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CONTENTS

MARCH 2023 VOL. 37 NO. 06

FIRST FRET

- 14** **Reader Mail**
- 16** **News and Notes**
Godin Receives Order of Canada;
Hiwatt Acquires Park Amps;
Musselwhite Receives Grand Prix
Blues Award
- 16** **Kenny Wayne Shepherd**
Nothing But Trouble
- 18** **In Memoriam**
- 20** **Kim Simmonds**
1947-2022
- 22** **Leo Lydon**
Beefy Tones
- 23** **Sebastian Nagel**
Meditations In Funk
- 24** **Mick Box**
Deep Heep
- 26** **Lincoln Goines**
The Bass Choir
- 27** **Don Latarski**
Electrifying

DEPARTMENTS

- 36** **Effects Spotlight**
- 40** **Vintage Guitar Price Guide**
- 71** **Upcoming Events**
- 82** **Classifieds**
- 90** **Showcase**
- 96** **Readers Gallery**

COLUMNS

- 44** **Pop 'N Hiss**
King Crimson's *Red* | *By Willie G. Moseley*
- 46** **Fretprints**
Jeff Beck in The JBG | *By Wolf Marshall*
- 50** **Dan's Guitar Rx**
Adding Master Volume to a Les Paul
| *By Dan Erlewine*

REVIEWS

- 76** **The VG Hit List**
Humble Pie, Neil Young, Joanne Shaw Taylor, Harvey Mandel, Journey, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Robert Gordon, The Senders, more!
- 77** **Check This Action**
Folk Music Meccas | *By Dan Forte*
- 84** **VG Approved Gear**
CopperSound Telegraph V2, Railhammer Corgan Z-One Humcutter pickups, Walrus Audio Eons Five-State Fuzz, D'Angelico Atlantic Baritone, Donner Arena 2000, J. Rockett Audio Archer/Dude/El Hombre pedals, Roland JC-120 50th Anniversary
- 85** **Gearin' Up!**
The latest cool new stuff!



Jeff Beck

28 ITALIAN CONNECTION

The Rex Solidbody

For 20 years beginning in the mid '30s, Brooklyn-based Gretsch subcontracted Rex instruments from Harmony and/or Kay in Chicago. This one, though, came from a land down under.

| *By Michael Wright*

32 STILL ROLLIN'

Keith Richards' 1977 Mesa/Boogie Mark I

Today, Mesa amps are played the world over. But there was a time when even the world's most-famous guitarist had to plead his case to jump the waiting list for one of Randy Smith's homemade creations. | *By Dave Hunter*

54 REMEMBERING JEFF BECK

The Guitar Hero, Defined

He was, inarguably, one of the most-influential musicians of his generation. We honor the legend with a look at his life, career, and influence, then offer remembrances from VG staff and fellow top-tier pro players. | *By Ward Meeker, Dan Forte, and Pete Prown*

62 GOOD TIMES IN BAD

The Origin of Fender's Original Vintage Series

The years before CBS' sale of Fender were fluid times at the instrument maker's headquarters in Fullerton. Until now, a fascinating part of the story has gone untold, including how Freddie Tavares, John Page, and Paul Bugielski were taking steps to cure the company's ills in 1980-'81 – before new management stepped in.

| *By Ward Meeker*

66 TAKE TWO

Fender's Siegle, Norvell on Creating American Vintage II

Reissues usually key on cut-and-dried classics, but with its American Vintage II line, Fender is venturing into its debated (and derided) '70s guitars, intent on righting wrongs. We talk to Director of Branding Rich Siegle and Senior V.P. of Product Development Justin Norvell to ask important questions – like, "Why?"

| *By Ward Meeker*



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TOM'S TORU TELE

My eye was drawn to the guitar that Tom Petty is playing in the February feature on Mike Campbell. Look closely and you'll see the letter N inside the green wreath on the body. That's the Guitar Classics of California logo, and we made those here at Norman's Rare Guitars in the '80s; we did copies of Teles, Strats, Les Pauls, and ES-335s. At the time, Tom wanted a blackguard Tele but couldn't afford one, so I suggested we build one, and our repairman, Toru Nittono, did great work on it.

Prior to the Heartbreakers, I played in a band with [bassist] Ron Blair for two years. I was delighted with the success of the Heartbreakers and sold many guitars to Tom and Mike through the years.

Norman Harris
Tarzana, California

CEIL'S NEXT STEP

I'd like to thank everyone at *Vintage Guitar* and its readers for the great feedback on my

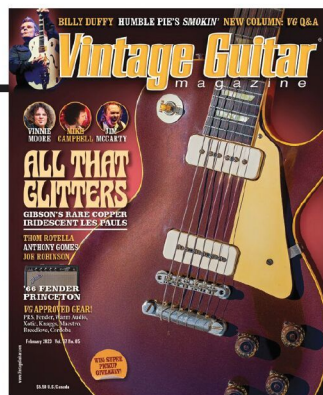
"Dan's Guitar Rx" columns discussing Ceil Thompson's build (August and November '22, January '23).

I gave Ceil a pickup winder for Christmas, and she is doing well with it while interning during her last semester with my friend, Tom Kelly. Tom is a retired occupational therapist whose serious hobby for years has been machining in our shop, and he's going to teach Ceil metalworking and machining from the ground up. By graduation, she'll have a great handle on the basics for all manner of guitar repair. Maybe we'll turn her loose on a lap steel so she can wind a seven- or eight-pole pickup for it!

Dan Erlewine
Athens, Ohio

CONNECTIONS ON THE PAGE

I always enjoy going through the new issue.



Even with players I'm not familiar with, there's common ground, like music I listened to growing up. I got Bob Dylan's new book, *The Philosophy of Modern Song*, and even me and Bob had some mutual faves; his chapter on "The Ballad of Jessie James" reminded me that my folks had a Gene

Autry record with that song on it, and on rainy days as a kid, I'd play it over and over. Ry Cooder did it on the soundtrack for *The Long Riders*, and The Grease Band had a cover on their first album.

Dylan also writes about Jimmy Reed's "Big Boss Man," another of my favorites. My pickin' buddy does "Old Violin" by Johnny Paycheck; he picks and sings while I do the moaning harp riffs after the vocal lines. It rocks!

George Lopez, Jr.
LaPlace, Louisiana

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Robert Godin with Governor General Mary Simon.

GODIN RECEIVES ORDER OF CANADA

Godin Guitars founder Robert Godin has received the Order Of Canada Honour (C.M.). Awarded by the Governor General, the C.M. recognizes achievement, dedication to community, and service to the nation.

"Godin Guitars has offered musicians innovative designs and premium-quality instruments, each with a signature sound, for more than four decades," the Office noted. "[Robert] has made generous donations to school programs in Quebec and the United States that help children discover music as a vector for academic and social development. His passion and dedication to the guitar are truly inspirational."

Others in the Order of Canada include Randy Bachman, Alex Lifeson, Sarah McLachlan, Tom Cochrane, and Leonard Cohen.

HIWATT ACQUIRES PARK AMPS

Mitch Colby, renowned amp builder, authority, and author on the subject, recently announced the sale of his Park Amps brand to Canada-based Hiwatt.

"I have been consulting with Hiwatt for years, and [that] will continue," he said. "Park amps will be made the same hand-wired way with the same high-quality components as I built them."

"I'm not retiring yet," he added. "I'm currently developing new Colby sand Sundragon amps, which will be introduced in 2023."

MUSSELWHITE RECEIVES GRAND PRIX BLUES AWARD

Charlie Musselwhite received the Charles Cros Academy Grand Prix Blues Award for his latest album, *Mississippi Sons* (reviewed in "Hit List," November '22). The award is granted by French national radio, France Musique. In a career spanning five decades, Musselwhite has released nearly 40 albums of exploratory music, mixing in elements of jazz, gospel, Tex-Mex, Cuban, and other forms.

FIRST FRET



KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD

More Trouble

In 1997, the rock music being embraced by radio and MTV was primarily pop punk (Green Day), rap metal (Limp Bizkit), nu metal (Korn), alt rock (Radiohead), and

Britpop (Oasis). It was *not* blues rock. But, thanks to the surprise success of Kenny Wayne Shepherd's sophomore album, *Trouble Is...*, and its single/video "Blue on Black," the

genre surged. With 2022 marking a quarter-century since the album's release, Shepherd has issued a complete re-recording, *Trouble Is...* 25.

What made you decide to re-record *Trouble Is...*?

There were a lot of reasons. There's business reasons to it – Taylor Swift recorded songs from her catalog for business reasons. It's revealing that some artists re-record their earlier material. But we had a whole thing planned; I knew I wanted to do a 25th anniversary tour where we were going to play the whole album in concert for the first time. Then I thought, "If we re-record this music, it's better than rehearsal." Also, this one holds special significance. It was a monumental record for us.

Did you have a sense that "Blue on Black" was a special song right away?

Yes. Without a doubt. Especially when it came down to mixing the record – we were in Burbank, and Tom Lord-Alge was mixing. We were all in the studio and played it. By the middle of the song, people's wives and girlfriends were dancing around the studio. It was this really euphoric moment. And by the time the song was done, people were hugging and high-fiving. It was one of the more-incredible experiences I've had as far as music goes.

Which solos are you most proud of?

"Blue on Black" obviously – that's the unique solo. John Mayer came up to me at the Hollywood Bowl when we were doing the Van Halen tour in 2015. He said, "You're the only guy since Jimi Hendrix to get an Octavia on mainstream radio." That guitar tone was something the record label was concerned about, but I didn't want to bend on it. The solo itself is very abstract, like a jazz singer doing scat. It's not melodic – it's a free-form, free-flowing thing.

Another was the song "Slow Ride," which won "Guitar Solo of the Year" from [a guitar magazine]. I was really proud of that, especially being an 18-/19-year-old guitar player.

What were your main guitars back then?

I've always been an old-school guy. Most of the songs were on my '61 Strat – a rosewood slab-board. It's pretty much all original except I put Graphtech saddles on it. I also picked up a '59 hardtail Strat I used on a few, and I had two Custom Shop Strats. But I'd say 90 percent of the songs were played on the '61.

Which amps and effects were you using?

I had a '65 Twin reissue from the first series; it was a numbered limited edition before it became a regular production amp. And I had a '64 blackface Vibroverb, and a Vibro King.

For effects, I used an original Univibe; I had an original TS808 [Ibanez Tube Screamer]. I found some old photos of us in the studio, and I'm sitting on the floor with my guitar in my lap, and in front of me plugged in is a silver Klon [Centaur].

And what are you using now?

I carry about 20 guitars on the road with me. On this tour, I have my '59 hardtail, for some shows I have the original amps, all those same effects, and a regular pedalboard that has various reissues of those pedals. I also have my '60 Les Paul sunburst. All of my regular amps were built by Alexander Dumble.

Do you think *Trouble Is...* helped keep blues-rock alive in the late '90s?

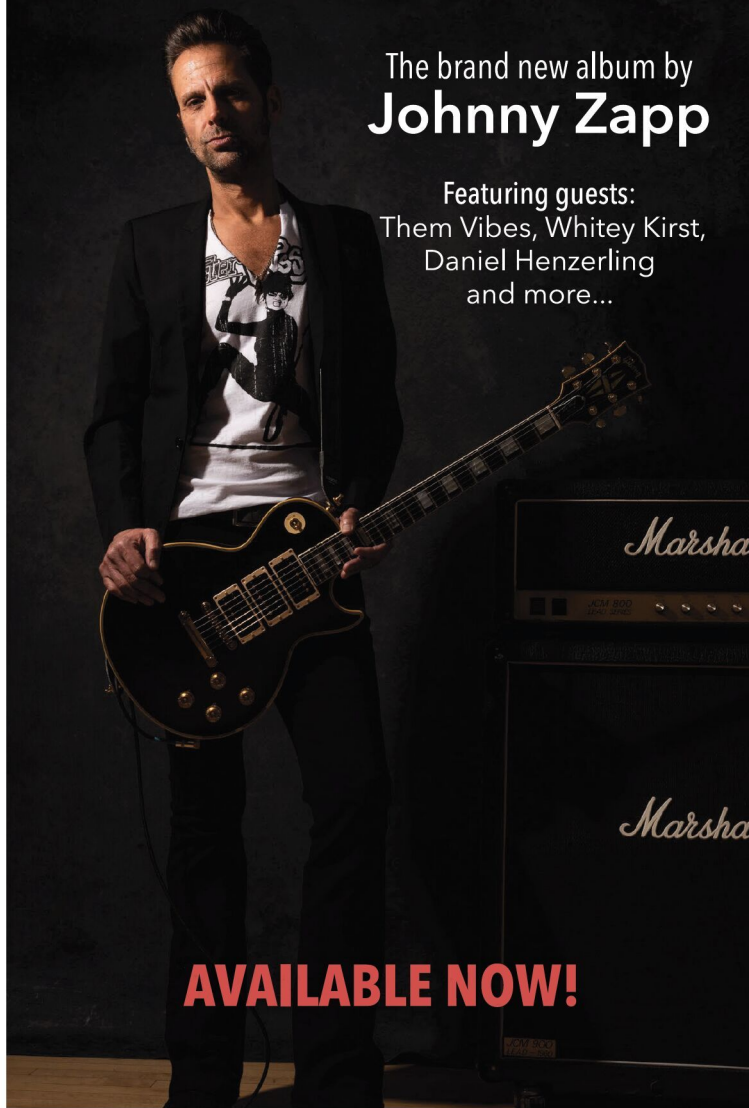
I would say so. There was a real void when Stevie Ray passed away. And I wasn't scheming to fill somebody's shoes – especially not his. I was just playing music I loved to play, things fell into place, and I got an opportunity. I broke through to the mainstream. And when things like that happen, record companies start looking for other people to do it. So, it helped break down a lot of walls at radio for this music, and opened a lot of doors for other players at the time. – **Greg Prato**

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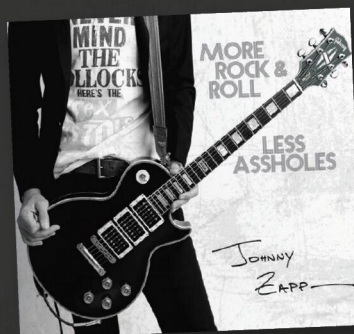
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IN MEMORIAM

DENNIS BUDIMIR

Renowned studio guitarist Dennis Budimir died in Los Angeles on January 10. He was 84.

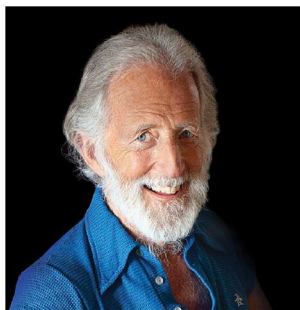
Early in his career, Budimir's path to jazz stardom began when he started working with progressive artists such as Bud Shank and Eric Dolphy, until he was drafted by the U.S. Army.

After being discharged in 1963, Budimir (VG, November '12) entered the lucrative world of studio work and was an early member of Hollywood's famed Wrecking Crew. He earned four consecutive National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences awards as well as a special citation for lifetime achievement – the Emeritus Award for Outstanding Past Performance. A short list of artists who employed Budimir's talent includes Rod Stewart, Linda Ronstadt, Randy Newman, Ravi Shankar, Frank Zappa, John Lennon, Harry Nilsson, Quincy Jones, Frank Sinatra, Warren Zevon, Brian Wilson, Dizzy Gillespie, and Joni Mitchell.

Long after Budimir was established in the studios, his jazz artistry was endorsed by his winning the 1971 *Down Beat* magazine critics' poll. Many believe that while Budimir was a musical recluse, the award confirmed that he personified the generational bridge between the old guard and the avant garde.

Guitarist Joe Diorio called Budimir, "a mystery man," while jazz great Larry Coryell added, "I first heard Dennis on a Bud Shank record called *New Groove* and immediately loved his playing because it was different and introspective with ideas outside the accepted tonality."

In a 1972 interview, Al Hendrickson, former king of session guitarists who began his career in 1938, cited Budimir as someone who could do it all. "He can sight-read, cover rock, jazz, jingles, and film



Dennis Budimir

scores with flair and creativity. He's the new guy."

Studio stalwart Tommy Tedesco added, "Dennis Budimir? A giant. When you want to talk about playing, call Dennis and just leave everybody else's name out." – **Jim Carlton**

ANTHONY KLASSEN

Anthony R. Klassen, a guitar builder and founder of New Era Guitars, passed away December 13 at his home in Furnessville, Indiana. He was 62.

In 1977, Klassen got a '64 Gibson Dove and became an accomplished player. He attended the American Academy of Art, in Chicago, then became a woodworker in Connecticut, favoring a Shaker style of furniture building. After returning to live to Chicago, he launched a career in graphic design and became a collector of vintage instruments. On a trip to Nashville in '85, he encountered a Euphonon guitar, made by Larson Brothers, and began to research the brand. Through the years, his interest in instruments deepened, and ultimately led to his founding New Era Guitars in 2005, where he put to use his background in design and woodworking while restoring instruments and building reproductions of instruments by Bacon & Day, Larson Brothers, Kel Kroydon, and others.

"Tony was a dear friend," said fellow Larson Brothers collector Bob Hartman. "Together, we learned the attributes of instruments built by my grandfather,



Anthony Klassen

Carl Larson, and his brother, August. I mailed Tony a note that arrived too late for him to see; it ended with, 'Our friendship is like laminated braces.'" – **Ward Meeker**

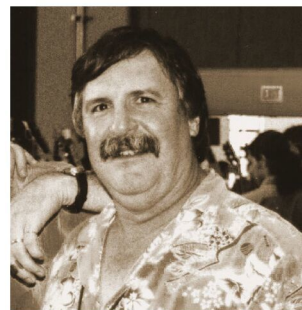
BOB PAGE

Bob Page, co-founder of the vintage-instrument shop Buffalo Brothers, died December 24 after falling and suffering a head injury at his home in Faial, in the Portuguese Azores. He was 79.

Page was a professional guitarist who played for The Association in the mid '60s, departing just before the group recorded its breakthrough hit "Along Comes Mary." He then became part of the Los Angeles jug-band scene (that sprouted Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and others), playing banjo in the Pinkham Orchestra. At the time, he held down a day gig at Eagle Music, which specialized in used instruments.

In '71, he opened The Guitar Shop, a 400-square-foot store in Pasadena, at first stocking it with 34 of his own instruments and employing his 16-year-old brother, Tim. His taste for folk and bluegrass gave the store an acoustic focus, and whenever a customer traded an electric instrument, Page would flip it to his friend, Norman Harris.

In '88, Page moved the shop to Leucadia and re-named it Traditional Music. It became Buffalo Brothers (the name honoring their mother's reference to the way the two ran



Bob Page

around the house as boys) in '99, when Tim returned to the business and began pursuing a broader range of instruments full-time via guitar shows and the internet. Booming business created a need for more space, and they moved the shop to Carlsbad, where they ran it until they retired in 2013.

"Bob was an exceptional musician and had a deep passion and knowledge of vintage acoustic guitars," said Tim Page. "I haven't the words to explain how I feel, other than I'll miss him greatly."

"I was very sad to hear of Bob's passing," added Harris. "He was a very dear friend and a great guy. He was one of the first people I did business with when my wife, Marlene, and I came to California."

"Bob was known for his tremendous sense of humor," noted *Vintage Guitar Price Guide* co-author Gil Hembree, who in 2003 penned a VG profile on Buffalo Brothers. "Like all dealers born in the '40s, he was an acoustic guy at heart, and pushed for a banjo section in *The Guide*."

"Bob and Tim were not only great dealers, they were family to us at Amigo Guitar Shows," added guitar-show promoter Ruth Brinkman. "They were the example of what honest and respected dealers were supposed to be."

Page is survived by his wife, Pat, a daughter, granddaughter, brother Tim, and two other siblings. – **Ward Meeker**

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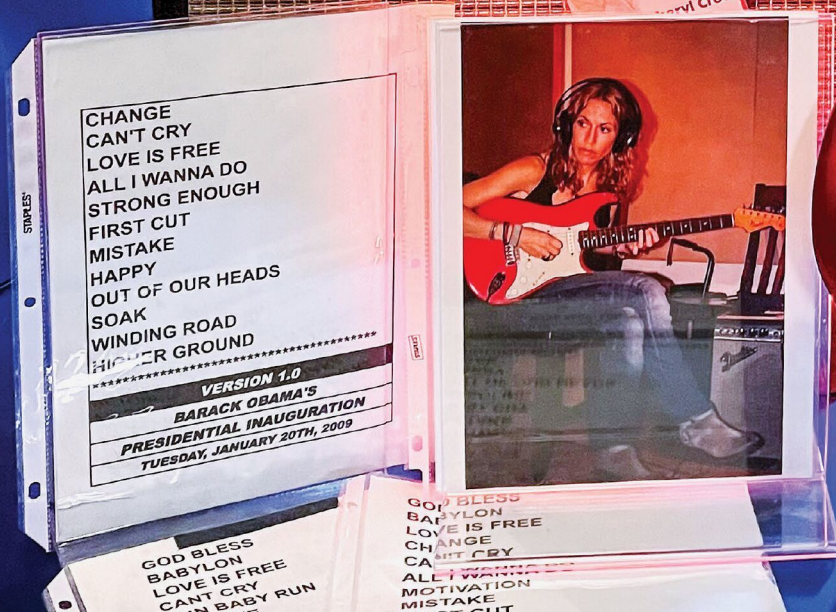
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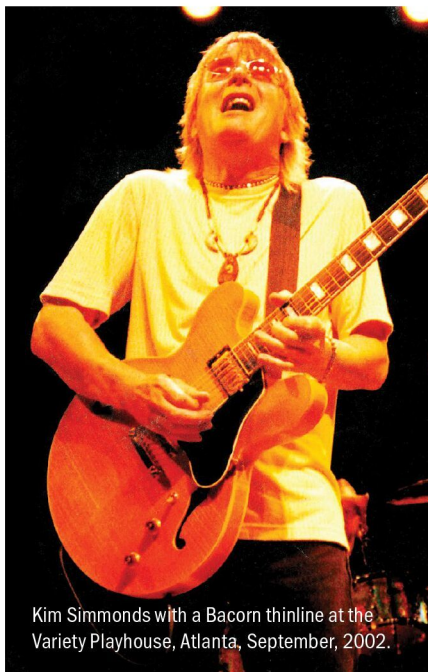
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Kim Simmonds with a Bacorn thinline at the Variety Playhouse, Atlanta, September, 2002.

KIM SIMMONDS

1947-2022

The British blues movement of the late '60s lost one of its original proponents and practitioners when Savoy Brown lead guitarist Kim Simmonds died December 13, following a year-and-a-half bout with colon cancer. He was 75.

A native of Wales, Simmonds became aware of the blues thanks to the record collection of an older brother. He founded the only band in which he was ever a member when his family moved to London in 1965.

"It was literally a case of being in the right place at the right time," he told *Vintage Guitar* in an August '93 interview. "I decided I wanted to play Chicago blues as opposed to Delta blues, and formed Savoy Brown with that musical style in mind."

Savoy Brown became known as one of Great Britain's preeminent blues ensembles, often cited alongside Fleetwood Mac and John Mayall's Bluesbreakers. However, Simmonds sought to clarify his band's concept for playing blues.

"We didn't want to be absolute traditionalists," he said. "We wanted to add our own embellishments. I'll admit, however, that Eric Clapton and Peter Green influenced my

playing style. The first instrument I had was a Telecaster; to get a warm, sweet tone, I only used the neck pickup. I ran it through a Vox AC30."

Blues guitarist Duke Robillard was an early fan.

"When I first heard Kim, it was apparent he was dedicated to the blues form," he said. "I loved the spirit of the band. The tunes were great and I liked the combination of his sound and the traditional aspect of his playing, but he had his own musical personality."

Savoy Brown's history was marked by numerous personnel changes.

"I've always thought I've had the pulse of the band and what direction it needed to take," Simmonds explained. "That's not to say I've done it all by myself; I've had a lot of other talented players and singers over the years."

"I don't think Kim was averse to calling it the way he saw it," added guitarist Andy Powell of Wishbone Ash. "He was good at being a bandleader. I can relate to that."

For many fans, the definitive Savoy Brown lineup was the late-'60s aggregation that included Simmonds, Chris Youlden (vocals), Dave Peverett (guitar, vocals), Tone Stevens

(bass), and Roger Earl (drums). Their masterwork song was the live, side-long "Savoy Brown Boogie" (on the 1969 release *A Step Further*), which featured Simmonds' searing tone evoked from a rare-in-the-U.K. Gibson Flying V.

Peverett, Stevens, and Earl departed Savoy Brown in late 1970 and, shortly after, founded Foghat. Later incarnations of Savoy Brown included vocalist Dave Walker, whose first go-round included lead vocals on fan favorites like "Tell Mama" and "Hellbound Train."

"Kim's slide tone on 'Tell Mama' knocked me out," said Buddy Whittington, who did a long stint as guitarist for John Mayall's Bluesbreakers. "When I asked him about it, he said it was a single-cut Les Paul Junior."

Simmonds eventually moved to the U.S., settling in Oswego, New York. Various incarnations of his band continued to record and tour; it and the Bluesbreakers would sometimes share a bill.

"We had quite a few memorable times," Whittington remembered. "He was always gracious and friendly with us."

Simmonds' primary instruments included Gibson guitars and Stratocasters, as well as a Zion and a Bacorn thinline. He continued to develop his slide and fingerpicking skills, and in 1997 released a critically acclaimed solo acoustic album.

In 2001, Savoy Brown was the last band that played in the summer concert series on the plaza of the World Trade Center before the terrorist attacks of September 11.

Savoy Brown released 44 albums in its 57-year history. Simmonds fostered relationships with his peers in America, and influenced younger players.

"When I was trying to resurrect my band's fortunes in the United States, he was invaluable in terms of very practical advice," said Powell.

Miami guitarist Albert Castiglia cited Simmonds' primary influence as "...his phrasing, plain and simple. Tasty licks for days! He had great tone, of course – all the great ones do. But I loved the way he spoke through his axe. No wasted notes."

Blues guitarist Sean Chambers was also an admirer.

"He had a distinctive raw, gritty-from-the-heart kind of sound," he said. "There was something just so *real* and true about his playing. It hit home with me, instantly, and his songwriting was unique. He had his own thing, his own sound."

"Kim was a wonderful, sweet guy and a real blues lover," Robillard summarized. "He will be remembered for a long time by everyone who knew him." – **Willie G. Moseley.**

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LEO LYDON

Beefy Tones

The wildly named Rickshaw Billie's Burger Patrol doesn't play the typical "doom metal" or "stoner metal" that has been hip for decades. Based in Austin, this power trio delivers its melodic, catchy, and often straight-up fun tunes on *Doom Wop*, combining the eight-string guitar of Leo Lydon, the bass of Aaron Metzendorf, and drummer Sean St. Germain. Through nine anthems,

Aaron splits his bass tone in a similar fashion; we both use Worshiper cabinets, out of Austin; I use a 2x12 and 1x15 and he uses a 4x10 and a 3x12. We want to create a giant wall of sound, but also act as one unit without stepping on each other's toes. Aaron plays a lot of chords on bass, while I play a lot of single notes on the eight-string. We're reversing a lot of traditional guitar/bass roles.

RBBP has created near-perfect driving music, good for commuting or headin' out for a nice, juicy burger.

Throughout *Doom Wop*, we hear a combination of '90s rock and Black Sabbath.

I would say there's a loose connection to that, yes. Our songs are very sing-along and anthem-like – we try to make annoyingly catchy hooks that you can't help but hum after the song is over. There's not really a Black Sabbath connection, though I get the Ozzy and Jack White comparison a lot. I sing that high to cut through all the low-end content of the instruments.

Your eight-string and Aaron's bass mesh without stepping on each other's toes. It sounds huge. How do you keep RBBP's music sonically uncluttered?

We both run dual-mono rigs. I run a vintage Sunn Model T for my highs and mids, and an Orange Terror Bass for my low-end, through an ABY switch.

On "Jesus Was An Alien," the guitar and bass are fat, dry, and chunky. How did you track it?

All of the new record was tracked the same way – our amps were DI'd into a stereo tube preamp and straight into Pro Tools. Cody J. Simpson, our mixing and mastering engineer, had some real magic going on this track. He especially captured that '90s vibe on that one. The chunk comes from certain parts where I'm running on my neck pickup – a Seymour Duncan Sentient with an Earthquaker Tentacle box to get it to sound really sluggish.

Who are your guitar influences?

Dimebag Darrell was my biggest inspiration growing up, as well as Mårten Hagström and Fredrik Thordendal from Meshuggah – if you want to guess where my eight-string influence comes from. More recently, I really love Chico Mann from Here Lies Man.

What is your eight-string and how do you tune it?

I use a Jackson DKA8M – the Dinky with a 28" scale. I drop the low F# a whole step to E, and the rest is standard tuning; low to high, it's E-B-E-A-D-G-B-E.

You wear the guitar high on your chest. Is that for comfort or technique?

A bit of both. I run around onstage, so having it up high allows me to tuck the body under my right elbow and still play accurately. With the scale length being three or four inches longer and the neck much wider than a standard six-string, having it up that high gives easier access to everything.

Which pedals do you use?

I run the Sunn through an Earthquaker Talons overdrive and Tentacle up-octave, with a noise gate and tape echo for solos. I run the Terror Bass head through a Sunn Life octave-distortion pedal; all that goes into a Bones ABY pedal.

Aaron also uses a lot of fuzz on his bass. Do you ever experiment with crunch tones to find the perfect balance between the two of you?

I'm not much of a gear nerd and have used the same setup for about three years. Aaron experiments with his setup much more than I do, but we always have the same goal in mind – to be as complementary as possible to the tonal structure.

It's hard for any band to make a living these days. Are you all full-time musicians or do you have other jobs?

Myself and Aaron are pretty much full-time musicians with Burger Patrol. We pickup oddball jobs here and there when we need to. Our drummer, Sean, is a cook when we're not on the road. It's pretty amazing we're able to pull it off, and we're grateful for all our fans that make that possible! – **Pete Prown**



SEBASTIAN NAGEL

Meditations in Funk

Germany's Sebastian Nagel is a producer, composer, session guitarist, performer, and fan of the funk. His latest project finds him joining Colemine Records for an odyssey into the groovy world of retro instrumental psychedelic R&B.

The project is called *The Winston Brothers*, where jazzy octave guitar work meets dreamy arpeggiation, fuzz solos, and hallucinogenic fade-outs. It's outta sight, baby.

How did the idea for this music come about?

