



FREDDIE KING'S ES-355 *ROBIN TROWER'S TWICE REMOVED FROM YESTERDAY*

Vintage Guitar[®]

magazine

**ROY ORBISON'S
MARSHALL 1961**

**MICHAEL
BLOOMFIELD'S
'63 STRAT**

ROBBIE ROBERTSON LASTING LEGACY

**VINCE GILL &
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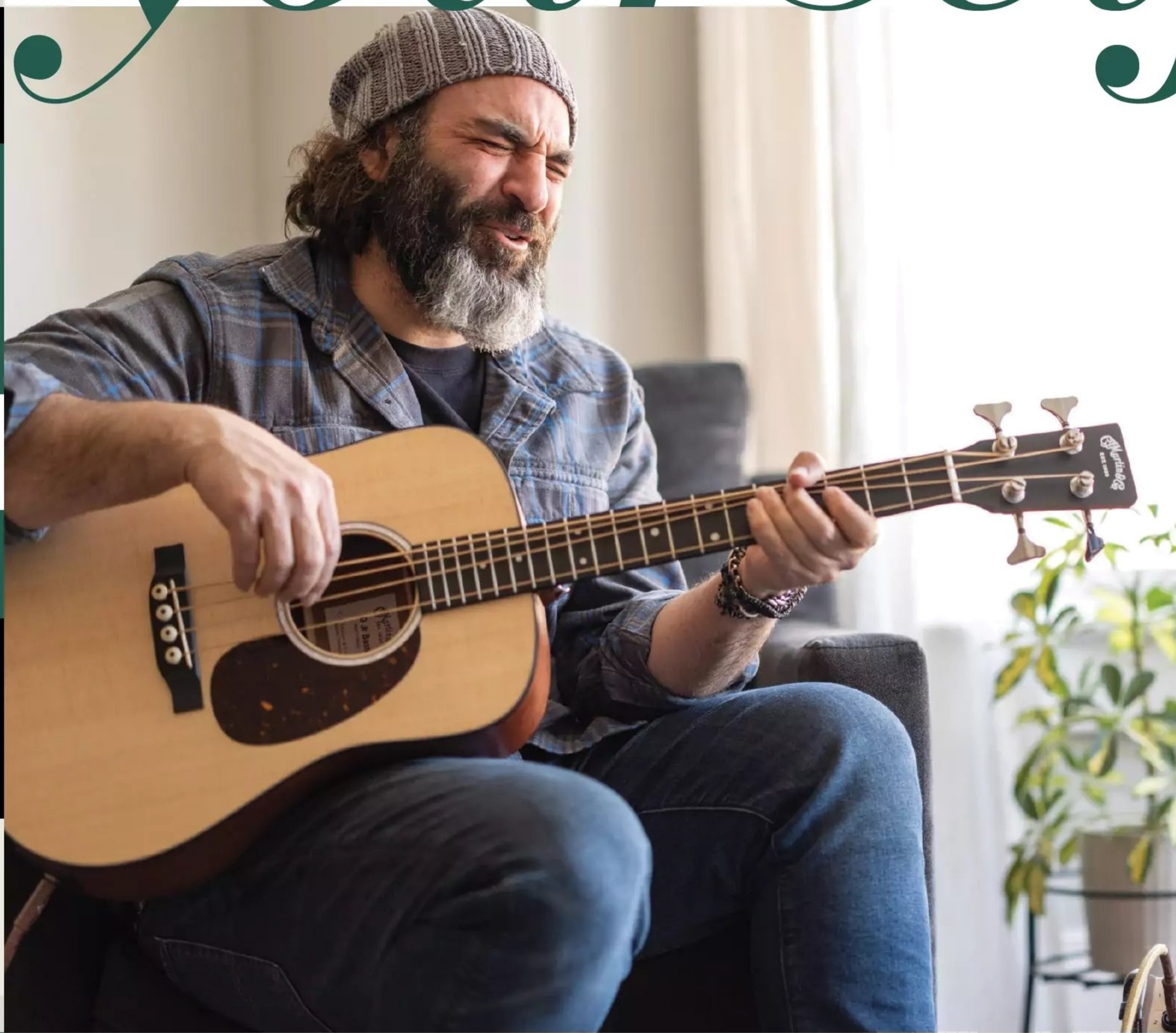
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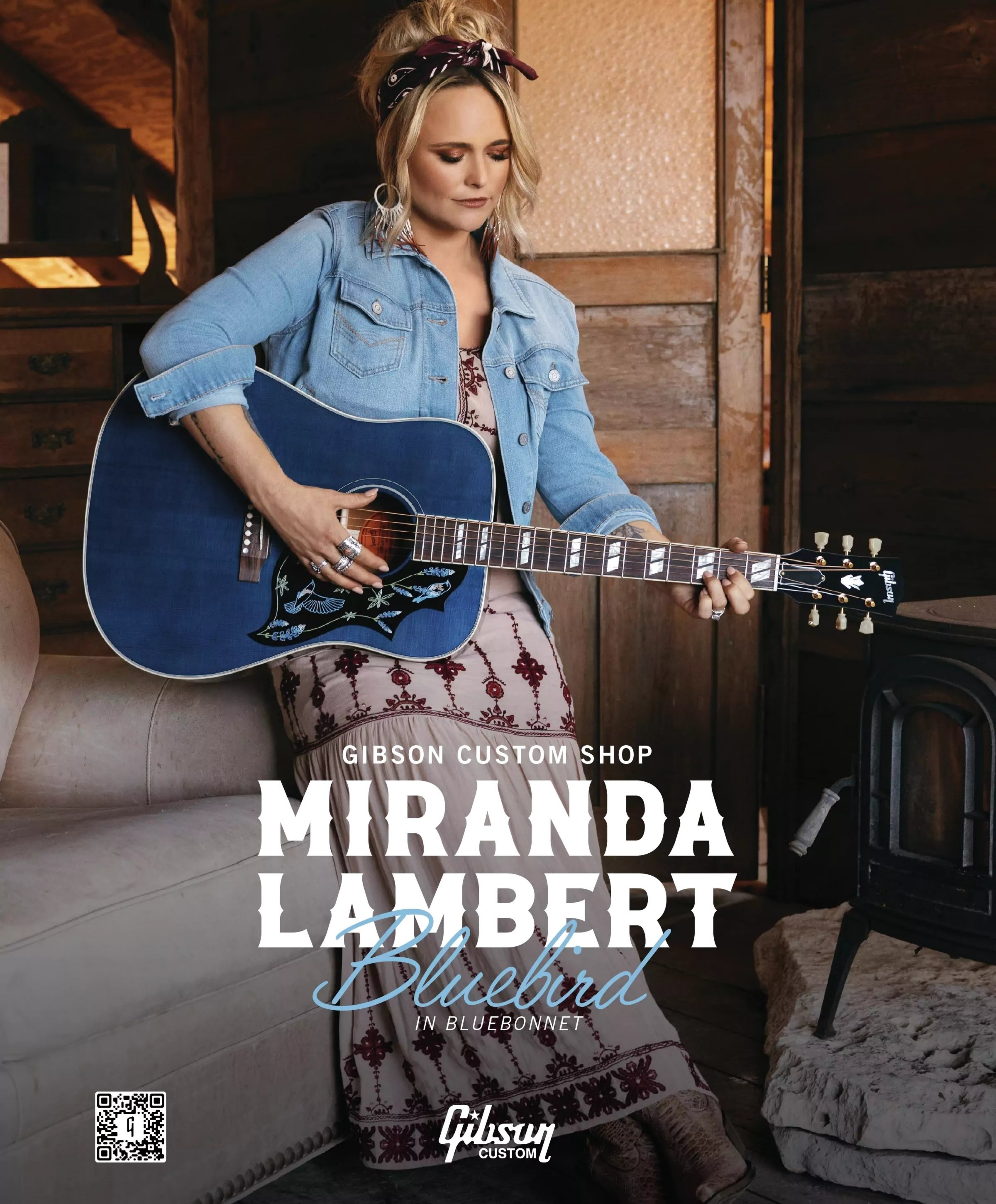
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- 87** **Gearin' Up!**
The latest cool new stuff!



Robbie Robertson

34 DREAM BABY Roy Orbison's Marshall Model 1961

One of the most desirable vintage amplifiers ever made goes by a name it never officially had. Possibly the first Marshall brought to America, ownership by a rock-and-roll legend adds plenty of allure to its story.
| **By Dave Hunter**

38 CLASSICS The first "guitar god" thanks to his work with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, this '63 Strat was one of Michael Bloomfield's favorite electrics in the last years of his life. | **By Ward Meeker**

58 THINLINE CROWN Freddie King's '73 ES-355 An integral piece of Chicago's blues history, Freddie King's style was emulated by Stevie Ray, Beck, Gibbons, Winter, Clapton, and many others. Here's the story of his go-to guitar as

heart disease brought a premature end to his life. | **By Ward Meeker**

62 LASTING LEGACY Robbie Robertson, 1943-2023 Famous mostly for his songwriting, beneath the minimal compositional style that marked Robbie Robertson's work with the Band was a true guitar stylist. The man who went from wild solos with Ronnie Hawkins to penning classics like "The Weight" and "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" passed away August 9. | **By Dan Forte**

70 STRATS AND DATA Ram Tuli Crunches Numbers for The Guide Combine a knack for numbers with a love of old guitars and you could be talking about nearly any accountant/guitar collector. But there's a super-charged version behind the numbers of the new 2024 *Vintage Guitar Price Guide*. | **By Ward Meeker**

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COVER PHOTOS: Robbie Robertson: Gijsbert Hanekroot /Alamy. Freddie King ES-355: Keith Cypert, courtesy of Carter Vintage. THIS PAGE: Robbie Robertson: David Jordan Williams.

The logo for Carra Amplifiers features a stylized, bold, italicized 'C' that frames the word 'ARR' in a similar font. Below this, the word 'AMPLIFIERS' is written in a large, bold, italicized, sans-serif font.

YEARS OF TONE!

A black and white photograph of four men inside a van. One man is sitting on a large amplifier, another is sitting on a box, and two others are standing. A guitar case is on the floor.

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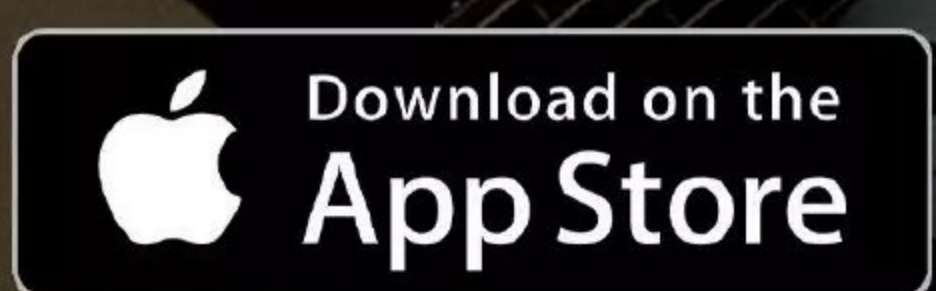


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CARMAN RECOLLECTION

I had a bittersweet reaction to Dan Forte's "Check This Action" column on The Chantays (September '23).

Brian Carman holds a special place in my life. We were "phone friends" for decades and brothers in grief whose first wives had died of breast cancer. We finally met at the Anaheim NAMM show in 2008. By then he had retired from Rickenbacker and Music Man.

Our face-to-face resulted in me buying his '69 Rickenbacker 381/12, which may be the first example. I call it the Pipeline 12, and it'll forever be a reminder of our friendship. Years ago, I found sheet music for "Pipeline" and had it framed then sent to him.

Brian battled Crohn's disease for much of his adult life and lost the fight in 2015. I miss him. Thanks for the story, Dan.

Stephen Johnson
Narberth, Pennsylvania

OVER-STRUNG, UNDERUSED

When I received the September issue, something immediately grabbed my attention – the top-right picture of an eight-string bass.

The eight-string ("Sonic Niche: Eight-String Bases," by Willie G. Moseley) is one of the most-under-utilized instruments in rock and roll. Imagine how many power ballads could have benefitted from the way it injects melancholy and haunting melodies, then sheer bombast when needed.

I'd like to see more coverage on non-Gibson and Fender instruments from the '70s and '80s.

Rick Pizzo
Lansdale, Pennsylvania

FIXIN' PRESCRIPTION

I'm always thrilled to get the new issue. The first thing I check is the table of contents to see if there's a "Dan's Guitar Rx" (if it's not there I'm still thrilled, just a little less!). Dan Erlewine's columns are very useful for seeing how a true luthier approaches repair, even if I'd never have the guts to take on some of his repairs, his step-by-step explanations give the typical guitarist a better understanding of their instruments and how to diagnose them. Kudos, Dan!

I also wanted to thank VG for revisiting Marshall Crenshaw's great sophomore album, *Field Trip* ("Pop 'N Hiss," Septem-

ber '23). Marshall is a great artist, performer, and guitarist. In a perfect world, he would be a much bigger star. Keep up the good work!

Jake Kerwin
Oxford, Connecticut

CRENSHAW CONFIRMATION

Thank you for the Marshall Crenshaw "Pop 'N Hiss"! I bought his debut album back when it was released and was blown away. Such a fun, bright record that I still listen to regularly, along with *Field Day*. I play a couple of Marshall songs in my act, using a sunburst Strat, of course.

Jeff Winkelhake
Elizabeth, Colorado

MICK MEMORIES

Thanks so much to Wolf Marshall for the September "Fretprints" column on one of my all-time favorites, Mick Ralphs.

I was playing bluegrass and acoustic blues on a Guild D-35 when I first heard him. Then I heard the solo on "Sweet Jane" by Mott the Hoople, and it blew my mind – so melodic and fierce at the same time. I *had* to learn how to play it. Next thing you know, I had a new Norlin Les Paul and a 50-watt Marshall. I started playing in cover bands that did so many great '70s-rock tunes by Bad Company, Thin Lizzy, Rolling Stones, Mott, Joe Walsh, etc. So much fun!

I was fortunate to see the Mick Ralphs Blues Band at the Cambridge Rock Festival, in England, toward the end of his career. He sounded amazing.



Steve Lukather

Thanks to you, VG, and thanks to Mick.
Barry Hill
San Diego, California

LUKE LICKS

Thank you for the feature interview with Steve Lukather (August '23). After reading it, I enjoyed another viewing of the *25th Anniversary: Toto Live in Amsterdam* DVD from 2003 and was once again struck by the band's version of "While My Guitar Gently Weeps," in which Luke plays one of the most fantastic leads you could imagine; it's a wild, melodic ride where he does indeed make his guitar weep. I played it over and over.

Ron Unwin
Elmira, New York

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Bob Hartman and Gregg Miner discussing Knutsen guitars at a Harp Guitar Gathering.

HARP GUITAR GATHERING SET FOR OCTOBER 27-29

The 21st Harp Guitar Gathering will take place October 27-29 in Mooresville, North Carolina. The event includes presentations, workshops, and performances highlighting the instruments.

Featured workshop hosts/performers this year are Jon Pickard and Martin Please, along with Muriel Anderson, Dave Powell, Andy Wahlberg, and Stephen Bennett, among others.

Mike Dooling will conduct a luthier's forum on Saturday, and Gregg Miner will speak on Sunday.

To see a detailed schedule and/or register, visit harp guitargathering.com. Passes are sold for half days, full days, and the entire event. Tickets are offered for individual performances.

MARTIN PRESENTS AT FRIST ART MUSEUM

On August 2, the Frist Art Museum, Nashville, hosted C.F. Martin, IV for a presentation on the history of Martin Guitar, in conjunction with the exhibit "Stringed Stories: The Guitar in American Art."

Joined by visual artist Robert Goetzl and Martin clinician/singer/songwriter Craig Thatcher, Martin, IV displayed and discussed guitars and prototypes from the Martin Museum in Nazareth, Pennsylvania. The event was attended by 300 people.



Paul Franklin with a pedal steel built by his father, Vince Gill his '51 J-200.

VINCE GILL & PAUL FRANKLIN

Homage to Ray Price

Vince Gill and longtime friend, collaborator, and pedal-steel giant Paul Franklin share a love of country music history. *Bakersfield*, their 2013 collaboration, paid homage to the timeless, twang-heavy music of Buck Owens and Merle Haggard.

Sweet Memories: The Music of Ray Price and the Cherokee Cowboys celebrates the late, iconic Texas singer and his Western-swing flavored backup band, considered one of the best of its day. Willie Nelson, Roger Miller, Johnny Paycheck and guitarist Pete Wade were Cowboys alumni. The pedal-steel work of members Jimmy Day and Buddy Emmons further enhanced their already-lofty stature.

Always his own man, Price, who initially

emulated the nasal singing of friend and touring partner Hank Williams, Sr., developed a distinctive voice after Hank's death in 1953. The danceable, Texas-style $\frac{4}{4}$ "shuffle" rhythm he created for his '56 hit "Crazy Arms" became as much a Price/Cowboys trademark as their glitzy rhinestone outfits. He maintained his hard-country sound until his controversial 1966 decision to disband the Cowboys and embrace fully-orchestrated country-pop, which ultimately proved successful.

As with *Bakersfield*, Gill and Franklin avoided obvious choices. Instead, they sought out worthy lesser-known Price material spanning nearly two decades (1951-'70).

"I love 'Crazy Arms,'" Gill explains. "I love

all those things, but why not do a deeper dive? We tried to find things that would suit what Paul would do. Some things might be good for a Telecaster – not all, but a couple. It makes a nice transition.”

Both, however, discovered Price via “Crazy Arms.”

“I’m from Detroit,” says Franklin, son of respected pedal-steel maker Paul Franklin, Sr. “That’s the first (Price song) I paid attention to. I started playin’ when I was eight, and my dad was informing me about country music. I learned how to play ‘Crazy Arms.’ That’s the song that taught me my first Dominant 7th chord,” he laughs.

“It was so massive,” Gill reflects. “What was so cool is, even though it was $\frac{4}{4}$, it felt like $\frac{2}{4}$ because of the swagger and the backbeat. It was a shuffle, but a laid-back shuffle, and it swung and danced as hard as any record ever has.”

The tunes range from “Weary Blues,” a 1951 Hank ballad, through “Danny Boy” and “You Wouldn’t Know Love” better-known hits from Price’s later country-pop era.

Gill’s trusty ’54 Tele appears occasionally. “On the handful of shuffles like ‘One More Time’ and ‘Walkin’ Slow,’ a couple of those had Tele solos,” he noted.

His second deep dive involved gear from his massive vintage collection. “I played 335’s, I played archtops.”

He paid subtle tribute to A-Team guitar master Grady Martin, who played on Price sessions for more than two decades. “I played a lot of fills on acoustic that emulate Grady a bit.”

Franklin stuck to his own sound, but occasionally conjured empathetic licks recalling those injected by Day and Emmons.

“I love Emmons and Day,” he says. “I didn’t want to copy the original records, but we didn’t want to depart completely from the emotion.”

Along with his Franklin pedal steel, he used vintage tube amps, adding, “I think you can get a great traditional sound many ways.” Some tracks featured his older Sho-Bud and Emmons instruments. “Both existed in the ’60s, so it stayed within that sound.”

Guitarists Tom Bukovac, Derek Wells, and Steve Gibson (on tic-tac bass) played on the album, which was recorded at Gill’s home studio in an affluent Nashville suburb. “The countriest music in town is being recorded in Belle Meade,” he quips.

Gill knew Price personally and fully understands his vocal approach.

“I did study the phrasing,” he says. “That’s what made him such a great singer. He’s like a jazz singer. Most sing on the beat, but Willie phrases in a way similar to Ray, with the same kind of spirit.

“It was really fun to make all this effort to emulate it just enough so it felt reminiscent, but not verbatim. Like Paul said, it’s no interest to either of us to do a note-for-note thing. ‘Danny Boy’ and ‘You Wouldn’t Know Love’ would be the closest to the broad-voiced singer doing the big ballads. We stayed in the realm of the beer joint/honky-tonk spirit.

“It was enlightening for me and Paul, finding things we never knew he covered. I never knew he sang ‘Sweet Memories’ and ‘Weary Blues.’ I think it’s gonna be fun for everybody to discover some of the hidden gems he was part of.”

Gill sees a particularly obvious audience for *Sweet Memories* and its unabashedly old-school approach.

“The generation of me and Paul’s age, and older, it’s a given that they’re gonna like this. They miss it.

“The neat part is that, potentially, it could (attract) a 20- or 30-year-old kid, a young musician who’d go, ‘I never knew this existed! I want to learn more.’ And they take the deep dive, learn the history, and find who they find and who inspired *them*.

“That’s the way it is for me. I’ve never been an overly cocky guy thinking, ‘I could do this, I could do that.’ I just sing and play as hard as I can.” – **Rich Kienzle**

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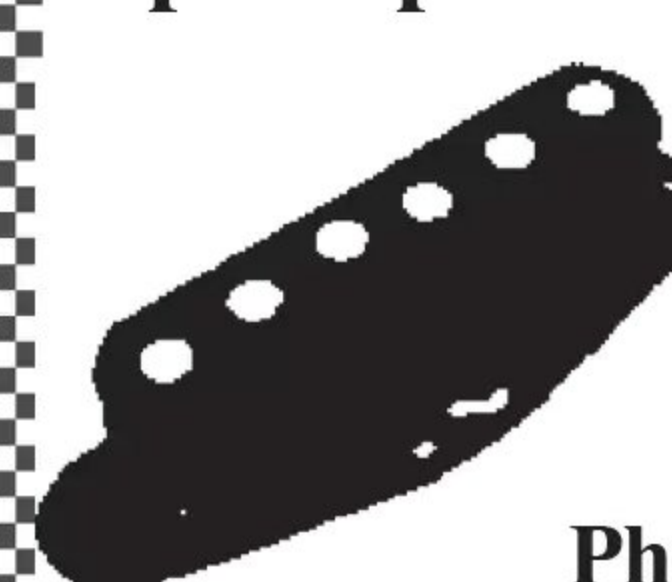
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IN MEMORIAM

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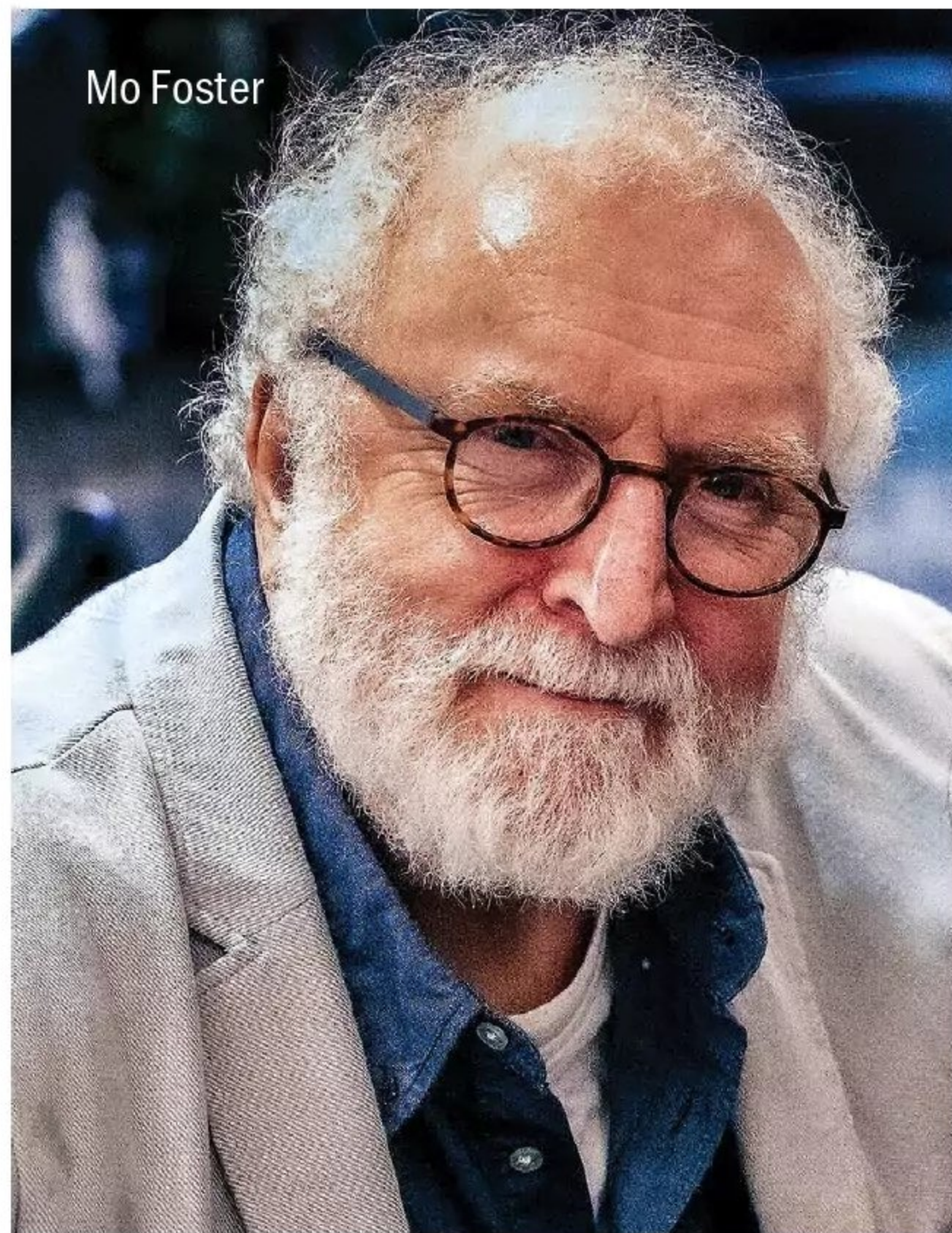
Michael Ralph “Mo” Foster, British bass stalwart who played with Jeff Beck, Phil Collins, Eric Clapton, Gary Moore, and others, died July 3. He was 78 and battled cancer of the liver and bile ducts after a stage-four diagnosis in May ’23.

While studying physics and math at the University of Sussex in the mid ’60s, Foster played drums and bass in pub bands. After a brief stint as a lab research assistant, he opted for a career in music and helped form a progressive-jazz/rock group called Affinity. When it disbanded in 1970, Foster placed an ad in *Melody Maker*, looking for like-minded musicians. It generated a call from former Manfred Mann singer Mike D’Abo, and the two recorded and toured together; the association led to Foster being hired for a session at Lansdowne Studios, in London.

More session work followed and he ultimately did more than 350 studio dates including TV and film sessions for the James Bond and Pink Panther franchises. One of his finest associations was with Beck on the 1980 *There and Back* album, adding four-string to the FM cut “El Becko” and gorgeous fretless to “The Golden Road.” He also recorded five solo albums and toured or performed live with Beck, Clapton, Collins, Moore, Van Morrison, Sting, Hank Marvin, Cliff Richard, Roger Glover, Leiber & Stoller, and many others.

In 2000, he wrote the acclaimed *17 Watts? The Birth of British Rock Guitar*, and followed in 2010 with *British Rock Guitar: The First 50 Years, the Musicians and Their Stories*.

Of his sideman’s philosophy, Foster told *Bass Inside* magazine, “Three decades of studio playing has taught me to be aware of the needs of the song, the requirements of the bass line and the actual



Mo Foster

sound that I’m making... I also realized that if you can play one note beautifully – and in the right place – then you are on the way.” – **Pete Prown/Ward Meeker**

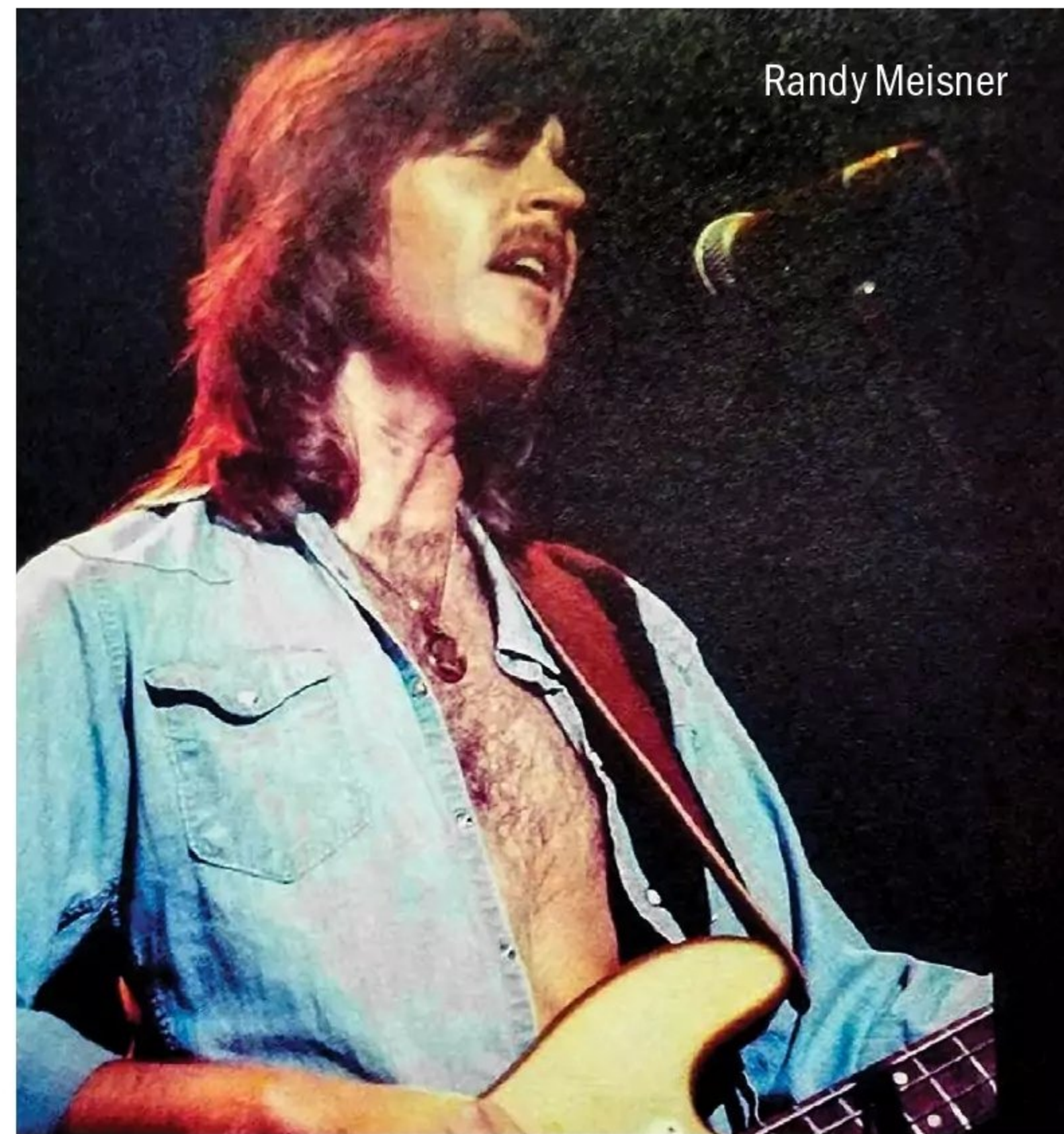
RANDY MEISNER

Randy Meisner, bassist and co-founder of the Eagles, died July 26. He was 77 and suffered complications from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Born in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, on March 8, 1946, he started taking guitar lessons after seeing Elvis Presley on “The Ed Sullivan Show,” then as a high-schooler moved to bass and began playing in local bands, inspired by R&B and Motown bassists.

From the early to mid ’60s, Meisner played in a series of groups that toured nationally and signed a recording deal with a small regional label in Texas. In ’66, he moved to California with a band that recorded a handful of singles, none of which charted.

In May of ’68, Meisner formed Poco with Buffalo Springfield’s Richie Furay and Jim Messina. He left the group after the release of its debut album, briefly played with



Randy Meisner

Rick Nelson’s Stone Canyon Band, then became a member of Linda Ronstadt’s backing band with Bernie Leadon, Don Henley, and Glenn Frey. In ’71, they parted with Ronstadt and signed to Asylum Records as the Eagles. Meisner spent six years with the band as it recorded five albums, concluding with the classic-rock stalwart *Hotel California*.

In the Eagles, Meisner sang a handful of songs – “Tryin’” (from the 1972 debut), “Certain Kind of Fool” (*Desperado*), “Midnight Flyer” (*On the Border*), and “Take it to the Limit” which he wrote with finishing help from Henley and Frey for 1975’s *One of These Nights*. Being decidedly uncomfortable in the spotlight, Meisner was reluctant to have the group perform his songs live. But, after “Take it to the Limit” hit #4 on the *Billboard* Hot 100, it became a fan favorite during the 1977 *Hotel California* tour. With a dislike of flying/traveling and weary of its personality dynamics, Meisner quit the band that August.

Though often overshadowed by the larger personalities/egos Henley and Frey, Meisner was an extraordinary vocal and bass talent. With a better ear

for tonal variation than many bassists, he played an array of instruments ranging from standards such as Fender’s Precision, Jazz, and Telecaster basses, a Rick 4001, and Music Man Stingray to more-obscure models such as a Peavey Foundation and a Hagstrom II with a red plastic top. Its woody tone provided the low end on much of the Eagles’ early material, including the gliss-laden “One of These Nights.”

