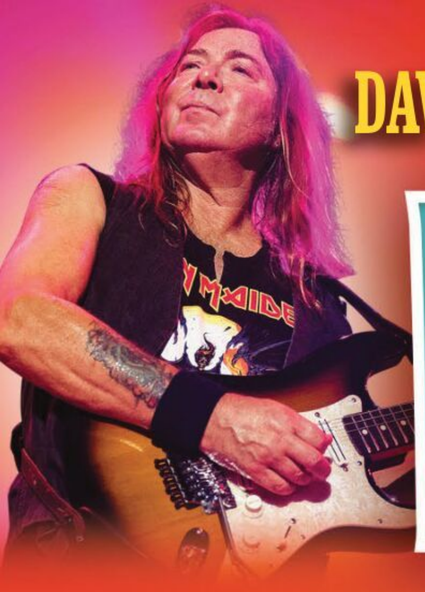

DAVE MURRAY

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December 2021 Vol. 36 No. 03

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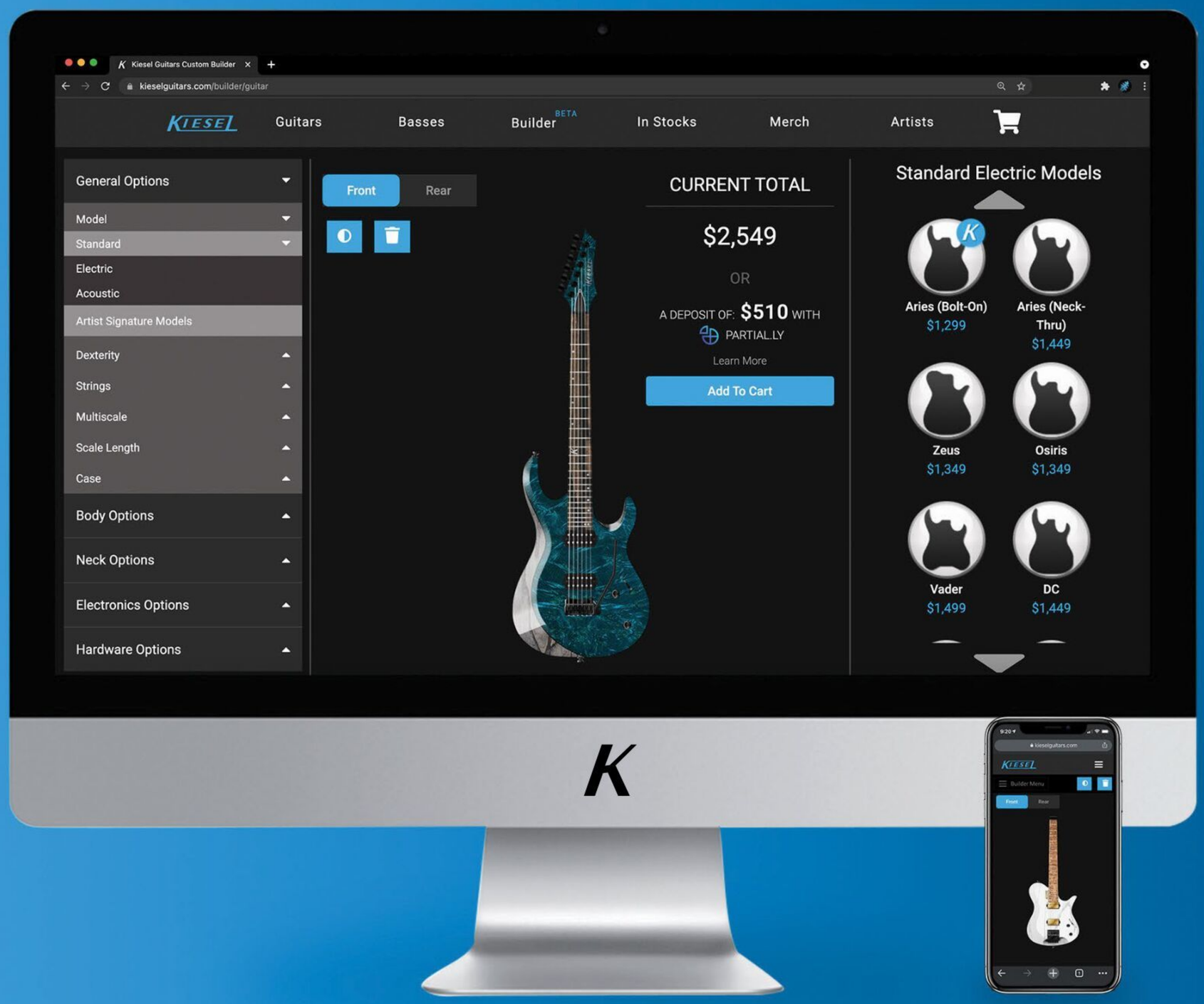

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FIRST FRET

This Czechoslovakia-made Jolana Star V is part of the "NMM Goes Electric!" exhibit.

NMM GOES ELECTRIC

The National Music Museum, Vermillion, South Dakota, has opened "NMM Goes Electric!," the first exhibit in its new Groves Gallery for Special Exhibitions. It focuses on eight themes related to electric stringed instruments, including earliest examples, basses, banjos, guitars behind the Iron Curtain and in East Asia, smaller/indie American luthiers, and the role of computers and MIDI technology.

The exhibit is free and open to the public on Fridays, Saturdays, and Mondays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. through December 13.

D'ADDARIO ACQUIRES NATIONAL PICKS

D'Addario has acquired National Picks, maker of metal thumbpicks and fingerpicks. Introduced in 1930, National picks are made in the U.S. from various alloys. Now dubbed D'Addario National Pick, the company will offer finger picks in stainless steel, brass, and nickel as well as celluloid thumb picks in white, black, and tortoiseshell.

GIBSON GIVES TO NASHVILLE SCHOOLS

Gibson Gives recently donated guitars and other music equipment worth $300,000 to benefit music education programs at Metro Nashville Public and other Davidson County schools. With students returning to classrooms, Gibson also donated 1,000 face masks to Nashville schools.

SETH LEE JONES

Pedal Pusher

Thanks to giants like Derek Trucks, Warren Haynes, and Sonny Landreth, we're living in a golden age of bottleneck guitar, with exceptional young sliders arriving regularly. Tulsa guitarist and builder Seth Lee Jones is among this rising group, offering Billy Gibbons-sized tones and wild pedal-steel tricks for bottleneck. On his new album, *Flathead*, Jones drops cool, funky licks all over the place. After a few spins, it was time to give Seth a call.

Flathead was cut live in the studio. How did it go during the sessions?

We tracked with all of us isolated as necessary for clean capture. The band has a residency at Tulsa's The Colony club, which is a perfect proving ground for working out the details. I could think of no better way to get your arrangements together, and in this case we had to think on our feet for a live show. It definitely helped my end game to put a record together without fussing over edits and overdubs.

Seth Lee Jones: Phil Clarkin.

You developed an innovative way to create pedal-steel sounds, as we hear in "Tulsa Time."

Developing the pedal-steel technique was actually a happy accident. I wanted to learn some Brad Paisley licks, and I'd built a Tele-style guitar with a Hipshot bender; I built the neck in Venice Beach, where I worked at the time, and assembled it in my home shop. The difference in humidity caused the neck to back-bow severely. Having been a lap-steel player, I realized the bender altered the I chord to a IV chord with both arms depressed, so I became infatuated with faking the pedal-steel sound. I still play that guitar and it now has levers on the fifth, third, and second strings. I'm using John Pearse Jazz nickel strings, the first two are .017s.

At 2:45 in "I Can't Be Satisfied," it sounds like two-handed tapping mixed with slide.

Absolutely correct; I've always been an Eddie Van Halen fan. I figured out that lick while trying to cop a Jimmy Markham harp lick and it's since become a staple parlor trick for me.

Who are some of your other key guitar influences?

As for Tulsa cats, you can't leave out Steve Pryor – he's *got* to be mentioned. While living in L.A., I was exposed to all types of stellar players; Michael Landau really got to me. I saw him at the Baked Potato and wanted to burn my guitars when I got home. While studying at Musicians Institute, I did some open counsel with Carl Verheyen, and that changed my direction. Last but not least, Sonny Landreth. I wouldn't have thought to try anything behind the slide bar if not for *Grant Street*. That album definitely changed my game.

Your guitar tone is massive.

Thanks. I'm using a Rick Potter-modded '68 Super Reverb with Warehouse orange-frame speakers, Keeley pedals, a Hilton low-profile volume pedal, and a Peckerhead Revibe.

Tell us about that last one.

The Revibe is a tube unit that looks like a head, but it's a harmonic tremolo circuit that's closer to a Univibe in tones, hand-built here in Oklahoma by Bob Peck. He's a retired electrical-maintenance guy that makes a few great amps a year and does repair on the side. The reverb side is the classic Fender three-knob reverb unit. It produces no speaker power – just trem and reverb – and warms things up a bit. I don't leave home without it.

Does "Moving Me" have baritone guitar?

Yes, I used a Mule Resophonic Mulecaster. Matt Eich is a good friend of mine and he's making cool instruments in Saginaw, Michigan.

You build guitars, but also do repairs. How did you get into that line?

The repair side of my business is heavily influenced by my time working for Fren Asken (see our review of the Asken Intercooler in the May '20 issue). The best lesson I got from Fren was observing his even temperament and the way he communicates with people. He's one of the best restoration luthiers on the West Coast.

What's the story behind your own guitars?

At this point I feel I can build anything I can imagine. My guitars are made in a small building behind my home; I make everything by hand, including the bodies, guards, truss rods, necks, and fretboards. I mainly do heavy restoration on vintage acoustics and electrics, but build 25 to 30 electrics and a few acoustics each year.

What is your approach to making guitars?

I use a combination of traditional and modern methods. The acoustics are based on the late Dixie Michell's work; I was fortunate enough to meet her before her passing in 2015, and gleaned a great deal. I bought her old house and shop after she passed – guitars have been built in this very spot since 1981. ***– Pete Prown***

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DAVE MURRAY

Maiden Voyager

After 46 years, Iron Maiden is still reinforcing its stature as a legendary heavy metal band. *Senjutsu*, the British juggernaut's 17th studio album, has earned critical praise. It's also the band's highest-charting album ever in the U.S., debuting at #3 on *Billboard*.

Clocking in at more than 80 minutes, *Senjutsu* is the follow-up to 2015's *The Book of Souls*. Recorded in 2019, pandemic concerns delayed its release.

Co-founder Dave Murray doesn't have a songwriting credit this time, but his musical ideas are there; he and fellow guitarists Adrian Smith (*VG*, March '21) and Janick Gers all created distinct parts.

"On some tracks, there'll be melodies, and the guitar solos are basically a free-fall," said Murray. "You jump in and ad lib – be spontaneous. You'll hear Adrian, Janick, and myself and our idiosyncrasies and changes. There are 10 tracks, and some are 10 or 12 minutes long."

Iron Maiden excels at tight, explosive metal classics like "Run to the Hills" and "The Trooper," but fans especially adore their progressive rock-influenced epic songs like "Rime of the Ancient Mariner." *Book of Souls* featured the band's longest-ever song, the 18-minute "Empire of the Clouds." *Senjutsu* includes both shorter blasts like "Stratego" and dramatic marathons, notably "Death of the Celts" and "Hell on Earth."

"Even from the very first album, 'Phantom of the Opera' was seven or eight minutes long," Murray noted. "It stems from the start, really, and has continued through the band's history. A lot of songs, like 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner' or 'Hallowed Be Thy Name' are supposed to be that way. They run off and it makes sense with the melodies," Murray said. "You're creating something that's building. I think it's just part of the identity of Iron Maiden; a lot of our albums start with a slow, moody part then jump into an upbeat section. It does vary. And it's not verse/chorus/verse/chorus. Things go off then come back again! It's the strength of the guys' writing. It's about the songs."

Also, the grooves are notably darker on *Senjutsu*'s spacious arrangements.

"A lot of those moody, ominous melodies are like a soundtrack for a movie. That's what I think of when I listen back to some of those slower passages," said Murray. "I love all that stuff where it's creeping along and there are these haunting melodies coming out. It adds to the mood of the song and gives it a lot of dynamics."

Murray praises longtime co-producer Kevin Shirley for his work. He helmed along with bassist Steve Harris.

"Kevin's a lovely guy and a great producer. He's got a lot of really good energy, and brings it to the album. He's always encouraging and bringing out the best in everybody. Everything was always on 'Record,' so all the magic moments were saved – as well as stuff that ended up on the cutting room floor (laughs)! Especially now with digital (recording). The good thing with Kevin is we get the analog sound using modern technology. He's amazing."

Murray stuck with a few classic guitars for *Senjutsu*.

"The main one was the California Series Strat I've been using for the last 15, 20 years. It has Seymour Duncan pickups and a tortoiseshell scratch plate. I also used a couple of Les Pauls – one that has a Floyd Rose on it, and a Standard."

The past few tours, the band has alternated between "greatest hits" shows and sets focusing on a new album. The well-received Legacy of the Beast world tour focused on classics but also featured rarely-performed fan favorites like "Flight of Icarus" and "Where Eagles Dare." Halted due to the pandemic, it resumes next summer. In the meantime, Murray tries to play every day, even during long breaks.

"It's like anything. You want to keep your hand in," he said. "If I'm watching a movie, I'll mess around to keep my fingers in shape. I have a little studio with guitars so I can jot down ideas. I'll jam with friends. I still play, but not with the intensity as with the band. I can keep myself busy (chuckles). I play because I love playing guitar. I love listening to music. It's not, 'This is work.' It's still something I enjoy as a hobby. It's become a lifelong obsession." ***– Bret Adams***

Dave Murray: John McMurtrie.

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JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR

Passion and Soul

British blues-rock guitarist Joanne Shaw Taylor is leaving her mark on the classics. With *The Blues Album*, Taylor's husky vocals and bold playing are bringing new life to songs by Peter Green, Magic Sam, and Albert King.

Producers Josh Smith and Joe Bonamassa are helping Taylor soar; *The Blues Album* is 100 percent passion, blues, fierce guitar, and soul.

Why did it take so long for you to collaborate with Joe Bonamassa?

I like to keep work and friendship separate, but during Covid we had a chance to talk more. I told him I had this idea for a covers album. We started throwing out ideas we thought would work for my voice. Eventually, it became apparent that he was producing it.

I wanted to have fun with this because I was burned out from touring. I wanted to get back to it and enjoy it. If you're not enjoying it, there's no point in doing it. My plan was to make an album with my best friend, make an album I always wanted to make, and hope for the best.

What was your criteria in choosing songs?

We never spoke about it, but we were in agreement that we didn't want to do "Hoochie Coochie Man," "Sweet Home Chicago," or "Stormy Monday." The main thing was to do songs that meant something to me. I've always felt that if I don't believe in the lyric, then I can't do a good performance. If I'm not feeling it, I can't make the listener feel something. That's my job as a performer – to make them feel something, whether it's good or melancholy.

Albert King's "Can't You See What You're Doing To Me" was on my setlist back when I was a 13-year-old schoolgirl, so it's nice to re-address it as an adult (laughs). I imagine it wasn't the most authentic blues you've ever heard.

Little Richard's "I Don't Know What You've Got" is interesting because he didn't do many ballads. It's also one of the greatest vocal performances I've ever heard. Joe wanted to push me as a singer; blues, for me, is all about the vocal. B.B. King, Muddy, and Freddie were great guitar players, but they were also *brilliant* singers. B.B. could have been a singer if he hadn't picked up the guitar. You sell a blues song through the vocals.

Did you use a single rig for the album?

That was one thing Joe was adamant about. We were going to pick *one* tone and use it for the whole album. I was more than happy with that because it's the most-authentic way of doing it for blues. I'm also lazy and didn't want to fuss around with pedals (laughs). It's one less bloody thing to worry about.

Amps, I left it up to Joe. He knows more and has a vast collection. We set up a '62 Deluxe and one of his Dumble Overdrives and plugged straight into my main guitar, which is a '66 Esquire affectionately called Junior. We messed with mic placement and reverb, but it was two amps running at the same time, both pretty cranked.

What do you use on the road?

In the U.K., I use a Super Reverb. In the U.S., I prefer a Bassman. I normally don't use new Fenders, but the new Bassman is pretty tasty. Tweed Fenders are my jam; I plug those into my Esquire, which I got when I was 15 and fits my tiny baby hands.

What's it like to collaborate with Josh and Joe in the studio?

Joe is the crazy mad scientist running the ship in the control room, Josh is a laid-back chap. They complement each other very well. Josh was in the recording room with me, playing rhythm guitar and acting as musical director. Essentially, you have one producer in the control room overseeing everything and a second producer in the live room with the band. All the bases are covered. It took a lot of pressure off me so I could focus on my part. They both have a love for music and a strong work ethic. We're all Stevie Ray Vaughan nuts (laughs). I'm playing guitar because of Stevie. Reese Wynans played keyboards on the record, so we had three Stevie Ray nerds in the studio, all scared to ask him questions about Stevie (laughs). It was awesome.

What's on your schedule?

I'm doing a European tour with Devon Allman, Robert Randolph, and Eric Gales. I'm *more* than ready to hit the road. I'm driving all my friends mad! ***– Oscar Jordan***

Joanne Shaw Taylor: Rachael Iverson.

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NAIA IZUMI

Intuitive Artistry

It's difficult to pigeonhole the music of Naia Izumi, a singer/songwriter who's also one of the most uncanny guitarists around.

"I make music I'm *not* hearing," says Naia, who was diagnosed with autism at the age of 16. On his new album, *A Residency in the Los Angeles Area*, he uses two-handed tapping, chiming chords, whammy-bar swoops, and a complex ear to craft a variation of modern soul music. Some of the guitar licks and chords may sound like electronic effects or multiple guitarists, but it's all Izumi. Add his mellifluous vocals and you have a truly singular collection of songs.

Naia gave *VG* a glimpse into his organic, intuitive approach.

Most guitarists use two-handed technique for flashy solos, but you use it as part of the groove and harmony in "As It Comes." Who are your influences?

Nobody, really. I've hardly ever listened to any lead guitarists and, if I do, it's more after the fact; someone might say one of my solos sounds like so-and-so, but I've probably never heard that person, so I might check out their music.

My music is really about my way of thinking, and letting it come out – I find influences everywhere. I'm a conceptual and objective thinker, so I listen to everything separately and take little pieces out of the weirdest little places. Ultimately, it's not a matter of *who* I listen to – I listen to the various sounds and timbres, and think about how can I use that in my own music.

You guitar groove is meticulous. Are you also a drummer?

I'm not a drummer – I'm just black. My blood is rhythmic. It's in my heart and soul, and as a black man, it's just *there*. I *did* learn to play drums later on, but it had nothing to do with my guitar playing.

Your sense of chord harmony is pretty sophisticated, as in "Voodoo." Did you study music theory?

To be honest, I just figure stuff out, crash into walls, and create my own process. It's just listening; I've been doing this for over 30 years now, so I've had lots of time to figure things out.

"Sad Song" has what sounds like layers of lush guitars. How did you build that, and what effects did you use?

I barely use any effects – the only thing I used there was one guitar with an auto-wah sound on it. Instead of using it in the percussive way most guitarists do, I used it more of a filter effect, letting it slowly do its thing. There might be an acoustic guitar on that track, I don't really remember.

Your guitar doesn't always sound like a guitar – it's like an ethereal keyboard pad. Are there backward effects?

No, it's mostly just the Volume knob on my guitar. I use the vibrato and some reverb, but I don't use a whole lot of effects. There's a little amp overdrive, too.

What other gear did you use on the album?

Mainly my Fender Jazzmaster and Deluxe Reverb, some overdrive, and the controls on the guitar – the pickups and switches, and how I manipulate them. It's a super-simple approach; I prefer to use basic stuff in a creative way.

Talk about your writing process. Does a song start with chords, taps, or lyrics?

I think about it this way: If all sound is vibration, then what is vibration? It's *rhythm*. And what makes these sounds unique are the different kinds of rhythms inside the vibrations, their different speeds and pitches. So that's my process – I just come up with rhythm, find a melody, and figure out a low note to use as a contrast to fill in the space.

Did your playing evolve at the same time as your vocals? They blend like one instrument.

I've been doing this stuff for decades and making a lot of mistakes – and sounding like s**t much of the time. But when I fail, I learn from it. I absolutely hate singing, but there's nobody else that had the intelligence and competence to sing around the stuff I create as a guitar player. So many other singers want to sound like everyone else; I love making music so much that I decided to embark on the journey to teach myself to sing what I heard in my imagination. I'll never be able to do it exactly right, but I can get close; the timbre of my voice isn't what I want, but that's my personal secret. It took a lot of time and sacrifice, but my music has gotten to the point where it all blends well. Developing your own style is really something you have to be patient about. The whole thing is a process and journey. ***– Pete Prown***

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MARK TREMONTI

Three-Band Man

The odds of any guitarist being in a highly successful rock band are long. Chances of being in two are slim. Three? Virtually unheard of. But guitarist Mark Tremonti is one of the lucky few – first climbing the charts with Creed before forming Alter Bridge, then fronting his own band, Tremonti. In September, the latter released its fifth studio album, *Marching In Time*. One of rock's busiest gentlemen spoke with *VG* about his new music, gear, and future.

How did being the band's singer and songwriter affect the creation of guitar parts on *Marching in Time*?

From a guitar standpoint, it's always a race to the finish. Once you finalize a previous album, you have to dive back into your guitar obsession to gain as much knowledge and skill as you tackle another record, so you don't just keep spitting out the same tricks. Once you have the arrangements and you've tracked rhythm guitars, you've got a two- or three-week window to finalize leads. For me, that's always the biggest race to finish. The previous record (*A Dying Machine*) was a concept album – a long, fictional story that required a commitment, more diving in. This one, each song stands on its own. It's easier to digest right off the bat.

There are a lot of pleasantly surprising twists and turns in "A World Away."

That song started with me thinking the beginning would be great with a big, chunky, muted, dynamic guitar part that would grab attention. Normally, I'll find a drum loop or tap something myself, then play along to get a feel and tempo. Then, I'll try to tackle a chorus, a verse, a bridge, a pre-chorus, and probably write four times as many parts as necessary. After that, I'll chop the ones that aren't as interesting, make it as dynamic as possible, and connect the parts.

Which amps did you use?

It's about 80 percent my signature PRS MT 100, which is going to be released in early 2022; hopefully, we'll have it at NAMM. I released the MT 15 a couple of years ago, and the MT 100 is the big brother 100-watt version with a third channel. I coupled it on the dirty side with a Cornford RK100 – one of my favorite amps of all-time – and a Victory V40 on the clean side, along with the MT 15.

How about the guitars?

Primarily, I used my signature PRS. When I didn't use that, it was one of my producer's PRS SE Baritones. There was also one of PRS' first baritones, which I'm lucky to own. It has made a ton of records by Chevelle, Limp Bizkit, Incubus. We were on a tour, and Limp Bizkit was on a show, and Wes [Borland] came over and was like, "Is that the guitar I think it is?" It's one of the best-tracking baritones you could imagine.

What initially attracted you to PRS guitars?

As a kid, it was my dream to have a job at a guitar shop. I applied and always got turned down. Once I got a song on the local radio station, I finally got that job, but I only had it for a month or two before we got our record deal. *But*, at the shop we had a few PRSs way up on the top rack, which I couldn't afford. Then, when we were in Boston, all of our gear was stolen. We filed an insurance claim and I finally had the cash to afford a PRS. Turned out I couldn't play it on stage, though, because the switches were all in spots I wasn't used to (laughs).

In the early 2000s, I was approached by PRS and they said, "Why don't we design your guitar?" And at that point, it was just me and Carlos Santana who had signature models.

What is the status of Alter Bridge and Creed?

I'm writing right now for the next Alter Bridge record – me and Myles [Kennedy] plan on getting together in January to put our heads together with new music. With Creed, there's always phone calls, "These promoters want you to do shows." Nothing's concrete – it's just talk at the moment. ***– Greg Prato***

Mark Tremonti: Scott Diussa.

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CHRIS TAPP

Heavy Adversity

Unphased by knee-jerk comparisons to rock duos like the White Stripes, Royal Blood, and Black Keys, The Cold Stares have nothing to worry about. Their teeth-rattling blues-rock sound is heavier than anything those bands could dream of. Guitarist Chris Tapp is the fuzz wizard behind the band's literary and sonic persona, and their current album, *Heavy Shoes*, is the sound of a monster walking.

What are the disadvantages of being in a power duo?

It would sometimes be nice to have a bass player or an organ to hold things down for me to explore a little bit. It's frustrating sometimes. If I make a mistake live, then I've made a mistake for two guitar amps and a bass amp – I've screwed it up for the whole band (laughs). I play solos in a hole. I have half a bar to play a solo then come back in. At the same time, it's made me a better guitarist and helped me refine my songwriting.

Your lyrics are loaded with harsh times.

If you go through a divorce or cancer, all that stuff eventually creeps into your songwriting. As soon as I got through treatment and stopped putting up walls, I started letting my emotions come into the songs. Certain songs reflect my grandad dying, but I'm not specifically writing about that. I'm allowing sentiment to come through. Somebody else may not have gone through cancer, but maybe they lost a son, a daughter, and have gone through the emotions. When you feel that in the emotions of someone else's songs, you feel like you're not alone. It's certainly done that for me.

"Strange Light" is such a great tune.

That's the one I hoped the label would've used as the single. I've been working the last couple of years learning how to make the guitar sound big. Not that it's giant in the mix, but in the way it has depth. That song has multiple guitar tracks. I have a De Lisle ABY amp switch that allows me to play through four amps at once and that song has a Friedman Dirty Shirley, an old Super Reverb, and a fuzz. I wanted it fuzzy, but I wanted a different flavor, so I mixed in a normal amp with one that's fuzzed, then panned them. I'm also carving out space where the verses aren't so big, so the choruses light up. So I'll have two guitars and two amps panned for the verses, then when the chorus hits, an old Fender amp comes straight up the middle. I was happy with the way that came out.

Which fuzz are you using?

I used two on "Strange Light"; the chorus is the King Tone Mini Fuzz, the other is the EarthQuaker Devices Dirt Transmitter, which has a bias control where you can get it to where the speakers are ripping without going over the top. You can also get it to make a great distortion sound. I have the Dirty Shirley running on one side, with a classic rock-type sound. The Dirt Transmitter is running through the '68 Super Reverb.

You're running an Octavia, as well.

Yes. Live, my first amp gets the guitar's regular signal. The second amp is one octave down. The third is two octaves down and runs through a bass rig. I use a TC Electronic Sub 'N Up Octaver for a bit of the octave up or octave down, to thicken the tone. Anything that has heavy riffs is a little bit of octave. I've been doing that live, so I don't want to overdo it in the studio. It thickens everything up and helps with the clarity and separation of notes.

What's your main guitar?

I put it together using a Fender Custom Shop Meteora body, which is between a Jazzmaster and some kind of spaceship-looking thing. I thought it was cool. Ed Magee (Executive VP of Operations) at Fender said, "Why don't you make this guitar yours?" When you see a Les Paul, you think of Jimmy Page. When you see a Strat, you think of Jimi Hendrix. I love old guitars, but I wanted something I could brand with. So, I put a reverse Strat headstock on the body, installed TV Jones pickups, and added a Bigsby. A year later, I got a white one with EVH humbuckers, and those are my two main guitars; they're super light and super comfortable. They get me in Les Paul territory, which is the sound of this band.

What's next?

We have 13 weeks in Europe where we play Germany, France, Belgium, and Holland. Then we come back and start writing the next record. ***– Oscar Jordan***

Chris Tapp: Alex Morgan.

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Young Jerry Kennedy with his 1950 Martin 00-18.

SEVENTY YEARS GONE

The Return of Jerry Kennedy's 00-18

Nashville legend Jerry Kennedy has won Grammy awards and owned numerous collectible instruments. And if *Guinness World Records* tracked such things, he'd likely own the mark for most years passed between having a guitar stolen, then returned.

As a youngster in Shreveport, Louisiana, Kennedy showed promising musical ability early on, under the tutelage of bassist Tillman Franks.

"I started trying to play guitar when I was five years old," Kennedy recounted. "I owned a couple of cheap guitars; the one I remember most was a Gene Autry Harmony. My actual playing came after Tillman taught me a few chords when I was nine."

Kennedy's father took his son to Franks for his first guitar lesson one Friday afternoon in late June of 1950. That day, Jerry learned to play "How Far Is Heaven." The following Monday, the elder Kennedy died. Later that year, Jerry's mother bought a Martin 00-18 (serial number 114232) so he could continue to learn.

"Tillman became like a father to me," Kennedy said. "He was so kind, and when his schedule was overloaded, he allowed me to teach lessons to other students. I was always impressed with all of the people he knew; he introduced me to the 'Louisiana Hayride' stars."

One day, Franks lent the 00 to another musician under whose watch it fell from the roof of a car and was damaged so badly that Franks bought a new Gibson J-50 for Kennedy.

For decades, Kennedy assumed the Martin had been destroyed – until he received a call in early 2021 from Franks' daughter, Darlene, asking whether he wanted his "old Martin" back.

"She put me on my heels," said Kennedy. "I hadn't even *thought* about that guitar in 70 years."

The details are nebulous, but the 00 had apparently been repaired and remained with the Franks family, where it was used by Tillman's son, Ben.

"When I started playing in 1973 or so, Daddy gave me a baby Martin," said the younger Franks. "He told me it was the guitar Jerry started on. I kept it a long time, and around 2001 lent it to a Hank Williams impersonator who never returned it. My cousin, Murray, found it in a pawn shop in 2004 and we got it back for $200."

In early February, Kennedy's oldest son, Gordon (*VG*, October '07), and his friend, Kevin Butler, journeyed to Shreveport to pick up the instrument. After visiting with several members of the Franks family, they returned home to Nashville. Gordon recalled his father's reaction, seeing the guitar.

"When I handed it to him, he didn't look like someone who was holding a guitar as much as he was holding a piece of his *life*. His mother, having been recently widowed, bought the guitar for him."

"It was like seeing a childhood friend who meant *a lot* to me," said Jerry.

In May, the 00-18 was sent to Martin, where glue was applied to its loose braces and rosette as well as to cracks on the headstock and body. The neck was re-set, pickguard replaced, and the nut was shimmed.

Fellow Nashvillian Peter Frampton compared Kennedy's 00-18 to his own '54 Les Paul Custom "Phenix" (*VG*, July '19) which was lost for more than 30 years before being returned in 2013.

"Gordon told me the story and I got chills," said Frampton. "It's another great tale about a much-loved instrument finding its way home. I said to Gordon, 'Seventy years later? Wow, your dad has me beat by almost 40 years!' What a great ending!" **– *Willie G. Moseley***

Jerry Kennedy: Delores Kennedy. Young photo courtesy J. Kennedy.

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H.P. Newquist with a Roland GR-707 guitar synth. A '70s Godwin Guitar Organ (inset) on display.

STRING SPECTACLE

NGM Hosts "Medieval to Metal" Exhibit

The National Guitar Museum, which has toured the U.S. for more than a decade, recently opened an exhibition titled "Medieval to Metal: The Art & Evolution Of The Guitar." We asked director H.P. Newquist to share a bit of insight on it.

When visitors see "Medieval to Metal," what are some common reactions?

They're often surprised at the breadth of shapes, colors, and materials that are part of the guitar universe – the aluminum National resonator, red-acrylic B.C. Rich, or an emerald-flame Teisco. Experienced guitarists often want to know the rationale behind oddball features like the Craviola's quasi-teardrop shape or our Silvertone 1487, which has a built-in speaker.

How far back do stringed instruments go?