It was born when I was working on the first album by Bacao Rhythm & Steel Band. Around 2017, we were digging into hip-hop instrumentals, covering hip-hop tracks, and getting into *that* sound versus funk. I asked drummer Lucas Kochbeck to join me for some studio sessions to track ideas I had. Lucas is the funky drummer in town.

I was still with the Mighty Mocambos, so I thought I'd like to do something with a differ-

ent sound and aesthetic. We made six tracks. After I left the Mocombos, I finished the songs and got in touch with Terry Cole of Colemine Records. Terry liked it and wanted to release "Winston Theme" as a 45 with "Boiling Pot" as the B-side. That was the beginning of the Winston Brothers. Later, we thought it would be nice to release a full album. I produced another five tracks with Lucas putting grooves together and then built it up with horns and synthesizers to finish the songs.

So, The Winston Brothers are you on guitar and bass, Lucas Kochbeck on drums, with session horn players.

The horn section is the same, but I did sessions with the Mocombo horns at the beginning, then moved on. I brought in people to add a different impact on the album and catch a certain vibe. I put everything together, wrote the songs, wrote the horn arrangements, and played bass on 50 percent of the songs. A few of the pieces were co-written with Lucas.

It has a '60s retro-funk flavor. It doesn't sound like hip hop.

It was more of the idea of a funk band playing hip hop instrumentals. I needed a starting point that would grow in a totally different direction. I love '60s and '70s funk, but I always try to bring something new to the music. What I did with Winston Brothers was put my own spin on it. I don't like to copy. I always try to create something that comes from me.

What's your musical background?

My first guitar teacher was a friend of my dad. He was into blues guitar, so that's where I started. I loved all the old blues guitar players and bought old records from flea markets when I was a teenager. I prefer '60s and '70s music and got into jazz-rock and funk. After high school, I studied jazz guitar in the Netherlands. I love Jimi Hendrix and Clapton, particularly when Clapton was in John Mayall and the Blues Breakers. I also love John Coltrane. It's the energy I like. I love funky R&B, as well – not so much as a guitar player, but more as a writer and producer. I love Parliament-Funkadelic. When Daptone Records came along, it was a real game changer for me in terms of sound and how to record a band. I'm also a huge fan of Lee Fields' *My World*.

Let's talk guitars.

My main guitar is a 1989 ES-335, but a few years back I bought a '56 ES-125T. I'm a lefty, so it's hard to find guitars. So, I took the 125 to a guitar builder who modified it into a left-handed model with DeArmond pickups. It has a nice vibe. I also have an ES-330 with a P-90 in the middle position that I used for some wah. It has a woody, percussive sound.

How about amplifiers?

I used a Vibrolux reissue from the '70s with a reverb tank, a Carr Vincent, which is like a Deluxe Reverb, a '62 Bassman, and a '63 Super Reverb.

"Drift" is a standout on the album. Which effects did you use on that track?

I used the reverb and the tremolo from the Vibrolux, and either the Devi Ever Legend Of Fuzz or the Fender Blender Fuzz. They're both great pedals.

The oscillating, fuzzy guitar fade-out is super cool.

That's the Roland Space Echo doing the repeats at the end. I used that a lot, especially where the sound oscillates at the end. I also use plug-ins, so it's kind of the best of both worlds. When it comes to the guitar, I prefer the analog stuff.

What's next for The Winston Brothers?

Concerts in Hamburg and a tour through Europe. We'll see where it takes us. I'm already working on the second album. – **Oscar Jordan**



MICK BOX

Deep Heep

It's hard to believe, but there is only one member still with us from the classic early-'70s Uriah Heep lineup that gave us classic albums like *Demons and Wizards*, *The Magician's Birthday*, and *Uriah Heep Live*. Yet, the U.K. band manages to retain its unmistakable (at one time, trailblazing) merger of prog and metal, as heard throughout its 25th studio album, *Chaos & Colour*. That last man standing is Mick Box.

How did you approach *Chaos & Colour* from a guitar perspective?

When it's time to write an album, I have a whole well of ideas – riffs, chords, melodies, lyrics. Then I usually get together with our keyboard player, and he has a similar thing, so

we marry them and start writing songs. From a guitar perspective, [producer] Jay Ruston got a fantastic sound, I was so happy with it. It's a guitar-driven album except for a few songs that we transposed to piano.

Which tracks are you most proud of, guitar-wise?

Generally, they're all good as far as I can see – it's up to the listener to decide. The rhythms sound great, the wah-wah solos sound great, the tones are good. The whole album has got a flow to it. "Hail the Sunrise" has a good solo.

What is your current guitar roster?

Studio and live, it's the same, to be honest – Carparelli guitars and some of my Gibson Les Paul Black Beauties, along with a lovely sunburst one. I started using Carparelli because

the Gibsons were getting totally trashed by airline people. I thought, "They're too fragile, they're too lovely. I'll leave them at home." I got in touch with Mike Carparelli, who was making guitars in Toronto. I picked up one, and I've been playing it ever since. It's fantastic.

How about amplifier-wise?

Amp-wise, it's Engl; I have a Fireball. Once I started using it, I threw away all my pedals except a Crybaby wah and a Carl Martin chorus. The rest of it is all fingers. I like to keep it really simple – I like to play guitar, I don't like to tap-dance.

What was your setup in the early '70s?

Pretty much the same, only Marshall. A Black Beauty, a Marshall 100-watt. I used to have a 1959 SLP – a beautiful amp, and it sounded really good, but it didn't have a lot of power out on the road. I used a 4x12 and I don't like the top cabinets because they give you too much treble, plus, if it goes into the microphone it gives the sound man a lot of trouble. Plus, I like to feel the low-end from a cabinet. Keep it simple – again, back then it was just a wah and, usually, a chorus.

Do you recall what year the Black Beauty was?

I got it in the late '60s, at was Eddie Moors Music, in Bournemouth, in the south of England. It was the only shop where you could get a Black Beauty. And it came direct from Kalamazoo in those days. I had to trade my Telecaster and get some hire-purchase payments. I fell in love with it more so from Les Paul and Mary Ford; I loved their music. I came from a jazz background – with Les Paul, Mary Ford, Barney Kessel, Tal Farlow, and Django Reinhardt. That was my introduction to music, because the first few lessons I had, [the teacher] was very jazzy.

Is it true that Randy Rhoads was a fan of the *Demons and Wizards* album?

Absolutely. So many people were. I talked to Randy loads of times because our drummer, Lee Kerslake, went off with Bob Daisley and formed Blizzard of Ozz. I used to keep in touch with Lee and go see them rehearse. Randy was a really cool guy, and yeah, he told me that.

Which Uriah Heep album would you consider the most definitive, guitar-wise?

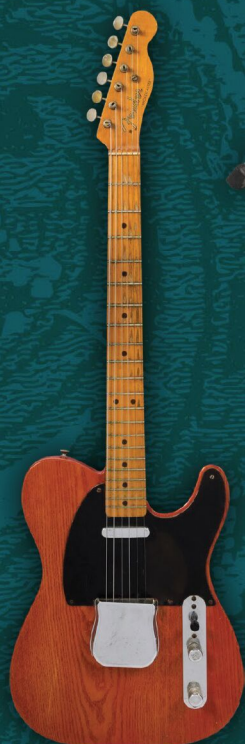
I think they've all got their moments, of course. *Demons and Wizards* took us on to the world stage – the searing rhythm on "Easy Livin'" seemed to catch on and inspire a lot of guitarists. When we reintroduced the band with *Abominog*, which went Top 40 in America, I played all over that one. Normally, I just try to enhance the song. But on that one, the producer was pushing me to do a lot more. – Greg Prato

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LINCOLN GOINES

The Bass Choir

Check out the credits on many jazz, pop, and Latin albums over the past four decades and you'll see the name Lincoln Goines. As a session player, sideman, and teacher, Goines has carved out his niche as a top-tier bassist for Dizzy Gillespie, Carly Simon, and guitarists Mike Stern and Wayne Krantz. His new solo album, *The Art of the Bass Choir*, is not only an all-star effort with bass heroes like John Patitucci, Victor Wooten, and Tom Kennedy, it's also a serious artistic statement.

Was part of the goal on *The Art of the Bass Choir* to help listeners understand the bass as a harmony instrument?

Indeed it was. I wanted to change the conception of the bass as a rhythm-section instrument, and move it to the forefront. We showcased all the harmonic possibilities of the low end in different multi-bass ensemble settings. I care-

fully chose and composed pieces in different styles and genres that represented the unique sonority and temperament of the instrument. On most tracks, I play the central trio, quartet, and quintet parts. The guests contribute solos, and in some cases, melodies, additional chord comping, and embellishments. Most of the parts, minus the solo spaces, were arranged and written in detail, and almost all of the contributing artists sent multiple takes.

On "All Blues," is that some kind of soprano bass taking the melody?

That is my Fodera 33" five-string, with a high C on top. The higher notes of the melody are played with artificial harmonics.

What's the story behind that funky chord comping with Victor Wooten on the Herbie Hancock composition "Spank a Lee"?

I played most of the four core parts, outlining the original Headhunters groove and

melody. I left some sections open, then asked Victor to add a track. He sent four parts that complemented mine and made the entire piece a cohesive funk symphony; that's the genius of Victor. Of course, for sophisticated modern funk, there is no drummer on planet earth like Dennis Chambers.

When recording all those basses, did normal EQ rules apply, so you didn't get a mass of muddy bass tones, as on "Spin the Floor."

Those rules *don't* apply. All my basses are single-pickup, which I find resonate with more clarity than dual-pickup basses. In addition, I panned all the basses wide because I discovered that positioning them together in the traditional manner had a tendency to squash and muddy them. I worked closely with the engineers to not over-compress, and use a minimal amount of reverb. This way, all the dynamics and the natural sound of wood and metal strings would remain intact.

"Velho Piano" has a long, beautiful improv. Is that you or John Patitucci?

That's John. I play the melody in and he plays the melody out. I re-orchestrated my comping behind his solo after I placed it in the track to enhance and complement what he had done. On the double-time samba ride-out at the end, John and I exchange four-bar trades.

"Three Views of a Secret" has some great chordal work.

That's a bass quintet, and the orchestrations are based in part on the Jaco and Weather Report versions. I consider that to be Jaco Pastorius' masterpiece. There are two soloists: Tom Kennedy in the E-major row, and Mike Pope in the G-major one. They are spectacular contributions.

"Vassar Llean" is a collaboration with Ed Lucie from the Berklee College of Music.

That is a lesser-known ballad by the great bassist/composer Charles Mingus, arranged by one of my mentors and influences, bassist Steve Swallow. I spoke to Ed Lucie about the Bass Choir project and he mentioned the handwritten arrangement he had in his attic. We put this together, pretty much verbatim, with maestro Steve's blessing.

What gear did you use on the album?

I used three Fodera Imperial basses – a five-string 34-inch, a five-string 33-inch, and a fretless 33-inch five-string, all built for me at the Brooklyn shop by Vinny Fodera. I also played my 1875 Italian-built acoustic bass, using a French bow, and I processed the tracks direct through an Epifani Piccolo 1,000-watt head with a custom 1995 Nat Priest DI.

Will you take a lineup of the Bass Choir on the road?

That is a goal for 2023. – **Pete Prown**



DON LATARSKI

Electrifying

Don Latarski is well-known in the Pacific Northwest as a player, author, teacher, and composer. His acoustic playing is revered, but on his latest, *Audiography*, Latarski brings in a full band for a set of electric tracks laced with uncanny jazz, blues, and rock ideas. Let's check in with the Oregon ace.

People mostly know your acoustic playing, but not electric.

My inspiration for playing guitar actually came from electric players; up until 1983, I didn't even own an acoustic. My first LPs are all focused on the electric, but around '96 I started making acoustic records. Later, I had a steady gig in Eugene, and I began to figure out how to play guitar without a keyboardist. I also quit using a pick. I look back on that period as really pivotal in my playing.

Do you play electric with fingers or a pick?

I've been playing fingerstyle exclusively

since around 2000. Since I stopped using fake nails, I have to be more careful because my natural nails are thin and they do break. My tone isn't as good as it used to be when using fake nails, but my life is simpler without all the maintenance. There's just a different tone I love when using a little nail along with the fleshy part of the finger.

"Noctiluca" sounds like you were under the spell of Larry Carlton and Robben Ford as a young player.

Like so many guitarists of a certain age, I was smitten with Carlton, Ford, Scofield, Coryell, Bill Connors, Howard Roberts, Wes Montgomery, and George Benson. Before that, I was into early Clapton, Beck, Peter Green, Roy Buchanan, Mark Knopfler, and other blues-based players. I've always been attracted to the emotional, funky players – but when Pat Metheny came along, I was deeply affected by his melodic approach.

"Blues #1" is a lyrical, jazz-enhanced approach to electric blues guitar, and avoids the cliches.

My background as a jazz player enabled me to solo using a vertical approach. In other words, I'm integrating notes from each chord, chord extension, or substitution into the solo. I love this approach, and it opens the door to new ideas that scale-based playing can't get to. I play a lot of arpeggio-based ideas. This approach gets me deeper into the harmony – and I want to take the listener into that harmony.

What do you look for in an electric guitar?

I look for something light, with a slightly wide and thick neck, and some undefinable "mojo" that speaks to me. I've had Les Pauls, Strats, archtops, and Teles, but when I became friends with Ralph Novak, he introduced me to his solidbody fanned-fret instruments. His Novax Sweet Annie model is the only electric guitar I used on *Audiography*. I've owned two of them and the current one has a particular sound I've never heard on an electric guitar before. It's push/pull switch provides a huge range of tonal color.

What about the pedals and amps?

All of my electric parts were recorded direct through an Ethos Overdrive preamp. It's all-analog and has a simulated speaker output, which went into a Neve DI – it's like getting the front-end of a really incredible amp. I did use a little wah on a couple of tracks, but it's a modeled pedal from inside Logic Pro X. Other than the Ethos and Neve DI – which I do think of as a tone shaper – I didn't use any pedals or amps, or any of the modeled amps or speaker cabs in Logic. My goal with this project was to really *up* my guitar tone, and I think I achieved that from the last trio record. I play pretty quietly these days, and for live gigs I use the smallest Quilter Mach 2 Combo 8. An acoustic guitar sounds pretty good plugged into it, since it is has a full-range 8" speaker.

"Bottoms Up" brings to mind that old jazz adage: "It's not what you play; it's about what you don't play."

The hardest thing to learn about playing is when to use space. There are times on gigs with my trio where I just quit playing. My group is also what I'd call "conversational"; we allow each other to experiment, and there's always a give-and-take chemistry at work. These guys – Mark Schneider on bass and Jason Palmer on drums – are fabulous players with way more experience, stylistically, than me. I happen to be the writer, but they bring ideas to the tunes that I wouldn't even conceive of. We've been together a long time and, from the first note on a gig, the magic always happens. – **Pete Prown** **VG**

The circa-1964 Rex solidbody, made by Lamberti Brothers in Melbourne, Australia.



A '60s or early '70s Rex Mascot amplifier, "Made in Australia" at General Music Company.

On and off from the mid 1930s until the mid '50s, Gretsch subcontracted construction of Rex instruments to Harmony and/or Kay – most were acoustic archtops and flat-tops. By '56, Gretsch was selling single-pickup solidbody electrics called the Rex Silver Streak and Rex Hawaiian, both made by Kay. But this Rex guitar has more to do with Queensland than Queens, the borough (Gretsch was just south of Queens, in Brooklyn).



The Aragon (left) sat atop Gretsch's Rex line. This one is from the late 1930s or '40s; the square shoulders, pointed head, and pickguard suggest Kay-made, though some Rexes were made by Harmony. This nice all-koa Rex acoustic from the mid '30s could have been produced by Gretsch, Harmony, or Kay.

ITALIAN CONNECTION

The Rex Solidbody

— BY MICHAEL WRIGHT —

An internet search for "Rex guitars" will turn up a fair – if confusing – amount of information about the brand used on budget guitars and banjos made by Gretsch beginning in the early 20th century.

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DUDLEY TAFT

"...far beyond just distorting the guitar sounds over the standard blues framework. It's a real new rhythm and harmony approach..."
- Blues Rock Review



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Actually, this Rex has more to do with Melbourne, Victoria, just south of Queensland, but certainly in Australia! Rex guitars and amplifiers were the product of the Lamberti Brothers company, founded by Frank and Anthony Lamberti in 1946. Details are spotty, but it appears that Frank emigrated from Italy to Australia as a teenager in the '30s. He got work at Astor Radio, taking night classes in radio engineering at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. After World War II, he joined his brother, Tony, a carpenter, to start the company, Frank serving as engineer, Tony a musician who supervised manufacturing.

The initial focus of Lamberti Bros. seems to have been on building Rex and Eston-branded tube amplifiers, though some sources mention early banjo-mandolins and guitars, as well. Frank concentrated on the chassis while Tony finished cabinets. By the late '50s, the Lamberti empire had expanded to include a retail music store, a music school, and their own record label, Melodiana, to promote local Italian musicians. Eventually, they were involved in importing, selling, and distributing musical instruments, Italian records, home appliances, and televisions. Lamberti Bros. manufactured amplifiers and guitars at its subsidiary, General Music Company. Other instruments, including guitars, were imported from Italy, Japan, and Taiwan using the brand names Rex, Eston, Electa, Canora, and Boston. Lamberti Bros. also distributed instruments by Fender, Epiphone, Ibanez, Rogers, Ludwig, Pearl, Tama, Selmer, and D'Addario.

Rex amps with various output ratings included the AG-6, Mascot, and Bassking, the latter being the most popular. Cos-

metically, they tended to follow a Fender look.

Lamberti Bros. instrument manufacturing at General Music ceased in 1974, due to high labor costs, but importing and distributing activities continue to this day.

According to Frank's son, Joe Lamberti, the guitar seen here was built in Australia by the General Music Company. Presumably, it had a model designation, though none appear. It also has no serial number and the pots have no visible date codes. Based on overall design (which in size and shape is very similar to early-'60s Kay and Harmony solidbodies) plus the tuners, thickness of the neck, pickup designs, and sound, this one dates to '64, though it could have been made earlier or slightly later.

The overall build is impressive. The set neck is three-ply maple (using different cuts) with mahogany divider strips; there is no visible truss rod. It's what used to be called a "baseball bat" neck, with a thick, rounded-C profile (to carry those

The Rex stock euro-style tuners do not appear to be Van Ghents as found on many European guitars of the period.

heavy gauge Black Diamond strings...or whatever they used in Australia back then), about 1 1/2" thick including fretboard, all the way up the neck. The radius is a fairly flat 12" with a wide 2" nut.

Despite the small body, the scale is fairly long at 26". The core of the body appears to be solid maple with a veneer of tiger maple front and back.

The covered tuners look very European but don't appear to be Van Ghents, the most common type on '60s Euro guitars. Similar buttons were used on other Italian guitars, so, given the Lambertis' strong Italian connections, these may be of Italian origin. And maybe it's because the guitar comes from the Southern Hemisphere, but the tuners tighten and loosen in the opposite direction than on most guitars! The bridge/tail is a curious wraparound design that brings to mind the old Danelectro designs.

The single-coil pickups originally had covers – you can see where they were in the wear on the pickguard. Reports say that Frank Lamberti aimed for a clean, hi-fi sound with his amplifiers. These pickups are not especially powerful, but they are very clean with a good frequency response, consistent with Rex's amplifier goal. The electronic components

are particularly interesting. The pickups are mounted directly onto the body under the pickguard (which would decrease feedback) and the wiring harness was assembled on a metal plate that was turned over and screwed into the body cavity.

This guitar would look swell and fit right in with a surf or early-'60s pop band. You probably *wouldn't* find it in the hands of Jimi Hendrix or Michael Bloomfield late in the decade!

It's unlikely Rex guitars were exported, at least not outside of the Oceania region. This guitar turned up years



A close look at the set laminate neck and the unusual Rex pickups that render a clear (but not loud) hi-fi sound. The electronics are mounted to a metal plate that protects them when screwed into the control cavity.

ago in a music shop in New Jersey – another example of guitars that returned in a G.I.'s duffel bag after a tour of duty in the Pacific!

When General Music Company closed shop in '74, a number of nearly finished amps were locked in the warehouse, where they sat until a few years ago. Resuscitated and completed in original vintage vinyl, they were offered for sale and revived interest in vintage Rex amps among Australian musicians. Lamberti Rex guitars (and other Australian brands such as Maton), on the other hand, remain pretty much hidden in the shadows of Gretsch's better-known Rex budget line – and certainly under the radar in the vintage guitar market. **VG**



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'58 Blond 100% original in Near Mint condition.

'59 Sunburst/Slab Rose neck Early '59 9Hole pickguard.

'59 Olympic White/Slab Rose neck

'59 Red/Slab Rose neck Original custom color, 100% original.

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'61 Black/Slab Rose neck 100% original. Super rare!!

'61 Blond "Tortoiseshell Pickguard"/Slab Rose neck

'61 Blond Gold Anodized 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.

'63 Candy Apple Red 100% original

'64 Sunburst (Spaghetti logo) Perfect collector's piece!!

'65 Dakota Red (Transition logo) 100% original in Near Mint!!

'65 Olympic White Only refret and changed nut, Mint-Green pickguard.

'65 Olympic White 100% original

'65 Olympic White "Tortoiseshell Pickguard" 100%

original

'65 Fiesta Red 100% original in Near Mint!!

'65 Ice Blue Metallic 100% original in Near Mint condition

'66 Sunburst We have 7 in stock

'67 Sunburst "Lefty & Hardtail" 100% original, Nedar

Mint condition.

'67 Sonic Blue 100% original in Near Mint condition

'67 Charcoal Frost Metallin 100% original in Near

Mint condition

'68 Sunburst 100% original, "Brand-New" condition.

'69 Blond/Rose neck 100% original, Amazing tone!!

'69 Olympic White/Rose neck 100% original Claen!!

'70 Candy Apple Red/Rose neck 100% original.

'70 Olympic White/Rose neck

'71 Sunburst/Rose neck 100% original in Excelent

condition

'71 Sunburst "Lefty" Maple Cap neck

'71 Sunburst "Lefty" 4Bolt 1Piecs Maple neck

'71 Lake Placid Blue/Rose neck 100% original!!

'73 Lake Placid Blue "Lefty"/Rose neck 100% original in

Mint condition,

'74 Black "Lefty"/Rose neck 100% original in Near

Mint condition,

'74 Olympic White "Lefty"/Rose neck 100% original in

Mint condition,

'74 Sunburst "Lefty"/Maple neck 100% original in

Mint condition,

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STILL ROLLIN'

Keith Richards' 1977 Mesa/Boogie Mark I

— BY DAVE HUNTER —

As ubiquitous as the little 1x12" Mesa/Boogie Mark Series combo has become over the past 48 years – and as large and successful as the company grew to be – there was a time when one of the world's most-famous guitarists had to plead his case with Randy Smith to jump the months-long waiting list for amps the Boogie creator was turning out from his California home.

1977 MESA/BOOGIE MARK I COMBO

- Preamp tubes: four 12AX7
- Output tubes: four 6L6
- Rectifier: silicon diodes
- Controls: Volume 1 (pull Mid Boost), Volume 2 (pull Bright), Master, Treble, Bass, Middle; five-band graphic EQ; Presence, Reverb, and Slave level controls on back panel.
- Speaker: Altec 417 12"
- Output: switchable 60/100 watts RMS

Built in early 1977, Boogie serial number A804 was the first of several that Rolling Stone Keith Richards would purchase – that's right, *purchase* – and play on tour and in the studio. Owned by Boogie enthusiast Ian Dickey and known as "Keef's El Mocambo Boogie," it's a Mark I 60-/100-watt with reverb, five-band graphic EQ, Altec speaker, and hardwood cab. At the time of the Mark I (so-called after introduction of the Mark II), the Mesa/Boogie was not a channel-switcher, but



had two inputs to access different preamp configurations; Input 1 tapped the Lead channel with four stages of 12AX7-fired gain, while Input 2 tapped three stages in the Rhythm channel for a more “hotrodded Fender” tone. Footswitchable or not, as Richards, the Stones, and hundreds of thousands of fans would attest, this Boogie rocked like the friggin’ bejaysus.

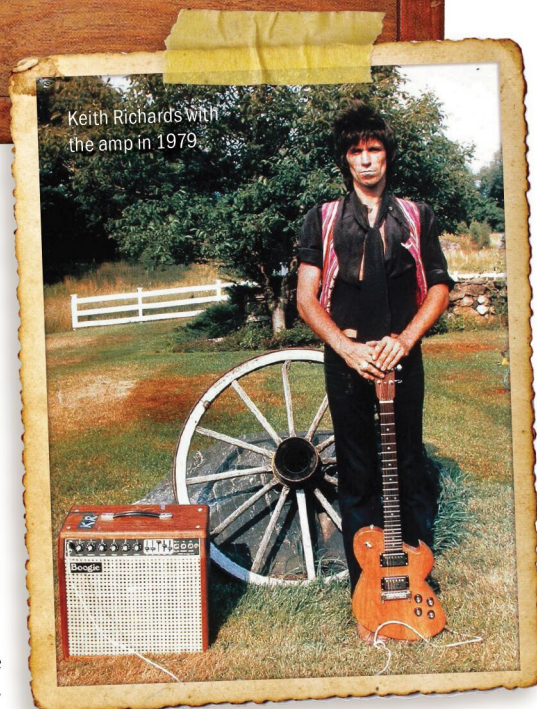
Famous as the little club big acts like to play, Toronto’s El Mocambo hosted the Stones for two nights in early March of 1977. The first proper club dates the band had played in 14 years, they served as a recording venue for what would become side three of the album *Love You Live*, and were also a warm-up for a forthcoming arena tour. Photos of those shows reveal the characteristic cigarette burn Richards had scorched into the cab (above the Treble knob), and

showed second guitarist Ronnie Wood also playing a Boogie built on the heels of Keith’s. Headly times.

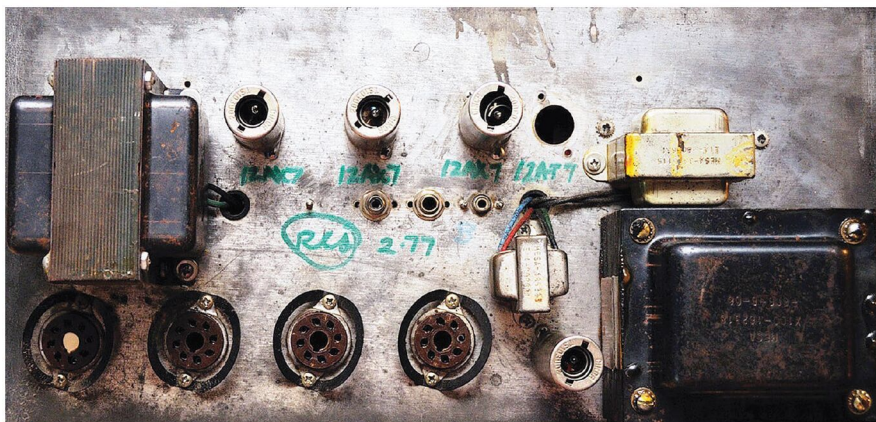
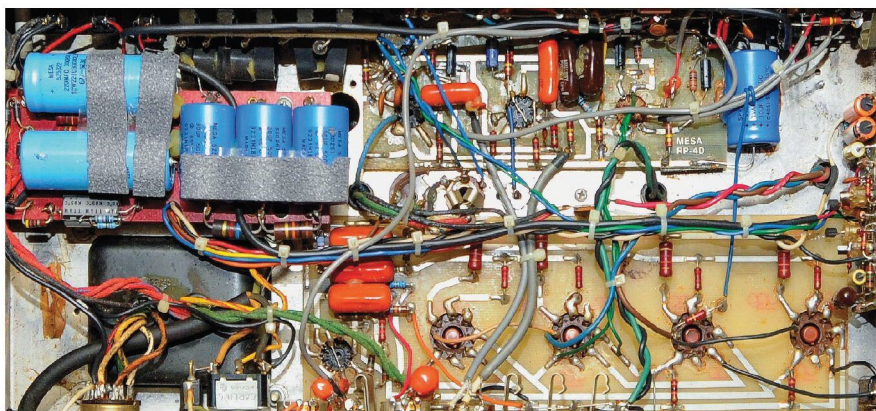
So, how did it all unfold? According to Mesa/Boogie founder Randy Smith, it started with an unexpected phone call.

“At that point, building amps was a cottage industry and I did everything. So, I picked it up and it was [Stones pianist] Ian Stewart. He said, ‘We’re interested in trying a Boogie.’ They’d heard a lot about them and asked if I would send some. I said, ‘I really can’t do that. I’m a one-person shop; I don’t give away amps.’ And he said, ‘We’re the Rolling Stones, we don’t pay for amps.’”

A brief stalemate was broken when the pioneering builder kicked it up a notch.



Keith Richards with the amp in 1979



The bottom of the chassis of A804 has Randall Smith's initials and tube-socket designations in Sharpie.

"I could hear Keith in the background," Smith continued. "He was talking at Ian, telling him what to say. I said, 'Is that Keith? Put him on, would you please?' Keith gets on the line and he's just the best – super-friendly guy – and he says, 'Hey man. How you doing? Yeah, I'd love to get my hands on one of your amplifiers.' We went through the same thing and he said, 'Well, it just doesn't seem right. We haven't paid for gear in forever. We just don't.' I said, 'Well, I just don't give gear away because I'm basically just a starving cat here. Besides, if I was going to give gear away, wouldn't I be better off giving it to some guy – a broken-down blues player or an up-and-coming guy – who truly couldn't afford it?' And he kinda' said, 'Yeah, I guess so.'"

"I'd probably been taking up, so I really stepped out on the plank. I said, 'Keith, look at it

this way... You guys are getting ready to go out on tour and you're going to be raking in huge bucks. Pay for the amp, and if you don't like it, you've got two choices. You can send it back and I'll give you a full refund. Or, because people are trying to get their

hands on these things and I've got a backlog that's endless, a better option would be to sell it and take the cash, which you've already written off for tour expenses."

"There was a long pause, and I thought, 'Uh oh, I might have gone a step too far.' After this pregnant pause, he says, 'Well, yeah, mate. That would be a really good idea, except I already know I want the amp. There's no doubt about that. I played Santana's when he sat in with us. And I don't want just one, I want six of 'em.'"

"So, the amp Ian has is one of those first six. Over the years, the Stones have bought – and paid for – 42 of them."