Meisner’s post-Eagles career included several solo albums, a Poco reunion, a stint in the group Black Tie (with Billy Swan and Bread’s Jimmy Griffin), and the Roberts-Meisner band with Rick Roberts of Flying Burrito Brothers and Firefall fame.

Despite the assurance Meisner brought to his music, he led a sometimes troubled and tragic life. After what he described as being “shunned” for decades by fellow Eagles, they asked him to join a reunion tour in 2013, but poor health kept him from participating. His final performance with the band took place 15 years earlier, at its 1998 induction to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. – **Ward Meeker/Jim Washburn**

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ADRIAN VANDENBERG

Return Of The Flying Dutchman

On Adrian Vandenberg's latest album, *Sin*, the Flying Dutchman joins forces with former Yngwie Malmsteen vocalist Mats Levén for the heaviest album of his career. Gothic riffs, Led Zep breakdowns, and classically influenced Euro metal intensity rule. But as always, Vandenberg leans into strong songs and the good notes.

What are your thoughts on the new record?

I'm extremely happy. Every album is an adventure that represents a special time in my life. I get antsy because, a couple of weeks after the mix, I hope I'm still excited about it – and I *am*.

When I was 20 and got my first recording

contract, I didn't have enough experience to translate the ideas I had in my head; I listened to stuff from Jeff Lynne and Rainbow and other great bands. Sitting next to my Marshalls, I'd get excited. Then I'd go into the control room and everything sounded thin. I wondered, "How the hell can I translate my guitar sound to a record?" It comes down to experience and getting a performance out of people. A live experience is what I always try to achieve on an album. It's also about attitude. When I record, I close my eyes and imagine playing live onstage, with air coming out of the Marshalls. It always has to do with a state of mind.

What's different about this album?

I had to kick some serious ass to go further

than my last album, because I was pretty happy with that one, too. I decided to go heavier with everything, and was fortunate to run into Mats. Anybody who survives working with Yngwie is pretty cool in my book (laughs). He's one of those true singers who digs into his soul. There are technical demands, but singing is all about getting your emotions across. He really performs, and I'm very happy to be working with him.

Since emerging in the early '80s, you've maintained a very distinctive vibrato.

That's great to hear. I don't think about it, but it's essential for *any* guitar player. I could hear three or four notes from my heroes – Brian May, Leslie West, Eric Clapton early in his career – and know it was them. That's lost on the last couple of generations of guitar players. They play on Youtube, pay for personal lessons with Steve Vai or Joe Satriani, and they all sound similar to my ears. The guys I grew up with had a very personal identity.

I played at a festival in Holland three years ago, and Extreme was playing. Nuno Bettencourt came up and said, "Mr. Vandenberg, do you mind if we take a picture together?" He's such a nice guy. Nuno is one of my favorite players. He's a brilliant guitarist with no attitude who loves what he does. Guys like that leave an echo for other players, and I'm still inspired. It makes me want to pick up the guitar.

Do you still play your Peavey signature model from the '80s?

I used my trusty Les Paul Heritage on *Sin*, which I've been dragging around the world since 1980 and has been relic'd by my own blood, sweat, and tears. I still play my Peavey Vandenberg; there are things I can do with it that I can't do with the Les Paul because it has the vibrato, and I can reach the high notes.

I've been working with Peavey on a reissue. I've had millions of questions on social media about it, and those people are going to be very happy because they'll be able to get one.

Are you doing anything different with the reissue?

I experimented with different pickups because the originals were very bright. So, the reissue will have Seymour Duncans, and the vibrato will be a Floyd Rose instead of a Kahler. Those are the only differences.

Do you ever play guitar around L.A. or hang out with friends and jam?

I've never really done that. My music and playing are so connected that I've only played a minimal amount on other records. I rarely play at jams because it doesn't inspire me.

If Nuno called, would you jam with him?

Oh, yeah (laughs)! – **Oscar Jordan**

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BOB SPALDING

Latest Ventures

More than 60 years since their inception, The Ventures are still a rockin' band, featuring longtime guitarist/bassist Bob Spalding and drummer Leon Taylor (son of original drummer Mel Taylor) plus the guitar/bass team of Ian Spalding and Luke Griffin. Their latest is the cosmic concept album *New Space*, retaining their timeless "instro" sound. We checked in with Bob as lift-off approached.

People often confuse the Ventures instrumental rock with California surf rock.

The early Ventures recordings, from 1960 to '62, predated surf – "Walk, Don't Run," "Perfidia" and "Ram-Bunk-Shush" – by a couple of years. That sound began with instrumental

groups from Southern California; in response, the Ventures released *Surfin'* with instrumentals like "Pipeline" and "The Ninth Wave," but then moved on, stylistically, to concept albums – psychedelic, hard rock, easy listening, even classical and movie themes.

Did you discover The Ventures as a teenager?

Before The Ventures, I was mesmerized by the sound of Elvis guitarists Scotty Moore and Hank Garland. Also, my older brother had Link Wray's "Raw-Hide." When "Walk, Don't Run" was released, I was really drawn to their playing and was fortunate to attend a rock-and-roll show with Bobby Vee, Jo Ann Campbell, and The Ventures. In my mind The Ventures stole the show even though it was just Don Wilson and

Bob Bogle playing Jazzmasters. That was the moment I told myself, "That's what I want to do."

Which guitars, amps, and effects did you and Ian use on *New Space*?

We used Jazzmasters. Ian did some additional recording with a Fender baritone, tuned B to B. I also used my Hallmark signature guitar, a Recording King lap steel with C6 tuning, and a Washburn B-17 banjo in G tuning. I had an ancient DOD wah/volume pedal and Hallmark Fuzz Blender.

"Moon Base Drive" really nails that Ventures mojo. What's the secret?

First and foremost is an attractive, engaging melody. Second, there's the eighth notes for the

rhythm guitar, to give it that "Ventures" drive. Third – and most-challenging – is making an arrangement that will keep listeners' interest through the entire song.

Which effects do we hear on "The Alien"?

I became fascinated with the sound of Lonnie Mack some years ago. He used a combination of the vibrato arm on his Gibson Flying V and unique vibrato settings on a Magnatone amp. I figured out that vibrato was electronically different than tremolo. I wanted to get that vibrato kind of sound on "The Alien" because it had to sound like outer space – without being goofy. Luckily, I found a pedal we used for many leads and intros – a TC Electronic Shaker vibrato. I played the wah passage on the last verse using the DOD FX-17.

The Ventures have a rabid following in Japan. Without those fans, would The Ventures have survived?

That's an interesting question. The only observation I can make is they influenced a whole generation of young people in the U.S., Canada, and Europe during the '60s to play an electric guitar and form a band. In Japan, they did the same thing, which had a profound influence on the music culture there.

Touring in Japan is a real experience. We play cultural theaters that seat anywhere from 1,000 to 2,000.

When you played Ventures gigs with the late Nokie Edwards, you played guitar on "Walk, Don't Run," while Nokie played bass.

I've always been able to play in the style of Bob Bogle using the Jazzmaster vibrato. When we played live, Don wanted to keep the songs in their original form as much as possible, so I was drafted to play the Bob-style leads. Nokie was okay with playing bass on those songs. Also, at that time he was playing completely with a thumbpick, which is difficult to use for double, alternate picking.

How would you describe the guitar styles of Nokie, Bob, and Gerry McGee.

Bob was the most unique guitar player I've ever known, and had the most incredible sense of tone and expression. When I first heard "Walk, Don't Run" I thought the lead was played on a steel guitar. Nokie had an uncanny ability to play guitar in ways that none of us today can understand or duplicate. Gerry was a gifted guitarist; his style was difficult to emulate, which kept him in demand as a studio musician. Gerry's Southern-blues style also changed the character of the Ventures, though I believe my style gravitates toward Bob and Nokie. I'm most comfortable playing in their styles – perhaps that gives me my *own* style. – **Pete Prown**

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JOANNA CONNOR

Blue-Collar Virtuoso

Joanna Connor's latest is her most-potent album to date. *Best Of Me* serves up a feast of guitar styles and genres, all under the banner of the blues. Special guests include Joe Bonamassa, Josh Smith, Gary Hoey, and Mike Zito, all bringing fiery fretboard interplay. But more importantly, *Best Of Me* is a window into the soul of a Chicago slide virtuoso.

How are you?

Well, Buddy Guy snatched my keyboard player, Dan Souvigny. That was a little hard, but we've been soldiering forward. He played on the new record, but now he's living the A-list rock star life (laughs). But I have a great rhythm section, so we'll be fine.

Best Of Me has a lot of fire. Bassist Shaun Gotti Calloway is a monster.

He's unbelievable. He's a character, and I

love him. He's special, and I'm trying to hold on to him as long as I can (laughs).

Did he have a lot of creative input?

He and I wrote the record. He wrote two by himself, I wrote two, and we collaborated on the rest. He got the musicians together and it was a collaborative-producing thing. My drummer, Jason "J Roc" Edwards, did all the background vocals, and it was all good with me.

After all this time, you still deliver so many shades of the blues.

I've always been on a journey to be as good a musician as I can be. I always surround myself with great players. People who are better than me do not intimidate me – they inspire me. Your life's journey influences your music. People come up to me and say, "Wow, you sound even better than you used to!" Well, I hope so (laughs)! That's the whole purpose.

You go from single-note playing to slide in the blink of an eye. You sound like two different people.

It's my schizophrenia (laughs). Just kidding. But I would get bored if I didn't. I love everything about the guitar; I love backing people, or whatever. When you do all those hours at Kingston Mines (in Chicago)... let's face it, you gotta mix it up. Some people don't, and that's fine, but I think that's one of the reasons I've had this gig for so long.

Best Of Me might be your most personal album – lots of love and loss.

I wanted to dive into the nitty-gritty. With love songs, there are different aspects. Love is never one thing. There's lust, adultery, and different shades, but it all came from what's in my head and what's in my life. The band helped a lot. We've been playing on all kinds of stages in Chicago and hitting the road a lot. We have a flowing communication onstage. When we play these songs live, they're a little more open-ended. We're not jazz players, but we *think* like jazz players. There's a structure, but a lot of freedom. We listen to each other, and I think that translated to the studio.

What gear did you use?

John Christy, the engineer who owns Studio 2424, had a crazy bank of amps and a switcher to run all them on their own or combine them; there was a Soldano, a Mesa-Boogie, Marshalls, Twins, and vintage cabinets. Isaiah Sharkey records there all the time, which is really cool.

Which amp did you use most?

I used the Boogie a lot. It's an older head that I mostly ran to a Marshall cabinet from the '70s.

Did you use your old Les Paul or your new Les Paul?

The new one – a Custom Shop Murphy Lab '59 Standard. I also used my Delaney LaGrange Joanna Connor model, which is a hybrid Delaney built that feels like a Les Paul but with a Strat tone and a Bigsby. For the first time ever, I raised the action and made it more of a slide guitar; usually, I use the Les Paul with the regular setup.

I also used a '62 Strat that was in the studio – Isaiah Sharkey's old guitar.

What's on your pedalboard?

My new thing is the Belle Epoch Tape Echo by Catalinbread. I also have a Boss Blues Driver and CE-2 Chorus.

What did Mike Zito offer for advice after you signed with his label, Gulf Coast Records?

When we were going in to record, he said, "Don't make the songs too long, so we can get them on the radio," which we were going to avoid anyway. And he said, "Try not to do too much fusion (laughs)!" – **Oscar Jordan**

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ELEONORA STRINO

Italian Jazz Ace

Eleonora Strino is making waves in the jazz world as both guitarist and media-savvy artist. Through her videos and online presence, Strino has gained a following for her serious old-school jazz chops, interpretations, and compositions. Her new album, *I Got Strings*, is a trio recording of swing and bebop material with elegant guitar work out-front. VG checked in with Eleonora from home in Italy.

You favor that timeless jazz style of Barney Kessel, Herb Ellis, and Jim Hall.

I fell in love with Jim Hall's music when I

doubt what I was supposed to do in my life.

Did you ever play rock?

I never played rock guitar. I tried to transcribe some Jimi Hendrix solos once, but that doesn't make me a rock guitarist (laughs)!

You mix chords with single-note phrases.

When studying great guitarists, I started to concentrate on other instruments, especially piano players. For sure, my first influence is Thelonious Monk, who changed the way I looked at the guitar. Then, I studied Hampton Hawes, Bill Evans, Bud Powell, Sonny Clark, and many others. I like the idea of pushing the

limits of the guitar, technically and musically, even imagining that it's a different instrument, like voice, piano, saxophone or drums. Yet I always want to retain the bluesy and country nature of the instrument.

was 15; he was the reason I decided to play jazz guitar. Then I studied all the great guitarists, like Barney Kessel, Grant Green, Wes Montgomery, Chuck Wayne, and Kenny Burrell. My favorites in the moment are Bill Frisell, Julian Lage, and Peter Bernstein, but I am always trying to develop my own style. My next album will be the culmination of this recent work and will only contain original compositions.

How did you get started in jazz?

My father was a great figurative painter, so I come from an artistic family, though there was no jazz at home. I decided to become a jazz guitarist because I heard an album when I was young – the boyfriends of my sisters loved jazz, and they brought albums in the house. I heard *Missouri Sky* by Pat Metheny and Dave Holland, and *Undercurrent* by Jim Hall and Bill Evans. Soon after, I had no

limits of the guitar, technically and musically, even imagining that it's a different instrument, like voice, piano, saxophone or drums. Yet I always want to retain the bluesy and country nature of the instrument.

Talk about the session for this new album.

I recorded it in just one afternoon with two of my favorite musicians, the gifted Greg Cohen on bass and Joey Baron on drums. I was nervous because the album was going to be recorded on analog tape, with no possibility to edit anything. Fortunately, I felt good and had so much fun, trying to focus on the music rather than my guitar.

What I really like about this album is the sound of the trio. Joey told me about how Jim Hall got his tone when recording; apparently he tried to get an acoustic sound out of his guitar, which I also prefer.

"Il Postino" mixes chords with fast-picking improvisation. Your solos are essentially songs unto themselves.

Thank you! Improvisation is an instant composition and I think melody has a leading voice over everything. I also love trying to tell a story when I solo, that's why I often mix chords with picking phrases. One of the best-constructed solos is pianist Hampton Hawes' improv on "Blues The Most," from *Hampton Hawes Trio*.

Which guitars and amp did you use, and do you roll back the Tone knob on your guitar?

I used a Gibson L-7 from 1933, an old Fender Deluxe Reverb, and no pedals. I can't roll back the Tone knob on my old Gibson because there is none; I can only adjust the volume.

You're part of a new generation of great Italian guitar players, including Matteo Mancuso and Pasquale Grasso. Have you noticed a guitar revival there?

I can't talk about myself, but surely I can say that they are inspiring other generations, and I'm very happy to witness them making their way into the international scene. Pasquale (VG, November '21) is a real maestro and Matteo (see page 30) is another great talent. Both have amazing technique.

As a 21st-century musician, you are exceptionally good at social media.

Actually, I am quite a disaster when it comes to organization (laughs). I recorded a video a few years ago, playing guitar in my pajamas, and it became viral. From that point on, I started to gain success on social media and it helped get my music known to other parts of the globe. I am so glad that many people follow me – it inspires me to become a better musician day after day, and enhance my music. – **Pete Prown**

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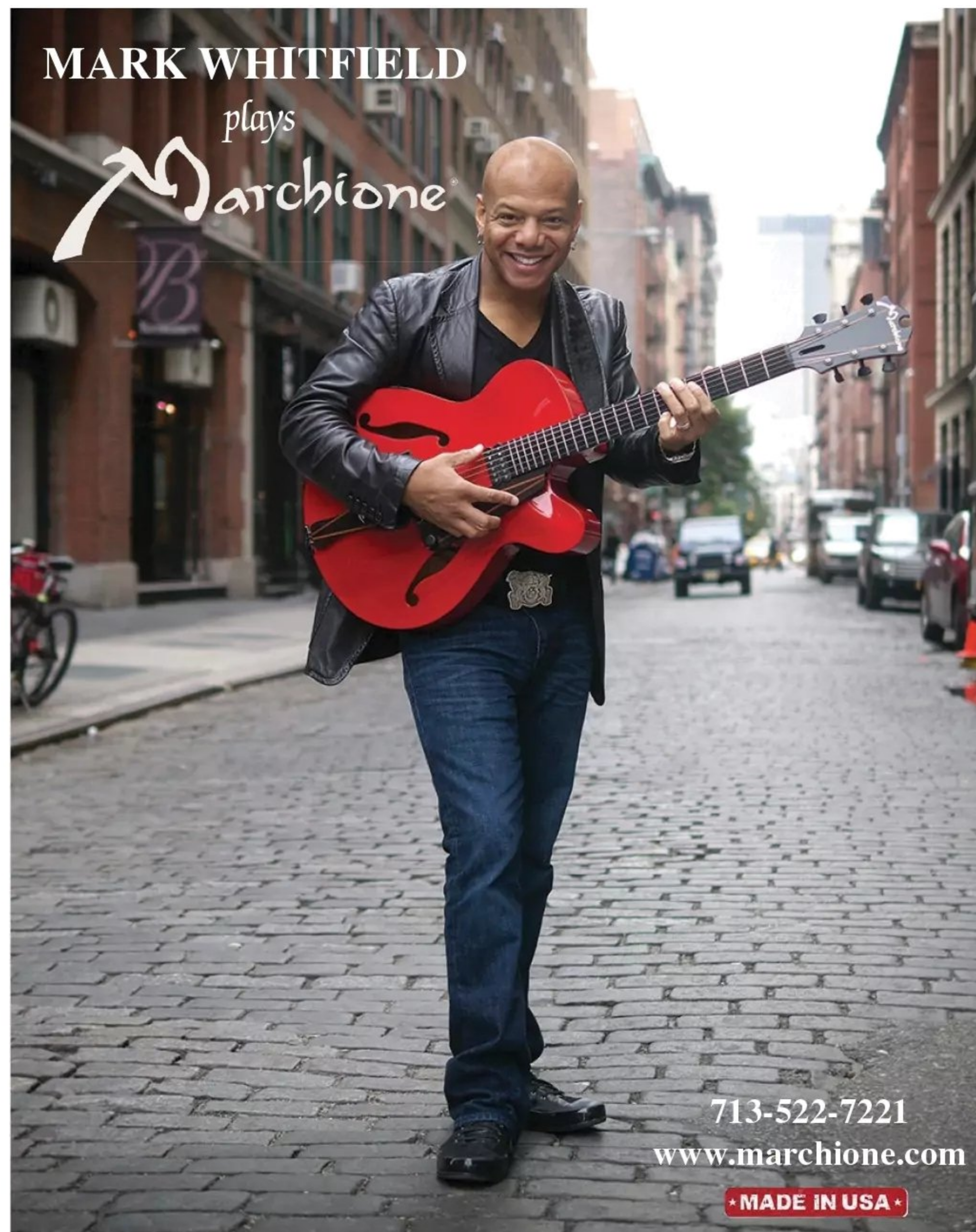
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SCOTT HOLIDAY

Reflection and Escapism in Rival Sons

On the new album by Rival Sons, guitarist Scott Holiday brings a power punch to the band's most-potent album to date. *Darkfighter* contains songs that rock with imagination, smothered in Holiday's super-cool sounds as he takes listeners on a foot-stomping musical journey, complete with sentiment.

ing? It's a dance between escapism and reflection, and my favorite artists have done it well. I want this band to be a healthy balance. It's in the title of the record. We need to fight the darkness.

You write killer tunes, and you have awesome toys.

What were your thoughts going into the making of *Darkfighter*?

We were looking at what was going on in the world, politically, socially, and racially. In every way, it was strange and divisive. I think of music as a juxtaposition where on one hand, it's a healthy form of escapism. You want to put on a record and disappear into an adventure for 50 minutes, and forget about everything that's driving you crazy. I'm a huge fan of music and art. Art should be a mirror to the people, and what's happening. That's the beautiful thing about art historically. You can feel the times in a painting, a story, a sculpture, or music. I hope our music is a healthy dose of both.

There's also a healthy amount of reflection. How could you be living in this world, creating art, and not be some form of a conduit? How genuine is your art if you can't reflect the world from inside of you and put it on paper? Where's the weight in what you're do-

I've done a lot of excavating and flipping rocks over to find sounds that feel new, fresh, and familiar, but crystalized and special. I think the record has a rainbow of good tones.

You always go the extra mile. There are no run-of-the-mill guitar tones on *Darkfighter*.

I appreciate that... Yes, because why not? When I go in to make a record, that's an integral part of it. First off, it's second nature. I've been fortunate enough to have a bunch of boxes, goodies, tones, and knowledgeable ways to record at my fingertips for a lot of years now. It's like having a room full of awesome samurai swords to take into battle. I'm not going to pick up some dingy butter knife when it's time to throw down.

I have all this stuff lying in wait. I usually think, "I want to give this track a little extra texture and color." I've thought about every section of the song. It's not that hard. It's just how I hear music. I'm certainly not the first person to do it (laughs); the people we all grew up listening to, like Page, Gilmour, and Zappa, created such an exciting color palette from section to section. That's the lineage I want to follow.

What are you using on "Guillotine?"

That was an early riff that I expanded. I connected with Peter Kossek, at Kossek FX, in Denmark, and he sent an eight-knob octave fuzz box that I really liked. He explained how the up and down worked, and how it blends. I love it. I told him, "We should put this in an octagon-shaped box. I want to call it The Kraken (laughs)." It's funky, chunky, weird, and glitchy, and has a completely different sound if I dig in too hard. I was happy to find something that nobody else had.

Which guitars are going on the road with you?

I'm taking out my blue Gibson Custom Historic Firebird, a Doug Kauer Excalibur, and a Kauer Organa Major Banshee Baritone, which is a single-pickup guitar tuned to C. I have a bunch of other things, too, like my Banker Custom Korina Flying V and a beautiful doubleneck that Matt Banker built for me. There are Gretsch guitars out with me that are really wonderful, and a custom Yamaha – a one-of-a-kind hollowbody Revstar.

You already have the next album in the can.

Yes, a follow-up to *Darkfighter*, called *Lightbringer*. We've never done a companion record, and I'm proud of what my guys did on it. The release date isn't hard-set yet, but I think everyone is going to like it. It's something different and special. We'll tour Europe supporting both albums until the end of the year. – **Oscar Jordan**

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MATTEO MANCUSO

Journey Into the Future

Emerging as a social-media sensation several years ago, Matteo Mancuso is changing the way we see and hear guitar. Using a radical fingerstyle attack, the Italian ace handles his electric with the fire of a flamenco player, weaving in staggering clarity and precision. Better yet, his instrumental debut, *The Journey*, promises to be the beginning of a long, fret-burning career.

How did you start playing fingerstyle on electric?

I've been playing with fingers since the beginning. I'd see my father playing classical at home when I was a kid, so I thought *every* guitar was meant to be played with fingers. It felt natural.

What's the sound you're after on guitar?

When I'm playing long phrases, the sound I chase is a very uniform and elegant stream of notes. I try to mix legato and staccato techniques to create a cascade effect where all the notes are

distinguishable from each other. I play lightly with my right hand, so I pay a lot of attention to the articulation and accent of the lines.

When we talked five years ago (October '18), you were a breakout internet phenomenon. But instead of starting a professional career, you went to a music college. Why?

Because I had the chance to play a wide repertoire, from big-band swing like Benny Goodman to modern jazz-fusion of Yellowjackets and Snarky Puppy. I also began to transcribe more and expand my vocabulary; I listened to a lot of sax players, like Michael Brecker, Cannonball Adderley, and Bob Mintzer.

As for the online fame, I didn't really care about it at the time. Being active on social media and chasing numbers wasn't my priority, mainly because I was surrounded by incredible musicians in my band and at school. My goal was to improve, musically, and continue learning from them.

Your jazz chops can be heard on "Polifemo."

"Polifemo" is one of the jazziest songs from the album and it's heavily inspired by a Frank Zappa song called "King Kong." I always play it with a clean jazz tone, but for the album, I wanted a less-traditional approach. So, in order to do some contrast with the first piano solo, I chose to record the solo with a distorted tone, then come back to the main theme in unison with the clean guitar.

You play a Yamaha Revstar solidbody, which has been something of a guitar-industry secret for a while.

Mine was custom-built in 2019, and it's my favorite guitar. I've used it for every concert and recording since I got it. It's really similar to a Revstar Professional, but the body is slightly smaller and has different woods; it's chambered mahogany with a maple top, and has a gorgeous pau ferro fretboard, stainless frets, and an oval, C-shape mahogany neck. The pickups are Lollar Imperials with a five-way blade switch. I rarely use the in-between positions, but they sound really good.

What other gear did you use on the album?

For "Time To Leave" and other classical parts, I used my Yamaha GC42S; that's it in the outro from "Silkroad." I recorded almost everything with my Line 6 Helix. For effects, I used plug-ins from Universal Audio. The sitar-sounding solo is a Yamaha Revstar 720B with an old Roland VG-88 pedalboard. In order to use some of the sounds from the pedalboard, I mounted a piezo hexaphonic pickup by Roland; I think it was the GK-2.

I have all this gear thanks to my father; the VG-88 was one of his favorite units back when he was playing!

You've jammed onstage with fusion great Al Di Meola. What was that like?

Jamming with Al was an unreal experience. Imagine walking up to the stage with him and playing his most-iconic songs, like "Mediterranean Sundance" and "Spain." It felt like a lucid dream, and he is such a nice person. We talked a lot about music and guitars, and he gave me some really good advice. Overall, it was one of the best experiences of my life and I can never thank him enough.

What's with the hoodie? Is that your signature stage outfit?

I don't really have a signature fashion (laughs). I just like to be comfy, so hoodies and track suits are my favorite clothes. I almost never use elegant stuff at gigs, unless there is a dress code; I like to go onstage with casual street clothes because that's what I wear every day. I'm just a regular guy who loves to play guitar. — **Pete Prown VG**



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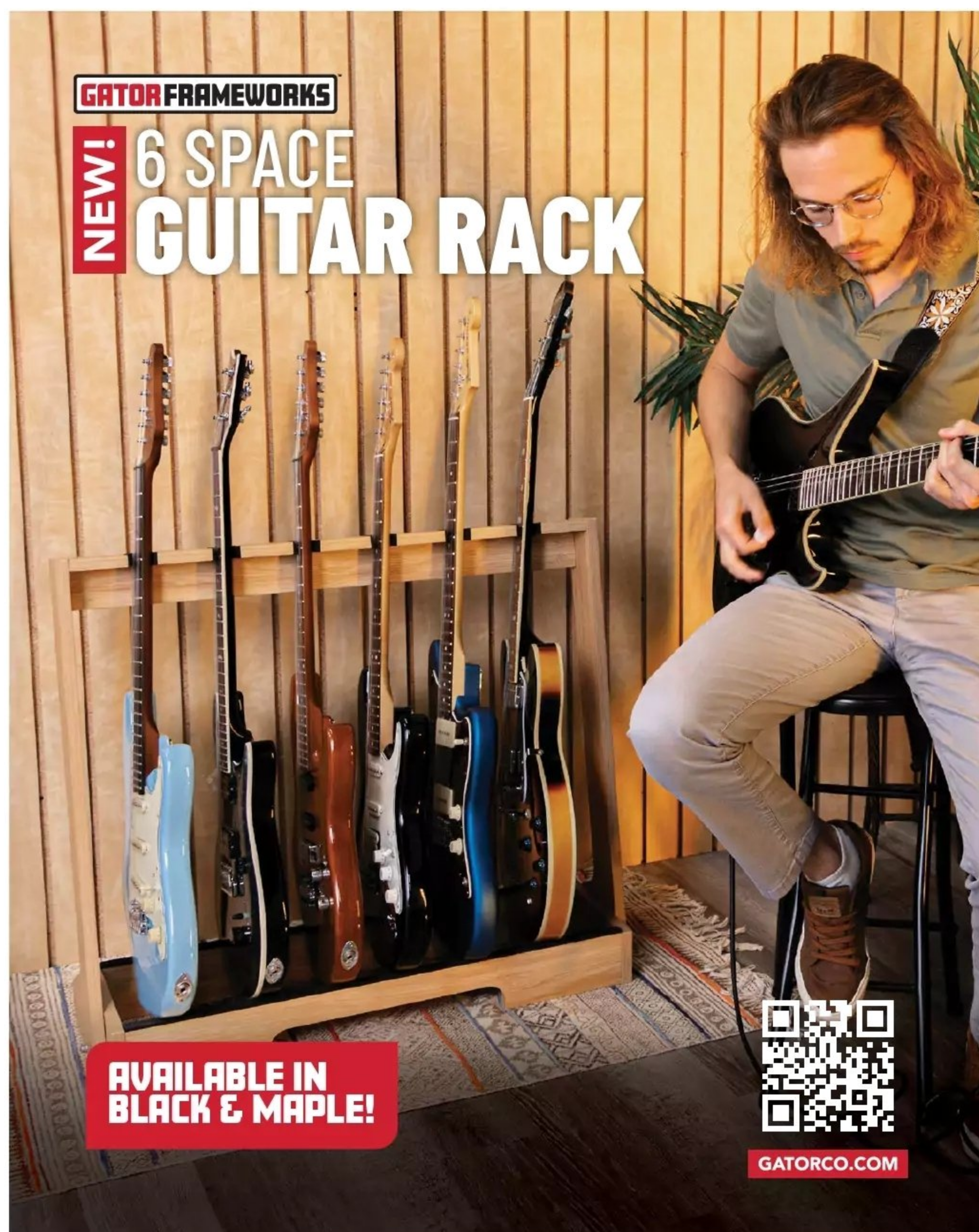


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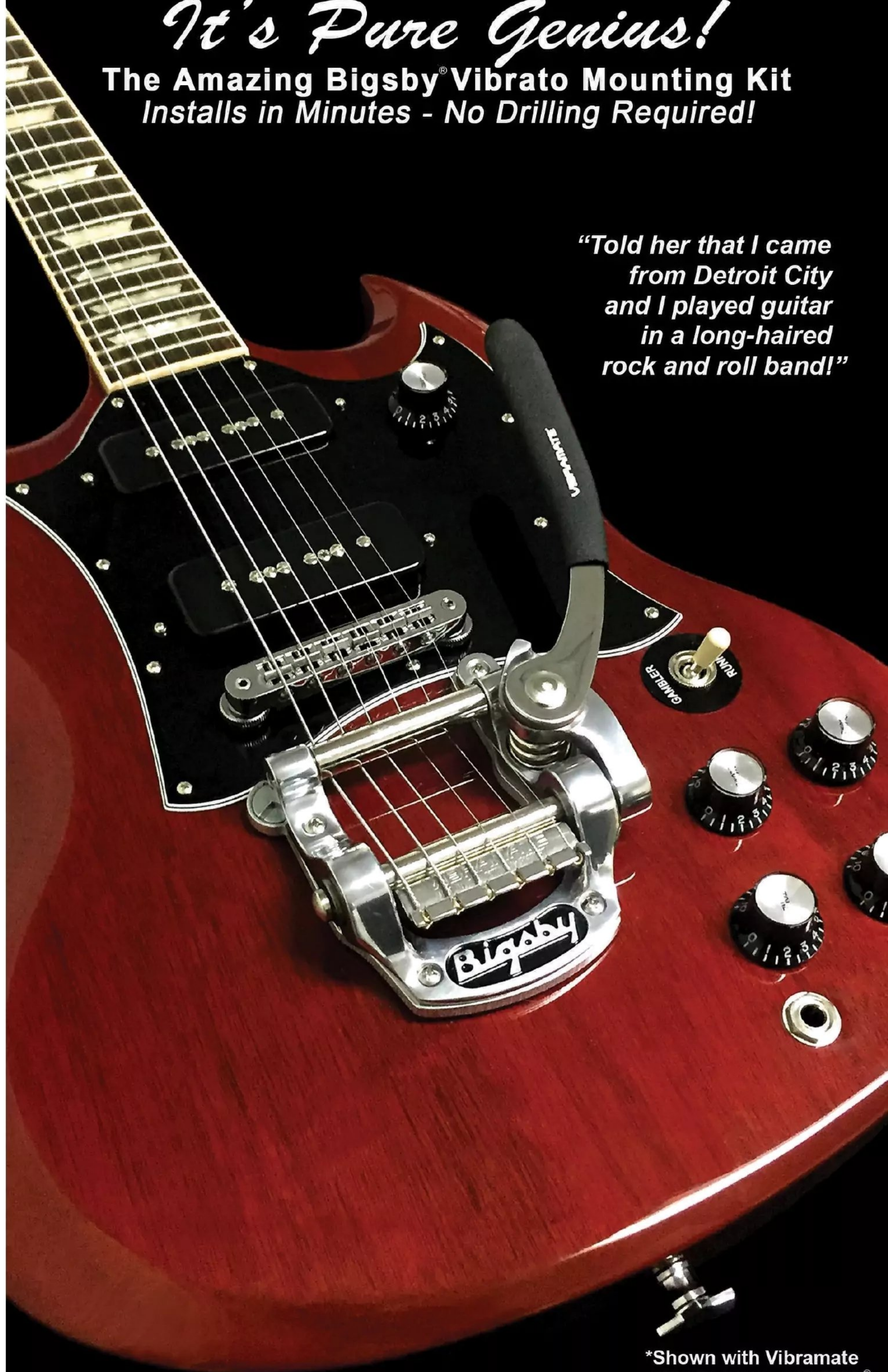
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DREAM BABY

Roy Orbison's Marshall Model 1961

BY DAVE HUNTER

One of the most-desirable vintage amplifiers ever made goes by a name it never officially had. Possibly the first Marshall brought to America, ownership by the great Roy Orbison adds plenty of allure to this Model 1961 “Bluesbreaker.”

