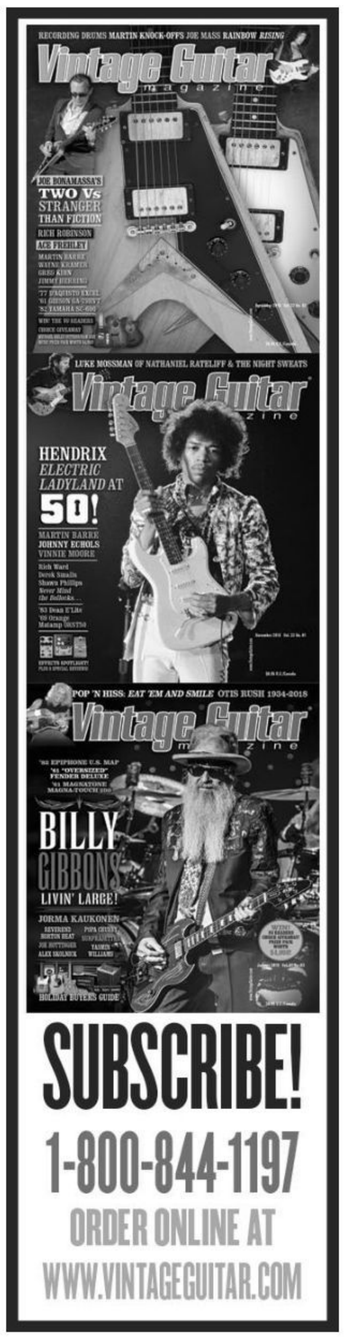


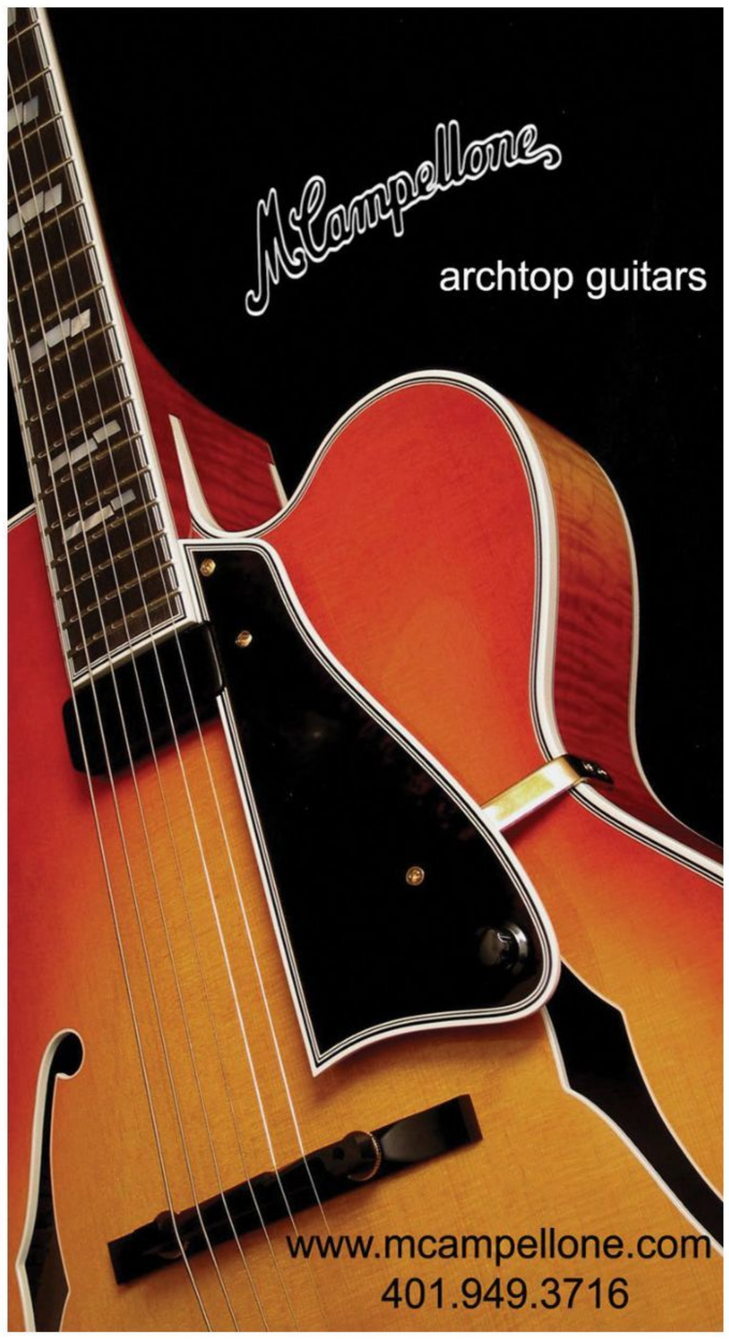
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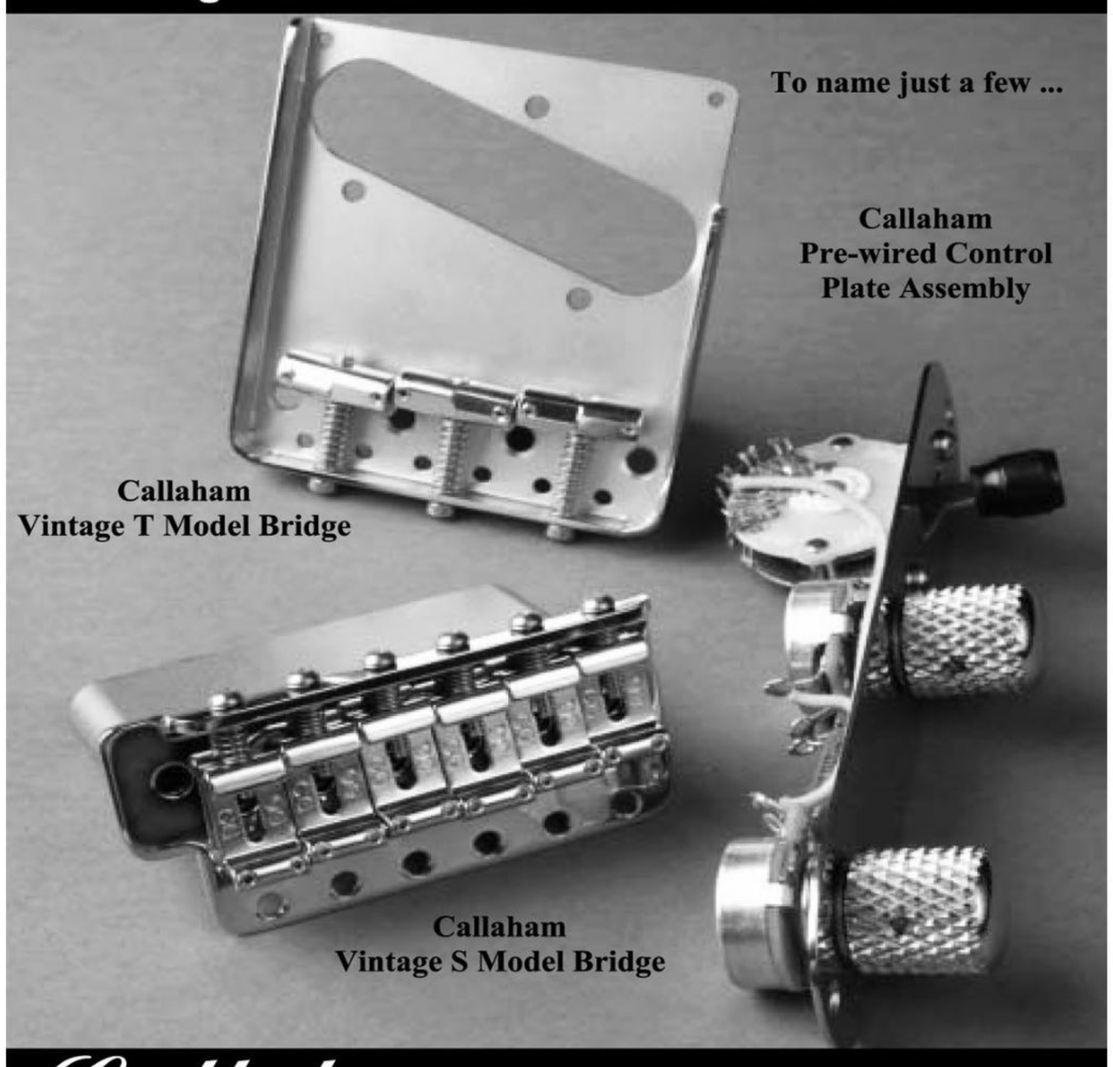
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1) Jeff DiPaola's collection includes his Fender "Coronado Family." All from '67, they are an Antigua, sunburst bass, and a 12-string.

2) Ray Clark's goal is to have his collection of reissues cover all sonic bases. It includes Les Pauls with pickups by Tom Holmes, Lollar, and Virgil Arlo, Strats and Teles he's left stock, an SG with Lollars, Firebird VII with Duncan Antiquities, a 335 with Lollars, and a Rickenbacker 360/12 with vintage "Toasters." "Ironically, I sound the same on all of them!" he laughed.

3) Subscriber Tyler Willison has amassed a collection that includes Gibsons like this Les Paul '60 reissue, '67 ES-330 with factory Bigsby, and a '78 Les Paul Deluxe. "They're all really amazing guitars!" he said.

4) Mike Thompson calls this shot "Jazz on Jazz." It's his 2002 D'Aquisto New Yorker next to an original Lamar Sorrento painting of Django Reinhardt.

5) Frank Manno has a colorful collection of Gretsch Custom Shop guitars by master builder Stephen Stern. From left, they are a Penguin in Tahitian Coral, a Round Up, a Dynajet, a Gold Sparkle Jet, and a Penguin in a classic shade of orange.

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