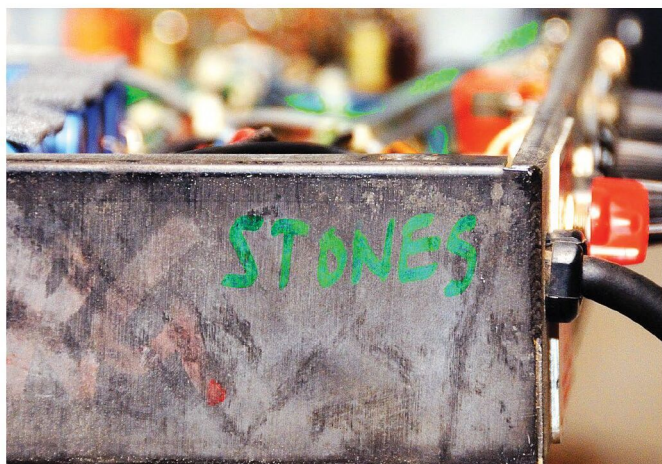
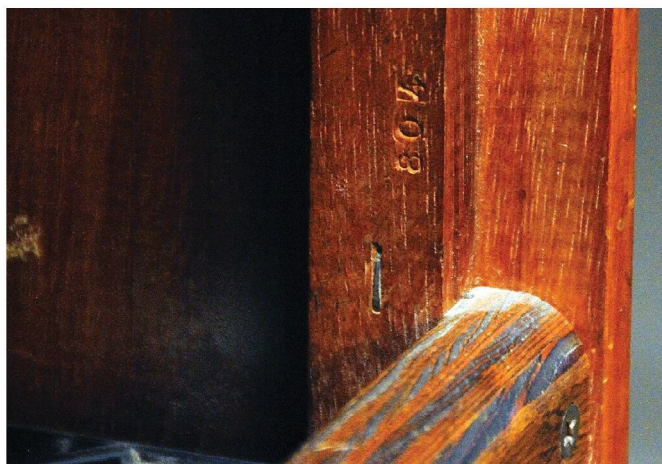
After the El Mocambo dates and recordings, the Boogie was used for the *Some Girls* sessions and more live dates, then was returned to Mesa for servicing in 1992-'93 before being taken on Richards' X-Pensive Winos tour.

Sometime during the Stones' *Forty Licks* tour of 2002-'03, Boogie A804 was given to guitar tech Pierre de Beauport, who sold it to Outlaw Guitars. An investment broker purchased it from Outlaw and sold it to Billy Penn, who hipped our current owner to its existence in '05 and sold it to him in '07.

Having been put through the intensive Stones CSI for authentication, this Boogie's lineage leaves little to the imagination. In addition to the serial number linking it directly to the Richards purchase, we have the telltale cigarette burns, evidence of the positioning of the blue gaffer tape with "KR" that formerly adorned the amp's top, Smith's own "Stones" legend in faded Sharpie on both sidewalls of the chassis, and several other distinguishing marks. And after all it has been through, it's still as mean and raucous as it was churning out "Honky Tonk



The Mesa's top has been branded with a Richards cigarette burn.



Women,” “Crackin’ Up,” and “Brown Sugar” on March 4, 1977, shortly after Randy Smith himself delivered it into Richards’ hands in Toronto. In all, the little box is about as formidable a chunk of rock-gear history as you’ll stumble upon.

In 2021, Dickey lent it to the Gibson Garage, Nashville, for a display in celebration of bringing Mesa/Boogie into the Gibson

fold; Smith personally thanked Dickey for the gesture. An orthopedic surgeon in Bangor, Maine, he plans to use the amp through the summer of ’23 for charitable performances near home and in his native Canada before loaning it to the new Gibson Garage in London.

“It’s generating a lot of attention, and it’s great that people are so excited about seeing

The serial number, stamped into the cabinet (left). After taking the order for A804, Randall Smith marked both sidewalls of the chassis in Sharpie.

it,” Dickey told VG. “It’s getting played a lot, and I’m looking forward to taking it out again.”

The original version of this feature appeared in the November, 2010, issue.

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Particle 2 is a granular delay that takes apart, rearranges, and reassembles your sound. What you play comes back altered, creating a dialog that leads you into uncharted territory. It excels at glitch effects that stay musical, so you can add subtle randomness while maintaining your tone. New firmware 2.2 adds random stereo panning, new pitch options, and preset sharing. www.redpandalab.com



Maestro

The Arcas Compressor Sustainer pedal provides excellent versatility. It offers both transparent, light compression as well as heavy, tight compression delivering enough sustain and level compensation to become a go-to workhorse for any situation. This all-analog pedal boasts a two-position Mode toggle switch for increased sonic versatility. <https://bit.ly/3wdFz8a>



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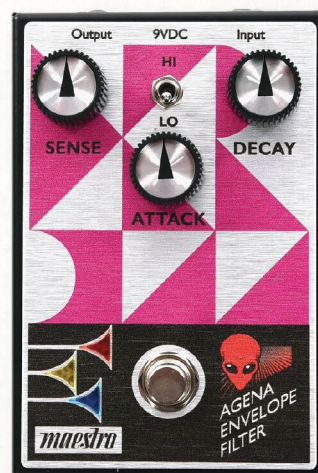


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Price Guide

By Alan Greenwood & Gil Hembree

NEW & UPDATED LISTINGS

YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND.	
			LOW	HIGH
1980	Acoustic 165 Amp	All tube	\$350	\$450
1972	Acoustic 450 Amp Head	170 watts	\$350	\$450
1988	Ampeg SS-70 C Amp	2x10, solidstate	\$205	\$265
1972	Audio Guild Ultraflex Amp	2x12, r & t, 4 power tubes	\$1,025	\$1,325
1934	Bacon & Day Blue Ribbon			
	17 Tenor Banjo	Non-carved	\$575	\$750
1925	Bacon & Day Ne Plus Ultra	Plectrum #7 Banjo	\$10,300	\$13,500
1920s	Bacon & Day Silver Bell #5			
	5-String Banjo		\$4,000	\$5,150
1890	Buckbee 5-string Banjo	Highest-level specs	\$1,225	\$1,600
2005	Carr Mercury Amp	8/2/.5/.1 watts, 1x12	\$1,600	\$2,100
1968	Coral Wasp Bass	2B4 (4-string) black or red	\$1,300	\$1,700
1996	Crate 5310/VC-5310 Amp		\$275	\$360
1966	Danelectro Cadet Amp	1x6	\$225	\$300
1955	Danelectro Model 89			
	(Series D) Amp	1x15	\$725	\$950
1949	D'Angelico Excel/Excel (Cutaway)	Sunburst, original binding	\$29,000	\$38,000
1968	D'Aquisto Excel (Cutaway)	Blond	\$33,000	\$43,000
1986	Dean Mach V Bass	USA	\$1,300	\$1,700
1982	Deering Basic Model 5-String Banjo	Resonator back	\$825	\$1,075
1999	Deering Maple Blossom			
	5-String Banjo		\$2,050	\$2,650
1986	Deering Texas Calico			
	5-String Banjo		\$8,300	\$10,700
1940	Epiphone Broadway (Acoustic)	Sunburst, maple body	\$2,400	\$3,100
1947	Epiphone De Luxe	Natural	\$4,200	\$5,400
1972	Epiphone E-30 B Amp	s.s., 30 watts, 2x10	\$175	\$225
1962	Epiphone EA-15 RVT Zephyr Amp	1x15	\$510	\$665
1947	Epiphone FT 45		\$1,375	\$1,775
1968	Epiphone FT 45 Cortez	Sunburst or natural	\$1,025	\$1,350
1925	Epiphone Recording A Tenor Banjo		\$1,925	\$2,500
1967	Estey Model T12 Amp		\$425	\$550
1896	Fairbanks Electric No. 5			
	5-String Banjo		\$5,000	\$6,400
1990	Fender Champ 12 Amp	Black, 1x12	\$320	\$420
1990	Fender Champ 12 Amp	Colors, 1x12	\$420	\$550
1964	Fender Champ Amp	Old cab, black, 1x8, F51	\$1,900	\$2,475
1964	Fender Champ Amp	New cab, black, AA764	\$1,075	\$1,400
2007	Fender FR-48 Resonator	Korea	\$275	\$350
1991	Fender HM Bass IV		\$725	\$950
1962	Fender Jaguar	Rare Custom Color	\$9,700	\$13,000
1961	Fender Jazz Bass	Rare Custom Color, stacked	\$34,000	\$44,000
1958	Fender Jazzmaster	Sunburst, maple 'board	\$11,000	\$14,500
1987	Fender Jazzmaster '62	Japan	\$1,175	\$1,525
1969	Fender Kingman Antigua	Antigua finish	\$1,600	\$2,100
1964	Fender Mustang	Blue, red, white	\$2,300	\$3,000
2011	Fender Mustang I Amp	20 watts, 1x8	\$70	\$90
2011	Fender Mustang II Amp	40 watts, 1x12	\$130	\$170
2011	Fender Mustang III Amp	100 watts	\$195	\$255
2011	Fender Mustang IV Amp	100/150 watts, 2x12	\$325	\$423

1994 Fender
Aluminum
Stratocaster
American
Standard



Artie Leider with
a 1939 Martin
000-28.



YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND.	
			LOW	HIGH
2011	Fender Mustang V Amp	150 watts, 4x12 half stack	\$375	\$490
1954	Fender Precision Bass	Blond, slab body	\$17,700	\$23,000
1971	Fender Scorpio Amp	56 watts, 2x12, solidstate	\$625	\$825
1954	Fender Stratocaster	Very first '54, very rare features	\$170,000	\$220,000
1954	Fender Stratocaster	Early-mid '54, typical features	\$105,000	\$140,000
1954	Fender Stratocaster	Sunburst, later production	\$70,000	\$95,000
1994	Fender Aluminum Stratocaster			
	American Standard		\$2,000	\$2,600
1950	Fender Super Amp	V-Front	\$6,000	\$7,800
1957	Fender Telecaster	Blond, back loader	\$24,000	\$32,000
1969	Fender Telecaster	Blue Flora	\$16,000	\$21,000
1999	Fender American			
	Standard Telecaster		\$1,000	\$1,300
1963	Fender Twin Amp	Smooth white and gold	\$6,000	\$8,000
2013	Fishman Loudbox			
	Mini LBX-500 Amp	60 watts	\$165	\$215
1992	G & L Legacy Bass		\$975	\$1,275
1945	Gibson BR-1 Amp	15 watts, 1x12, large G logo	\$750	\$1,000
1960	Gibson EB-2 Bass	Sunburst, banjo tuners	\$4,700	\$6,200
1960	Gibson EB-6 Bass	Sunburst, 335-style	\$5,500	\$7,200
1960	Gibson EB-6 Bass	Natural, 335-style	\$7,600	\$9,900
1936	Gibson EH-150 Amp	15 watts, 1x10	\$1,350	\$1,750
1996	Gibson F-5 Bruce Weber Mandolin		\$5,100	\$6,700
1924	Gibson F-5 Mandolin	Loar with virzi	\$67,000	\$87,000
1924	Gibson F-5 Mandolin	Loar March 31, 1924	\$78,000	\$102,000
1924	Gibson F-5 Mandolin	Loar, no virzi	\$75,000	\$97,000
1924	Gibson F-5 Mandolin	Late-1924 (unsigned)	\$53,000	\$70,000
1968	Gibson Flying V (Mahogany)	Sunburst	\$21,200	\$27,600
1959	Gibson GA-20 Amp	14 watts, 1x12, 2-tone	\$1,000	\$1,300
1965	Gibson J-160E		\$4,500	\$5,900
1970	Gibson J-200	Natural or sunburst	\$3,900	\$5,100
1974	Gibson Les Paul Standard	Special order, humbuckers	\$6,300	\$8,200
1960	Gibson Les Paul Standard (burst)	Highly figured, late '60, flat, specs vary	\$305,000	\$395,000
1962	Gibson RB-175 5-String Banjo		\$1,200	\$1,600
1923	Gibson RB-4 5-String	Trap or non-trap door	\$2,900	\$3,800
2000	Gibson SG Angus			
	Young Signature	Large guard, maestro	\$1,775	\$2,300
2021	Gibson SJ-200 Standard	Wine Red or Autumnburst	\$3,500	\$4,500
1967	Gibson SJN (Country-Western)	Gold case lining, brown saddle	\$3,550	\$4,550
1937	Gibson TB-12 Tenor Banjo	Top tension pot assm.	\$50,000	\$65,000

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			LOW	HIGH
1966	Gibson Thunderbird II Bass	Sunburst, non-reverse	\$4,900	\$6,500
2000	Gretsch Broadkaster 6119B Bass		\$1,400	\$1,825
1925	Gretsch Broadkaster Tenor Banjo		\$450	\$575
1956	Gretsch Model 6150 Compact Amp	Brown tweed, 1x8	\$550	\$725
1986	Guild Ashbory Bass		\$425	\$550
1972	Guild M-85 I BluesBird (Solidbody) Bass		\$1,575	\$2,050
1963	Hagstrom Coronado IV Bass	Bi-Sonic	\$1,075	\$1,400
2002	Hamer Chaparral 12-String Bass	USA made only	\$1,850	\$2,400
1964	Harmony H-306A Amp	1x12	\$360	\$470
1970	Harmony H-22 Bass	1 pickup, 2-on-a-side	\$1,025	\$1,325
1974	Ibanez Rocket Roll Bass		\$2,000	\$2,600
1994	Jackson Kelly Pro Bass		\$750	\$975
1970	Kalamazoo Bass 30 Amp	2x10, tubes	\$500	\$650
1986	Kentucky KM-800 F-style (Japan) Mandolin		\$725	\$925
1977	Kramer 350-B Standard Bass		\$975	\$1,275
1970	Kustom K100-2 1-15L/1-15A-2/1-15J-2 Amp Set	Black, 50 watts, 1x15	\$275	\$350
1925	Ludwig Kenmore Plectrum Banjo	Open back	\$500	\$650
1948	Magnatone Model 194 Lyric Amp	Old style, 1x12	\$650	\$850
1969	Marshall Model 1967 Major 200-Watt Amp Head	Aluminum era	\$2,000	\$2,600
1967	Marshall Model T1959 Super Lead (Trem) Amp Head	Custom color, plexi	\$5,700	\$7,400
1899	Martin 2-27	1 made	\$6,800	\$9,000
1911	Martin 000-18	3 made	\$10,200	\$13,500
1957	Martin D-28	Kluson, 901 made	\$12,000	\$16,000
2020	Martin D-28	Forward-shifted X	\$2,050	\$2,650
2004	Martin D-45 Celtic Knot	Brazilian, 10 made	\$21,000	\$27,000
1998	Matchless Lightning 15 210 Amp		\$2,100	\$2,725
1999	Mesa-Boogie Formula Preamp		\$450	\$600
1999	Mesa-Boogie Heartbreaker Combo Amp	60-100 watts, 2x12	\$1,150	\$1,500
1928	Paramount Style B Plectrum Banjo		\$1,425	\$1,850
2001	Peavey Envoy 110 Amp	40 watts, 1x10	\$110	\$140
1986	Peavey Rage/Rage 158 Amp	15 watts, 1x8	\$40	\$50
1984	Peavey TNT-130 Bass Amp		\$290	\$375
1957	Premier Model 88N Amp	25 watts, 1x12 wedge	\$1,050	\$1,375
1986	Rickenbacker Model 4001 V63 Reissue Bass	Plain/opaque	\$2,900	\$3,800
1999	Rickenbacker Model 4003 Bass		\$1,700	\$2,200
1988	Roland Spirit 40A Combo Amp		\$85	\$110
1890	S.S. Stewart Banjeaurine	Style 3 fancy	\$1,625	\$2,125
1956	Silvertone Model 1335 Amp	1x15 heavy duty	\$600	\$775
1971	Sound City 50 Plus/50R Amp Head		\$1,000	\$1,325
1966	Standel A-30 G Artist 30 Guitar Amp	ss, 80 watts, 2x15	\$425	\$550
1989	Sunn SPL 7250 Amp	250 watts, head and cab	\$515	\$670
1964	Supro Combo Tremolo S6497T Amp	35 watts, 1x15	\$925	\$1,200
1962	Supro Dual-Tone Amp	1624TA, no panel 1x12	\$950	\$1,225
1966	Supro Galaxy (Tremolo) S6688 Amp	35 watts, 2x12	\$975	\$1,275
1997	SWR Basic Black Amp		\$310	\$400
1990	Tobias Classic C-6 Bass		\$2,300	\$3,000
1976	Univox Bicentennial Bass	Carved eagle	\$775	\$1,025
1963	Vega Folklore SS-5 5-String Banjo		\$1,050	\$1,375
2010	Victoria Golden Melody Amp	50 watts, 2x12	\$1,475	\$1,900
1962	Vox AC15 Twin Amp	Custom colors	\$3,800	\$4,925
1972	Vox AC30 Twin/AC30 Twin Top Boost Amp	Combo, black	\$2,275	\$2,950

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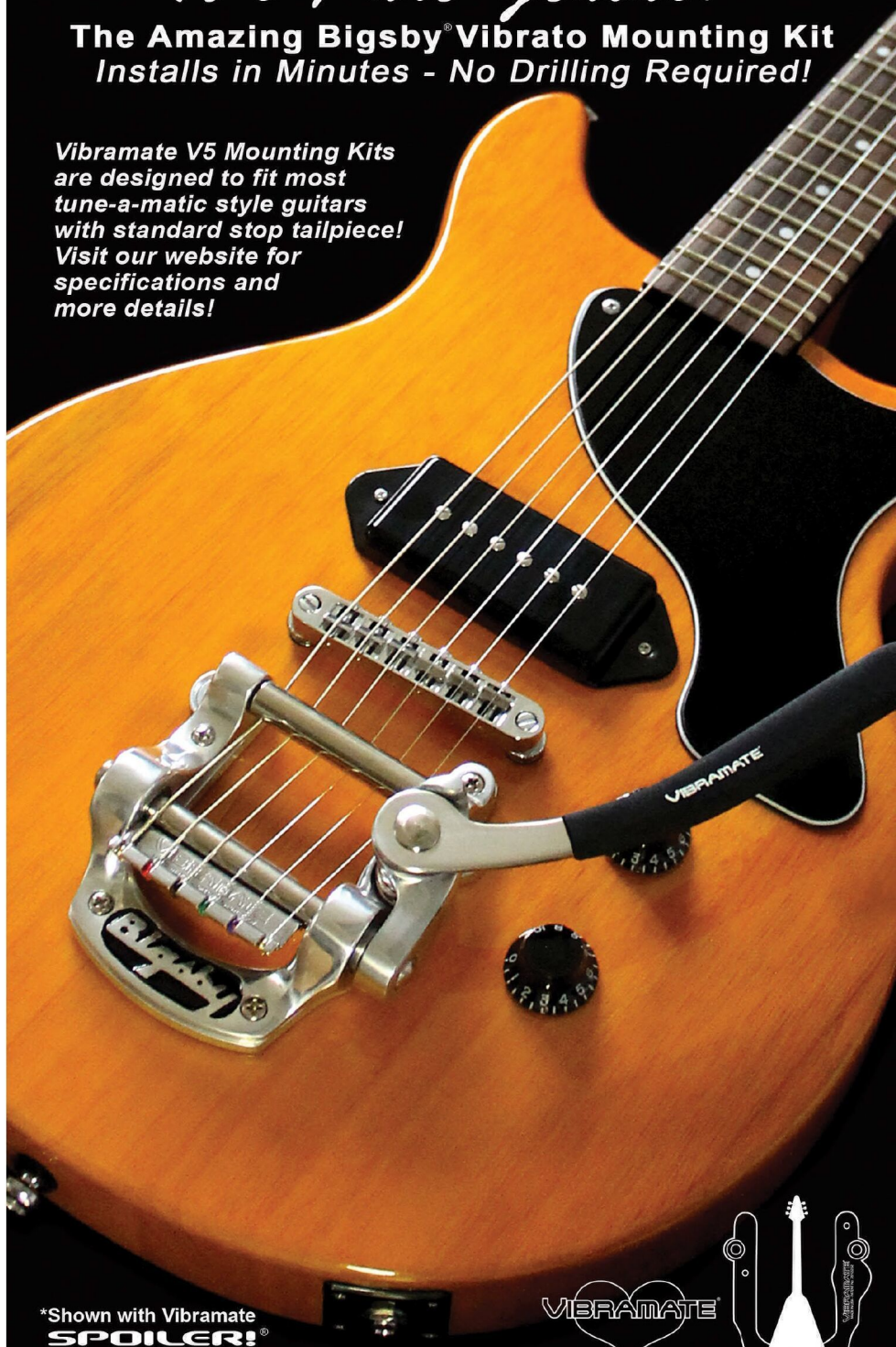
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COMMENDABLE CODA

King Crimson's *Red*

By Willie G. Moseley

In the late '60s, a new style of rock emerged in Britain, influenced by classical music and fronted by bands like Yes, Genesis, and Emerson, Lake & Palmer. Dubbed "progressive rock," King Crimson epitomized the form.

Fusing against-the-grain arrangements and meters with grandiose lyrics, King Crimson's approach was piloted by guitarist Robert Fripp frenetically chording on a Les Paul Custom rendering everything from snarling fuzz riffs to a dark version of Clapton's "woman tone." Fripp shifted the band's music and membership from album to album and composed songs that were often extended, with variations in mood, tempo, volume, and time signatures.

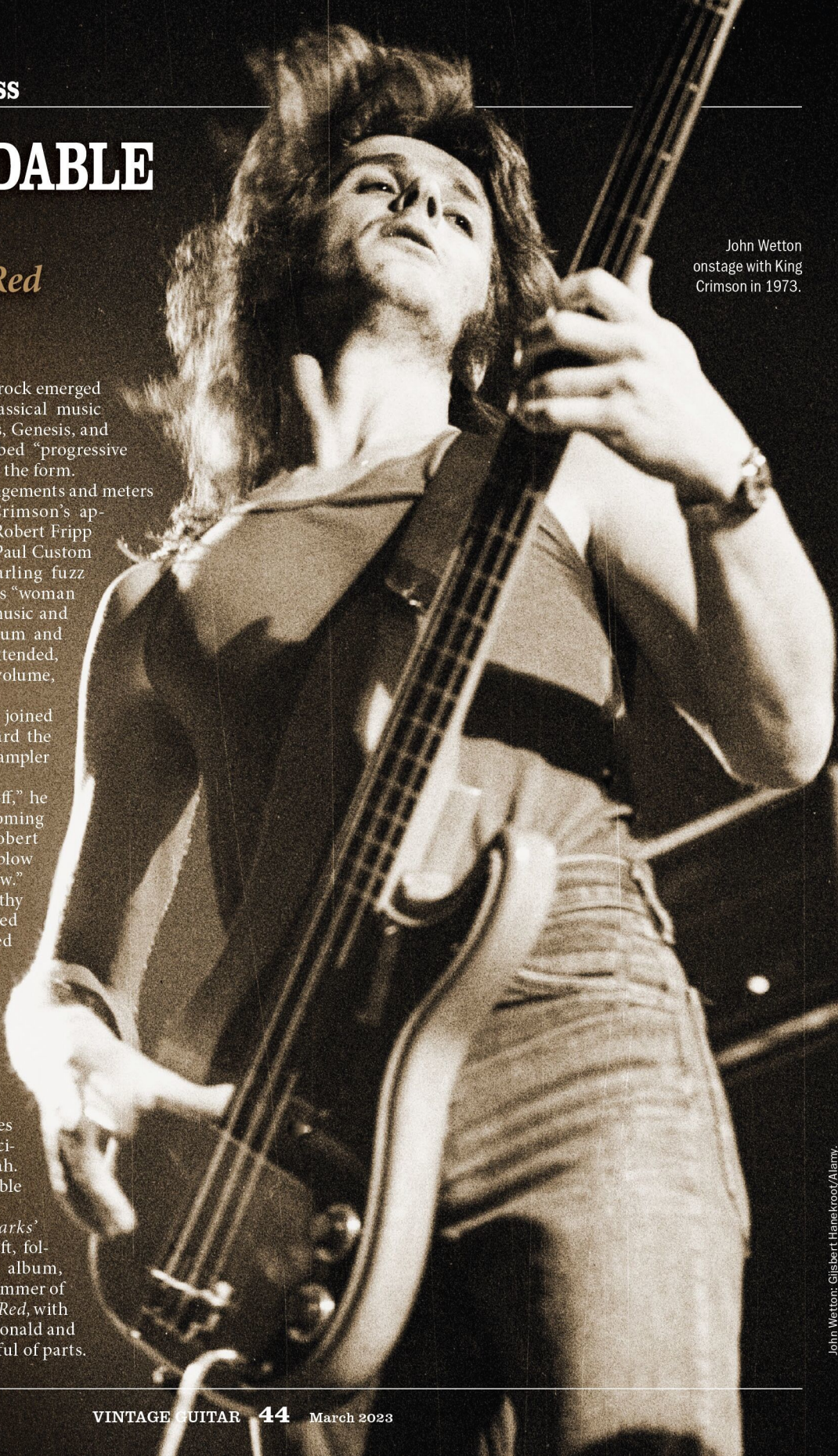
Guitarist Jakko Jakszyk, who joined King Crimson in 2013, first heard the band in '69, on an Island Records sampler album. He was 11 years old.

"It blew the top of my head off," he recalled. "You could tell it was coming from somewhere different. Robert seemed ruthlessly determined to plow his own particular musical furrow."

One of Crimson's most noteworthy stylistic transpositions happened in early '73, when Fripp recruited bassist/vocalist John Wetton, drummer Bill Bruford (who joined from Yes), violinist David Cross, and eccentric percussionist Jamie Muir. Together, they created a stripped-down, semi-abstract tack with little of the Mellotron that previously played a key role. Wetton's tones were evoked from a '61 Fender Precision interpolated with fuzz and wah. His evocative vocals and relatable lyrics were also assets.

The lineup debuted with *Larks' Tongues in Aspic* before Muir left, followed by Cross after the next album, *Starless and Bible Black*. In the summer of '74, the remaining three recorded *Red*, with Cross and saxophonists Ian McDonald and Mel Collins contributing a handful of parts.

John Wetton onstage with King Crimson in 1973.



John Wetton: Gijsbert Hanekroot/Alamy.

Jakszyk's first encounter with *Red* happened while he was working in the record department of a local store.

"Robert's tone and approach writ large on this album," he said. "The ascending melody on the title track and the unique tone and phrasing throughout was a huge influence on how I wanted to play, and what I wanted my music to sound like."

Red is only five songs, each a standout for separate reasons. The instrumental title-track opener starts with raw, howling guitar lines before focusing on a distorted chord melody. The riffs were some of the most "mainstream" Fripp had ever played.

The softer portions of "Fallen Angel" lament street life in a gritty metropolis, with a delicate acoustic passage from Fripp before proceedings crank up on the growling chorus.

"One More Red Nightmare" discusses the perils of airline travel; each verse has an unorthodox start, with Wetton's vocals against a guitar solo. The track has a unique percussion effect created by Bruford's ride cymbal, which was cracked and warped when he found it in a trash bin; its clanking resonance fits perfectly.

"Providence" is quasi-free-form, recorded



live and showcasing the band's experimental soundscapes. And finally, "Starless" is a 12-minute masterwork opening with minor-key Mellotron and Fripp's melancholy guitar; its dirge-like initial pace recalls Pink Floyd's "Comfortably Numb," though *Red* preceded *The Wall* by a half-decade. Wetton's plaintive singing fits the mood perfectly, and as his vocal concludes, he starts with an ominous, repetitive riff on his P-Bass, soon joined by Fripp playing twangy, repeated single notes before their riffing creeps upward in volume

and urgency. Fripp works in more strings, bending them until the song explodes in a galloping frenzy, with saxophone and the return of Bruford's dilapidated cymbal; the cacophony references the chaos of the band's signature song, "21st Century Schizoid Man," before careening back to the intro melody, louder and more forcefully. The track is definitive King Crimson on an album of fan favorites.

"I can see why someone would think that, since it goes through so many moods and changes, and contains so many Crimson trademarks and dynamics," Jakszyk said of "Starless." "It's at times beautiful, heart-wrenching, minimalist, majestic, savage, and has the big build-and-release."

The song's final chord decays to silence that serves as both finale and requiem, given that Fripp had decided to break up the band as *Red* was recorded.

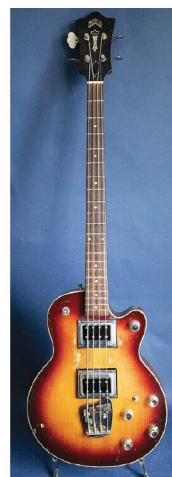
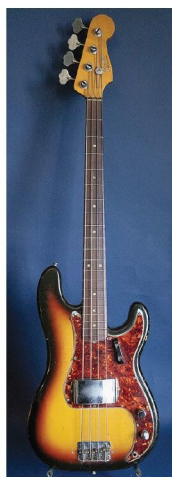
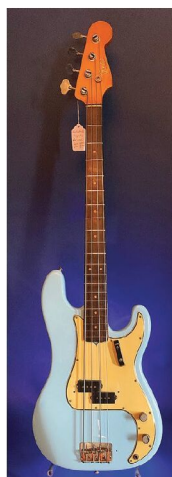
In 1981, Fripp staged a version of *Crimson* that took another musical direction, and he has done so numerous times since. In testament to the durability of *Red*, the most-recent incarnation has performed every song except "Providence." **VG**

1963 Fender Precision Bass Refin Sonic Blue

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Beck with his 'Burst at the Saville Theatre, London, March '67.



JEFF BECK

The JBG: Birth of Heavy Metal?

By Wolf Marshall

The proverbial chicken-or-egg conundrum has an equivalent in the spirited debate over the Jeff Beck Group versus Led Zeppelin as progenitors of heavy metal. There's a bit of truth in either.

Heralded by many as the birth cry of metal, *Truth* was Beck's first album as bandleader, and the 1968 release pre-dates Zep by several pivotal months.

JBG was formed in January '67, then performed consistently throughout the year and was in the studio recording on May 14, 1968, while Jimmy Page was touring the U.S. with the Yardbirds. In June, Beck was on the road with his primary JBG lineup (Rod Stewart,

Ron Wood, and Mick Waller) while Page was more than two months from assembling what would become Zep.

Truth was released in America on October 4, weeks before The New Yardbirds (Page, Robert Plant, John Paul Jones and John Bonham) were recording the earliest tracks for *Led Zeppelin*. The matter is made more convoluted by the fact that both bands included a heavy blues-rock version of "You Shook Me." However, there's a wild card in the game – "Beck's Bolero" and the fateful session in spring of '66.