Marshall model names and designations have always been confusing, and it didn't help that Jim and company decided to label many

products with four-digit numerical codes that are easily mistaken for calendar years; the Model 1961 and 1962 were not made in

those years, for example, but simply denote the company's 2x12" combos developed at the end of '64 and put into wider production throughout '65 and beyond. The Model 1961 also carries the name Super Tremolo, while the 1962 is the Lead & Bass, and both were part of the JTM45 series until 1967.

Further confusing it all is the fact that most guitarists have referred to both simply as a “Bluesbreaker combo” ever since Eric Clapton used one to record his seminal tracks on the *Blues Breakers* album with

1965 MARSHALL MODEL 1961

- Preamp tubes: four ECC83 (a.k.a. 12AX7)
- Output tubes: two KT66
- Rectifier: GZ34
- Controls: Volume II, Volume I, Treble, Middle, Bass, tremolo Speed and Intensity
- Speakers: two Celestion G12 Alnico
- Output: approximately 30 watts RMS

Photo by Keith Necaise. All other photos by Michael Mastro.

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John Mayall in '66. The recordings almost single-handedly launched the Marshall sound and sent countless aspiring rock guitarists scrambling to attain it. Other artists had already been using Marshall's amps for some time, however, even if the sound hadn't quite been codified. And among the definitive British artists on the Marshall roster appeared one unexpected American – Roy Orbison.

The amp that gave legitimacy to Marshall's use of Orbison's name in promotional literature is now in the possession of former rock-music photographer and roadie Michael Mastro, its only caretaker other than Orbison and his bandmates. Of interest for reasons beyond connection to the late star, it's also an extremely early example of the then-new Marshall combo, and an historically significant amp from several perspectives.



The speakers' original Celestion labels are still faintly visible beneath the yellowed Marshall labels.

"In the mid '80s I had the honor of working [as a roadie] for Atlanta Rhythm Section, and their lead guitarist, Barry Bailey, told me about being a member of Roy Orbison's Candymen in 1965," Mastro told VG. "Roy

booked a tour of Europe, but because Barry was only 17, he couldn't get a work visa. So, Roy called the guitarist Barry had replaced, John Rainey Adkins, to do the tour.

"While they were in London, Jim Marshall gave Roy a JTM45 2x12" combo. Roy later sold it to Adkins, who in turn sold it to Barry. Barry used the amp on Mylon LeFevre's 1969 album *We Believe*, and on his last album with Atlanta Rhythm Section, *Truth in a Structured Form*. In '96, I went to Barry's home to photograph him with the Marshall, and when Barry passed away in 2022, he left it to me in his will."

Most recollections point to Marshall manufacturing its first 2x12" combos around December of 1964 in a bid to bring a "grab-and-go" model to the lineup. The effort simply involved porting over Lead & Bass and Super Tremolo chassis used in the head cabinets into 2x12" cabinets,

which is why even the very first Bluesbreakers carry a “MkIV” designation on their back panels. By every indication, Mastro’s is an early amp indeed; Marshall used rectangular black-and-gold plexiglass logo plates on them partway into 1965, then changed to the new white script “Marshall” logo, allowing us to peg this as an early-’65 example at a glance. A deeper look confirms this, and indicates this might have been among the very first 2x12” Marshall combos.

After receiving the amp from the Bailey estate, Mastro took it to guitarist and Sheryl Crow bandleader Peter Stroud, who consolidated his know-how as a co-founder of 65amps (alongside Dan Boul). After probing, Stroud found component codes dating from no later than the fourth quarter of ’64. The discovery doesn’t necessarily ensure it was built in late ’64, since manufacturers commonly built new products with parts they had on the shelf for a few months or more, but it does point to early origins.

“I also checked with Marshall historian Hugh Gilmartin and Jeff Hime, in Nashville, who believed it was a very early combo,” Mastro said.

Early Marshalls retain several manufacturing quirks that further point to the DIY-like origins of the company’s beginnings.

Among these, the chassis is made from a much thinner aluminum sheet stock than would later be used, folded into shape without welds to join the corner seams (L brackets were bolted to the corners of this one, likely later, as reinforcement). Otherwise, the circuit is remarkably intact, with the hallowed Mullard “mustard cap” signal capacitors, several large, brown carbon-comp resistors, and other components that help make vintage Marshalls legendary.

The cabinet carries a pair of 15-watt Celestion G12 speakers with Alnico magnets, which in later ’65 would be replaced by ferrite-magnet G12M Greenbacks. A close look at the yellow “Amplification by Marshall” label applied to the circular magnet retainers at the backs of the speakers reveals the red “Celestion G12” legend and Thames Ditton, Surrey, address visible underneath. Though early JTM45s generally put out only

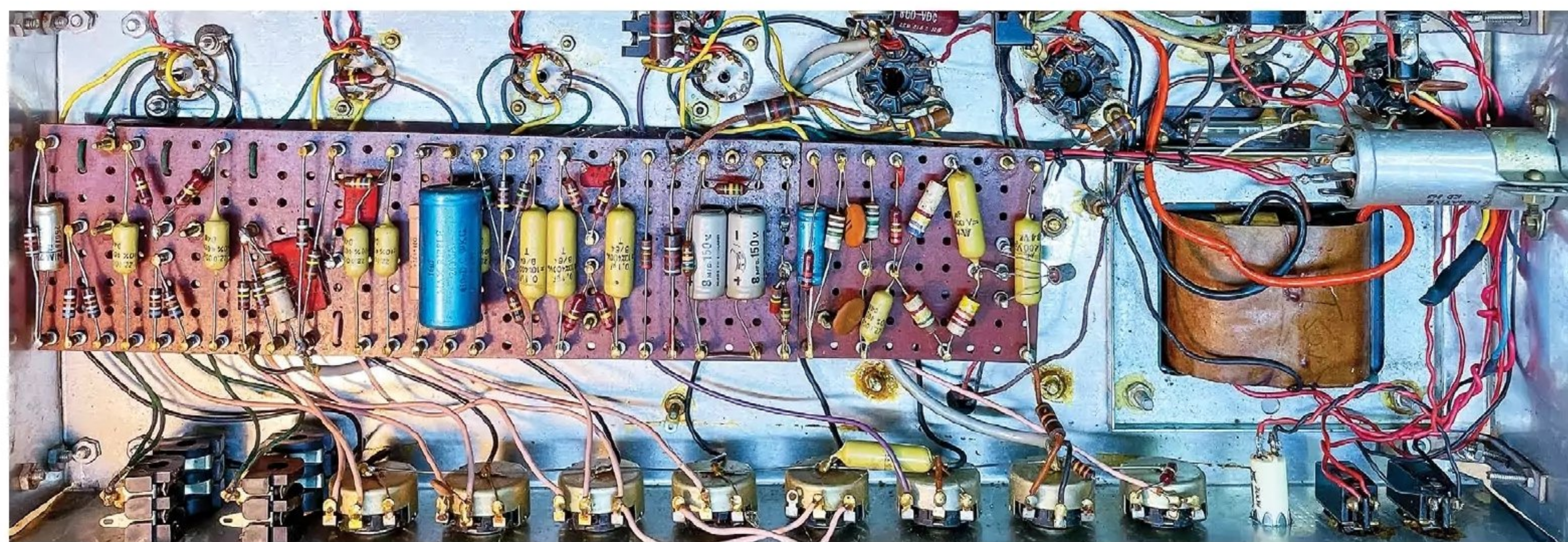
around 30 watts rather than the 45-watt nominal rating they are often given, one operating at peak could blow a pair of 15-watt speakers, and often did, so it’s unusual to find two of them intact.

Anyone who has perused Marshall’s early promotional material likely thought of Orbison as an unlikely proponent of “the Marshall sound,” but other pop-leaning artists of the day also endorsed the new maker’s work, and certainly don’t come to mind when the Bluesbreaker is discussed, much less the archetypal British full stack. Trade ads from late ’64 or early ’65 boasting “Go over big with Marshall” listed semi-forgotten artists such as The Next Five, The Nashville Teens, The High Numbers, Peters Faces (no connection to Small Faces), Tony Rivers and the Castaways, and more significantly, Brian Poole & The Tremeloes and The Yardbirds. Two years later, such ads would list not only

The control panel (top) displays the grime evident from 58 years of use and storage, along with a missing tremolo Intensity knob. Marshall enthusiasts immediately recognize the originality of this circuit, including several “mustard caps” and other desirable components. The “MkIV Super Tremolo Amplifier,” as designated on the chassis’ back panel, indicates its origins with the tremolo-equipped head version of the JTM45.

Orbison, but – far more appropriate to the brand image – Jimi Hendrix, Cream, Small Faces, and Procol Harum (along with, yes, the Bee Gees).

Arguably, however, if not for it having been less-definitive of “the Roy Orbison sound” than that of latter names, there’s a good chance this Super Tremolo would never have left the Big O’s backline and found its way to Mastro, to be preserved for posterity on these pages. Mercy! **VG**



Classics

Antonio Mazzara's passion for music started at age 10, when he started playing a nylon-string classical guitar before moving up to a sunburst '72 Strat and a '68 Princeton Reverb to learn licks from favorite songs. While he never gigged, Mazzara has always loved guitars and the music of Eric Clapton, Jimmy Page, Michael Bloomfield, Jeff Beck, Carlos Santana, Mark Knopfler, and others.

In late 1988, Mazzara got a call from a friend named Dennis Eveland, offering a once-in-a-lifetime deal. A salesman at Freedom Guitars' Hollywood store, Eveland needed quick cash and had talked himself into parting with a Stratocaster that once belonged to Bloomfield, his personal guitar hero. Though the price brought him pause, Mazzara ponied up \$6,500 so he could add the Strat to his collection of old Fenders, Gretsches, and Gibsons.

The guitar had fallen into Eveland's hands the day after Bloomfield's passing in February of 1981; needing cash to return a few of his client's performance advances, Bloomfield's manager called Freedom, acting on a tip that Eveland was a Bloomfield fan and would be very interested. Though he didn't have the money, Eveland quickly talked his boss (shop owner Ed Bowen) into a loan so he

could become the guitar's devoted keeper.

The Strat bears serial number L-13266 on its neck plate, "2 Oct 63" on the neck, and "11/63" on the body. The case has strips of duct tape on which is written, "Bloomfield" and "3," along with a bumper sticker from Flapjack Canyon, a restaurant in Austin, Texas.

Bloomfield, of course, is considered the first "guitar god" thanks to his work on a Telecaster for the 1965 debut album by the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. Just after the Butterfield sessions, he also played on Bob Dylan's *Highway 61 Revisited* and was part of the singer/songwriter's famous performance at the Newport Folk Festival that July.

"The folkies at Newport knew that Michael was a hot ticket, guitar-wise, having heard him with Butter and Bob," said David Dann, author of *Michael Bloomfield: An American Guitarist*.



"But it really wasn't until the first Butterfield album came out that the general listening public took notice; *Highway 61* was controversial because it was electric, and though Michael's solos may not have been earth-shattering, they were a definite departure from Bruce Langhorne's tasteful noodlings on Dylan's previous release – raw, loud, and occasionally even intrusive. It was pure greaser rock-and-roll – the distinction Dylan was looking for. But it wasn't until Butterfield's first release that people began to talk about Michael."

A few months after Newport, Bloomfield ran into John Nuese, a guitarist friend who was forming a band with Gram Parsons set on becoming part of the emerging country-rock scene. For it, he needed a guitar more appropriate than his old Les Paul goldtop. Bloomfield, also interested in changing his sound, offered his Tele in trade.

After playing the goldtop barely more than a year, Bloomfield – who'd become enamored with Les Paul Standards after noodling on John Sebastian's while in New York for an Epic Records demo session in March of '65 – started the hunt for a Standard of his own; his friend (and VG contributor) Dan Erlewine, had a '59 and reluctantly agreed to a swap. With each guitar change along the way, Bloomfield made waves in the market, and his playing a '59 Standard is a major factor in 'Bursts becoming a foremost collectible; in an interview with VG in 2001, pioneering dealer/VG consulting editor George Gruhn said, "Prior to Bloomfield, vintage acoustic guitars were collectible, but electrics were not. He, more than

The Strat had been converted by a previous owner to a 12-string, and was later returned to six-string configuration. The holes on the headstock (below) are more apparent than those filled-in between the bridge and body end.

any other person, changed musicians' views regarding electric-guitar tone during the mid '60s. The tens of thousands of musicians he influenced changed the marketplace immeasurably."

In 1968, *Super Session*, an impromptu jam album Bloomfield recorded with Al Kooper, Electric Flag keyboardist Barry Goldberg, and Flag bassist Harvey Brooks, became a surprise hit. Dann recalls that Bloomfield – uncomfortable with his growing celebrity and the demands of the music industry – reacted by going into semi-retirement.

"Also, because he had begun using heroin while with the Electric Flag, he wanted to remove himself from the temptation," Dann noted. "So he took an apartment in Lagunitas, a rural town 60 miles north of San Francisco."

After several months away from the scene, he'd cleaned up enough to return to the Bay Area, though he had still little interest in playing out.

"He spent much of his time at home in Mill Valley, watching TV and reading," Dann noted.

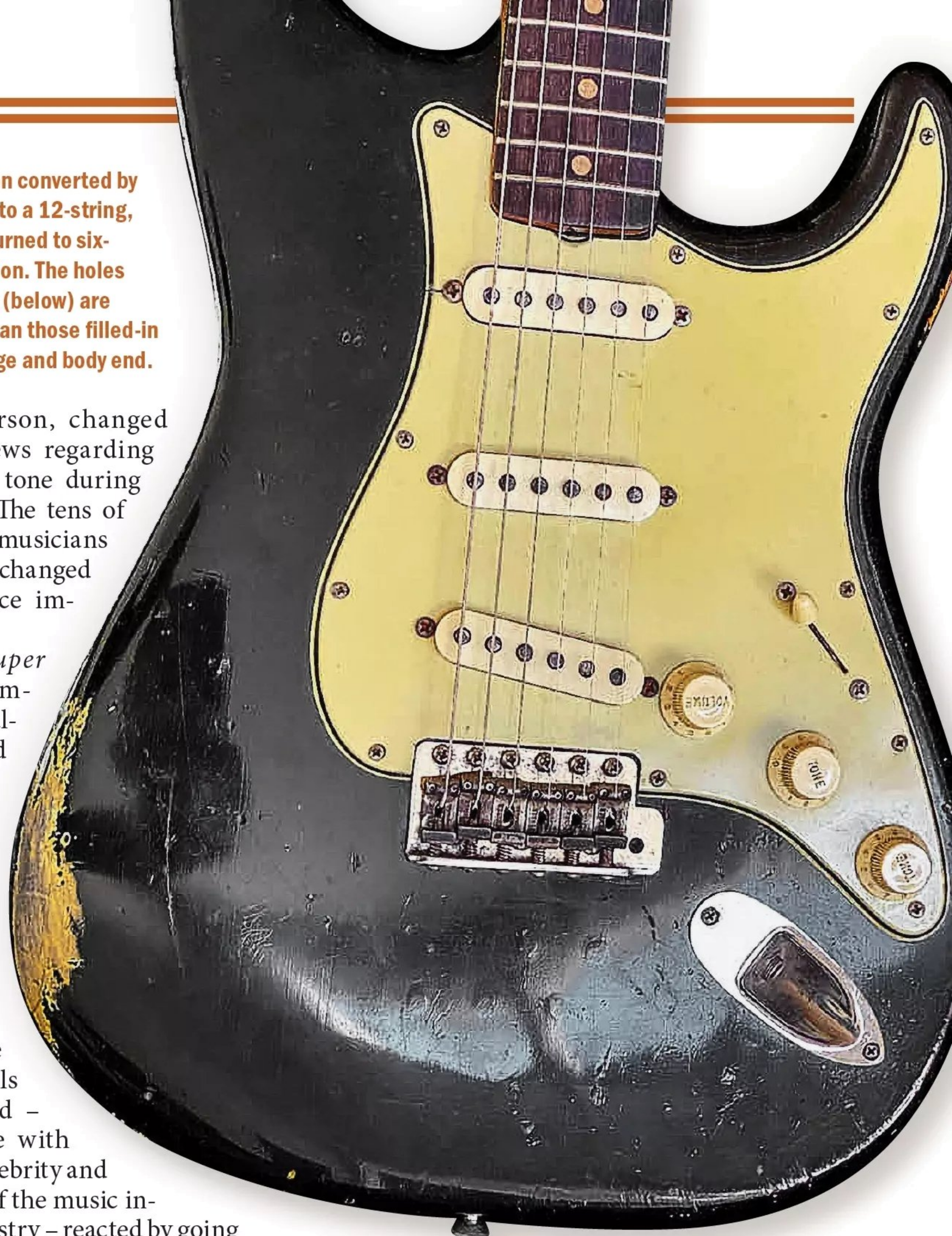
"When he needed money or the spirit moved him, he'd play the occasional gig near his home in Marin County.

"By '72, he was venturing further thanks to help from Toby Byron, a fan, producer, and friend who offered to find gigs for his band, Michael Bloomfield and Friends. They played regularly around California and toured the Midwest and Eastern U.S."

After famously abandoning the 'Burst and a hand-painted blue-swirl Telecaster in a Vancouver nightclub in '74 (booked for a five-night run, Bloomfield bailed after the first night and went home, leaving behind his band and gear), Dann says he started playing a Telecaster and this Strat regularly at small venues like the Old Waldorf in San Francisco and the Bottom Line in New York City, up until '79.

"Though he was using Fenders, he also was briefly a Gibson/Epiphone endorser, and was shown on the April '79 cover of *Guitar Player* with a Les Paul Custom, a guitar he particularly disliked."

In the final months of his life, Dann added,

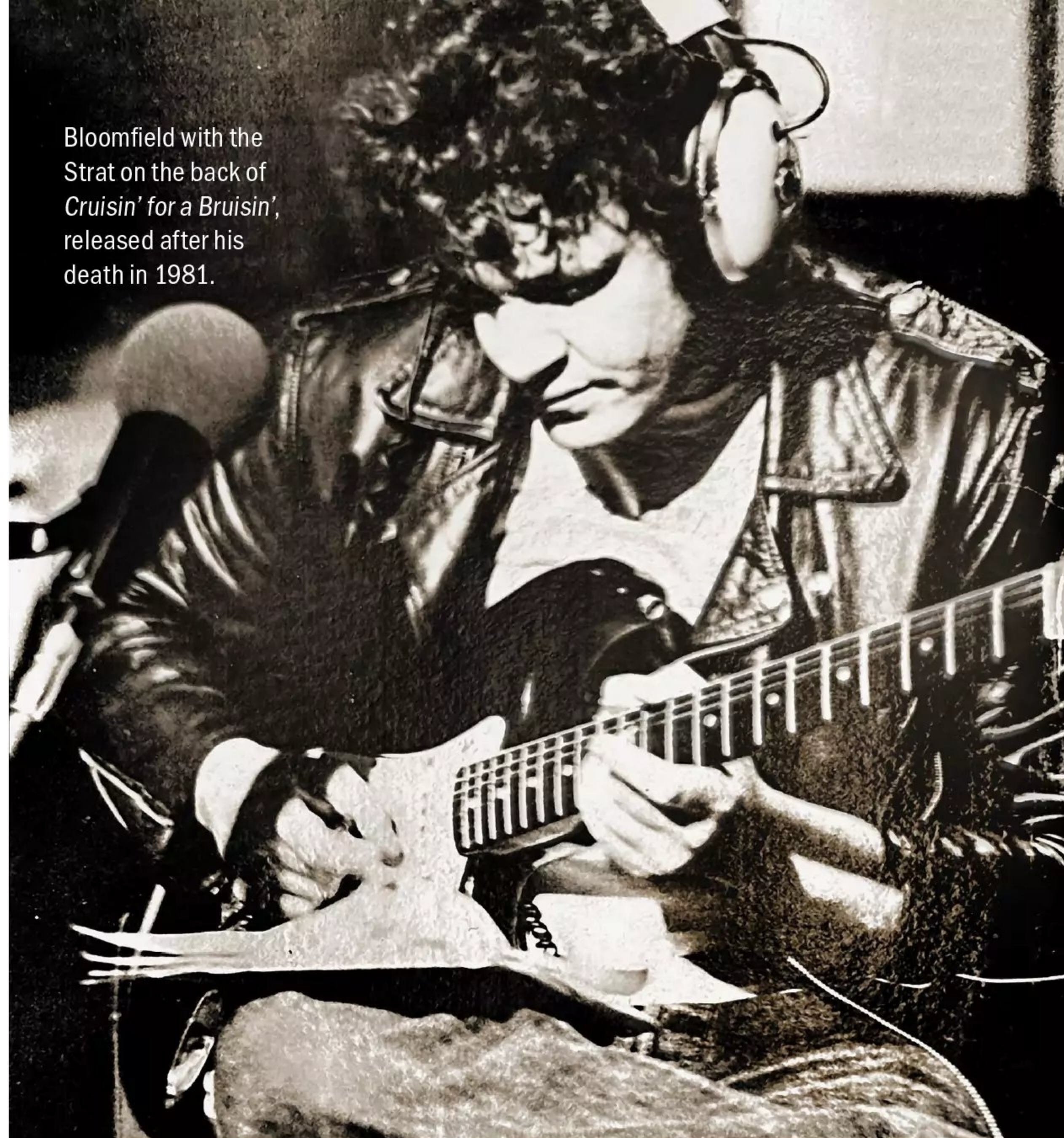


Bloomfield played mostly acoustic on a cutaway flat-top made in Mill Valley by Ove Veggerby, rigged with a DeArmond pickup taped in place. On at least one gig, he had a J-200. His set was mostly traditional blues, ragtime, and gospel, usually solo on guitar but also on piano in a duo with guitarist Woody Harris.

While the Strat's original finish was black, prior to Bloomfield's possession it had been converted to a 12-string, then back to six. And history doesn't tell us *exactly* why – perhaps to better cover the repaired holes resulting from the modifications – but Bloomfield oversprayed it with black model-car paint. One apocryphal story has it that Electric Flag bandmate Buddy Miles gave the Strat to Bloomfield, perhaps after getting it from Hendrix during their time in Band of Gypsies.

"I've never heard that," said Dann. "And I suspect that, like so many stories around Michael's instruments, it's just that – a nice story." – **Ward Meeker**

For more on Michael Bloomfield and his guitars, see John Picard's "A Sunburst Mystery: What Really Happened to Mike Bloomfield's Missing Guitar?" (VG, June '11), Dan Forte's "Michael Bloomfield: Igniting the Blues" (May '14), and "Michael Bloomfield's '63 Telecaster: This Guitar Killed Folk!" (October '15). Also fascinating is the corresponding VG Youtube video produced by John Peden and featuring G.E. Smith playing the latter. It has been viewed more than 2.3 million times. David Dann runs the comprehensive website mikebloomfieldamericanmusic.com.



Bloomfield with the Strat on the back of *Cruisin' for a Bruisin'*, released after his death in 1981.

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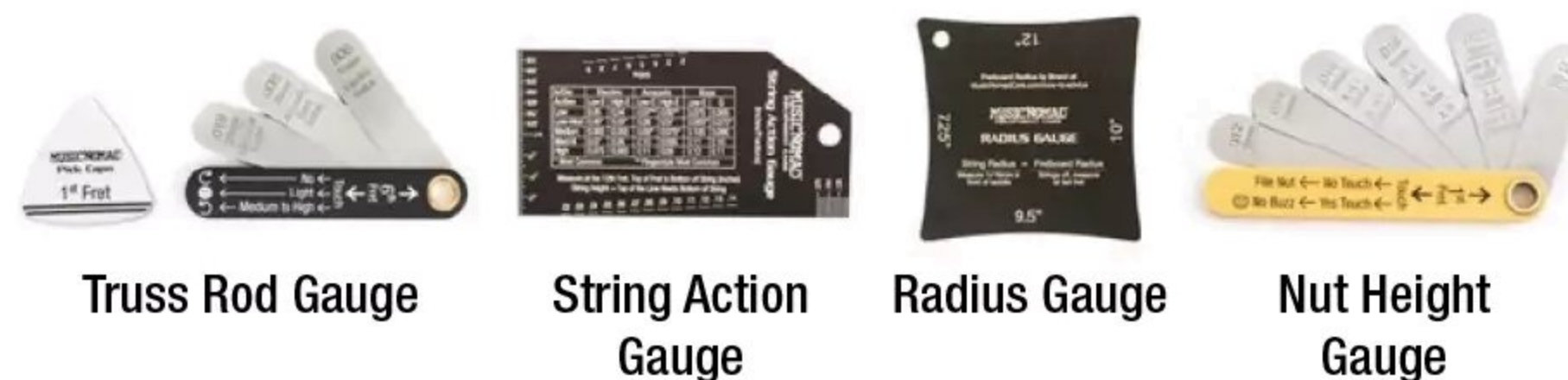


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Price Guide

By Alan Greenwood & Gil Hembree



1955 Fender
Stratocaster

YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND.	
			LOW	HIGH
1958	Airline Tube Amp (Highest-End)		\$950	\$1,225
1969	Ampeg Dan Armstrong Lucite	Clear	\$2,100	\$2,750
1991	Ampeg VL-1001 Head		\$350	\$450
1989	B.C. Rich Mockingbird	Class Axe era	\$1,500	\$1,950
1965	Baldwin Exterminator	100 watts, 2x15, 2x12, 2x7, ss	\$625	\$800
1988	Blade R4		\$575	\$750
2010s	Carr Bloke	48 watts, 1x12	\$1,300	\$1,800
1919	Cole Eclipse	Dot diamond inlays	\$1,575	\$2,025
1968	Conn Acoustic	Various models	\$175	\$250
2008	Dan Armstrong Wood Body Guitar AMG 100 BLD	Blond swamp ash	\$625	\$825
1958	Danelectro U-2	Enamel, Coke headstock	\$1,950	\$2,525
1977	Dean V Standard (U.S.A.)	Common opaque	\$2,000	\$2,600
1942	Dobro Model 35 (32)		\$2,200	\$2,900
1967	EKO Ranger 6/12	Ranger 12	\$425	\$550
1966	Epiphone Casino (2 Pickups)	Various colors	\$4,700	\$6,250
1997	Epiphone Electar Tube 10	10 watts, tubes	\$110	\$145
1965	Epiphone Granada (Cutaway)		\$1,400	\$1,850
1961	Epiphone Rivoli (1 Pickup)	Standard tuners, sunburst	\$3,000	\$3,900
1954	Epiphone Zephyr (Cutaway)	Natural	\$2,250	\$2,900
1980	Fender 75	2x12 tubes	\$625	\$825
1965	Fender Bass VI	Rare Color	\$16,000	\$21,000
1993	Fender Bronco	Solidstate, 15 watts	\$115	\$150
2001	Fender Cyber-Twin (SE)	Combo	\$425	\$550
1958	Fender Esquire	Blond, backloader	\$20,000	\$26,000
1997	Fender Frontman 65R		\$80	\$105
1963	Fender Jazz	Rare color	\$21,000	\$33,000
1991	Fender '60s Jazz (Import)	Japan	\$700	\$925
1985	Fender Katana		\$850	\$1,100
2006	Fender Mustang '65 Reissue	Classic series	\$725	\$950
1974	Fender Precision	All colors	\$2,800	\$3,800
1994	Fender Rumble Bass	Cab	\$700	\$900
2012	Fender Squier Telecaster Special	Vintage Modified Series	\$190	\$250
1955	Fender Stratocaster	Sunburst	\$55,000	\$75,000
1965	Fender Stratocaster	Sunburst, white 'guard	\$18,500	\$24,000
2018	Fender American Original '60s Stratocaster		\$1,400	\$1,800
2020	Fender Time Machine 1967 Stratocaster Journeyman Relic Custom Top	CZ Serial No.	\$2,800	\$3,700
1992	Fender 1300sx		\$650	\$850
1976	Fender Telecaster	Sunburst	\$2,600	\$3,400
2013	Fender 1972 Telecaster Custom Closet Classic		\$2,500	\$3,300
2006	Fishman Loudbox 100	100 watts	\$240	\$310
2002	G & L ASAT Classic Custom	2nd version, 4-bolt neck	\$1,100	\$1,450
2010	G & L SC-2	Reissue	\$650	\$850
1975	Gibson All American	5-String	\$6,200	\$8,000
1962	Gibson C-4 Classical		\$775	\$1,000
1959	Gibson EB-2	Natural	\$5,600	\$7,300
2013	Gibson ES-139		\$1,050	\$1,400
2015	Gibson ES-335 Government Series		\$2,100	\$2,700

Featured Survey Participant
Richard Friedman, with a 1959 Gibson Les Paul Standard, in front of his old store on 48th St. in NYC.



YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND.	
			LOW	HIGH
1997	Gibson ES-346 Paul Jackson Jr.	Custom Shop	\$2,900	\$3,800
2008	Gibson Explorer Robot		\$1,050	\$1,350
1966	Gibson Firebird III	Polaris White	\$9,100	\$11,900
2002	Gibson Flying V Voodoo		\$1,275	\$1,650
1961	Gibson GA-79 RVT Multi-Stereo	Tweed	\$2,400	\$3,200
2004	Gibson Hummingbird			
	Custom Koa		\$3,850	\$5,000
2010	Gibson J-45 Brad Paisley	Adirondack, COA	\$3,000	\$4,000
1908	Gibson L-3 (Archtop)	Round hole	\$2,300	\$3,000
1950	Gibson L-7 CN	Natural	\$4,300	\$5,600
1997	Gibson Les Paul Custom	Pilot run,		
	Ace Frehley Signature	Custom Shop specs	\$7,100	\$9,200
1978	Gibson Les Paul			
	Jimmy Wallace Reissue	Kalamazoo, high flame	\$4,800	\$6,300
1968	Gibson Les Paul Standard	P-90s, small hdsk,		
		no volute	\$18,600	\$24,200
2019	Gibson 1958 Les Paul			
	Standard CME Spec	Plain Top, VOS	\$3,600	\$4,700
2002	Gibson Les Paul			
	Tie Dye Custom Shop		\$2,500	\$3,300
2001	Gibson Nick Lucas Elite Custom		\$3,300	\$4,400
1934	Gibson Roy Smeck			
	Stage Deluxe Hawaiian	Spanish converted	\$10,000	\$13,000
1985	Gibson SG Special	2 pickup model, 3 knobs	\$800	\$1,050
1994	Gibson SJ-200			
	Centennial Limited Edition		\$3,500	\$4,600
2009	Gibson Super Dove		\$3,000	\$4,000
1966	Gibson Trini Lopez Standard	Pelham Blue	\$7,800	\$10,200
1975	Gretsch Broadkaster			
	(Hollowbody)	7604, Bigsby, sunburst	\$1,000	\$1,300
1965	Gretsch Duo-Jet (6128)	Sparkle, double-cut	\$4,300	\$5,625
1960	Gretsch New Yorker		\$925	\$1,225
1965	Gretsch White Falcon			
	Mono (6136/7594)		\$8,200	\$10,800
1999	Guild D-40	Mahogany	\$1,250	\$1,625
1960	Guild Granada X-50		\$1,600	\$2,100
1986	Guild S-285 Aviator	Deluxe	\$550	\$725
1965	Guild ThunderBass Quantum X	200 watts, 2x15	\$725	\$950
1960s	Haynes Jazz King II		\$400	\$525
1900	Howe-Orme Style 4		\$1,600	\$2,100
1974	Ibanez Model 2341 Les Custom	LP Custom copy	\$625	\$825
1979	Ibanez RG/RS Roadstar/			
	Roadster Series	Low to mid-range	\$300	\$425
1960	Kay K1962 Value Leader	2 pickups	\$425	\$575
1980s	Kentucky KM-180	A-style	\$255	\$330
1983	Kramer Floyd Rose			
	Signature Edition		\$825	\$1,075

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			LOW	HIGH
1972	Kustom K150-2 Set	Color option, 150 watts, 2x12	\$400	\$525
2008	Larrivee L-03R-12	12-string	\$825	\$1,075
1955	Magnatone Model 111 Student	3 watts, 1x8	\$650	\$850
2002	Marshall JCM 800 Model 2203 Head	Reissue	\$850	\$1,100
1976	Marshall Model 1959 Super Lead	Black	\$1,250	\$1,650
1977	Marshall Model 2200 100-Watt Lead Combo	s.s., 2x12	\$525	\$675
1927	Martin 5-17		\$3,200	\$4,200
1944	Martin 000-21		\$15,000	\$20,000
2000	Martin 000C-16RB (Babyface)		\$1,700	\$2,200
1964	Martin 00-21		\$7,000	\$9,300
1940	Martin 0-17T		\$1,625	\$2,125
1934	Martin C-2T	F-hole	\$2,000	\$2,600
2010	Martin D-18 1955 CFM IV		\$3,075	\$3,975
2003	Martin D-28CW Clarence White	Indian	\$3,600	\$4,700
1994	Martin D-45 Gene Autry	Snowflake 'board option	\$20,000	\$26,000
2020	Martin D-X2E		\$475	\$625
1994	Martin HJ-28M	Mahogany	\$2,500	\$3,300
2001	Martin OM-16GT		\$1,000	\$1,300
1938	Martin R-21		\$4,300	\$5,600
1993	Matchless ES/EB Cabinet	2x10	\$550	\$728
1991	Mesa-Boogie Mark IV/ Mark IV B Combo	Custom hardwood	\$2,050	\$2,700
1979	Moonstone Eclipse Standard XII		\$1,425	\$1,850
1984	Music Man Cutlass II	Ernie Ball era	\$1,700	\$2,225
1968	National N800 Series	with Bigsby	\$700	\$900
1950s	Old Kraftsman Electric Solidbody	Various models	\$375	\$500
1984	Ovation Celebrity CC-63	Classical guitar	\$275	\$375
1921	Paramount Style F	Plectrum	\$2,700	\$3,500
2016	Paul Reed Smith McCarty 594	Figured maple top	\$2,550	\$3,325
1998	Peavey Cirrus 4		\$800	\$1,050
1990s	Peavey Stereo Chorus 212	2x12 combo	\$245	\$325
1962	Premier Model 200 Rhythm Bass	1x15	\$800	\$1,050
1992	Rick Model 2060 El Dorado		\$1,300	\$1,700
1989	Rickenbacker Model 325JL (John Lennon)		\$2,700	\$3,600
1969	Rickenbacker Model 381	Various colors, some rare	\$4,500	\$5,900
2009	Rivera M-100 212 Combo		\$750	\$975
2009	Santa Cruz Firefly		\$3,000	\$4,000
1954	Silvertone Model 1333	1x12, vibrato	\$525	\$675
1920s	Sovereign Bent-Top		\$300	\$400
1980s	Sunn Beta Bass	4x12	\$675	\$900
1965	Supro Royal Reverb 1650TR	2x10 reverb	\$1,300	\$1,700
2018	Taylor 314ce-LTD		\$1,275	\$1,650
1999	Taylor 812ce		\$1,900	\$2,450
2011	Taylor GS Mini		\$325	\$425
1980s	Tobias Signature S-4	Tobias-Burbank	\$3,200	\$4,200
1965	Univox Lead Model Tube	2x10 or 2x12	\$700	\$900
1960s	Vega Vegaphone Professional	5-string	\$875	\$1,125
2004	Vox AC30CC (Custom Classic)	30 watts, 2x12	\$575	\$750
1965	Vox Tempest XII	12-string	\$850	\$1,100
1928	Weymann Small Models/ Standard	Brazilian	\$3,000	\$5,000
1977	Yamaha SR (Super Rock'n Roller) Series	Various models	\$475	\$625

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THINK AGAIN

Robin Trower's *Twice Removed from Yesterday*

By Bret Adams

The solo career of guitar icon Robin Trower took off like a rocket in the early '70s after he left Procol Harum, which he joined shortly after the release of its 1967 debut single "A Whiter Shade of Pale."