To at least 3000 BCE; anything before that is considered pre-history.

And when did the six-string guitar become popular?

In the early 1800s, coinciding with the beginning of the Romantic movement; guitarists began playing melody notes on individual strings instead of strumming double courses, compelling them to adopt the design.

We don't often see clarinets or upright basses being transformed into ornate objects. Why are guitars so often imbued with artistic decoration?

That goes back to inlays and rosettes on ouds; Arabic designs were incredibly intricate and often used repeated inlay patterns. For electrics, that can be traced to Leo Fender's awareness of Southern California car culture. He painted instruments in Detroit car colors, using the exact same paint. Fender designer Freddy Tavares further broke out of the single-cutaway concept by using a French-curve template to draw the Strat, which changed everything for luthiers.

As a nation, America became wired for electricity in the 1920s. Then, in the '30s, Rickenbacker's lap-steel changed music.

Rickenbacker was the first company to mass-produce electric guitars, and the impetus for electrification was that early steel-guitar players couldn't hear themselves over the rest of the band. Lap steels – played *face up* – were used primarily by Hawaiian bands touring America in the '30s. Rickenbacker co-founder George Beauchamp added the horseshoe pickup, which made projection a moot point. Later, when jazz, country, and blues guitarists saw what Hawaiian players were doing with electricity and amplification, they wanted it for themselves. That prompted Paul Bigsby, Leo Fender, Paul Tutmarc, Les Paul, and others to create guitars that could be played *face out*, and not necessarily on the lap.

The exhibit includes some oddball Russian solidbodies.

During the Cold War, Russia wouldn't do business with the West. Yet, Russian teenagers – like those everywhere in the '60s and '70s – heard guitar-driven rock and roll and wanted to play it. To appease potentially rebellious youth, several Russian factories were converted to guitar production with no understanding of how to do that. They used military electronics and cheap plywood for bodies and necks; the electronics were produced to Russian specs, not Western standards. This created ungainly guitars that looked and felt like tanks.

In terms of art, which is the most beautiful in the show?

I'd say the '70s Godwin Guitar Organ, which is an example of sleek Italian design with its 19 switches and 13 knobs. Also, the Hagstrom Goya 80, which was manufactured in the early '60s from accordion materials including white pearloid for its fretboard and appointments, the sparkle finish, and the pushbuttons.

The Stratocaster remains one of the best-selling guitars of all time. Why?

The Strat is buried in our collective subconscious as the definitive electric guitar. It was also designed to deliver more playing comfort and tonal variety.

What's the most popular guitar in the show?

The most popular one for selfies is the Air Guitar – yes, we display one – but most players want to get their hands on the late-Renaissance-era theorbo, probably because it's six feet long and has 16 strings

In putting together the show, what did you personally learn about the evolution of the guitar?

One thing that strikes me over and over is that, with the invention of the amplified electric guitar, people heard a sound they'd never heard before. That's a significant turning point in human history. No wonder recordings like Link Wray's "Rumble" scared the previous generation.

Where will the exhibition be appearing next?

It will be in Pennsylvania until January 9, then goes to the Lauren Rogers Museum Of Art, in Mississippi, from January 25 until April 17, then it goes to The Powerhouse, in Durango, Colorado, for four months beginning May 1. Our larger exhibit, "Guitar: The Instrument That Rocked The World" will be in Denver through April. ***– Pete Prown*** VG

Photos courtesy of National Guitar Museum.

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Audley Freed and his Collings I-30 LC

Photo: Robert Forte

THE OVATION ADAMAS II

BY MICHAEL WRIGHT
THE DIFFERENT STRUMMER

What do you get when you cross a helicopter with a Martin dreadnought? Easy answer – Ovation guitars, perhaps the greatest champion of alternative materials in an age when traditional woods like Brazilian rosewood and Honduran mahogany have become virtually extinct. Among Ovation's alt-material creations, the Adamas is the ultimate expression.

The father of Ovation guitars was Charles (Charlie) H. Kaman (1918-2011), a man driven by two passions – engineering, and playing guitar. Kaman chose aeronautical engineering and, in 1945, got a job with helicopter pioneer Sikorski, in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Eventually, differences of opinion led Kaman to start the Kaman Aircraft Corporation.

Like any true guitar fanatic, Kaman kept one at work, for inspiration and diversion. Connecticut can be warm in the summer, very cold in winter. As a result, Kaman made his share of trips to the Martin factory, having repairs made, like splits in tops.

In 1965, he conceived a "better" guitar, specifically, one he could hang on his wall without fear of cracking. He set his engineers to work solving the problem using aeronautical principals applied to the guitar, focusing on the back and sides.

Kaman's designers came up with a spruce-topped guitar with a molded fiberglass body. They called it the Lyrachord, and among the first players to embrace it were folk/bluesman Josh White and jazz/classical fingerstylist Charlie Byrd. When Byrd was shown a prototype, the legend exclaimed, "This guitar deserves an ovation." A name was born!

Despite those early endorsements, Ovation guitars might never have taken off were it not for Glen Campbell, the Arkansas singer/songwriter who scored big in '67 with the pop-folk ballad "Gentle On My Mind." With Ovation, Campbell devised a signature model in '69 – the year his "Glen Campbell Goodtime Hour" variety show hit television airwaves. For nearly three years, Campbell played the show in front of a national audience, plucking his round-back Ovation. In 1970, Ovation developed its first acoustic/electric pickup system specifically for Campbell.

A surge in popularity of singer/songwriters through the '70s added to Ovation's success, the guitars' durability and amplified sound proving ideal complements to the genre.

Kaman wasn't one to rest on his laurels, and innovation continued to pour out of his

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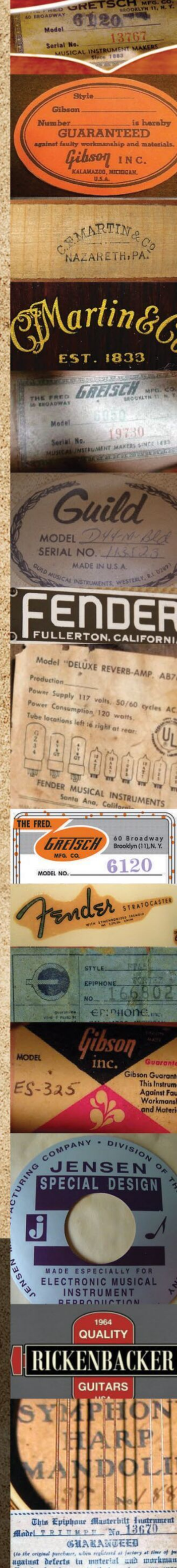

company, including an array of refinements to the Ovation guitar and a fascinating (if ultimately unsuccessful) obsession with trying to crack the solidbody electric guitar market with its own designs.

In for a penny, in for a pound, Kaman soon turned his attention to the guitar's top. As *VG* contributor/consulting editor Walter Carter relates in *The History of the Ovation Guitar*, Kaman's objective was to replace traditional spruce and eliminate the "problems" caused by a round soundhole in the middle of the top. The idea was to make the top as thin as possible (to increase resonance) while maintaining structural integrity. The soundhole creates a void in the middle of the stress lane that runs from head to bridge. This requires added bracing, which dampens vibrations.

The puzzle was solved with a top consisting of paper-thin birch sandwiched between two thin layers of carbon graphite. This allowed the top to be a mere 1/32" thick – thin enough for great vibration yet strong enough not to cave when tuned to pitch. Twenty-one variously sized soundholes were moved to the top's upper bass bout and given wooden "leaf" designs called "epaulets."

Add a walnut neck with the company's revolutionary "Kaman bar" reinforcement (a hollow/inverted T-shaped piece of cast aluminum) under the epoxy-infused walnut fretboard, "carved" hard-foam for the bridge and headstock, and an optional stereo pickup with EQ, and you have the Adamas, introduced in 1976.

Enthusiastically received by the guitar press and pros like Larry Coryell, the Adamas had a harder time with average players because guitarists are a pretty conservative lot *and* the sticker price over $2,000 was hefty for *any* guitar in the late '70s. In '81, Ovation introduced the "budget" Adamas II, which saved about $600.

The primary departures from the Adamas I are a five-piece mahogany and maple neck and a much simpler bridge and headstock design. Also, the II was offered only as an acoustic/electric with stereo output and an "EQ" that was basically a super-sensitive active Tone control. The neck has a thin V profile with a narrow nut and very electric-guitar feel – there's no way it would be confused with a Martin!

That said, it's a great-sounding guitar, with a rapid, sharp, crystalline attack, well-separated string voices, plenty of reserve volume, and rich harmonic content. Amplified, it's very clean.

How many Adamas IIs have been made is unknown. They're still offered in a cutaway version. Serial numbers apply to all variations and reflect production output, which appears to be approximately 1,200 to 1,500 per year. However, there are many variations. How many were Adamas II 1681s is impossible to know; the highest serial number found in online lists is 17958, which would be 1999-2000, suggesting the 1681 may have been replaced by other models about that time.

In 2007, Kaman Music Corp. was sold to Fender Musical Instruments and Adamas guitars continue to be produced, technically separated from its helicopter parent but forever technologically bound to Charlie Kaman and aeronautics. **VG**

1983 Ovation Adamas II 1681-5 with serial number 3598; 5 in the model number indicates color (black).

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ACCORDION TO PLAN

The Bell 30 RV Stereo-Reverb Combo

BY DAVE HUNTER

In some parts of the United States of the ’50s and ’60s, the premier amplified instrument was *not* the electric guitar, but the accordion, and one electronics conglomerate aimed to supply everything an aspiring player might need.

1961 BELL 30 RV STEREO-REVERB

- Preamp tubes: three 6EU7, one 7199, one 12AU7, one 12AX7
- Output tubes: four 6BQ5 (a.k.a. EL84)
- Rectifier: solidstate
- Controls: Ch1: Volume, Treble, Bass, Reverb, Tremolo Depth and Speed; Ch2: Volume, Treble, Bass
- Speakers: Two 10" Jensen P10Q
- Output: approximately 15 watts per-side stereo/dual mono

The products of Bell & Howell and Bell P.A. are relatively well-known. Despite its badge, this impressive 1961 Bell 30 RV Stereo-Reverb amplifier, however, was built by neither. Those familiar with the wedge-

Amp and photos courtesy of Jeffery Dec.

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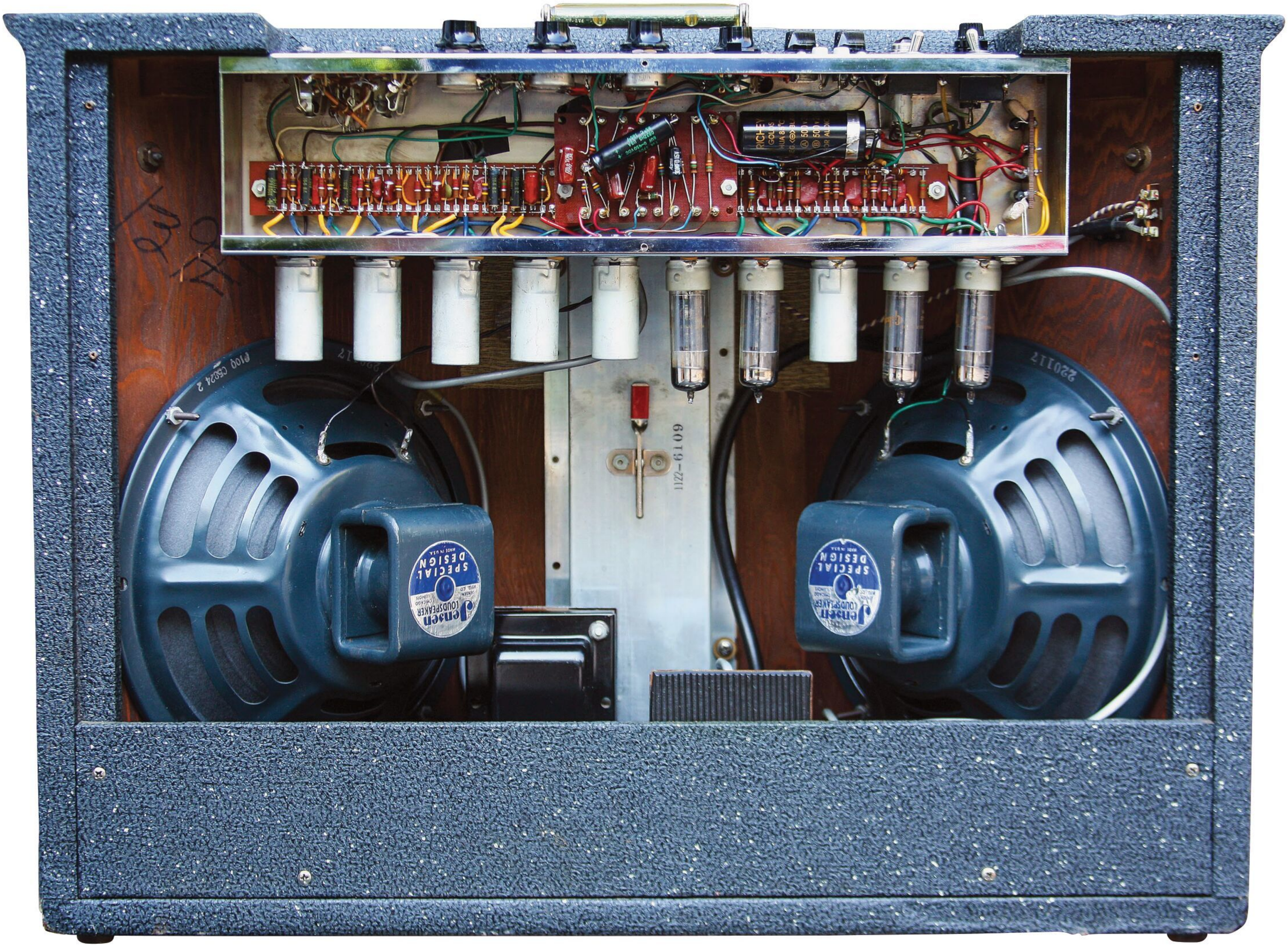


shaped enclosure will recognize it as the work of Gibson.

Bell Accordions was founded in New York by Aldo Mencaccini, an Italian immigrant who built his first accordion at the age of 11. Mencaccini was born in 1920 and emigrated with his family to the United States in 1937, quickly finding work with New York City accordion manufacturers Galant and Excelsior. Eventually, Mencaccini established his own facility for manufacturing accordions and related accessories, and also imported goods from Italy, which received his Bell brand name for distribution in the U.S. More than just an entrepreneur, Mencaccini was noted for his skills at tuning and designing accordions, and was the main designer behind what many consider one of the finest piano accordions ever manufactured, the Scandalli Super VI.

If all this feels a long way from guitar amplifiers, hold on – it's inching surprisingly close to our subject du jour. Mencaccini also contributed to the design of the Cordovox, a leading brand in electric accordions, which was distributed in the U.S. by Chicago Musical Instruments (CMI), which also distributed Bell accordions for a time – and, as guitarheads will already know, was the owner of Gibson guitars from 1944 to '69.

The manufacture of amplifiers intended for use with accordion was nothing new to Gibson when this 30 RV was made for Bell. Some Maestro-branded combos of the '50s had been sold for that market, including the GA-45T, an interesting 4x10" variation of the popular 1x12" Gibson GA-40. Like many of the era, however, such designs where intended for use with multiple instruments, and even if there was a dedicated accordion input, there was almost certainly one for the newly popular electric guitar.

In addition to displaying its remarkably clean condition including two pristine Jensen P10Q speakers, the rear view shows the 30 RV's unusual 10-tube complement.

Armed with this info, we might assume the Bell 30 is a re-badged Gibson GA-79 RVT, a similar 30-watt stereo amp (featured here in December of '18) with reverb and tremolo or the tremolo-less GA-98 RV, which wore the Maestro badge. And often, that *was* the case. This particular amplifier, however, which comes to us courtesy of *VG* reader Jeff Dec, is different from both. There are no records to tell us how it came to be, but indications are it was a prototype to test a new layout for the tremolo and tone controls, *or* a back-to-factory modification to add tremolo to an RV.

Gibson's wedge-shaped stereo amp was available as the tremolo-equipped/non-

The chassis (top) has the added tremolo circuit board, done in what appears to be entirely factory-spec wiring. In addition to the usual control layout and Stereo-Monaural switch, this amp's control panel carries the added individual Speed (S) and Depth (D) controls for the tremolo effect.

reverb GA-79 in late 1960 and early '61, the reverb-equipped non-tremolo GA-79 RV in '61, and the fully featured GA-79 RVT from '61 to '67. The RV was also commonly sold as the Maestro 30 Stereo-Reverb (a.k.a. GA-78 RV) and the Bell 30 RV seen here, which was also sometimes equipped with an RVT chassis with reverb and tremolo, though its front badge usually still just called it an RV (likely because so few were sold that it wasn't worth making up separate logo plates). All had nine tubes, while reverb/tremolo models carried stacked concentric knobs for individual Bass and Treble controls and tremolo Frequency and Depth. The reverb-only amps, on the other hand, had individual knobs for all controls.

Take a closer look at the control panel and chassis layout and you'll see tremolo and individual knobs for all positions, along with 10 tubes hanging from its underside. Inside, the tremolo circuit appears to be factory original (per the wiring and components), but is built on a separate terminal board mounted behind the larger main, wired to a tube socket that's also mounted differently, carrying a 12AX7 that doesn't exist in the rest of the range. On the control panel, the "S" and "D" controls (for tremolo speed and depth) have smaller knobs to help them fit between the other controls, and are mounted in holes drilled through the "Gibson" logo that every Bell and Maestro amp still carried.

Back-to-factory modifications were relatively common in the '50s and '60, which is a feasible explanation for this amp's state, even if we have no means of confirming such speculation. It's in impressively good condition for an amp of its age, and even carries the matching RCA tubes with which it was most likely born, all branded with the Gibson logo.

"I purchased it locally off of Craigslist 10 years ago," Dec tells us. "The guy said his father had purchased it locally new in the early '60s along with a '61 Epiphone Broadway. The pair had been used very sparingly over the years and were in amazing condition. The gentleman told me his father played them mostly over the holidays. I suspect it spent many years under the original cover that accompanied it."

Fired up, the 30 RV offers a range of configurations either as two individual 15-watt mono amps through their own single 10" Alnico Jensen P10Q, a bridged 30-watt amp through both Jensens, or a stereo amp of 15 watts per side, intended for use not only with stereo accordions, but also with guitars like Gibson's stereo ES-355.

"The tone is great, especially with a 335 or other semi-hollowbody," says Dec. "When pushed, it gets into a compressed, articulate, and singing overdrive not unlike an AC15 or similar EL84 amp with 10s. The tone controls are unusual, but usable – they seem to affect volume quite a bit, and when channels are jumped, the amp really does take on more character and volume. It's very usable in this way to find a great tone with nearly any guitar, though it prefers P-90s and humbuckers.

"The tremolo is simply amazing," he continued. "I'm not sure if the cabinet design has anything to do with it, but it's the best I've heard, next to my brown Fender Super. The reverb is typical of Gibson – saturated and surfy – quite different than a blackface Fender reverb, and more like a stand-alone tank."

We don't know whether Aldo Mencaccini was aware of the modification, though the master who put his brand name to it is still with us, having turned 101 years old in May. **VG**

Classics

Live-music fans who roamed South Florida from the early '80s until the mid 2000s might recognize Craig Ball's '67 Rickenbacker 360/12.

Ball was lead guitarist in the Rockerfellas, a band that was steadfast on the scene, playing '60s rock – Beatles, Stones, Kinks, Byrds, Hollies – at joints like the Candy Store, The Button (and Button South, where they opened for the Kinks), Washington Square, and Bayside. One day in '82, Ball and his bandmate, Drew Berlin (now a noted guitar dealer), paid yet another visit to their friends Ed and Michelle Oleck at Ed's Guitars, in Miami, where they often stopped to browse. Seeing the 360/12, Ball felt an impulse.

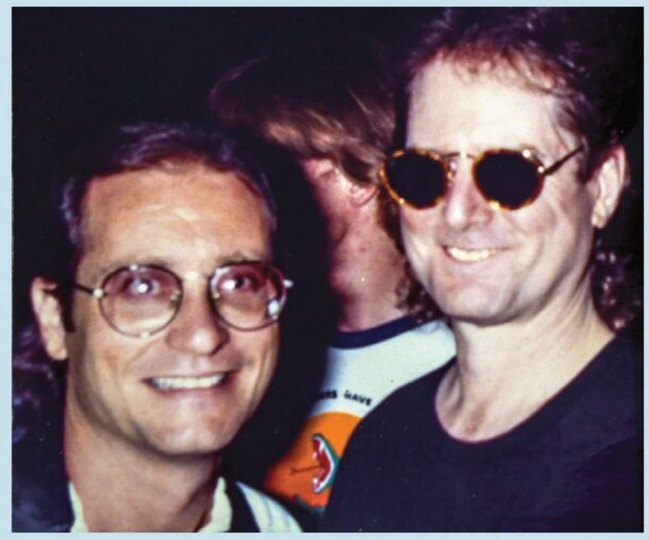
"It looked way better than the Montezuma Brown Rick 12-string I was using at the time – the patina on the crushed-pearl inlays was incredible! Plus, mine didn't have the toaster pickups," he said. "It was love at first sight – and sound (laughs)."

Ball and Berlin had jammed together in bands since junior high in '64, and each had several cool axes; Ball got good mileage from a '59 ES-335 and a '72 Les Paul Deluxe he modded with humbuckers, while Berlin played a '56 Les Paul Custom, a Rick 330, and two Epiphones – a Broadway and a Casino. But the Rockerfellas covered a ton of folky pop tunes, and Ball *needed* an electric 12 to play stuff like the Beatles' "Can't Do That," the Stones' "Ruby Tuesday," "As Tears Go By," and "19th Nervous Breakdown," the Byrds' "Mr. Tambourine Man," "Eight Miles High," "Turn! Turn! Turn!," the Mamas and the Papas' "California Dreamin'," The Hollies' "Bus Stop," and The Kinks' "Tired of Waiting for You." So....

"Ed was asking $800 for the 360/12, and I didn't even think twice, let alone try to bargain," Ball chuckled.

In '83, The Rockerfellas made local news by playing every night for four months at Art Stock's Playpen, in Fort Lauderdale, when that city was *the* best place in the world for spring break. Hard to miss, they were part of MTV promos and their gigs were advertised via banner planes flying over beaches. And of course, there was a Rolls Royce limo ("That's a whole other story!" Ball says).

Anyway, the Rick can be heard on the band's song "Everything I Say" from the 1993 compilation album *Jimmy Buffett Margaritaville Cafe Late Night Menu*, but its story extends beyond the Rockerfellas. In 2001, it appeared in a music video by the country-pop trio The Alice Band, where Amy Lindop is shown using it to pick the melody of "One Day At A Time" (the group's first and only album was produced by Giles Martin, son of Beatles producer George Martin). A singer/songwriter from Glasgow, Scotland, Lindop later adopted the stage name Amy Belle and, in 2004, sang a live arrangement of "I Don't Want To Talk About It" with Rod Stewart that has been viewed more than 500 million times on Youtube.



A decades-long fan of the Byrds, Craig Ball (left) met Roger McGuinn at the Miami Shores Theatre in 1990, where the folk-rock legend signed Ball's Fireglo 360/12. In 2001, the guitar was part of a video shoot for The Alice Band's "One Day At A Time" at the same venue.

Today, Ball says the 360/12 "...is on a well-deserved sabbatical."

– Ward Meeker

Do you have a classic/collectible/vintage guitar with an interesting personal story that might be a good fit for "Classics?" If so, send an e-mail to ward@vintageguitar.com for details on how it could be featured.

Craig Ball Rickenbacker 360/12; Jill Kahn.

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2021 HOLIDAY BUYER'S GUIDE

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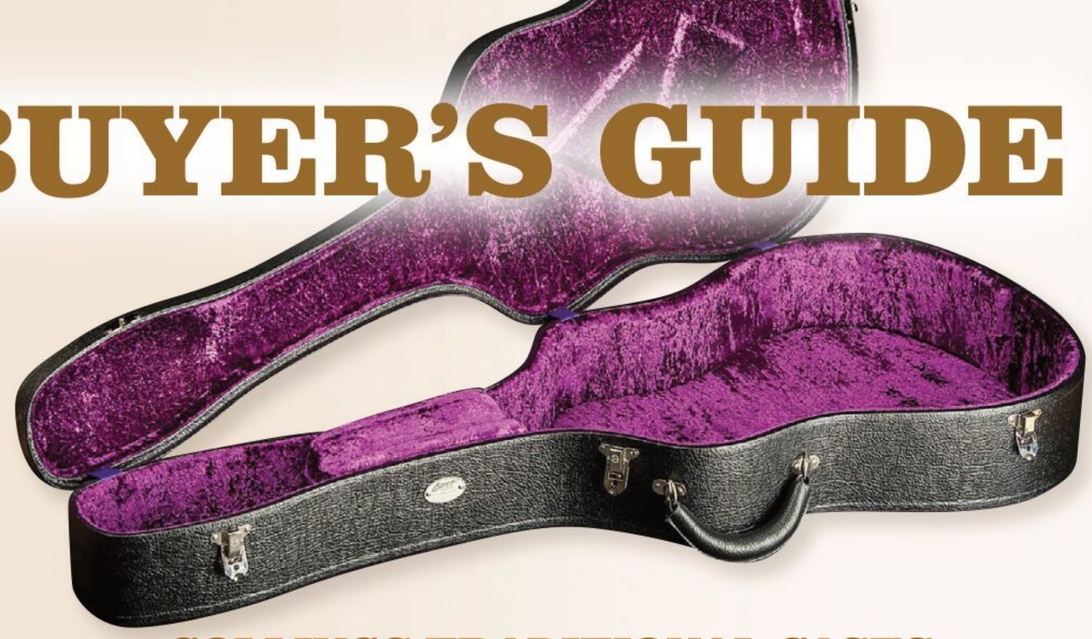

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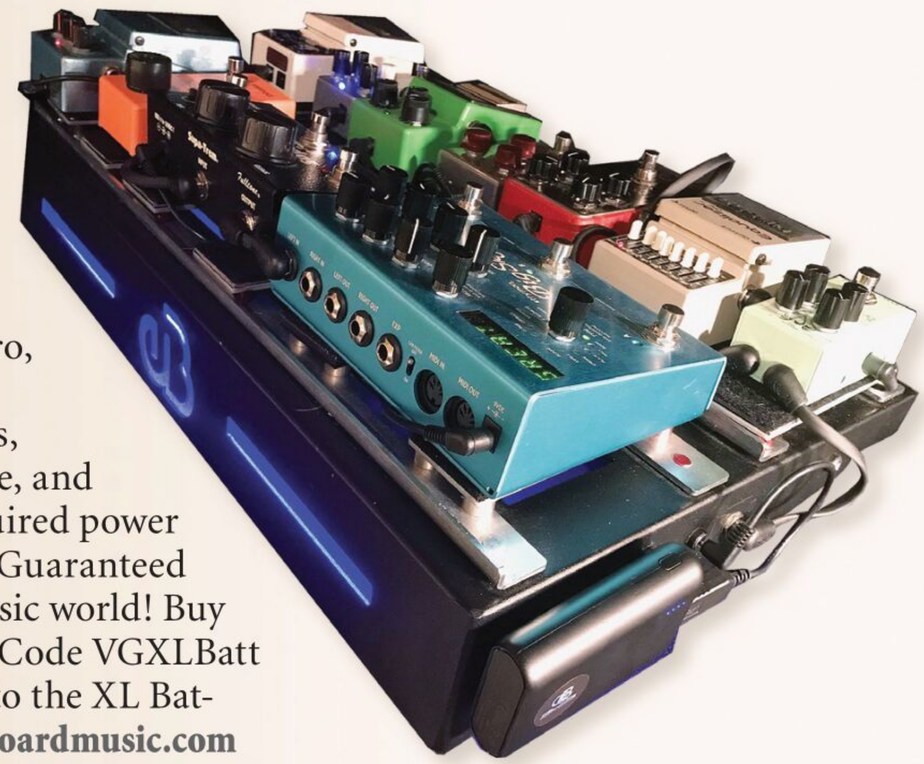

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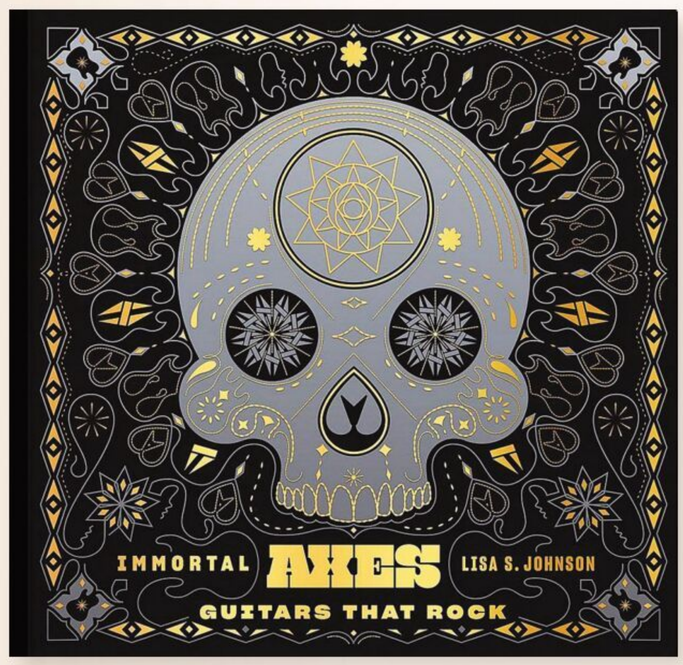

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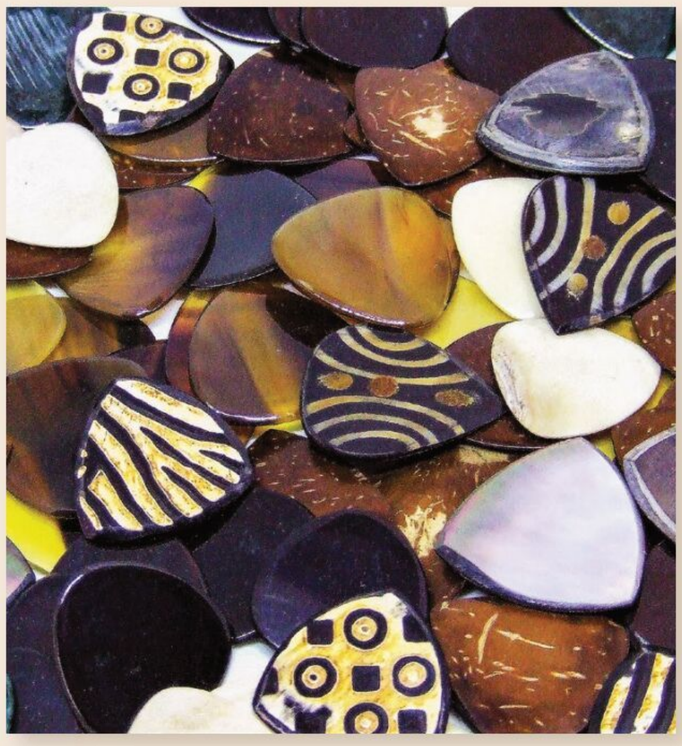