"Beck's Bolero" was an instrumental crafted by Beck and Page just days before the session. Built on the interaction of Beck's lead guitar

and Page's 12-string-electric rhythm, its stately, vocalesque theme and quasi-classical bolero groove prompted the evocative title, offset by a heavy, riff-based bridge. In retrospect, the song introduced several tenets of metal: a vaguely ethnic lead-guitar melody played with a distorted feedback-laced tone, a juxtaposition of textures, terraced dynamics, charging modulatory power riff rendered as an ensemble figure in the bridge, and a strong, distinct musical identity different from the obligatory blues-rock of earlier British fare. Relegated to the B-side of Beck's first single as a pop vocalist, "Hi Ho Silver Lining" (March '67), it languished until *Truth*.

The Led Whobirds is a tongue-in-cheek nickname given retrospectively to five participants of a hurriedly arranged record date at IBC's London studio on May 17, 1966, consisting of Beck and Page, drummer Keith Moon, session bassist John Paul Jones, and session pianist Nicky Hopkins. "Beck's Bolero" was the only track issued from the illustrious two-hour session, though other music was recorded. It provided an early template for what would become heavy metal – the band that *could have been Zep* (Page's words). From a different perspective, what was laid down that day by members of (future) Zeppelin, the Who, and Yardbirds planted the seeds for a new genre. Beck biographer Annette Carson succinctly put into words what many feel in their gut. If Beck's ambitions of '66 had come to fruition, he would've preceded Cream and Jimi Hendrix, and *precluded* Led Zeppelin.

Rock got heavier and more experimental in the wake of "Beck's Bolero" and *Truth*; Beck noted the trend in the liner notes of the follow-up, *Beck-Ola*. Blues-rock rapidly evolved into heavy metal, and metal was a term used regularly by '70. Zep reigned supreme at decade's end, bolstered by "Whole Lotta Love" and *Led Zeppelin II*. Meanwhile, beset by artistic and personal differences, JBG released the considerably heavier *Beck-Ola* and parted company in August '69, just a few weeks before the Woodstock festival. The turbulent history of heavy metal has been punctuated by tangents and transitions, few as significant as the trend started by the first Jeff Beck Group – if you can believe Ted Nugent, Joe Walsh, Tom Scholz, Gary Moore, George Lynch, Jamie West-Oram, Steve Morse, John Frusciante, Slash, or Joe Bonamassa.

The London blues-rock community affected Beck considerably. Eric Clapton's thicker timbre with John Mayall's Blues Breakers and Cream prompted him to acquire a Gibson Les Paul and strive for a heavier blues-rock sound. Another factor was Page, who, as a

producer and studio maven, provided recording opportunities for Beck and Clapton on the Immediate label. Hendrix was also an important influence, and inspired Beck to exploit a Strat after *Beck-Ola*. A lesser, but still consequential, influence was the power-rock (frontman/singer plus trio) bombast of The Who. Though Beck admired the intensity of drummer Keith Moon and bassist John Entwistle's facility, he never cited Pete Townshend as a guitar influence and expanded JBG into a quintet to include Hopkins. A key aspect of their approach was the near-telepathic interplay of Beck's guitar and Stewart's singing; epitomized by the intuitive trading of parts in "Rock My Plimsoul," the tight duetting of "Let Me Love You" and the complementary arrangement of "Shapes of Things." These factors influenced Plant-Page excursions in early Zep.

Venturing beyond turf established by the Yardbirds, he'd assimilated his primary influences – Les Paul, Cliff Gallup, James Burton, Paul Burlison, Chet Atkins, Buddy Guy, and Otis Rush – and reshaped them into a heady amalgam in JBG. His inclusion of Far Eastern modes and Celtic references was more skilled, richer, and subtler. A new facet was his semi-classical reading of "Greensleeves" as a fingerstyle guitar piece – part English folk, part Chet Atkins, the off-the-cuff number established the tradition of including a solo acoustic-guitar vignette amidst the heaviness of a metal album; foreshadowing tracks like Jimmy Page's "White Summer," Eddie Van Halen's "Spanish Fly," Randy Rhoads' "Dee," and Yngwie Malmsteen's "Black Star." A finer point was made with the country undertones in the "Beverly Hillbillies" theme worked into live versions of "Jeff's Boogie." Moreover, his early fusion found him showcasing bandmates' strengths in diverse, unexpected settings; consider Hopkins' gospel piano dominating "Girl from Mill Valley," Stewart's atypical

Moderate Rock

Beck's heavy, melodic rock was epitomized by his reappraisal of "Shapes of Things." Where the erstwhile Yardbirds hit featured fuzzy raga-inspired solo lines, the JBG version sports a sleek, elegant melodic theme (1:16) inflected with highly personal variations of string bending, rhythmic punctuation, and ornamentation. Note the use of whole-step, half-step,

and held bends and the B Mixolydian mode, a measured trill decoration figure, wide interval leaps, and the emblematic descending B arpeggio in measures 4 and 6 – a favorite Beck phrase ending. His contrasting line in 8-9 is purely rhythmic and milks a stuttering pattern of simple but effective articulated half-step bends repeated as only he could.

rendering of George Gershwin's standard "Ol' Man River" (which revealed Rod's love of the Great American Songbook), Wood's bass soloing on "Spanish Boots" (3:05) and Waller's drum solo/coda in "I Ain't Superstitious."

Beck's reinterpretation of blues and rock resulted in several powerful, albeit mutated, outings. On *Truth*, his blues veered from the conventional influences of Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf, and was taken to its breaking

point with twisted soloing in "Let Me Love You," "You Shook Me," "Rock My Plimsoul," "Blues De Luxe," and "I Ain't Superstitious." Noteworthy are his free mix of pentatonic blues licks and elastic string bending tinged with odd chromaticism and sophisticated note choices, Far Eastern allusions, and random-if-purposeful sound effects. His slide guitar approach, played in standard tuning reminiscent of Earl Hooker, was repurposed for the slurred

Moderate Blues-Rock

F#7

B7

F#7

B7

F#7

Beck invigorated British blues-rock with tracks like “Let Me Love You.” This passage launched his 12-bar blues in F# and utilizes a number of trademark elements. Check out the held bend and slow-release move in the opening, answered by expressive legato at the phrase ending in measure 4. His funky, rhythmic phrasing enlivens bars 5 and 6 and is melodically simple, yet

rhythmically involved. He applies a streamlined (but highly syncopated) two-note figure (D# and E) over B7, creating a choppy, animated phrasing with a modal feel. The second half is played in the upper register, in contrast to his lower opening lines. Note his inimitable treatment of legato bends in 8-11, emphatic string scrapes in 12, and nasally stuck-wah/fuzz sound.

lines in “Beck’s Bolero” (0:38-0:55). His rock-and-roll roots were self-evident, epitomized by JBG’s metallic covers of Elvis Presley’s “All Shook Up” and “Jailhouse Rock” on *Beck-Ola*. Similar reinventions distinguished covers of the Yardbirds hit “Shapes of Things” and the Tim Rose composition “Morning Dew,” which

developed into a tour de force for Beck’s wah orchestrations.

Beck adopted a tougher, metallic, colorful style in JBG. Power chords and edgy beyond-blues licks were ubiquitous, laced with his puckish humor and unique rhythmic delivery. In the process, he codified traits we take

for granted as heavy metal lead-guitar staples, including artful noises like pick slides and string scrapes, exaggerated slurs, free-form feedback screeches and electronic effects as musical events, and various guitar-generated percussive sounds like the slide antics in “All Shook Up” (4:28-4:37). A particularly telling moment occurs at the end of “You Shook Me,” where the listener is treated to what his tortured guitar (laden with feedback and wah) really sounds like after being assaulted for two and a half minutes. Beck’s imaginative, well-conceived overdubbing, similar to Les Paul’s multi-tracked wizardry, dominated arrangements on *Truth* and *Beck-Ola*. Prime examples are heard in “Shapes of Things” “Jailhouse Rock” “All Shook Up” and “Rice Pudding.” Particularly intriguing pieces of ear candy include the unpredictable careening parts (three truly independent guitar voices) in “Shapes,” slow-panned solo of “Rock My Plimsoul” (album version), chorused doubling of “Rice Pudding,” weighty stereo imaging of his wah in “I Ain’t Superstitious,” and insertion of a bagpipes track in “Morning Dew.”

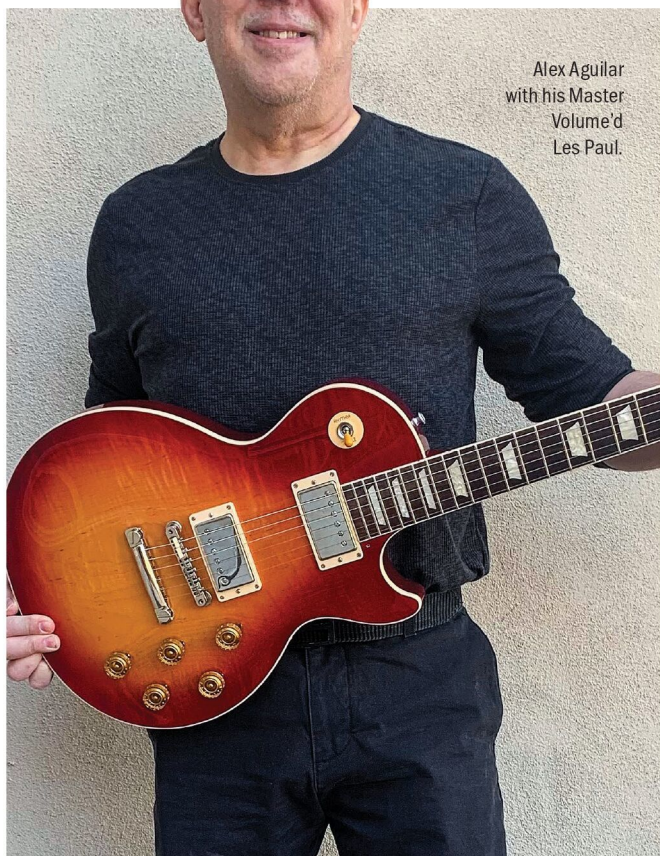
ESSENTIAL LISTENING

Truth and *Beck-Ola* are must-haves in any guitar lover’s collection, supplemented by *Twilight of the Idols* and *Live at the Fillmore West* (San Francisco ’68). Also recommended is the Beckology box set, which contains the rare B-side version of “Rock My Plimsoul” and “I’ve Been Drinking.” Worth searching for is the 1988

compilation *Jeff Beck: The Late 60s with Rod Stewart*, a 19-song set that includes “I’ve Been Drinking” and Beck’s first three solo singles.

ESSENTIAL READING

Jeff Beck: Crazy Fingers by Annette Carson (Backbeat Books) is even more essential today.



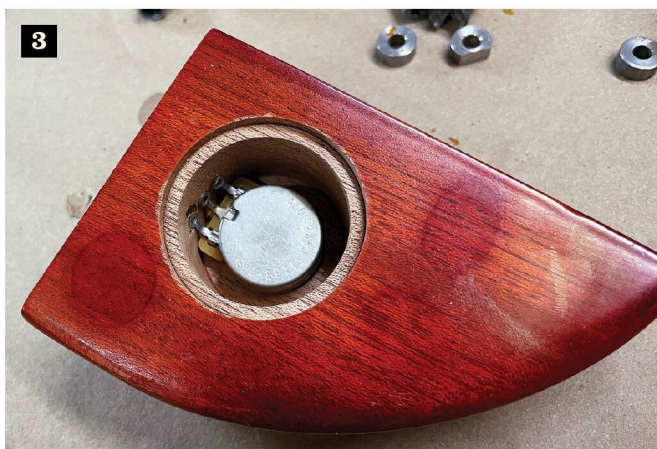
Alex Aguilar
with his Master
Volume'd
Les Paul.

3) I had a handful of practice wood pieces left from a finishing workshop, so I used one to test-bore holes.

4) Despite the fact my test piece came out well, I was a little nervous as I jiggled the guitar then started the milling/drilling machine.

5) Scary, right?

6) Anticipating the control knob being on plane with the top carve, I



PLUS ONE

Adding Master Volume to a Les Paul

By Dan Erlewine

My friend Alex Aguilar recently asked me to do something most guitarists would consider sacrilegious – add a Master Volume pot to a Les Paul, and put it in easy reach of his pinky.

You might recognize his name as founder of Aguilar Electronics and co-founder of Aguilar Amplification. He was also a design engineer on amps and pedals at Fender, and now he's an engineer at Stewart MacDonald, working on pedals, amplifiers, and other electronics. Primarily a Tele player who uses the Volume control for swells, he has long wanted a Les Paul that could be played the same way. This mod presented an especially enticing challenge.

1) Alex marked the spot for the control with a blue sticker. His Les Paul is a 2021 model.

2) Since a hole for the pot will cut through the wiring channel – and because the guitar will be completely re-wired – we removed the electronics.

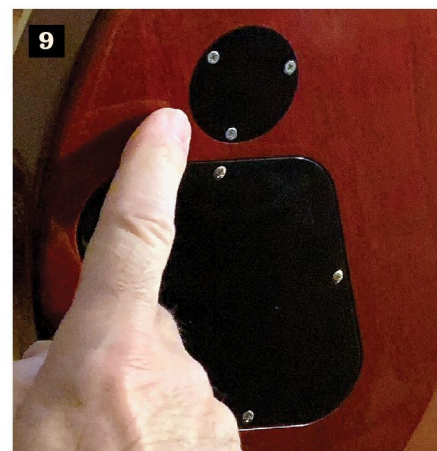
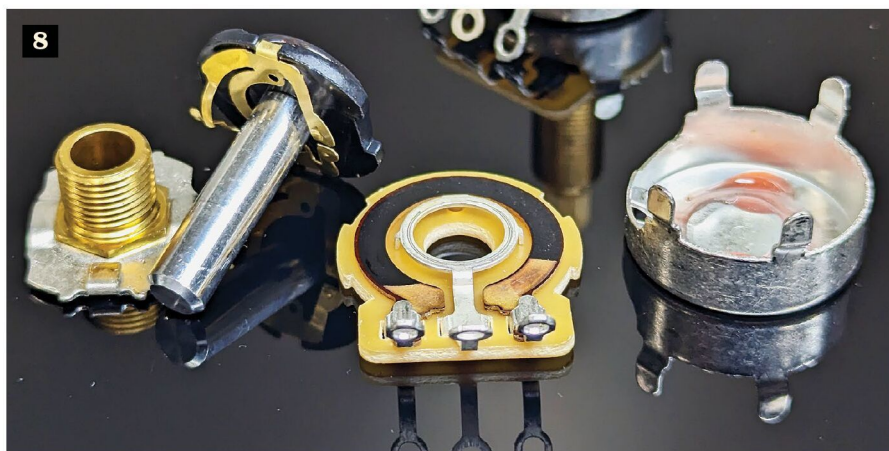
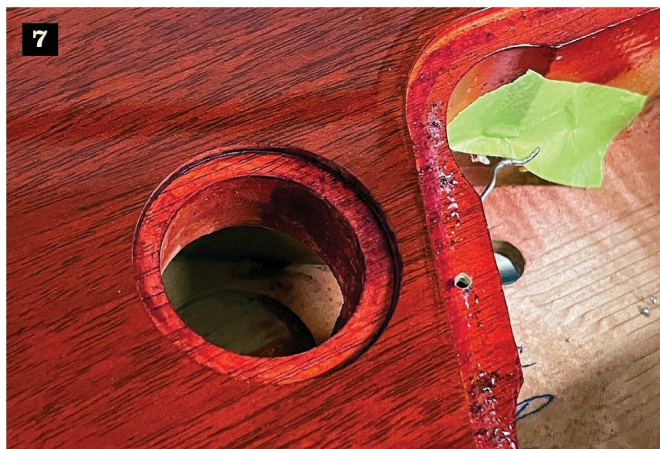
drilled the shaft hole with the guitar shimmed at an angle.

7) With woodwork complete, I filled the grain in the bore with StewMac Colortone water-based filler colored with Cherry Red stain, then brushed on several coats of Cherry Red clear lacquer.

8) Alex wanted a long-shaft 1k-ohm pot, but I couldn't find one, so my friend Joel Wilkens, a repair expert and master of electronics, made a custom pot by joining two. "I got CTA audio-taper 450 pots, one 500k with a long shaft, the other a 1-meg with a short

shaft," he told me. "I removed the wafer from the 1-meg and installed it in the 500k. It was super simple." That's the wafer in the middle.

9) Our shop intern, Ceil Thompson, made a cover plate for the new hole on the back. It looks stock, doesn't it?

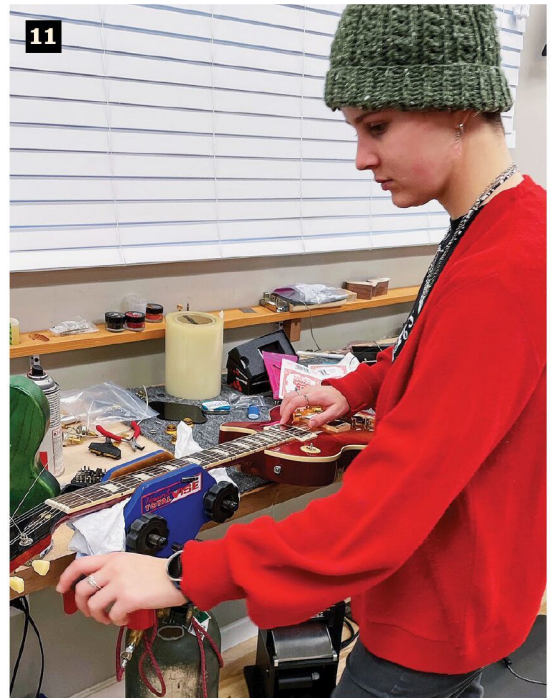


COLUMN Dan's Guitar RX

10) Gene Imbody does *clean* wiring work here in the shop – better than mine – and loved doing this mod.

11) Ceil did final setup – her first on a Les Paul. She also packed and shipped the guitar to Alex, who was thrilled enough to send a note: “Dan, the Les Paul arrived safe and sound. Wow, it’s fantastic! The reach for the Master Volume is perfect, the execution and work are awesome. This is the LP I’ve always dreamed about, and with the StewMac Parsons Street pickups, its sound is clearer, with better articulation and dynamics. The setup is perfect and it just feels terrific. I am so pleased!”

Dan Erlewine has been repairing guitars for more than 50 years. He is the author of three books, dozens of magazine articles, and has produced instructional videotapes and DVDs on guitar repair. From 1986 through his retirement in late 2019, Erlewine was part of the R&D team for Stewart-MacDonald’s Guitar Shop Supply; today he remains involved with the company, offering advice to the department and shooting video for the company’s website and social media. This column has appeared in VG since March, 2004. You can contact Dan at dan@stewmac.com.



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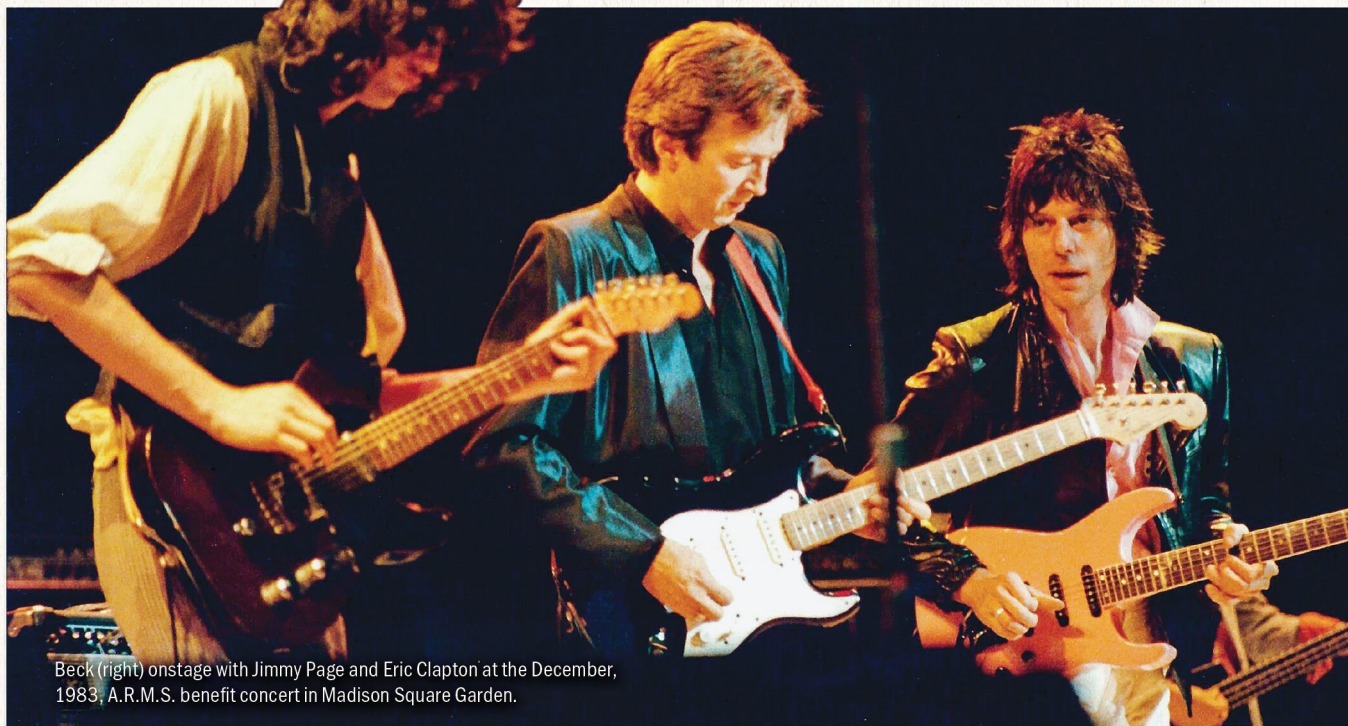
Beck onstage in 2022.

REMEMBERING JEFF BECK

The Guitar Hero, Defined

Jeff Beck, the guitarist who pushed the '60s British Invasion band the Yardbirds from its electric-blues roots to a contemporary rock-and-roll sound before becoming one of the most-influential musicians of his generation, died January 10 after being stricken with bacterial meningitis. He was 78.

Born Geoffrey Arnold to Arnold and Ethel Beck on June 24, 1944, as a young boy, his mother forced him to play piano for two hours every day. At age six, he grew keen on the guitar after hearing Les Paul's "How High the Moon" on the radio; by his teens, he was listening to other American artists including Gene Vincent and Buddy Holly; Cliff Gallup's guitar backing Vincent proved



Beck (right) onstage with Jimmy Page and Eric Clapton at the December, 1983, A.R.M.S. benefit concert in Madison Square Garden.

especially captivating, as did blues guitarist Lonnie Mack, followed by B.B. King and Steve Cropper. Motivated to take a turn, he learned to play on a borrowed guitar then built his own by gluing together cigar boxes and bolting on a fence post for the neck.

While attending art school in London, Beck worked odd jobs while playing in local rock-and-roll bands. In 1963, he formed an R&B unit called The Nightshift, which recorded a version of "Stormy Monday." In '63/'64, he was a studio guitarist for the pop-focused Picadilly Records and gigged with The Tridents until joining the Yardbirds following Eric Clapton's departure from the band in '65. While Clapton was a blues purist, Beck brought an adventurous guitar style that moved the band beyond the form and served as the starting block for his unequaled career.

In the '80s and '90s, Beck went through long periods of musical inactivity, saying he was sometimes frustrated, even depressed by his lack of inspiration, but not to the point of desperation; at times, he maintained perspective by recognizing the privileges in his life, and fostering his hobbies including building hot-rod cars.

In a 2010 interview with National Public Radio, he recounted being hired to play guitar for Stevie Wonder during the making of the *Talking Book* album. One day at the Electric Lady studios in New York, Beck was noodling on a drum kit, waiting on Wonder. When he finally walked in,

Wonder told Beck, "Don't stop [playing]..." as he went to his clavinet and, on the spot, created the melody that became "Superstition." The song was intended for Beck as part of a three-song exchange for guitar services, but producer/label boss Berry Gordy recognized it as a potential hit and put it on the album.

Discussing his then-new *Emotion & Commotion* album, Beck explained his preference for the Stratocaster, citing a "purity of tone" that recalled the intent of the electric guitar created by Leo Fender and Les Paul. And while he remained a fan of the Les Paul for its richer, thicker sound, inspired by Jimi Hendrix, he adopted the Strat full-time and referred to it as an "Olympic runner" that allowed him to do more "gymnastics."

Beck's playing style went beyond unique. With a keen ability to manipulate the instrument and his amplifier, he became an idol to guitarist of all ilks and skill levels for the way he used the fingers of both hands to pluck and bend strings while heavily employing the Volume knob and vibrato arm. For most of his career, his amps were driven hard even when he was rendering gentle notes and melodies, the technique allowing for wide dynamics and the use of feedback as a musical element.

Throughout his life, Beck played guitar nearly every day, keeping one near his bed because he was often awakened by inspiration. His practice routine included figures, phrases, and picking at all speeds. But, too

much technique, he argued, could overtake the soul in one's playing. In his mind, any day he did not come up with a lick or melody was a failure. And, despite coming of age in the first wave of British "guitar gods," Beck didn't view the instrument as a source of competition, or even bother with comparisons to his countrymen Clapton or Jimmy Page.

Beck's playing was profound in its ability to infiltrate the way other guitarists make the brain-to-hands connection; perhaps no guitarist has ever been better at creating a melody or using a simple-sounding phrase to build a tune. Generations have learned his licks – at first by picking up and dropping a turntable needle, later by creating a loop in software.

Beck received six Grammy Awards for Best Rock Instrumental Performance and one for Best Pop Instrumental Performance. In 2014, he was granted the British Academy's Ivor Novello Award for Outstanding Contribution to British Music, and he was twice inducted to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, first as a member of the Yardbirds, then as a solo artist. He is survived by his wife, Sandra.

Here, we pay homage to the legend with an overview of his life and career by VG editors Dan Forte (who interviewed Beck for *Guitar World* in 1993 and for VG in 2011), and Pete Prown, who founded the '90s guitar-gear periodical *Guitar Shop Magazine*, its moniker inspired by Beck. – **Ward Meeker**

THE EARLY YEARS

By Dan Forte

When Jimmy Page gave the speech for Jeff Beck's induction to the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame in 2009, he said of his former Yardbirds bandmate, "He'd just keep getting better and better, and he still has, all the way through. You know, he leaves us mere mortals – believe me – just wondering and having so much respect for him."

Thirteen years later, Beck was still improving, charting new territory – remarkable for a 78-year-old. But when he was just 20, his emergence with the Yardbirds broke all kinds of ground and set a new standard for all rock guitarists who followed.

At the time of his arrival in '65, there was George Harrison adapting Carl Perkins licks to the Beatles and Keith Richards' Chuck Berry imitations with the Rolling Stones. To be clear, his Yardbirds predecessor, Eric Clapton, displayed stinging blues licks on "I Ain't Got You" and fat, almost unheard-of tone on "Good Morning Little Schoolgirl," but Beck threw down a new gauntlet. There was the vocal-like tone of "Evil Hearted You," the dynamics of "You're A Better Man Than I," the Indian-influenced hook in "Heart Full Of Soul," and his propulsive choruses in "Train Kept A-Rollin'."

The real head-spinner, though, was "I'm A Man." With drummer Jim McCarty's marching beat; the Bo Diddley number was a jumping-off point for a manic jam. Beck's solo begins in call-and-response mode with Keith Relf's harmonica before some high-register bends. He then mutes the strings, not pressing to the frets, and climbs beyond the top of the fretboard. It's been described as a chicken being run over by a steamroller.

Beck was pushing the sonic envelope, reimagining what a guitar could sound like – and, mind you, this was a year before an unknown Jimi Hendrix arrived in England. He could be both melodic and savage, and the term "perfectly constructed spontaneity" isn't a contradiction in his case. No wonder Yardbirds bassist Paul Samwell-Smith said in '84 that the Beck period was the band's most creative.

When blues purist Clapton left the Yardbirds, Jimmy Page turned down an offer and recommended Beck, who'd been impressing folks with the Tridents. Though he didn't own a guitar ("They loaned me the red Telecaster that Eric had played"), he wasted no time staking his claim as the new guitar slinger in town. To clear up any confusion, the first Yardbirds album released in America, 1965's

For Your Love, pictured and credited Beck, who played on only "I'm Not Talking," "My Girl Sloopy," and "I Ain't Done Wrong," the latter featuring his slide playing. Un-named Clapton played on the other eight tracks. Its follow-up, *Having A Rave Up With The Yardbirds*, had a live side culled from the band's English LP *Five Live Yardbirds*, again not crediting Clapton, while the studio side was all Beck.

Beck's exposure to blues didn't come until he started playing in bands, and surprisingly, he wasn't enamored of the Yardbirds' reworking of "Train Kept A-Rollin'" by Johnny Burnette's Rock 'n Roll Trio. "Blues was a big thing, and in the beginning they really wanted me to play blues," he said. "They hadn't heard of Johnny Burnette until I came along. All the Yardbirds were upper-crust blues fanatics. They knew all the blues songs, and I had never heard them. I said, 'Do you know the Johnny Brunette stuff? It's *real* ass-kicking stuff.' They just heard me play the riff, and they loved it and made up their version of it. We didn't bother to make any references to the original record."

When the band entered the studio to finally record its first full-fledged album (as opposed to leftover live material and collections of singles), Beck and the boys were at their eclectic best. The 1966 album was called *The Yardbirds*, but was nicknamed "Roger The Engineer" after rhythm guitarist Chris Dreja's cover drawing (a truncated version titled *Over Under Sideways Down* was released in the States). Beck handled the varied repertoire in grand fashion – from "Over Under Sideways Down" (an Indian-tinged follow-up to "Heart Full Of Soul") to the country drone of "I Can't Make Your Way," and the uncategorizable "Hot House Of Omagarashid." His instrumental "Jeff's Boogie" (with nods to Chuck Berry and Les Paul) became a trial by fire for guitarists in high-school garage bands everywhere, and was the first song Doyle Bramhall, Sr. heard an adolescent Stevie Ray Vaughan play. In Beck's vocal contribution, a shuffle in Elmore James mode called "The Nazz Are Blue," you

can almost feel the volume in the studio as he controls feedback for 15 seconds.