After five albums of psychedelic rock laced with classical, blues, and other styles, Trower grew restless and departed the band amicably in 1971.

"I left because I was writing so much material that I needed my own band to start putting it all together," he said. "The guitar was featured a little bit, but Procol Harum really was a keyboard band. I wanted a guitar, bass, and drums kind of thing."

For a short while, he was part of Jude, a band that featured vocalist Frankie Miller, former Stone the Crows bassist/vocalist James Dewar (1942-2002), and former Jethro Tull drummer Clive Bunker.

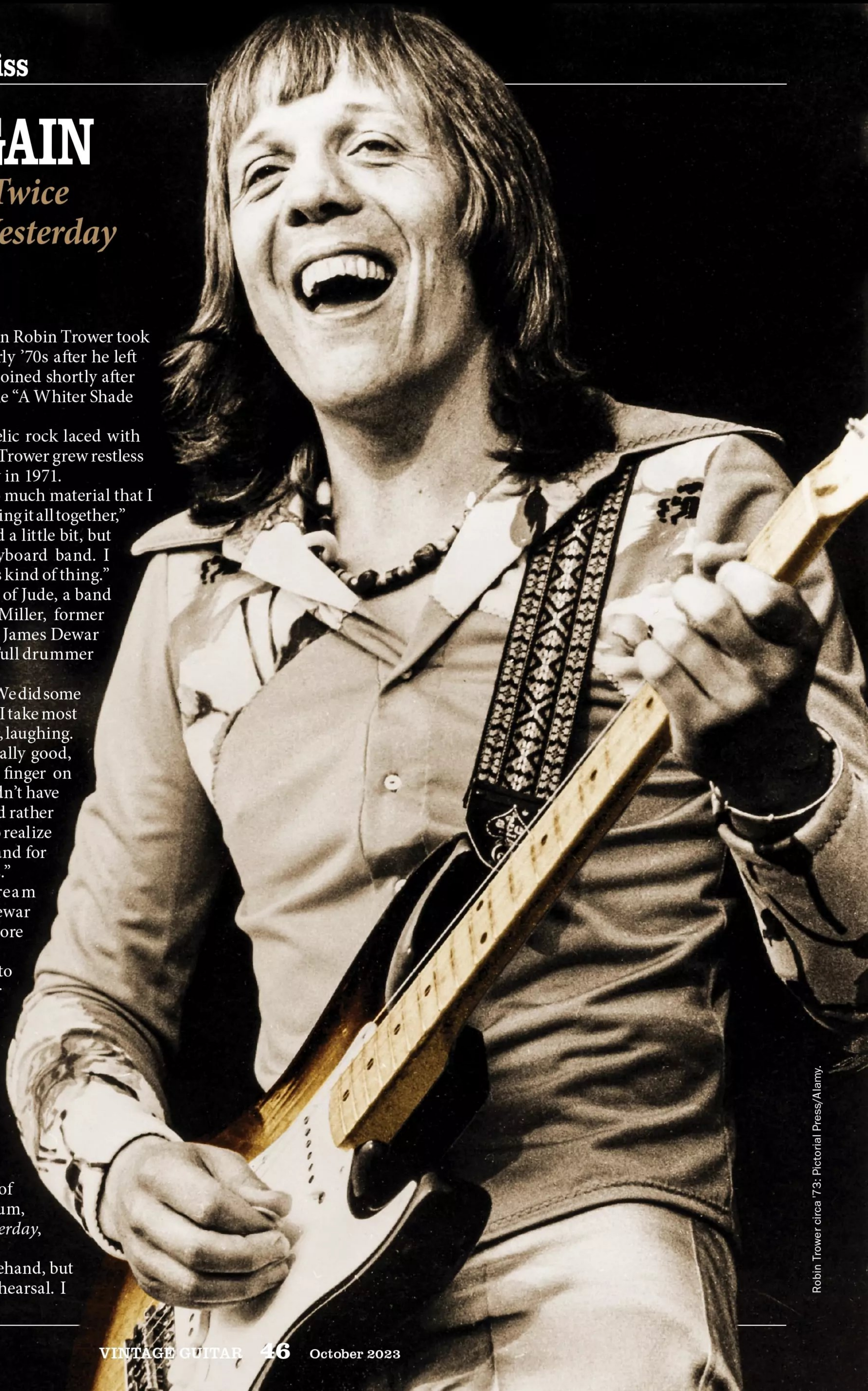
"It didn't really work very well. We did some shows, but it never really clicked. I take most of the blame for that," said Trower, laughing. "Even though everybody was really good, it didn't gel. I couldn't put my finger on *exactly* what it was, but it just didn't have that *thing*. I *did* start to think, 'I'd rather have a three-piece,' and started to realize I needed more room for guitar, and for the music to be less about vocals."

Trower's power-trio daydream came to fruition when he and Dewar joined with drummer Reg Isidore (1949-2009).

"Working with Frankie, I got to hear Jimmy as a vocalist. So, after that band split up, I approached Jimmy to work together," he recalled. "That was a real turning point, being able to form a three-piece with him, and we found Reg, who was recommended by Zoot Money. We auditioned him and thought he was great."

Though Trower had a backlog of material, the new trio's debut album, 1973's *Twice Removed from Yesterday*, featured mostly fresh songs.

"Some of the ideas I had beforehand, but it was mostly written during rehearsal. I



Robin Trower circa '73: Pictorial Press/Alamy.

brought in the backings – guitar parts and the arrangements – then Jimmy would put the vocal to it.”

Twice Removed was produced by former Procol Harum bandmate/organist Matthew Fisher.

“He had quite a bit of input, but mostly it was down to the three of us being happy with what we were doing. I can’t remember doing more than two or three takes of any song because we were so well-rehearsed.”

The opening track, “I Can’t Wait Much Longer,” is a grooving blues-rocker co-written by Miller and Trower during their time in Jude. It features trademark Trower guitar.

“I was using a Uni-Vibe on that; I got into the Uni-Vibe in Procol Harum and it became a signature of mine.”

“Daydream” sports varied playing from Trower, including a spry melody riff, crisp rhythm, and fast strumming. Fisher overdubbed organ accents.

“Apart from the organ, all the playing on that went down live, which was a bit of a happening. I was pretty open to giving anything a try, and Matthew is a brilliant musician, so he knew exactly where to put the organ parts.”

Catchy riffs and a bluesy solo fueled the upbeat single “Man of the World.”

“We put that together with the hope of getting on the radio. When we wrote the song, I certainly felt it had a commercial side to it,” remembered Trower. “I was quite influenced by (Marvin Gaye’s version of) ‘I Heard it Through the Grapevine’ when I came up with it, and it’s one of my all-time favorites!”

Other notable songs include the psychedelic “I Can’t Stand It” and the title track,

which Trower attributes to his Jimi Hendrix influence, and the no-holds-barred B.B. King cover “Rock Me Baby.”

Trower’s gear was fairly simple.

“I was playing a stock Strat. I still had the ’60s one I’d been playing in Procol Harum, along with the Uni-Vibe and a Fuzz Face. I had Marshall 100s was playing through 8x10 cabinets, which was rare at the time.”

The album was well-received, especially once the trio hit the road to promote it.

“We had a very good response! We were fortunate to open for really big acts in America. I think

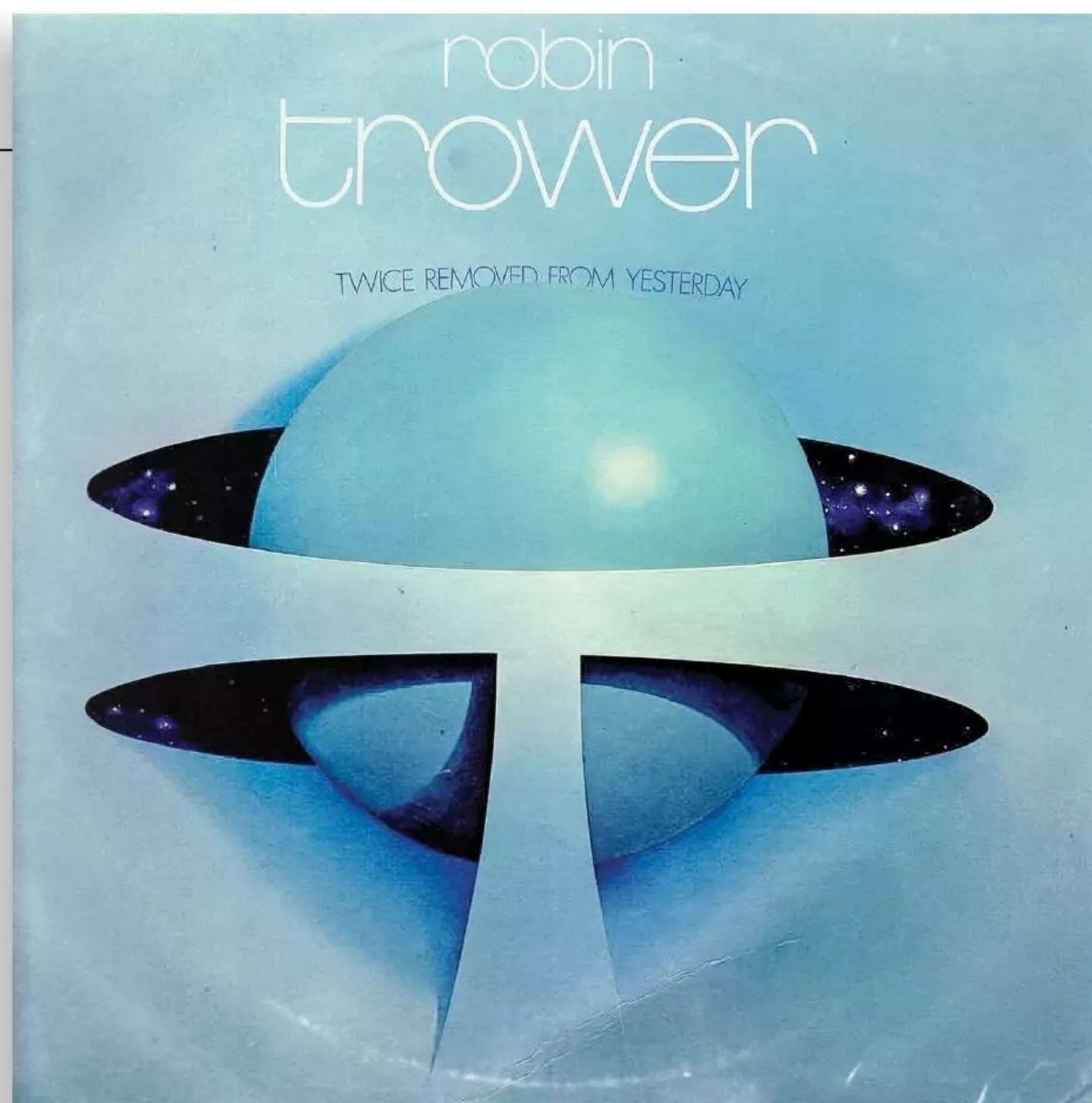
it helped tremendously that we were supporting Jethro Tull first and then Ten Years After.”

A 50th anniversary reissue of *Twice Removed from Yesterday* includes a newly remastered version of “Take a Fast Train” (“Man of the World” single B-side), an alternate mix of “Man of the World,” and rough mixes of “Hannah” and “Ballerina.”

Other highlights are four songs from John Peel’s enormously influential “BBC Radio 1” session from March 26, 1973: “Twice Removed from Yesterday,” “Man of the World,” “Daydream,” and “Sinner’s Song.”

“When you went to the BBC, the studio was tiny and it was a really dead-sounding room. It was difficult to perform in there. But the songs turned out okay. You didn’t get a lot of time – maybe a couple of hours for the session.”

“Peel was very important to introducing new music at that time,” Trower noted. “He was a champion for our stuff and played our music later on. It was a big breakthrough, in the U.K., to be on his show.” **VG**



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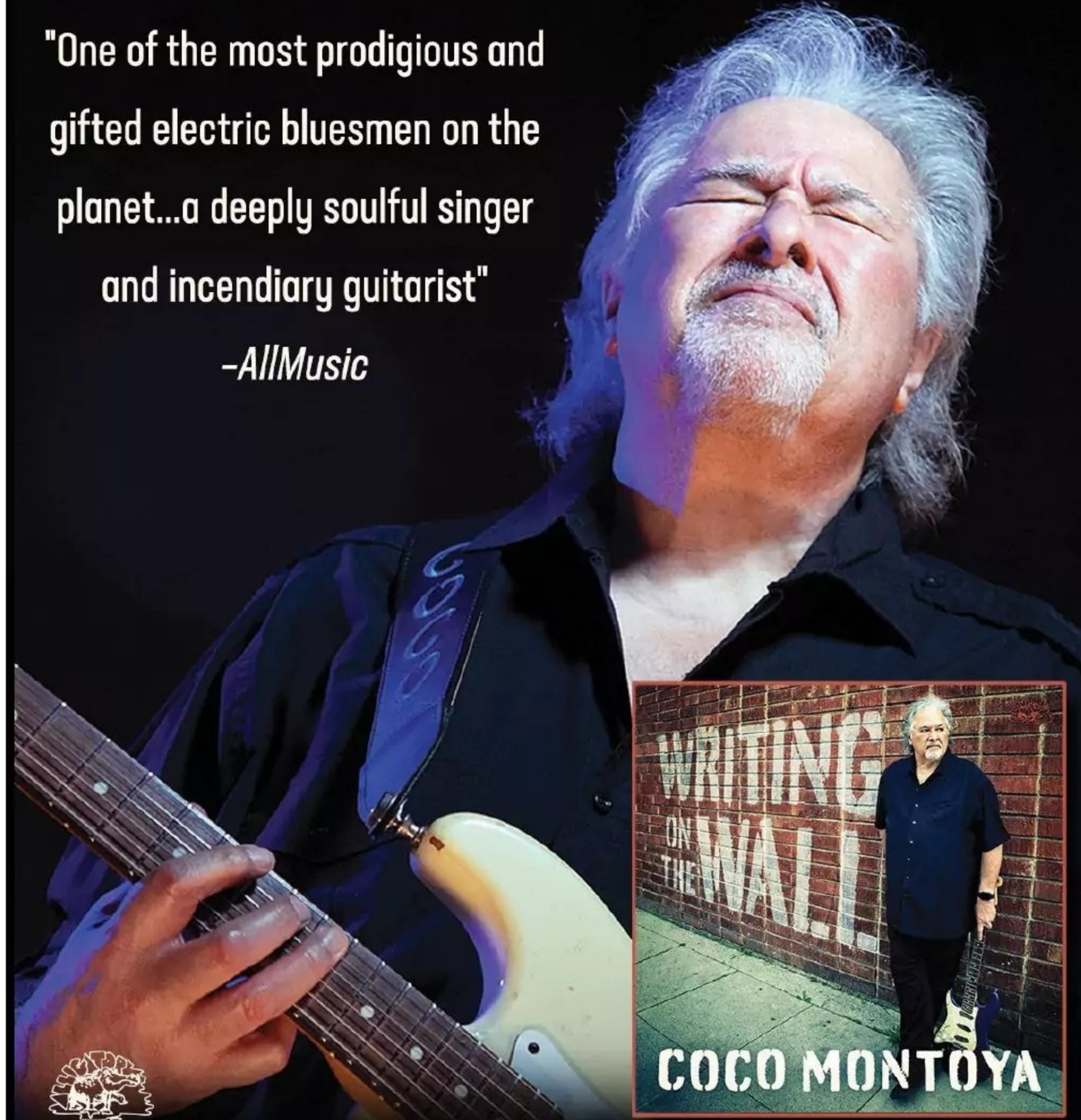
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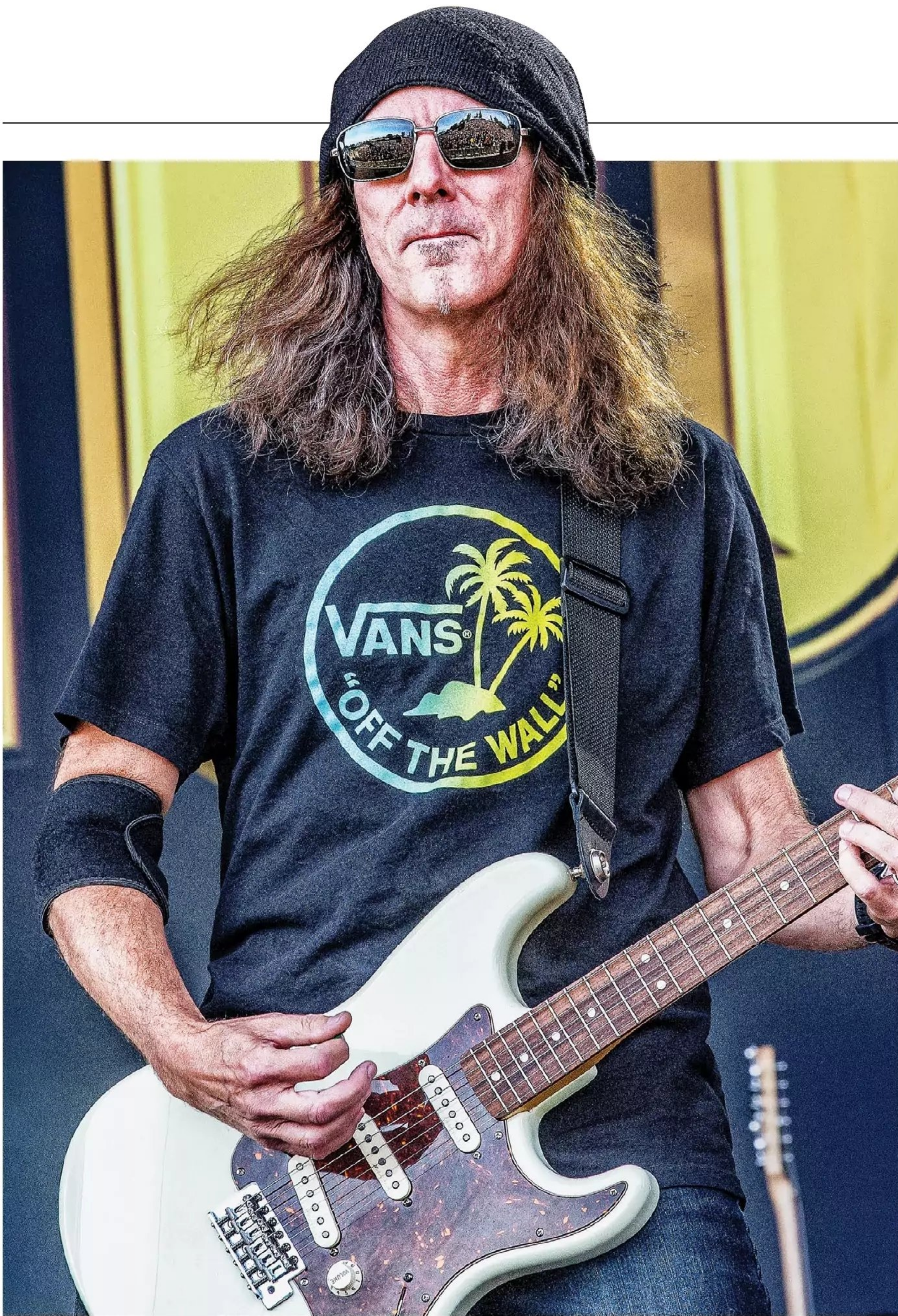
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TY TABOR

X Marks the Spot

By Wolf Marshall

The turbulent 1980s ended with a tsunami of bands seeking new sounds. Trends like classic-rock redux, blues/roots revivals, nu-metal, grunge, and divergent alternative styles purveyed by Red Hot Chili Peppers, R.E.M., Jane's Addiction, and Faith No More dotted the horizon.

Among the inimitable genre-defying outfits was King's X, a power trio (guitarist Ty Tabor, bassist Doug Pinnick, drummer Jerry Gaskill) touted by cognoscenti and seasoned players as musicians' musicians. Maybe one reason King's X didn't attain greater commercial success is that they lived up to that reputation

in their challenging story lines, inscrutable lyrics, and elevated musical content.

Ty Tabor was born September 17, 1961, in Pearl, Mississippi, and raised in Jackson, where he absorbed the family's bluegrass influences and regional rural blues. By his early teens, he was playing guitar in bands that sometimes performed alongside Lester Flatt and Grandpa Jones while concurrently assimilating music of the Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, and Alice Cooper. After high school, he relocated to Springfield, Missouri, and there met Jerry Gaskill (with Phil Keaggy), who helped him participate in recording sessions for the Tracy Zinn Band. In 1980, he played a talent show at Evangel University, where he caught the attention of Doug Pinnick.

The two began collaborating, then with Gaskill formed The Edge, added rhythm guitarist Dan McCollam (followed by Kirk Henderson, Ty's childhood friend), and worked the Top 40/classic-rock bar circuit. As a trio called Sneak Preview, Tabor, Pinnick, and Gaskill developed a distinctive vocal/instrumental sound. After moving to Houston, they recorded an indie album of original songs.

King's X was born in '85 and cut its first Megaforce album, *Out of the Silent Planet*, in '88. They gained recognition touring with labelmates Anthrax and Testament as well as Robert Plant, Blue Oyster Cult, and Cheap Trick. In '89 they released *Gretchen Goes to Nebraska*, a masterpiece "new rock" record that merged The Beatles "white album" aesthetics with metal, funk, progressive, folk, pop, and other tangents. The outing yielded "Over My Head," which received moderate airplay on MTV. *Faith Hope Love* followed and was their most commercially successful album with Tabor's Beatles/Lennon-inspired single "It's Love" reaching #6 on *Billboard*'s Mainstream Rock Tracks. "We Were Born to Be Loved" was a recurring bumper piece played by Paul Shaffer's CBS Orchestra on "Late Night with David Letterman." References to C.S. Lewis' writings, Bible quotations, and occasional lyrical religious undertones led to a skewed public perception of "Christian rock," a label they denied. 1992's *King's X*, the first of three Atlantic albums, was a darker, more-evolved metallic effort that, despite their growing artistry, didn't resonate with the period's alt/grunge predilections – even after Pearl Jam's

NOT NEW!



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Jeff Ament maintained that “King’s X invented grunge.” *Dogman*, produced by Brendan O’Brien (Pearl Jam, STP), addressed the medium with a heavier, streamlined sound, and Pinnick as the sole lead singer. Despite critical acclaim and fan response, the album didn’t fare well, lacked a hit single, and stalled at #88. *Ear Candy* (’96) was their last Atlantic album; production credits for Tabor on “American Cheese” and “Lies in the Sand,” along with additional vocals by Glen Phillips (Toad the Wet Sprocket) signaled changes and alluded to individual activity.

Tabor recorded his first solo album, *Naomi’s Solar Pumpkin*, as an indie in ’97, and thereafter signed with Metal Blade for *Moonflower Lane*, *Safety*, and *Rock Garden* – the latter two featured Gaskill and Pinnick respectively. He participated in numerous side projects like Platypus, Jelly Jam, Jughead, and Xenophobe, and guested with Queensrÿche, Lillian Axe, and Ayreon. He has released nine solo albums extant in his recent *Shades*, while keeping King’s X’s five-decade legacy alive. *Three Sides of One*, from 2022, is their latest.

STYLE

King’s X’s music epitomizes eclecticism and creativity. Deemed the precursor of “progressive metal,” it is much more – part Beatles, part Hendrix, part Sly Stone, part Free, part Pink Floyd, part Rush, part ’80s metal, and part uncategorizable. Various instrumental aspects of prog sophistication, modern hard-rock mannerisms, and electric blues sensibilities, particularly in Tabor’s guitar improvisation, cycling funk grooves à la Hendrix’s Gypsys, lofty psychedelia pop, and heavy metal textures places them in a category that, in the late ’80s, foreshadowed rock’s future. Moreover, their Beatlesque vocalizing is true three-part

harmony and generates a sonic impression beyond the limitations of a conventional power trio. And they humanized their musical world by populating compositions with colorful

characters like “Mr. Wilson” and “Sally,” tantamount to “Lovely Rita” and “Sexy Sadie” in the Beatles mythos.

Ty proved the ideal player for King’s X.

Moderately Slow Rock
N.C.

w/distortion P.M. - - | P.M. - - |

Drop D tuning: tune 6th string to D

Fig. 1B
Moderate Rock
Dm7 G7 D5

* P.M. - - - - - |

* P.M. 6th string only

Dm7 G7 D5 Dm7 G7 D5

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

Fsus2 Eb

let ring - - - - - |

Heavy big-guitar riffs are emblematic of King’s X. These are made larger and heavier with Ty’s penchant for dropped tunings and his fat tone, both displayed in this example. One familiar facet of his riff making is his pursuit of unpredictable rhythmic elements exemplified by odd time spans, asymmetric phraseology, and punctuating syncopation epitomized in his “Lost in Germany” opening

figure (1A). Note the turning-around of the beat in measure 2 as well as the $\frac{3}{4}$ bar to accommodate the metric twists as well as the Drop D tuning. Fig. 1B, from “Black Flag,” depicts the use of voice leading to resolve the dissonant C-F (Dm7) to B-G (G7) creating a progression in the otherwise droning Delta-blues-flavored phrase. Note the parallel low dyads in the pattern, another staple of King’s X riffs.

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His pioneering attitude, tone, songwriting, singing, and range of influences contributed much to the band's ethos, exemplified by the variety of guitar approaches. His lead/solo statements, often colored with short-delay modulation, are largely blues-based in the spirit and tradition of Cream-era Clapton, Hendrix, Robin Trower, Johnny Winter, Dick Wagner, and Ace Frehley, sporting similar pentatonic/blues-scale melody, string bends, and singing vibrato exemplified by "Prisoner," while another side conveys atypical but memorable melodic expressions ("Summerland") comparable to Brian May and Phil Keaggy, two significant heroes. He can deliver fleet double-timed lines soaked in distortion and decorated with pinch harmonics and occasional tapping ("What I Know About Love") reminiscent of '80s shred, or he can exhibit slow, soulful bluesiness. He often uses volume swells for violin effects ("The Big Picture") and exploits the whammy bar for dips, dives, wobbling phrases, wide vibrato, and pitch bends ("What I Know About Love"). His soloing frequently functions as an extension of a song, an interlude, or a contrasting soundscape ("Not Just for the Dead," "Fine Art of Friendship" coda) ranging from ethereal and spacey to lush and orchestral ("Don't Believe It," "The Big Picture"). He added sitar colors to "Silent Planet" and "Not Just for the Dead" and sometimes applied independent solo parts for a "double lead," as in "Mr. Wilson."

Tabor reimagined the core-riff principle of rock guitar – centerpiece of the genre – setting in motion precedent and mindset that prevail today. His riffs could be power-chord laden, metallic, and heavily palm-muted ("Pleiades," "Ooh Song"), oddly asymmetric and oblong ("We Were Born To Be Loved," "Lost in Germany," "What I Know About Love"), laced with piquant dissonance made accessible through clever voice leading ("Out of the Silent Planet," "Mission," "Chariot Song"), or tough and bluesy

("Over My Head," "Don't Believe It"). He often distinguished his riffs with R&B syncopation and unpredictable time spans and rhythmic anticipations ("Everybody Knows a Little Bit of Something," "I'll Never Be the Same," "Fall On Me," "What I Know About Love"). He toggled between meters ($\frac{4}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ in "Send a Message"), employed feel and tempo changes in arrangements, and sometimes incorporated non-pitched string-scraped harmonics ("Over My Head" chorus) and other sound effects. The shifting rhythmic accents in arpeggiations made his "Summerland" theme as intriguing as central figures found in The Police and Rush repertoire. Layered guitar is prevalent in Tabor's music and heard in many forms. "The Differ-

ence" rivals CS&N's finest acoustic-driven moments while mixed acoustic/clean and dirty electric timbres, a frequent combination in King's X, are used to good advantage in "Summerland" and "The Big Picture."

Reaching beyond Beatles ("Dear Prudence") and Van Halen ("Unchained") implications, Tabor regularly applied Drop D tuning, reflected in seven of 12 tunes on *Gretchen*. Later, "Black Flag" and "Lost in Germany" also relied on it to facilitate droning low-register open strings, huge open D5 sonorities, and thundering parallel power chords. By King's X, he was consistently tuning down a half step in Drop D ("Ooh Song") and later to Drop D a whole step, cited as the "King's X standard." Tabor pursued

Slow Rock
Em D/F# G5 A A7/6 Em D/F# G5 A7
(clean tone doubled by acoustic)
let ring-----

Fig. 2B

Moderate Rock
A5 G5 D F#sus2 G5/G Am7 G/B C
w/distortion (clean tone)
let ring-----

A5 G5 D F#sus2 C5/G Am7 G/B
w/distortion (clean tone)
let ring-----

Tabor's guitar orchestrations are illustrated in the phrases of "Summerland" and "Prisoner" (2A/B). Note the Rush/Police-like arpeggiated pattern in the former, played on a clean Strat doubled with acoustic, and its internal accents and shifted rhythms

implying syncopations within the steady 16th-note phrase. In the latter, distorted guitar alternates timbres with clean electric, trading metallic dyads (syncopated) with flowing arpeggiated patterns also distinguished by accents on off beats.