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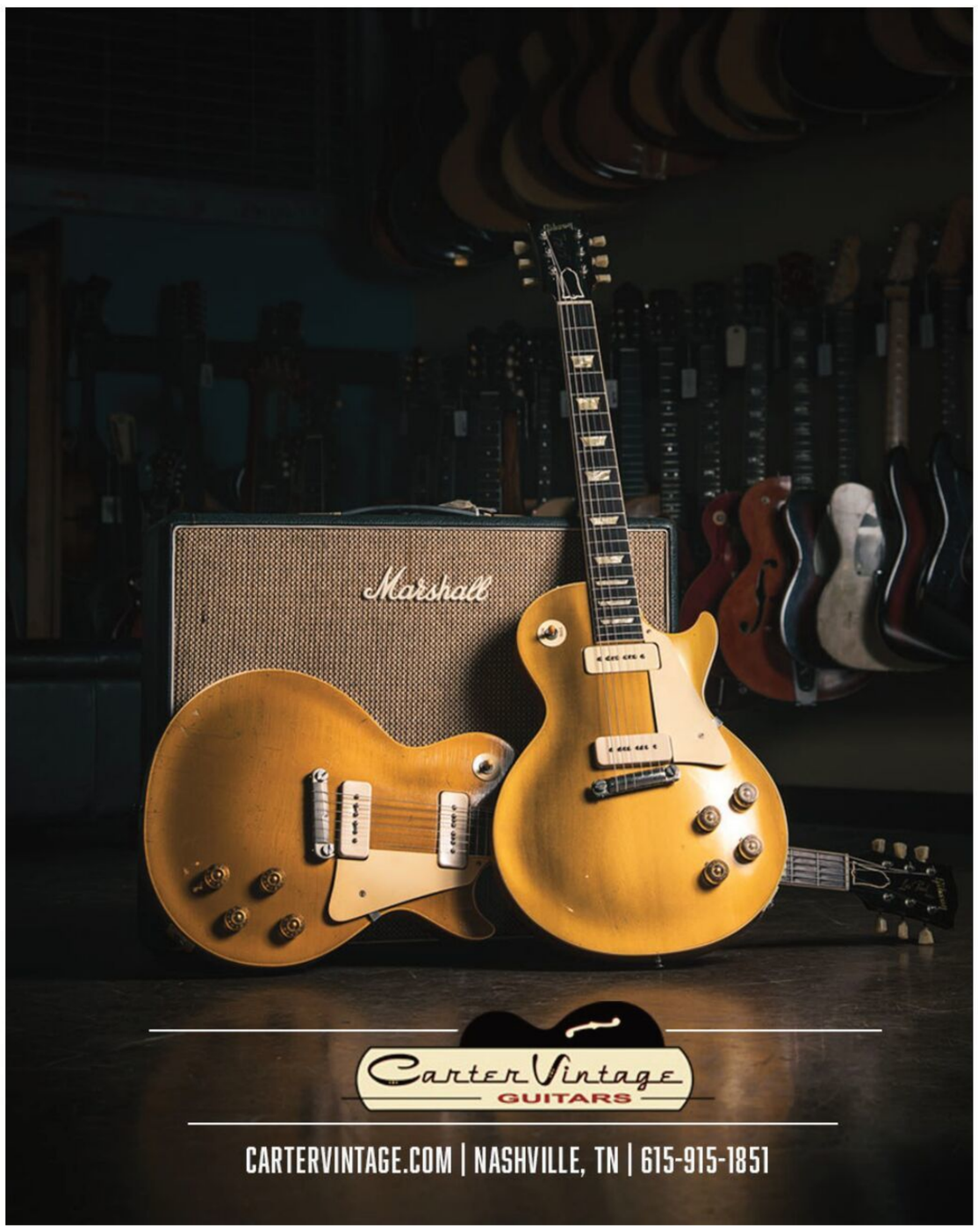

Price Guide

By Alan Greenwood & Gil Hembree

1962 Gretsch Duo-Jet.

NEW & UPDATED LISTINGS

YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND. LOW	EXC. COND. HIGH
1900	Acme Professor 5-string Banjo	Tree-of-Life board	$775	$1,000
1975	Alembic Series I Bass	Medium or long scale	$4,200	$5,500
1955	Bacon & Day Belmont (guitar)		$1,075	$1,400
1967	Baldwin Model 706	Double cut, semi-hollow	$700	$900
2008	Bourgeois D-150	Brazilian, Adirondack	$4,500	$5,800
1961	Burns Vibra Artist	3 pickups, 6 knobs	$650	$850
2008	Chapman Stick	10-string	$1,700	$2,200
2015	Collings 360 LT		$2,450	$3,200
1988	Collings C10	Mahogany, Sitka	$2,400	$3,200
2020	Collings D1A	Standard specs, mahogany, Adirondack	$3,000	$3,900
1920	Dyer Style 8 Harp Guitar	Tree-of-life	$7,700	$10,000
1998	Ehlers 15 SRC		$1,900	$2,475
1963	EKO Model 500/4V		$750	$1,000
1930	Epiphone Emperor (Acoustic Archtop)	Natural	$6,400	$8,300
1940	Epiphone Windsor Special Mandolin	Rare high-end	$9,800	$12,700
2010	EVH Wolfgang Special	Japan, opaque finish	$825	$1,100
1910	Farland Concert Grand 5-String Banjo		$825	$1,100
1966	Fender Coronado I	Solid colors	$1,400	$1,825
1999	Fender Cyclone	Various (Mexico)	$550	$725
1950	Fender Deluxe Amp	Tweed, TV front	$2,450	$3,200
1988	Fender Flame Elite	Diamond markers, Japan	$1,350	$1,750
1964	Fender Jaguar	Sunburst	$3,900	$5,100
1962	Fender Jazz Bass	Early '62, sunburst, stacked	$19,000	$25,200
1958	Fender Jazzmaster	Sunburst, maple 'board	$8,300	$10,900
2020	Fender Mustang Special (Pawn Shop Series)	Japan, HH	$400	$575
1953	Fender Precision Bass	Blond, slab body	$15,000	$20,000
1955	Fender Stratocaster	Blond, nickel, late '55	$56,000	$73,000
1972	Fender Stratocaster	Rare Color, 3-bolt	$6,400	$8,300
1954	Fender Telecaster	Blond black 'guard	$32,000	$42,000
2011	Fender '52 Telecaster (Custom Shop)	Closet Classic	$1,950	$2,525
1957	Fender Tremolux Amp	Tweed, 1x12, narrow panel	$3,600	$4,725
1987	G & L ASAT	Leo Fender logo headstk	$1,025	$1,325
1993	G & L Climax XL	HH	$800	$1,025
1953	Gibson Electric Bass (EB-1)		$4,200	$5,450
1991	Gibson ES-335 Reissue/1959 Dot Reissue	Cherry, sb, walnut, black	$1,925	$2,500
1958	Gibson ES-335 TDN	Natural, unbound neck	$70,000	$92,000
1975	Gibson F-12 Mandolin		$2,250	$3,000
2015	Gibson F-5 Fern (Custom Shop) Mandolin		$5,800	$7,700
1923	Gibson F-5 Mandolin	Loar, non-side bound	$82,000	$114,000
1963	Gibson Firebird I	Sunburst, reverse, hardtail	$11,200	$14,500
1952	Gibson GA-40 Les Paul Amp	Brown, 2-tone, LP grille, 1x12	$1,400	$1,800
1954	Gibson GA-55 Amp	30 watts, 2x12	$2,600	$3,400
1954	Gibson J-200N	Natural	$10,500	$13,500
1945	Gibson J-45	Sitka top	$6,700	$8,700

Eric Newell with a 1929 Gibson L-2.

YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND. LOW	EXC. COND. HIGH
1935	Gibson L-5	Values vary according to specs	$4,100	$8,200
1976	Gibson Les Paul Artisan & Artisan/3	2 pickup, walnut, sb, ebony	$3,900	$5,000
2003	Gibson '57 Les Paul Goldtop	Brazilian rw (w certificate)	$4,900	$6,300
2009	Gibson '59 Les Paul Burst Brothers	1st run, 34 made	$6,300	$8,200
2021	Gibson 1954 Les Paul Goldtop Heavy Aged	Murphy Lab	$3,800	$5,000
1954	Gibson Les Paul Jr.	Sunburst, single-cut	$6,000	$8,000
1952	Gibson Les Paul Model	5/8" knobs, bound neck	$15,000	$19,500
1990	Gibson RB-3 Reissue 5-String Banjo		$2,850	$3,675
2004	Gibson SJ-200 Elite Custom Koa	Figured koa, abalone trim	$3,150	$4,100
2015	Godin Passion RG-3		$1,175	$1,525
2000	Goodall Standard	Jumbo, mahogany, sitka	$2,475	$3,200
1954	Gretsch Chet Atkins (6120)	Single-cut, G-brand, Western	$10,200	$13,200
1956	Gretsch Constellation		$1,425	$1,850
1962	Gretsch Duo-Jet (6128)	Sparkle finish, double cut	$4,000	$5,200
1955	Guild Aragon F-30	Maple	$1,850	$2,400
1960	Guild Aragon F-30	Mahogany	$1,700	$2,200
1958	Harmony H952 Colorama		$275	$400
2017	Heritage H-575		$2,100	$2,700
1957	Hofner Model 111 Lap Steel		$425	$550
1966	Hofner Model 182 Solid Bass		$725	$950
1968	Hopf Explorer Standard		$600	$800
1900	Howe-Orme Mandolin Style 3	Brazilian, plain style	$1,300	$1,700
1975	Ibanez Model 2612 Artist		$900	$1,175
1978	Ibanez Model 2710 Custom Artist	Exotic wood, anvil case	$1,550	$2,000
1985	Jackson Kelly Custom		$1,350	$1,800
1988	Jackson Randy Rhoads (USA)	Early Ontario-built	$1,525	$2,000
1999	Jackson Surfcaster SC1	Tube humbuckers	$950	$1,250
1968	Kalamazoo KG-1/KG-1 A	Later SG body	$375	$500
1910	Knutsen Harp Guitar	Various	$1,500	$4,000
1988	Kramer Baretta	With graphics	$775	$1,000
1979	Kramer DMZ-1000		$900	$1,200
1990	Lowden Flat Top	Standard level, various	$2,000	$4,000
1955	Magnatone Troubadour Lap Steel	Wood body	$460	$600
1946	Martin D-18	Adirondack	$13,700	$17,800
1947	Martin D-18	Sitka	$7,075	$9,200
1951	Martin D-28	476 made	$9,500	$12,350
1940	Martin F-1	Mahogany, 54 made	$1,850	$2,400
2010	Martin HD-16R Adirondack		$1,450	$1,900
1968	Martin N-20	Brazilian, short scale, 12 made	$5,500	$7,200
2008	Martin OM Negative	Black	$2,800	$3,600
1931	Martin OM-28	Late 1931, large guard, standard tuners	$49,000	$63,000
1994	Martin OM-45	Indian rosewood, 9 made	$5,100	$6,650

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

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Boingosaurus Music

Dave Belzer
Burst Brothers

Walter Carter
Carter Vintage

Daniel Escauriza
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John Majdalani
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Dave Rogers
Dave's Guitar Shop

Drew Berlin
Drew Berlin's Vintage Guitars

Stan Werbin & S.J. "Frog" Forgey
Elderly Instruments

Dewey Bowen
Freedom Guitar

Rick Hogue
Garrett Park Guitars

Gary Dick
Gary's Classic Guitars

Eric Newell
Gruhn Guitars

Richard Johnston
Gryphon Strings

Kennard Machol & Leonard Coulson
Intermountain Guitar & Banjo

Jim Singleton
Jim's Guitars

Kevin Borden
Kebo's BassWorks

Dave Hinson
Killer Vintage

Timm Kummer
Kummer's Vintage Instruments

Buzzy Levine
Lark Street Music

Larry Wexer
Laurence Wexer, Ltd.

Artie Leider
McKenzie River Music

Neal Shelton
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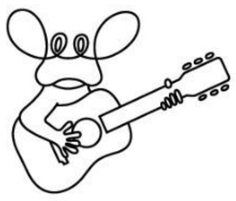

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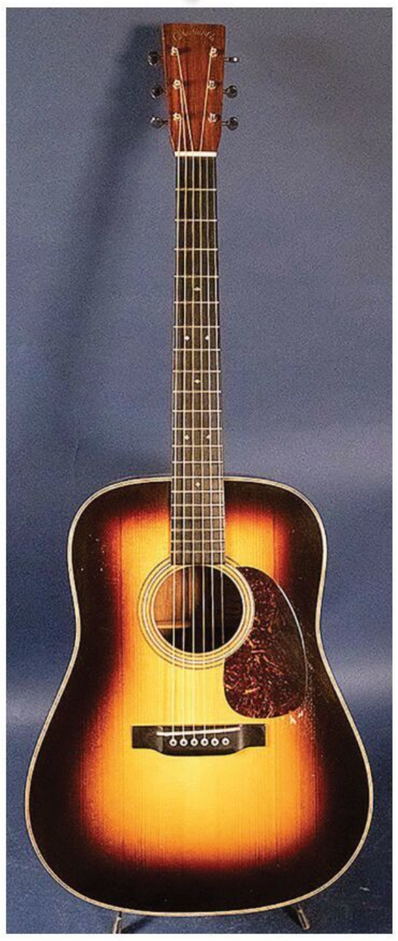

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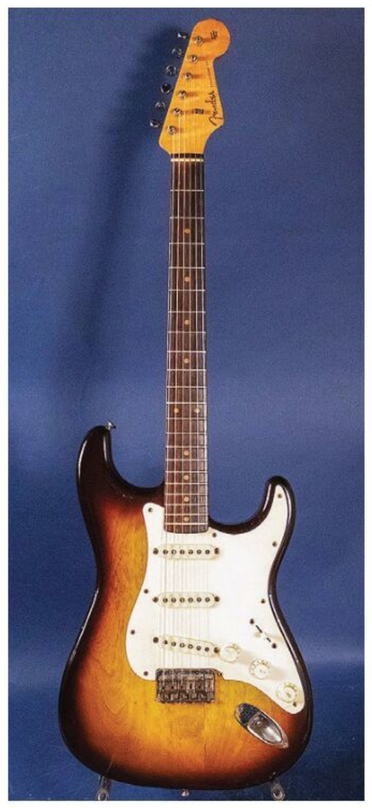

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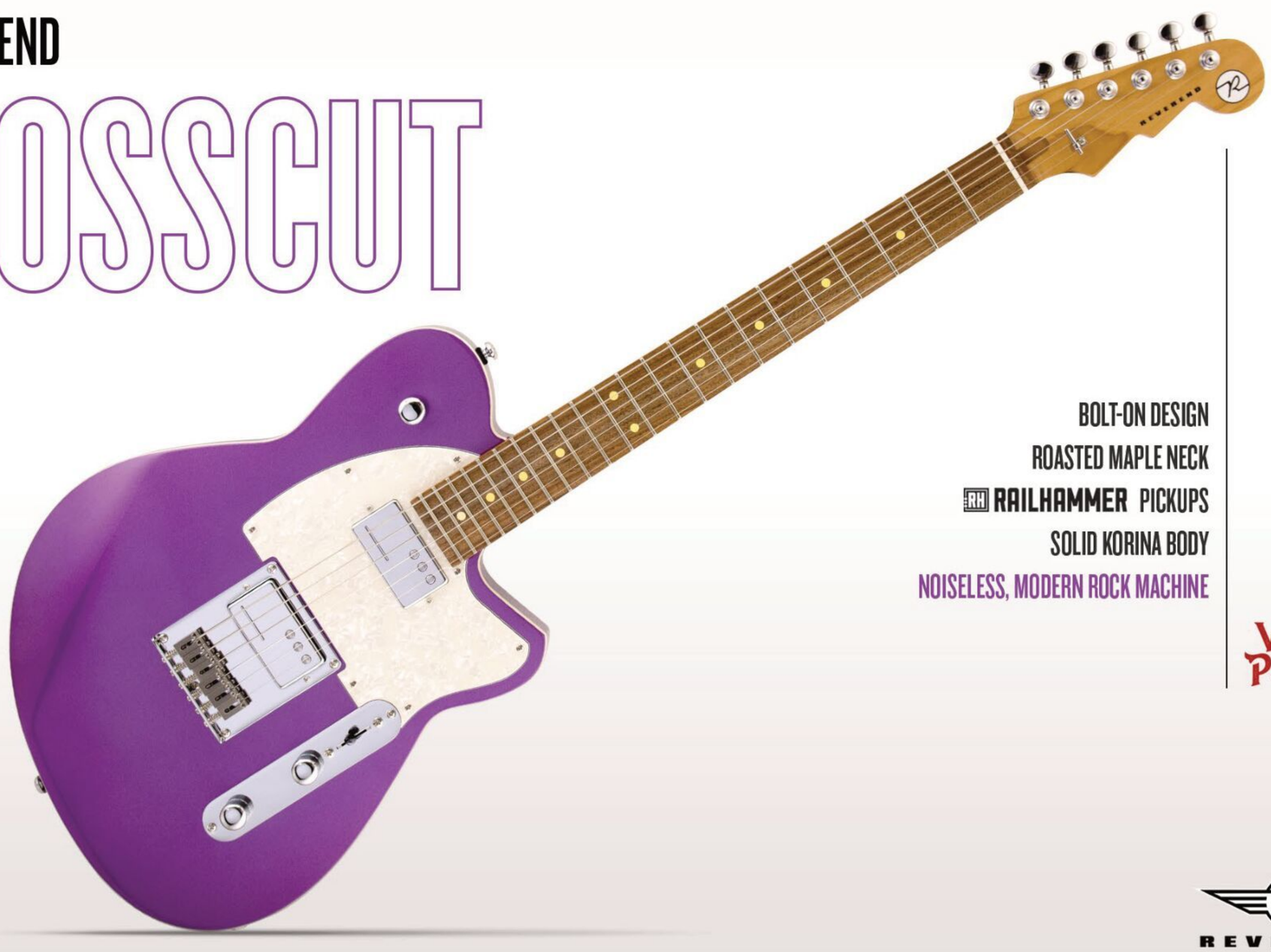

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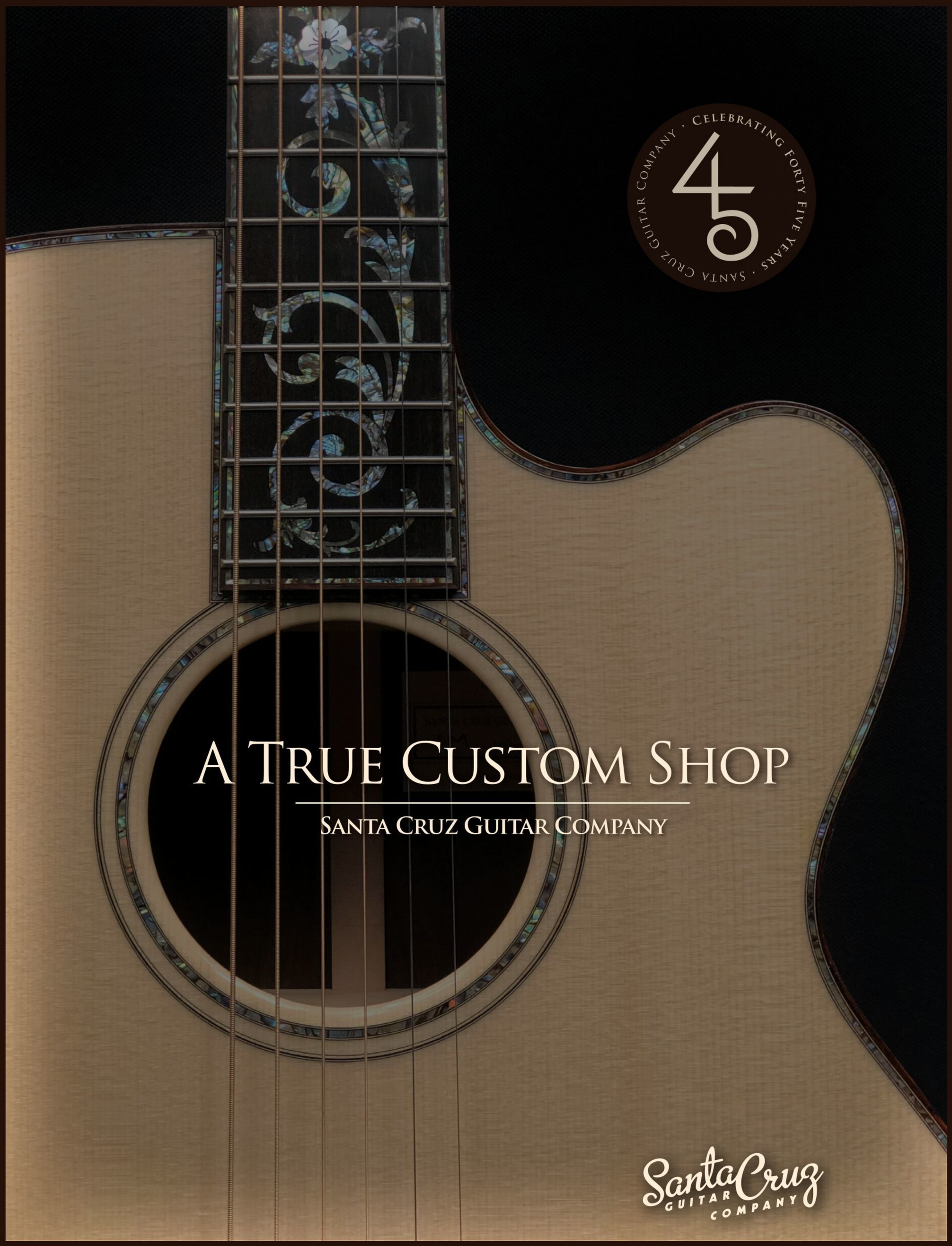

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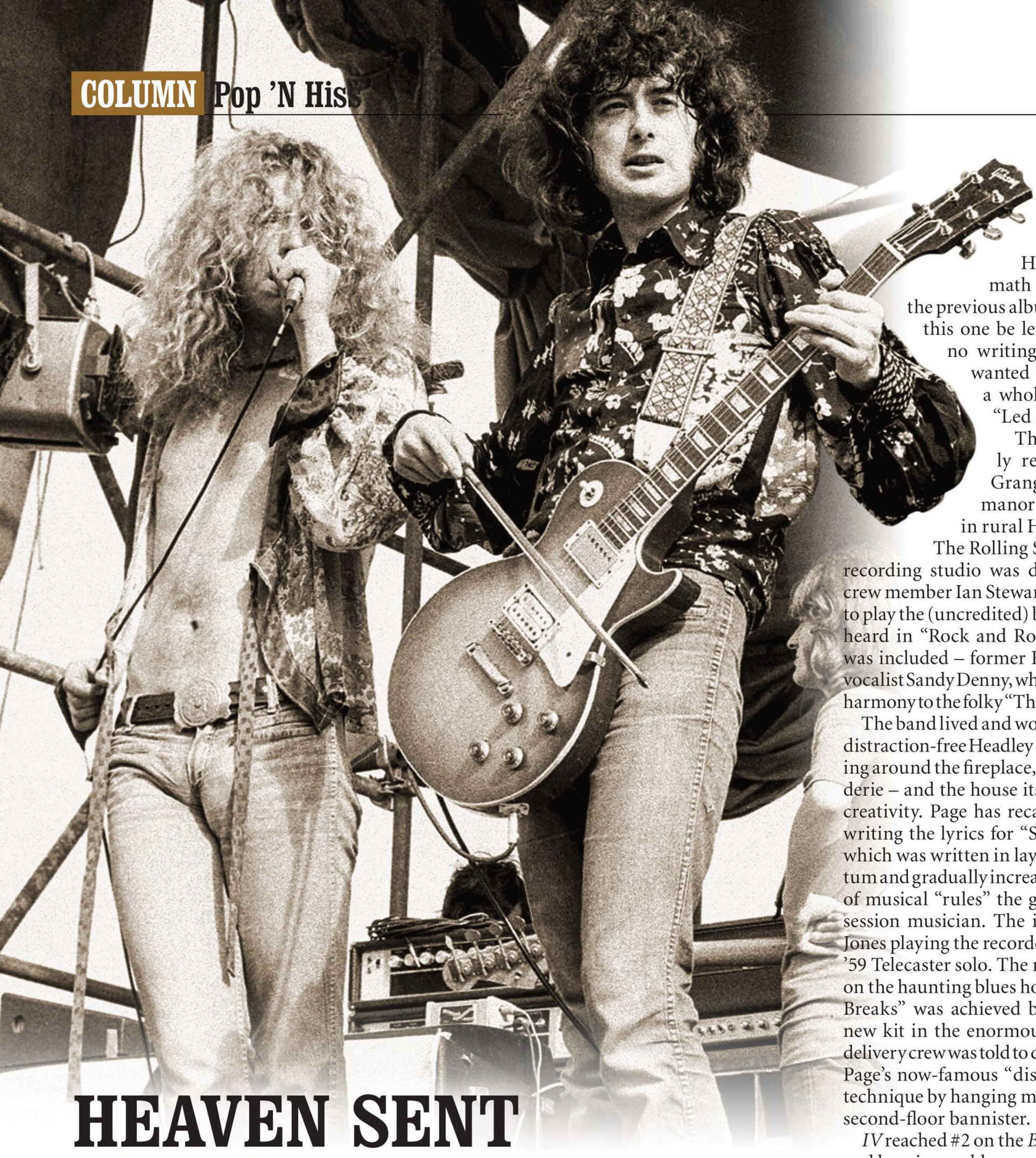

Robert Plant and Jimmy Page onstage in 1972.

HEAVEN SENT

Led Zeppelin's *IV*

By Bret Adams

It's impossible to overstate the influence Led Zeppelin's "untitled" fourth album – call it *IV*, *ZoSo*, *Runes*, *Four Symbols*, whatever – has had on musicians of all stripes.

Released November 8, 1971, the album was a towering creative achievement that has been the subject of unequaled acclaim, speculation, and lore. Of its eight songs, "Stairway to Heaven," "Black Dog," "Rock and Roll," "Going to California," and "When the Levee Breaks" are today staples of classic-rock radio.

By the time of its release, vocalist Robert Plant, guitarist/producer Jimmy Page, bassist/keyboardist John Paul Jones, and drummer John Bonham (1948-'80) had become megastars for their powerful blend of rock, folk, funk, and blues. However, in the aftermath of criticism faced by the previous album, *III*, Page insisted this one be left untitled and have no writing on the cover – he wanted the music judged as a whole, not on the name "Led Zeppelin."

The songs were mostly recorded at Headley Grange, an 18th-century manor house turned studio in rural Hampshire, England. The Rolling Stones famed mobile recording studio was delivered by pianist/crew member Ian Stewart, who was recruited to play the (uncredited) boogie-woogie piano heard in "Rock and Roll." One other guest was included – former Fairport Convention vocalist Sandy Denny, who added the haunting harmony to the folky "The Battle of Evermore."

The band lived and worked at the secluded/distraction-free Headley Grange, often gathering around the fireplace, where their camaraderie – and the house itself – bolstered their creativity. Page has recalled watching Plant writing the lyrics for "Stairway to Heaven," which was written in layers to build momentum and gradually increase tempo, in defiance of musical "rules" the guitarist learned as a session musician. The iconic track features Jones playing the recorder and Page's soaring '59 Telecaster solo. The massive drum sound on the haunting blues howl "When the Levee Breaks" was achieved by leaving Bonham's new kit in the enormous entryway where a delivery crew was told to drop it and employing Page's now-famous "distance equals depth" technique by hanging microphones from the second-floor bannister.

IV reached #2 on the *Billboard* album chart and has since sold more than 23 million copies in the U.S. Its impact has spanned every generation of guitarist.

Heart has always been unabashed about its love for Zeppelin – guitarist Nancy Wilson (*Vintage Guitar*, September '21) learned mandolin after hearing "The Battle of Evermore" and she counts the band's 2012 performance of "Stairway to Heaven" in front of Plant, Page, and Jones at the Kennedy Center Honors as a career highlight.

"That album is insanely magical," Wilson said. "Except for 'Four Sticks,' every song has been recorded or played live many, many

Page and Plant: Philip Morris/Austral/Zumapress.com.

times by Heart. Even 'The Battle of Evermore' was in our live set forever, and was part of the *Singles* soundtrack album; we recorded it as the Lovemongers.

"One thing I love so much about Jimmy Page is how he used dissonance in his playing. 'Black Dog' is one of those songs," she added. "He does parts like in 'Four Sticks,' with these unexpected, dissonant intervals that were not just blues riffing. It was really off the wall.

"One of the things that made Zeppelin so incredibly special was that they weren't just *one* thing. They were *many* things. When we were putting Heart together, we wanted that versatility like Zeppelin had. A lot of Heart fans at first would say, 'I love your big rock stuff, but why do you have to play those wimpy ballads?' And the other half would say, 'I love your beautiful ballads, but why do you have to get so loud with the rock songs?' There's room in the sky for all of it, and Zeppelin proved that. They're impossible to pigeonhole.

"*IV* is simply a masterpiece. It's got all the beautiful nooks and crannies, and just so much *character* about it. It takes you to so many places."

Dirty Honey co-founder/guitarist John

Notto (*VG*, August '21) first heard of Zeppelin when his guitar teacher tasked him with learning "Stairway to Heaven."

"I went home and asked my mom, 'Who's this Led Zeppelin guy?' She laughed and said, 'It's a band... here.' And she handed me her copy of *II*. I was absolutely floored by it. The first guitar solo in 'Whole Lotta Love' blew me away. Next, I got *IV*, and beyond 'Stairway,' 'Rock and Roll' was a big one. It taught me about the building blocks of rock and roll. It's just blues and has the basic riff that's been in most blues songs, but it was so hyped-up. It follows 'Black Dog,' and that one-two punch was *so* impressive."

Even as a kid, though, Notto saw beyond the heavy-banging openers.

"The much simpler 'Misty Mountain Hop' stuck out to me, too, and I love 'Going to California' because it's a beautiful song that encapsulates the times. Plus, it's a Robert song; he was the hippie presence in the band, that free spirit.

"'When the Levee Breaks' is an iconic dirge; you just live in the *sound* of it, how it pulsates in this reverb-soaked cave, with compression breathing with the groove. It's an incredible sound – a complete sound. Jimmy knew how to take a song and make it an experience.

"That's what's so genius about that whole record. Every song has a sound, and you hear the sound first, *then* you get into the nuances of the guitar playing, the drumming, and the lyrics.

"Zeppelin had an enigmatic, mysterious presence. They had this extra *thing* about them." **VG**

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BILLY BEAN

Missing Link of Modern Jazz Guitar

By Wolf Marshall

The rediscovery of a missing link is cause for celebration in any field – historic, scientific, or musical. In modern jazz guitar, none more aptly fit the title than Billy Bean.

No mythic character, Bean is one of the most-astounding and unheralded guitarists in the form, having emerged when jazz was evolving from swing-era precedents to the complex art music known as bebop. Today, he presents a capsule view of a genre in flux. Many ask how modern players like Joe Pass, Pat Martino, and George Benson emerged from the foundations laid by Charlie Christian, Les Paul, Barney Kessel, Tal Farlow, and Jimmy Raney. The answer may be found in the short-lived career of Billy Bean.

William Frederick Bean was born in Philadelphia, PA, on December 26, 1933. He picked up his father's guitar when he was about 8 years old and was encouraged by his doting mother to indulge his passions. The passions initially came from 78 RPM records played on the family Victrola and old chestnuts like "Heart of My Heart." He began learning informally from his father, Nelson Bean, an amateur singer/guitarist, and at age 12 graduated to official tutelage from Howard Herbert, a local teacher who taught him fundamentals and tunes like "Tico, Tico." He soon developed an interest in jazz and guitar players Django Reinhardt, Carl Kress, Chuck Wayne and Les Paul. In high school, he played clarinet in the marching band and was drawn to saxophonists Charlie Parker and Sonny Stitt, who remained lifelong influences. He transcribed lines from Parker, Stitt, Lester Young, Miles Davis, Bud Powell and Clifford Brown to develop his ear and phrasing. Bebop shaped and informed his obsession and became his central focus. He dropped out in the 12th grade to pursue music and cultivated a reclusive, nocturnal lifestyle of practicing and performing from dusk to dawn. At 18, he studied classical guitar with Peter Cologna, but abandoned it within a year because of his preference for improvisation. He then studied with Dennis Sandole, a famed pedagogue who taught John Coltrane, Pat Martino, Benny Golson and others. His curriculum included theory, technique (he acquired his picking style from Sandole's guidance) and Kreutzer violin exercises adapted for guitar.