He didn't particularly like the rosewood fretboard on the "Clapton Tele," and replaced it for *Rave Up* and *Roger*. "I really wanted a maple-neck. In '65, we were on tour with the Walker Brothers, and John Walker had one, and I asked if I could buy it. He wanted 75 pounds for it."

It also can be heard on the single "Shapes Of Things," featuring another classic Beck solo.

Leaving session work, Page replaced Samwell-Smith on bass, eventually switching roles with Dreja. The monumental prospect of dual Beck-Page leads only surfaced on the psychedelic "Happenings Ten Years Time Ago," "Psycho Daisies," and revamped version of "Train Kept A-Rollin'" titled "Stroll On," for the 1966 film *Blow Up*.

Accounting for his bad temperament and sometimes being a no-show, Beck was fired during a U.S. tour in November '66.

Though it seems obvious that Beck was blessed with natural talent, he also must have spent untold hours woodshedding. At six, he first heard Les Paul, who would become a continuing influence; his bright sound and echo also caught Beck's ears via Carl Perkins and Scotty Moore.

Of being a 13-year-old with no formal training, Beck said, "I used to go to the music shops in Charing Cross Road and look through the window, and sometimes go in and play when they'd let me. And the salesmen at the guitar shops, like Jennings, had to be pretty good to demonstrate different styles while selling guitars. So I'd watch them."

Around that time, he saw the rock-and-roll movie *The Girl Can't Help It*, starring Jayne Mansfield and including lip-synched appearances by Little Richard, Eddie Cochran, Fats Domino, and others, along with Julie London's sultry "Cry Me A River." He recounted, "It was like a door opening. That film was a masterpiece – in Technicolor, just everything about it."

Particularly pivotal were albums and the movie appearance by Gene Vincent and the Blue Caps, featuring the dazzling guitar of Beck's idol, Cliff Gallup. "When I was a kid learning those songs, all I did was play along with those licks," Beck said in '93. "Cliff did all the work, and I just hit the odd note here and there. I would just play the easy bits, and later I linked them together with my own things. I guess you could say that's where the original Beck style came from – the 'making up of the bits in between.' Then I gradually shed off the Gallup stuff, my motor was running, and I played my own stuff."

Going Retro

In 1985, speaking of the '83 Action Research into Muscle Dystrophy (A.R.M.S.)

tour that united Yardbirds alumni Beck, Page, and Clapton for the first time, E.C. said, "At that time and for many months after that, I began to think of Jeff as probably being the finest guitar player I'd ever seen. And I've been around. I still think that way if I really sit down and mull it over."

Of Beck's gunslinger attitude, he added, "There's something cool and mean about Beck that beats everyone else."

Having already played heavy rock with Beck, Bogert & Appice and jazz-fusion on *Blow By Blow* and *Wired*, Beck again did the unexpected, breaking out his '50s Gretsch Duo Jet and a small amp to cut 1993's *Crazy Legs*, a tribute to Vincent and Gallup, backed by England's Big Town Playboys.

When asked where the inevitable "Jeff Beck twist" was, he said, "There is none. I see myself like an evangelist; 'Listen to the gospel of Cliff Gallup.' I'd have made the album just to have it for my car, you knows. So I could say, 'Hey, want to hear me play like Cliff?'"

For his part, Gallup seemed oblivious to the fact that English guitar gods like Beck, Page, and Albert Lee were devotees, saying only, "I heard there were some guys over there." Which suited Beck just fine. "I can imagine he was playing clubs like Bob's Country Bunker," he laughed, referring to a scene in *The Blues Brothers*.

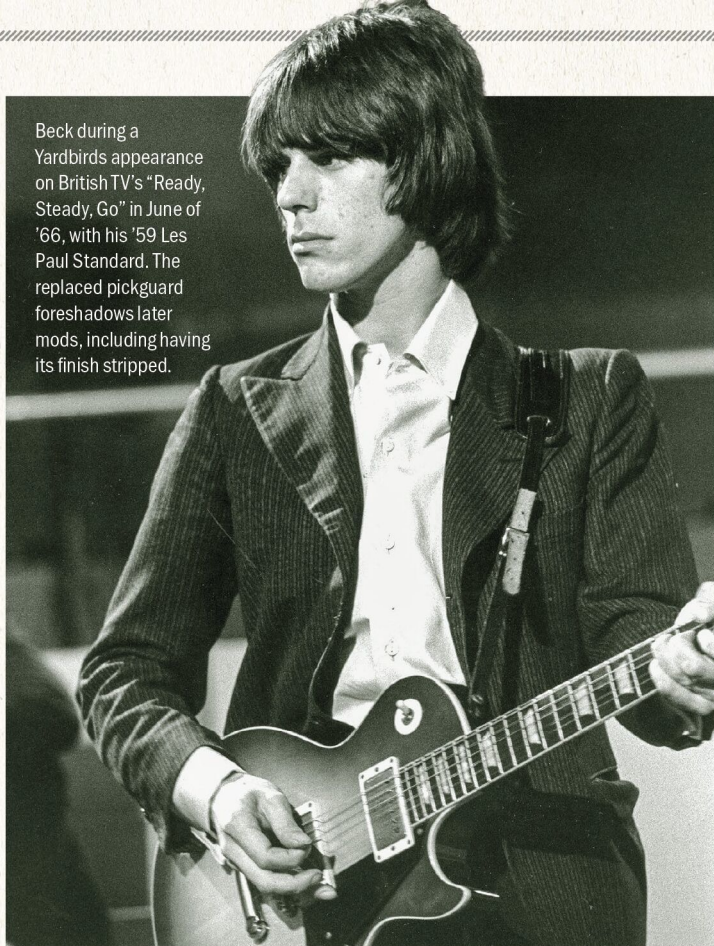
Beck used Gallup's lines as a road map, rather than copying them verbatim, but you'd have to A/B them to make sure. "On a thing like 'B-I-Bickey-Bi-Bo-Bo-Go,' I'm half playing my stuff in a Cliff Gallup style. I maybe would've liked to have another version with all my own solos," he said. "But the whole point of it was, 'Hey, this guy Cliff Gallup was it.'"

He didn't want to take any credit or accolades for the project; to him, it was all about Cliff. The iconoclast-turned-purist even adopted Gallup's unorthodox technique of using a pick in combination with fingerpicks on his middle and ring fingers.

He spoke of his tinnitus ("a hiss, like steam, more like a rattlesnake"), saying he couldn't hear a phone ringing in the next room, the rustling of paper, or shoes shuffling across a floor—perhaps an additional reason for, and benefit of, the low-volume Gallup tribute. "I don't suppose my amp went over 1 in the whole session."

Beck first got to play with Les Paul in '83,

Beck during a Yardbirds appearance on British TV's "Ready, Steady, Go" in June of '66, with his '59 Les Paul Standard. The replaced pickguard foreshadows later mods, including having its finish stripped.



version. "Peter Gunn" was a nod to Duane Eddy, while a note-perfect "Apache" was a bow to another early influence, the Shadows' Hank Marvin. Beck uncannily imitated a steel guitar for "Sleep Walk" thanks to deft manipulation of his Strat's Volume knob and whammy bar.

For the event, he was even decked out in a tailored outfit identical to the powder-blue pleated pants and three-tone blue shirt-vest (and cap, of course) that Vincent wore in – you guessed it – *The Girl Can't Help It*.

As reverential as he was, Beck looked onward far more than he looked back, as he continually morphed stylistically and altered the actual mechanics of his technique.

In his Hall Of Fame speech, Page said, "Jeff's whole guitar style is totally unorthodox to the way that anybody was taught. He's really developed a whole style of expanding the electric guitar and making it into something that is just sounds and techniques totally unheard of before."

In a career spanning almost 60 years, Beck experienced many instances when his playing took flight and he entered the "zone." Asked in 2011 how that felt, his response is now especially poignant.

"Yep, that happens," he nodded. "I don't know how it happens. It's heaven. You want to stay there forever."

(Ed. Note: All quotes in this section are from interviews conducted by Dan Forte.)

and recorded *Rock 'n Roll Party (Honoring Les Paul)* in 2010, a year after Paul's death. The setting was the Iridium, in New York City, which had been the guitarist/inventor's home base, and the show included favorites by Les Paul and Mary Ford like "How High The Moon" and "Vaya Con Dios," featuring vocalist Imelda May. This time, "Train Kept A-Rollin'" was delivered in spirited rockabilly style, à la the Rock 'n Roll Trio's

WIRED: THE JOURNEY TO FUSION, FUNK & BEYOND

By Pete Prown

If Beck's career had ended in the November '69 car crash that fractured his skull, he would still be thought of as a guitar pioneer. Turns out, he was just getting started.

After the demise of the original Jeff Beck Group (with Rod Stewart) three weeks before Woodstock, the 25-year-old planned

to form a new act with bassist Tim Bogert and drummer Carmine Appice of Vanilla Fudge. But, with Beck still recovering, the

pair formed Cactus. A year later, Beck assembled the *second* Jeff Beck Group and released two studio albums that, in hindsight, were largely transitional. Unlike Jimmy Page's arena-sized explorations with Led Zeppelin, Beck turned *down* the volume to explore funk, R&B, and soul. On *Rough and Ready* and *The Jeff Beck Group*, he grabbed a stripped-down Strat with a broken pickguard, trying to shed his sweaty hard-rock past. Highlights were the bruising blues-rock of "Goin' Down" (previously covered by Freddie King) and harmonized bottleneck in "Definitely Maybe," both produced by Steve Cropper. Still, the group broke up after 16 months.

The guitarist then assembled Beck, Bogert & Appice and recorded one studio album that merged rock with cacophonous funk and soul. The trio covered "Superstition," a song Stevie Wonder had written for Beck then recorded himself (scoring a #1 U.S. hit). Beck also started using a Heil talk box in concert, as well as acquiring a '54 Les Paul purchased from Strings & Things, in Memphis, for \$500. He refinished it in a near-black color that thereafter was called "oxblood" and installed humbuckers; later, it would become a critical part of the Beck guitarsenal.

Fusion Superstar

By the time BBA folded in '74, the 30-year-old Beck was heavily into the Mahavishnu Orchestra, a breakthrough act of jazz-rock fusion, as well as Billy Cobham's *Spectrum* album with guitarist Tommy Bolin. The Cobham LP effectively became a blueprint for Beck's fusion, revealing a method for rock guitarists to play jazz-tinged instrumentals – without possessing actual jazz training.

Throughout this era, players began integrating the Dorian mode and chord tones into solos, bypassing the need to learn hard bop or that dreaded "playing over changes." Of his jazzy ambitions, Beck bluntly said in the biography *Crazy Fingers*, "I want stuff that enables me to *roast* on the guitar, but... not have to come out with all the old s**t that people expect from me. You can keep up with the times, as well as kick ass."

The proverbial atomic bomb dropped on March 29, 1975, when Beck released *Blow By Blow*, produced by The Beatles' studio wizard, George Martin. The album exploded to #4 on the charts and established a new paradigm for instrumental rock, offering more-sophisticated harmony, yet retaining a high-velocity thump. "Scatterbrain" was a tour-de-force, displaying the axeman's high-speed picking with Martin's string arrangements behind him. He gleaned airplay with "Highway Jam," as well as a bittersweet ballad, "Cause We've Ended as Lovers,"



Beck with a Gretsch Duo Jet in 2011 at The Fillmore, San Francisco.

written by Stevie Wonder as a gift/apology for stealing back "Superstition." The track was dedicated to Roy Buchanan – another pivotal influence.

Instead of a Strat or Les Paul, Beck recorded "Cause We've Ended as Lovers" using a solidbody assembled by Seymour Duncan, who documents the guitar on his company website. "The Tele-Gib was a hybrid that started out as a butchered '59 Telecaster with a slab rosewood fingerboard," he says. "The body was chiseled out badly. It had no pickguard, bridge, or other parts that could be used. I worked on repairing the fingerboard and pickguard quickly so it could be done before Jeff was done at CBS Studios. I rewound a broken pair of old Gibson '59 PAF humbuckers that were damaged when the covers were removed. They were from a smashed '59 Flying V that was painted black and once belonged to Lonnie Mack."

Blow By Blow had an immediate impact on the guitar universe, even winning Beck readers' polls as "best jazz guitarist" (much to the ire of traditional jazz pickers). A doubleheader U.S. tour with John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra – on which he often used the oxblood Les Paul – made it that much more exciting. Another achievement was the concept of an instrumental guitarist carrying an entire live show, much less in front of noisy, inebriated rock crowds.

In 1976, the British ace doubled down with another masterpiece, *Wired*, prominently featuring ex-Mahavishnu keyboard maestro Jan Hammer. As Hammer told Beck biographer Annette Carson, "He's the only person

of his type – which is a genuine '60s rock-and-roll guitar hero – that actually advanced anywhere beyond the '60s. You take every one of those other guys, from Clapton down to Page and Wood or whatever – they're still where they started, haven't moved one inch. But Jeff has progressed incredibly, because he's open to all kinds of melodic invention."

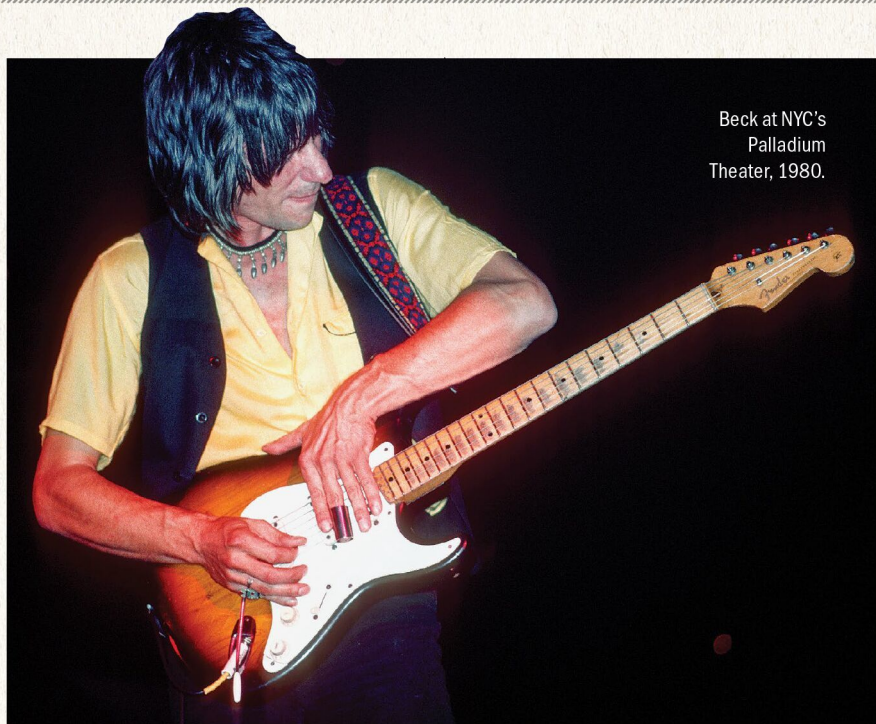
Amongst *Wired* tracks, the electronic boogie "Blue Wind" became an immediate FM staple, as Jeff's Strat joyously battled Jan's Minimoog synth and Oberheim SEM module rig. "Sophie" found him wailing with a newfangled pedal called a ring modulator, while a cover of hard-bop bassist Charles Mingus' "Goodbye Porkpie Hat" bolstered his jazz cred. A joint tour with the Jan Hammer Group followed, summed up on the *Live* album where Beck also revisited an old Yardbirds favorite, "Train Kept-A Rollin'."

Seemingly overnight, Beck was the hottest guitarist alive.

Disappearing Act

After this peak, Beck launched a pattern that would continue for much of his career – he simply *disappeared*, retreating to his English home to build hot rods, his beloved hobby. Aside from a deafening tour of Japan with Return to Forever bassist Stanley Clarke (which likely contributed to Beck's profound tinnitus), he didn't reappear until 1980's *There and Back*, a strong album marking the end of his jazz-rock era. It was also one of the final projects where he used a plastic pick before converting to fingerstyle.

Once again, he vanished, though reap-



Beck at NYC's
Palladium
Theater, 1980.

pearing for the 1981 benefit gig, The Secret Policeman's Other Ball. For the first time, Beck got onstage with Eric Clapton for "Cause We've Ended as Lovers," "Crossroads," and "Further On Up the Road." Well-documented on video, Beck effectively mopped the stage with his old friend and rival. He also appeared on the 1983 ARMS charity tour with Clapton and Jimmy Page, and made a studio reappearance the next year on "Private Dancer," the comeback mega-hit from Tina Turner. The single was written by Mark Knopfler, who was not a fan of Beck's angular solo – as he told a New Zealand website, the Dire Straits picker decried the hiring of "Jeff Beck to play the world's second ugliest guitar solo." This was followed by a hired-gun role on *She's The Boss*, Mick Jagger's disappointing debut.

In '85, Beck delivered *Flash*, an all-star affair that found him moving into mainstream rock with the aid of super-producer/guitarist Nile Rodgers. A reboot of Curtis Mayfield's "People Get Ready" with old pal Rod Stewart earned a hit, while Beck shredded on other tracks using a pink Jackson superstrat (upon which Tina Turner had carved her name). In *Rolling Stone*, critic David Fricke astutely analyzed "Ambitions," noting that, "Jeff Beck's guitar suddenly shoots up into the mix like a runaway jet, cutting a reckless path through Nile Rodgers' spit-and-polish production with sawtooth distortion and heat-ray feedback."

Following another hiatus, Beck returned in '89 for the Grammy-winning solo album *Guitar Shop* and a U.S. tour with

Stevie Ray Vaughan. In '90, he played the slide-guitar parts and lead solo for the Jon Bon Jovi soundtrack hit "Blaze of Glory." Yet with all this activity, was Beck back at last? Nope. Once again, the Houdini of electric guitar disappeared for much of the '90s, occasionally popping up for an album of rockabilly (*Crazy Legs*), a '95 tour with Santana, recording with Pink Floyd's Roger Waters (*Amused to Death*); and a soundtrack (*Frankie's House*). Otherwise, he was home.

The Comeback

In the '90s, the Fender Custom Shop offered the Jeff Beck Signature Stratocaster. As his guitar tech, Steve Prior, told VG's Dan Forte, "Jeff's signature Strats are slightly modified from the ones you'd find in a guitar shop. The main white one is a '95 basswood-body made by J.W. Black, with a neck from '93 and John Suhr pickups, which there are really only two sets in existence – that main guitar and the Surf Green spare. Obviously, Fender would like to get those back so they could try to replicate those pickups, but that'll never happen because you'd never get the guitar out of Jeff's hands long enough."

In '99, Beck reinvented himself as a techno player on *Who Else?*, his band highlighting guitar-synthesist Jennifer Batten. The live cut "Brush With the Blues" revealed something even bigger – Beck had taken his Strat playing to another level with revolutionary fingerpicking, volume swells, and a whammy-bar technique that could

mimic slide guitar. By age 55, Beck had, miraculously, gotten *better* on guitar. His 2001 sequel *You Had It Coming* proved a late-career masterpiece, displaying virtuosity on the Indian-tinged pop of "Nadia" and "Blackbird" – where he actually jammed with bird songs. At long last, Beck was back.

In the 2000s, the British master not only began touring regularly, but became an online-video sensation for a generation dumbfounded by his command of the six-string. His Stratified versions of "Nes-sun Dorma" and "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" remain evidence of that uncanny genius. Gigs at Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club in London proved another sensation, with Beck bringing Clapton onstage for blues jams and making a star out of young bassist Tal Wilkenfeld. More solo albums arrived, including last year's eyebrow-raising duo project with movie star Johnny Depp.

For the last 24 years of his life, Beck was a man on a mission, thrilling fans in concert and making up for the lapses that marked his career.

Guitar Hero

With his passing, accolades poured in from fellow rock heroes. Gene Simmons of Kiss nailed it by saying, "No one played guitar like Jeff. Please get a hold of the first two Jeff Beck Group albums and behold greatness." Joe Satriani added, "Jeff Beck was a genius, a stunning original. He was an astounding guitar player with more ways to make you go, 'WTF was that?' than anybody else." Dixie Dregs/Deep Purple virtuoso Steve Morse once told the *Long Island Weekly*, "I always admired his phrasing and ability to explore the quirky and melodic side of the guitar ... even without effects, he could be so amazing."

British guitar flash Bill Nelson, solo artist and founder of Be Bop Deluxe, recalled, "I became aware of Jeff when he was a member of The Yardbirds and I remember watching him play 'Shapes Of Things' on television's 'Ready, Steady, Go' program. He wore a fringed buckskin jacket and when his solo came up he dropped to his knees, placed his Telecaster upright on the floor of the stage and played the song's wonderful, Indian-inspired solo with the aid of a Tone Bender fuzzbox. It was a magical, transformative moment."

The immortal Ritchie Blackmore once told journalist H.P. Newquist, "Jeff Beck is my idol. The guy gets notes from nowhere, you know? Sometimes he finds notes that I just do not have on my guitar. When 'Shapes Of Things' came out, everybody went, 'Oh my God, who is that – and why is he playing this Indian stuff? It shouldn't be allowed.' It was just too good."

BECK REFLECTIONS

Vintage Guitar staff and friends recall the mystique and impact of a legend.

Beck's performances at the Shrine auditorium in November '68, are as fresh in my mind today as the evening I witnessed them. He inspired many as a member of the Yardbirds, but for most, *Truth*, *Beck-Ola*, and the U.S. tour were our first taste. Beck's command of the instrument, imagination, sound, soul, and humor were life-changing. Through the twists and turns of his career, he was an innovator, but in '68 he not only redefined blues-rock for a generation and anticipated heavy metal, but left enumerable musical bread crumbs the rest of us follow to this day. He will always be remembered as the ultimate guitar hero. – **Wolf Marshall**

Duane Eddy and Jeff Beck were my first guitar heroes, and *For Your Love* was the first album I bought with my own money. My first Beck interview was in '93, behind his *Crazy Legs* tribute to Gene Vincent and Cliff Gallup. When he began quoting *Guitar Player's* Gallup feature from 1983, I said, "That was my interview." He was blown away; "You have Cliff's voice on tape?" After that, whenever I'd cross paths with Jeff, I'd remind him that "I'm the guy who interviewed Cliff Gallup," and he'd immediately brighten up. That was my "in." – **Dan Forte**

While John McLaughlin and Jan Hammer popularized what we might call the "Mahavishnu Scale," it was Jeff Beck who made the sound world-famous. Before jazz-rock began, guitarists typically soloed in straight major- or minor-blues scales, but Mahavishnu's *minor* pattern replaced the minor 3rd with a *major* 3rd, combined with heavy pitch and string bending; in A minor, this would be A-C[#]-D-E-G,

with the optional E^b "blue" note. Beck later embedded this motif into his fusion-era solos. Try this Beck-ism for yourself: pop a major 3rd into your minor blues and start bending. Like El Becko, you'll be instantly wired. – **Pete Prown**

Jeff Beck was one of those guitarists who held your feet to the fire. Whenever you think your playing is inspired – you're hitting all the right notes with the right tone, the right dynamics, the right balance of fire and air – it only takes a few bars of Beck to let you know you can do it better. – **Walter Carter**

When I think of Jeff Beck, I picture the cover of *Having a Rave Up with The Yardbirds*; Beck stands to one side, smirking knowingly, both part of and apart from the rest. Whatever he played – blues, hard rock, fusion, retro rockabilly, pop, and beyond, that attitude remained, along with drive to embrace surprise. Whatever he played sounded like a spontaneous creation, regardless of context. He was truly inimitable – practically a genre unto himself – and it's reassuring that he did not succumb to the traps of the '60s, but remained a vital artist for six decades, doing what he wanted, bending notes with that offset smirk. – **Peter Stuart Kohman**

Beck was the greatest living guitarist of his generation – a role model for the creative, forward-thinking player. Never tied to the past, he was always reaching, exploring, and curious about new music. Exhibit A for the adage, "Tone is in the hands." He was never precious about gear, and everything he played was a distinctive



Jeff Beck and
Greg Martin

fingerprint of humanity. All this from a guy who took rockabilly-guitar tropes and morphed them to his will through decades of music trends. His passing is a massive loss to the world. – **Oscar Jordan**

When I first heard the Yardbirds single "Over Under Sideways Down," I knew it was fuzztone, but only learned later who created that nimble, fluent riff. I was a Jeff Beck fan from that moment on. I marveled at over a half-century of virtuosity and depth, at the daring fearlessness that set standards for the future. He traveled light years, musically, yet never forgot his roots. Whether blazing new trails on *Blow by Blow* and *Wired*, jamming on old blues with Tom Jones or celebrating Cliff Gallup and Les Paul, he summarized – unforgettably – the entire history of electric guitar. – **Rich Kienzie**

Almost every aspiring teen guitar-

ist in the '60s was familiar with Beck's innovative, often-distorted riffing in the Yardbirds, and many were surprised when the first song on the Jeff Beck Group's first album, *Truth*, was a reworked Yardbirds hit, "Shapes of Things." Beck abruptly and adroitly yanked the song into his own guitar-centric fiefdom, purveying his sonic sleight-of-hand in a manner that mandated listening to the entire album. His shape-shifter approach on subsequent albums was legendary, but that audacious and auspicious cover of "Shapes..." was the first footfall of a brilliant and innovative career. – **Willie G. Moseley**

It's hard to express how much Jeff meant to me. When he was young, the electric guitar was taking its first breaths. He took hold of the instrument and never let go, creating his own genre, crafting sounds and technique that nobody had heard before. Then somehow, impossibly,

he did it again and again and again. Every new record broke the mold. How did he do it? Personally, I think he just got bored and had to create something fresh – for himself. And thank God he did. A few notes bring me to tears; rough and ready, he will always be my hero. – **Rick Gould**

The loss of Jeff Beck is monumental, tragic, and unbelievable. His revolutionary and exploratory work with The Yardbirds was mind-shattering when I discovered them in the '60s. The Jeff Beck Group laid the groundwork for '70s hard rock. His forays won Grammys, acclaim, and a two appointments to the Rock Hall of Fame. His later work, embracing rockabilly, Les Paul-style jazz/pop wizardry, and gorgeous neo-classic melodicism, secured his place as a shaman of electric guitar – Master of the Stratocaster, a musician's musician, and a talent the likes of which we may never see again. Beck is simply irreplaceable. – **Bob Cianci**

Jeff Beck was a genre unto himself, knowledgeable about every form of music and fearless enough to tackle whatever he wanted to delve into – rockabilly, psychedelic rock, jazz, electronica, blues, he was adept at it all. And, he was ever evolving. When I saw him in 1989, he was playing just new stuff. A fan yelled "Yardbirds," and he played eight bars of "Over, Under, Sideways, Down", stopped, laughed, and broke into a new song. Always moving forward. – **John Heidt**

There's so much to be learned by working out Beck's lines and melodies, but his real lesson for musicians is about independence. Listen for your own voice and then pursue it, without compromise. Follow it if it changes, and toss the things that don't work. When I watch *Live at Ronnie Scott's* from 2007, when he was 63, it sounds like a player who'd been refining his thing for a lifetime. And he sounded as if he was still searching, still chasing the possibilities. – **Rich Maloof**

In 1980, I was 14 and just starting to play guitar. I bought

Wired and Blow by Blow on cassette and never looked back. The sounds, the playing, the interaction between Beck and Jan Hammer, the instrumental format – it was all sonically mesmerizing. Over the decades, I devoured all of Beck's new albums, and he just got better and better year after year, culminating in what I consider the best live performance album of all time, *Live at Ronnie Scott's* – a true masterpiece by a true master of the guitar. – **Phil Feser**

In the '70s golden age of the guitar hero, there was none bigger than Jeff Beck. From The Yardbirds to his last tour in 2022, the only thing predictable about his playing was that it was constantly changing, growing, and improving. He paid no attention to trends, but created new ones, then moved on. With their voice-like phrasing and tone, his solos were unique and recognizable, his touch incredibly sensitive, and his impact massive. Our age of tribute acts proves that many guitarists can be copied and mimicked, but nobody will ever sound like Jeff Beck. His art is eternal. – **Tom Guerra**

Growing up in the '60s as a fan and young guitarist, I knew Jeff Beck to be a player's player. His stellar playing on *Live at Ronnie Scott's* is exemplary of his unfolding melodic solos and unbelievable technique that pierces your soul and takes you places. Jeff Beck was one of a kind – a great master indeed! From the jump, he had a profound effect on my appreciation for genius talent. – **Mac Wilson**

I remember playing "Jeff's Boogie" in the summer of '66. Hearing it for the first time was mind-blowing to a 13-year-old kid, and from The Yardbirds through The Jeff Beck Group and Beck, Bogert & Appice, I followed Jeff's many sonic adventures; his music has always been a beacon of light, a part of our DNA. He showed us the sonic possibilities of the guitar and inspired us to push our own boundaries and find our God-given voices. I'm thankful to have met him. His passing hurts,



J.W. Black, Jeff Beck, and John Page in 1990.

like part of my youth has been yanked away. God bless you, Jeff, you're forever in our hearts. – **Greg Martin, The Kentucky Headhunters**

Jeff brought a huge element of what people know as the "Yardbirds sound" – an adventurous, devil-may-care approach breaking through the old barriers. Some called it psychedelic. Great loss, and shock. – **Jim McCarty, The Yardbirds**

I had the pleasure of working with Jeff while in Fender R&D and the Custom Shop. He was an amazingly cool guy. During the Bon Jovi "Blaze of Glory" sessions at A&M, J.W. Black and I were delivering guitars built for him, and Jeff had us hang out while he was recording the solo. It was amazing, watching him create this wild, seemingly out-of-place solo, yet in the end it blended perfectly. His playing was so instinctual

and effortless. The musical world has lost a great one. – **John Page**

I was 17 in 1985, when Jeff Beck and Rod Stewart released their astonishing cover of the Impressions' "People Get Ready." Its soulfulness leaped out in the shiny '80s, his tone and vibrato were earthshaking. I knew his history, but that song and his fun solo on Stewart's 1984 hit "Infatuation" led me to discover *Blow by Blow*, etc. Beck's '80s work deserves respect as a primer for many in my generation. – **Bret Adams**

Jeff Beck was *the man*. I adore *Truth*. Live, he was otherworldly, channeling something no one else had access to – so in the present, as if everything was 100 percent improvisational, but delivered with an urgency and mastery of technique that always astounded. A mastery beyond description, without peer. – **Webb Wilder VG**



John Page and Michael Stevens in one of the first photos taken in the new Fender Custom Shop, 1987.

The years leading up to CBS Musical Instruments' 1985 sale of the Fender brand were fluid times at the instrument maker's headquarters in Fullerton. Faltering in a market death struggle with imports from Japan, in August of '81, the company hired John McLaren and Bill Schultz – both poached from the guitar-making sector of Yamaha – and charged them with saving Fender from extinction.