Slow Rock

F5 D5

full 1/2 full

10 12 13 10 13 13

T A B

G5 F5 D5

full

13 10 15 10 15 10 13 15 10 13 15 10 13 10 13 10 12 13 12 10 12 10 12

T A B

F5 D5 A5

hold bend -- 1

full full full

12 12 14 14 15 15 (15) 13 15 (15) 15 15 13 18 20 17 19 20 22 20 22

T A B

Tabor's distinctive lead guitar is represented in this excerpt from "Ooh Song." Check out his blend of mannerisms like the wide-interval pull-off figures (G to D) in measure 2 and the general shred implications in the 32nd-note flurry, with the slower blues-based

string bends, vibrato, and pentatonic vocabulary of surrounding melodies. Note the interesting inclusion of E (the 9th) in the opening measure. The slurred phrasing in 4, with its atypical use of unisons, provides another taste of his innovations in blues-rock.

these aspects to even greater heights; employing Nashville-tuned plus Drop-D acoustics in "Legal Kill" and "The Difference" (Drop D capoed at 3rd fret). Other tunings include unusual modal arrangements in "Chariot Song," "Shoes," "Black the Sky" and "Don't Care," in which low E and A are dropped to B and A; a variation is found in "Human Behavior," with low C and G bottom tones.

ESSENTIAL LISTENING

Gretchen Goes to Nebraska is essential, followed closely by *Faith, Hope, Love and King's X*. *Best of King's X* is a serviceable intro that includes later material and a lengthy live version of "Over My Head" from Woodstock 25.

ESSENTIAL VIEWING

"Black Flag," "It's Love," "Dogman," and their appearance at Woodstock 25 provide illuminating glimpses of King's X at the height of its powers.

SOUND

Tabor boasts one of the most-atypical sounds in rock, emanating from an atypical rig. On the first four King's X albums, he favored an '80s Fender Elite Strat with active electronics, Alnico II pickups, and Freeflyte vibrato (later a Floyd Rose). In the mid '90s, he used custom Zion signature guitars with Joe Barden pickups and John Mann Resophonic vibratos. Later, he designed a signature model RGX with Yamaha.

He has also used various Les Pauls, a Martin D-18, and vintage Gibson acoustics heard in "Legal Kill." Hestrung electrics with extra-light GHS Boomers .009-.042 (.011 on acoustic) and preferred a particular green ultra-thin Mel Bay guitar pick he insists accounts for his tone due to its material and light gauge. He strikes hard with the pick's edge rather than tip or butt which facilitates "scrapey tones" and more-aggressive attack.

Tabor's mysterious main amp was a solid-state Gibson Lab-Series L5 removed from its combo housing and made into a rack unit feeding a 1,000-watt Crown power amp and Marshall 1960 cabinets. Drawn to transistor amps in the late '70s, he has championed their consistency and reliability. He recorded with multiple amps, sometimes combining the L5 with Pearce GR-2 heads. In the mid '90s he used a 100-watt Mesa Dual Rectifier preamp, tube-driven Mesa 2:Ninety stereo power amp, and the preamp of his Elite (all rack-mounted), with three Mesa 4x12 cabinets, allowing him to achieve his signature tone with different guitars. More recently, headlined Orange Crush transistor models to replace the L5. He also occasionally used Vox, Marshall, Egnater, and Randall amps in the studio and played through a Leslie cabinet in "Pretend."

Tabor's live effects included an Alesis Midi-verb, MXR Pitch Transposer, Ibanez DD-2 and DOD delays, Boss CE-2 chorus and Dunlop Crybaby wah. He prefers boost pedals (like the Mojo Hand Rook Royale) versus distortion or fuzz boxes. In the studio, his chorus sounds came from changing the speed via the tape machine's VSO, and he used an E-Bow on "Cigarettes."

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

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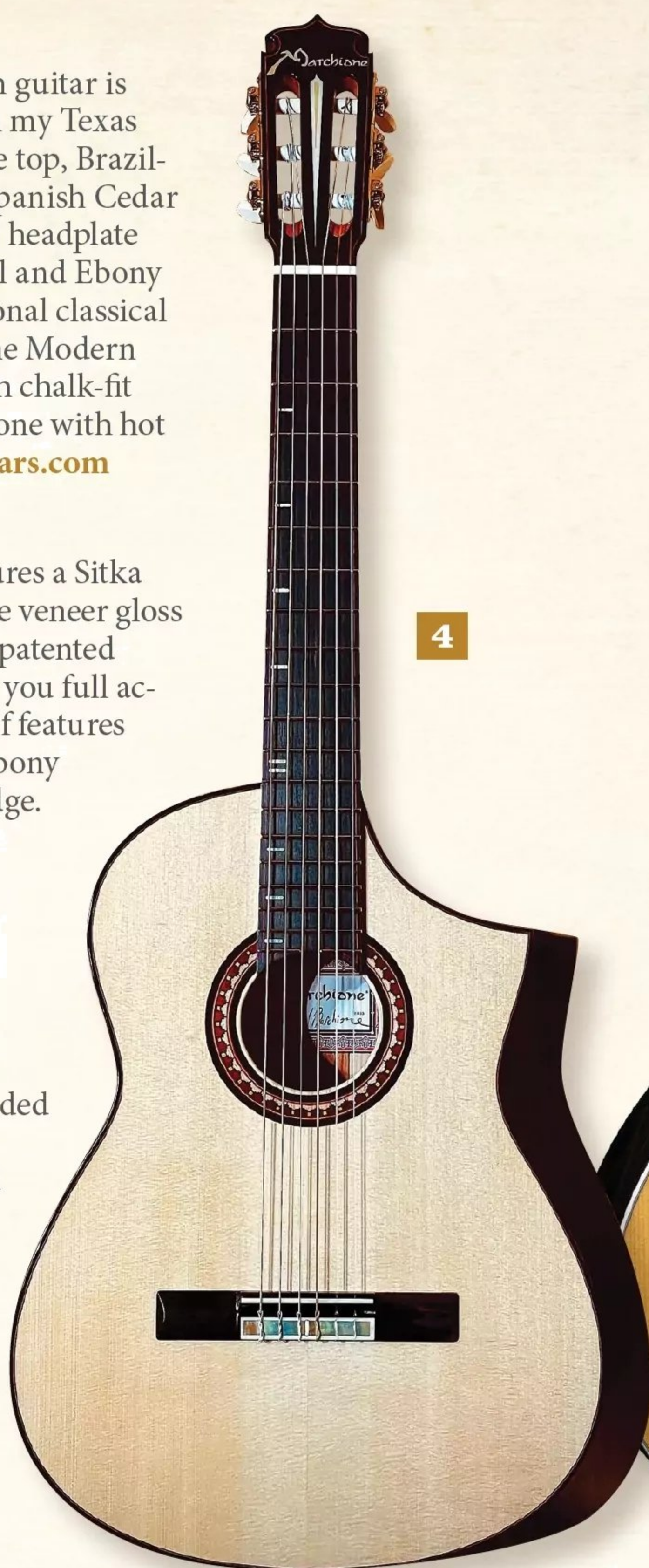
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The Epiphone USA Frontier and Texan are handcrafted in Bozeman, Montana, alongside Gibson's acclaimed acoustics. Both feature all-solid woods, x-bracing, 25.5" scale mahogany necks, and nitrocellulose lacquer finishes. The Frontier has a figured maple body, while the Texan has a mahogany body; both feature Sitka spruce tops and onboard electronics, so they're gig-ready straight out of the included hardshell cases. www.epiphone.com/en-US/Acoustic-Guitar/EPIMMI210/Antique-Natural

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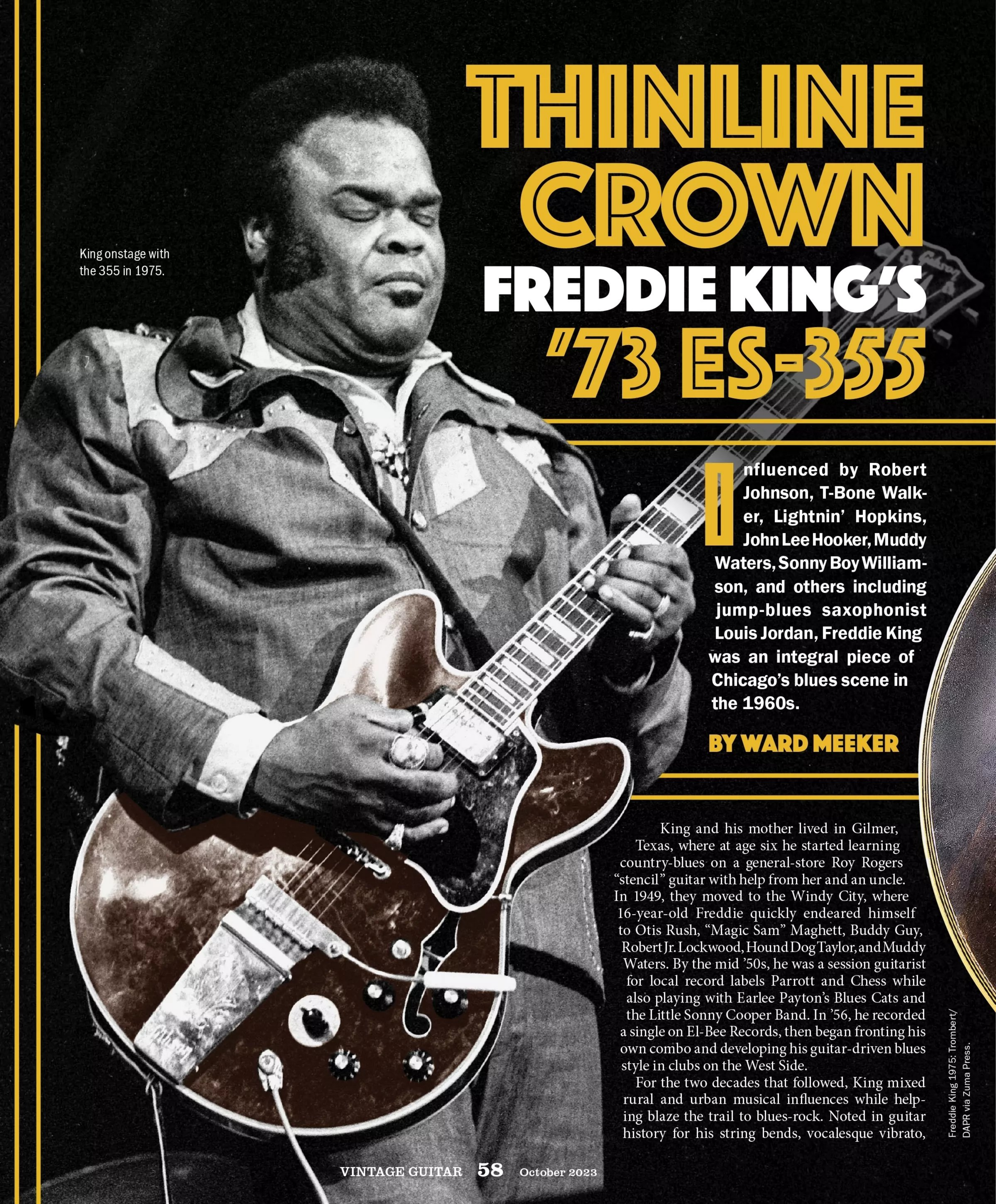
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A black and white photograph of Freddie King playing a Gibson ES-355 electric guitar. He is wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored shirt and has a focused expression. The guitar is a dark-colored hollow-body with a white pickguard and two humbucker pickups. The background is dark and out of focus.

King onstage with the 355 in 1975.

THINLINE CROWN

FREDDIE KING'S '73 ES-355

Influenced by Robert Johnson, T-Bone Walker, Lightnin' Hopkins, John Lee Hooker, Muddy Waters, Sonny Boy Williamson, and others including jump-blues saxophonist Louis Jordan, Freddie King was an integral piece of Chicago's blues scene in the 1960s.

BY WARD MEEKER

King and his mother lived in Gilmer, Texas, where at age six he started learning country-blues on a general-store Roy Rogers "stencil" guitar with help from her and an uncle. In 1949, they moved to the Windy City, where 16-year-old Freddie quickly endeared himself to Otis Rush, "Magic Sam" Maghett, Buddy Guy, Robert Jr. Lockwood, Hound Dog Taylor, and Muddy Waters. By the mid '50s, he was a session guitarist for local record labels Parrott and Chess while also playing with Earlee Payton's Blues Cats and the Little Sonny Cooper Band. In '56, he recorded a single on El-Bee Records, then began fronting his own combo and developing his guitar-driven blues style in clubs on the West Side.

For the two decades that followed, King mixed rural and urban musical influences while helping blaze the trail to blues-rock. Noted in guitar history for his string bends, vocalesque vibrato,

Freddie King ES-355: Keith Cypert, courtesy of Carter Vintage.



he scored with both vocal and instrumental albums, *Freddy King Sings* and *Let's Hide Away And Dance Away With Freddy King* (both 1961) and *Gives You A Bonanza Of Instrumentals* ('65). His music was praised and his style emulated by Stevie Ray Vaughan, Jimmie Vaughan, Peter Green, Mick Taylor, Jeff Beck, Lonnie Brooks, Billy Gibbons, Luther and Bernard Allison, Johnny Winter, and Eric Clapton, who covered "Hide Away" on the 1966 John Mayall *Blues Breakers* album.

Early in his career, King played the '54 Les Paul goldtop pictured on the cover of *Freddy King Sings*; it inspired Clapton to buy a Les Paul, though he inadvertently got a 'Burst. King moved to Gibson semi-hollows in the mid '60s, then through the late '60s and early '70s was most often seen on a '68 ES-345 (VG, January '18), furthering his right-hand technique with a plastic thumbpick and metal pick on his index finger.

Riding high through the early '70s, King's three albums for Shelter Records, *Getting Ready...*, *Texas Cannonball*, and *Woman Across the River*, sold well as his performances drew impressive crowds of blues and rock fans. In '73, he stepped up from the 345 to a new 355 before signing with RSO Records and recording *Burglar* with an all-star cast

of backing players including Clapton and his band on "Sugar Sweet." In '75 came *Larger Than Life*, a mostly-live album compiled from three performances at Armadillo World Headquarters.

King toured the U.S. through '76, even as heart disease began to noticeably wear him down. He died that December 29, just 42 years old. In 1993, Texas Governor Ann Richards declared September 3 "Freddie King Day," and in 2012 he was inducted to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

This ES-355 was King's main guitar in his final years. It resurfaced in March after the widow of its owner, John Beudel, brokered it through Carter Vintage, in Nashville.

"She had no documentation," said Jon Roncolato, the shop's general manager at the time. "So we went on a search for provenance."

Given the guitar's distinct wear—especially on the neck since King's guitars are known for the damage caused by the jewelry on his fingers—and ample video from the period, "We were pretty confident it was, in fact, his guitar," Roncolato said. "But we needed more proof, and as we continued to put together the story, the guitar gods got to meddling."

That "meddling" happened on March 21, when an employee, not knowing the guitar's

history, listed it for sale on the store's website.

Late that evening, managing partner Kim Sherman was manning the website chat when someone posted a message.

"They were asking for a serial number of a listing," Sherman said. "I looked at what they were viewing and suddenly realized that the ES-355 had gone live on the site for \$9,500. I shared the serial number, then put it on hold."

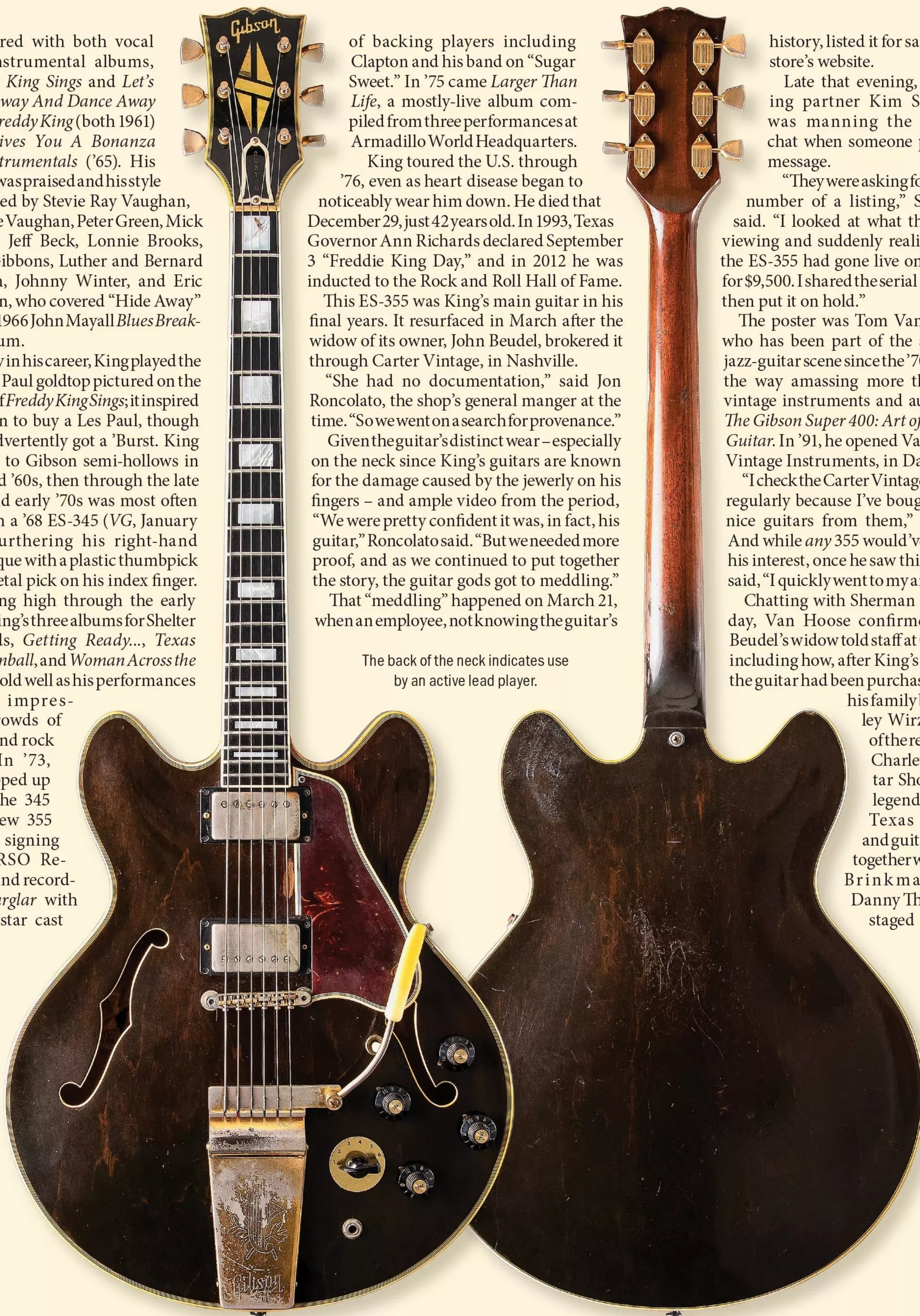
The poster was Tom Van Hoose, who has been part of the archtop/jazz-guitar scene since the '70s, along the way amassing more than 400 vintage instruments and authoring *The Gibson Super 400: Art of the Fine Guitar*. In '91, he opened Van Hoose Vintage Instruments, in Dallas.

"I check the Carter Vintage website regularly because I've bought some nice guitars from them," he said. And while *any* 355 would've piqued his interest, once he saw this one, he said, "I quickly went to my archives."

Chatting with Sherman the next day, Van Hoose confirmed what Beudel's widow told staff at Carter's, including how, after King's passing, the guitar had been purchased from

his family by Charley Wirz, owner of the renowned Charley's Guitar Shop and a legend among Texas players and guitarheads; together with John Brinkman and Danny Thorpe, he staged the first

The back of the neck indicates use by an active lead player.



An indicator of Freddie King's ownership – heavy wear anywhere his fret hand had to travel. His style – using a thumbpick and fingerpick on his index – meant wear not normally seen under the strings at the top of the pickguard.

Greater Southwest Vintage Guitar Show (a.k.a. the “Dallas guitar show”) in 1978.

Wirz died unexpectedly during the NAMM show in February, 1985. Being a close friend, Van Hoose helped his widow, Carol, determine the fate of the store and Charley's guitar collection. The process involved recording all serial numbers.

“About a year before Charley died, I'd visited their home and he showed me his thinline collection; he had 41 – all vintage 335s, 45s, 55s, and a blond Sheraton,” he said. “The Freddie King guitar was there, and I remember tinkering with it. It was rough, but it *was* cool, and Charley told me the story about how he got it from Freddie's family.”

Beudel, a blues enthusiast and guitar collector in Ohio, acquired the 355 from Wirz's estate in the '80s. He died in December of 2021.

After Van Hoose helped her gain full confidence in the guitar's provenance, Sherman sold it with one call to a longtime customer (going back to her days at Cotten Music) who is a devout Freddie King fan.

Special thanks to Dan Forte.



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LASTING LEGACY

ROBBIE ROBERTSON, 1943-2023

BY DAN FORTE

It's ironic that Robbie Robertson was famous mostly for his songwriting, because beneath the minimal, compositional style that marked his work with The Band hid a true guitar stylist and one of the most animalistic in rock history. The man who went from wild guitar solos with Ronnie Hawkins to penning classics like "The Weight" and "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" passed away August 9 from prostate cancer at the age of 80.

The mysterious quintet known simply as The Band released their debut album in 1968, following a stint backing Bob Dylan.

In a year that saw *Electric Ladyland* by the Jimi Hendrix Experience, *Wheels Of Fire* by Cream, and louder-than-God Blue Cheer's

Vincebus Eruptum, *Music From Big Pink* was a far cry from the extended guitar solos and Marshall amps of the day, and unlike anything that preceded it – ever.

As producer John Simon said in the "Classic Albums" video series, "The Band was unique in that we didn't listen to anything else. We didn't care what was on *Sgt. Pepper's* and *Pet Sounds*. We liked them, but we were just in isolation, influenced by very old, established influences."

Their stew of blues, country, folk, gospel,

Robbie Robertson: David Jordan Williams.



Cajun, jazz, rock and roll, and Tin Pan Alley was perhaps *the* seminal example of what is now called Americana.

Robertson wrote only four songs on *Big Pink* (he wrote or co-wrote everything on the group's self-titled follow-up) and was not typically part of the vocal blend. But he had three fabulously distinctive singers at his disposal in drummer Levon Helm, pianist Richard Manuel, and bassist Rick Danko. As he told VG in November, 2011, "I'd say 90 percent of the time I wrote those songs specifically for them to sing. It was like a workshop."

Jaime Royal Robertson grew up in Canada, born July 5, 1943, in Toronto. His father was Jewish, his mother Cayuga/Mohawk, and he split his time between the city and the rural Six Nations of the Grand River reserve.

He used the terms "Indian" and "Native" interchangeably, as his friends in the commu-

Robertson's bronzed '58 Strat, as seen in *The Last Waltz*. Todd Krause at the Fender Custom Shop removed the Floyd Rose while prepping the reissue in 2016. Robertson's '51 Broadcaster. This Robbie Robertson signature Strat moved the middle pickup next to the bridge pickup. Its Moonburst finish was done by Krause at the Custom Shop. This signature Strat is one of two Robertson commissioned with a Native-American finish.

nity did. "On the Six Nations Indian reserve, where all my cousins and uncles and aunts were, it seemed to me like everybody played music," he recounted. "I felt like I needed to get in on this. Finally, some cousins and uncles started showing me some chords on guitar. I was just really drawn to it. There was a time that I can remember thinking to myself, 'Wow, it's so great, you guys turning me on to this and showing me this, but I actually can play better than you can now.' I can remember thinking that at a pretty young age, around 12 or 13."

He referred to 1956 as his "big bang," when he was at the impressionable age of 13 and the

sounds of Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Little Richard were blasting out of radios.

Playing his first electric, a copper-colored Harmony H44 Stratotone, his ear was also cocked to Les Paul and Mary Ford, Joe Maphis, and the Collins Kids, but, as he declared, "I thought, 'Man, Carl Perkins writes the songs, he plays the guitar solos, he sings!' That's even better than just somebody who strums the guitar to accompany themselves. And Chuck Berry. Look at *that!*'"

A string of garage bands followed for the pompadoured teen, including Robbie & the Rhythm Chords. When one opened for



Ronnie Hawkins, the rockabilly singer asked Robbie to join his band, the Hawks.

"After the Harmony, I found probably a '57 Strat in a store, and got a pretty good deal on it. But I had to pawn it about a year later to pay for my ticket to join up with Ronnie Hawkins & the Hawks in Arkansas. He said, 'You don't need a guitar; just figure out how to get down here and we'll get you a guitar.' So when I got there, we got a Telecaster. I played Telecasters for years."

Robertson can be heard strangling leads out of that Tele on recordings like Hawkins' cover of Bo Diddley's "Who Do You Love."

"At that time, there weren't a lot of people playing that style of guitar – like James Burton and Roy Buchanan," he recalled. "They were very unusual and unique in the beginning. And I learned a lot of their tricks from Fred Carter, Jr., and then from Roy

'61 Gibson EMS-125. This 1920 Gibson Style O is the guitar Robertson is holding on the cover of *The Basement Tapes*, and was a prominent instrument in his days with The Band. **'66 Epiphone Howard Roberts.** Robertson's 1919 Martin 00-45K is the only koa 00-45 ever made.

Buchanan. Most people played a different style, and when I first was playing with Ronnie, I took what they were doing and made it more raging. On those first recordings I played with Ronnie, and just from us playing wherever we played, guitar players were coming from all over to hear me do that. They didn't know about moving the strings down and using a banjo string for the first string. They thought I was doing that with regular guitar strings, because there were no 'light-gauge' strings back then, right? So the fact that I could bend this thing, and in the particular way that I did it, it was like, 'Oh, my God, the world's coming to an end!'"

With Robertson on guitar and Arkansas

boy Helm on drums, Hawkins moved the group to Canada and became a hot act in Toronto clubs. He soon replaced members with Canadians Danko, Manuel, and keyboardist/saxophonist Garth Hudson. In *The Band: The Authorized Video Biography*, Carl Perkins said they were as good as any rockabilly players anywhere.

Producer/engineer George Semkiw played guitar with Toronto's Richie Knight & the Mid-Knights. In the Robertson documentary *Once Were Brothers*, he said, "Every guitar player in Toronto learned from Robbie. I watched them all change from their old style of playing to the new Robbie style of playing. I was one of the pack."



RECOLLECTIONS OF ROBBIE

I remember vividly the making of *Blonde On Blonde*. Robbie and I shared a hotel room in Nashville, and we didn't sleep because we stayed up laughing all night. I was a big fan of his guitar playing, and I loved playing with him on the album. I was on some of those "Boo Tours." I thought *Music From Big Pink* was incredible, an amazing record. What they did was much more difficult than making a blues album, for instance. – **Al Kooper**

I always had the deepest respect for Robbie Robertson. Here was a guy that created some of the greatest American music of all time, was an incredible songwriter, and led The Band, a group I have always loved. His blues-rooted guitar playing never really got the credit it deserved, and he was a master at "playing for the song," whatever that meant at the time.

The years I spent as part of the Woodstock, New York, scene were very dominated by his and The Band's accomplishments, and as The Band went, so did the town... songs of his, such as "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down," "The Weight," and "Rag, Mama Rag" are just part of this master's American songbook, and he definitely deserves a place among all the greatest songwriters of all time! He will be sorely missed by us all, and thank goodness he has left such a rich creative musical legacy! – **Arlen Roth**

I was asked to come to a meeting with him at Village Recorders in Santa Monica. He was going to make a film with [writer/director] Zalman King,

and he played me a bunch of songs. The film never happened, but those songs made up about half of his first solo album. It was just me and Robbie talking for a couple of hours about blues and rockabilly. He was like "How do you know about this stuff?" or "What's your deal?" – at 15 or 16. I just told him my story – where I grew up, how I grew up. What was really special was after talking a while, he said, "You don't have to live anymore. All you have to do is figure out how to tell your story." He had that sort of cinematic side to him. Of all the songwriters I've been around or worked with, that was the best advice anyone ever gave me. Eventually, that's kind of what I did. I'm very thankful for that day with him. He was really inquisitive and observant about things, and you can see that in his writing.

We played guitar a little that afternoon, but that was it. I played the Strat that he had bronzed, which weighed 9,000 pounds. I told him, "You're supposed to bronze your child's shoes, not your '58 Strato-caster!" He was awesome, but so underrated. He always played the right part for what was going on. I appreciated the fact that not every song needed a solo. Robbie did a lot of the Bobby Womack/Hendrix double-stops, like in the intro to "The Weight." He was all about composition – in all definitions of the word. – **Charlie Sexton**

Robbie's guitar stylings were the perfect fit for The Band, and a great

example to all players and songwriters of what can happen when one is inspired by the musical company they keep. His tone shined throughout a vast landscape of sound and songs that defined an undefinable new genre of music. – **Cindy Cashdollar**

We lost one of America's great songwriters – the visual songs and melodic lead playing he did with The Band greatly inspired me and many others. The songs combined folk, blues, and rock and roll into what's now called Americana music. – **Jim Weider**

I met Robbie in 1963 in Toronto, and he became my friend. He was a very knowledgeable guy about the scene there, and hepped me to stuff I didn't know. Ronnie Hawkins was notoriously cheap, so they decided to split from him. I used to go hear their show, they came to hear mine, and we became really good friends. They were trying to get a record deal, and I was signed to Vanguard Records, so I suggested we make a record together. My friends Michael Bloomfield and Charlie Musselwhite were in New York at that time, and I invited them to the session.

At the time, I was good friends with Bob Dylan, and he also came to the session, so I introduced him to Robbie and the guys. Dylan wanted to do something electric, and as soon as he heard Robbie and the guys, he knew who he wanted to do it with.

Robbie was a great blues guitar player. He knew his stuff and had a great ear. I was so surprised when he didn't just become more of a blues player, but he was a great musician and very capable of making that transition. I honestly wasn't too impressed with the *Big Pink* album; it took a while for me to understand how they had made that transition. But after they worked with Bob and had their own inspiration as to how to come up with their original stuff, I was very impressed later. But at first I was so disappointed; I thought they would make a blues record.

In the fall of '65, I did the *I Can Tell* album, also with Robbie. The Rolling Stones were in New York at the time, so I invited them to the session, and Bill Wyman played bass. Brian Jones wanted to play harmonica, but I said, "No, I'm playing harmonica." We had a grand old time. – **John Hammond**

The Forest Hills concert (August, 1965) was my first live gig with Dylan, and then the Hollywood Bowl. We had two weeks of rehearsal with Robbie replacing Bloomfield and Levon replacing drummer Bobby Gregg. Prior to that, I was familiar with the Hawks. Robbie was a good part player with licks that related to the song melody. In Woodstock, we hung out at the Bear Cafe and spent time jamming at Big Pink. He was a good co-writer but needed the band to make the songs work. Producer John Simon really helped The Band develop their sound, and he would play tunes for me. *Music From Big Pink* is one of the all-time great albums. – **Harvey Brooks**

I was on a different side of the moon when the early Band albums came out. I backed into them by way of *The Last Waltz*. I knew a bit about them because they backed Bob Dylan, and I knew they were a great band that was responsible for a lot of cool things. But when I saw *The Last Waltz*, I did a deep dive, and I was in it from the first note. It was one of those once-in-a-lifetime combinations of people that was probably even beyond their comprehension. It was so good and so right, and at the bottom of it all was the songs.

Levon was my pal, and Robbie and I shared a table at a Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction, and I hung out with him at Billy Bob Thornton's studio. I saw Richard Manuel play in Nashville not long before he passed. I never met Danko, and I've yet to meet Garth. But the other ones, I at least got to shake their hands – it was truly shaking hands with somebody.

Robbie was absolutely a good guitar player. I was assigned a mission in the '90s, when I was on MCA Records. I did this project called *Rhythm Country And Blues*, where they paired us hillbillies with soul stars. They asked me who I wanted to sing with, and without question it was the Staple Singers. The song that went with that was "The Weight," and there's one guitar fill in *The Last Waltz* that wrecked me, on the line "Catch a cannonball now, and take me on down the line." That one particular guitar lick absolutely made the sun come out for me. He knew what to play to make those songs sparkle. And that's the mark of a great guitar player, to me.

God bless Robbie Robertson, a once-in-a-lifetime cat. – **Marty Stuart**



Desiring to become a group with no front-man, the quintet left en masse to become Levon & the Hawks. Their first recording session without Hawkins was backing bluesman John Hammond in '64 for the album *So Many Roads*.

This was a year prior to the hubbub of Dylan's "goes electric" set at the Newport Folk Festival. After an ad hoc ensemble including Mike Bloomfield backed Dylan there, he enlisted the Hawks for a tour in which folk purists bought tickets specifically to boo the proceedings.

"He gave me too many guitar solos," Robertson laughed regarding that period. "He'd sing a verse, then look over again. I'd say, 'Okay.' It was a new experience for Bob, having that kind of facility of music, for people to play different things. He wanted to wail, and there was something about it

Robertson called this '07 Martin Custom OM-42 "Showdog Workhorse." It's actually an OM-18 in Style 42 trim, with mahogany back and sides, ebony fingerboard with snowflake inlays, an Adirondack spruce top, 1935 Sunburst top finish, a slotted headstock with torch inlay, and a pyramid ebony bridge. '51 Martin D-28. This 1928 12-fret 000-45 gut-string inspired a Robertson signature Martin. 1928 Bruno.

when we played together, it was hard to be discreet. Things really ended up catching on fire very quickly, and tempos got fast. It was leaning toward a certain kind of excitement that was available; all you had to do was push on the accelerator.