Bean's professional life began in '52 with a commercial band led by accordionist Joe Major. He also worked in Philadelphia sporadically; participating in a demo session for Al Martino and club date with pianist Sonny Henderson, where Coltrane was a sideman. His first significant jazz experience was with saxophonist Charlie Ventura, a veteran of Gene Krupa's band, who hired him for live concerts in '55-'57 and three studio albums in '56. One of these, *Charlie Ventura Plays Hi-Fi*, caught the ear of guitarist John Pisano, who was stuck by his advanced approach. He had already surpassed the decade's leading players, Tal Farlow and Jimmy Raney, in terms of articulation, rhythmic variety, phrasing, proficiency at fast tempos, and lengthy technical passages. The next phase of Billy's professional life took place in Los Angeles and involved interaction with Pisano.

Bean moved to L.A. in January of '58, at the behest of Pisano and cellist/A&R man Fred Katz to record two guitar-centric albums for Decca Records. The first, *Makin' It*, was a "mood jazz" production heavily arranged and orchestrated around the duo. Its one spontaneous track, a one-take performance of "The Song is You" (also a favorite blowing vehicle for Joe Pass), featured Bean, Pisano, and bassist Hal Gaylor, and set standards for what would develop in the coming decade. Their sophomore album, *Take Your Pick*, relied more on improvisation, eschewed lush arrangements, and boasted three Bean compositions. As a duo, they recorded several casual (but illuminating) rehearsal tracks at Pisano's home, eventually released as *Makin' It Again* and *West Coast Sessions*. Notable performances include a blistering "Cherokee" on the former, and a powerful

Billy Bean photo courtesy of Edith "Cheri" Criniti and Dr. Seth Greenberg.

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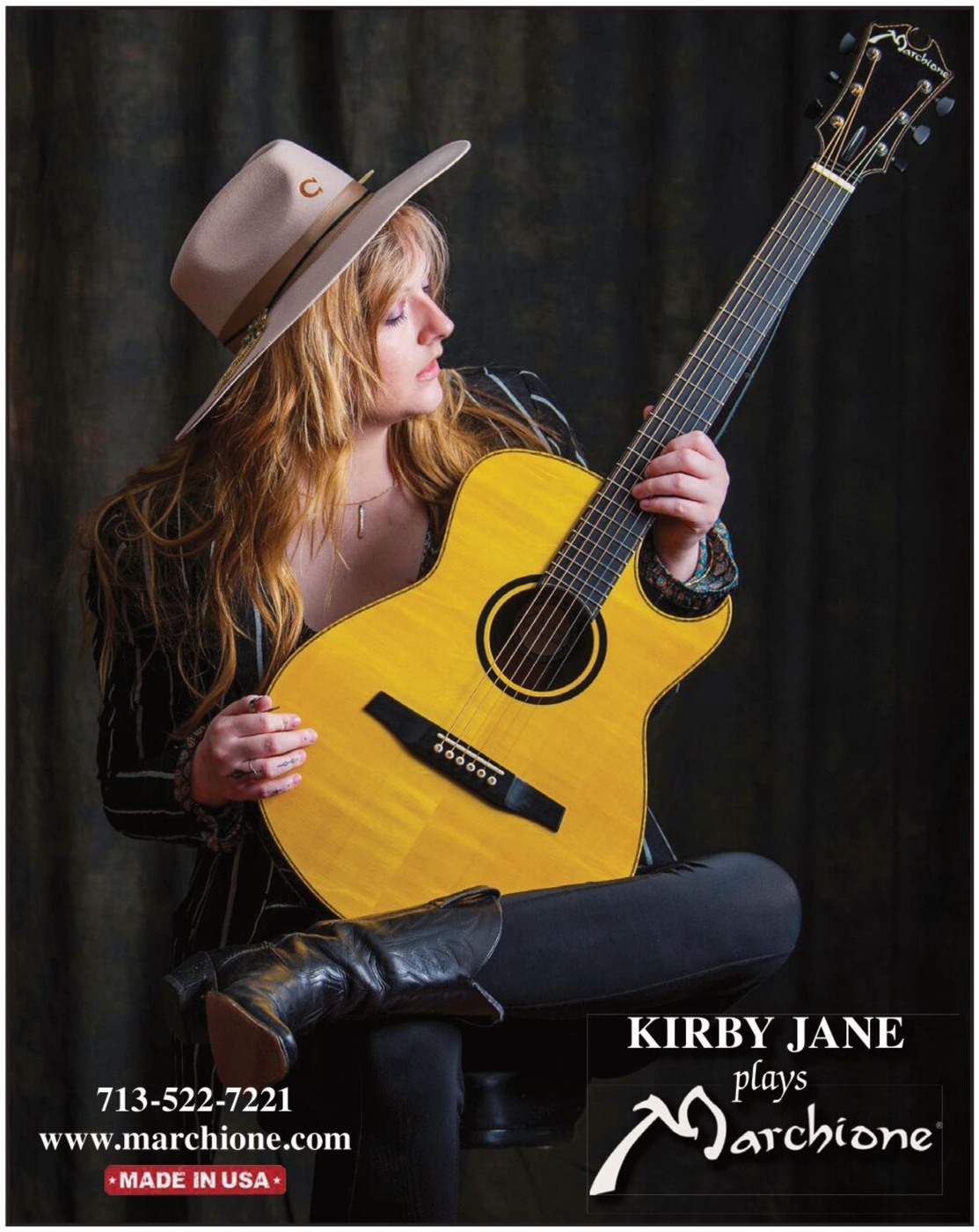

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rendition of Sonny Rollins' "Airegin," played with Dennis Budimir on the latter. Bean soon became a sought-after commodity on the L.A. scene, recording a dozen albums as sideman in settings ranging from bop and mainstream jazz to American folk, beatnik poetry, and avant-garde between '58 and '59 with Paul Horn, Carmen McRae, Red Callender, Milt Bernhart, Buddy DeFranco, Fred Katz, Bob Dorough, Paul Togawa's Sextet, Zoot Sims, Buddy Collette, and others.

Surf music will be forever linked to jazz, and jazz to the first wave of surf culture, via Bean's recordings with saxophonist Bud Shank for Bruce Brown's debut film *Slippery When Wet* in April '58. This album was conceived when Brown was duly impressed by Shank's quartet at Malibu's Driftwood Inn. Recorded at Pacific Jazz studios, where Wes Montgomery recorded in the mid '50s (and where Joe Pass would in the mid '60s), the music was a smooth melding of bop, blues, and ballads that served as the perfect underscore for the surfing action and narration in the classic movie. The group highlighted Bean's presence as featured soloist and primary accompanist with Shank, Gary Peacock (bass), and Chuck Flores (drums). More than three years before Dick Dale made reverb-drenched twang a SoCal cliché, Billy's bop was the music to surf by. Trivia time for your next guitar hang: Who was the first surf guitarist – B.B. or D.D.?

This excerpt presents a wealth of approaches. Billy plays blues sounds over E♭ diminished and Dm7 chords in measures 1-2 and combines them with a Bird-inspired bop line over G7 and Cmaj7 in 3-4. The hexatonic melody over Fmaj7 in 6 is a common hard-bop gesture also favored by Wes and Martino. Like those players, he "minorizes" the line in 7 to play F minor over B♭7. He varies his articulation to include a sweep-picked arpeggio in 8 and plays two measured quarter-note figures as recurring rhythmic motives for contrast in 9 and 12. These simpler, more-static ideas are separated by two active phrases in 10-11 and 13-15 for a jazz-oriented call-and-response result.

After his prolific West Coast period, Bean relocated to New York in October '59 to perform with Tony Bennett, who'd hired him for concerts in L.A. He recorded *To My Wonderful One* with Bennett in November '59 and worked with him until the spring of '60, when he tired of being a singer's accompanist. He played briefly with saxophonist Herb Geller, then formed The Trio with Gaylor and pianist Walter Norris. The Trio recordings of '61 represent a high point in Bean's career. "Scramble" (an angular "Rhythm Changes" contrafact) and "Safari" showcase his inventiveness and technique while "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" and "For Heaven's Sake" present understated ballad performances that mixed lyrical playing with double-timed lines. "Lush Life" is a rarity – his only recorded substantial chord-melody arrangement, and his "Motivation" reveals a modern side. "Land's End," "Che-Low" and "Grooveyard" contain generous samples of his blues/bop proclivities and hint at the hard-swing double-time in Pass' work.

In '62, Bean joined Herbie Mann's Latin jazz group and recorded two prescient bossa-nova albums that posed his bebop style over Brazilian grooves in an early "fusion" precursor. Moreover, his playing on "Cool Heat" suggests he was conversant with

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post-bop modal playing. He was nominated for Best Jazz Guitarist in the '62 and '63 *Playboy* Jazz Poll and later worked with Stan Getz, who occasionally placed him in the unwanted role of bandleader.

Alcoholism began to take its toll on Bean in this period, compounded by his unorthodox nocturnal regime, unreliability, and a challenging relationship with his only girlfriend Verna White. *Essence*, his '64 album with MJQ's John Lewis, would be his last official recording. In less than 10 years, he had played on 20 studio albums of diverse styles. He never recorded an album as leader, preferring the role of sideman, and remained an underground legend.

In '65, Bean returned to Philadelphia to live with his parents. He later secured work on "The Mike Douglas Show" and in Peggy Lee's band, but lost both positions due to his unpredictable behavior. He continued to perform locally and played briefly with Red Norvo in the early '70s. Several bootleg recordings of live gigs have surfaced over the years and reveal his fealty to the bebop style he favored since childhood. He officially retired in '86 and enjoyed two years of sobriety, but lived a hermit's life punctuated with alcoholism, described as a prolonged suicide after the death of his parents and brother. While recovering from a cold, he died in his sleep on February 6, 2012.

Billy's ease of navigating chord changes is explicit in this segment. He combines stepwise motion in measure 1 with chromaticism and genre-specific arpeggio substitution ($D^{\flat}$ diminished over C7) in 2. The skipping chromatic line in 3 is a modern pattern seen these days in Pat Metheny's playing. Note the heavy accents to emphasize the targeting effect, here and in measures 11-12.

Billy plays a delayed-resolution enclosure line as a phrase ending in 5 and allows more space in 5-8, for rhythmic variety. A modern twist is found in measure 10, where he superimposes an unusual F minor functioning as an altered $B^{\flat}7$ line over A7. Another modernism occurs in 12, where Billy applies a B major triad as a dissonant sound over G7. The payoff is its slick resolution into C in 13.

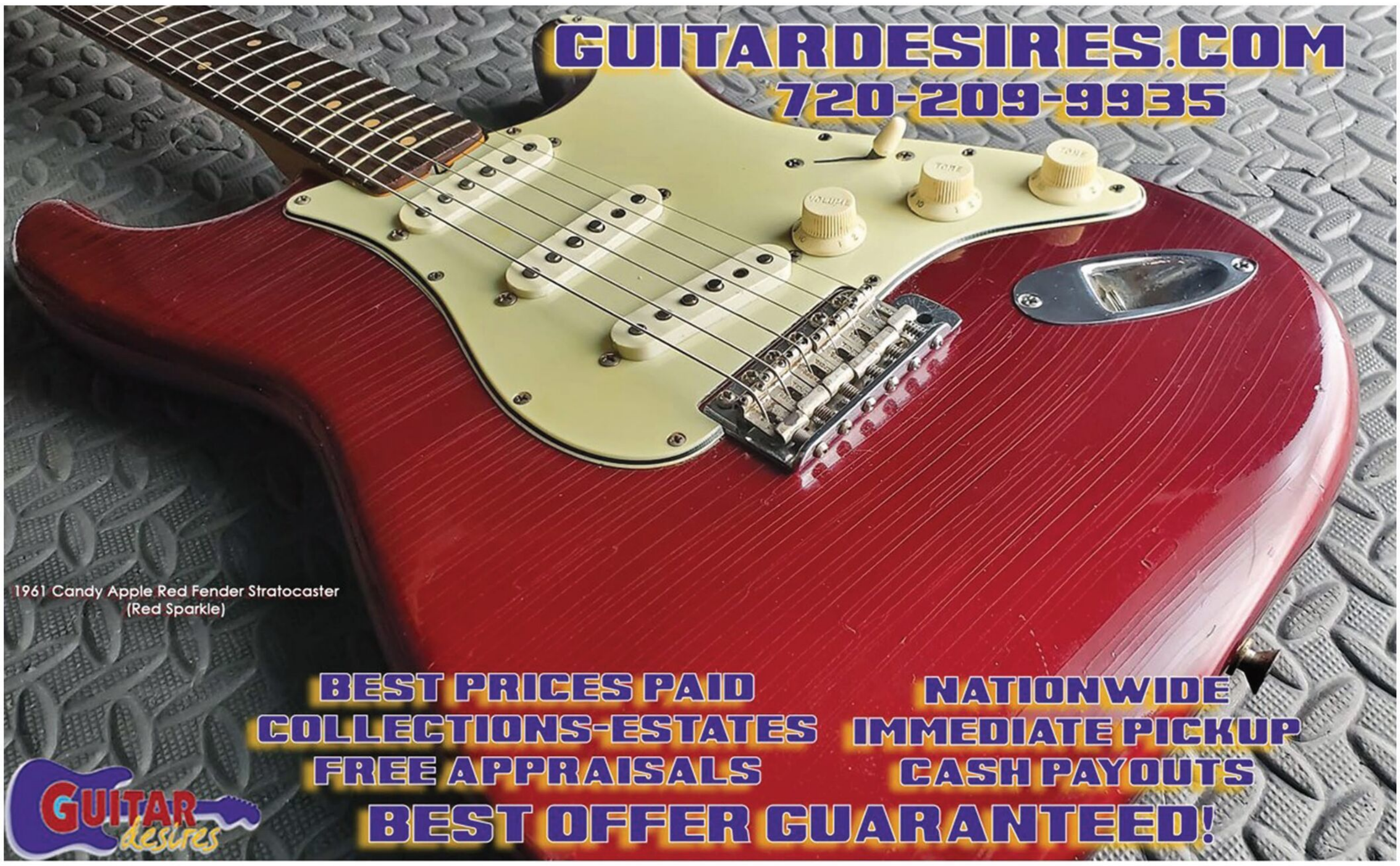
STYLE

In the '50s, Bean boasted a modern style reminiscent of Joe Pass' work a decade later, one that differed markedly from his contemporaries. Immediately evident are his well-articulated plectrum lines; his precision, consistency and fluidity prompted pianist John Coates to dub him the "J.S. Bach of bop guitar." Like Bach, Bean epitomized smooth, inventive navigation through complicated chord changes. His improvisations were informed by melodies, dissonances, and harmonic concepts of bebop horn players yet exhibited a Bach-like logic in execution. Moreover, compared to other guitarists, he was prescient in his ability to effortlessly play long lines through changes, a trait shared by Pass, Martino, and Benson. Where Farlow or Raney played two to three bars of steady eighth notes, it was common to find Bean playing six. Another aspect was the incisive accenting of his attack. A self-confessed "hard picker," Bean favored alternate picking decorated with sweep-picked strokes (usually for arpeggios) and minimal legato phrasing. His playing contained a variety of dynamics facilitated by his pick control. The harder edge added punch and drive, and increased the swing quotient. However, his gradations of volume and attack imparted a saxophonist's breathing quality to lengthy single-note lines, often enhanced by stylistically correct sax mordents and trill ornaments.

Bean's chord work consisted of straight four-to-the-bar timekeeping in the vein of Freddie Green with duos and larger ensembles, an occasional chord-melody rendering of a theme ("Out Front"), tasteful comping when he was the primary harmonic instrument (as on *Slippery When Wet*), chord-melody fills, and various percussive effects, like the muted-string strums on "End of a Love Affair." His arrangement of "Lush Life" reveals his fluency with advanced jazz sonorities and ability to develop chord-melody themes and create interesting reharmonizations.

ESSENTIAL LISTENING

Makin' It and *Take Your Pick* are available as a compilation. *Makin' It 2* includes rehearsal cuts and unissued material. Also recommended are *Slippery When Wet* and *The Trio*.



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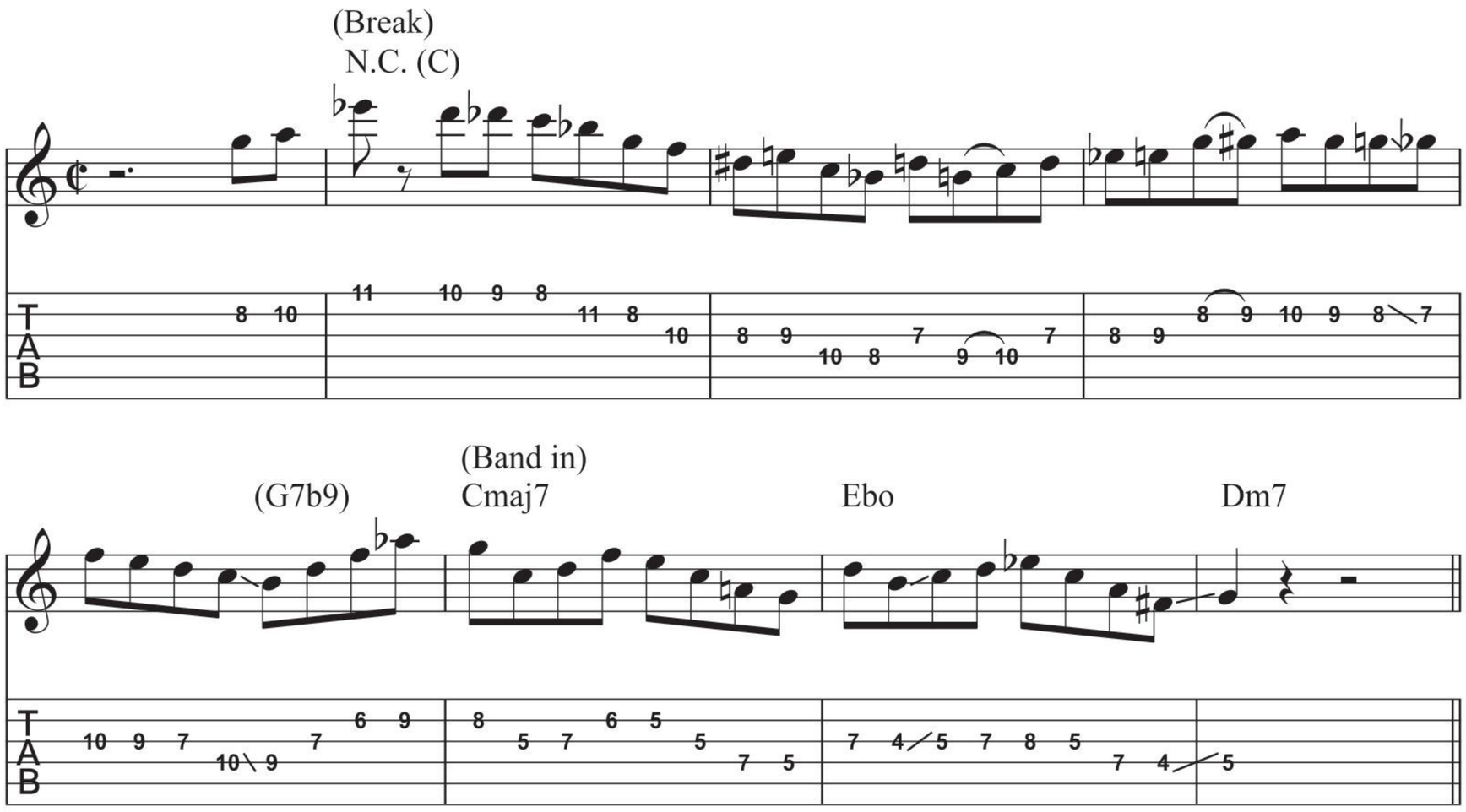
ESSENTIAL VIEWING

Bean appears in a vintage clip titled "Lynn's Blues," from "Peter Gunn," filmed September 23, 1958, as part of the singer's band. Several live clips from circa '80 (without video) are posted as "Billy Bean Bootleg." Of these, "Straight No Chaser," flaunts modern blues sounds while "Mr. P.C." bears a strong resemblance to Pat Martino.

ESSENTIAL READING

Seth Greenberg's two-volume *The Life and Music of a Jazz Guitar Legend* (Red Note Press) is definitive, with its exhaustive biography, interviews with Bean and associates, discography, transcriptions, analyses including comparisons of Bean's solos with Farlow's and Raney's, and a collection of personal studies. The latter comprise *Volume 2* and are worth the price of admission.

Fast Bop



"The Song is You" from *Makin' It* contains the DNA that defines Bean's style. His first phrase begins with a mix of major/minor blues viewed through the bebop lens. Note the abundant chromaticism in the form of passing tones, leading tones, neighbor notes, enclosure figures targeting chord tones, and other active functional sounds of modern jazz. The Major Bebop Scale is emphasized in measure 4 in the G-G♯-A chromaticism (and its arrival at the flat-five blue note, F♯) and a B diminished arpeggio is heard as a substitute for G7 in 4, both bop staples. Also noteworthy are the classic chord-outlining melody in 5, a nod to saxophonist Stitt's influence and the slick motion into the E♭ diminished sound via a bop/blues approach in 6. Stepping back, the entire phrase stands a superb example of his ability to play long, uninterrupted lines – it spans more than six bars.

SOUND

Bean favored hollowbody archtops with built-in pickups. He played a sunburst Epiphone Zephyr Deluxe (circa '49) from '56 through '59. In New York, he replaced the Epiphone with a blond Gretsch Electro-II Synchromatic ('53). Both had two single-coil pickups though he specified the Gretsch had a softer, mellower tone. While recording with Herbie Mann, he used a Gibson L-7 with a Charlie Christian bar pickup. In '66, he acquired a Gibson ES-175 with single PAF that Bean moved flush with the fretboard to better suit his picking posture. He strung guitars with .013-gauge flatwounds by made by Mapes, Black Diamond, and Fender, and used medium-gauge picks, favoring the Nick Lucas size and a white Fender 351.

Bean used a Premier 88N suitcase-style amp with a 12" speaker and pushbutton controls from '56/'57, then, from '58 through the '60s, a small Ampeg (likely a Mercury or Rocket) with a Tone control and a 12". He later favored a silverface Fender Twin-Reverb with two 12s.

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.

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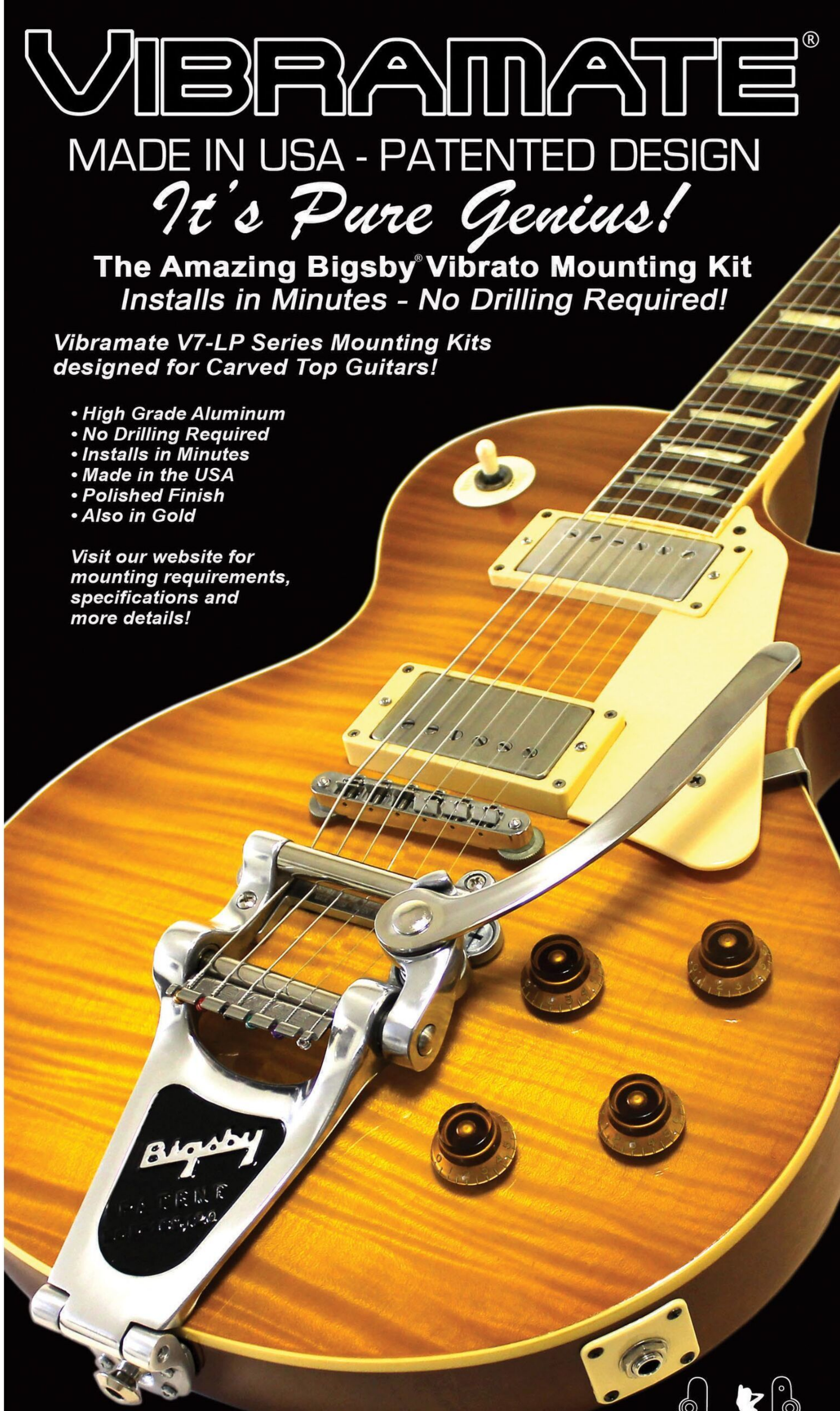

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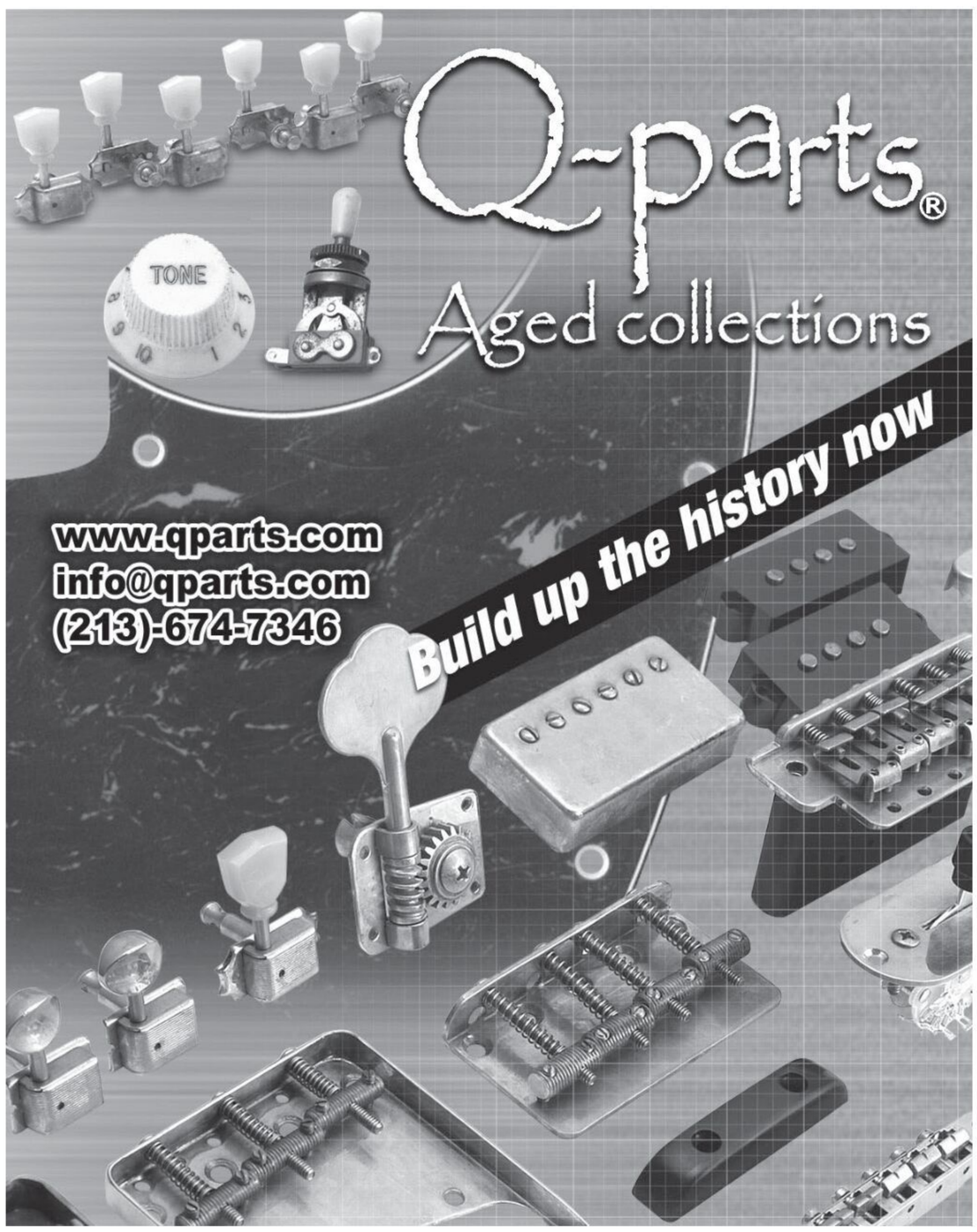

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ZAKK WYLDE

DOOMSAYER

Wylde with his vintage Les Paul Juniors, part of his collection since the making of *Ozzmosis* in 1995.

Best-known as Ozzy Osbourne's longest-tenured guitarist, Zakk Wylde has also been the leader of Black Label Society since the late '90s. With Ozzy off the road in 2021, Wylde has made the most of his time; not only has BLS issued a career-encompassing 12-LP box set, *None More Black*, but there's a new studio effort, *Doom Crew Inc.*, which sees Wylde once again joined by guitarist Dario Lorina, bassist John "J.D." DeServio, and drummer Jeff Fabb.

BY GREG PRATO
PHOTOS BY JEN ROSENSTEIN

Wylde spoke with *Vintage Guitar* just before BLS embarked on its Doom Trooping Over North America tour, discussing both BLS releases, his go-to guitars, and some of his favorite vintage fiddles.

A birthday gift, Ozzy Osbourne bought this '57 Junior (left) for Wylde because both were big fans of Leslie West's guitar tone. **The control-cavity cover on Wylde's '58 Les Paul Junior is signed by Les Paul.** Wylde bought this '65 SG Junior while recording *Ozzmosis* in 1995. It's also heard on *Book of Shadows* and other Black Label Society albums. **This '81 SG Firebrand Deluxe (in Pelham Blue) was Wylde's first Gibson. Bought new, the wear is all his.**

What was your overall approach to making *Doom Crew Inc.*?