With Schultz (1926-2006) came a new marketing team led by Yamaha cohort Dan Smith (1946-2016), who was keenly aware of why Japanese guitars were eating Fender's lunch. Though Schultz and Smith are rightly credited for their roles turning the company's fortunes, part of the story has gone untold, including how Freddie Tavares, John Page, and Paul

GOOD TIMES IN BAD

THE ORIGIN OF FENDER'S VINTAGE SERIES

BY WARD MEEKER

Bugielski were taking steps to cure Fender's ills *prior* to the arrival of the suppliants.

When hired in May of '78, 21-year-old Page was a neck buffer on the production floor. Having DIY'd guitars and amps for his band since his early teens, he envisioned himself doing bigger things, so he kept a close eye on internal job openings, and within a few months was a model maker on the research-and-development team.

One of Page's early assignments was to design a new

method of hanging guitar bodies for transport through the production facility; the result was a vertical conveyor to hold them as their finishes cured. Once it was in use, the sight of hundreds of bodies hanging in a straight line made it glaringly obvious there were inconsistencies with body contours. Page tried to address them.

"I went to the wood shop and found that even though they had templates and tooling, they weren't being used," he said. "That meant quality depended on which guy was carving, *and* their mood. So, contours were all over the map. I had to tell shapers, 'You've got to use the templates and tooling.' Some guys had the attitude, 'Oh, that's too difficult' or 'That would take too long.'"

Just one of many quality issues that had gone unaddressed during the CBS reign, it was resolved by adding new technology in the form of a mechanical shaper.

In late 1980, Page became a guitar-design engineer, working alongside Tavares.

"My first project was the Bullet

Photos courtesy of John Page.



Steve Boulanger (left), Michael Stevens, John Page, and Larry Brooks joined forces in the late '80s to build a plexiglas Precision for INXS bassist Gary Beers. Page today with a JP Classic Ashburn.

guitar, which to me was the coolest thing in the world, and the assignment came from Paul Bugielski," he said.

Prior to his stint at Fender, Bugielski was Director of Marketing at Shure Brothers' Illinois headquarters, where his professional circle included Norlin Industries' marketing director Roger Cox and Ed Llewellyn, director of CBS Musical Instruments' corporate offices in Chicago. Cox was hired away by Fender in early 1980 and recruited Bugielski to join him in Fullerton to lead the marketing of Fender's guitars, amplifiers, and sound-reinforcement gear. Part of that job included addressing quality control.

"Myself, John, Freddie, and Ed Jahns, who was Freddie's counterpart for the amplifier line, regularly picked a dozen of whatever was coming off the line and we'd carefully look them over," Bugielski recalled. "Being no stranger to monitoring product quality – in MI, Shure was widely known as top-notch – at Fender I was immediately made part of weekly quality evaluations. Some weeks, we met twice, and our goal was to have the vast majority of product be in a range of good to excellent – accepting only a *small* amount of 'good.'"

For more than a decade before Bugielski arrived, CBS had viewed Fender as a mass-producer of product more than an instrument maker. Quantity mattered, quality did not. And because CBS failed to invest in technology that would have allowed for high quality along with high output, every aspect of guitar building – from shaping necks and bodies to

drilling, routing, and mounting hardware – suffered greatly.

Beyond being pushed to increase output, the attitude among workers was impacted by chatter about the company's future and how CBS was trying to dump Fender. Bugielski, though, was focused.

"I just kept trying to make things better," he said. "I'd been a musician since high school and played in bands. So did John, and of course, Freddie was a star. We were *all* musicians, and we had a feel for quality. The last thing we wanted was to be part of tarnishing the Fender name. And to be clear, *none* of what we were making by then was terrible, even if we had a sense that things could be better.

"We were in a period of fundamental change in the guitar market, technologically and psychographically, for dealers, our competitors, and the buying public," he added. "The synths were coming! That sort of change usually brings unrest, and *that* brings change to business; as the saying goes, evolve or die, and Fender's product line needed to adapt. And without John, Freddie, and a few others explaining to me how to make our ideas work within Fender's structure, my insights for the guitar line would not have been possible."

Working under the supervision of Cox, one day in the summer of '81, Bugielski told him about a marketing strategy that he and the group conceived for guitars across a range – low-cost, middle, and high-end.

"We wanted to offer decent quality at every point," said Bugielski. "The line would start with the Bullet guitar, the Standard line was middle ground, and the '52 Telecaster would be an instrument for pro and semi-pro players that would be the ultimate in quality, priced accordingly.

"After we got a cautious go-ahead from CBS Corporate, Freddie was put in charge of quality for the midrange line, where things like the three-bolt neck with Micro Tilt adjuster were unpopular."

Page recalls he and Bugielski discussing the Telecaster reissue with Tavares, including details about the finish, with Tavares lobbying for a white-blond instead of the familiar butterscotch, and a few others.

"Some of the first prototypes were rock-heavy ash bodies with a polyester white-blond finish – they were just s**t," he laughed.

With a plan officially in place, wheels began to turn. Within a few months, though, fate intervened when Llewellyn was replaced by McLaren, Cox by Schultz and Smith; the new group fired the existing marketing team and every brand manager, including Bugielski. In early '82, Fender entered agreements to have guitars made in Japan, after which it dramatically scaled down production at the Fullerton plant. For a time, most Fender guitars were made – ironically but strategically – in the



Page chats with Freddie Tavares about the Bullet guitar, still (literally) on the drawing board, 1981. The Bullet was later shifted to a sub-brand of imports briefly called Squier by Fender, then Squier.



Page with Eric Clapton and Tavares, who's holding the first Vintage Tele in its case.



Page hobnobbing with Paul McCartney at the 1990 Knebworth Festival in England, discussing a guitar Page built to have signed by the artists then auctioned to benefit the Nordoff Robbins Music Therapy program.



Paul Bugielski in 2016, gigging with his modded Fender P-J bass.

factories of its Japanese competitors, the intent being to have Fender-branded instruments beat those competitors' copy guitars on their own turf, in turn forcing them to raise the retail prices of guitars sold in the U.S.

Domestically, the focus turned to a line of Vintage reissues, including the '52 Telecaster being developed by Tavares, along with the '57 and '62 Strat as well as Precision and Jazz basses, with Page as lead designer. The groundwork included a lot of legwork.

"Dan and I flew to dealers around the country to buy old guitars and basses, mostly from Larry Hendrickson at Axe In Hand, in Illinois," he said. "We disassembled them, noted points we thought were important, then passed the parts along to design draftspeople for detailed documentation."

While they had all the real-deal bits and pieces, and could have accurately reproduced vintage models, dealers were adamant that players wouldn't respond.

"There ended up being a lot of things

that were not very accurate, by design, because players at the time didn't care about deep-V necks and dot spacing – at least that was the feedback our marketing department was getting," Page said. "Dan had to decide on things like neck shapes based on that, which is why we came up with the medium-C shape.

"Another issue was finishes," he added. "We started with 100-percent nitrocellulose, but when the first Vintage models came out, dealers complained about grain shrinkage and irregularities showing through. We told them, 'Well, it's *lacquer*, like vintage...' But they said, 'Yeah, but we don't wanna see that.' So, we started doing urethane undercoats with nitro top coats."

Adding more pressure was continued competition from Japanese instruments.

"Hanging on the walls in guitar stores, too often we were told, 'You guys lose,' and we needed to change that," Page said.

Those concessions for the sake of mar-

katability helped make the Vintage line successful.

"Dan's attitude was that sales of those guitars afforded us the ability to develop the Standard line and the Elites, which pushed the envelope with modernism and ultimately led to creation of the Custom Shop," said Page.

Launched in 1987 under the guidance of Michael Stevens, who'd been hand-picked by Schultz, the Custom Shop was a stand-alone entity, in theory unbound by rules or the bottom line. Stevens' first hire was Page, who fondly recalls its early heyday.

"We were all surrounded by incredibly creative people working insanely long hours," he said. "You didn't clock out at a certain time. I loved that atmosphere, that craziness."

Relatively unrestricted, management considered the Custom Shop the company's wild frontier, and Page said Schultz was consistently pleased with the results.

"We made really good margins, and I



During the release party for the Vintage '52 Telecaster, John Page (left) gave a tour of the Fender plant to Dave Mason, Steve Cropper, and Dick Dale.

battled a *bit* with Bill because they always wanted more," he laughed.

Some of those low-key battles involved Page's decisions regarding personnel and other factors, but they didn't impact the shop environment.

"We were allowed to do our work. I was trying to gather the best builders in the world, and Dan was doing his job as a marketing guy. We were dealing with the best artists in the world, and my approach was we had to listen to *them*, not our own opinions of what was the best pickup or neck shape. But in the eyes of management, that didn't always apply.

"For Dan and I, the difference was between thinking big numbers and little numbers. Nobody was wrong, we were just dealing with a different customer base and the fact I always wanted art to win. Art and business always reach an impasse; Dan was a very artistic guy, and he understood that. But I didn't want to give in to the business side. Still, I credit Bill and Dan for allowing us to do what we did."

Another discussion that stands in his memory involved Schultz and the company's broader use of the Custom Shop logo.

"Bill allowed Fender Japan to use our original oval-shaped Custom Shop art for their decals," he said. "I felt it furthered confusion when rumors on the street were already erroneously saying that Japan was making our

Custom Shop guitars. So, I started using a new V-shaped logo that I'd developed with Pamelina Hovnatanian. Bill wasn't too happy with me on that one."

On the flip side, some of Page's fondest memories include working with Bugielski and Tavares.

"In my opinion, Paul has never been given proper credit for what he did at Fender, especially the concept of the Vintage reissues," he said. "And, it was always great when Freddie would come by the Custom Shop. One day, he and I were standing on the mezzanine, looking down on the floor, when he said, 'This is exactly like when I started with Leo. It feels like that.' That was the biggest compliment in the world."

Though his time at Fender was brief and ended mid-stride, Bugielski also enjoyed his time there.

John Page assembled this guitar for himself in 1981, using prototype-castoff parts for the original Vintage Telecaster. "It's the only guitar from those days that I still own, and it's such a piece of junk," he laughs. "It has gone through some changes over the years; the pink nail polish and humbucker are remnants of the '80s!"

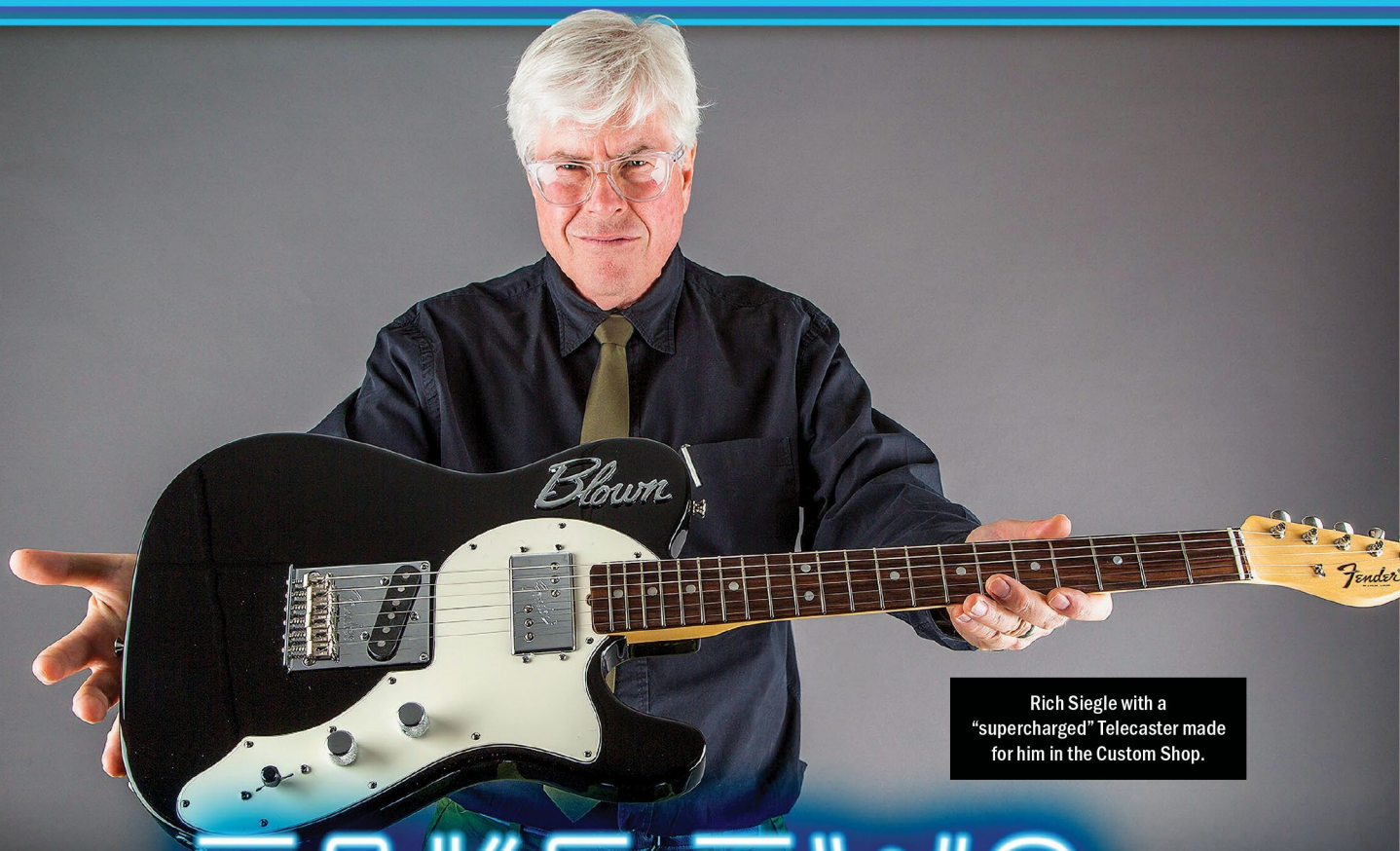
"John, Freddie, and I were best friends in those two years," he said. "Schultz, Smith, and all of the people they brought in had to address a lot of factors quickly; they did what they had to do, and it worked out. I knew all about corporate reorganizations, so there was no skin off my back. I wound up at Mattel Electronics, where I helped develop the first generation of video games, the Intellivision game console, a line of handheld video games, and handheld musical games. My brand group, Synsonics, was charged with bringing electronic musical instruments and music-learning/gaming software to the home-video-game market. Those games were precursors to Guitar Hero and Rock Band."

Page stayed at the Custom Shop until November of '98, having built instruments for Eric Clapton, David Gilmour, Pete Townshend, Elliot Easton, Cesar Rosas, and others, along with developing high-profile custom models for Harley Davidson, Jaguar, and *Playboy* magazine. Hethen spent four years helping establish the Fender Museum of Music and the Arts before moving to Oregon, where he designed and built custom art furniture. One day in 2006, on a whim, he sketched a guitar design that proved to be the first step toward John Page Guitars, a one-man shop where he creates guitar and bass designs, along with functional art. In 2014, he and business partner

Howard Swimmer began marketing small batches of select Page designs under the name John Page Classic.

Bugielski worked for Mattel Electronics until 1984, when he founded PSC Management Consultants, where today he serves as Managing Principal Partner.

Special thanks to Richard Smith and Dave Hunter. Watch for a review of the John Page Classic T-Style guitar in a future issue.



Rich Siegle with a "supercharged" Telecaster made for him in the Custom Shop.

TAKE TWO

Fender's Siegle, Norvell on Creating American Vintage II

More than most, guitar builders know you can't please everyone, especially when offering "reissue" instruments to customers whose tastes revolve around details like the space between dots at the 12th fret of a Strat and know the number of screws on every "golden era" pickguard or the width of an old neck with just one touch.

At Fender, the concept of making guitars that looked and played more like beloved '50s and '60s models was born in 1980/'81, as CBS

BY WARD MEEKER

teetered toward dumping Fender from its corporate portfolio. The idea gained steam after new president Bill Schultz and V.P. of marketing and sales Roger Balmer wearied of hearing about the "pre-CBS" glory days and how its current instruments paled in comparison – worse yet, how they were inferior to instruments being made in Japan.

Seeking wisdom, they gathered a small group of employees who'd been at Fender since the '50s and '60s, including designer Freddie Tavares (co-designer of the Stratocaster), pickup winder Gail Paz, and final-assembly inspector Gloria Fuentes. They also hired Dan Smith, who'd been key in guiding the guitar division at Yamaha.

In 1980, Tavares started work on what would become the Vintage '52 Telecaster, built with specs taken from a '52 owned by jazz guitarist/educator Ted Greene ("Fretprints," January '22). Under Schultz, Balmer, and Smith, production started on the Vintage '52 Telecaster as well as the '57 Stratocaster, '62 Stratocaster, '57 Precision Bass, '62 Precision Bass, and '62 Jazz Bass, which were offered in a late-'82 catalog that described them with enticing phrases like "a faithful replica" and "a remarkably detailed tribute." The basses were called "painstaking replicas" (see sidebar on the creation of the original Vintage line). Today, they stand as a desirable subgroup in the collectible market.

Last October, Fender announced the

Rich Siegle photo courtesy R. Siegle.

American Vintage II series, listing qualities such as original build specs (“all of them”), nitro-lacquer finishes (where applicable), vintage-style neck profiles, year-specific pickups, ash and alder bodies, and vintage-style hardware. Where reissues have traditionally keyed on cut-and-dried classics, this time Fender is venturing into its debated (and derided) ’70s guitars, intent on righting a few wrongs.

Guiding the effort are Rich Siegle and Justin Norvell, whose combined time at Fender adds up to more than a half-century.

As a kid, Siegle’s love of guitars started when he’d sit with his brother, John, and gaze at instruments in the Sears catalog. Seeing The Beatles on Ed Sullivan cemented a fascination and he learned to play on John’s Gibson SG.

“I’d open the case and just gaze at it,” he said. “Whenever he wasn’t home, I’d pick it up and strum. It was crazy how good it felt (laughs).”

That infatuation led to a life immersed in music and instruments; in 1996, he was hired as Advertising Manager at Fender. Today, his job title is Director of Branding/ Fender Academy, but Norvell points out that Siegle is also, “... our resident historian and archivist.” He still loves to play, write, and perform.

Norvell, Fender’s Senior V.P. of Product Development, was raised by devout music fans.

“My dad had a thousand records,” he said. “From age four or five, I’d sit with the coil-cord headphones in front of the console stereo and listen to Cream, Zep- pelin, Allman Brothers, Steely Dan – all that stuff; Hendrix, the Doors. I really soaked it in.”

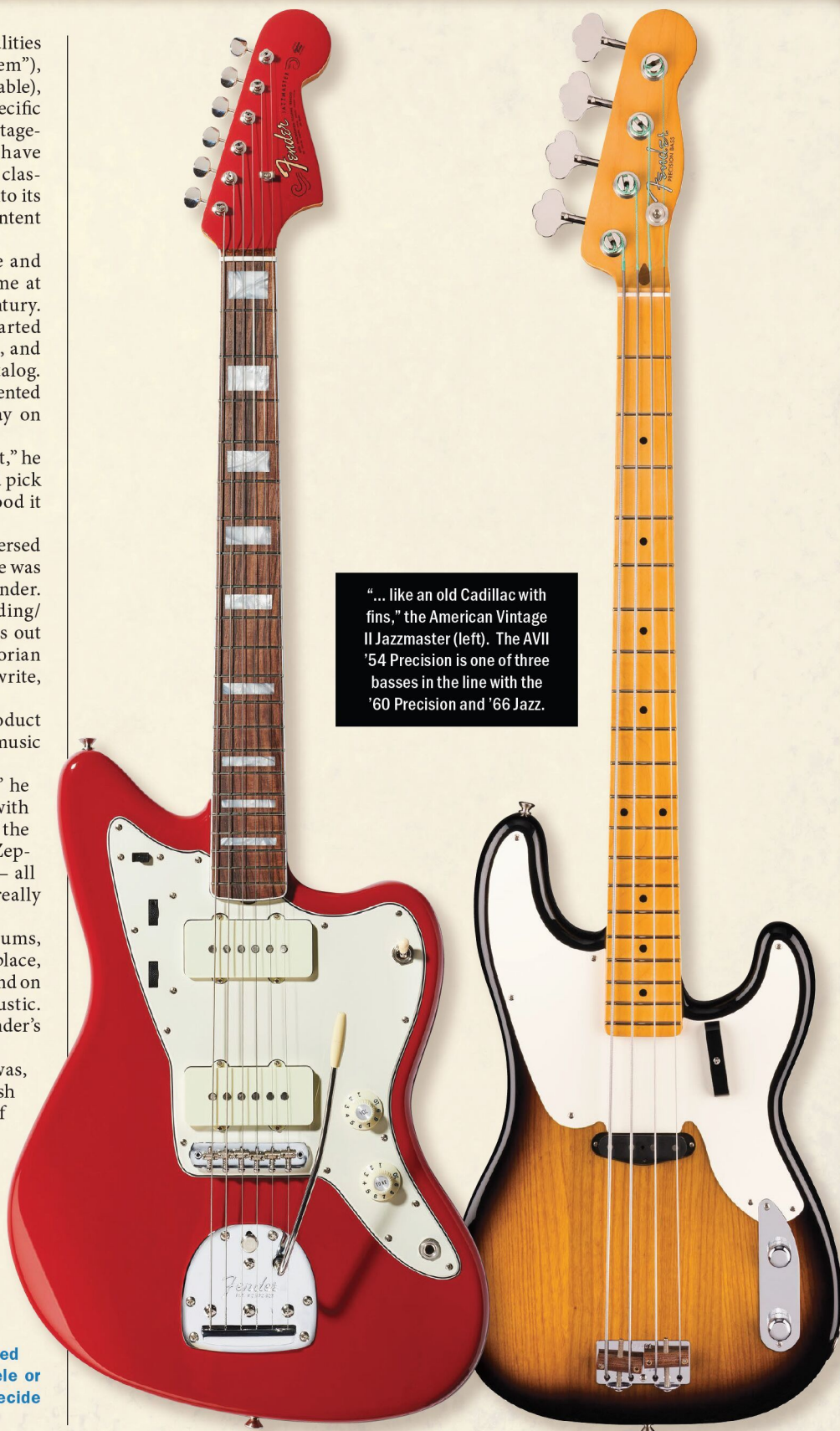
Though his first instrument was drums, bandmates would leave gear at his place, and (with permission) he’d pick around on a solidbody or his dad’s Yamaha acoustic.

In 1996, he was hired to work in Fender’s parts division.

“I had to know what everything was, from all years,” he said. “It was my crash course on product and the history of Fender. Like Rich, I’ve remained very steeped in not only what we’re doing now, but everything that came before it.” Also like Siegle, making music remains an important past-time for him.

We talked with both to learn what went into the American Vintage II line.

Reissues have traditionally focused on “peak” examples, like the ’52 Tele or stack-knob Jazz Bass. How did you decide on models for AVII?



“... like an old Cadillac with fins,” the American Vintage II Jazzmaster (left). The AVII ’54 Precision is one of three basses in the line with the ’60 Precision and ’66 Jazz.

Justin Norvell: After the American Original line (launched in 2018) highlighted features of a certain decade, a lot of people wanted us to go back to year-specific reissues. We had to consider whether to try the same models again or take on something different, and there were things we wanted to do.

Many people look at a '54, '57, or '59 Stratocaster and go, "Yeah... sunburst Strat." But of course there are those who know how it went from ash to alder, two-tone to three-tone, U to V necks, Alnico IIIs to Vs – all that stuff. The first Vintage Tele was arbitrarily chosen because Dan Smith had Ted Greene's guitar handy to use as the prototype.

It was a simple matter of accessibility.

JN: Yes, and that's part of why we wanted to celebrate the '51 this time, because that's *really* the first-year Telecaster. Plus, on the original reissues, we weren't able to do round-lam rosewood fretboards on the production line – that was only available in the Custom Shop. But we now have capabilities to do more. We wanted to play with other ideas and reappraise the CBS era. People have come to look more fondly upon a lot of those models and designs. One could argue the execution wasn't always perfect back then, but the designs were pretty good. And there's *so many* flavors of Telecaster from '51 to the double-bound '63 Tele Custom with the mahogany body and round-lam, and on to the '72 Thinline, '75 Deluxe, '77 Custom.

The '62 Jazzmaster – the first version – is *cool*, but to my mind, the quintessential Jazzmaster is the mid-'60s, with the blocks and painted headstock cap. *That* is what people really gravitate toward.

Did you have an original '66 Jazzmaster to use as a reference?

JN: We have some archives, but we spent a lot of time at the Songbirds Museum, in Chattanooga, going through their collection and looking at models we felt were interesting.

Given that manufacturing can now make things closer to original-spec, do you think AVII could be viewed as more collector-centric than previous reissue lines?

JN: In some ways, yes, but it's more about how the original Vintage series was trying to benchmark that late-'50s/early-'60s grouping of the "golden era," and this time we wanted to widen the aperture to offer interesting transitional examples; a lot of people have a '60s-reissue P Bass, so a '54 should be interesting to them. Same thing with



With the AVII '72 Telecaster Thinline (left), '75 Tele Deluxe (right), and '77 Tele Custom, Fender is hoping to change the perception of good ideas that were poorly executed in the '70s. Other models in the line are the '51 Telecaster, '57 Strat, '61 Strat, '73 Strat, and '63 Tele.

the '70s Teles – they're just flat-out *fascinating* instruments – a bit left of center, but in the collector's market, esoteric or transitional stuff is highly desirable because it was made for a shorter period of time and wasn't the most popular or longest-running spec.

Rich Siegle: I think AVII instruments bring an obvious appeal for collectors, players, and anyone who appreciates a great-playing, great-sounding guitar. They're made in our U.S. factory and garner a pretty good price, so people who are serious about playing and serious about Fenders will love them, hopefully.

JN: If you went to buy a '66 Jazzmaster with a painted headstock, you'd be over 10 grand, easily. And a '51 Tele or '57 Strat isn't attainable for a lot of people. So, putting all that design into these and making those accessible was really important to us. The other side is, especially with the mid '60s to early '70s instruments, a lot of people like the aesthetics or concepts of those instruments, but in the vintage market it's a real gamble in regard to the quality of materials, construction, weight, and tone, plus condition after 50 years.

Over the years, I had many conversations with Dan Smith and George Blanda about how the three-bolt neck design was a great idea but was executed poorly; the fixturing was off, so the bolts and two screws didn't always line up perfectly. But when done *right*, those guitars are amazing.

So, AVIIs are not *copies* of '70s guitars, they're a *refinement* of the designs. With CNC and the handwork combination, we have a level of quality like the *best* possible vintage examples.

In the vintage market 30 years ago, most CBS-era guitars were \$400 pieces.

RS: Right, nobody wanted them. And now, people are paying top dollar for those. Maybe the market evolved, or maybe, like Justin said, they really were great designs that weren't built properly. But bringing those back is one of the coolest things about this new line.

Another factor is that in the last 10



Justin Norvell with an American Vintage II '77 Telecaster Custom.

years, '70s guitars have made it onto big stages – it's now cool to play a humbucker Tele, and a '73 Deluxe is a \$4,000 guitar.

JN: The collector's market changes and turns; it's now driven by Gen X and bands that were picking up pawn-shop guitars in the grunge and punk scenes. In the early '90s, Jazzmasters and Jaguars found their way into a lot of hands because they were affordable, which brought them to a world stage. Now, people can get a guitar like those and know it's going to be well-made.

RS: Those '70s guitars are very underrated. Yeah, there were some bad ones, but the designs were solid.

JN: Early-'70s Fender was Roger Rossmeisl and Seth Lover. There were *great* names in the stew. It wasn't just about the Coronado (laughs).

It's also a reality that many '70s Fenders were very heavy.

JN: Because they switched to Northern

ash or Big Leaf maple; I have a '79 Strat that's 9.3 pounds. On ash-body AVII models, we made some judgment calls because we didn't want to reissue 10-pound guitars. They're where you want them to be.

What are some other refinements?

JN: With the AVII '73 Strat, the main one was whether we should cast the block saddles again then spend money re-tooling a bridge that most people think was inferior and was *often* switched out. But we didn't do that. So, there are areas where we made decisions in favor of playability, quality, or tone over authenticity. It's not always a strict reissue, but it made sense to do it.

Did you find or do you make the Cunife for the new Wide Range Humbucker in the '70s Teles?

JN: We made it. After car tachometers became mostly digitized, Cunife went away because factories stopped making it. Tim Shaw, our Chief Engineer who's been in the pickup business for a very long time and is very knowledgeable, was talking to magnet suppliers and found a place willing to make it to our spec. We had to go in for a certain amount

to make it worthwhile, but we figured it's got enough vibe and a cult following that it would be cool to move beyond what we lovingly call "Cunifakes" that approximate the look or tone but really aren't it.

The new humbucker occupies interesting sonic territory, with its wider bobbins and weak magnet; *underwound* pickup tones are de rigueur these days, so it fits nicely. And we're exploring new pickup styles with Cunife magnets. It's been fun.

Have you made Strat pickups with it?

JN: Yeah, Tim and his team have been playing with it for the better part of five years.

Does history tell us why Seth Lover used it in the first place?

RS: Because it's machinable, where Alnico is not because it's brittle. Cunife could be machined into screw pole pieces, and he probably liked the idea that you could directly adjust the height of the magnet. I

assume that was the idea – and it sounded good, so away he went.

Do you have personal favorites among the AVII line?

RS: I like Telecasters, so I really dig the '77 Tele Custom. I have an old Tele with a Cunife humbucker in the neck, and love it.

JN: I was going to say the same, having been imprinted by the Rolling Stones while growing up. But I also really like the '66 Jazzmaster because it's just so quintessentially mid-century – the angles and the blocks. Fenders aren't fancy, so the Jazzmaster with painted headstock, block inlays, and bound fretboard is about as adorned as a Fender gets. It looks like an old Cadillac with fins.

If you talked to someone who was trying to decide between an AVII instrument and one from the Custom Shop, what would you tell them?

JN: AVIIs are made on the [production] line, so while it goes through 150 hand processes, it goes through *different* hands in the mill, in sanding, in paint, in subassembly, and final. In the Custom Shop, it's shepherded by much fewer people.