"A lot of that was just youth. In the beginning, I was trying to make it do *more, more* all the time. Louder, higher, brighter, harder – just because you're young and you play the guitar the same way as you drive a car. Years later, when a lot of people were starting to play like that, that's when I went completely against the grain and tried to really appreciate subtleties. Completely following the song.

My motto was, 'If I can play one note and it can mean more than somebody else playing 20, I'm getting somewhere.' It was becoming that way with Dylan. I was heading there on *The Basement Tapes*, but that was just a ragged process. There wasn't much thought put into anything; it was just kind of rattling it off and having a good time."

Of his evolving style, he said, "After I got off the 'wailing wall,' I started appreciating more Curtis Mayfield and Steve Cropper. That's when Eric Clapton was first attracted to what I was doing on the guitar, because it was the opposite of what most people were doing."

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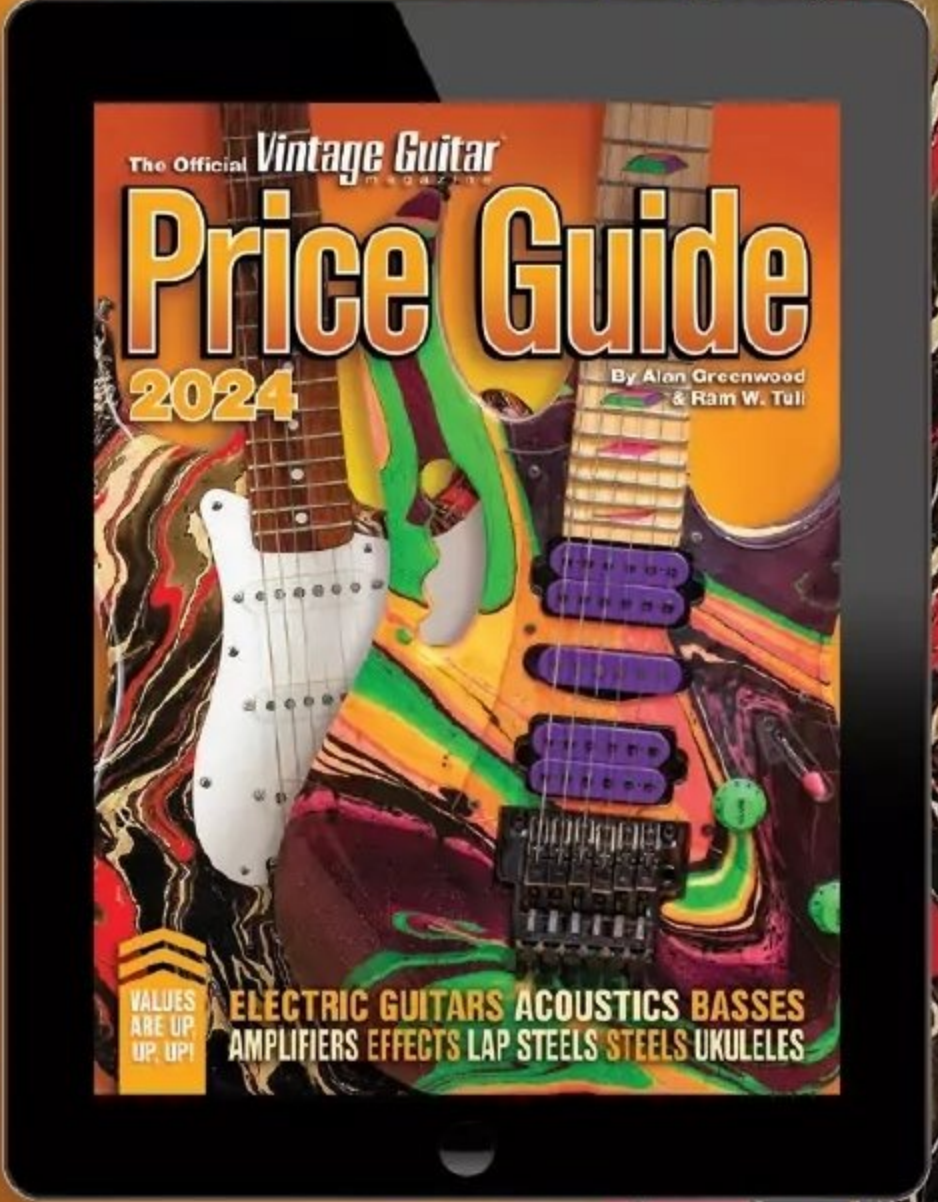
2024

By Alan Greenwood & Ram W. Tuli

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Dylan recorded demos in the rustic studio basement of the house in Woodstock occupied by Danko, Hudson, and Manuel, with Robertson and Helm joining in. They weren't released on LP until '75, after Dylan's *Blonde On Blonde* and *John Wesley Harding*.

So powerful was the impact of *Big Pink*, Clapton hoped to join the unit by then known as The Band; in fact, it was one of the factors that led to him leave Cream. Its influence is readily apparent on the guitar hero's subsequent solo work.

Meanwhile, The Band's self-titled sophomore effort, again produced by Simon, was every bit as good. It featured such standouts as "King Harvest (Has Surely Come)," "Up On Cripple Creek," and "Rag Mama Rag," all written by Robertson. His "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" was told sympathetically from the perspective of a Southern family defeated in the Civil War.

In '66, Robertson played on the best of all Dylan albums, *Blonde On Blonde*. He and organist Al Kooper were surrounded by Nashville's best, including Hargus "Pig" Robbins, Charlie McCoy, Joe South, Jerry Kennedy, and Wayne Moss.

On 1970's *Stage Fright*, the guitarist revealed his aggressive side on "The Shape I'm In." Producer credit went collectively to The Band, as was the case with the next effort, *Cahoots*, with strong cuts "Life Is A Carnival," written by the entire group, and "When I Paint My Masterpiece," penned by Dylan.

But after the live *Rock Of Ages* and an album of early rock-and-roll covers, *Moondog Matinee*, 1973's *Northern Lights – Southern Cross* disappointed despite high spots "Ophelia" and "Acadian Driftwood."

The Band dissolved in '76, throwing a farewell concert on Thanksgiving Day at Winterland in San Francisco. Stars who joined them included Hawkins, Dylan, Muddy Waters, Dr. John, Paul Butterfield, Neil Young, Joni Mitchell, Ringo Starr, and Ronnie Wood. When Clapton's guitar strap came loose during "Further On Up The Road," Robertson stepped up with six-string fireworks, prompting E.C. to respond in kind. In the outro to Van Morrison's rendition of "Caravan," Robbi mixed descending double-stops with aggressive pick-slicing false harmonics.

The concert was dubbed "The Last Waltz," as was Martin Scorsese's subsequent documentary of the event and the group. Robertson's relationship with the director resulted in him scoring such films as *Raging Bull*, *The King Of Comedy*, *The Color Of Money*, *The Wolf Of Wall Street*, *Killers Of The Flower Moon*, and *Carny*, in which he also starred.

1901 Martin 00-42 in its "coffin" case.

Robertson wouldn't release a solo album until his self-titled 1987 debut, which included Danko and Hudson as well as U2, Peter Gabriel, jazz arranger Gil Evans, and producer Daniel Lanois. Over the years, he produced or played on albums by Clapton, Morrison, Starr, Muddy Waters, Neil Diamond, Steve Miller, Jesse Winchester, Charles Lloyd, Joni Mitchell, Carly Simon, Tom Petty, Roy Orbison, Emmylou Harris, B.B. King, and Jerry Lee Lewis, and his songs earned him induction to the Songwriters Hall Of Fame. But only five solo efforts would follow in the ensuing 32 years, with *Music For The Native Americans*, composed for a TV documentary and featuring backing from the Red Road Ensemble, being a highlight.

For Scorsese's *The Irishman*, Robertson recruited Morrison to duet on "I Hear You Paint Houses" and tapped into a throaty,

fuzz/wah tone for the slow-burning, evocative blues.

Alongside Clapton at his friend's 2007 Crossroads Guitar Festival, Robertson made a brief-but-stellar appearance, reprising the Bo Diddley classic

he'd recorded with Hawkins, "Who Do You Love."

For the 2011 VG feature, Robertson supplied photos of more than a dozen guitars, including a refin-

ished '51 Fender Broadcaster, a rare '61 Gibson EMS-1235 doubleneck mandolin/guitar, a '66 Epiphone Howard Roberts, and the "bronzed" '58 Strat he played at The Last Waltz.

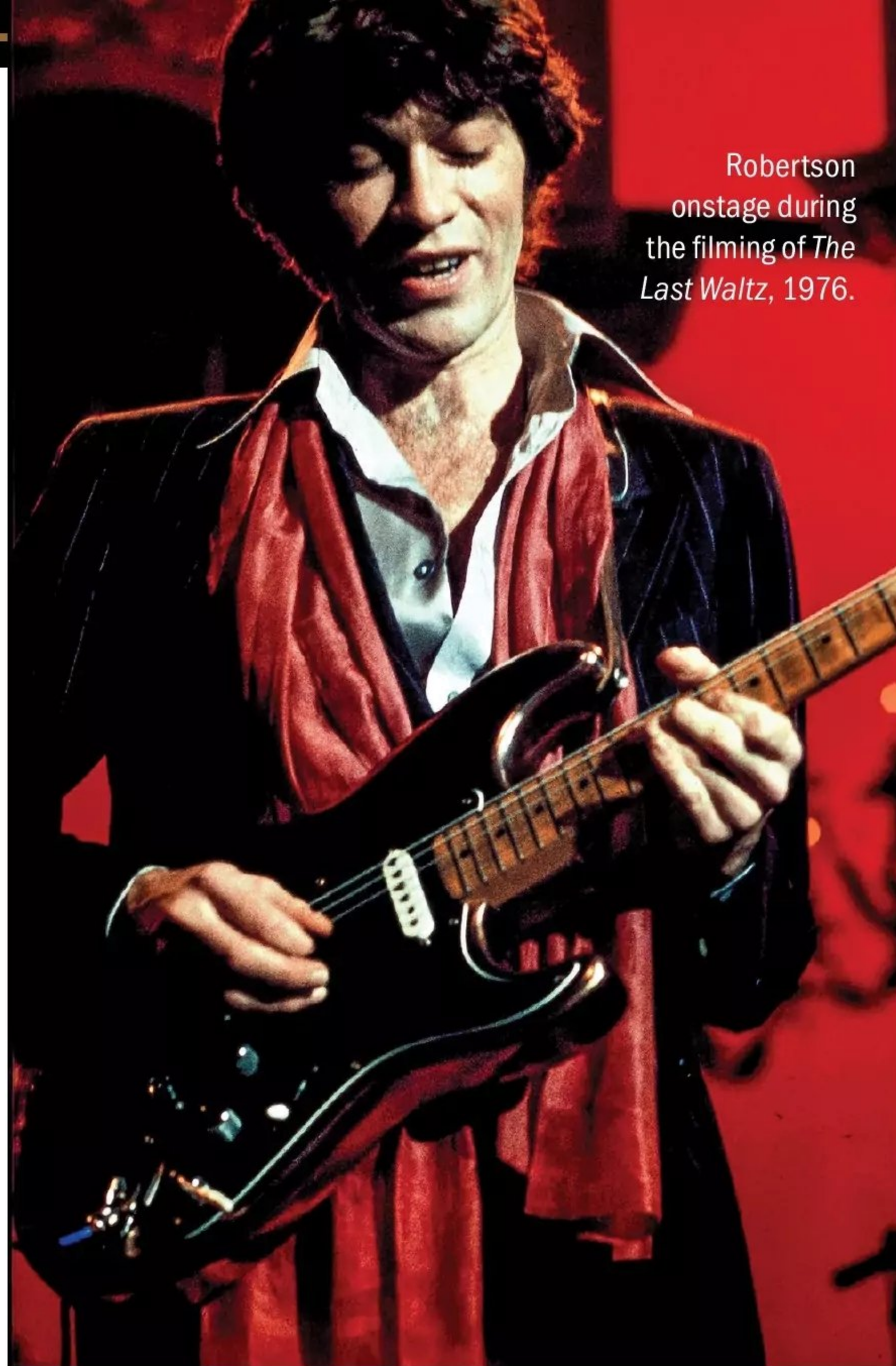
"I play with either all my bare fingers or a pick," he detailed. "I used to play with a flatpick and two National fingerpicks [on the middle and ring fingers]. Sometimes, certain ways that I play, my fingers get stuck on that middle pickup. So I got used to moving the middle pickup out of my way, back to the bridge pickup, making it into more like a humbucker. I like the way it made the rear pickup not so thin sounding. That was a complaint with Stratocasters – they were just a little thin sometimes in comparison with Gibsons."

Acoustics included his 1920 Gibson Style O and a 1928 Bruno made in Chicago. Martins featured were a '28 000-45 12-

fret gut-string, a 1901 OO-42, and an '07 Custom OM-42 (OM-18 in Style 42 trim) Robertson called "Showdog Workhorse." His 1919 OO-45K is the only one ever made, and provided the inspiration for OO-42K and OO-42K2 Robbie Robertson signature models. His '51 D-28 prompted the first line in "The Weight" when he observed the label in the sound hole that read "Nazareth, PA."

His solo albums fared better in Canada and Europe but mostly languished on the U.S. charts; the exception was 2011's *How To Become Clairvoyant* collaboration with Clapton, which climbed the *Billboard* 200 and penetrated the Top 10 Rock and Independent tallies.

"It really started out as us just saying, 'We should do something together sometime.' We didn't have real specifics, to be honest; it was just see what happens. We messed around with some musical ideas and told a lot of stories back and forth. It was just a natural, very organic kind of feeling. A lot of times in making records, there's a lot more frenzy involved. But there was something



Robertson onstage during the filming of *The Last Waltz*, 1976.

about Eric's nature, and there was no pressure in any direction. We didn't know whether we were making an Eric record or a duet record or a Robbie record. I wanted to kind of go after that and do more writing, because I really wanted to do my best to help this go somewhere – whatever it might be."

Richard Manuel died by suicide in 1986, Rick Danko died of heart failure in 1999, and Levon Helm died from throat cancer in 2012. In '16, Robertson's memoir, *Testimony*, was published, and the 2019 film *Once Were Brothers* told his version of his own and The Band's story. Of the inevitable "guitarist or songwriter?" question, he concluded, "It's evolved over the years, but I probably think of myself as a songwriter first. The guitar playing and the songwriting and the singing – all those things kind of blend together. It was really reaching for emotional things, and it wasn't about just depending on excitement. It was depending on things that would hopefully send chills down your spine and touch an emotional nerve." VG



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Tuli fronting his collection with a '58 Strat.

BY
WARD
MEEKER

Strats & Data

Combine a knack for numbers with a love of old guitars and you get... well, you might get any of a thousand babyboomer accountants/collectors. But one is a supercharged version named Ram Tuli.

A trained data analyst, Tuli is the new co-author (with *Vintage Guitar* founder/publisher Alan Greenwood) of *The Official Vintage Guitar Price Guide*, the magazine's annual survey of the collectible market. He replaces Gil Hembree, who for 22 editions crunched the numbers after retiring from General Motors, where he worked in financial administration/internal control.

Tuli has been a "tone freak" since his teens, when he discovered Robin Trower's *Bridge of Sighs*.

"By the second time I listened to it, I knew I wanted to play guitar and sound like *that*,"

RAM TULI Crunches Numbers for *The Guide*

he said. "I didn't know much, but I knew I needed a Stratocaster."

In 1984, he enlisted for a six-year stint in the U.S. Navy. Training and working as a nuclear electrician aboard the aircraft

carrier USS Enterprise, he watched, bemused, as most fellow sailors returning from deployment would head ashore in Alameda, California, and "...blow their money on booze and women and whatever. But with 2,000 bucks in my pocket, I'd go straight to Real Guitars, on Lafayette Street in San Francisco.

"They'd see me and right away say, 'Hey, look what we got!'" he said. "The first guitar

I bought there was a '52 Telecaster."

Aboard ship, Tuli's social circle was mostly fellow musicians.

"My buddies were all players. There was a little lounge near where the [nuclear] reactor staff lived, and my '77 Tele was always there for anybody to play. There was a Roland amp, and a bass, and when we were underway, I spent 12 hours a day playing guitar."

Growing up in California, he closely followed the San Francisco blues scene and became friendly with some of the best-known bands. When his hitch ended in 1990, he was set on playing blues for a living.

"I was at the top of my game - I was



Tuli's Olympic White '65 Strat, perched among his collection of '50s and '60s Fender amps. The outlier is a '61 Martin 112T.

practiced, I had the blackface Super Reverb, the Tele, and the Strat. But one day I realized that these guys – my friends and idols – were living hand to mouth. I wanted a wife and kids and a normal life. So I made a deal with myself that I'd focus on building a stable life, *then* start a blues band."

He enrolled in college and earned degrees in electrical and nuclear engineering, then began a career in data analysis.

"I worked for Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), doing probabilistic risk assessment – basically, trying to conceive of every possible failure of something. For example, if we were working for a nuclear power plant, we'd create databases tracking potential risks, the likelihood any of them would occur, and what it meant if something did.

"I became fascinated not so much by what the answer is, but how you *get to* the answer."

Whenever he wasn't on the clock, he'd spend time with his wife and growing

family, refining his guitar skills, tracking down cool vintage pieces, and learning about his hobby.

"I read A.R. Duchossoir's *The Fender Stratocaster and Gibson Electrics* from cover to cover," he said. "Parts of them, I all but memorized."

In 2002, Tuli left SAIC and moved his family to Phoenix, where he took the reins of his father's plant-nutrient business.

"Dad had decided he was going to either sell the company or let me take over the production side," he said. "So, we rolled the dice and began to expand."

That growth spurred a flashback/light-bulb moment.

"I remember walking through our new warehouse one day when it occurred to me, 'Now would be a good time to start a band because we could rehearse right here.'"

So, he set about gathering members of what would become a blues band they dubbed Psychedelic Mooj. At first, they'd

get together for casual jams every Saturday, but eventually began playing out, and so far have recorded five albums.

"It was great," Tuli said. "I'd work during the day and gig at night. In our heyday, we did a show every week."

One of their yearly gigs was the Rock and Roll Marathon, in Phoenix.

"They'd put us at the finish line because we could play during the whole thing – four to five straight hours."

Apart from the day job and the band, Tuli slowly gathered about 40 guitars.

"At first, it was my dream to have a Stratocaster from every year – even the bad years. That didn't happen because I got realistic (laughs), but I'm 60 now and almost there. I don't have a '54 or '55, but I don't need them because I have a '57. And I always tell people, 'You've got to have an early-'60s Strat, and right now my #1 is a '60 with the really thin slab fretboard. Those are incredible. For some reason, I like the

'66 to '69 Strats; my '69 is a maple-cap, which makes a big difference."

After hunting guitars for years. Tuli started collecting vintage amps, and with that pursuit came a realization there was much to learn. Research generated a lot of notes, which he compiled.

"My first book, *Naked and Dimed*, was a way for me to get to know my own amp collection. As a teenager, I had a blackface Super Reverb and I thought, 'Well, that's all I need.' I thought *all* Fender amps sounded like that (laughs). But of course as I started exploring, I realized that 80 percent of one's tone comes from the *amp*, not the guitar, and that from one Fender to the next, there's a lot of difference in sound.

"The first vintage amp I bought to use onstage with Psychedelic Mooj was a '64 Deluxe Reverb, and it blew my mind. So I wanted the book to help me figure out why I loved old amps. It started as electrical-engineering project where I was studying schematics and running an oscilloscope to figure out where odd and even harmonics came from. But I figured out that you can't learn the real reason that way, because it's all about *feel*."

The same motivations carried over to his other three books on guitars and amps.

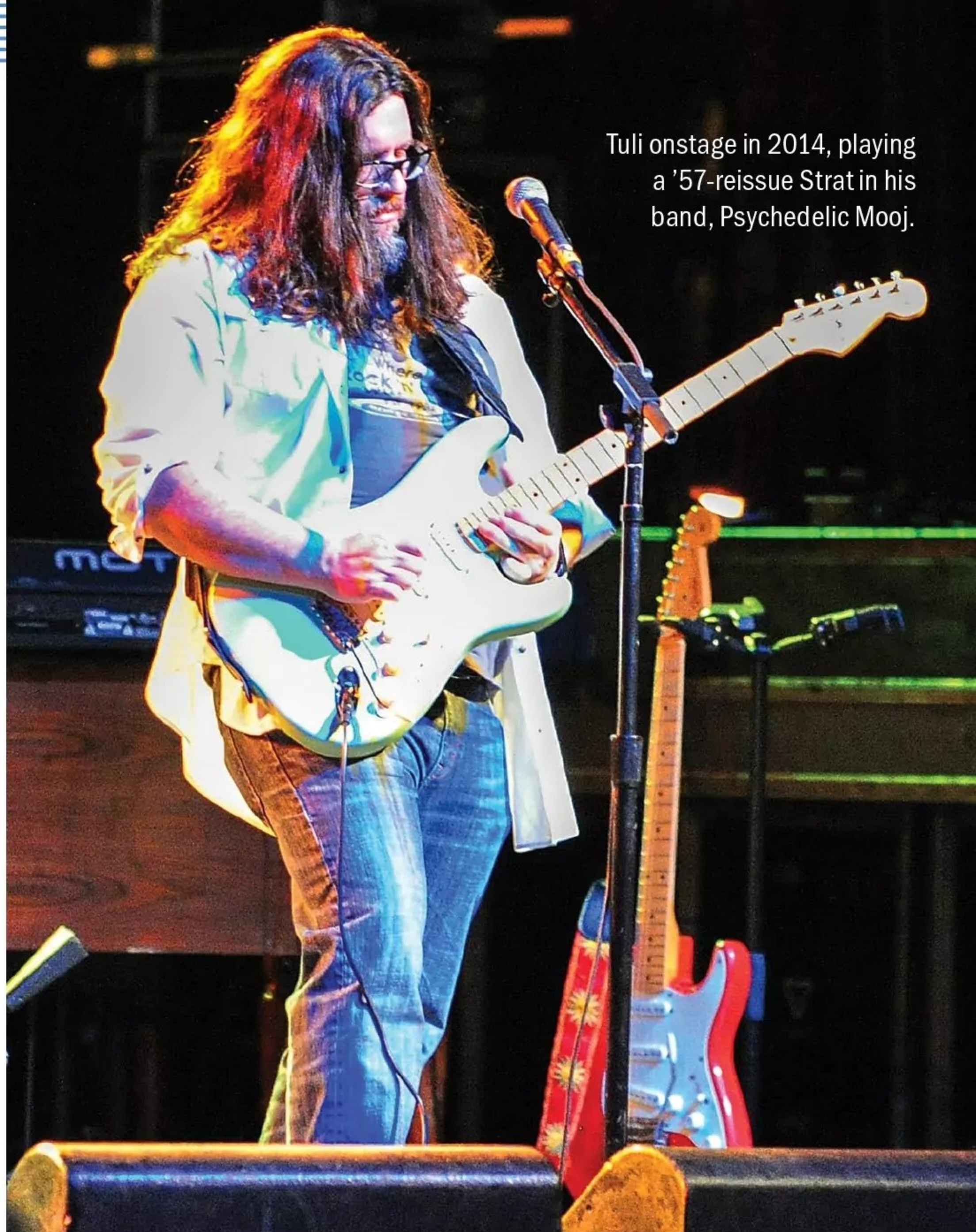
"People often tell me they bought a brown Princeton because I wrote about how small brown Fenders were cheap and would blow their mind. They *used to* sell for about half the price of a tweed Deluxe. Now, not so much."

Tuli's business, meanwhile, gathered steam until it attracted attention from Scotts Miracle-Gro. In 2017, it was bought out by Scotts and Tuli began a new phase in life.

"I wrote *Stratocasters and Telecasters: A Love Story* after I sold out and had to bring all of my guitars and amps home. My wife asked, 'How many guitars do you have?,' and that was the first time I had to actually count. Then she asked, 'Why do you have so many?' and I couldn't answer.

"So I wrote the book to explain why a guy who collects guitars his whole life looks back and realizes it's mostly Stratocasters and Telecasters. There was physics involved, but there's also *magic* involved. The book is me trying to answer for myself."

Now, his innate curiosity and decades of expertise will be put to use conducting the



Tuli onstage in 2014, playing a '57-reissue Strat in his band, Psychedelic Mooj.

research and studying the data behind the valuations presented in *The Guide*.

"For a lot of people like me, part of our wealth lies in our guitar collection," he said. "So it's important to know what's going on: Why is it going up, why is it going down? Over the years, I've fine-tuned my understanding of the factors that create variables and fluctuations.

"Becoming part of *The Guide* team is a dream come true because A) I love vintage guitars and amps, and B) I'm a data freak. For 30 years, I've been able to read data like most people can't."

His collection sits at about 40 guitars and a similar number of amps, and he's been buying *The Guide* since it was produced every few years in a relatively slow-moving market. It has been published annually since 2001.

"I still have the first one I bought – the third edition – and every one since," he said. "When Alan called to gauge my interest in working with him, I told him, 'I've watched the book evolve.'"

His enthusiasm for "benchmark data" and tracking trends will enhance *The Guide*.

"Data analysis – learning *how* you get the answer – is just as important as the answer itself. That's what I want to bring, and in the 2024 intro, users will read about how I focused on what is going on. It's one

thing to say, 'The price is this...' but that price is a vector; it's been somewhere and it's going somewhere. I'm trying to show how it got there, where it came from, how it's used, and by whom."

The result is a broader view; where previous editions focused on the classic market – Gibson, Fender, Martin – tracked via The 42 Index, Tuli says, "I've kept track of 3,000 guitars. So, in the 2024 edition I'll overlay charts showing the 2007 bubble for the blue-ribbon pieces and demonstrate how there *wasn't* a bubble in the broader market. Jaguars, Jazzmasters, and Duo-Sonics didn't go to crazy numbers in 2008.

"The \$5,000-to-\$10,000 market zigzags, but it's *always* moving up," he adds. "The '58 Les Paul Custom... yeah, it quadrupled in price leading up to 2007, then lost half over the next five years, but it still advanced the broader market.

"That's why *The Guide* is essential. And because I'm a collector, there will be a bias

toward the collector; I'm not a dealer, I never sell *anything*."

He adds that while the traditional market – Les Pauls, Strats, Teles, SGs, 335s, etc. – will always be bellwethers, the non-traditional market is increasingly dynamic – "...the Ampeg Dan Armstrong Lucite, the Dano Coral Sitar, the Travis Bean stuff."

"Then there's what we call the 'emerging market,' which is the pointy-headstock/swirly-finish stuff that's 30 or 40 years old. It has become a huge component. You can't compare a '57 Strat to a Charvel, but if you collect Charvels, you're in for a surprise given how they're moving. Same thing if you're into Ibanez Jems, B.C. Rich, Hamer, or Music Man Eddie Van Halen stuff. There are more people looking for it, and *The Guide* will talk about those things. If you have 10 grand to spend, you could get some pretty cool things that are going to keep going up in value."

The first – and perhaps most-noticeable – reflection of Tuli's input is the cover of the 2024 book.

"When traditionalists see it, they're going to think, 'Whaaaaat?' But as I've walked through guitar shows, I've been blown away by how much those guitars are going for."

To hear isolated recordings of the 14 vintage amps featured in Ram Tuli's book *Naked and Dimed*, visit nakedanddimed.com.

Ram Tuli live 2014: Joel Klein.



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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

Seattle-Tacoma Guitar Show, Sunday September 17th, 2023; 9:30am-3:30pm at Kent Commons, 525 4th Ave N, Kent, WA 98030. Contact: bruceadolph@mac.com westcoastguitarshows.com (See Advertisement on page 74.)

Rockford Guitar Show, Saturday, September 23, 2023 - 10am-3pm at the Tebala Event Center 7910 Newburg Rd Rockford IL 61108. \$5 at the door.

More info at www.rockfordguitarshow.com (See Advertisement on page 76.)

The Indiana Guitar Show, September 23-24, 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

Riverhead Guitar Show, September 30 - October 1 from 9am-5pm at the Twin Forks Brewery, 807 Raynor Ave, Riverhead NY 11901. For more information contact Kevin at strat1960@aol.com

1st Annual American Amp & Custom Guitar Club Swap Meet, Saturday, September 30 at the Gulfstream Ballroom, 7227 Valjean Ave., Van Nuys, CA from 11am to 6pm. Booths \$100 and up. \$10 at the door. For more info call 818-517-8247.

OCTOBER

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

Southern Ohio Guitar Show, Sunday, October 15 from 11am - 4pm at the Yoctangee Park Armory, Tritscheller Rd. Chillicothe, OH. For more information visit www.sohioguitarshow.com (See Advertisement on page 74.)

Woodstock Invitational Luthier's Showcase, October 13-15, 2023, at the Bearsville Center Woodstock NY. For more info go to www.WoodstockInvitational.com

Guitarlington 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 (See Advertisement on page 75.)

NOVEMBER

Phoenix Guitar Show, November 4th at the Roberto-Venn School of Luthiery, 1012 Grand Ave., Phoenix from 11am to 4pm. Free to attend. For more information, visit www.phoenixguitarshow.com

Great American Guitar Show (Fall Philly), November 4-5 at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center - Hall A, 100 Station Ave., Oaks, PA. For more info contact Bee 3 Vintage at (828) 298-2197 or visit www.bee3vintage.com.

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

DECEMBER

Rose Quarter Guitar Show, Sunday December 10th, 2023 from 10am-3:30pm at the Veterans Memorial Coliseum 300 N Ramsay Wy, Portland, OR 97227 Contact: bruceadolph@mac.com www.westcoastguitarshows.com

2024

JANUARY

Winter Ohio Guitar Show, Sunday, January 7, 2024 at the Makoy Center 5462 Center St, Hilliard, OH 43026 Show hours 11:30-5:00. For more info, contact Marcat (740) 797-3351. guitardigest@frontier.com, www.ohioguitarshows.com.

Amigo Bay Area World Guitar Show, January 13-14, 2024, Marin Center Exhibit hall, 10 Avenue of the Flags, San Rafael, CA. For more info call Larry Briggs, 918-288-2222, amigoshow@stringswest.com, www.amigoguitarshows.com.

Amigo SoCal World Guitar Show, January 27-28, 2024, OC Fair & Event Center, Arlington & Fairview St., Costa Mesa, CA. For more info call

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Rockford Guitar Show

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Saturday, September 23, 2023
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Larry at (918) 288-2222, amigoshow@stringswest.com, www.amigoguitarshows.com.

FEBRUARY

Orlando International Guitar & Music Expo, February 2-4, 2024 at the Central Florida Fairgrounds, 4603 West Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL. Public hours Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4. For more info contact Morty Beckman at (850) 962-4434, guitarexpo22@yahoo.com or visit www.guitarexpo.net

MARCH

Sarasota Guitar and Amp Show, March 8th - 12pm - 5pm (dealer day), March 9th and 10th - 9am - 6pm at the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium, 801 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34236. Contact: Kevin Wood at 941-993-3098 or visit Sarasotaguitarshow.com

Amigo Nashville Guitar Show 2024, March 23, 10-5

com, Larry Briggs (918) 288-2222, shows@amigoguitarshows.com, Dave Crocker, davecrocker@gmail.com (417) 850-4751. www.amigoguitarshows.com.

Illinois Guitar & Gear Expo, Sunday March 10, 2024 at the Kankakee County Fairgrounds 213W 4000S Rd. Kankakee, IL 60901, 10am - 3pm For more info, visit: <https://www.illinoisguitarexpo.com/>

APRIL

The Greater Pittsburgh Guitar Show, Sunday, April 7, 2024. 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.

MAY

Dallas International Guitar Festival, May 5-7, 2023 at the Dallas Market Hall, 2200 N Stemmons Fwy,

and March 24, 10-4. Williamson County Ag EXPO Park, 4215 Long Lane, Franklin, TN. For more info contact Ruth Brinkmann (817) 312-7659 ruthm-brinkmann@gmail.com.

Dallas, TX. For more info visit www.guitarshow.com.

Jake's Guitar Show & Music Swap Meet, May 4-5, 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

JUNE

Summer Ohio Guitar Show, Sunday, June 23, 2024 at the Makoy Center 5462 Center St, Hilliard, OH 43026 Show hours 11:30-5:00. For more info, contact Marc at (740) 797-3351. guitardigest@frontier.com, www.ohioguitarshows.com.