Just like every Black Label album, I approach it like it's a new season. Whether you win the Super Bowl, just made the playoffs, or had a horrendous season, it's always exciting going in, and it's brand new. I always look forward to it. It's the bottom of a Cracker Jack box – you don't know what you're going to get. We had a blast doing *Doom Crew*, but with the pandemic it was like, "I guess we'll just record and have it in the can."

Whenever you do a record, you're on to the next one anyway. You're like, "I've already written other songs," and you're *always* most excited about what you're currently working on.

Dario had an expanded role this time.

It's an evolution. When we did *Catacombs* in 2014, I started doing harmonies in the guitar solos or the intro for the solos. Like the Allman Brothers, you need two guitar players in the band – just based on the fact that there's so many harmonies going on, you need two guys. Before, if I was playing piano, I needed somebody to play solos. And if we have an acoustic thing, we need an electric to cover the two parts. I wanted Dario to have more fun and have more to do. Like, "Dario, double the solo on this part with me." And obviously, he's doing all the solos when I'm playing piano.

For this one, I was going to write for two guitars on the solo sections. There were certain solos, like with "Set Me Free," where I wrote the whole solo but said, "Dario, you play this part, then I'm going to play this part, then you play this part, and then

we'll end together." But on others, or when we play live, we might have an extended jam in "Fire It Up," where we trade-off solos. It was an extension of that. Dario has a studio in Vegas – the Dark Chapel – and I've got the Black Vatican here. So we'd send tracks on ProTools.

You favored your Wylde Audio Nomad guitars for recording *Doom Crew Inc*.

Yeah, I used Nomads on the whole album. I was double-tracking guitars with one on the left side and another on the right. I basically did the whole record with those two. It sounded slamming, so I was like, "I might as well just stick with that," which I've pretty much always done. Once a guitar sounds good, it's like, "Alright. Let's do this." Certain solos – not that I needed to pick up another guitar – but I was like, "Ah, let me play this one on this solo." It wasn't like the difference was drastic, like I was going from a Telecaster to a humbucker guitar. I just felt like using another guitar. I had a couple Heathens here in the Vatican, and I was like, "Let me try this one on the solo." And then, "Let me try a Nomad on this solo."

Wylde's Red Rum Vertigo Nomad and Cocobola Nomad covered all of the rhythm tracks on *Doom Crew Inc*. **Wylde calls this the Battle Scarred Burl Vertigo Nomad. You'll hear it on the solo to "Farewell Ballad" from *Doom Crew Inc*.** Listen for this Wylde Audio Quilted Sabertooth Heathen (right) on the solos for the *Doom Crew* tracks "Shelter Me" and "Gather My Sins."

Earlier in the year, BLS issued the *None More Black* box set.

I can't believe the band has been together 20 years – it's just flying by. But yeah, putting that together was fun, taking a trip down memory lane. I remember looking at guitar magazines in the '80s with Keith Richards on the cover – "Keith Richards: 16 Years in the Rolling Stones." (laughs) That was a milestone. The fact *anyone* in a rock band was still alive after 16 years and that *any* rock band was still around for 16 years... I look at that and think about Black Label being around even longer.

You were a longtime Les Paul player. What originally attracted you to it?

Pretty much all my heroes played them – Jimmy Page, obviously, Randy [Rhoads]. All the '70s guitar players – whether it was Thin Lizzy and all the classic rock bands – everybody had a Les Paul, so I thought they were really cool. But I remember when I played a Custom compared to a Standard, a Custom has got more bells and whistles – binding, headstock inlay. I guess it's like with Strats and Teles. You have your Tele guys – like Danny Gatton and Albert Lee were always Tele guys. Whereas Robin Trower is always a Strat guy, or Jimi Hendrix. And then you had the Les Paul Custom guys and the Les Paul Standard guys. Slash is a Standard guy, Jimmy Page is a Standard guy. Mind you, I'm sure Slash owns a ton of Customs, but live, he's always playing Standards. I was always more of a Custom guy. The weight, and I also liked the ebony fretboard. Standards have rosewood, but they both sound great, so you can't go wrong. It's just a preference thing.

How did you come up with the bullseye design?

Originally, I wanted the design from the poster for the Alfred Hitchcock movie [1958's *Vertigo*]. I remember seeing that and thinking, "That's a cool design! I'll put that on a guitar." Then when I was getting ready to do a photo shoot for guitar mags, I had my buddy, Max, paint it. I opened

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NICK PORTER

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the case, and it was a bullseye. I was like, "Bro, it's a bullseye. I wanted the *Vertigo* thing!" And he's like, "Oh. I f**ked up." (laughs) So that was it.

How did pinch harmonics become part your style?

I remember my guitar teacher, Leroy Wright, showing me how to play "La Grange." Billy Gibbons, of course, is the godfather of the pinch harmonic – that's where I got my beard *and* pinch harmonics (laughs). Plus, he played a Les Paul. Anyway, I was like, "What is that sound?" And Leroy was like, "Let me show you." Then it was just a matter of practicing. When I was recording with Ozzy, they doubled them and I was like, "Wow! They really jump out." It sounded cool, so that's what I started doing.

What is your current amp and effects setup?

I'm using my Wylde Audio Master 100s. I've been using those since around *Grimmest Hits*. And I still have all of my signature Dunlop pedals. It's pretty much my same setup. I never understood "tone chasers" I've got buddies who are constantly mixing and changing things. When you hear Billy Gibbons play "Tush," you think, "That's all you need – *ever*." Or King Edward on "Eruption" and the first two Van Halen records, it's like, "Whatever that amp is and that setup, you've found it."

For me, from "No More Tears" or "Miracle Man" onward, it was my JCM800 2203s. I remember once, when one of the heads was dropped and the tubes broke; it had EL34s, but my buddy who took it to get fixed said, "Zakk, all the shop had was Groove Tubes 6550s." But we plugged it in at sound check, and it was so much thicker and tighter than the EL34s. It was super-noticeable. That's when I realized the nuances with power tubes.

The same thing with EMG pickups. The first time I ever heard them was when one of my guitar students had a Fender Mustang with EMGs. I was like, "What are those?" He goes, "EMGs; you gotta put a battery in them." I had my Les Paul with PAFs and a '79 Marshall 50-watt combo, and when he plugged into my amp, the difference compared to my guitar was like someone took a blanket off the speakers. It was *that* noticeable. I was like, "Whoa. *That* is what that amp's supposed to sound like." I was sold on those pickups right there and then.

They became part of what you call "the soup"?

Yes, certain little things make the soup. You take any player and put them through any guitar, they're going to sound like them. It doesn't matter if it's Keith Richards, Eddie Van Halen, Eric Clapton, Robin Trower, Frank Marino, Al Di Meola, John McLaughlin – you put them on the same guitar/same amp, they're all going to sound like themselves. Being on the road with Yngwie [Malmsteen], Steve [Vai], Nuno [Bettencourt], and Tosin [Abasi], they all sound exactly like themselves the minute they pick up a guitar. You can put them through the same rig – they have a different touch. It's amazing how you can identify them immediately. But certain ingredients in the amp constitute the soup; a lower-watt speaker is going to distort more than a higher-watt speaker. That'll have something to do with your sound, as well. I've tried different amps and setups, but it's always the meat-and-potatoes setup that works best for me.

This Wylde Audio Tiger Barbarian is the most-heard guitar on BLS' *Grimmest Hits*.

Do you have a few favorite vintage guitars?

When we were working on *Ozzmosis* in 1995, we were in New York City with [producer] Michael Beinhorn, and he rented a '58 Junior that he then bought for me as a gift. It was amazing. I still have it, and Les Paul signed it for me. I also bought a '65 when we were there. Both are original – I've never touched them. And, Ozzy got me, for my birthday, a '57 Junior because he told me, "Zakk, when [Black Sabbath] came to the States, we opened for Mountain, and Leslie had the hugest guitar tone...." And I remembered Leslie West had a single-cut Junior.

What's the story behind your two SGs?

The Pelham Blue SG Firebrand was the first Gibson I ever got – I was 15 or 16, and my teacher, Leroy, went to get it at Red Bank Music, in Red Bank, New Jersey, with my parents. I remember the slogan, "A Firebrand for under a grand," and I did the majority of my learning on that guitar. I still break it out and noodle on it – it brings back great memories. I think it's an '81. Same thing with the '65; I think I played "See You On the Other Side" on that.

From a guitar perspective, do you look back at certain songs or solos with more gratification compared to others?

Well, on Instagram, if anyone covers something I've played, it's probably the "No More Tears" solo and the "Mama, I'm Coming Home" solo. With Black Label, probably "Stillborn." There are other things I've done recently, like the *Book of Shadows* record. But with *all* of it, I can't complain. I've been truly blessed that I've had a really fun ride. And I'm really happy with how the new stuff came out. Every record I've done, I look back and go, "That came out pretty cool."

Does Ozzy plan on returning to the road?

Yeah, he's still doing rehab after he slipped and banged himself up. The tour was going great and as far as he was concerned, he was going to tour for the next 10 years because we were having such a good time. Then we did the New Year's Eve show in 2018 that came out great. Ozzy was saying, "Maybe we should do this every year?" Basically, it was a mini-Ozzfest.

Why should they stop it if they love doing it and still can? I never understood why anyone would want to retire from making music. It's not like you're boxing and you're like, "I can barely walk anymore from all the surgeries." I'm always the guy saying, "Well, maybe we should move into coaching." (laughs) VG

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Samantha Fish

MOVING FASTER

Barely over 30, Samantha Fish already has more than a decade's worth of writing and performing in life's rearview mirror. Her new album, Faster, is the latest step in a career marked by constantly evolving sound, style, and skill.

BY WARD MEEKER

Samantha Fish: Kevin King.

Working with multi-instrumentalist/producer Martin Kierszenbaum and backed by drummer Josh Freese and bassist Diego Navaira, *Faster* is her edgiest, widest-ranging work to date, driven by bluesy rock guitar but swerving stylistically to rock and pop. Released September 10, within a week it vaulted to #1 on *Billboard*'s Blues chart, #2 on Americana/Folk, and was the #10 Current Rock album.

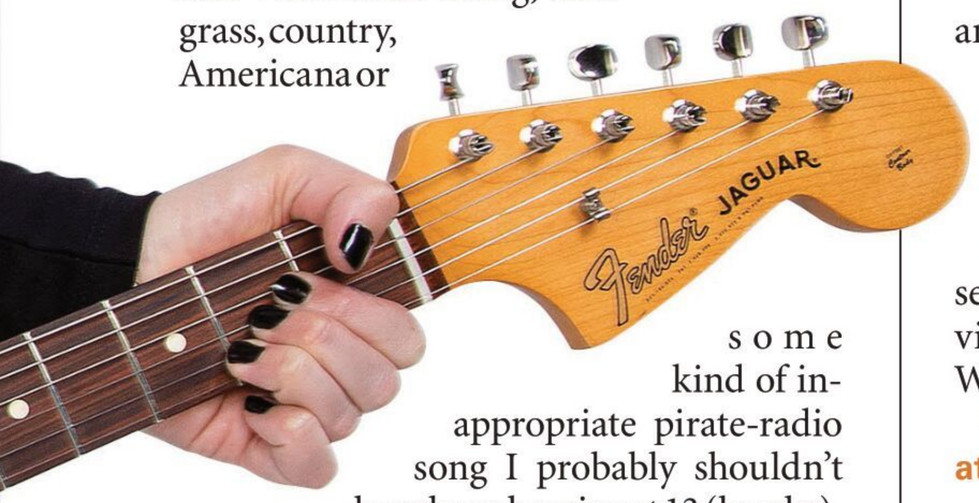
Now on tour, Fish is traversing the U.S. through November and will play a guest spot on three shows with the Allman Family Revival. Early next year, she'll return to the U.K. and Europe. Nestled at a hotel in Fort Wayne, Indiana, the Kansas City native talked with *VG* about the new album, her professional growth, gear, and touring amidst a pandemic.

"We're putting one foot in front of the other and rolling with the punches," she said. "It's been a challenge, but we're accepting what we can't control and making it work."

Fish with a Telecaster she used to record several rhythm parts on *Faster*.

You grew up watching your dad, his brothers, and their friends do guitar-circle jams. What did you take from that?

I was introduced to a lot of music that wasn't on the radio. Some of my uncles were metalheads and Dad's friends were into West Coast swing, bluegrass, country, Americana or some kind of inappropriate pirate-radio song I probably shouldn't have been hearing at 13 (laughs). My dad's best friend was a cross-country truck driver, and he'd listen to college radio stations, then come back with music from all these obscure indie artists.



Were there certain riffs you saw them play and thought, "That is *so* cool!"?

Not at those jams, but hearing Angus Young on the radio had that effect. I actually started on drums because everybody around me played guitar; I was like, "I gotta do something different." And it was cool – I was 13 and did well with lessons even though I wasn't very disciplined. I picked up guitar later, though, because I could leave the basement with it. I could play in the back yard. I could go hide out. I'd started singing while was I was drumming, and that gave me a rhythmic foundation that helped me figure out how to sing and play.

Was rock still your primary influence?

Yeah, when I started playing, I liked classic and alternative rock because of the guitar solos. You listen to the Stones or Tom Petty or Stevie Ray Vaughan and you realize it's all blues-based. So I went down this rabbit hole, discovering different genres. By 18 or 19, I started doing leads after seeing Stevie Ray, Freddie King, and Angus videos. I was like, "That's *so* empowering." Watching them pushed me.

Were you hearing any female players at the time?

I heard some, but I didn't find that there were as many in the mainstream. That had me thinking girls didn't play lead for some reason. Representation is everything. Looking back, I know there was more than what I'd seen, but still, disparity.

What sort of guitar did you first learn on?

My sister had a pretty stiff acoustic (laughs). Pressing those strings down hurt *so* bad, but I worked up my callouses and played through the blisters and the pain. I encourage people to learn on an acoustic because you get that out of the way. Then, when you switch to an electric it's like, "Wow, I'm flying here!" My dad also had a Kramer electric and I'd mess with it even though it was a little wild for my taste. I remember getting my first perfectly set-up guitar and how easy it was to play.

When and where did you first play in front of an audience?

It was at a street party, and there was a band playing; it was three guys – upright bass and two guitars. One of them was a picker like I'd grown up around, and he had this golden voice and a Gibson Chet Atkins that I thought was so cool. I went to check it out on their break and he strapped it on me and said, "Play a couple songs." Had I thought about it, I would've chickened out because I was really, really shy. But it happened so quick. Obviously, it was my worst performance, but people were very nice and they clapped. I remember feeling exhilarated, like, "*This* is what I want to do!"

Which tune did you play?

I don't even remember. It was probably Bonnie Raitt's "Love Me Like a Man" or something bluesy. I barely remember *any* of it happening (laughs).

Were you into gear at the time?

No! When I started, I didn't know what an amp *was*. I used to plug into a keyboard amp I dragged around to jams – an '80s Peavey KB-300 that weighed a ton and sounded like s**t (laughs).

When did a "real" amp enter the picture?

A friend in Wichita sold me a Fender Super for $300, but as he was bringing it to the city, he knocked it against something and the Reverb knob broke off [in the 10 position]. At first, I was like, "That amp sucks," but

after I got it fixed, I realized it was really nice.

I didn't put much thought into gear for quite a while, and now I think that if I'd found something better, I'd have grown faster as a player. My relationship with gear is much different now.

Before you had a band, you hosted a popular jam.

Yes, every Monday night at The Waldo Bar, so I knew a lot of standards. It was a tiny little place and the surrounding businesses would complain about the noise, so the cops would always come shut us down. My main memory is walking around outside with a decibel meter while people were playing (laughs). I did that for two years, and it was really successful; I'm still so proud of it. For awhile, we were averaging 35 to 40 sit-ins each night, which was pretty bangin'. And the bar loved it because they had business on a Monday night.

Being a devout music fan and a musician growing up in K.C., you must've seen some pretty good live music.

Oh, yeah. I remember going to Knuckleheads Saloon for the first time and seeing Papa Chubby. Later, I'd go to watch Michael Burks and Mike Zito. I also used to love watching Randy Ellis with Chubby Carrier, and Albert Castiglia and Tab Benoit. Kansas City has always had a vibrant music scene and Knuckleheads was the club touring acts would roll through on the blues circuit, along with every kind of country music, Americana acts, bluegrass, and rockabilly. After touring the U.S., I realize how fortunate I was to grow up there.

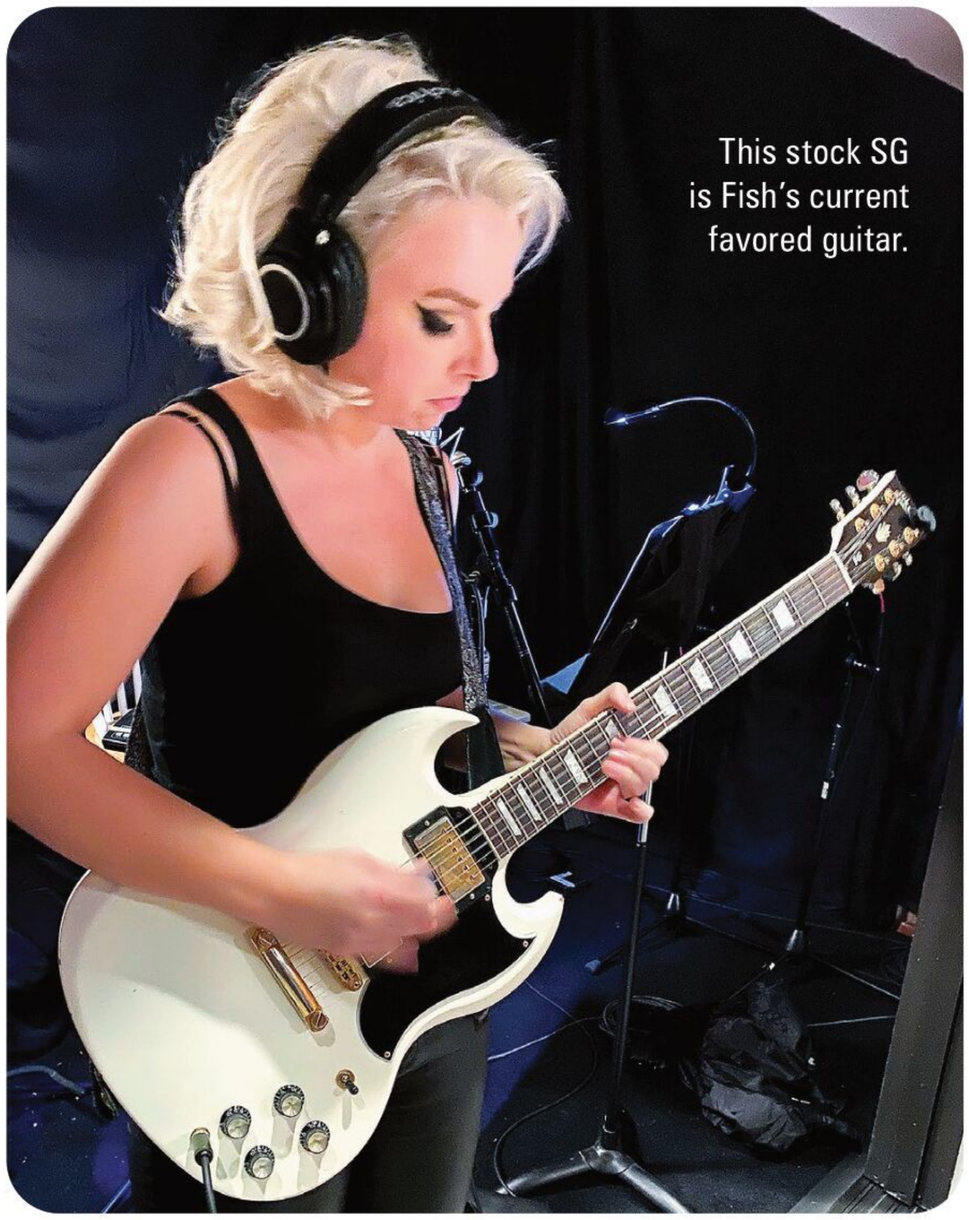
Was your attention focused on the guitar when you watched other players?

For sure. I remember Michael Burks being incredible; I'd fixate on his hands, and I always knew I was watching a great show if I wanted to leave halfway through and go play. He inspired me so much.

Your very first band was a trio, which is bold for a young, inexperienced player...

I did that *because* I wasn't skilled enough. I wanted to challenge myself. I really felt strongly about holding down that role. So yeah, I might've taken it on sooner than I had the skill set, but had I not, I might've never gotten there.

I'm not afraid to fail in front of people (laughs). I don't think I ever really did, but I've struggled enough to think, "Okay... I'm not fitting the bill here. What can I do to make this better?" When I first started, I developed crutches like relying too much on effects. So, I wanted to prove I could hold it down. It's a never-ending journey, trying to improve. But being the sole guitar player called to me. I wanted people to say, "Yeah, that's her..."



This stock SG is Fish's current favored guitar.

What kind of music were you playing, early on?

A lot of blues and classic-rock covers. I was *starting* to write, but had to fill a set. When you start out, people get an idea of what you do through covers.

Which guitar were you using at the time?

A Les Paul Studio. We picked up a friend's gig and he ended up selling that guitar to me because he didn't want to come to the city to get it.

How about your amp?

It was that Super, by then I'd had it fixed so I could turn down the reverb.

Any effects?

I didn't know much about pedals, so all I had was a wah, but I used it for *every* single solo (laughs). It wasn't always for the wah sound – sometimes I just wanted a bit of extra bite to my tone like you get when you open the wah for a different EQ.

What was your next step?

Well, my goal was to fill my calendar – keep the band busy enough to where everyone would make it a priority. I'd open up the phone book and call every bar and restaurant. At the time, I wasn't popular enough to play places like Knuckleheads, so I had to go from the ground level and call places that didn't even *have* bands or music. Sounds cheesy, but that's what I did. I had a PA, so we could set up anywhere.

We slowly started expanding regionally – going to Chicago and St. Louis and Wichita. That's when my friend, Mike Zito, hooked me up with his record label, Ruf Records, which was putting together a touring package. He said, "They're looking for a third person to do a Girls With Guitars tour, and I recommended you." And I was *so* against it – adamantly, like, "Girls with guitars? That sounds like everything I *don't* want to do." At that point, I was dressing in Chuck Taylors and baggy shirts because I didn't want to be seen in that way. But he saw it as a great opportunity. And he was *so* right. That was such an exciting time because I got to jump up to this next level of professionalism. It was the first big break I had.

Who else was on it?

Dani Wilde and Cassie Taylor, who is Otis Taylor's daughter. We toured Europe, which was really awesome. At first, I was intimidated; I was 20 years old and everybody was warning me about the evil music business and record labels. But there were good people around, like Mike, to coach me through those moments. I'm glad I didn't talk myself out of that because it really opened a door.

Were people doubting you?

There are *always* those people, and if you allow them in, you'll doubt yourself. I *still* hear from people like that, but you've got to see it for what it is and put it in its place. Some people are scared *for* you – and there *are* sh***y deals out there – but this was not one of them.

Has your being female added to others' "doubts"?

When I was coming up, there were plenty of chauvinistic men who'd say derogatory things about my gender and the fact I was playing guitar. It still continues. Every single female artist goes through this. You just have to keep showing up to shut them up.

Your sister, Amanda, is also a singer/songwriter and performer. Safe to say you've had the support of your family?

Being a real quiet person and very shy, when I started playing music, I was embarrassed to share it with my family. I learned to play almost secretly. So did Amanda; the second our parents left to do an errand, she'd run up to her room, slam the door, and start

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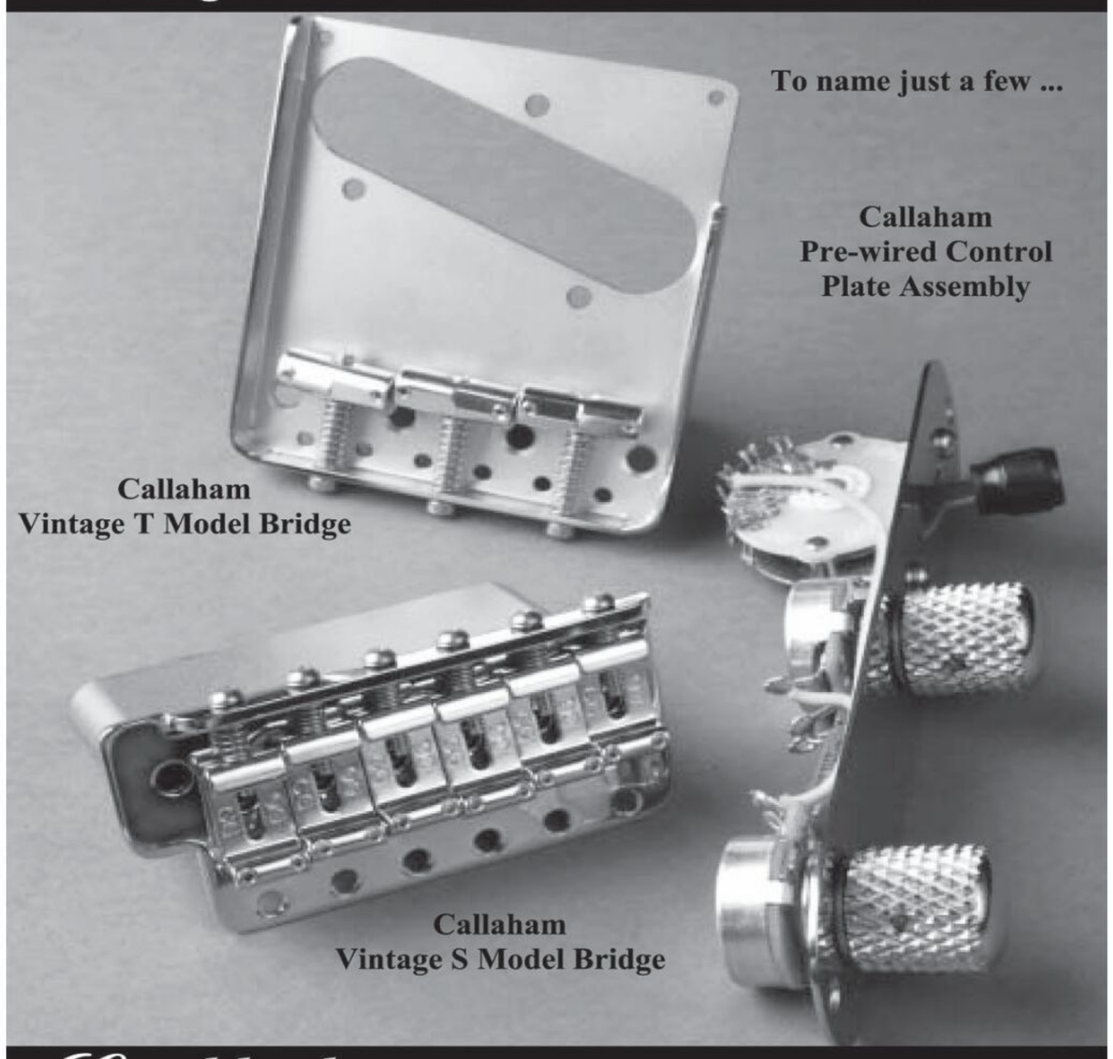

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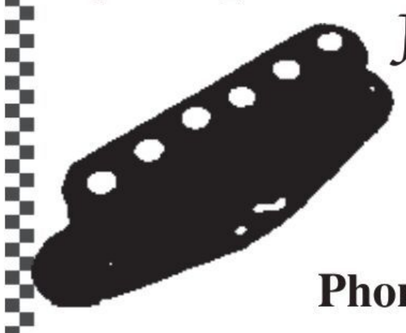

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singing. When they pulled in the driveway, she'd turn the stereo off and come back downstairs.

Were you afraid of being judged?

Maybe it was a vulnerability thing, I don't know. Kids are weird, and I don't assign too much meaning behind it. *Maybe* it was about not being judged, but I just wanted time to figure it out. Sometimes you've got to struggle alone before you bring your craft to people.

Were your parents onboard with music as your career choice?

They were apprehensive, but it didn't matter to me. I love them both, but when they split up, I started doing my own thing. I was a teenager by then, so I slipped under their radar.

What do they do?

Dad's a really talented master carpenter and contractor, and Mom is a claims adjuster. She's also a classically trained vocalist, and was very involved with our church choir. When Amanda and I were kids, she was put in charge of the kids Christmas choir one year, and of course she was harder on us than anybody. She taught the choir "Lean on Me," and I hate that f***ing song now (laughs). When I hear it, I get a sick feeling in my stomach because I remember mom yelling at us. She wanted us to be the best, so that's what we worked for.

Did she teach you about singing?

Mom can project. In church, she was the loudest singer – the star of the congregation – and I may have picked that up from her.

Your new album, *Faster*, steps away from the blues-rock you're known for.

It's a huge step and I was motivated and inspired by the whole process making it.

You were writing songs as the pandemic was forcing the world into shutdown mode. What was motivating you at the time?

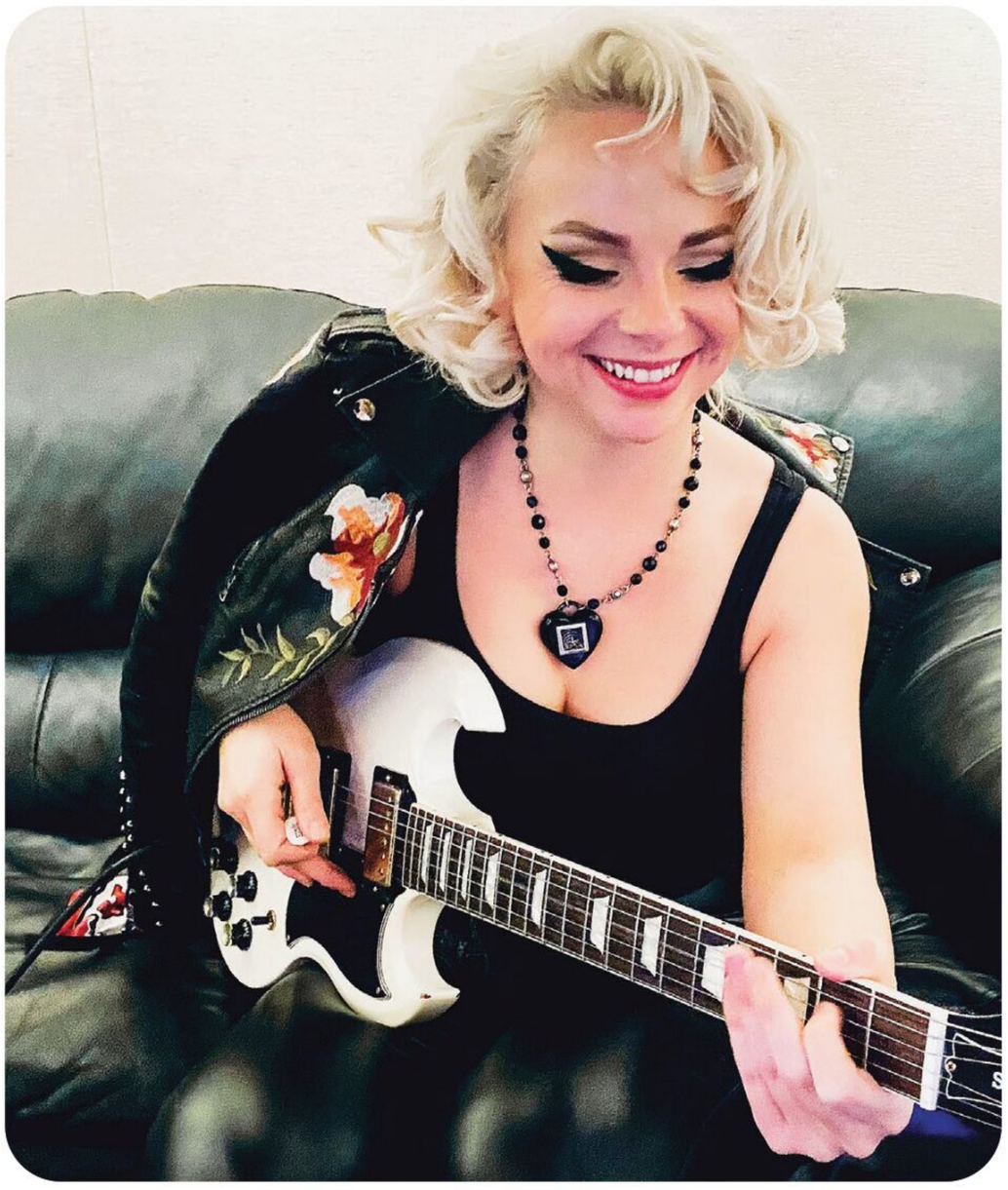
I think I was in denial, like a lot of people at the beginning. We were in Europe in March of 2020, in the middle of a tour, when we were sent home. I remember thinking, "Alright, in a couple weeks we'll get back at it." In June, we were canceling August dates.