At a very base level, AVIIs are like a brand new '77 Tele Custom or '57 Strat in terms of what it would look and sound

like, while the Custom Shop is more for people who go for the NOS and Closet Classic finishes, where it's more as it would be *today* if you found a really good well-used one; maybe the pickups have lost a little top-end and things feel a bit more aged – there's the "then versus now" vibe. From an overall quality standpoint, both are stunning. AVIIs are made on the line – but still by hand – and we're still stamping out saddles and stamping out jack ferrules. We have the old tooling and old machines. We're not assembling from purchased parts. It's the real stuff, with all the mojo.

RS: An AVII is going to sound and feel great, but there's something magical about what comes out of the Custom Shop. You can feel it, and you can hear it. And the other thing is you can customize; if you want hand-wound pickups or something special, you get that in the Custom Shop.

After launching a new line, what do you most look forward to in terms of feedback?

RS: I love seeing them played live. With the American Pro and American Elite, anytime I saw video, a player onstage, or someone on "The Tonight Show" playing one, I'd get a real buzz.

JN: I agree, and with AVII it'll be great

to show that we are reverent toward the original recipes and want to retain the magic that is Fender. Nobody is immune to that feeling; even to someone who likes a very-modern guitar, a '57 Strat is iconic. And just because you *have* a '57 Strat doesn't mean you have to play 1957 music on it. You can come up with the next cool thing.

RS: There's a ton of credibility, too, to say that we're making these just like we did in the '50s, '60s, '70s. That's a bold statement, especially to collectors or vintage aficionados.

Ever since we started doing this in the '80s and into the '90s, when Mike Lewis first coined the name "American Vintage," it's been a point of credibility to our legacy.

JN: And it's important that we make them in the old way. We're cutting the cold-rolled steel bridge blocks and using old tooling and putting bridge assemblies together. It's not super common in the business where someone does it all from tip to tail. There's something beautiful and magical about that.

See our review of the American Vintage II '57 Strat in the February issue, and watch for reviews of the '54 Precision Bass and '75 Tele Deluxe.



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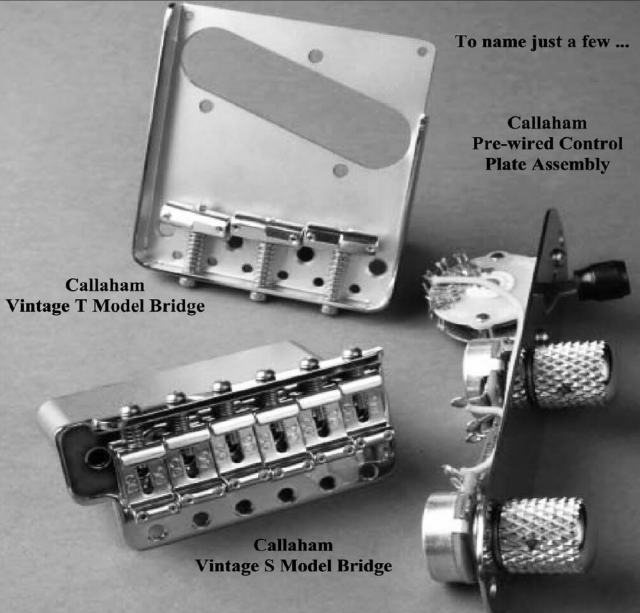
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Upcoming Events

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Denotes a new or updated listing.

Lake County Musician's Swap Meet, 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. March 12, 2023 May 14, 2023

FEBRUARY

The Greater Pittsburgh Guitar Show, Sunday, February 26. Printscape Arena, 114 Southpointe Blvd., Canonsburg, PA. Show hours 11-4. For more info contact Scott at (412) 716-8411, scotpro@comcast.net or visit www.guitarshowusa.com.

MARCH

The 2023 Cincinnati Guitar Show - Our 29th year! Sunday, MARCH 5th, 10am -4pm, at the Sharonville Convention Center, 11355 Chester Rd Cincinnati OH 45246. Contact Denny Melchers at 513-503-1072. More info at cincyguitarshow.com & FB.

3rd Annual Chicago Vintage Guitar Expo, Sunday March 5th 2023, 9am-3pm at the Holiday Inn, 1000 Busse Rd, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007.

Contact Beverly Bakes, R&B Productions for more info at 847-931-0707 or Bakesguitar@aol.com

WestCoastGuitarShow - NorthWest, Saturday, March 11th, 2023 at the Renton Community Center - Renton, WA. For more info contact Bruce Adolph 253-445-1973 or bruceadolph@mac.com (See Advertisement on page 72.)

Carolina Guitar Show - Asheville, March 11-12, 2023 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 (See Advertisement on page 73.)

Amigo Nashville Guitar Show, March 25-26, Williamson County Ag Expo Park, Franklin, TN. For more info Larry at (918)288-2222, amigoshowstringswest.com, Ruth at (817) 312-7659, ruthmbrinkmann@gmail.com, Dave at (417) 850-4751, davelcrocker@gmail.com or visit www.amigoguitarshows.com. (See Advertisement on page 74.)

The Lansing Music Instrument Swap, Sunday, March 26th 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

The Indiana Guitar Show, March 31- April 2, at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds 1900 E. Main St. Danville, IN. For more information contact Eddie at (317) 272-5222 or visit www.theindianaguitarshow.com

APRIL

Central Coast Guitar Show, Saturday, April 15, 2023, 10am-4pm at the Radisson Hotel Ballroom, 3455 Skyway Dr. Santa Maria CA 93465. For more info call 805-431-3067 or email

centralcoastguitarshow@charter.net or visit www.CentralCoastGuitarShow.com

The Elmira Vintage Guitar Show, April 23, 2023 at the Woolrich Memorial Center, 24 Snyder Ave S Elmira ON Canada D3B 1Z1. For more information go to www.elmiravintageguitarshow.ca

***All Axes Show Swap Sell**, April 23, 2023 at the TAK Music Venue, 1710 Center Ave, Dilworth MN. Opens at 11 a.m. For more info, email sugarsackstudios@gmail.com

Northeast Guitar Expo, Sunday, April 23, 2023 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 Grand Rapids Music Instrument Swap, Sunday, April 30th at the Double Tree Hotel, 4747 28th St SE Grand Rapids MI 49512, 10am -4pm. For more information contact Shawn VanSteeland at 517-410-6409 or at info@musicinstrumentswap.com

MAY

Dallas International Guitar Festival, May 5-7, 2023 at the Dallas Market Hall, 2200 N Stemmons Fwy, Dallas, TX. For more info visit www.guitarshow.com. (See Advertisement on page 71.)

Jake's Guitar Show & Music Swap Meet, May 6-7 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

Eastern Kentucky Guitar Show, Sunday, May 7, 2023, 11:00AM - 4:00PM, Boyd County Convention & Arts Center, 15605 KY180, Catlettsburg, Kentucky 41129. Contact Jeff at 606-922-0626 or 606-923-4130.

Midwest Music Gear Swap, Sunday, May 21, 2023 10am to 4 pm at 48 E. Bath Rd. Cuyahoga Falls (Akron) Ohio 44223 For more information, go to <http://www.midwestmusicgearswap.com> or call Corey at (330)753-5050.

JUNE

Amigo SoCal World Guitar Show, June 17-18, 2023, OC Fair & Event Center, Arlington & Fairview St., Costa Mesa, CA. For more info call Larry at (918) 288-2222.

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JULY

*Great American Guitar Show (Summer Philly), July 15-16, 2023, at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, 100 Station Ave., Oaks, PA. For more info contact Bee 3 Vintage at (828) 298-2197 or visit www.bee3vintage.com.

SEPTEMBER

Jake's Guitar Show & Music Swap Meet, September 16-17, 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

The Kalamazoo Music Instrument Swap, Sunday September 17th 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

OCTOBER 2023

33rd Annual Chicago Vintage Guitar Expo, Sunday October 1st 2023 9am-3pm at the Holiday Inn, 1000 Busse Rd, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007. For more info Contact Beverly Bakes,

R&B Productions at 847-931-0707 or Bakesguitar@aol.com

The Indiana Guitar Show, October 13-15, at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds 1900 E. Main St. Danville, IN. For more information contact Eddie at (317) 272-5222 or visit www.theindianaguitarshow.com

Guitarlinton 2023, October 21-22 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 817-592-3381 www.amigoguitarshows.com

NOVEMBER

The Ann Arbor Music Instrument Swap, Sunday, November 5th 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 at info@musicinstrumentswap.com

Great American Guitar Show (Fall Philly), November 11-12 at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, 100 Station Ave., Oaks, PA. For more info contact Bee 3 Vintage at (828) 298-2197 or visit www.bee3vintage.com.

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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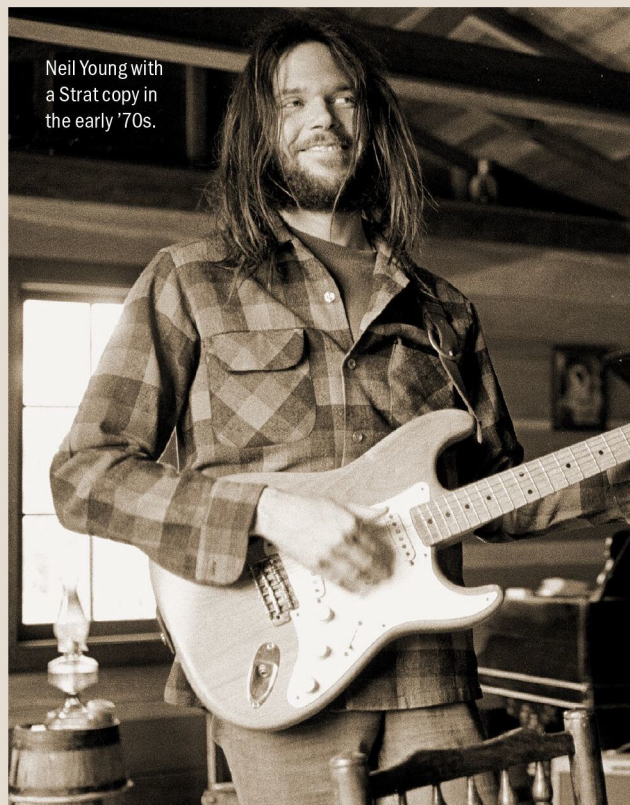


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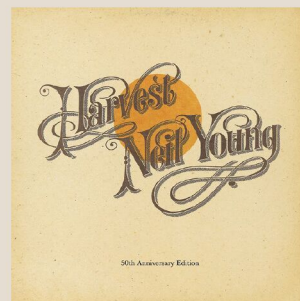
Neil Young with
a Strat copy in
the early '70s.

GUITAR ARTISTRY

Young's 1972 smash delivered on the promise of CSNY, offering California rock rife with acoustic guitars, piercing lyrics, and cozy West Coast production. "Heart of Gold" was the blockbuster, yet only one of many brilliant tracks. This deluxe box adds a documentary film, solo BBC concert (much of which is on Youtube), and unreleased cuts.

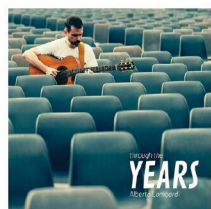
Pick any studio track and marvel at the guitar artistry. On "Old Man," Neil plays a beguiling chord figure, complemented by James Taylor on guitar-tuned banjo and Ben Keith's pedal steel. Only a million '70s teen pickers tried to figure out "The Needle and the Damage Done." While acoustic guitars dominate the LP, "Alabama" is electrified country-rock. Vintage video from Neil's barn shows him jamming on a Gretsch White Falcon and reveals where much of *Harvest* was recorded.

Among the BBC live tracks,



Neil Young
Harvest 50th Anniversary
Edition

"Heart of Gold" is met with silence for the simple reason the audience had never heard it before. And, Neil's unreleased tracks are good, not earthshaking – this box is of interest more for its remastered studio tracks and video documentary. By itself, the 1971 footage of Young, Stills, and Nash recording harmonies for "Words" is spellbinding. – **Pete Prown**



Alberto Lombardi
Through the Years

The Italian guitarist's third acoustic-fingerstyle album brings a pleasurable mix of covers with two originals. Primarily a solo set, it overdubs keyboards, drum patterns, and he even sings on the title track.

An expressive player, Lombardi's finger-picking, muting, and sliding give the music a distinctly human feel that seamlessly incorporates harmonics.

Lombardi opens the proceedings doing classic Motown songs, starting with a lively reading of the Supremes' "You Can't Hurry Love," followed by an expert handling of the haunting melodies of "I Heard It Through The Grapevine." A warm electric solo adds to his jazzy take on Stevie Wonder's "Isn't

She Lovely," and he uses harmonics to great effect on the Temptations' "My Girl."

His take on The Beatles' "Fixing a Hole" has a breezy see-saw tempo, while the mournful "Eleanor Rigby" is given an upbeat kick. "Ah! The '80s," with its smooth pop flavor and drum machine, is the best original, while Supertramp's quirky "Breakfast in America" provides a real highlight. For contrast, there's bittersweet material, notably "Schindler's List." Throughout, Lombardi delivers proof of the acoustic guitar's power in gifted hands. – **Bret Adams**



The Winston Brothers
Drift

and return the sound

Germany's The Winston Brothers intercept, collate, codify, regurgitate, of late-'60s instru-

mental funk to the country from which it spawned.

The band's first full-length LP, *Drift*, is a time machine back to the days when funky guitar lines, hip-shaking bass, and toe-tapping drum grooves came face-to-face with the sounds of psychedelia. Producer/guitarist Sebastian Nagel leads a crack team of music professionals and analog fetishists including drummer Lucas Kochbeck.

The ensemble, also made up of members of the Mighty Mocambos, the Bacao Rhythm & Steel Band, and the Hamburg Spinners, creates an album that balances groove, melody, and space. Heavy drumming offsets strategic use of hollowbody guitars doing tasty octave work, dreamy chord arpeggiation, reverb-drenched guitar solos, and spacious jazzy guitar tropes, like on "High Life." Slow dance grooves with tremolo and Rastafarian echo repeats make the title track hip and sensual – dig that

CHECK THIS ACTION



FOLK-MUSIC MECCAS

By Dan Forte

Though I was only six or seven, I experienced the Folk Boom of the late 1950s and early '60s via my parents' cocktail parties, when their friends would break out instruments and sing "Michael, Row The Boat Ashore" and "Tom Dooley." It was the commercial vein of folk, à la the Kingston Trio and Limelites, but it was where I also learned about Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, and Lead Belly.

In the wake of the recent PBS documentary on Buffy Sainte-Marie, I revisited two excellent films – *Greenwich Village: Music That Defined A Generation* and *For The Love Of The Music: The Club 47 Folk Revival*, from 2012 and '13, respectively. The former deals with artists in the bohemian Manhattan neighborhood, told via excerpts from *A Freewheelin' Time: A Memoir Of Greenwich Village In The Sixties* by Suze Rotolo, best

known as Bob Dylan's girlfriend (that's her with him on the cover of *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*).

Artists such as Sainte-Marie, John Sebastian, Richie Havens, and Judy Collins serve as talking heads, interspersed with concert footage. While it's not about guitar playing, specifically, acoustic guitars are omnipresent; longtime Martin historian Dick Boak once told me, "Martin was back-ordered for two to three years because of the Kingston Trio and the Folk Boom."

It's unfortunate that excellent pickers like Happy Traum and Jose Feliciano, both interviewees, aren't seen in performance, though there's excellent footage showing Havens' unique percussive strumming. But the focus is as much on the scene and the messages as on the music itself. The film conjures exciting images of clubs like Cafe Wha? and the Gaslight, or Izzy Young's Folklore Center, and musicians jamming in Washington Square Park on Sunday afternoons.

The repertoire consisted of ballads, blues, historical songs, and Appalachian tunes. Terri Thal, Dylan's first manager, points out that Dylan's debut album contained only two originals. But he, Phil Ochs, and a few others ushered in the singer/songwriter

as the entity typically thought of today as folk music or Americana. Radio disc jockey Pete Fornatale, now deceased, takes a condescending view of rock and roll, stating that it didn't have the emotional intensity, lyrical depth, and musical textures present in folk. But when the story shifts to the Lovin' Spoonful doing "Do You Believe In Magic" in '65, it's electrifying in more ways than one.

The focus of *Club 47* is narrower, since it's about one venue in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Some artists, like Carolyn Hester and Maria Muldaur, straddled both scenes, but Tom Rush, Taj Mahal, and producer/performer Jim Rooney, among others, called the club home. In 1958, the coffee house featuring jazz turned a corner when 17-year-old unknown Joan Baez auditioned and was quickly packing the small house. She is an

interviewee, as is Debbie Green, from whom Baez got songs and much of her style.

There are more performances than the Village film, from archival footage of Rev. Gary Davis and a brief clip showing the sheer power of Son House to Rush, banjo great Bill Keith, the Kweskin Jug Band with Jim Kweskin and Geoff Muldaur, bluegrassers Peter Rowan and the Charles River Valley Boys, and folkie Jackie Washington Landron. A section is devoted to the late Eric Von Schmidt, a pivotal singer/guitarist and collector of material.

The hotspot featured early-'60s bookings of Doc Watson, Lightnin' Hopkins, and the Staple Singers, and Dylan would play the club half-secretly, owing to his popularity and management, provided there was no formal advertising. By April '68, the acts that were the club's bread and butter had outgrown it, as national tours became more lucrative. It eventually housed a bookstore, which morphed into Club Passim and presented Americana acts.

Though not featured in *Club 47*, Beverly "Buffy" Sainte-Marie played there. In *Buffy Sainte-Marie: Carry It On*, University of Massachusetts Amherst classmate Taj Mahal sings her praises, as do Robbie Robertson, Joni Mitchell, and others.

Born to Cree parents in Canada, Sainte-Marie was adopted by an American family and grew up in New England. She ventured to Greenwich Village in '63 and drew acclaim almost immediately. A natural musician from a young age, she plays guitar and piano, as well as mouth bow, and at 81, with its speedy vibrato, her voice is one of the most recognizable in popular music.

As *Greenwich Village* details how Pete Seeger was blacklisted by the House Un-American Activities Committee, Sainte-Marie's pointed political songs drew a more-covert version, carried out by the FBI. Like Seeger, she ultimately triumphed – winning an Oscar, becoming a regular on "Sesame Street," and having songs covered by Donovan, Glen Campbell, Quicksilver Messenger Service, and Elvis Presley.

One subchapter the story doesn't tell is that when underground radio was launched in San Francisco in '67, songs like "Co'dine" and "Little Wheel Spin And Spin" were in heavy rotation. I was on the other side of the Bay, glued to my radio, soaking it up just as I had the folk songs my parents sang.

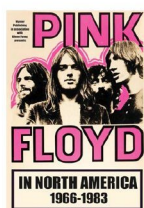
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Pink Floyd onstage during a U.S. tour in early 1973.

trippy, hallucinogenic fadeout guitar solo, dripping with echo.

Repetition legitimizes, and the brothers Winston lean into it with catchy guitar lines and riffs like on “Winston Theme,” “Boiling Pot,” and “Free Ride.” The horn section yields that early-’70s blaxploitation film soundtrack flavor. It’s solid, baby. – **Oscar Jordan**



Glenn Povey Pink Floyd in North America 1966-1983

David Gilmour playing a rare Stratocaster double-neck? You’ll see that 1972 photo and others in this reference book documenting Floyd’s many North American tours (FYI, one Strat neck was set up for slide).

Largely a compilation of tour dates, setlists, and memorabilia with brief historical descriptions, what makes this tome interesting is the way it contextualizes Floyd’s tour history in chronological order, giving a sense how rock concerts evolved.

During their early (and quite humble) club tour of 1967, guitarist Syd Barrett was already displaying mental-health symptoms – dates were chaotic or canceled. After a gig at Santa Monica’s Cheetah Club, the penniless Floyd stayed in the apartment of

a local band fronted by a singer later known as Alice Cooper. After *Dark Side of the Moon*, Pink Floyd jumped into arenas and, by ’77, were playing sold-out stadiums to upward of 55,000 fans.

Gear detectives can sift through photos to see Gilmour and Roger Waters using various Strats and Precision basses, as well as hip backline gear like Gilmour’s Binson Echorec box and Hiwatt heads. *Pink Floyd in North America* is by no means essential, but it does chart the rise of what became a touring juggernaut. – **PP**



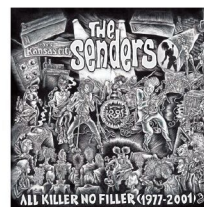
Elizabeth Moen Wherever You Aren’t

Moen is a Chicago-based singer/songwriter who does much of her own guitar work on songs that are often deeply personal. This, however, is no pompous, acoustic-driven collection of bland Americana fare; the sound is amplified, her vocals edgy and teeming with attitude.

Accompanists, including guitarist Dan Padley on many tracks, focus on organically integrating guitar sounds and textures.

That’s apparent on the ethereal intro to the opening track, “Headgear,” reflecting elements of ’70s soul with churning textures.

It’s rare to hear any singer/songwriter utilize guitars with such meticulous flair and creativity, yet Moen’s instrumental skills enhance every performance. – **Rich Kienzie**

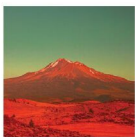


The Senders All Killer No Filler (1977-2001)

The PR for this double-LP (and CD) casts the Senders as “punk,” concentrating on seven live tracks featuring guitarist Johnny Thunders (New York Dolls, Heartbreakers). But 24 other cuts reveal the New York club band’s capabilities with blues, rockabilly, and straight-ahead rock.

Howlin’ Wolf’s “Do the Do” (penned by Willie Dixon) is as good a cover as you’ll find, and singer/harpist Phil Marcade delivers an anguished reading of Lowell Fulson’s dirge-like “Tollin’ Bells.” Other sources include Little Richard, Fats Domino, Chuck Willis, and the Glen Glenn rockabilly hit “One Cup of Coffee (and a Cigarette).” Think Dr. Feelgood of the Lower East Side.

Bandleader Marcade, who hails from France, penned great material like “Devil Shootin’ Dice,” a hit that should have been, spotlighting Barry Ryan’s slide. The MC5’s Wayne Kramer guests on a live version of the Stones’ “Empty Heart,” but the real story is



TUOMO & MARKUS

Game Changing

Recorded in L.A. with guitarist/producer Jonathan Wilson and Minneapolis with the late Ed Ackerson, the second LP from this Finland-based duo finds them and their talented band expanding the soundscapes and welcoming guest guitarist Marc Ribot on select tracks. The result is cosmic American music, steeped in folk, blues, rock, Tex-Mex, and (really) blue-eyed soul, all sung in English. – **DP**



KURT ROSENWINKEL

Berlin Baritone

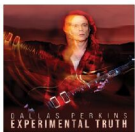
The latest from jazz guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel features nine completely improvised solo pieces using the baritone guitar. Moody, introspective, and intimate, it's a beautifully produced recording utilizing chord melody, voice-leading techniques, and entrancing improvisational inventiveness. Rosenwinkel's sound is deep, rich, sparkling, and harmonically expressive. Timbral highlights include "Mellow D," "Just Chillin'," "First Impression," and "Life Of A Flower." – **OJ**



LA POMPE ATTACK

Putt Lake Toodleo

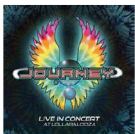
Guitarist Doug Munro's manouche band moves between the straightforward gypsy jazz of "Django's Castle." He offers jazzy takes of the pop-rock standards "Honey Pie," "Traffic Jam" (both received similar treatments from John Pizzarelli) and Soundgarden's "Black Hole Sun." Munro applies his eclecticism to Wayne Shorter's "Black Nile," the Jaco Pastorius favorite "Teen Town," and his intense original "Psycho Samba." – **RK**



DALLAS PERKINS

Experimental Truth

Described as a progressive-rock guitarist, Perkins' dazzling, fleet-fingered style mostly resembles Satriani and Vai. However, prog and other elements are found in these instrumentals. The glistening bends on "Beck Street" soar, while "Deus X M" and "Monolith" are Van Halen-esque bursts. Tempo shifts abound in "Mexican Puppets," while "Azul" is ethereal prog-metal. "Jagwired" rocks the tightest groove. Shred fans will dig this. – **BA**



JOURNEY

Live in Concert at Lollapalooza

After a half century, Neal Schon is still a fusion-over-pop maniac. Cue up "Stone In Love" for fret-vaporizing leads, offering more thrills than players half his age. "Any Way You Want It" is a bomb blast; Schon's lead in "Be Good To Yourself" is like sticking your tongue in an electrical outlet. This live recording scores bonus points for punchy audio. – **PP**



LINCOLN GOINES

The Art of the Bass Choir

Almost everything you hear on this solo set is bass or drums – there are no guitar or keyboard chords. Throughout, sideman Goines deploys his Fodera bassettes, along with guests like John Patitucci and Victor Wooten. On "All Blues," the full ensemble features bassist Tom Kennedy, while Matthew Garrison lends high-speed improv to "Spin the Floor." A jazz-bass extravaganza. – **PP**



THE COLD STARES

Voices

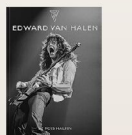
For those who crave surreal fuzz tones in their rock and roll, the latest from The Cold Stares might be the ticket. Bassist Bryce Klueh and drummer Brian Mullins craft hard-hitting, testosterone-fueled grooves while guitarist Chris Tapp supplies the melodic heat. "Lights Out," "It's Heavy," and "Sinnerman" showcase passion, vision, style, and conviction. In all, *Voices* is dark, blues-based rock. – **OJ**



SAM REIDER & JORGE GLEM

Brooklyn-Cumaná

"Refreshingly original" best describes the Venezuelan/New Yorker duo of Glen on cuatro and accordionist Reider. Despite the instrumentation, the melody of John Hartford's "Homer the Roamer" reveals Irish roots. Segueing into "Sábana Blanca," it explores flamenco territory. Notable guests reflect the pair's eclecticism, from jazz sax legend Paquito D'Rivera to Molly Tuttle's mandolinist, Dominick Leslie, and Billy Strings violinist Alex Hargreaves. – **DF**



ROSS HALFIN

Edward Van Halen

Halfin is a renowned rock photographer and this hardcover contains the motherlode of Van Halen pics. Gearheads will salivate over Eddie's axes, from striped "superstrats" to Kramers, Peavey, and EVH planks. Even Michael Anthony had a striped Rickenbacker bass. There are lamentably few captions, but the photographer's goal is to convey

the seismic thrill of a Van Halen concert. Mission accomplished. – **PP**



STING

Nothing Like the Sun: Expanded Digital-Only Edition

This 35th anniversary edition of Sting's second solo album adds 14 bonus tracks. Though "They Dance Alone (Cueca Solo)" includes Eric Clapton, Mark Knopfler, and fusioneer Fareed Haque, guitars are barely noticeable. The Hendrix cover "Little Wing" boasts exquisite guitar from the late Hiram Bullock, who also cruises through this bonus-tracks keeper – a 10-minute, orchestral rendition of Jimi's "Up From the Skies." – **BA**



LIGHTNIN' MALCOLM

Eye Of The Storm

One-man-band Malcolm learned blues firsthand from greats like R.L. Burnside and T-Model Ford, and producer Tab Benoit retains his raw quality, even on the titular ballad. With drummer Brady Blade and Dumpstaphunk bassist Tony Hall lending lockdown support to Lightnin's distorted guitar, this is the next-best thing to catching him in a sweaty Hill Country juke joint. – **DF**



HARVEY MANDEL

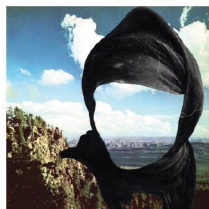
Who's Calling

Like Jeff Beck, Mandel is that rare '60s player who is still evolving after 55 years. On his latest, Harvey conjures thick swells of distortion and whammy growls on "Last Walk," while "Crazy Town" is an echo tour-de-force. "Lucky Sevens" blends fat chords with deep delay over a fat Afro-Cuban groove. Despite battling numerous health challenges, Mandel remains a ferocious post-fusion guitarist. – **PP**



Joanne Shaw Taylor

the late Wild Bill Thompson on lead for most of the tracks. Be it raw rock or electrifying blues, his playing is a revelation. Whether blues for punks or punk for bluesers, the blues crowd needs to look past categories and give the guy some belated props. — **Dan Forte**



**Mike Baggetta/
Jim Keltner/Mike
Watt**
Everywhen We Go

Guitarist Mike Baggetta teams up with renowned rock

drummer Jim Keltner (Harrison, Dylan, Frisell) and equally legendary punk bassman Mike Watt (Minutemen, Stooges) for the trio's second album. As one might expect given their pedigree, this rhythm section is *locked*, allowing Baggetta to explore myriad styles and tones ranging from the Morricone-flavored sauce of the opening title track to the laid-back "This is Not a Euphemism," to the urgency of the near-epic "Yank It Out" and the shimmering atmospheric "In the Center."

Watt and Keltner are mostly in tugboat mode, letting the guitarist do his thing, even

taking five on the aforementioned "Center," the cinematic "Not Enough Of Time," and the acoustic-driven "Measure Of A Life Intro." Which is not to say this is a collection of improvisational flights. "Fake Break," for example, with its layered guitars and varying textures, would well fit on a late-period Wilco album, perhaps not surprising given Baggetta's collaborations with Nels Cline

This trio began when Baggetta cold-called Keltner and Watt, both of whom he admired as a young player. On paper they seem like strange bedfellows, but as a trio they prove that worthy endeavors can result from long shots. — **Dennis Pernu**



Humble Pie
**The A&M CD Box
Set (1970-1975)**

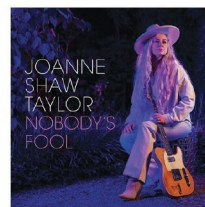
Arena-rock pioneers Humble Pie launched some of the grittiest heavy rock of the '70s, courtesy of vocalist/guitarist Steve Marriott, bassist Greg Ridley, and successive lead men Peter Frampton and David "Clem" Clempson. This eight-CD box set

includes the Pie's seven main A&M albums and a bonus disc of 14 B-sides/rarities, five debuting here.

1970's *Humble Pie* includes the loose "Live With Me." The following year's *Rock On* burns brightest on "Stone Cold Fever" and "Rollin' Stone." Also from '71, *Performance: Rockin' the Fillmore* is one of the best FM live albums, proven by the nine-minute swaggering blast of "I Don't Need No Doctor."

Clem Clempson replaced Frampton for 1972's *Smokin'* (see "Pop 'N Hiss" in the February '23 issue). "30 Days in the Hole" grooves ferociously. 1973's *Eat It* swerves closer toward R&B, such as "Black Coffee." The era's relentless recording and touring grind took its toll creatively, and Humble Pie started recording more covers. *Thunderbox* includes the slinky "Ninety-Nine Pounds," while 1975's haphazard *Street Rats* (not originally intended as a Pie album) contains the smoldering "Road Hog." Straight-ahead rockers "Big Black Dog" and "Mister Ring" as rarities highlights.