SEPTEMBER

Jake's Guitar Show & Music Swap Meet, September 21-22, 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

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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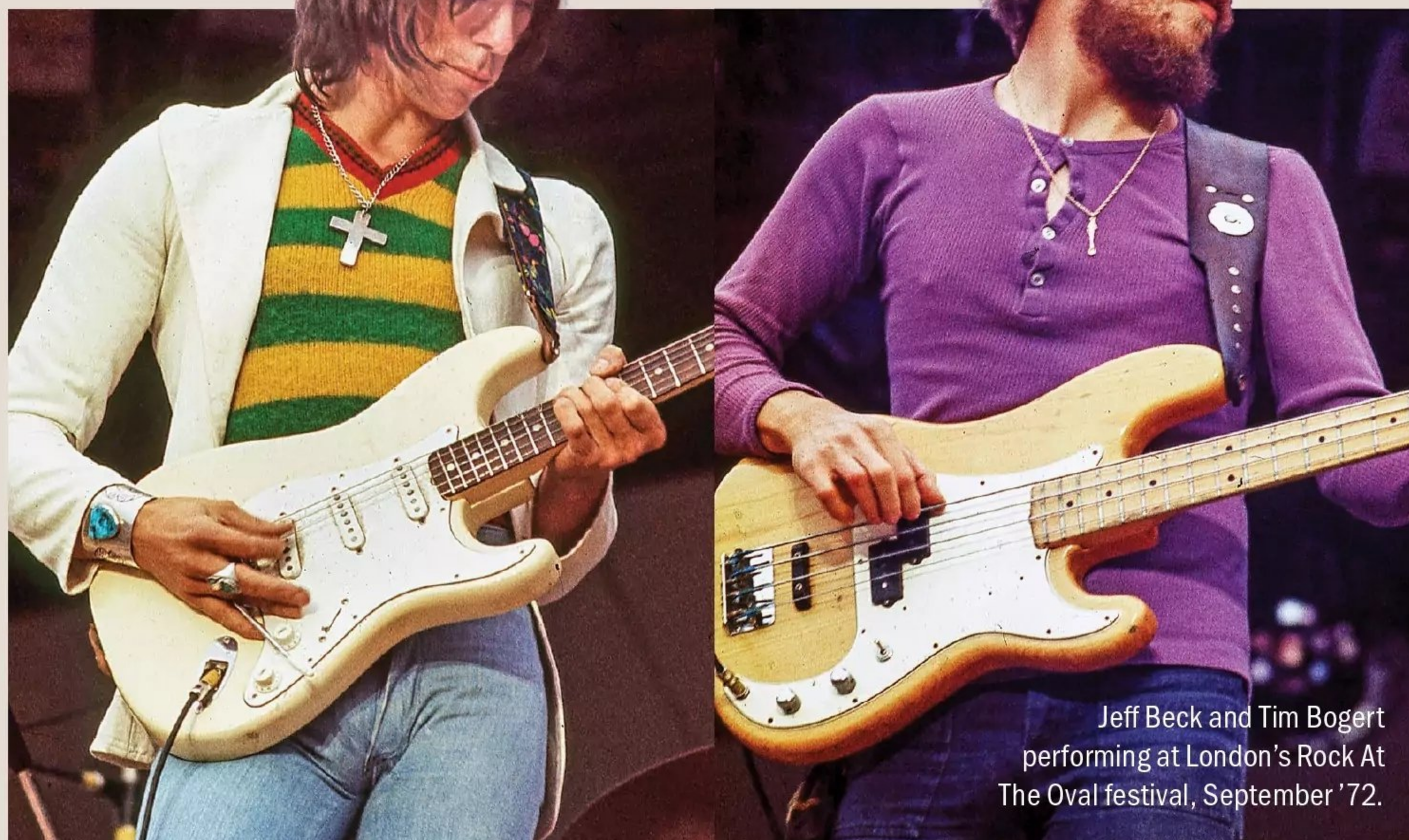
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Jeff Beck and Tim Bogert performing at London's Rock At The Oval festival, September '72.



Beck, Bogert & Appice Live In Japan 1973, Live In London 1974

the influence of '50s guitar wizard Les Paul, cue up a furious "Jeff's Boogie." Captured at London's Rainbow Theatre in January '74, "Jizz Wizz" unleashes Bogert with some cage-fight bass.

Lowering the temperature, BBA could also play a sweet soul ballad like Curtis Mayfield's "I'm So Proud." This subtler material reveals the threesome's true potential. All told, this is a serious live release. Freed from studio confines and destroying these stages, Beck, Bogert & Appice's definitive testament is finally here – 50 years later. – **Pete Prown**

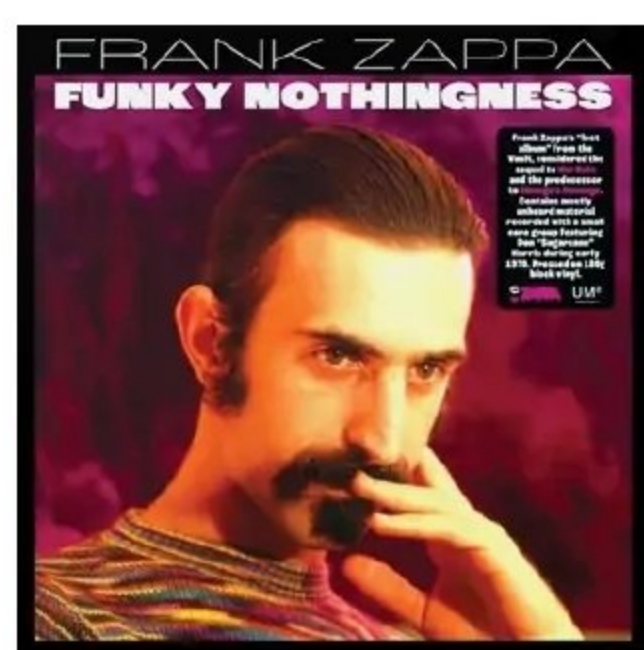
THE POWER TRIO, REVISITED

After one underwhelming studio album, Beck, Bogert & Appice – a power trio with bassist Tim Bogert and drummer Carmine Appice – became a footnote in Jeff Beck's career. While the band's ham-fisted funk

was something of a bull in a china shop, these live recordings give fresh insight on their achievements.

To witness genuinely nimble interplay, fire up "Superstition" and "Lose Myself with You" from

Japan in May, 1973; Beck's Strat is in prime form, complemented by Bogert's muscular fuzz bass. "Going Down" is a barnburner despite cringy vocals, while Beck busts out a newfangled talkbox on "Black Cat Moan." To understand



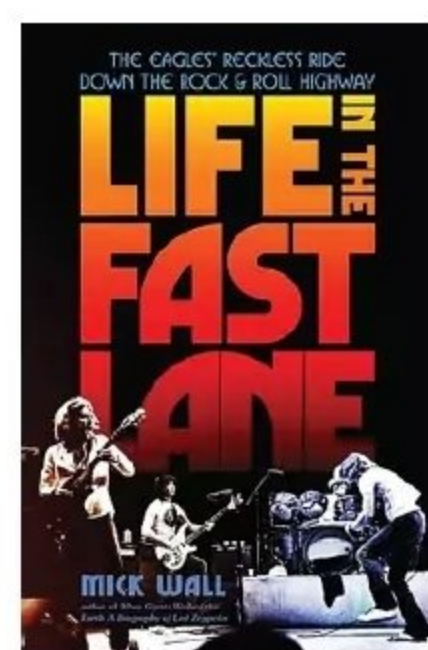
Frank Zappa Funky Nothingness

The stream of archival Zappa releases would be overkill if not for the fact that the quality remains excellent – a testament to the high standard to which FZ held himself. Recorded in 1970, after the classic *Uncle Meat*, these 25 tracks feature one of the best groups Zappa ever assembled – Mothers of Invention keyboardist/saxophonist Ian Underwood joined by blues violin virtuoso Don "Sugarcane" Harris, session bassist Max Bennett, and drummer Aynsley Dunbar following the dissolution of the Aynsley Dunbar Retaliation.

Clearly cut during a creative high, the material is mostly instrumental, but Frank sings Muddy Waters' "I'm A Rollin' Stone," featuring battling wahs, guitar, and violin. The leader further dips into his rhythm-and-blues roots

for "Work With Me Annie," featuring soulful vocal by Harris and a blistering Zappa solo. Three different versions of "Chunga's Revenge," averaging 18 minutes, feature Zappa's distorted, squawky guitar, but the title cut is a simple, bluesy acoustic ditty. "Khaki Sack" highlights some of his most-straightforward blues licks.

Listeners continue to realize what an impressive guitarist Zappa was, in the same way that lay people discover a serious composer who had more to say than "Don't Eat The Yellow Snow." – **Dan Forte**



Mick Wall Life in the Fast Lane

Despite personality conflicts and substances galore, The Eagles created impeccably crafted music. Mick Wall's book

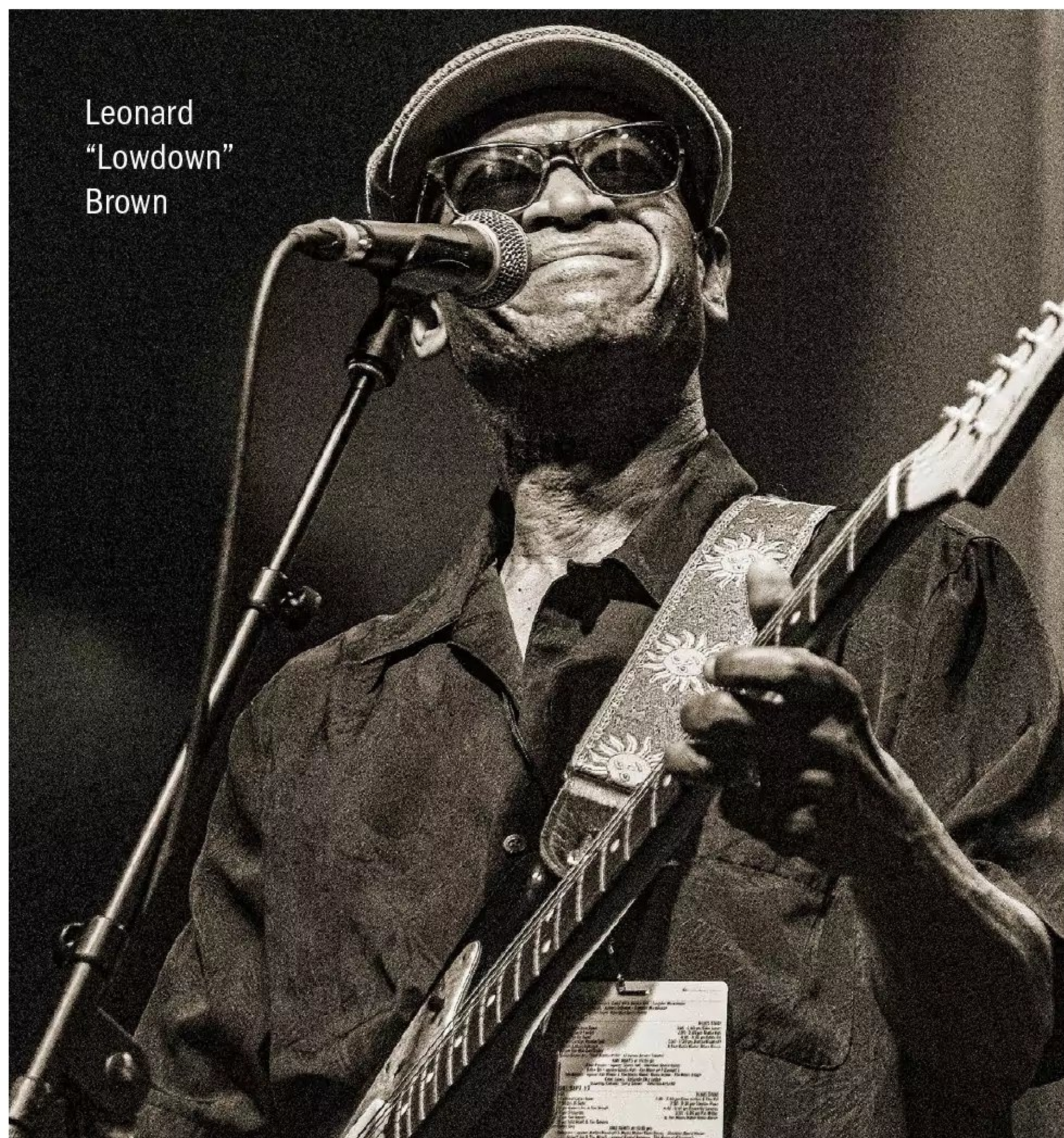
explains how Glenn Frey, Don Henley, Bernie Leadon, Randy Meisner, Don Felder, Joe Walsh, and Timothy B. Schmit became an all-time best-selling act, exemplifying '70s self-indulgence.

Frey and Henley bulldozed the rest of the band members for control; later, Walsh and Schmit hung on for the ride. The often-ignored contributions of Leadon, Meisner, Felder, and Schmit are, fortunately, covered.

Guitar tales abound. Songwriting partner J.D. Souther calls Leadon "one of the best and most overlooked guitar players around." Frey, praising Felder's slide playing, says, "If he isn't Duane Allman reincarnate, I don't know who the f--k is." Felder wrote the "One of These Nights" bass part when Meisner was home ill, and his guitar solo is described here as "diamond-cut lightning." Walsh, meanwhile, was courted by Humble Pie, the Who, and Rolling Stones.

For the finale to "Hotel California," it took Walsh and Felder nearly three days to record

CHECK THIS ACTION



Leonard
"Lowdown"
Brown

MY KIND OF BLUES

By Dan Forte

The great Junior Parker sang, "You will feel like dying when you get these kind of blues." But he sang it over an infectious rhythm, to an upbeat melody. Such is the ability of the blues to interweave sad and happy. It's not monochromatic; it traverses the gamut of human emotion.

I'll be honest: A lot of mediocre blues passes my desk, by acts that mummify the idiom rather than inject it with life. So it's heartening to find three new releases that hold it to a high standard and a reissue of a classic by a true blues icon.

Tracy Nelson's powerful voice was evidenced on her 1965 debut, *Deep Are The Roots*, which mixed folk with classic blues songs by Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith. It featured Charlie Musselwhite's harmonica, and he's back among the accompanists on Nelson's latest, *Life Don't Miss Nobody*.

The eclectic set, embracing Allen Toussaint, Hank Williams, Chuck Berry, and more, is Nelson's best effort in years. Sonny Boy Williamson's "Your Funeral and My Trial" is a duet with Jontavious Willis, who also

at the helm. The 11 tunes, ranging from the impassioned title cut to the humorous "Fat Shame," were penned by "Alabama" Michael Benjamin himself, and onboard is what's becoming a Greaseland stable – Andersen sharing guitar duties with Rusty Zinn, Bobby Young, and Anson Funderburgh (who adds a penetrating solo to "King Cock"), Jerry Jemmot handling bass, and drummer D'Mar Martin. It's another impressive release by the nonprofit Little Village label, founded by Jim Pugh, who's at his usual keyboard seat.

From boyhood in Gary, Indiana, to gospel quartets and blues clubs in Chicago, to jams at Dan Electro's in Houston, **Leonard "Lowdown" Brown** has carved a musical path. As he sings over a funky beat in the title song of *Blues Is Calling Me*, "I'm headed wherever the blues takes me; that's my destiny."

Part of the Music Maker Foundation's formidable roster, he delivers "You Gotta Move" in a smooth, facile style, backed by jazzy, warm-toned guitar fills. Horn stabs punctuate "Lowdown's Blues," a medium-tempo shuffle displaying his guitar stance – authoritative, but

plays resonator slide. Sister Rosetta Tharpe's "Strange Things Happening Every Day" features great distorted guitar by Mike Henderson. Roger Alan Nichols, who co-produced the album with Nelson, supplies guitar on several tracks, and Larry Chaney brought out acoustic and cuatro for the Latin-flavored original title song. Stephen Foster's "Hard Times" receives a band treatment and a stirring solo version with Nelson on acoustic 12-string.

Stuff I've Been Through by **Alabama Mike** is the hippest soul-styled blues disc to come along in a good while. Not surprisingly, it was recorded at San Jose's Greaseland Studios with Kid Andersen

unhurried. "Find a Bridge" features muted guitar bursts over an infectious zydeco rhythm, while the swinging groove of "French Quarter Woman" is reminiscent of Wilson Pickett.

When **John Lee Hooker** half-speaks/half-sings, "I had a friend one time; at least I thought I did," it can raise your hackles, convinced that "I'm Bad Like Jesse James" is more warning than boast. The inspiration for blues-rock acts from Canned Heat to Van Morrison, George Thorogood, and the Animals started his recording career with "Boogie Chillun" – #1 on the R&B chart in 1948. He later cut collaborations with Muddy Waters, Bonnie Raitt, Carlos Santana, and Los Lobos.

Alone: Live At Hunter College 1976 contains his entire concert, sans backup band – just rawboned guitar and his ever-present foot-stomping. Hooker standards "Boom Boom," "Crawlin' King Snake," and "One Bourbon, One Scotch, One Beer" are featured along with lesser-known originals "Dark Room" and "Trying To Survive" – the rare solo concept proving a winner.

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME

I got to see Tracy Nelson and John Lee Hooker perform several times in the late '70s and early '80s. Nelson often played the basement rathskeller of Larry Blake's restaurant in Berkeley. She was friends with the Rat Band, an all-star group consisting of past and future members of Elvin Bishop, Charlie Musselwhite, Tower of Power, Robert Cray, and Santana. Led by guitarist Tim Kaihatsu, they excelled in backing any roots artist or holding down the fort by themselves. Tim doubled as booking agent, and one of his crowning achievements was booking Etta James with Nelson opening. I thought the sweaty ceiling would come down.

Hooker gigged steadily, leading a crack band that featured dual guitars of Luther Tucker and Benny Rowe, with later ensembles held down by guitarists Michael Osborn or Ron Thompson. "Boogie Chillen" was always the highlight, but occasionally he'd slow things down with the band barely audible and do a moody piece like "The Waterfront" to pin-drop silence from the crowd.

Hooker enjoyed his later years in the San Francisco area, where he was rightly treated like royalty. He received four Grammy awards in addition to a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000, a year before he died at 83. There will never be another like him.

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HIT LIST REVIEWS

the landmark guitar duel. And several “The Last Resort” takes were scrapped when tapes caught Black Sabbath’s roar as they recorded in an adjacent studio! Occasionally sardonic – but still, an engrossing read of the multi-platinum American band. – **Bret Adams**



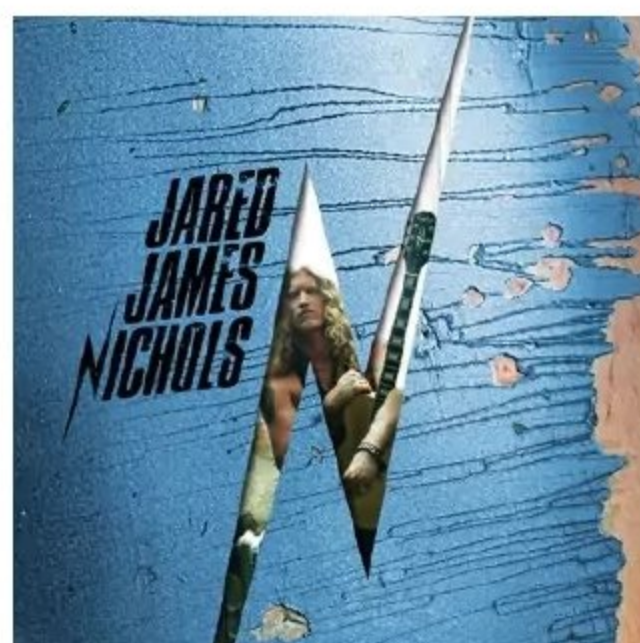
Vince Gill & Paul Franklin

Sweet Memories: The Music of Ray Price and the Cherokee Cowboys

Ray Price (1926–2013) created a distinctive hard-country sound in the ’50s, combining his powerful vocals with the iconic Cherokee Cowboys, a fiddle/pedal-steel band echoing the honky-tonk and Western swing of Price’s native Texas. Cowboys alumni included some of Nashville’s greatest instrumentalists along with singer Johnny Paycheck and Country-Hall-of-Famers Willie Nelson and Roger Miller.

Vince Gill and pedal-steel master Paul Franklin know Price’s music on a molecular level. That’s why this is no greatest-hits homage; instead, they wisely select lesser-known, highly worthy masterpieces. Gill’s vocals are powerful, his guitar concise and fluid, particularly the expressive intro and break on “You Wouldn’t Know Love” and “Walkin’ Slow (and Thinking ’Bout Her).” He and Franklin stomp through “Your Old Love Letters,” one of several tunes driven by the trademark $\frac{4}{4}$ “Texas shuffle” beat created by Price himself.

Franklin plays his way while subtly evoking Cherokee Cowboys steel luminaries Jimmy Day and Buddy Emmons on Price’s “The Same Two Lips” and Willie’s ballad, “Healing Hands of Time.” On “Danny Boy,” the controversial 1966 single that marked Price’s transition from the Cowboys sound to lush orchestral backing, Franklin enhances Gill’s searing, passionate vocal with rich chordal textures, evoking the original string arrangement. – **Rich Kienzie**



Jared James Nichols

Jared James Nichols

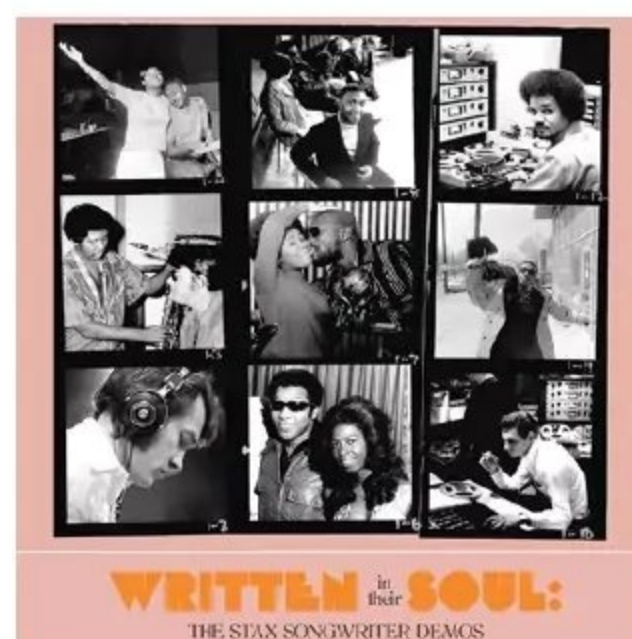
Pentatonic beast and Gibson ambassador Jared James Nichols’ third album bristles with out-of-the-box soloing amidst crafty tunes where blues-rock meets grunge at the trailer park. Nichols



cuts loose with testosterone-fueled vocal intensity and solos that signal the end of the world. Raw production and unmanicured bass and guitar support Nichols’ refreshing meat-and-potatoes vision. The 12 songs are bold, visceral, and an epic showcase for the beauty and power of his Les Paul.

“Down the Drain” mixes punishing riffs with psychedelia and a searing guitar solo. Alternative metal and grunge make an appearance like on “Skin ’n Bone,” but blues rises to the surface. Nichols channels Black Sabbath on the pummeling “Hallelujah”; on “Saint or Fool,” strap in as he exacts revenge on every civilian who ever asked a guitarist to turn down. Torrents of skull-crushing G-forces lay waste to all with a soulful feel and extroverted double-stop string bends.

The solo in “My Delusion” evokes memories of Ted Nugent’s *Double Live Gonzo*. At the same time, on “Hard Wired,” Nichols wails right out of the gate, manhandling his Les Paul with bizarre effects like a demon during an exorcism. A powerful record. – **Oscar Jordan**



Various artists

Written In Their Soul: The Stax Songwriter Demos

You may think you know Stax, but this seven-CD set

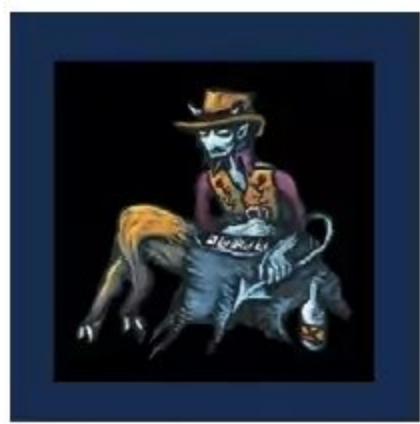


Jared James Nichols (left). Steve Cropper in the ’60s with his trademark Telecaster.

of 146 tracks (140 never before released) proves again how much creative genius was contained in that old Memphis theater turned recording studio. These songwriter demos are loose and unfinished – usually without a full band backing, and sans horn section. But they’re still soulful, funky, and in most cases, stunners. Plus, if you’re a fan of Steve Cropper and the Memphis guitar sound, you can hear it here loud and clear.

Dial up “634-5789 (Soulsville, USA).” Penned by Eddie Floyd and Cropper, the tune became a hit for Floyd’s former band-mate in the Falcons, Wilson Pickett. But Floyd’s demo unveils the genesis, powered by Cropper’s silky-smooth riffs. Ditto the Staples Singers’ smash “Respect Yourself,” demoed with an uptempo urgency by studio songwriter Mack Rice with jagged-but-driving guitar.

Other gems include the Staples’ “Top Of The Mountain” with Roebuck “Pops” Staples’ tremolo-laced rhythm and Rice’s demo of his “Linda Sue Dixon,” which became an LSD-paeon for Mitch Ryder’s Detroit Wheels. And that’s just highlighting a handful of tracks. Last, but hardly least, in proving the point is a sweet tune simply titled “Song #2” by The MGs, presumably a studio jam that coulda, shoulda been a hit. – **Michael Dregni**



DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS

The Complete Dirty South

This expanded reissue of the Truckers' acclaimed 2004 concept album, an evocative overview of Southern culture, includes unreleased material, remixes and edited-updated vocals on several tracks. One constant is the unvarnished, smoldering guitars of Patterson Hood, Mike Cooley, and Jason Isbell. They continue to dominate the musical end, particularly on "Lookout Mountain," "Where the Devil Don't Stay," and "The Buford Stick." – **RK**



EAST NASH GRASS

Last Chance to Win

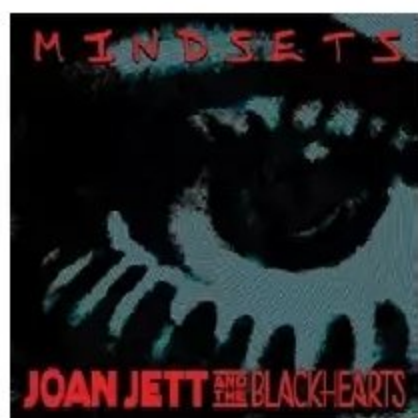
This sextet of experienced bluegrass sidemen blend their vocal and instrumental talents for a cohesive, neo-traditional debut. Singer/guitarist James Kee plays smooth rhythms, adding fluent flatpicking. Harry Clark's aggressive mandolin chops through "East Due West Blues." Clark and dobroist Gaven Largent wax energetic on both '30s bluesman Leroy Carr's "Papa's on the Housetop" and the free-for-all instrumental, "Jenna McGaugh." – **RK**



BLACK STONE CHERRY

Screamin' at the Sky

Kentucky's finest unleash their eighth studio album. Hard-hitting tunes feature drummer John Fred Young, guitarists Chris Robertson and Ben Wells, and new bassist Steve Jewell, Jr. Tight riffs, gruff-voiced choruses, wah work, and chunky chord machinations yield a sameness to the tracks but reinforce the band's powerful brand. Highlights include the well-executed guitar arranging of "Out Of Pocket" and "Nervous." – **OJ**



JOAN JETT & THE BLACKHEARTS

Mindsets

You know what you're getting with a Joan Jett release – catchy pop-/punk-glazed rock with crunchy chords and concise riffs. This six-song digital EP featuring guitarist Dougie Needles doesn't disappoint. "If You're Blue" zips with a distorted riff and buzzing bends. Shockingly, "Whiskey Goes Good" oozes country. It's all solid material that should've been half an album. – **BA**



NICK MOSS BAND

Get Your Back Into It!

When blues, swing, and rock and roll collide, guitarist Nick Moss and harmonica virtuoso Dennis Gruenling will be there to "Make your backbone shiver." Like a trip back to Chicago of the '50s, Moss and Gruenling plays this bygone pop style with respect, authenticity, and true love. Moss' well-oiled guitar vocabulary is right on the money – clean, tasty, and badass. – **OJ**



ANA PATAN

Spice, Gold and Tales Untold

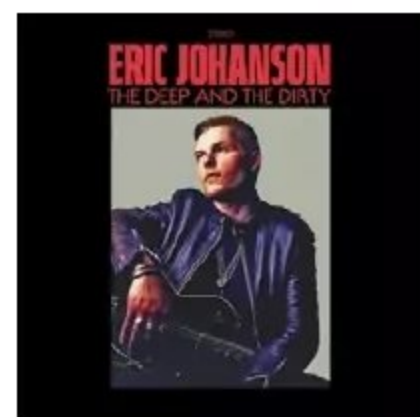
Patan's formidable talents are showcased on originals that are sexy but smart, hip but not pretentious, breezy in spots but never snoozy. The funky "General Conspiracy" contrasts with a lively Caribbean feel and her interwoven lead, rhythm, and punctuating guitars on "The Human." Bass star Jonas Hellborg, formerly with Ginger Baker and Mahavishnu Orchestra, adds a melodic bottom end. Highly recommended. – **DF**



SOLSTEIN

Solstein

If you think jazz-rock is dead, here comes Solstein, featuring monster players who've worked with Steely Dan and Toto. Norwegian guitarist Stian Larsen has an uncanny combination of taste, rock tone, and quick jazz chops, heard on "Intersection" and "Oriental Folk Song." Solstein does a great job avoiding clichés, evoking jazz and progressive textures topped with superior musicianship. Recommended fusion. – **PP**



ERIC JOHANSON

The Deep And The Dirty

On his previous album, Eric Johanson cracked the *Billboard* blues chart Top 10. Now, he takes Americana to the shed with depraved guitar sounds, nightmarish blues, and transparent vocals. Guitarist Jesse Dayton sits in the cockpit directing ditties like "Elysian Fields," taking garage aesthetics to the swamp. Johanson's slide playing is earthy, skillful, and always in service to good taste. Welcome to the riff party. – **OJ**



BOB BRADSHAW

The Art Of Feeling Blue

In a sea of hummers and strummers, this singer/songwriter presents a dozen originals with strong, intriguing melodies and bold arrangements. "Waiting" sounds a bit like Tom Petty, while mariachi trumpet and Andrew Stern's spaghetti-western guitar add drama to "Rosa," which ends in a flurry of percussion and fuzz guitar. Andy Santospago

adds lap-steel, and Bradshaw's acoustic drives every cut. – **DF**



JAMIE WEST-ORAM

Skeleton Key

The Fixx guitarist stretches beyond his clean, atmospheric style on his first solo album, where he sings and plays everything except drums. Five of the 10 songs are instrumentals, which are the highlights; layers of pure, distorted, and tremolo guitar textures dominate. "Knuckle Down" is slow, vibrato-laced funk inspired by Mountain's Leslie West. "Life Support" is compact, cosmic, and Pink Floyd-like. – **BA**



SHOOK BOYS

"Tell On You"/"Dead By 22"

Toronto rockabilies Shook Boys drop a first 45 single with plenty of rebel swagger. "Tell On You" swings proud with clever lyrics and hot picking by Mark Robinson on his sweet-toned Bigsby-replica guitar. "Dead By 22" is a loving tribute to '50s juvenile delinquency, deploying a lowdown '60s Danelectro longhorn Bass VI for bassy leads. – **MD**