When I started writing, the first couple songs were pretty bleak. "The Way Down," which is on the deluxe version of the album, was written when I was mad, sad, frustrated, and lonely. I was dealing with a lot of things, kind of depressed. In June, I got in contact with Martin over the phone and before we ever talked about the record, he was like, "I think you're great and you're doing all the right things."

Having that feedback sparked me to start writing more-empowered, more-confident material from a perspective of where I *wanted to be* rather than where I *was*. When we started writing together, he brought this positivity, energy, and enthusiasm for what we were doing. You can't help but feel confident when you're working with Martin.

How did the process work?

The majority of the songs that we wrote together started with a riff. We actually got together in Kansas City, where we wrote "Faster" and "Hypnotic," and we started "Twisted Ambition." I brought a guitar riff and said, "What about something starting like..." and "How about a high-falsetto melody here?" Then we'd start bouncing ideas off each other. He went to France to work on Sting's new record, but we got together on Zoom nearly every night to work on ideas. It was constant work over several months.



"... the solos are the SG because it's comfortable. When you're feeling it on a new track and want to express yourself, comfort is important."

There are great guitar parts and tones in every song. But what's different is the edgier rock/pop flavor. Is that Martin's influence?

Well, I started working more with modern instrumentation on *Kill Or Be Kind,* which had a pretty traditional Memphis vibe but mixed a throwback sound and soul with a bit of synths. This time, though, I wanted to commit. We were bringing in Josh Freese to play drums; he played with Nine Inch Nails, which is one of my favorite bands. I love the instrumentation in bands like that, where you don't always know what the hell you're hearing, but it's a cool soundscape.

Martin also did Lady Gaga's *The Fame*, and I've been leaning more toward that sort of music over the years. It's about having the right people, and this was the right time to dive in.

There's still a lot of guitar, though. Are you proclaiming, "I'm a guitar player, first and foremost?"

Well, my playing and singing are what people know me for. It's who I am. I can't lose it.

Which guitars did you use most?

I used my white SG for most of the solos and a Jazzmaster for some rhythm parts. That's a ES-335 on "All the Words" because it was a slightly different song, tonally, and was the last song of the entire session.

There's a Telecaster on some rhythm parts, but all the solos are the SG because it's comfortable. When you're feeling it on a new track and want to express yourself, comfort is important.

If I had it my way, I would've been in the studio for three more weeks, messing with every guitar, every different pedal, every amp. Sometimes, it's good having a producer say, "Hey, you're done. We found the sound and it's awesome." I'm grateful he did that because it allowed me to focus on playing rather than dickin' around with gear.

What spurred you to sometimes grab the Jazzmaster?

It's one of those guitars I really like, but don't have one of. So I just wanted to play it.

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Gerald Weber

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Which amps did you run most often?

We blended a Fender Deluxe with a Super Reverb, but favored the Deluxe. In the studio, I like smaller amps. No offense to Fender Twins, but I don't want that in the studio. I need something small but mighty, so when they told me they had a Deluxe, I didn't care what year it was.

In your live rig you've been using Category 5 amps for years, right?

Yes, and they sound incredible. They're all-tube, old-school point-to-point wired. I've got different speaker configurations and different cabinets, different wattages. Right now, my favorite is a 50-watt combo with a 10" and 12" speaker. It's called the Andrew, and it's self-biasing. I can pop tubes in and out like light bulbs.

Let's break down a few *Faster* tracks you've come to especially like because of the solo or the guitar tones.

Well, I love the first single, of course – "Twisted Ambition" – but the focus songs already get plenty of attention. So, from the rest I really like "All Ice No Whiskey" because it's exciting and encompasses everything I'm trying to represent on the record. It's got a screaming vocal and a really cool lead where it drops to another key. It plays back and forth off a heavy synth part, so it might not be a guitar solo where you're like, "Oh, it's got a real structured melodic lead," but it plays off of the synth. It's a cool moment, kind of crazy, with a lot of energy and attitude.

Another cool guitar moment is "Hypnotic," which... I hate comparing myself with somebody so great, but when we were writing and recording it, I was like, "This is a little Prince-esque," because it's got this really cool vibe; the vocals and lyrics are different than anything I've ever done. I sing in a high falsetto, then, in the middle is this monstrous guitar moment – the lead is huge – then it goes away just like that and we're back into this wild vibe.

I also like the lead in "So-Called Lover," which we did in one take; I was pretty proud of that. I was really warmed up, so my right hand was just goin' as we hit this perfect peak moment where I was feeling like, "I can do *anything*." It's that sweet spot, and that solo is the result.

There's *a lot* of cool guitar moments on this record. As a player, I feel we captured something special and different and unique. I don't like to toot the horn or pat myself on the back too much, but I'm incredibly proud of what we accomplished.

Doing *Kill Or Be Kind* a couple years ago was the first time I was the only guitar player on a record. In the past, I had Mike Zito and Luther Dickinson producing, and they're *incredible* guitarists, so of course I wanted them to play on the album. Bobby Harlow brought in some incredible musicians for *Chills & Fever*. We utilize our strengths when making a record, and carrying that weight solely is a fun challenge, but I've settled into the role, like, "Okay, I know what I've got to do," and it's a good feeling.

Do you practice guitar?

I go through phases where I feel inspired and want to pick it up. Then I'll go through a phase where I'm like, "I don't even want to look at it right now." But I *love* the guitar. We have a healthy relationship and there are moments where I go to it, but I *don't* want to make it a chore. That's when I might start hating it.

Sometimes, it requires a little discipline. When I pick it up and my fingers hurt because my callouses have worn down, that's when I've gone too long. But if I lose the fun in it, I lose the creativity. You've got to find the balance. Plus, it *is* my job, so I feel a responsibility to keep up. **VG**

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'60 Fiesta Red/Slab Rose neck 100% original, Player's deam!!
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'61 Sunburst "Hardtail"/Slab Rose neck 100% original, Cleanb!!
'61 Sonic Blue/Slab Rose neck 100% original, Cool!!
'61 Black/Slab Rose neck 100% original. Supoer rare!!
'61 Blond/Slab Rose neck Refret changed nut, 100% original parts.
'61 Blond "Tortoisheshell Pickguard"/Slab Rose neck
'62 Sunburst "Tortoisheshell Pickguard"/Slab Rose neck
'62 Olympic White/Slab Rose neck 100% original, Amazing flamed neck!!
'62 Olympic White/Slab Rose neck 100% original, in Near mint condition.
'62 Sunburst/Round Rose neck 100% original clean!!
'63 Sunburst 100% original
'64 Sunburst (Spaghetti logo) Perfect collector's piece!!
'65 Dakota Red (Transition logo) 100% original in Near Mint!!
'65 Sunburst 100% original, Clean one!!
'65 Olympic White Only refret and changed nut, Mint-Green pickguard.
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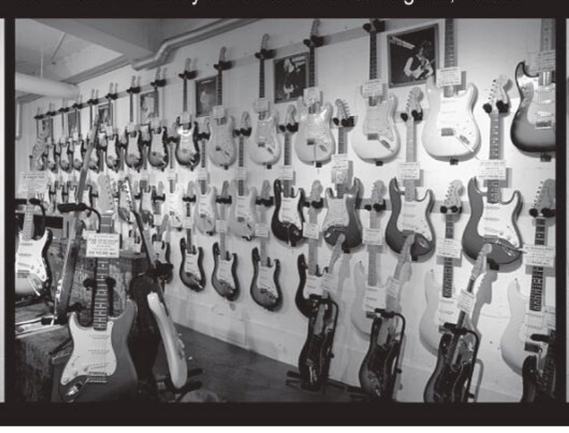

Upcoming Events

***Denotes a new or updated listing.**

Lake County Musician's Swap Meet, September 12, November 14, February 13, 202, May 8, 2022, at 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

NOVEMBER

Rockford Guitar & Drum Show, November 6, 2021. 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

Great American Guitar Show (Fall Philly), November 6 & 7 at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, Rt. 422, Exit at Oaks, 100 Station Ave., Oaks, PA 19456. For more info, contact Bee 3 Vintage at 828-298-2197 or www.bee3vintage.com

Ann Arbor Music Instrument Swap, Sunday, November 7th at Weber's Inn, 3050 Jackson Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48103 from 10am - 4pm. For more information contact Shawn VanSteeland at 517-410-6409 or info@musicinstrumentswap.com

Calgary Guitar Show, Sunday, November 7 at the Red & White Lounge McMahon Stadium, 1833 Crowchild Tr. NW, Calgary AB T2M 4S7. For more information contact Scott Harwood at canadianguitarshows@amplifycorp.com or www.edmontongutiarshow.ca

Edmonton Guitar Show, Sunday, November 14 at the Italian Cultural Centre 14230 133 Ave NW, Edmonton AB Canada T5L 4W4. For more information contact Scott Harwood at canadianguitarshows@amplifycorp.com or www.edmontongutiarshow.ca

Rose Quarter Guitar Festival, Sunday November 21 at the Veterans Memorial Coliseum Portland, OR. For more info Bruce@AdolphAgency.com, 253-445-1973 or visit www.rosequarterguitarfestival.com

Northeast Ohio Guitar Show, Sunday, November 21 at the Quality Inn, 4742 Brecksville Rd, Richfield, OH 44286. For more information contact Lawrence Puljic at 440-865-4301 or LP@ncwcom.com. www.lpsound.com

Midwest Music Gear Swap, Sunday, November 21 at the Polish American Club, 472 E. Glenwood Ave, Akron, OH 44310. From 10am - 4pm. Contact Edward Michalec at 330-753-5050 or www.midwestmusicgearswap.com

DECEMBER

CANCELED - Atlanta Guitar Show, at the Infinite Energy Forum, 6400 Sugarloaf Pkwy, Duluth, GA 30097. Hours Saturday 10-5 Sunday 10-4. Contact Ray at 404-895-3459 or Ray@grinningelk.com

2022

JANUARY

2022 Winter Ohio Guitar Show, January 9, 2022, at the Makoy Center, 5462 Center St, Hillard, OH 43026. Hours 11:30am–5pm. For more information call Marc at 740-797-3351 or visit www.ohioguitarshow.com

Amigo, SoCAL Guitar Show, January 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.

Orlando International Guitar & Music Expo, January 28-30, 2022 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) 962-4434, guitarexpo22@yahoo.com or visit www.guitarexpo.net (**See Advertisement on page 76.**)

FEBRUARY

Greater Pittsburgh Guitar Show, February 27, 2022 Printscape Arena, 114 Southpointe Blvd., Canonsburg, PA. For more info contact Scott at (412) 716-8411, scotpro@comcast.net or visit www.guitarshowusa.com.

MARCH

Carolina Guitar Show – Asheville, March 12-13, 2022 at the WNC Ag Center I-26, Exit 40, 1301 Fanning Bridge Rd., Fletcher/Asheville, NC 28732. For more info, call Bee 3 Vintage at 828-298-2197 or visit www.bee3vintage.com

The Lansing Music Instrument Swap, Sunday, March 20th at the Causeway Bay Convention Center, 6820 S Cedar St., Lansing, MI 48911 from 10am - 4pm. For more information contact Shawn VanSteeland at 517-410-6409 or at info@musicinstrumentswap.com (**See Advertisement on page 77.**)

The Indiana Guitar Show, March 26-27, 2022 at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds, 1900 E Main St, Danville, Indiana. For more info visit www.theindianaguitarshow.com

Amigo Nashville Guitar Show, March 26-27, Williamson County Ag Expo Park, Franklin, TN. For more info Larry at (918) 288-2222, amigoshows@stringswest.com, Ruth at (817) 312-7659, ruthmbrinkmann@gmail.com, Dave at (417) 850-4751, davelcrocker@gmail.com or visit www.amigoguitarshows.com.

APRIL

Northeast Guitar Expo, April 3, 2022 at The Verve Hotel & Convention Center, 1360 Worcester St., Natick, MA. Hours 11-4. For more info call Peter Occhineri (860) 983-6774, email – NortheastGuitarExpo@gmail.com, website – www.NortheastGuitarExpo.com

The Kalamazoo Music Instrument Swap, Sunday April 24 at the Kalamazoo County Expo Center, 2900 Lake St., Kalamazoo, MI 49048 from 10am - 4pm. For more information contact Shawn VanSteeland at 517-410-6409 or at info@musicinstrumentswap.com (**See Advertisement on page 77.**)

Dallas International Guitar Festival, April 29 through May 1, at the Dallas Market Hall, 2200 N Stemmons Fwy, Dallas, TX, For more info visit www.guitarshow.com.

MAY

Jake's Guitar Show & Music Swap Meet, May 7-8, at the Indoor Treasure Barn, 1380 Rt 100, Barto, Pa. Hours 8-1. For more information contact Justin at (484)256-6515 or info@jakesfleamarket.com

Amigo Chicago Guitar Show, May 16-17, Odeum Sports & Expo Center, Villa Park, IL. 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.

SEPTEMBER

Jake's Guitar Show & Music Swap Meet, September 17-18, at the Indoor Treasure Barn, 1380 Rt 100, Barto, Pa. Hours 8-1. For more information contact Justin at (484)256-6515 or info@jakesfleamarket.com

OCTOBER

Guitarlington 2021, October 15-16 at the Arlington Convention Center, 1200 Ballpark Way, Arlington TX. For more info contact Ruth Brinkmann (817) 312-7659 ruthmbrinkmann@gmail.com , Larry Briggs (918) 288-2222 larryb@stringswest.com, Dave Crocker (417) 850-4751 davelcrocker@gmail.com, Fax (817) 473-1089 www.texasguitarshows.com.

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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10am-4pm

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Contact: Shawn VanSteeland 517-410-6409 Visit: www.musicinstrumentswap.com

GRAND RAPIDS MUSIC INSTRUMENT SWAP

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SUNDAY
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at the door

Double Tree Hotel

4747 28th St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49512

Contact: Shawn VanSteeland 517-410-6409 Visit: www.MusicInstrumentSwap.com

2022

KALAMAZOO MUSIC INSTRUMENT SWAP

Buy, Sell or Trade

SUNDAY
APRIL 24, 2022
10am-4pm

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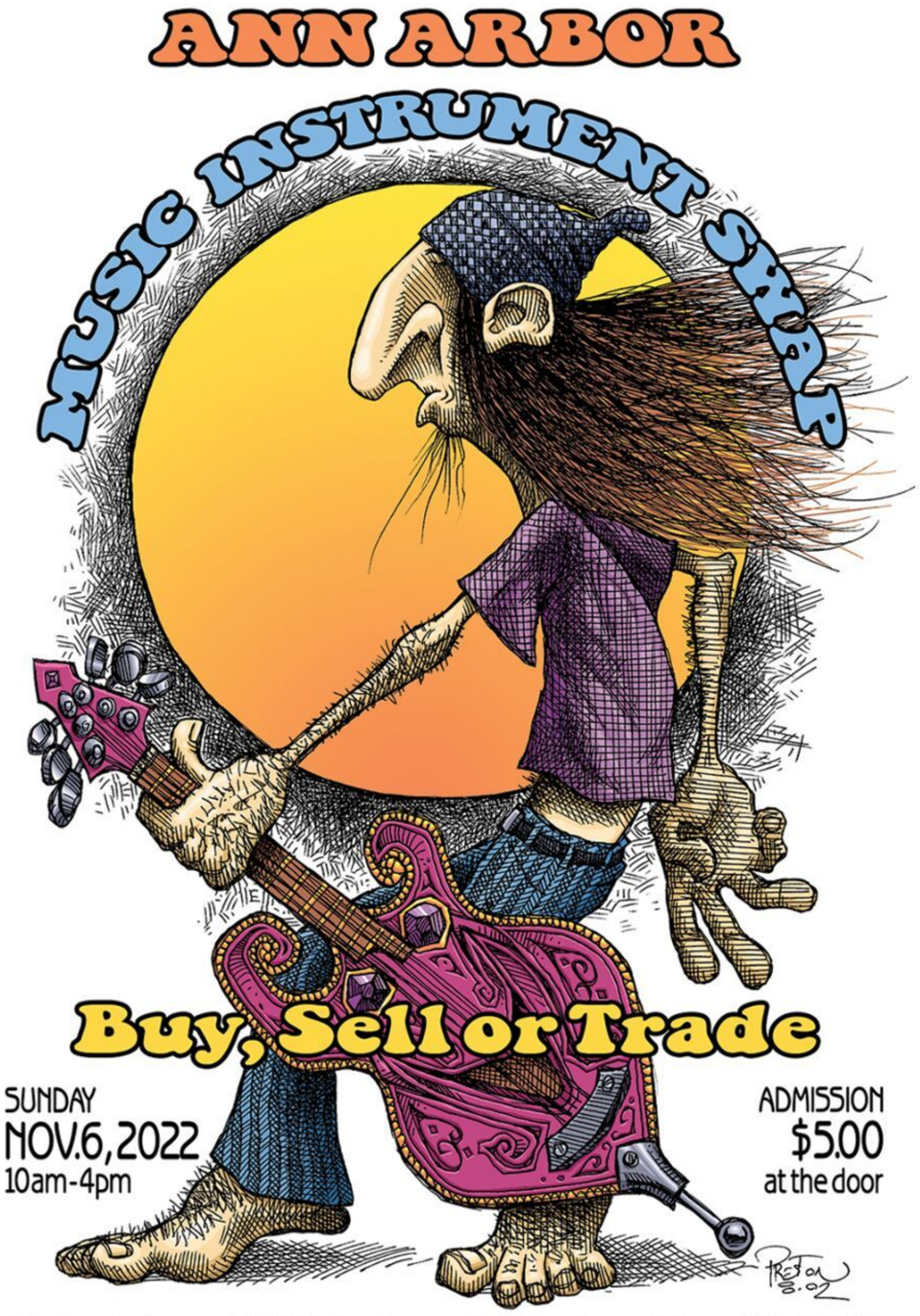
at the door

Kalamazoo County Expo Center

2900 Lake Street, Kalamazoo MI, 49048

Contact: Shawn VanSteeland 517-410-6409 Visit: www.MusicInstrumentSwap.com

ANN ARBOR MUSIC INSTRUMENT SWAP



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Weber's Inn 3050 Jackson Ave. Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Contact: Shawn VanSteeland 517-410-6409 Visit: www.musicinstrumentswap.com

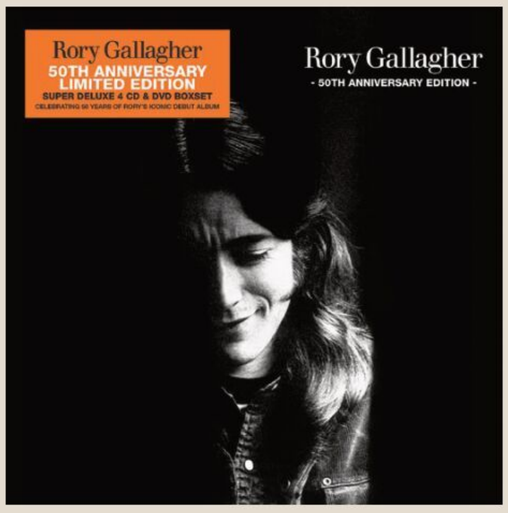
Rory Gallagher

RORY GORGE

Rising appreciation for the late Irish guitar wizard continues with a 50th anniversary/five-disc box of his 1971 solo debut. With pristine sound quality, the collection includes a new mix of the original album; 30 previously unreleased outtakes and alternate takes; a BBC concert and session tracks; and a previously unreleased concert DVD, filmed in Paris for television.

Only 23 years old when the album was completed, Gallagher was already a mature bluesman, with bassist Gerry McAvoy and drummer Wilgar Campbell providing flexible backing. His emotional vocals and astonishing lead, slide, and acoustic – along with mandolin and saxophone – took his blues-rock and boogie to intriguing heights.

"Laundromat," "I Fall Apart," "For the Last Time," and "Can't Believe It's True" are highlights, capturing the rich, organic tones of Rory's 1961 Stratocaster and capoed Tele. The scorching instrumental "Advision Jam" proves an excellent outtake, while the DVD reveals how focused and intense Gallagher became during live performances.



Rory Gallagher

Rory Gallagher 50th Anniversary Edition

Box sets are often for obsessive fans, which would describe those interested in hearing *four* takes of the deceptively upbeat "At the Bottom," or *six* takes of "Hands Up," all with subtle variations. If you're this kind of Rory Gallagher completist, it's a must-buy. ***– Bret Adams***

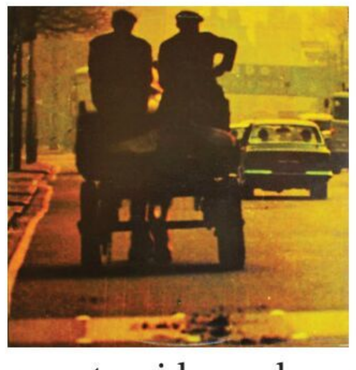
Black Label Society

Doom Crew Inc.

BLS' 11th album has Zakk Wylde sharing duties with guitarist Dario Lorina. Huge tones, harmonized lines, and blistering solos dwell in the realm of metal-infested stomp and fretboard intensity. Dedicated to their roadcrew and legions of adoring fans, *Doom Crew Inc.* is a caffeinated guitarfest with punishing intensity, and Wylde and Lorina rifflike it's the end of days.

Exhibit A is "Set You Free" with its humorous video and lightnin' licks. Although not the most distinctive guitar duo (Wylde's influence rubs off on Lorina), their solos combine delightfully over-the-top harmonized runs, à la Stryper, Racer X, or a blues-based Cacophony. "Ruins" is another grungy, Ozzy-wailing dirge that will instantly melt flesh from bone.

There are somber ballads like "Love Reign Down," where Wylde does his best Gregg-Allman-style vocal, but the fireworks are where this album rules. Zakk has always had an ABB-meets-Sabbath fixation and here, *Doom Crew Inc.* delivers. "Gospel of Lies" and "Shelter Me" are super heavy, and Lorina more than holds his own via super-melodic badassery. *Doom Crew Inc.* marinates in dark jubilance. ***– Oscar Jordan***



Ronnie Lane

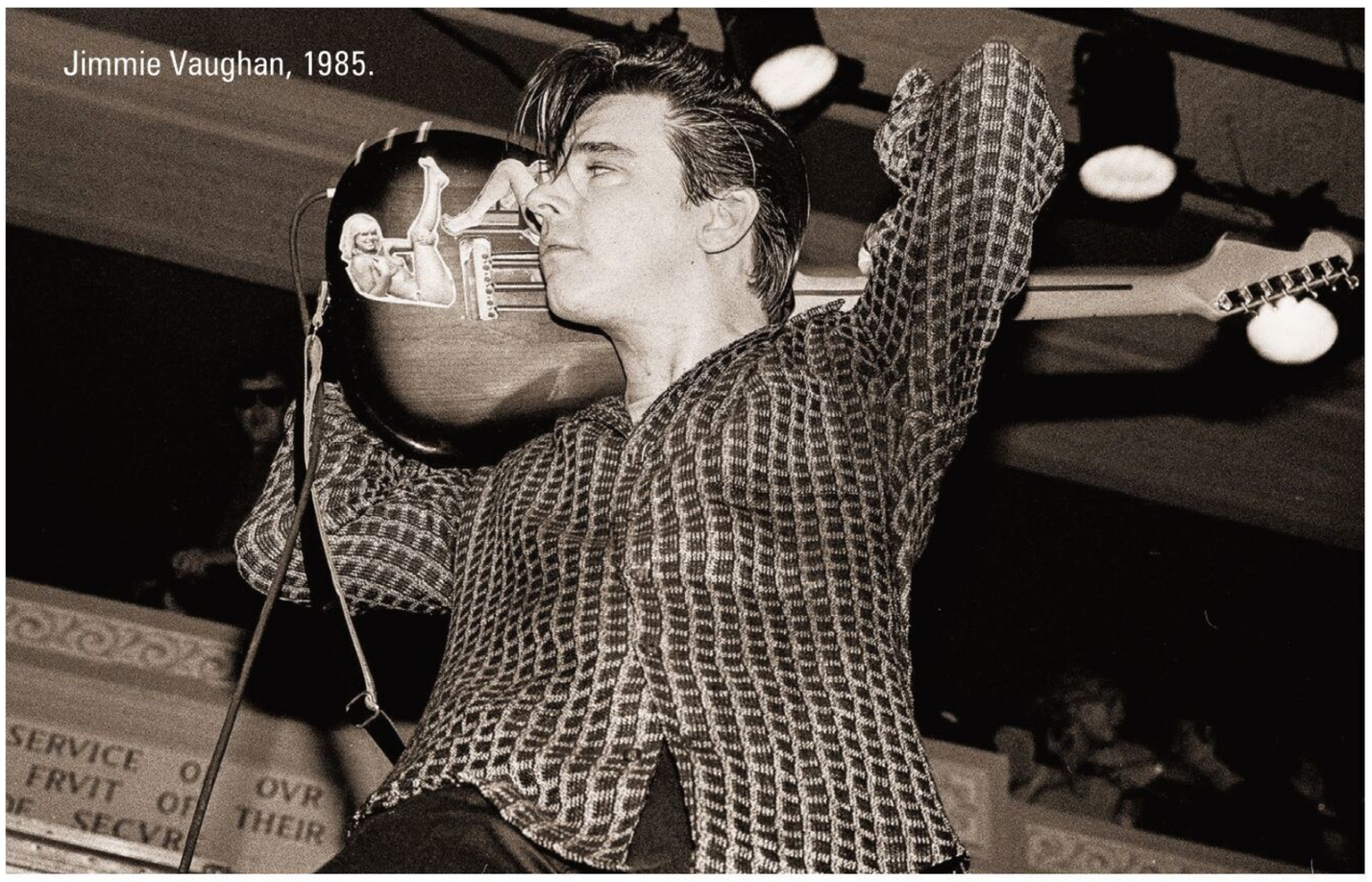
Anymore For Anymore

In 1974, Faces bassist Lane left the rat race of arena rock for the Welsh countryside and recorded his magnum opus. Remastered at Abbey Road and now reissued on vinyl with download codes, in what would've been Lane's 75th year, *Anymore for Anymore* reveals Lane the polymath, turning in 11 masterful plays on country, R&B, rock, gospel, and music hall.

Often veering into the shambolic joy that became the Faces' stock in trade – see "Bye And Bye (Gonna See The King)," driven by Graham Lyle's bottleneck, or the roadhouse rave-up "Chicken Wired" – the true standouts are the Lane-penned classics like "Tell Everyone" and "The Poacher." While the occasional saxophone, music hall chestnuts, and – wait for it – the oboe refrain on "The Poacher" may seem obtuse to American ears in the context of what is essentially a folk-rock album, there are more than enough guitars and mandos here to sate even the most pedantic.

Like Lane himself, *Anymore for Anymore* is charming, at once thoughtful and off the cuff, as the disclaimer on the sleeve would seem to indicate: "Any rumble on 'Anymore For Anymore' is wind in the microphone, please do not adjust your set." ***– Dennis Pernu***

Rory Gallagher: Barrie Wentzell.


Jimmie Vaughan, 1985.

JIMMIE'S BLUES BOX

By Dan Forte

Don't think music can be life-changing? Try moving 1,700 miles. In 1987, I moved from Northern California to Austin, Texas, and music was the reason. Bands like the LeRoi Brothers, Tail Gators, and Teddy & the Tall-Tops played a part, but the biggest reason was the Fabulous Thunderbirds.

On a trip to Austin in '76, I was introduced to the band's harpist/frontman Kim Wilson and guitarist/leader **Jimmie Vaughan**. The night I walked into a near-empty restaurant called Rome Inn, to the sounds of them doing "Scratch My Back," my senses were altered. It took another 11 years to make the move, but it was never off my radar.

My notion of what a young, white blues band could sound like was upended. I've said it before, and it's not a perfect depiction, but the T-Birds sounded like grown men. They weren't long-haired hippies in faded jeans (though plenty of groups fitting that description could play their asses off). There was something serious and authoritative about the quartet of Vaughan, Wilson, bassist Keith Ferguson, and drummer Mike Buck.

I sang the band's praises like a warning of what was to come. Within weeks of the T-Birds playing the 1978 San Francisco Blues Festival, local bands got haircuts, traded their jeans for pegged slacks, and hunted down old Strats – the group's effect was that profound.

Jimmie, older brother of Stevie Ray Vaughan, left the Thunderbirds in 1990, mere months before Stevie's death and the release of their only tandem album, *Family Style*. He's gone on to a successful solo career, and over the years he's contributed to albums by dozens of artists, from Bo Diddley and John Lee Hooker to Eric Clapton, Carlos Santana, and Bob Dylan.

With five CDs, a vinyl LP of *Do You Get The Blues*, two 45s, and a 200-page booklet, *The Jimmie Vaughan Story* covers a generous swath of that career. There's bevy of previously unreleased cuts that are every bit as good as the material so familiar to fans. The cuts by Vaughan's pre-Thunderbirds band, Storm, are true rarities. Doyle Bramhall, Sr.'s soulful vocal on "Have You Ever Loved A Woman" is stunning, as is Jimmie's channeling of Freddie King.

The ballad "When Did You Leave Heaven" makes you wonder why it's just now seeing the light of day. And Jimmie's lap steel takes the spotlight on the standard "Harbor Lights."

I've never heard Vaughan shred, and I mean that as the highest possible compliment. I'm sure he could and did, maybe when his band, The Chessmen, opened for Jimi Hendrix in '68, but overplaying wouldn't fit with what the Thunderbirds were about, nor his later solo work. It was about the integrity of the overall sound, and he made his case with just the essential notes. One of my favorite tracks is "Sugar-Coated Love," where Jimmie plays only a rhythm throughout, laying down the sort of Jimmy Reed in overdrive groove that was the band's stock-in-trade.

On the other hand, it's mystifying that "Full-Time Lover" isn't included, particularly a live version, because it showcased how he could build a slow-blues solo.

Along with appearances with greats like Albert Collins, Bonnie Raitt, and Little Milton, there are collaborations with Austin mainstays Bill Carter, Lou Ann Barton, and Denny Freeman. You also get to visit the tiny Continental Gallery, and hear Vaughan and Billy Gibbons rip through the Nightcaps' "Wine, Wine, Wine."

The booklet is chock full of photos from the 70-year-old's life and career. Baby pics of him and Stevie, teen bands, the Thunderbirds' house-band period at Antone's blues club, backing blues legends Buddy Guy, Hubert Sumlin, and Jimmy Rogers, and his solo career.