In all, this box is essential for fans — and devotees of ballsy guitar rock. — **BA**



**Joanne Shaw
Taylor**
Nobody's Fool

Combining her love of blues and accessible pop, *Nobody's Fool* finds

Joanne Shaw Taylor leaning into songcraft and transforming life lessons into fine music. Co-produced by Joe Bonamassa and Josh Smith, Taylor's eighth studio album brings the kind of crossover appeal destined to reach beyond blues audiences.

Dave Stewart of the Eurythmics joins for a spirited cover of "Missionary Man" with pumped-up fuzz-guitar flourishes and vocal swagger. The blue-eyed soul singer's nicotine vocals are a perfect fit for moving ballads like "Fade Away," featuring cellist Tina Guo.

On the energetic '80s-style pop of "Figure It Out," Taylor is joined by guitarist Carmen Vandenberg (who has played with Jeff Beck) doing a powerful solo. Bonamassa also gets his licks in, putting aside his Brit blues appropriations in favor of concise lyricism, trading solo sections with Taylor on the mid-tempo "Won't Be Fooled Again." *Nobody's Fool* is filled with cool tunes, great playing, and earthy-but-clear production — think Adele after a pack of cigarettes, shot of whiskey, and with burning guitar chops. The gutsy "Just Getting Over You" and "New

Love” deliver all of it. Whether on acoustic, clean-sounding Les Pauls, or fuzzed-out Teles, Taylor is one to watch. – **OJ**

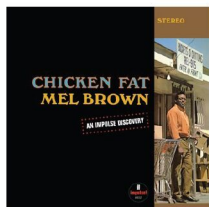


Sons of Adam
Saturday's Sons:
The Complete
Recordings, 1964-
1966

Whatever claim to fame the Sons of Adam have is thanks to guitarist Randy Holden, who later joined Blue Cheer (replacing Leigh Stephens) after a stop with the under-recorded Other Half.

The Sons released only three singles (and no albums), but this CD collects them along with demos, outtakes, and a 1966 show at San Francisco's Avalon Ballroom. There are also seven cuts by Holden's earlier outfit, the surfin' Fender IV. A 48-page booklet features bandmate interviews by reissue producer Alec Palao.

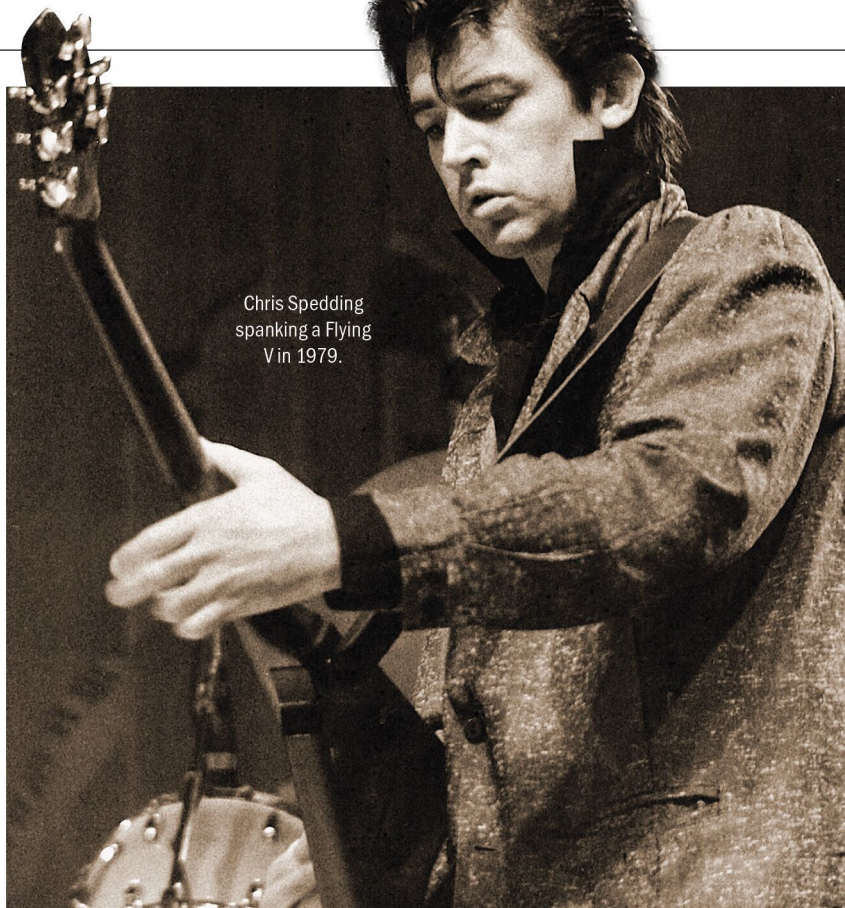
The band straddled garage and psychedelia while covering the Stones, Yardbirds, Them, and Love, and Holden reeled off impressive leads à la Jeff Beck. The original "Mr. Sun" is akin to the Syndicate of Sound, while the folk-rock "Without Love" was written by Mike Post, composer of themes for TV's "The Rockford Files" "Hill Street Blues," "L.A. Law," and "Law & Order." The psych numbers are period pieces, almost caricatures, yet the reverby Fender IV material proves most timeless. Not only does Holden give Dick Dale a run for his money, the tunes are inventive and well-constructed; "Malibu Run" has a ska rhythm, and only the best surf revival bands can handle the tremolo-picked "Mar Gaya." – **DF**



Mel Brown
Chicken Fat

Before becoming a member of the house band at the legendary Austin venue Antone's, Mississippi-born Mel Brown (1939-2009) was a blues guitarist who gained notice with West Coast R&B icon Johnny Otis. This reissue of his 1967 solo debut reveals a solid, blues-based soloist clearly at ease with the era's organ-driven soul-jazz, surrounded by high-caliber L.A. sidemen including organist Gerald Wiggins, drummer Paul Humphrey, jazz guitar master Herb Ellis (occasionally on 12-string), and Arthur Wright.

Soul-funk grooves drive many tunes,

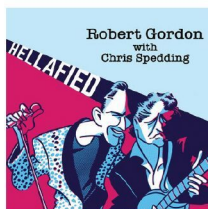


Chris Spedding
spanking a Flying
V in 1979.

beginning with the title track. While Brown adds wah to his take on Oliver Nelson's easygoing "Hobo Flats," he wasn't a captive of effects. He spins out straight-ahead blues lines on "Greasy Spoon" as Ellis chunks rhythm behind him. The laid-back "I'm Goin' to Jackson" has Brown and Ellis (on 12-string) facing off, Brown and Wright rip through the furious "Slalom," and the old-school feel of "Home James" reveals Brown's deep debt to T-Bone Walker.

Brown recorded 11 more solo albums and accompanied other blues greats on record. In the '70s, he joined Nashville iconoclast Tompall Glaser's Outlaw Band.

This vinyl-only reissue reminds everyone that *Chicken Fat*, Brown's launching pad, remains a masterpiece more than a half-century later. – **RK**



Robert Gordon
with Chris
Spedding
Hellafied

A legend out of time with the times, Robert Gordon

should have been a star during the true rockabilly era of the late '50s. Instead, he made his mark in the punky late '70s and '80s, heralding a rockabilly revival.

When he passed away October 18, 2022, tributes came from around the globe – along with news of this long-forgotten 1998 studio gem.

Gordon had that voice. He could sing rockabilly like few others ever did, moving from silky smooth desire to hiccups, yodeling, and a downright growl. And he always had the best guitarists at his side, including jaunts with Link Wray, Danny Gatton, and as here, Chris Spedding.

Lesser known than the others, Spedding played with Paul McCartney and on Elton John's *Madman Across the Water*, produced the first Sex Pistols demos, and had a fine solo career.

The original opener here, "One Day Left," is '50s-style pop crooning with a punkified solo from Spedding; "Middle Of The Night" is solid rockabilly boogie with tough guitar work. The finale, "Believe What You Say," sounds like a regional-radio hit from 1955. Just the way Gordon, Spedding, and we all want it. – **Michael Dregni VC**

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1966 Fender Vibrolux 2x10 all original amp with foot switch almost a 9/10. \$3,900. 1966 Fender Vibro Champ super clean condition \$1k. 1962 Fender Deluxe Brownie amp. rich@thefishingline.com

1965 Fender Tremolux speaker cabinet (2x12") all original in very good condition. \$749 plus shipping. rockbucko@yahoo.com

Original 1970s Earth Usa Tube Guitar Amplifier Tuck & Roll Blue Sparkle in fantastic condition. 100Watt head with trem and reverb. Four 6L6 power tubes with full complement of Preamp tubes. 2x15" matching speaker cab. ampman57@aol.com for details.

1959 Fender Tweed Deluxe, 1959 National 2-10" 2-6L6s, 1949 Gibson GA-50. All Are Original And Working With Original Speakers And Two Prong Plugs. \$12,500. 570-823-2268

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STOLEN INSTRUMENTS

Fender P Bass w Jazz neck #L21023, was factory Olympic white in white orig case. Also Fender Jazz bass, #L90890, refin pink when last seen, wired stereo, in original black case. 419-668-1010 donmos@roadrunner.com



3 BLONDS ON A BENCH

Art Print • VG's "3 Blonds on a Bench" includes three Gibson ES-5s (1957, '51, and '59) reclined on a lavish red sofa. Printed in vibrant full color on heavy, 22" x 17", acid-free Lustrro stock - quite suitable for framing! Order at Store.VintageGuitar.com Limited Quantity!

LOWDOWN

D'Angelico's Deluxe Atlantic Baritone

Baritone guitars have been around for decades, traditionally featured in Nashville and Hollywood studios and elsewhere to “sweeten” a track or for some other “special” application; to hear an example, take a listen to Glen Campbell’s solo on “Wichita Lineman.”

Baritones have experienced a resurgence in popularity across genres and especially gained traction amongst modern hard-rock and metal acts because they’re typically tuned a fifth lower than standard six-strings. So it makes sense that more builders are jumping into the fray. One is D’Angelico, with its new solidbody Deluxe Atlantic Baritone.

A visually beautiful instrument, the company’s goal was to offer maximum player comfort with a medium-weight alder body, slim C-shaped set neck with 26.75” scale, and a deep cutaway. Other details include 22 frets, two Volume and two Tone controls with coil splitters, nickel pickup covers, and a nickel tune-o-matic-style bridge. Gold Grover 509 Super Rotomatic tuners complete a classy package. Strapped on, the Deluxe Atlantic feels as good as it looks, hanging very comfortably with no neck dive.

Plugged into a Class A tube amp, the Deluxe Atlantic’s two Seymour Duncan Seth Lover A4 pickups provided clear tones with a thick midrange and low-end. The coil splitters helped coax an array of sounds suitable for almost any musical situation, while the bridge pickup rendered chime, clarity, and excellent single-note and chord definition. With the splitter engaged, highs were accentuated. The neck pickup offered copious amounts of thick, sometimes gnarly low-end that with added overdrive or fuzz, would work well in a dropped-tune grunge, ambient, or metal situation.

Available in Satin Black and Walnut finishes, the Deluxe Atlantic may not be a budget instrument in the eyes of some, but it is competitively priced given its quality.

– Bob Cianci

Price: \$1,699.99
www.dangelicoguitars.com



Price: \$229
www.walrusaudio.com

MODES OF FURY

Walrus Audio's Eons Five-State Fuzz

Hot on the heels of its Ages Five-State Overdrive and Eras Five-State Distortion, Walrus Audio has unleashed the Eons Five-State Fuzz.

Multi-voiced dirt pedals are the latest thing, and the new Walrus brings five fuzzy tones in one small, convenient package along with (like the other two) cool graphics, a sturdy build, and simple functionality via controls for Volume, Gain, Bass, and Treble; a Voltage knob controls the degree of current, allowing the user to achieve that sought-after “dying battery” tone at three volts, or adding low-end and compression when cranked to a full 18 volts.

Mode I on its rotary dial produces a big, smooth, compressed, silicon-fuzz sound. Mode II also includes silicon clipping with more bass, compression, and crunch. Mode III switches to germanium yielding more dynamics and added distortion. Mode IV is darker, producing more high-end cut using LED clipping diodes – great for offsetting thinner-sounding single-coil pickups. Finally, Mode V yields hard-clipping silicon transistors combined with soft-clipping diodes for brutal saturation.

All Modes are malleable, with the Gain, EQ, Voltage, and Volume controls allowing users to tailor a range of gainy, ear-friendly sounds. It’s a sweet buffet for fuzz freaks, ranging from light, volume-boosted peach fuzz to all-out adolescent garage mayhem. It uses a 9-volt power supply and will make a sonically handy addition to any studio. – Oscar Jordan



MR. CLEAN

Roland's JC-120 Jazz Chorus 50th Anniversary

The Roland Corporation was born in 1972 and just a few years later introduced its landmark Jazz Chorus JC-120 amplifier. To celebrate the half-century mark, the company has reissued a 350-piece run of the amp with an elegant cherry-wood veneer cabinet.

In contrast to the muscular overdrive of Marshalls or bark of Fender Twins, the JC-120 promised a clean, high-tech future for guitarists, thanks to its stereo wiring, ample wattage, and groundbreaking built-in chorus (the effect was later ported to the Boss CE-1 Chorus Ensemble pedal).

If you've ever plugged into a JC-120, you know it's a memorable experience, and the Anniversary version nicely aids in flashing back. A 2x12 combo, it's the size of a large suitcase and packs considerable heft at just over 63 pounds – obviously, this is no lightweight transistor box. The front panel has two channels, the first with just a Volume knob, three-band EQ, and Bright button. The other is the stereo JC experience, with EQ, distortion, reverb, and a vibrato/chorus section called Dimensional Space Chorus. Today, chorus is a garden-variety effect, but 45 years ago, putting it inside an amp was seriously radical.

Price: \$1,999.99
www.roland.com

As on the original, the JC-120's channels are not footswitchable. While you can turn distortion, reverb, and chorus/vibrato on and off with third-party switches, you can't jump between channels 1 and 2. Think of it as having two guitar amps in one; as a workaround, you can use an external A/B switch to activate each channel, along with different pedals or EQ settings (an effects loop is also provided).

Cranked up, the JC-120 sounds big and beautiful; plug into the High input jack and it's *loud*! With 60 watts pumping into each speaker, it's stage-ready and will cut through the muddiest mix, with sparkling top frequencies and tight bass, all the more gorgeous with a splash of stereo chorus on top. The so-called Distortion knob adds only a smidge of grit instead of true dirt; tested with a Boss SD-1 Overdrive pedal in front, the JC-120 conjured simply glorious distortion.

All told, Roland's JC-120 Jazz Chorus 50th Anniversary is a big, bold amplifier with clean tones reminiscent of The Police, Rush, and a million '80s albums. Dial in that magical chorus and the stomptboxes of your choice, and you'll own the stage.

– Pete Prown

GEARIN' UP



GREZ MENDOCINO LONG SCALE

The Greiz Guitars Mendocino Long Scale bass has a semi-hollow mahogany body with salvaged old-growth redwood top, mahogany neck with 34" scale, 12"-radius ebony fretboard, and 22 frets. Other features include Curtis Novak pickups, Babicz saddles, Gotoh Res-O-Lite Tuners, and satin-nitro finish.



EVENTIDE H90 HARMONIZER

Eventide Audio's H90 Harmonizer has 62 effect algorithms including seven new and three of the most-popular from the company's rackmount processors, allowing for hundreds of program combinations. Other features include an intuitive interface and built-in tuner.



ENKI AMG GEN 3

Enki's AMG Gen 3 guitar and bass cases have a new padlock-ready latch and a modular soft insert with Nylex interior and cut-resistant 600D center strips where strings and bridge make contact. The insert can be modified for a custom fit.

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CLEAR CRUNCH

Railhammer's Billy Corgan Z-One Humcutters

In the quest for tone, the secret is a combination of pickups, wood, construction, and the magic in a player's fingers. Aiming for a tone like a P-90 with hot midrange, Railhammer is now offering the humbuckers previously available only in Reverend's Billy Corgan signature guitar ("Approved Gear," May '22).

Part of the company's Humcutter line, the ceramic-magnet Z-Ones have a single rail under the wound strings (for tightness) and three slugs under the top three (for clarity). The overall sound blends poppin' midrange with big bottom and balanced highs – without the dreaded hum of single-coil pickups.

A critical piece of any replacement-pickup puzzle is wood. Install the Corgans in a mahogany body/neck guitar (like a

Gibson or many PRS models), and they'll sound warmer and mellower than in an alder body with a bolt-on maple neck (like a typical Fender). In our A/B comparisons with mahogany-

Price: \$119 (black/chrome); \$129 (gold)
www.railhammer.com



bodied axes, they sounded brighter and funkier in an alder plank; with mahogany, one would expect a clearer tone than PAF-style humbuckers – again, more like a P-90. In our tests, they were always noise-free. And, Railhammer ups the ante with etched covers in chrome, gold, and black.

In all, the Railhammer Billy Corgan Z-One Humcutters are about delivering humbucker clarity with punchy midrange, along with the joy of quiet design. – **Pete Prown**

ALL THE RAGE

CopperSound's Telegraph V2 Autostutter/Killswitch

Need the perfect stutter effect or killswitch in a pedal? Massachusetts-based CopperSound Pedals' latest iteration of its popular Telegraph Stutter box was recently launched, with a nice dash of increased versatility.

Kill and Activate modes carried over from the previous version, while a new adjustable Burst mode adds tremolo effect to the stuttering sounds ranging from 110 BPM on up. Built for the stage or studio with an all-metal enclosure, the Telegraph Stutter runs on a 9-volt adapter and allows users to control its effects using latching and momentary options. In addition, an internal dip switch allows latching to be turned off.

A three-way toggle engages Kill, Bust, and Activate modes; Kill and Activate

cut or pass signal when pressed, while Burst can be set to Kill or Activate using the two-way polarity toggle. When polarity is set to Kill, clean signal will pass until the key is pressed, engaging the Burst. When set to Activate, no sound is heard until the key is pressed, creating stuttering bursts of sonic glory.

It slices, it dices, and again, it's versatile – just the thing for rhythmic experimentation; Morse code, turntable scratching, or rapid-fire signal cutting a la Tom Morello can be had, with seamless connecting to other instruments, including vocals. It's also expression-pedal friendly. For the forward-thinking musician, the Telegraph Stutter can be a fun, funky addition. – **Oscar Jordan**

Price: \$249
www.coppersoundpedals.com





EARTHY VIBES

The Donner Arena 2000

Donner has been making a name delivering import gear at absurdly low prices while maintaining solid quality. The Arena 2000 is another triumph, this one going up against multi-effects floor units with color screens – a feature that typically drives the price to around \$400. This box lists for substantially less, yet contains a universe of sounds – 278 effects, 150 effects presets, 80 amp models, and 50 cabinet impulse response (IR) models, plus a (very) small

pedal for wah, volume, and other effects. Oh yeah – there's also a looper and drum machine with 40 patterns.

Price: \$269
www.donnermusic.com

Using what Donner calls FVACM technology (the company's proprietary 24-bit/44.1 kHz audio processing), the 2000 is designed to reduce the canned/processed sound of multi-effects. In fact, the unit has serious earthy vibe for a digital box.

The acid test of today's digital multi-effects units is user-friendliness, and the Donner

earns top marks. Even without the manual, it's easy to navigate and adjust the many "scenes," which is a grouping of effects and models visualized on the 3.5" screen. One big knob controls myriad features, scrolling through models of sounds, amps, and cabs. Pushing it in jumps to another level of menus. It's absurdly simple to navigate and save new sounds, thanks to a handy bank of touch controls (Cab, Amp, Drive, Reverb, Compressor, etc.). USB connectivity lets you download more IR simulations, so can you pick the virtual "space" of an amp in the studio.

Powered up, the Arena 2000 offers convincing sounds, from metal crunch (with super-ambient cabinet sims) to echo-laden cleans that defy description. Better yet, they're easy to edit and save as new presets. It's hard to gauge the Arena 2000's gig-durability, but for its price, Donner brings jaw-dropping value here. Step on it! – **Pete Prown**

GEARIN' UP



PEAVEY 6505 II

Peavey's 6505 II is a 120-watt head that uses six 12AX7 preamp tubes and four 6L6GCs. It has selectable Rhythm or Lead channels with separate three-band EQ, Resonance and Presence control for the power section. Crunch Select and Bright help users dial-in the preamp.



PRS SE MCCARTY 594

The PRS SE McCarty 594 has a mahogany body with carved flame-maple top, laminate-mahogany neck with 24.594" scale, rosewood fretboard with bird inlays, 58/15 LT S pickups with separate Volume and Tone controls, and three-way toggle selector.



VOLA OZ SRM

Volta Guitars' OZ SRM has an alder body, bolt-on/one-piece maple neck/fretboard with 12" radius and stainless-steel frets and two-way truss, Gotoh bridge, VHC pickups with five-way selector, and master Volume and Tone controls. It's offered in satin white or black finish.



Price: \$199 (Archer); \$199 (The Dude);
\$160.88 (El Hombre)
www.rockettpedals.com

OVERDRIVE ECSTASY

J. Rockett Audio's Archer, The Dude, and El Hombre

Part of the success behind J. Rockett Audio Designs lies in the fact that, like any player who might tackle building a pedal for themselves, Chris Van Tassel and Jay Rockett design stompboxes that *they* love to play. Their effects attract some

of the finest players in the world, so the formula is working.

The company's Archer overdrive is a tribute to the fabled Klon Centaur, which for years has starred on the pedalboards of top guitarists who love its sweet, transparent, germanium richness. Using

a Les Paul Standard through a Fender Deluxe Reverb, the J. Rockett version captured the charismatic personality of the Klon, with a smidge more grit, bite, and glorious clean headroom – at a fraction of the cost of an original.

The Dude is another overdrive favorite. J. Rockett's take on the Dumble Overdrive Special amp, plugged in between a Telecaster and a Bassman reissue, delivered rich harmonic clarity, opulent bass, touch sensitivity, and noiseless footswitching whether running as a clean boost or applying more-complex grit. Transparent clean boost escalates into snarling low mids, singing neck-pickup leads, and delicious overtones.

New from J. Rockett is the El Hombre, which leans heavily into the sounds of that “Little ol’ band from Texas.” With a Strat plugged into a Marshall DSL40, it offered a range of overdriven sizzle; the Bite knob works like an EQ, delivering punchy, plexi-like aggression, Van Halen harmonics, and Texas teeth. It goes from chill to kill, instantly supplying warmth, sustain, feel, and fierce clarity. It's also fun to play.

J. Rockett pedals take up minimal real estate, are built like a Sherman tank, and employ simple knob layouts that allow users to quickly get down to business. J. Rockett Audio Designs builds effects pedals that make guitarists want to play the guitar, and that's the crux of the biscuit.

– Oscar Jordan VG

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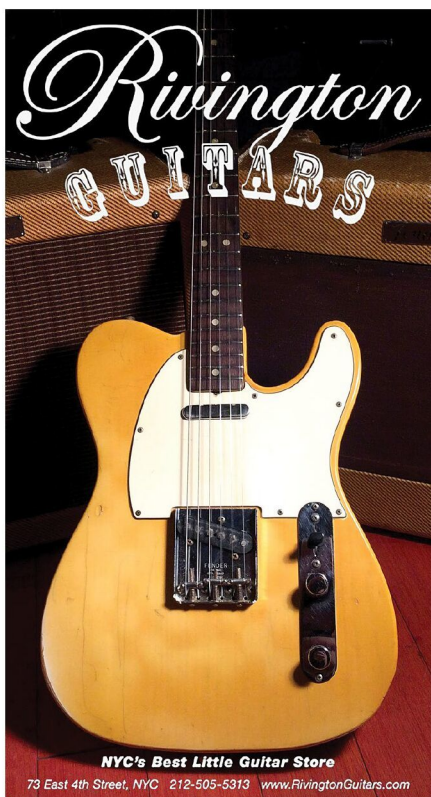
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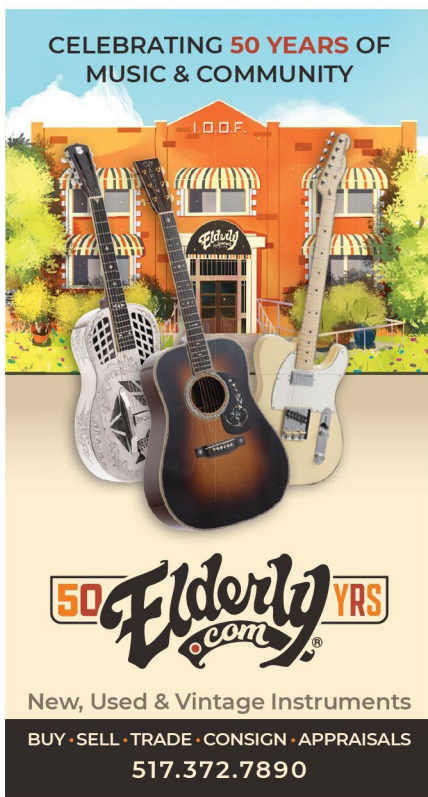


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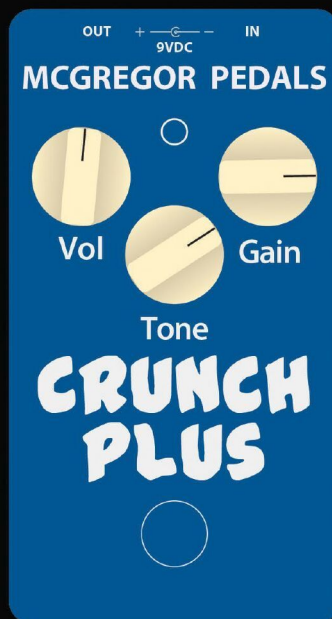
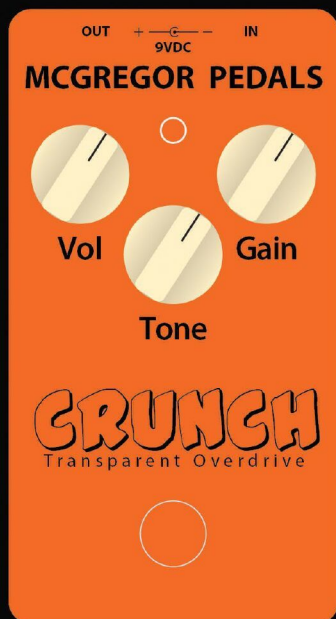
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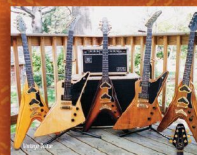
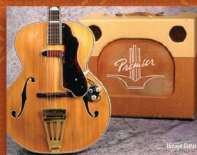
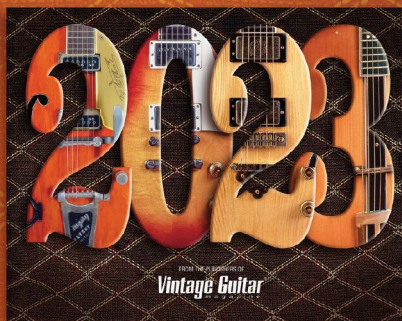
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01 The collection of Doug B. keeps growing. From left in front are his American Pro II Tele, Pro II Strat, SG Standard '61 reissue, Les Paul Standard '50s reissue, and Rickenbacker 330. In back are a J-185 Original, J-45 Standard, L-00 Vintage, 000-18MC, 000-28VS, National Triolian, and a National Style 1.

02 Larry Carter is a longtime subscriber whose collection includes this sharp-looking pair – a '49 ES-175 and '59 Vibrolux.

03 Richard Prestia has collected (and modded) Highway One HSS Stratocasters in every color. Here are half of them, in Walnut, Amber, Daphne Blue, Black, Honey Blonde, and Sunburst.

04 This “family photo” from Tom V. features (front, from left) an Earl Slick Tele, an Art & Lutherie Roadhouse, Gretsch Bobtail resonator, Takamine acoustic bass, '90s Strat, Taylor T5z Pro, Zemaitis A24MF, Cordoba D9-CE, and a Taylor T5z 12. In back are a Cordoba Mini SM-CE, Fender uke, '81 Martin Sigma, Epiphone Hummingbird Pro, '91 Gibson Dove, a Martin D-35 Ambertone, and a 1920s Regal parlor.

05 Russ Rozell has been buying guitars since the '80s, so what was then new is now “vintage.” From left in back are a modern Tele, a '72 Telecaster bass, Martin SC-13E, Takamine GF30CE, and a modern Gibson Songwriter Deluxe EC. In front are an '85 Jackson Randy Rhoads, '17 Epiphone Korina Explorer, PRS Tremonti Pro, '14 Les Paul, '85 Jackson Soloist Pro, and an Ibanez Fireman.

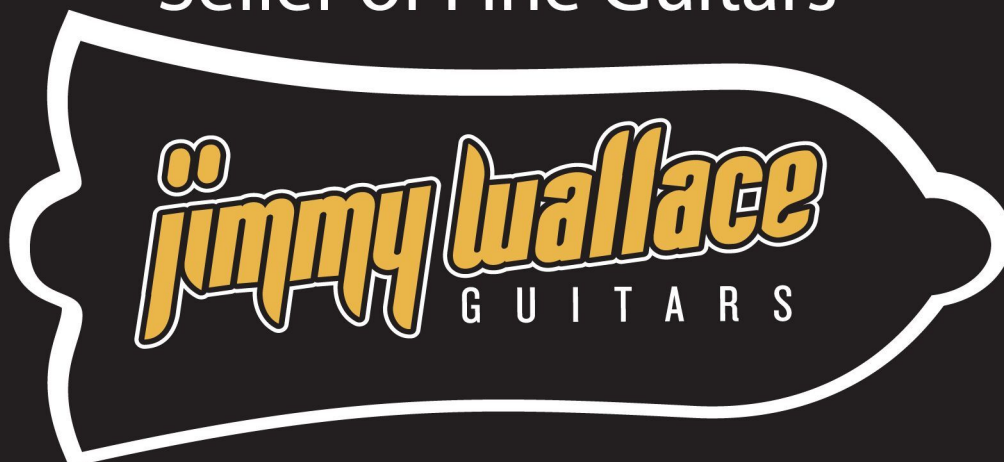
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A close-up photograph of a man with a beard, wearing a plaid shirt, playing an acoustic guitar. The focus is on his hands and the guitar's neck and headstock. The background is dark and out of focus.

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