The narrative, culled from an interview with journalist/producer Bill Bentley, rambles and gets repetitive. For someone who has interviewed Jimmie, which I have, you can definitely hear his voice. But for the uninitiated, it could be hard to follow. For instance, he mentions "Blind George," but unless you were around Austin in the early '70s, you wouldn't know he was referring to singer/pianist Blind George McClain (which could have easily been inserted). But when Jimmie talks about losing his brother in a helicopter crash, calling to tell their mother, having to identify the body, it's downright moving.

My one objection with the package is the absence of personnel credits, which seems unnecessary since that information would be easily obtainable for the record company. This isn't just Jimmie Vaughan's legacy; it's part of the legacy of every bandmate and sideman who played a part in the recordings. Sure, it would take up space, but a few less snapshots of Jimmie wouldn't have hindered the package, as many just repeat the image of him onstage with his Stratocaster.

Am I nitpicking? I don't think so, and I'm sure neither would a drummer or bassist whose work with the bluesman was good enough to merit inclusion.

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Jimmie Vaughan: Tracy Anne Hart.

Wanda Jackson with the Martin D-18 she adored almost as much as she did Elvis.

Wanda Jackson

Encore

The girl with a big guitar, big hair, a short dress, and a rockabilly howl, she first shook up the music world in 1954, pre-Elvis. Wanda Jackson went on to score rock and country hits that helped define the genres, earning her slots in the halls of fame – for rockabilly, gospel, and rock-and-roll. Sixty-seven years on, she's still shaking them rafters. *Encore* is promised to be her farewell album, and Wanda's going out with plenty of glitter and swagger.

That this album is co-produced by Joan Jett tells you of Jackson's power and influence. She not only broke into the boy's club that was popular music, she wowed them, whether they were country, rockers, or punkers. Jett joins in on three tunes – including the full-tilt "Two Shots" that also includes Elle King and an ample helping of twangy, hot-rodded guitar. The saucy "Treat Me Like A Lady" is both a tongue-in-cheek and no-nonsense rocker. Singers Angaleena Presley and Candi Carpenter help out on a funky, lowdown "Good Girl Down" with plenty of sass and tease.

Jackson still boasts the big hair and howl. Rockabilly will never be the same again when she retires. – ***Michael Dregni***

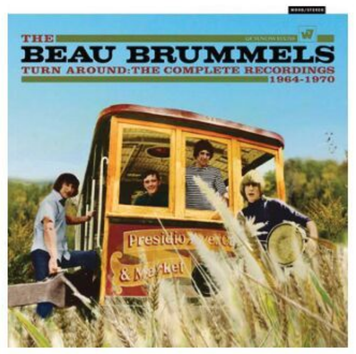
Pokey LaFarge

In The Blossom of Their Shade

The 2020 pandemic left an impact on Pokey LaFarge, who was about to tour behind his newly released *Rock Bottom Rhapsody*. During the ample downtime, he wrote an album's worth of new tunes, yet he didn't stop there. Setting aside his trademark acoustic sound (inspired by swing, jazz, and folk) LaFarge cloaked them in a drastically different sound. While the feel remains retro, the arrangements and instrumentation are spare, ethereal, and guitar-driven thanks to solid work from Scott Ligon, Joel Paterson, and LaFarge himself.

Ligon delivers flawless Tex-Mex nylon-string filigrees behind LaFarge's limber vocal on the clever love ballad "Yo-Yo." Paterson's twanging electric powers up "Rotterdam," a swirling minor-key performance in the Los Lobos tradition. LaFarge's acoustic and electric work propels the ballad "To Love or Be Alone." Playing acoustic on the aching lament "Drink of You," he and lap-steel player Doug Corcoran ably channel Santo & Johnny.

Plugging in, LaFarge and Ligon head for the swamp on the raw, bluesy rocker "Fine to Me." A smoother '50s ambience surrounds his vocal on the fatalistic "Goodnight, Goodbye (Hope Not Forever)," framed by Ligon's gorgeous, shimmering rhythm licks. LaFarge's insistent rhythms kick along "Killing Time," an engaging, upbeat country and doo-wop fusion. – ***Rich Kienzle***



The Beau Brummels

Turn Around: The Complete Recordings (1964-1970)

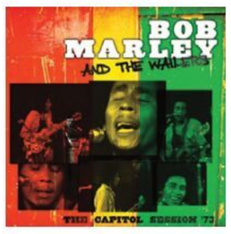
In the mid '60s, this Bay Area band straddled British Invasion, garage rock, and emerging psychedelic sounds. More important, they cut some of the most sophisticated rock and roll of the time, thanks to lead guitarist/composer Ron Elliott, and benefiting from Sal Valentino, one of rock's great voices.

This eight-disc box covers their heyday and breakup. Initial hits "Laugh, Laugh" and "Just A Little" had a dark, moody quality; kudos to producer Sylvester "Sly Stone" Stewart.

The group also dipped into country music, covering Don Gibson's "Oh, Lonesome Me," complete with jangly guitar solo, and twisted the genre on "Just Wait And See." Then they turned around and rocked out Jimmy Reed blues on "Ain't That Loving You Baby." Elliott's name might not be whispered in guitar circles, but on the 12-string-packed "Don't Talk To Strangers," he out-jangled the Byrds.

They helped pioneer country-rock on the 1968 album *Bradley's Barn*, with future-exec Lenny Waronker joining the band. Cut in Nashville, it featured session pros such as guitarist Wayne Moss, drummer Kenny Buttrey, and bassist Norbert Putnam.

extra EXTRA



BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS
The Capitol Session '73

This DVD presents the greatest-ever reggae band just as *Burnin'* and *Catch A Fire* were exposing the genre to the masses. Peter Tosh supplies plenty of wah squawk while bassist Aston "Family Man" Barrett's pauses say as much as his fluid lines. And if Bob Marley never wrote or sang a song, he'd still have been a great rhythm guitarist. **– *DF***

JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR
The Blues Album

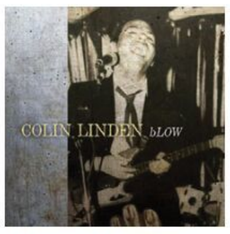
The latest from the British blues-rock phenom pairs her with producers Josh Smith and Joe Bonamassa. Taylor's husky vocals and muscular soloing bring life to covers of Peter Green ("Stop Messin' Round"), Little Richard, and Albert King ("Can't You See What You're Doing To Me"). Taylor's note selection is deep and visceral, with vocals that add even more depth. She's fierce! **– *OJ***

ANDRE FERRERI QUINTETTO
Numero Uno

Guitarist Ferreri has worked with artists ranging from the Platters and Bucky Pizzarelli to the Charlotte (North Carolina) Symphony. He shares the spotlight with saxophonist Ziad Rabie on this set of originals, including bluesy swing, Metheny-esque explorations, and lyrical ballads. Ferreri's tone is warm, while his lines are articulate and his improvising inventive. **– *DF***

MUDHONEY
Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge Deluxe Edition

While they're often hailed as "grunge godfathers" who missed the post-Nirvana sweepstakes, this remastered 30th anniversary reissue has a full disc of bonus content. It proves Mudhoney owes as much to garage rockers like the Sonics and Billy Childish as they do to the two Blacks – Flag and Sabbath. Especially enlightening are the previously unreleased 24-track demos that perversely preceded the eight-song album proper. **– *DP***



COLIN LINDEN
Blow

The veteran blues-rocker, inspired by Howlin' Wolf and other blues icons, delivers a set of snarling, stomping originals of the moment yet rooted in the past. His voice is raw; his stunning guitar pyrotechnics are incendiary without overheating. Linden is particularly powerful on "Until the Heat Leaves Town," "Angel Next to Me," and the Bo Diddley-inspired "Right Shoe Wrong Foot." **– *RK***

MR. BIG
Lean into It: 30th Anniversary Edition

This platinum 1991 album boosted the careers of guitarist Paul Gilbert and bassist Billy Sheehan, and included a surprise #1 single, the sing-along acoustic ballad "To Be with You." The unreleased bonus track "Wild Wild Women" rocks with swaggering grooves, while "Shadows" and "Strike Like Lightning" are from the *Navy SEALs* film soundtrack. Back then, Mr. Big displayed virtuosity bred with songcraft. **– *BA***

STURGILL SIMPSON
The Ballad of Dood & Juanita

After a Memphis-style session, followed by a cattywampus headbanger's part then two glorious bluegrass records, Simpson upsets the cart yet again with a storyteller's song cycle set after the Civil War. Fans will love it; detractors will detract. But the music is rousing country, bluegrass, and old-timey – all with Sturgill's impassioned vocals, plus a helping hand from Willie Nelson and Trigger. **– *MD***

AL STEWART
Time Passages Deluxe Edition

Reissues of Stewart's grown-up pop continue with this 1978 hit. The acoustic guitars of Stewart and Peter White, along with electric flash from Tim Renwick and producer Alan Parsons, make it almost irresistable. Bonus material includes a Chicago radio concert with obscure, underrated guitarman Adam Yurman, plus a high-def 5.1 mix. For goosebumps, listen to White's reverb-graced acoustic lead on "Time Passages." **– *PP***

APRIL WINE
First Glance/Harder... Faster

A remastered two-fer of their first two U.S. albums, the Canadian band's 1978 and '79 releases delivered melodic crunch throughout an array of tight rockers and ballads. "Roller" and "Silver Dollar" (*First Glance*) show power and sophistication, as do "I Like to Rock" and King Crimson's "21st Century Schizoid Man" (*Harder... Faster*). A blast of tasty '70s vintage. **– *BA***

WEE WILLIE WALKER
Not In My Lifetime

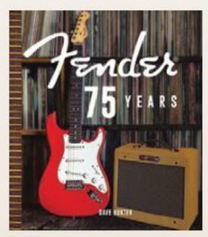
The veteran soul singer shines on his final recording, barely completed before he passed away at 77. Most songs were co-written by Christine Vitale and Anthony Paule, who provides tasteful guitar throughout. No bombastic bends and heavy sustain here. He moves from out-of-phase T-Bone to gospel tremolo with ease, and his solo on "Real Good Lie" is soul-jazz perfection. **– *DF***

TREMONTI
Marching In Time

The former Alter Bridge and Creed guitarist's fifth solo-band record is a collection of aggressive soundscapes and stories, detailing events of the past year. Thrash collides with modern metal, as Mark blazes with chugging rhythms and searing solos in "The Last One of Us." Check out bludgeoning drums and layers of hair-raising virtuosity in "Not Afraid To Lose." **– *OJ***

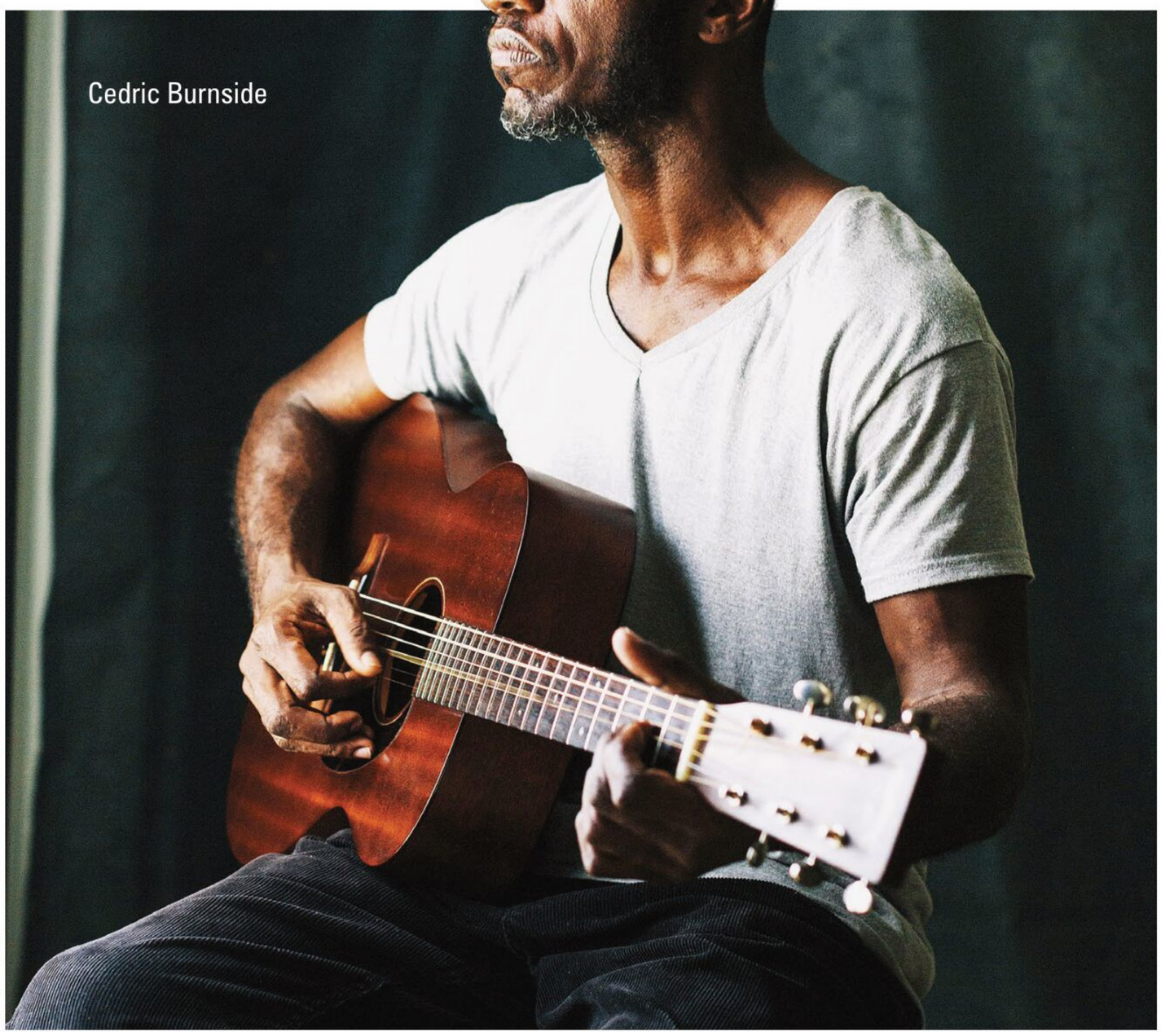
TOM PRINCIPATO
50 Years Live

One of our greatest Tele-whackers, Principato drops this two-CD live manifesto. "Rock Me Baby" captures *supreme* Fender tones at an '04 Italy show; on "Meddlin'," Tom lets his reverb do the talkin' with double-stops and slick runs. A 1979 Washington, D.C. duet with steel giant Buddy Emmons yields "Cherokee," backed by Principato's masterful jazz-blues improv. This is Telecaster heaven. **– *PP***



DAVE HUNTER
Fender 75 Years

Aspects of Fender's story have appeared in a litany of magazine features and books over the years, but never has it all been collected and summarized so well in one large, stylish tome. *VG* contributor Dave Hunter does a fine job tying together the many plot lines, and the publisher has sourced a wealth of pictures including many rarities along with the usual (but essential) suspects and official Fender shots. **– *MD***


Cedric Burnside

The 86-page booklet includes copious notes by producer Alec Palo, with quotes from surviving band members. A fitting tribute. ***– Dan Forte***

Samantha Fish
Faster

Samantha Fish's latest continues an artful trajectory combining pop and gritty blues; *Faster* seduces the listener as it showcases empowerment, self-reflection, and taking control of one's destiny. Under the watchful eye of producer Martin Kierszenbaum (Sting, Lady Gaga), Fish's seventh solo record effortlessly ignores the blues police on "Twisted Ambition," with a pumping bass line, radio-friendly choruses, and nasty guitar licks. "Forever Together" and "Hypnotic" abandon the blues entirely, as they surreptitiously implant dark lyrical content within groovy pop beats.

Faster is a production-heavy affair that's less about live studio performances; instead, it leans into implanting compelling sounds, clever instrumentation, and dynamics with Fish's sultry drawl to pull you in. "Loud" is an excellent example of this as it builds to a crescendo and features guest rapper Tech N9ne and Samantha's badass blues-rock solo. "Imaginary War" displays inspired guitar riffage and wah work with finesse and soul. Her solos on this track are wild and spicy.

Finally, "So-Called Lover" is a power pop-meets-blues mashup, with ballsy rhythm work and extroverted soloing. Fish speaks her truth through words, production, guitar, and juxtaposing genres. ***– OJ***

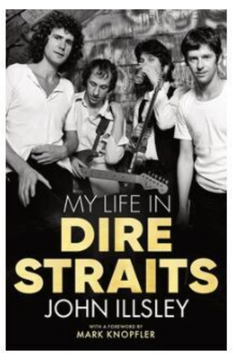
Cedric Burnside
I Be Trying

One of 35 grandchildren of the late R.L. Burnside, Cedric grew up in the rundown Holly Springs, Mississippi, home that housed four generations of Burnsides. An award-winning drummer, he was behind a kit with his grandfather by 13 and later played with uncle Garry as the Burnside Exploration, as well as recording with Lightnin' Malcolm, Bernard Allison, and younger brother, Cody.

Having moved to guitar (but providing excellent drumming here), his lowdown playing is true to the North Mississippi style while expanding the genre. For instance, the title cut features a gospel-like choir, while the solo acoustic "The World Can Be So Cold" is more folk than blues, and "Pretty Flowers" recalls Ali Farka Toure.

A cursory listen to the angular, distorted "Get Down" is enough to reveal that Burnside has no use for picks. This is finger-yanking, string-popping guitar. "What Makes Me Think" is brooding and plodding in the John Lee Hooker vein – not surprisingly, since granddad R.L. was heavily influenced by the Hook.

For decades, people have wondered how the blues might evolve without sacrificing its essence. The answer may be right here. ***– DF***



John Illsley
My Life in Dire Straits

Illsley's story is unusual in that the bassist and co-founder of Dire Straits survived rock superstardom better than most. John grew up in a conservative post-war English home, and eventually discovered boredom-killing rock and roll. While living in public housing, he met David Knopfler, a guitarist whose brother, Mark, sang, played lead, and wrote songs. In 1977, they formed Dire Straits and went on to conquer the MTV universe.

With plainspoken honesty, Illsley describes touring and recording routines, and how each wreaked havoc on members' personal lives. He covers the Knopfler brothers' painful falling-out during the recording of 1980's *Making Movies*; they're still estranged, yet Illsley remains friends with both. He chronicles the dizzying success of 1985's *Brothers in Arms*, the massive tour for '91's *On Every Street*, and how he and Mark knew the band was reaching its end.

Many bass and guitar anecdotes are included; Illsley prefers the soft sound of old bass strings, and Mark's distinctive Les Paul tone on "Money for Nothing" was achieved accidentally when the microphone in front of his Laney amp was pointing down at the floor. An absorbing history of an important band, one that intentionally flew under the publicity radar. ***– BA***

Cedric Burnside: Shoalsmusicfan/Wikipedia.

Hayes Carll
You Get It All

Over nearly two decades, Hayes Carll established himself with an astute amalgam of original material reflecting humor, heart, and an independent spirit befitting his Texas roots. His flair for blending the grittier side of Americana with the sounds of classic outlaw country is particularly apparent on the sardonic "Nice Things," driven by a relentless, roaring arrangement straight out of Waylon Jennings.

Carll and guitarist Kris Donegan handle much of the acoustic strumming, while Nashville session vet Kenny Greenberg plays the leads. Greenberg stands out on the foreboding, bayou-flavored "Different Boats," unleashing a screaming break in the middle. On "You Get It All," he enhances Carll's vocal with an emphatic acoustic interlude. Playing pedal steel, Greenberg and guitarist Adam Landry complement "In the Meantime," Carll's duet with singer/songwriter Brandy Clark.

Dementia is the subject of "Help Me Remember." Written by Carll and Josh Morningstar, it's a powerful performance, sung from a victim's pained, fearful viewpoint. His understated vocal and the minimalist arrangement render it unforgettable. Greenberg generates sparks with a snarling outburst in the midst of Carll's Jerry Lee Lewis-style rocker "To Keep from Being Found." The moody, intimate "The Way I Found You" also benefits from Greenberg's and Donegan's tasteful acoustic playing. ***– RK***

Judas Priest.

Judas Priest
50 Heavy Metal Years of Music

With 42 CDs containing every studio and live album by the British colossus – including *13* discs of unreleased material – this is the metal motherlode.

The opener, 1974's "One for the Road," sounds almost quaint today, with the young Priest putting a heavier spin on Free. Later, guitarists Downing and Tipton evolve into the sleeker "Hell Bent for Leather" and "Green Manalishi," before the MTV years of "Breaking the Law" and "Living After Midnight." From a 1988 concert, "Metal Gods" sums up their platinum decade with frontman Rob Halford.

Guitar amps of the '90s and 2000s, along with the rise of saturated preamp distortion, made Priest's anthems sound better and heavier, as heard on later live versions of "Grinder" and "Judas Rising." Recent tracks boast the young ripper Richie Faulkner, who has revitalized the band. The holy grail is a '79 tape from a tiny Manhattan club, and it's revelatory; imagine "Victim of Changes" performed for a NYC bar crowd, but at full-blast Judas Priest stage volume.

Priced at several hundred dollars, *50 Heavy Metal Years of Music* can hardly be called "essential." But if you're a card-carrying metal mutha, you know you want it. ***– Pete Prown***

Peter Frampton
Somethin's Happening/ Frampton

Many first heard the English rock star on his chart-obliterating live album – but Frampton already had *four* solo albums under his belt. This studio pair, from 1974-'75, display wicked guitarmanship and are now remastered on this two-CD set.

Somethin's Happening found Peter already mixing heavy guitar with pop and soft-rock textures. "Golden Goose" and the Doobie Brothers knock-off "Doobie Wah" are radio-ready missles, laden with breezy chords and rock attitude. The production is cluttered, but portrays a young rocker hunting for FM gold.

Peter finally worked out the audio kinks for 1975's *Frampton*, the best studio album of his career. "Day's Dawning" is whip-smart rocker, topped with phase-shifter guitar, while "Show Me the Way" is a blueprint for the iconic talk-box single from *Frampton Comes Alive*. Tuning to G-G-D-G-B-D, Peter reveals his acoustic fingerstyle skills on "Penny For Your Thoughts."

For sharp songwriting, "One More Time" and "Apple of Your Eye" are pop-rock gems, with ringing acoustics and cleanish leads. "Fanfare" deploys a massively compressed solo; for harder stuff, Peter wails on "Nowhere's Too Far (For My Baby)."

By the final metallic riff of "(I'll Give You) Money," you'll realize the 25-year-old Frampton was more than ready to conquer the world. ***– PP VG***

Judas Priest : Zach Petersen/Wikimedia.

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Buscarino Gigmaster #PE0371105. 17" Blonde. Only about 100 of these made. Shows some wear from gigging. Custom made for this original owner with built in peizo. Stereo out. Beautifully set up by Phifer guitars. w/ original flight case. $2999 + ship. 845-679-4354

2002 reissue Gibson Firebird VII (three pickups) Mint with new, soft travel case. $2,600 plus shipping. jbeshears@comcast.net.

Cigar box guitars by Bluesboy Jag. Over 4,000 sold since 2004. 1,2,3,4,6 strings, electric, custom designs, ukes, diddley bows, dulcimers, dogbowl resonators. jagshouse.com

Guild D4 True American acoustic dreadnought guitar, 1999, natural solid spruce top, solid mahogany sides, laminated mahogany arched back, rosewood fingerboard and bridge,

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I've ever heard. Clean with some cleated cracks & Martin hard shell molded case. Really a fine piece of history and a rare clean piece. Comes with non original HSC. rich@thefishingline.com

1982 Fender Stratocaster. Beautiful grain natural finish. All stock except same period & spec replacement neck pickup and refret. Includes non-original HSC. Distinctive "Smith Strat" with large 70s logo on small headstock, 4-bolt neck. Very Good condition. Plays and sounds great. $1,800. john@hedbor.org

Vintage '51 Blond Epiphone Deluxe Regent 17 inch cutaway, Gold hardware, 2p-ups, Replaced P-gd. Clever non-weld Tailpiece repair (no extra hole). Good overall, typical finish wear, some binding patches. NICE NECK! $4,000/BO, cash/certified check. Pickup N.DE welcome. randyscb@aol.com Pics can be sent.

INSTRUMENTS WANTED

Looking for my first love. 1971 Walnut SG Standard Serial #962917 If you know of her where about please contact Tom at email: tguard12@comcast.net thanks!

Looking for a vintage, Gibson 1932-'34 L-00 in ebony finish and white pick guard. Please contact Mitch @ 443-223-8781 or Mitchell_Yockelson@Comcast.Net

Seeking a 1962 Gretsch Tennessean I owned in the 80s. Not stolen or anything weird, just nostalgia. Has '61 and '62 features. No binding on fholes, no Atkins on guard. S/N 4420X. Non original Gretsch case. It was sold through a shop in Japan in 2017 or 2018. They don't have the buyer's info. I can positively identify by grain and one spot of damage. I will pay market price. ksdaddy@yahoo.com

AMPS FOR SALE

Acoustic 150 B bass amp and speaker cabinet, 1970-71. Plays great, 200 watts. Cabinet has 2X15" JBL lifetime speakers. Excellent for guitar as well. Cabinet has 2 small worn areas of exposed wood. I am second owner since 1974. Played only at home

since 2000. $600.00, prefer local to Philadelphia. paulstevienolan@aol.com

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CANUCK SCREAMER

The New Vintage Outrider

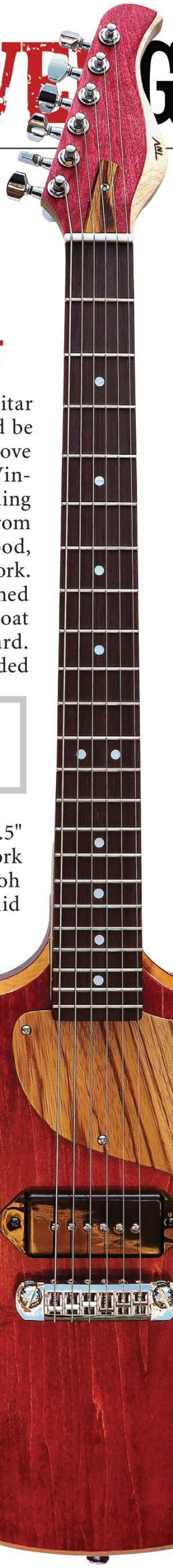
If the 1950s and '60s were the Golden Era of guitar building, then we're now living in what could be prime time for small-shop builders. Among the trove of modern luthiers is Kevin Gullion of The New Vintage Custom Guitars, in Alberta, who started building instruments several years ago while recovering from an illness. Gullion frequently uses reclaimed wood, which imparts a lovely appearance and feel to his work.

The Outrider's one-piece linden body is finished in a reddish-brown gel stain with a satin clear coat and topped with a beautiful zebrawood pickguard. Woodgrain is exquisite throughout. The rounded heel at the end of the body is smooth, comfortable, and easy on the hand when reaching for high notes. The bolt-on neck is home-grown maple with a scarf joint and laurel fretboard with a 25.5" scale, medium-jumbo frets, and 16" radius. Fretwork on our tester was flawless, and the sealed Gotoh tuners kept it perfectly in tune in varying humid and dry conditions – no small feat given seasonal fluctuations in the Garden State. A nice touch is the TNV logo tastefully burned into the headstock and body.

Price: $1,600
www.tnvguitars.com

The Outrider uses one Ash Can P-90 made by fellow Canadian Ken Holmes, and when plugged into a Class A tube amp proved a resonant, expressive rock machine capable of soft and crunchy chord work, fingerpicked lines, and searing blues and rock leads. The Tone knob provided plenty of variation, and the guitar really came alive when cranked. It's very comfortable sitting or standing, and well-balanced for both.

The TNV Outrider is a reasonably priced, worthy contender for anyone seeking a single-pickup guitar. Leslie West and Johnny Thunders would be proud. ***– Bob Cianci***



Price: $150
www.vintagevibeguitars.com

C.C. REDUX

The Vintage Vibe Charlie Christian Suspended Pickup

Distinctive tone is all about technique, vision, and... gear. Pickups of the 1930s were evolving, and the unit in Charlie Christian's original ES-150 produced volume and a legendary "horn sound" since employed by guitarists ranging from Barney Kessel to John Lennon to Redd Volkaert.

Vintage Vibe Guitars' Christian models attempt to re-create Charlie's original pickups and are available in several styles, including two designed for acoustic archtops in petite enclosures. Design details are proprietary, but the single-coil/single-bar pickup has a DC resistance of 7.43 ohms. Magnet structure, bobbins, scatter-wound coil, and shielded enclosure are handcrafted and topped with a graphic suggesting the binding on the original.

We mounted a neck-heel bracket model on a Loar 350 with Monel-style strings, then plugged in through a Henriksen JazzAmp. Swinging Christian phrases flowed like it was 1939 thanks to a mellow attack, mild compression, horn-like sustain, and mid-forward voice that eased a path through long, flowing lines. Hammer-ons, pull-offs, and picked single notes sounded fat and even. Chord melody floated in a warm space, but rockabilly, blues, and '50s R&B were just a Treble knob tweak away.

If you're chasing 80-year-old inspiration – the first popular fretted electric tone – the Vintage Vibe will get you partway there. Technique and vision are up to you. ***– Chip Wilson***

RENAISSANCE REIMAGINED

The Iris Guitar Dan Erlewine DE-11

Among the famous names in American guitar lore is Dan Erlewine – guitarist, builder, *VG* columnist and editorial consultant, and of course, world-class repair expert who literally wrote the book on the craft. Now he has partnered with Iris Guitar to bring to life a reimagined version of his personal favorite guitar – a 1937 Kalamazoo KG-11.

The Dan Erlewine DE-11 is right out of the pages of a pre-war catalog. Aesthetically, it's a dead ringer for the guitar that inspired it, with an Adirondack spruce top that sports a lovely sunburst under a satin finish, tiger-stripe pickguard, straight bridge, and ladder bracing. The mahogany back and sides also sport a light satin finish and give the guitar a worn vibe. The mahogany neck is 1.75" at the nut, with a 25"-scale and a huge V shape – a bold feature that, while not for everyone, drives home the point that this is from another era.

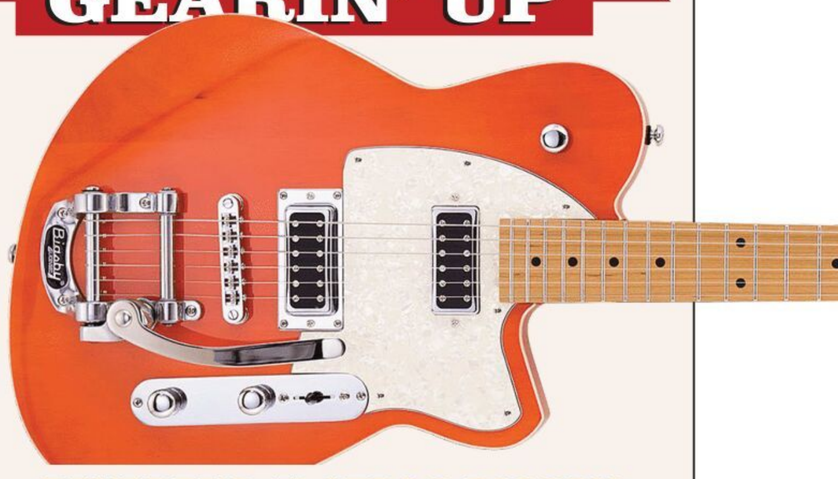
Price: $3,500
www.irisguitarcompany.com

The DE-11 becomes Erlewine's own at the headstock. Elongated between the nut and the start of the peghead, it actually starts more than 2" behind the nut – a feature designed to give hands better access to chords near the nut; to some, it'll at first feel even more foreign than it looks. The tuners also draw attention. Erlewine insisted on rear-mounted banjo tuners by Rickard Cyclone. Smooth and precise, they're a nice touch. What's more, the first seven positions have built-in brass capo threadings, allowing a player to screw-in included capos from the top of the neck. This feature offers two advantages – no capo on the back of the neck, and precise control of tension on the strings.

This guitar sounds even better than it looks. Warm, punchy, and just a little woody, its satin finish stays out of the way so the guitar can project nicely – belying its concert-ish size. The V neck may impose a learning curve for some, but those experienced with the shape will find it to be a riot – this is no soft V. And while the capo system isn't a quick-change operation, the afforded tension control keeps the guitar in tune incredibly well when adding and removing capos.

A decidedly modern take on a decidedly vintage guitar, with the DE-11, Iris and Erlewine have found a sweet spot between then and now. – ***Michael Shirek***

GEARIN' UP



REVEREND FLATROC BIGSBY

Reverend Guitars' Flatroc has been updated with Retroblast mini-humbucker pickups and a Bigsby B50 with the company's Soft Touch spring. Other details include a Korina body, locking tuners, Bass Contour Control, and choice of Transparent White, Rock Orange, or Metallic Emerald finish.

FENDER CALIFORNIA MINI SERIES

Fender's California Redondo and Sonoran Mini have walnut fretboards and bridges, Nubone nut and saddle, and satin finish. Their Strat-inspired headstocks have six-in-line tuners.

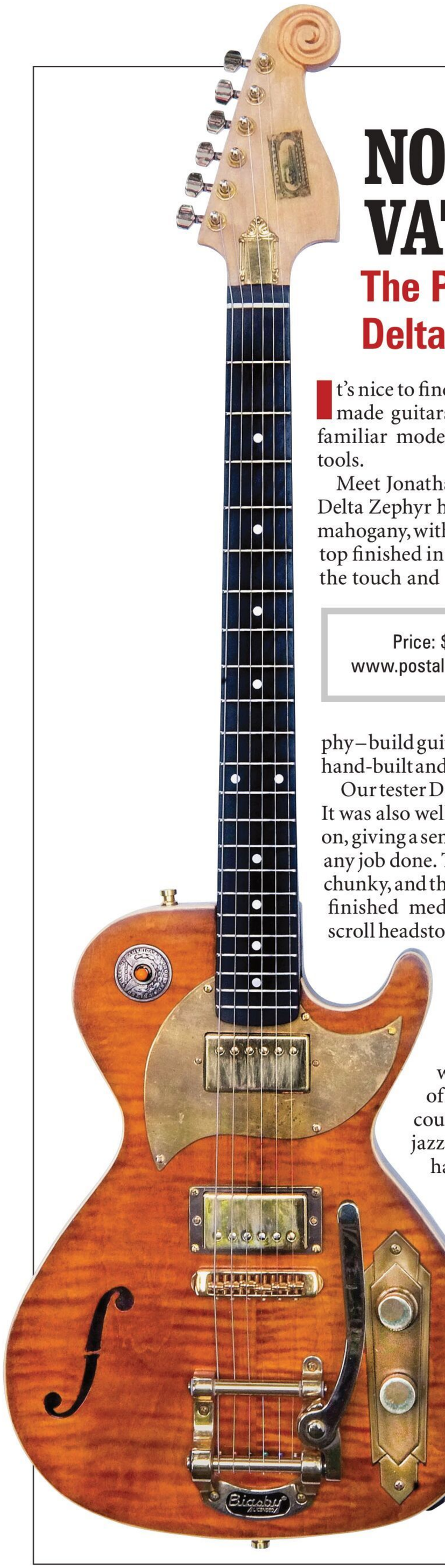
PIGTRONIX GAMMA DRIVE

The Pigtronix Gamma Drive is a germanium-enhanced overdrive with LED and silicon diodes arranged to produce asymmetrical clipping. Its active Treble and Bass EQ controls overdrive in second-order harmonics from clean boost to a distortion.

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

NO RESERVATIONS

The Postal Delta Zephyr



It's nice to find guitar builders producing handmade guitars that are more than a rehash of familiar models, while using traditional hand tools.

Meet Jonathan Postal, whose single-cutaway Delta Zephyr has a chambered body of African mahogany, with a 0.25" hand-stained flame maple top finished in nitro. The feel is slightly rough to the touch and does *not* look as if it was cranked out of a big factory. Similarly, the sound holes have a look, but it's all part of Postal's philosophy – build guitars that *look* and *feel* as if they were hand-built and can be played without reservation.

Price: $2,375
www.postalguitars.com

Our tester Delta Zephyr felt extremely durable. It was also well-balanced and felt great strapped on, giving a sense of confidence in its ability to get any job done. The C-shaped neck was pleasantly chunky, and the rosewood fretboard had expertly finished medium-jumbo frets. The tilt-back scroll headstock is a patented Postal design with a clever glued-on logo in the form of a postage stamp. Locking tuners are standard.

Plugged into a vintage tube amp, the Delta Zephyr spoke with authority across a spectrum of styles; it excelled at blues, rock, country, pop, Americana, and even jazzy chordal work, but also easily handled overdrive and distortion.

The guitar's brass hardware is stunning – the control plate is a classic Art Deco design, and the classy pickguard is brass salvaged from the old Memphis train station. A Schaller roller bridge, gold Bigsby, and Duncan Pearly Gates pickups completed the package. In short, the Delta Zephyr is a perfectly imperfect guitar one could grow to treasure without hesitation.

– Bob Cianci

Price: $1,799
www.reverendguitars.com

POP THE HOOD

The Reverend Koch Gristle 90

What happens when you mix a classic design with the creativity of twang ace Greg Koch? You get the Reverend Gristle 90, which may look like a sporty T-style guitar but has cool things under the hood.

Specs include a chambered korina body and a set 24.75" korina neck. The former's raised midsection brings to mind a Gibson Firebird, and there's a Bigsby B-50 with adjustable roller bridge and pin-lock tuners for tuning stability.

For tone toys, the Fishman Fluence Gristle 90 soapbars (*VG*, October '21) offer P-90 twang with an active, hum-less circuit. Don't bother looking for the 9-volt battery; peek at the output jack, where you'll find a mini-USB input for charging an internal lithium battery.

Amped up, the Gristle 90 has a comfortable neck and Reverend's typically sweet setup (these are imports set up in the USA). The body is reasonably lively, while the pickups offer myriad tones. P-90s traditionally have a noisy persona, but the Gristle 90s remedy that with their active circuit. Bonuses include a Midrange Boost button for extra punch, and a push/pull Tone knob adding out-of-phase flavor when both pickups are combined.

The Gristle 90 is *not* your father's Tele clone. It's a unique plank that evokes all kinds of rockin' retro flavors, but with a Gibson scale and hot-rodded electronics under the hood. ***– Pete Prown***

SMALL WONDER

Fender '68 Custom Vibro Champ Reverb

Fender's '68 Custom amp series has become popular among pickers who love old-school looks and sounds but prefer contemporary modifications and features.

The original Vibro Champ was a small wonder with big tones that produced five watts of unadulterated glory. The new '68 Custom Vibro Champ Reverb takes the original to the next level by adding era-friendly Hall reverb and a bigger 10" Celestion speaker to beef up the low-end. With two inputs along with controls for Volume, Treble, Bass, Reverb, Speed, and Intensity, the Custom Vibro Champ is the very definition of plug-and-play. The clean reverb sounds are stunning with just the right combination of girth and shimmer.

This amplifier exists in the sonic zip code of surf, old-school country, rockabilly, and traditional blues, but jazz guitarists will dig it, too. Thanks to its Custom Ten 30 speaker, it produces everything from dreamy sparkle to pint-sized SRV sounds. Weighing in at a tad over 20 pounds, it uses two 12AX7 preamp tubes and a single 6V6 in the power section. Its custom-made Schumacher transformer is like the original, and there's tube-driven tremolo, classic 1968-style silver trim, and silver-turquoise grillecloth.

Price: $799.99
www.fender.com

While this '68 can send a player into a long-term musical trance all by its lonesome, it embraces overdrive pedals and time-based effects like family. Used with a Richie Kotzen Signature Telecaster, a Les Paul Traditional, and a Frankenstrat, the Custom Vibro Champ showcased the guitars' individual personalities under the banner of lush and ungodly. Veteran guitarists know the benefits of recording a small amp cranked up in a big room, and this amp is perfect for that situation. Humbuckers push its front end in the most beautiful way while single-coils sing sweetly with upscale warmth and superb clarity. Plus, the tremolo pulses organically with a range of intensity and speed levels.

Though louder than its ancestor, the '68 Custom Vibro Champ Reverb is not quite loud enough for a typical band setting. But, it *is* perfect for practice, low-volume gigs, and recording. Best of all, it can be cranked for delectable low-volume grind. Highly recommended. ***– Oscar Jordan***

GR[illegible]' UP

SPECTOR EURO RST BASS

Spector's Euro RST basses are neck-through and have figured-maple tops with matching headstock, paulownia back, three-piece Roasted Maple neck, and fretboard with mother-of-pearl inlays. They use Aguilar Super Double pickups and OBP-2 preamps. Their hardware is proprietary, and tuners are chrome Gotoh GB-350 units.

TUBE AMP DOCTOR EL34-STR REDBASE

Tube Amp Doctor's EL34-STR Redbase is made in the sonic tradition of the Telefunken EL34, with gold-grid construction. It is given extra burn-in and formatting at the factory.

ERNIE BALL MUSIC MAN JOHN PETRUCCI MAJESTY 8

Ernie Ball Music Man's Petrucci Majesty 8 has a basswood body, neck-through design, multi-scale fretboard with 24 stainless-steel fanned frets, and an angled hardtail bridge. Its three-way selector controls DiMarzio Dreamcatcher bridge and Rainmaker neck pickups. There's also a piezo in the bridge.

FINGERSTYLE DREAM

The Santa Cruz HT/13 Happy Traum

In a career spanning more than 60 years, Happy Traum has been a fixture of the American folk scene, from the Village to Woodstock and the New World Singers to a duo with his brother, Artie. Along the way, he made collaborative stops with Bob Dylan, Allen Ginsberg, and a galaxy of folk stars. His latest collaboration – the Santa Cruz HT/13 Happy Traum signature model – is an instrument befitting the fingerstylist's legacy.

Based on two of Traum's personal custom Santa Cruz guitars, the HT/13 offers a decidedly unique experience among modern acoustics. Starting from the concert-sized H model, it has a robust body depth of 4.875" at the endpin. Combined with the 13-fret body, this guitar is oversized on volume. Scalloped Adirondack-spruce braces support an old-growth redwood top with a gorgeous natural finish and abalone purfling and rosette. A teardrop tortoiseshell pickguard and pyramid bridge complete the classic look. The Honduran mahogany back and sides have Santa Cruz's Tobacco color, adding a warm red tint to the flawless two-piece back. The 25.375" scale and 1.75" nut offer a genuine fingerstyle platform, with a V-shape neck that, while comfortable, may not suit smaller hands or those who prefer the more-common C shape. A slotted headstock with Waverly tuners completes the aesthetic.

Price: $8,800
www.santacruzguitar.com

Sonically, the HT/13 strikes a fantastic balance between delicate and powerful. The featherlight body is responsive and resonant, bass response is warm, loud, and ever-present, but never steps on mids or highs. Strumming the guitar produces a pleasant and balanced chorus, loud and clear.

While the HT/13's sticker price will put it in the hands of relatively few pickers in an era when we can get a *lot* of guitar for much less money, this one is worth it. Fit and finish on the test model was immaculate, as was the beautiful inlay work. Setup was exemplary, with medium-low action providing comfortable trips up and down the fretboard. It's a standout among its peers – as its namesake has been for six decades. ***– Michael Shirek***

Price: $499; $599 with wireless transmitter
www.line6.com

AUDIO VISUAL

The Line 6 POD Go

In the world of multi-effects pedalboards, there's a trend toward simpler navigation and friendlier interfaces – but retaining deep editing and pro-grade processing. The Line 6 POD Go is a good example of this desire to balance a visual approach with big effects and models.

Like its pricier siblings in Line 6's Helix family, the Go includes a color screen for precise editing and creating a virtual pedalboard, where you can arrange pedals in whatever sequence you want. There are gobs of effects, but also countless amp and cabinet simulations, effectively making the Line 6 nearly a complete rig. Just add a powered cabinet or PA out (direct DAW recording is also easy).

For effects, you'll find Helix-derived distortion, modulation, reverb, echo, wah, volume-pedal, and EQ galore. Amp models range from Fender clean to Boogie crunch, with nearly any cabinet you want. You can further assign any effect – or combination of effects – to any footswitch.

That said, the POD Go's operation is dependent on manipulating *a lot* of buttons and knobs. Unlike less-expensive units, this box is made for the player who isn't afraid of menus. If you want total ease of use, stick with individual pedals or Line 6's M Series pedalboards. But if you want to create your own monster board, check out the Go, or Go Wireless. ***– Pete Prown*** VG

We asked guitar players what drove them crazy about their pedalboards. This is what they said:

"The ripping sound of velcro is like fingernails on a chalkboard."

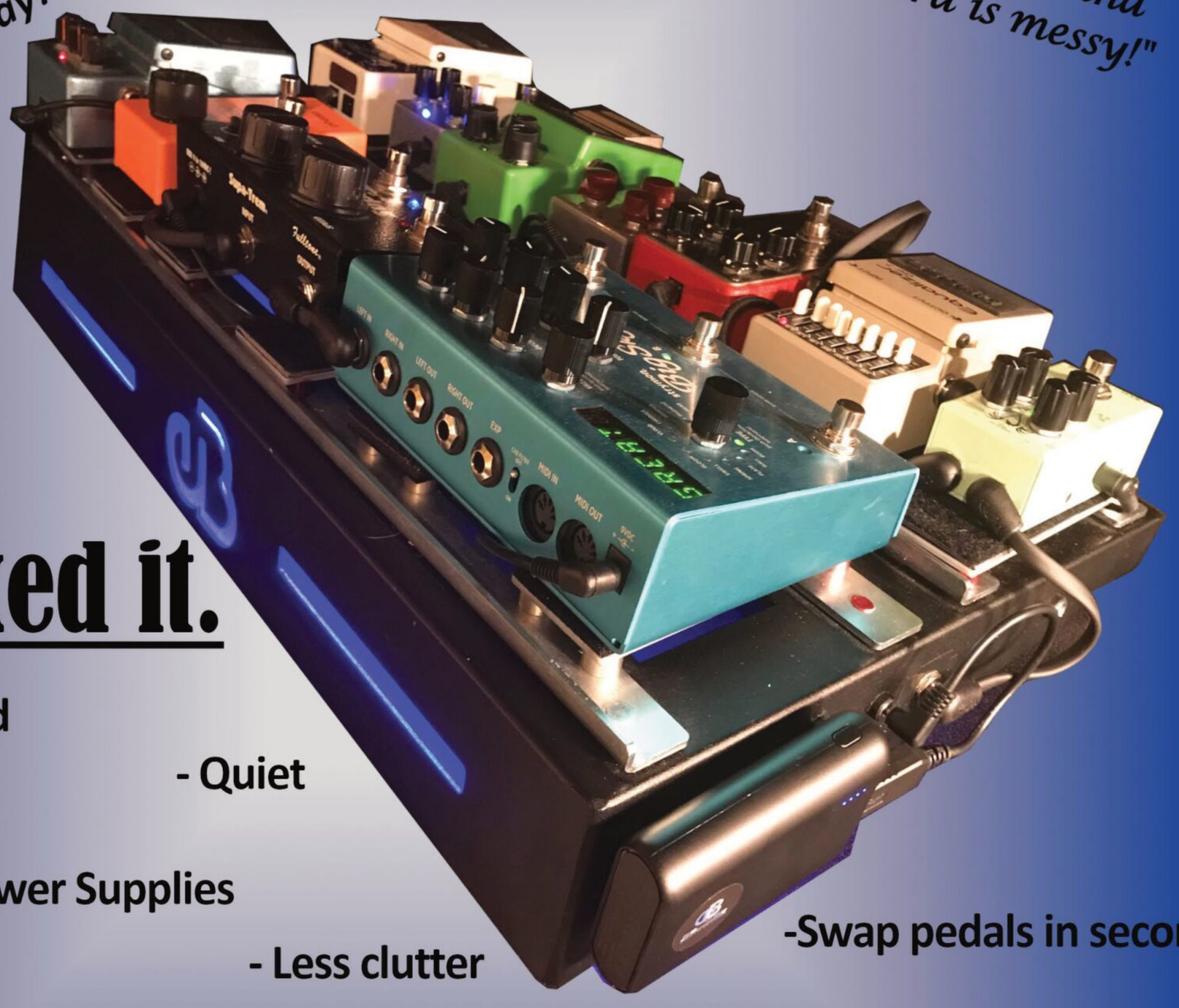
"Isolating power supplies take up space and add more weight."

"I hate searching for wall outlets and extension cords."

"Nothing worse than noisy hum from dirty power circuits!"

"If I want to rearrange my pedals I need half a day!"

"So many cables under and around my board is messy!"



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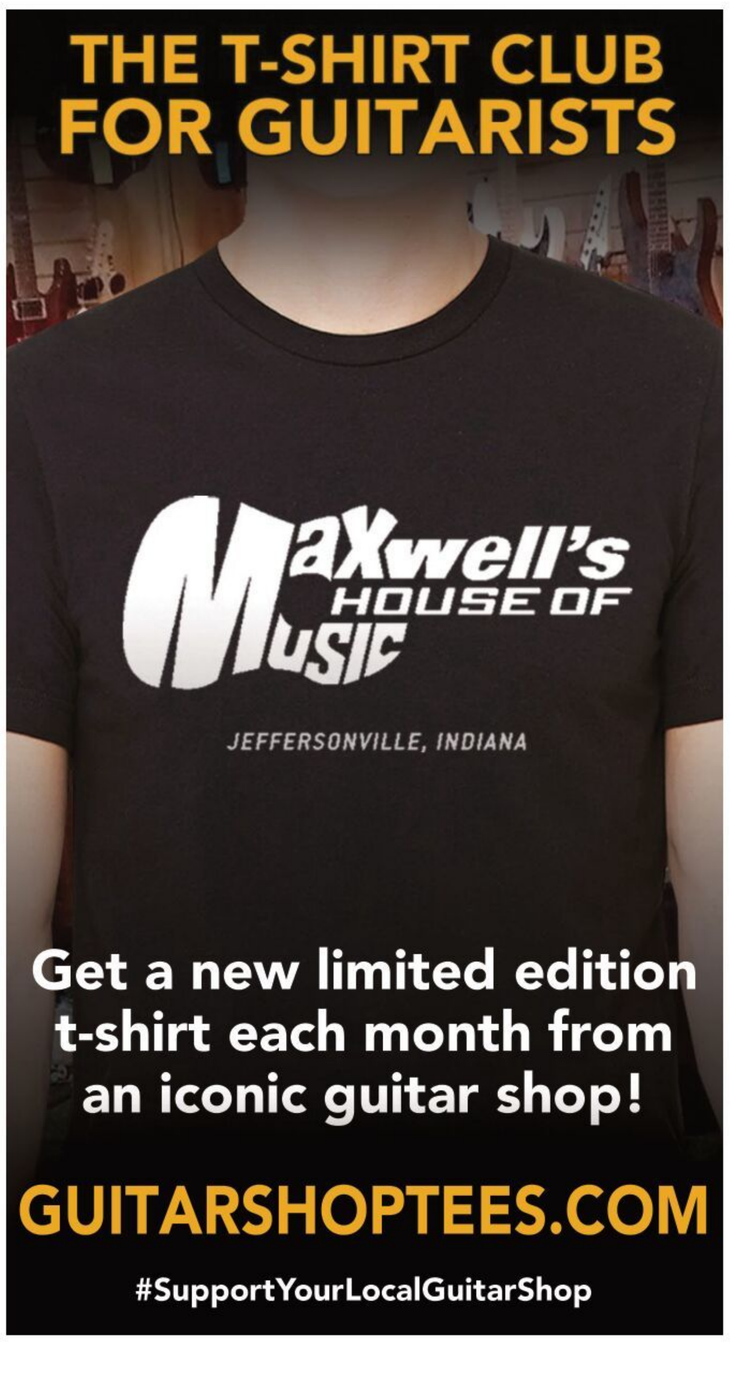

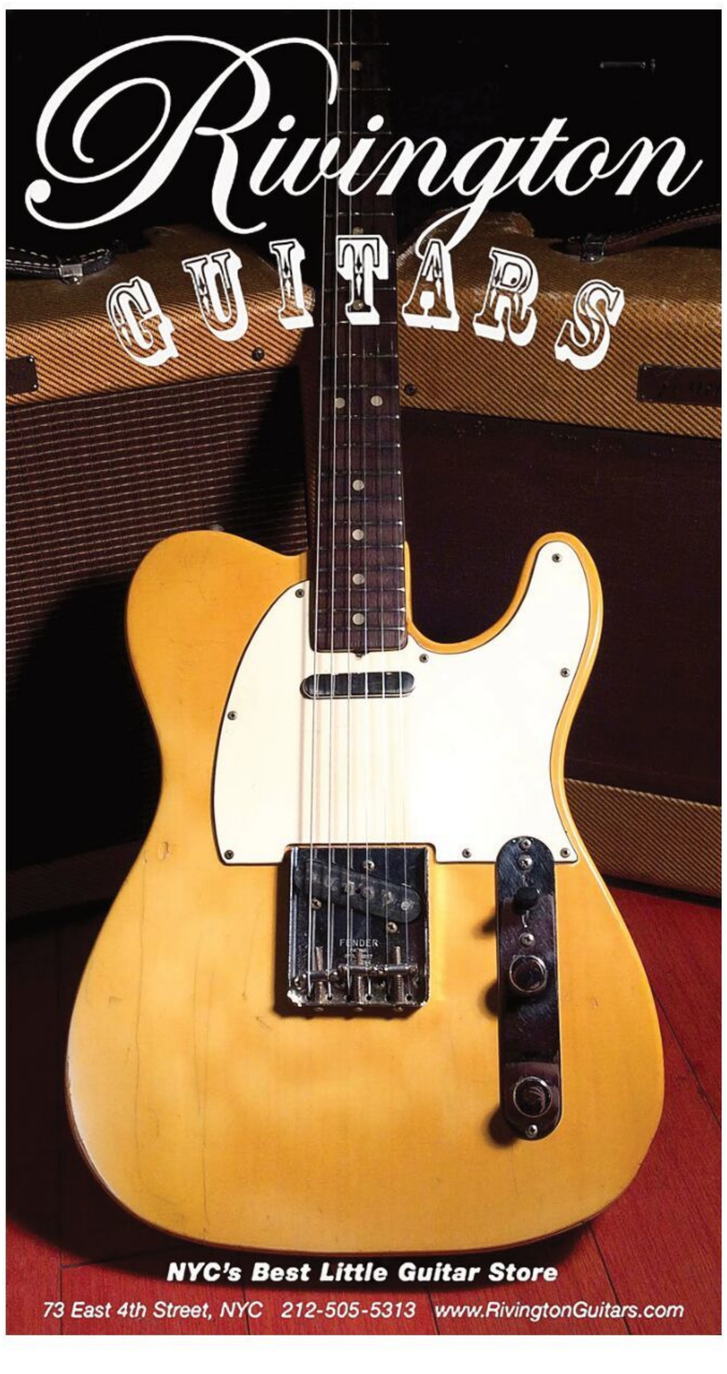

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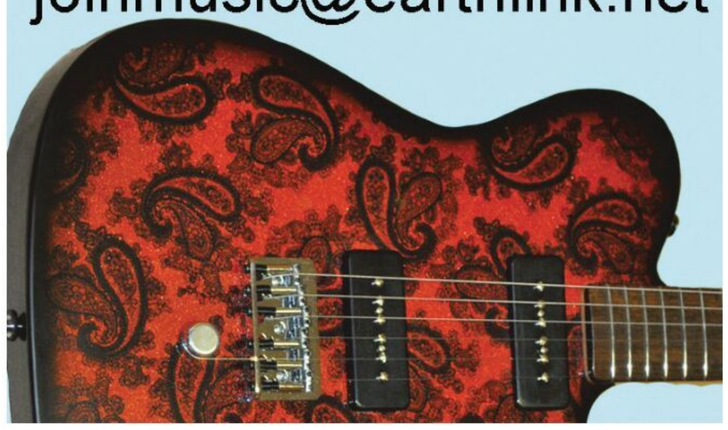

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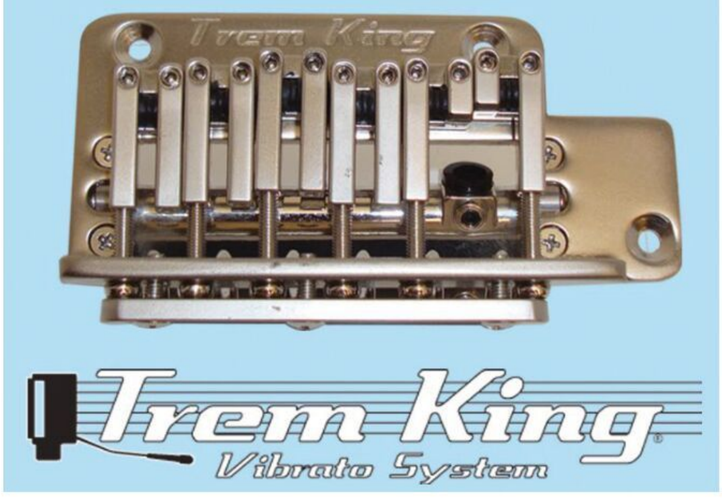

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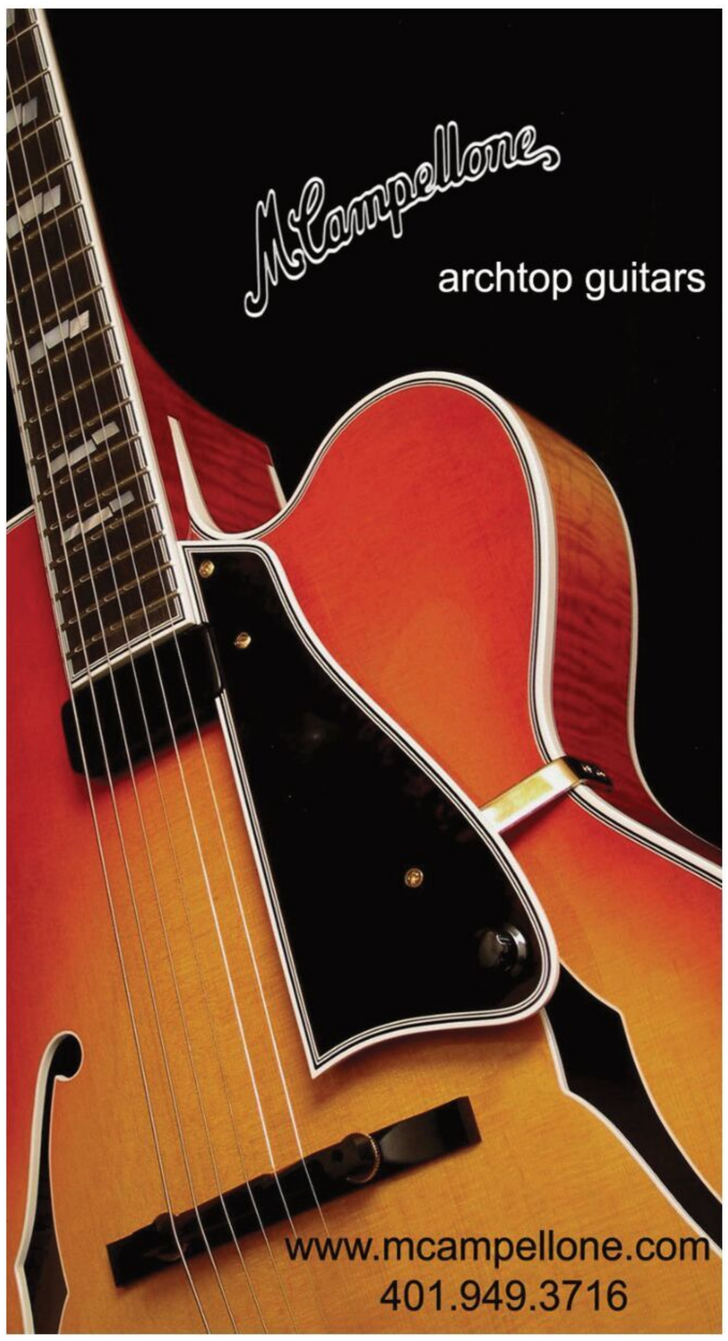

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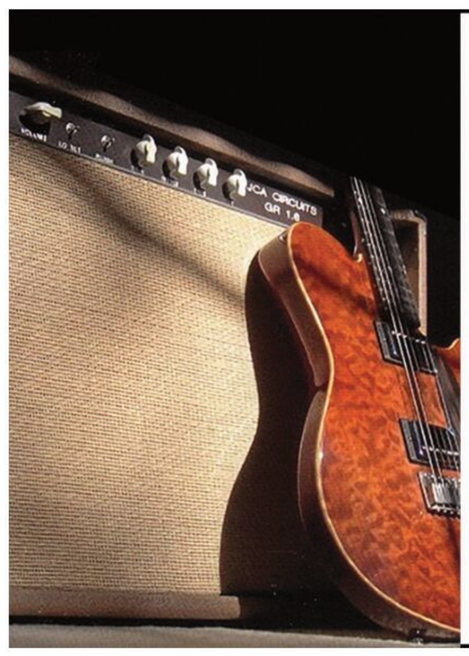

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1) Bruce Cohen is a longtime avid reader who so admires his guitars that he did oil-on-canvas paintings of each. On the left is an '85 Les Paul Custom with factory Kahler vibrato, a '68 ES-335 with factory Bigsby, a George Gorodnitski Nueva Suprema prototype, and a Fender Blues Deluxe amp.

2) Representing the acoustic crowd this month is John Mendez, with this assortment that includes dulcimers, fiddles, and an autoharp. The stars are a '56 Gibson J-45, '97 Huss & Dalton DS Custom, 1898 S.S. Stewart banjo, '73 Martin D12-35, a Harmony archtop, and a 12-string Stella.

3) Steve Karras' collection is nicely varied but favors Gibsons. Hanging from left are his '78 Les Paul Custom, '08 LP Traditional, '12 LP Traditional Goldtop, '73 ES-335, '13 Firebird V, and '04 SG Standard. Perched along the bottom are a Fender SE Deluxe Ash Tele, a USA Strat, '98 Precision Bass, a '12 Martin 000-28EC, and two 1980 Yamahas – an FG-335 and FG-312. The amps are a mix of Marshall, Fender, and Carvin.

4) Mike Chollet is a longtime subscriber whose collection includes (clockwise from bottom) a Hamer Vector, a Gibson ES-339, Epiphone Hummingbird, '64 Gibson LG-0, Taylor 614 CE, '90 Les Paul Custom, '70 Les Paul Deluxe, Fender Mark Hoppus Bass, PRS Silver Sky, a Strat Relic, two more Strats, a Tele in Shell Pink, a Telecaster in Midnight finish, another in white, a Hamer Blitz, and a '90s Parker Fly Classic.

5) John Summer uses guitars as a canvas for his original (but inspired) artwork. Here are his Yelly Telly, his version of Clapton's The Fool, and the Kartoon Strat, all dressed with an assortment of memorabilia.

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