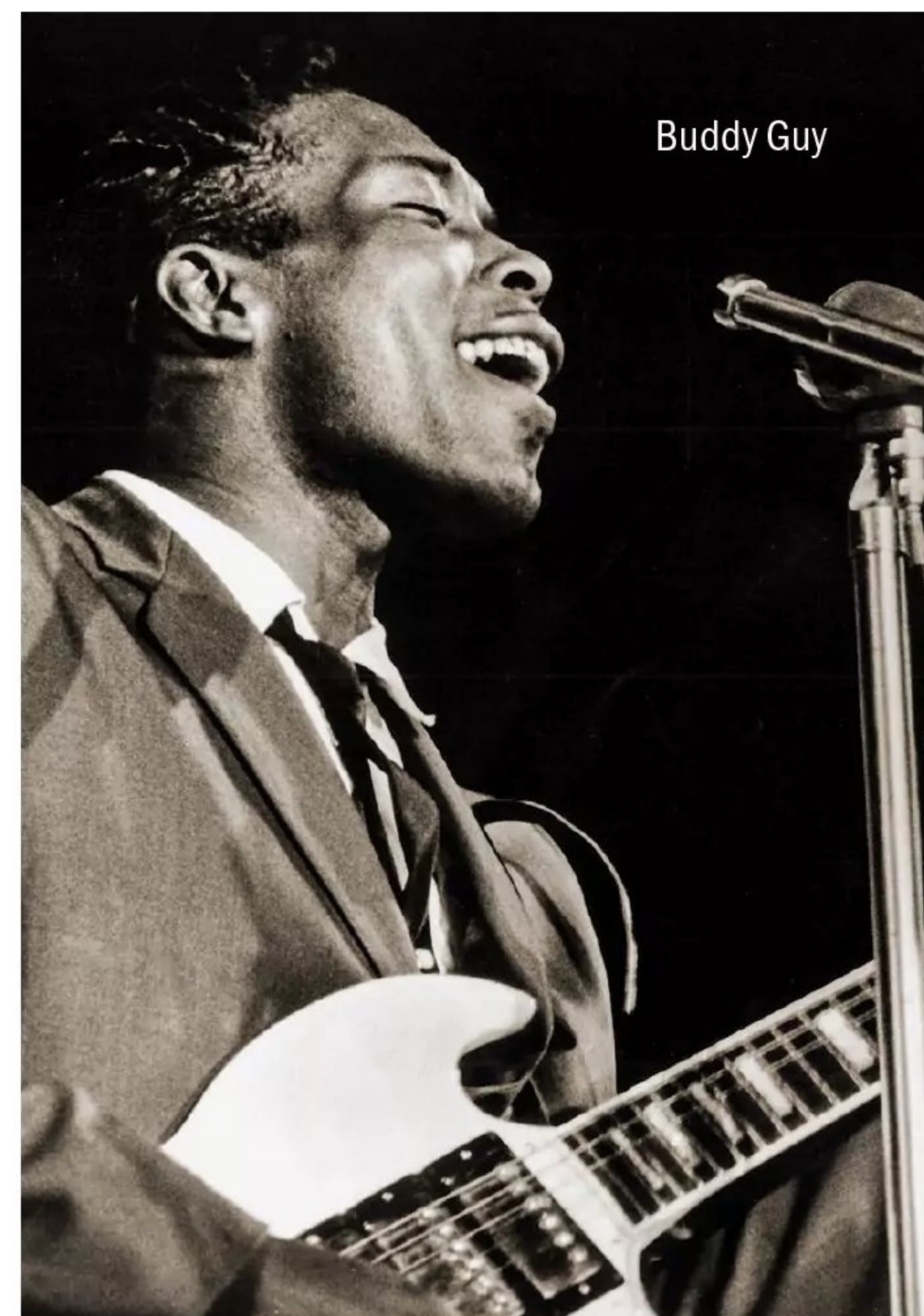
SALTWATER HANK

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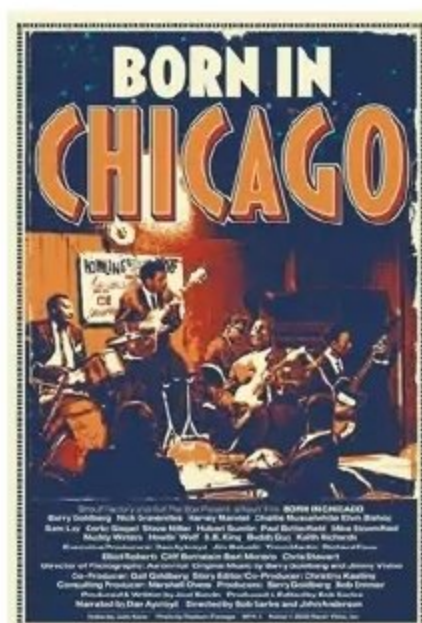
Sung in Ts'msyen, the language of an indigenous tribe on Canada's Western coast, this album is both disarming and *rockin'*! Saltwater Hank (a.k.a., singer/guitarist Jeremy Pahl) leads his ensemble through roots jams with twangy six-string and Liam McIvor's lap steel. The uptempo swing of "Liimi Mak'ooxs" sports reverb-heavy guitar; "Ba'wis" evolves into fierce folk-rock. Hank delivers surprisingly fun (but still powerful) material. – **PP**



Hubert Sumlin
and Howlin' Wolf



Buddy Guy



Various artists Born in Chicago

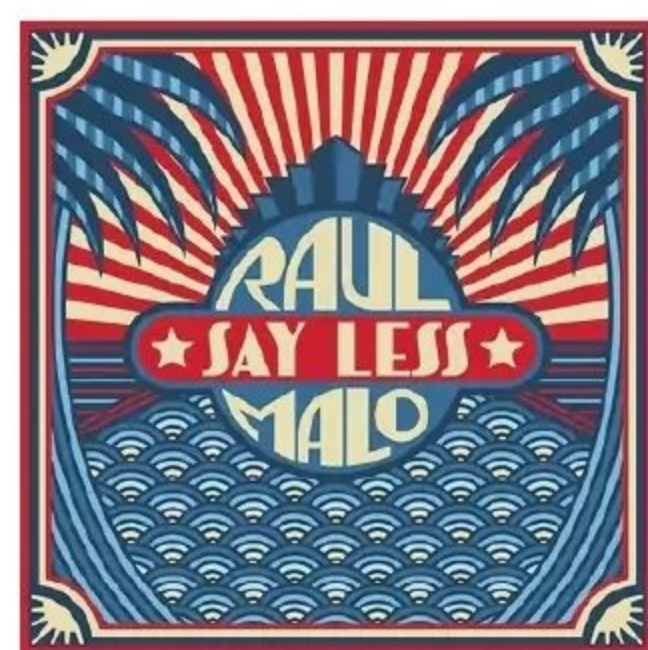
Tweaked and re-cut, this documentary charts the rise of America's greatest urban blues and its gradual adaptation into rock. There are photos, interviews, and even footage of Maxwell Street, where bluesmen would perform outdoors for a few bucks. The film reminds us that the scene took place in "the little bars and tiny dives of Chicago's South and West sides," rife with names like Willie Dixon, Little Walter, and Paul Butterfield.

Naturally, Muddy Waters is celebrated, along with rival Howlin' Wolf – when asked if Muddy and the Wolf were actual enemies, drummer Sam Lay simply responds, "Yeah." Aside from Wolf – noted for "massive hands that cradled his guitar like a toothpick" – you'll meet his lauded lead guitarist Hubert Sumlin, interviewed here.

Also discussed is the genre's decline among young black listeners; simultaneously, white college kids discovered blues throughout the '60s – among them, a 17-year-old "B.B. King fanatic" named Michael Bloomfield. Organist Barry Goldberg recalls jamming with teenaged Michael and Howlin' Wolf, while Bob Dylan describes young Bloomfield as "the best guitarist I ever heard." Harvey Mandel

says watching weekly Buddy Guy gigs was like, "...going to college for playing guitar."

Ultimately, this documentary becomes mandatory viewing for every guitarist. – **PP**



Raul Malo Say Less

Raul Malo's passionate, searing vocals helped define the Mavericks from the early '90s on. Malo blended his Cuban-American roots into the band's rich, varied sound, as they embraced rockabilly, classic country, pop ballads, Vegas jump-jive-wail music and anything else that caught their fancy. Malo did the same on his various solo projects; this one, however, is a major departure. *Say Less* showcases his formidable guitar skills on 10 instrumentals, delivered on a worn '63 Jaguar.

The tunes, all but one of which are original, illuminate both Malo's diverse approach and longtime love of '50s and '60s instrumental LPs. Backed by first-rate sidemen, he fuses Jimmy Nolen-style funk with Cuban rhythms, voices, and horns on the mesmerizing "Cosa's Cumbia." The moody "A Summer Ago" conjures bittersweet nostalgia. Raul's eloquent take on Paul Simon's "Sounds of Silence" speaks for itself.

The Mavericks join Malo for three tight, well-focused numbers. Hearing him on

the pulsating "Tsu-Ching," alongside Mavs guitar master Eddie Perez adds greater heft and excitement to the performances. They turn reflective for the eloquent and nostalgic ballad "Havana's Midnight." Malo, switching to a Gibson hollowbody, and Perez (using a Jazzmaster) create an incandescent twin-guitar ensemble on the boisterous, swinging "Peach Blossom Blues." – **RK**



Reverend Freakchild Songs Of Beauty For Ashes Of Realization

Though its nine tracks revisit and rearrange originals from his 16 albums, the Reverend's latest project is as ambitious as it is eclectic. While he typically performs solo (as he does on two cuts here), stars such as drummer Chris Parker (Aretha Franklin, Miles Davis, Bob Dylan) and Garrett "G. Love" Dutton on harmonica were called on for ensemble tracks.

Featuring his National Resoelectric, the Rev interweaves meaty lines with Hugh Pool's guitar, lap-steel, bass, and harmonica, blending and pushing the boundaries of blues, folk, and rock. Freakchild blows harp as Drew Glackin's lap-steel sails through the outro of "All Across America." The cynical "Hippy Bluesman Blues" features



Matteo Mancuso

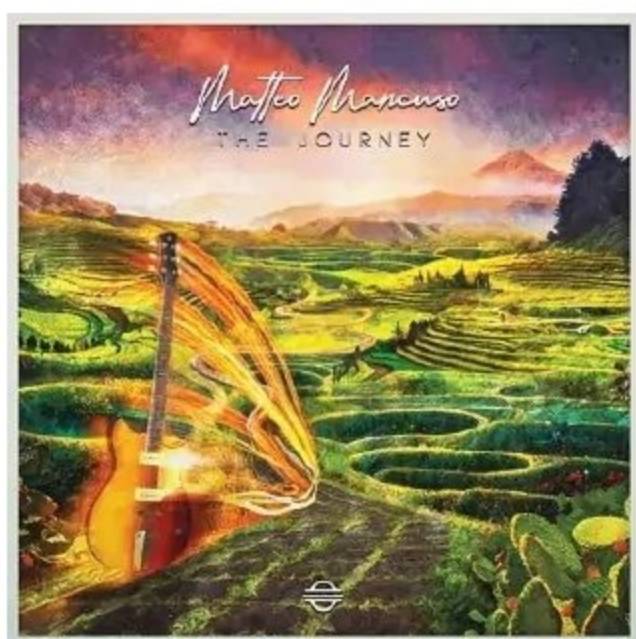


Roy Buchanan

Andrea Whitt's pedal-steel and Mark Karan's "woman tone" lead.

"Tears Of Fire" is the most-rocking selection, with Freakchild and guitarist Chris Bergson achieving wonderfully distorted tones, while "Skyflower (Watermoon)" offers a beautiful pastoral respite.

The shining spot of the program is "Amsterdam Blues," with Rev backing his vocal on bottleneck – both double-tracked – sounding a bit like John Fahey. If you arrived late to the Freakchild party, worry not. Exploring his catalog offers surprises at every turn. – **DF**



Matteo Mancuso The Journey

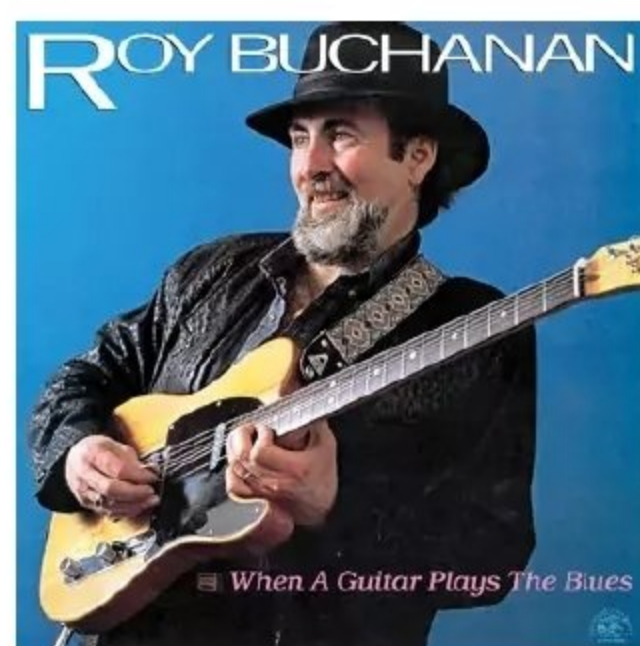
When guitarists as diverse as Al Di Meola and Joe Bonamassa are singing your praises, something's up. Sicilian guitar prodigy Matteo Mancuso's debut record displays effortless facility, charisma, and fresh ideas instead of trodden musical landscapes. These ingredients have made the 26-year-old a Youtube star. Produced by his guitarist/father Vincent, the album includes bassists Stefano India and Riccardo Oliva, drummers Giuseppe Bruno and Gianluca Pellerito, and Giuseppe Vasapolli on keys.

The Journey is a grab-bag of accessible fusion, beginning with "Silkroad," which com-

bines seamless legato reminiscent of '80s Bill Connors and Scott Henderson. Acoustic guitar and odd-time signatures make an appearance that impresses. The swinging "Polifemo" takes a jazz approach, and Mancuso's phrasing is tops. "Falcon Flight" goes full-blown jazz rock with sitar sounds and lush chord voicings.

From the pastoral ambiance of "Open Fields," Mancuso is never afraid to rip, like on the rocking "Drop D," or pour on the acoustic elegance for "Time To Leave."

Mancuso's letter of introduction, *The Journey* is a sonic business card that bops, shreds, and nails the changes with musicality, immaculate phrasing, and a maturity that bodes ferocious things ahead. – **OJ**



Roy Buchanan When A Guitar Plays the Blues

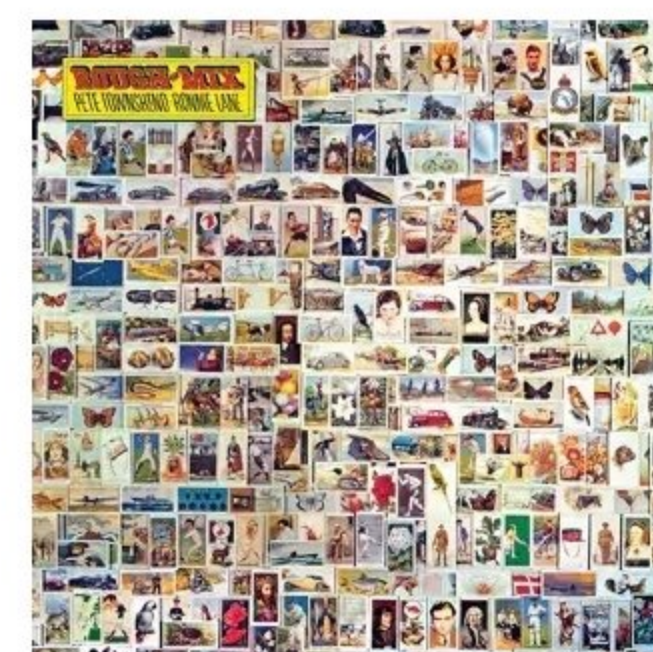
After a recording hiatus, the blues-rock pioneer enjoyed a 1985 comeback with this Telecaster manifesto, now reissued on vinyl. The title track opens with volume swells on a rabid Fender amp drenched in reverb and overdrive before he blows the roof off with screaming bends and a razor tone. Roy was back.

"Chicago Smokeshop" is funk-blues that lets Buchanan solo like a speed-freaked demon. Conversely, "Country Boy" is a

"Green Onions" variation with spoken vocals and fast, almost Van Halen-esque pull-offs (no wonder Roy's career was erratic – it was *impossible* to pigeonhole the guy). On "Mrs. Pressure," he turns the volume down for silky, Hawaiian-like glissandos in the Chet Atkins/Les Paul wheelhouse – it's gorgeous. "Sneaking Godzilla Through the Alley" displays a wonky riff with swells on top, while "Short Fuse" carves a path for Roy to visit Tele town.

"A Nickel and a Nail," the best cut on the album, is sultry minor blues with Bill Heid's haunting organ and guest Otis Clay on vocals. Buchanan's solo here is raw and devastating.

Though Buchanan committed suicide three years after its release, this vinyl reminds us of his vast legacy. A Telecaster master that's gone, but never forgotten. – **PP**



Pete Townshend & Ronnie Lane Rough Mix, Pete Townshend, Empty Glass



Two important Townshend solo albums have received their long-awaited vinyl reissue. Internal friction gnawed at the Who in the mid '70s as they focused on outside projects; Pete Townshend was tapped

to produce an album by Small Faces bassist Ronnie Lane that turned into a collaboration. While 1977's *Rough Mix* isn't entirely cohesive, it's the sound of rock royalty having fun. Guests include John Entwistle, Eric Clapton, Boz Burrell, and Charlie Watts. The title track lets the guitars loose, with Clapton on lead.

1980's *Empty Glass* – superior to Who albums of the same era – was Townshend's powerful reaction to punk and a host of personal problems. On vinyl, FM staple "Rough Boys," retains its glassy, shimmering chords and sexually provocative lyrics. "Let My Love Open the Door" delivers buoyant pop, punk beats and cutting guitar dominate the rocker "Jools and Jim," and aggressive guitar parts highlight "Empty Glass."

These reissues utilize Abbey Road's half-speed mastering (an alluring feature for audiophiles) and sound quality is excellent. *Rough Mix* is best, as the warmth and clarity of the instruments is outstanding. On *Empty Glass*, guitar, bass, and piano leap out of the grooves. These are must-have LPs for Townshend fans. – **Bret Adams VG**

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1997 California Series Stratocaster, vintage white, maple neck, SSS pickups, gigbag, excellent cond. \$999.00, shipping negotiable Gpgamby@gmail.com

2005 Fender Reverse Proto Stratocaster - Dennis Galuszka Masterbuilt #025. Mint, Collector-grade. No lacquer checking. Original purchaser. 100% as received. Reverse headstock with all the '69 rock-guitar vibe. \$7,900.00 plus shipping. Email for pics/details whatsupjp@gmail.com

1989 Fender Eric Clapton Strat (Blackie), all original with tweed case, exc. cond. Best offer over \$1,400 + shpg. 1992 Les Paul bass (LPB-1), all original with soft case, exc. cond. Best offer. Dave dloughery@verizon.net

Fender Player Duo-Sonic, 2021 model, excellent condition; one small ding on a back edge. Desert Sand body, maple neck, gold aluminum pickguard. Tuners replaced with Kluson Revolution 19:1 units. Comes w/ tired but serviceable gig bag. \$575 OBO. info & pics: machambers@charter.net

INSTRUMENTS WANTED

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AMPS FOR SALE

1982 Mesa Boogie Mark II B. I am it's only owner and it is in absolutely perfect condition. Comes with its original EV 12" speaker, slipcover, channel switching pedal, and cable. Please..serious inquiry only. E-mail me at nchervenak@comcast.n

1973 Fender Twin Reverb - excellent condition for it's age, second owner owned it from 1976 until now. Dead stock: tubes, caps, speakers, cord, footswitch, cover - all original. Just checked over by a well-respected tech, needs nothing. They're only original once! \$1499, will ship on your dime. plakbill@aol.com for pics or more info.

1958 Original Fender Champ. Respectively serviced and ready to use. \$2,999 Other Fender tweed in the collection. Contact ampman57@aol.com

1965 Vox AC 15T in great shape, serial # 01366. Works great, sounds great. Comes with nice Vox cover. Also have some vintage foot pedals, 1960s Vox Tone Bender serial# 1564915 and two Gibson Maestro FZ-1A Fuzz Tone one with input cord and one without. All items work well. Please e-mail me at michaelbkennedy@live.com and we can discuss pricing and I can send you pictures. Serious Inquiries only.

'62 Tweed Champ in Tinted Repro. Fender Cab. Nos Tubes, Mod 8" speaker, Weber Cp & Resistor Kit. Orig.Cab & Recond Alnico

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AMPS WANTED

AMPEG Goldenglo Reverberocket. Mid-60s, 25 watt tube combo amp. Copper control panel top, lucite back panel lights up, that's the one! contact Willis/Delta Prince Music, deltaprince@cox.net [az.]

MISC FOR SALE

Mid 60s vintage Gibson ES-335 guitar case: Black with yellow interior plush lining; brass "Gibson" logo badge. Very rough shape (rips, black tape, etc.) very reasonable. rdart50@gmail.com for photos and details

Glen Anderson has just released his new CD - "Don't Look Back" from Houndogrecords. It is currently available on itunes, spotify and all media outlets. Glen has 3 previous CDs including "The Big Show, Let's Pretend", and "Reverend". Also, check out his book, "Classic Performances (from the Golden Age of Rock & Roll)" on his website, or via blurb.com You can also hear it at glenanderson@hearnow.com

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STOLEN INSTRUMENTS

Fender Jazz bass L90890 when last seen was hot pink and wired in stereo. Fender bass, Olympic white when last seen, P bass body with Jazz bass neck L21023 was in blonde Fender case. Serial numbers are correct or close as I can remember them now. Don Mossman 419-668-1010 donmos@roadrunner.com

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BROTHERS IN TONE

Jam Pedals' Harmonious Monk Mk2 & Boomster Mk2

Jam Pedals continually evolves its line by creating a cool menagerie of point-to-point stompboxes that adapt to a multitude of sonic applications while maintaining residency on the pedalboards of string-benders like Steve Lukather, Greg Koch, and Kenny Wayne Shepherd. Their latest additions are the Harmonious Monk Mk2 and Boomster Mk2.

A harmonic tremolo, the Harmonious Monk Mk2 is a collaboration between Jam Pedals and “That Pedal Show” hosts Dan Steinhardt and Mick Taylor. The Boomster Mk2 is an analog boost with selective true- and buffered-bypass functions along with a few other sweet options.

The Monk Mk2 has two modes of tremolo – Harmonic and Amplitude, with added Tap Tempo and a variable Ramp Speed feature. Its Legacy Mode can double or increase the tremolo speed by

1.5 times. Its three waveforms (Sine Wave, Square Wave, and Reverse Sawtooth) offer the user subtle tremolo sounds as well as mind-altering rhythmic stutter.

The Boomster Mk2 is a volume boost with three voicings and switchable true or buffered bypass. With increased clean headroom and improved fidelity and functionality, the Boomster is a performer's utility tool. Its toggle switch allows users to cut the high-end response, achieve a flat full-range response, or introduce midrange. Used as an on-all-the-time pedal or engaged to make solos soar, it also acts as a buffer to alleviate signal loss and adds 16db of rugged clean boost and sculpting capabilities.

Both pedals use a 9-volt power supply and reflect Jam Pedals' stamp of quality, user-friendly functionality, warm sounds, and hip graphics. – **Oscar Jordan**

Price: \$279 (Harmonious Monk); \$219 (Boomster Mk2)
www.jampedals.com

ANDY FLANGE

EHX's Walking on the Moon
Flanger/Filter Matrix

With its mouthful of a name – The Andy Summers Walking On the Moon Flanger/Filter Matrix – the latest Electro-Harmonix stompbox is modeled after Summers' legendary tone, with nuance that separates it from the jet-plane swoosh of early Van Halen.

While technically a flanger that offers classic swooshy/wobbly tones, the fun is in how the WOTM delivers that deep, sensual chorus heard on hits by The Police, Rush, and Pretenders from the late '70s to early '80s.

Functionally, its Color knob determines intensity of the flanger effect, while Range sets the width of the sweep and increases bass dimension. Rate is the speed control, increasing modulation. The Filter Matrix switch adds a chimy dimension without the swooping flange, and Dry Out runs a wet/dry rig. Dig around a bit and you'll discover Uni-Vibe and vibrato flavors.

To dial-in that vaunted Police tone, simply put all knobs roughly at noon and click the switch left to Flanger mode. Instantly, you'll hear the glorious timbres of “Roxanne,” “Message in a Bottle,” and of course, “Walking on the Moon” wafting from your amp. It's really that simple.

While EHX calls it a flanger, the Walking on the Moon might actually be the best chorus you've ever heard. – **Pete Prown**

Price: \$129
www.ehx.com



MOJO, DISTILLED

The PRS NF 53

Players who appreciate simple, elegant, well-built guitars may find themselves enamored with the new PRS NF 53, inspired by one of Paul Reed Smith's favorite Fenders – a '53 Telecaster.

You won't find the latest gee-gaws or high-tech innovations on this plank. But it's also not a clone. Rather, it distills the Tele's mojo.

As intended, the NF 53 sports a clean design and layout – a single-cut with two pickups, two controls, and a selector. *That's it* – no pull pots, locking tuners, or EQ-contour knobs. Instead, its body is made of swamp ash – a venerable material with bright, resonant tone – and a maple neck, everything rolling in around the eight-pound mark. The plate-style bridge is steel with brass saddles, balanced with a bone nut and vintage-style NF 53 tuners that have nice, wide keys. The neck has a scarfed headstock joint, maple fretboard with 22 frets (a nod to modernity!) and silhouetted bird inlays.

PRS Narrowfield DD humbuckers give the "NF" its name. With their taller bobbins (DD is "deep dish"), more winds, and metal between the magnets, they produce a big, clear tone. If you're confused why they'd put humbuckers in a Tele-inspired solidbody, it's something the Maryland-based company has proved time and time again – a good piece of wood has *a lot* to do with tone. Thus, Narrowfield 'buckers in swamp ash is far twangier than you'd expect while also delivering a hum-free benefit (another Maryland connection: Telecaster master Danny Gatton often used stacked-coil humbuckers in his Fenders to get some of the greatest twang of all time).

In hand, the NF 53 has what's sometimes termed a U-shaped neck profile, alluding to a shape from Fender history that's coming back into vogue. It's terrifically comfortable, with the expert fret work and setup you'd expect from PRS. Plugging in, the NF 53 proved a rockin' beast, covering everything from heavy crunch riffs to roots-rock, blues, country, and more. Better still, the guitar's tone was fat, bold, and bright, balancing vintage twang with noise-free Narrowfield humbuckers. Again, that slab of swamp ash makes a crucial contribution.

The NF 53 is a winner and, once again, PRS proves that superb, no-frills craftsmanship can make a difference in this world. – **Pete Prown**



Price: \$2,899
www.prsguitars.com

GEARIN' UP



FENDER TOM DELONGE STRAT

Fender's Tom DeLonge Stratocaster uses a Seymour Duncan Invader humbucker with master Volume and treble-bleed circuit. Its maple neck has a modern-C shape, medium jumbo frets, and 9.5"-radius rosewood fretboard. Other features include vintage-style tuners, hardtail bridge with block saddles, and neck plate with original artwork by DeLonge. It's offered in four finishes.



ORANGE OR30

Orange Amplification's OR30 is a 30-watt single-channel amp with four EL84 output tubes. It has footswitchable Volume Boost, three-way Bright Switch, and tube-driven effects loop. Custom-designed choke and output transformers help maintain clean headroom as output/volume is pushed.



EARTHQUAKER DEVICES LEDGES

EarthQuaker Devices' Ledges Tri-Dimensional Reverberation Machine is a three-mode (Room, Hall, Plate) reverb that can save and recall six presets. Its user-assignable Expression controls each of the parameters. It has buffered-bypass switching and the company's Flexi-Switch Technology.



TINY TOOLS

Fishman's AFX Pedals

The shrinkologists at Fishman recently introduced a line of *mini* AFX pedals that do many jobs in an acoustic/electric guitar while offering a minimal footprint, 9-volt power, and optional true-bypass.

The ProEQMini is a compact graphic EQ and preamp with extra goodies like Input Trim to set level for active or passive pickups, as well as fingerpicking versus strumming dynamics. Controls for Bass, Middle, Treble, and Brilliance sliders help sculpt tone, while the Low Cut slider fends off onstage rumbles and howls. The Phase

Inverter circuit might save your next gig: hold down the footswitch for three seconds and, guitar signal is inverted, which can help extinguish feedback.

The AcoustiVerb is a digital reverb with lots of flexibility. You get three modes – Spring, Hall, and Plate – each adjustable with Level, Decay Time, and Tone controls. The reverbs are warm and useful. One particularly cool feature is the ability to let the

effect fade out naturally when you click the footswitch off, or set it for an abrupt chop.

The PocketBlender is the brains of the whole operation. A *powerful* box, it can mix separate pickups in/for one guitar (say, piezo and microphone), or give separate clean boost. It can also control innovative signal-path options using TRS cables,

potentially creating two distinct effects paths for your acoustic audio. For example, you can have different Fishman pedals in each path and toggle between them. Like all of the AFX line, the Pock-

etBlender does tons more, offering an astounding range of functions for such a tiny pedal. – **Pete Prown**

Price: \$89.95
(Pocketblender); \$119.95
(ProEQMini and AcoustiVerb)
www.fishman.com

SPACE, MAN

The UAFX Galaxy '74 Tape Echo & Reverb

The original Roland Space Echo was a thing of sonic beauty, used by everyone from Brian Setzer to Bob Marley and Radiohead. Universal Audio has ported that vibe into the UAFX Galaxy '74 Tape Echo & Reverb.

The Galaxy is as simple or complex as you want. As a straight-up stompbox, there are intuitive controls like Echo Rate (time), Feedback, and Echo Vol (blend), like most delays. But there's also a toggle that switches between virtual tape heads for different delay times (dotted 8th and 16th notes, quarter notes). The bottom controls include Input Volume and tools like Dwell (drive

turn the echo/reverb on and off, as well as Tap tempo and Hold for gnarly, real-time effects.

Plugged in, the Galaxy adds everything from classic echo and rockabilly slapback to silky repeats that evoke otherworldly chime for shoegazers. The pedals sounds great in mono, but stereo outputs take it to another level, and there are further controls you can tweak via the UAFX smartphone app. It also has a USB-C port for firmware updates via the UA Connect app.

While on the pricey side, the Galaxy '74 is eminently hip – and ready for deep sonic explorations. – **Pete Prown**

Price: \$349
www.uaudio.com

into the reverb) and Reverb Volume; another toggle accesses secondary functions like Tape Age, Bass, and Treble. The footswitches let you



GET YOUR GRUNGE

Guild's Polara Kim Thayil

With Soundgarden, guitarist Kim Thayil helped define the grunge movement. His unusual weapon of choice was the Guild S-100 Polara, a solidbody often unfairly compared to the Gibson SG. Soundgarden may have disbanded years ago, but Guild has nonetheless seen fit to honor Thayil with a signature-model Polara influenced by his original '70s S-100s.

Made in Indonesia, the Polara Kim Thayil has all-mahogany construction, a large vintage-style headstock, and HB-1 Guild humbuckers that use Alnico II magnets and are wired with a phase switch that brightens tone in the middle position when both pickups are combined. Its set neck sports a shallow-D profile that facilitates fast movement, a rosewood fretboard with pearloid inlays, and Grover Rotomatic tuners per Thayil's request.

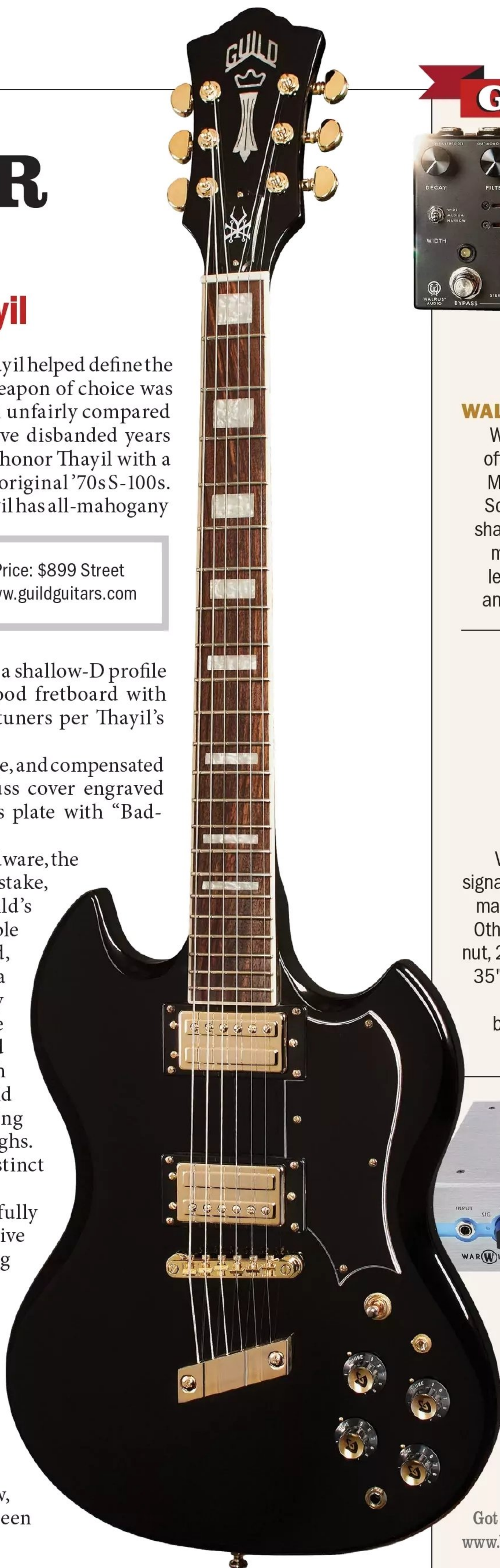
A three-way toggle, Tune-O-Matic bridge, and compensated tailpiece are standard, along with a truss cover engraved with "King Animal" and control-access plate with "Bad-motorfinger."

Offered only in gloss black with gold hardware, the Thayil is a classy package. But make no mistake, it's also a serious hard-rock machine. Guild's full-size HB-1 pickups deliver strong treble and midrange response with pronounced, articulate lows that, when plugged into a '66 Ampeg Reverberocket, never got woolly when fuzz or overdrive was added. The neck pickup was ideal for bluesy leads and chord work, while the bridge sizzled with any added fuzz or overdrive, as one would expect. Tone cleaned up nicely when rolling off the Volume knob, with no loss of highs. Engaging the phase switch produced a distinct out-of-phase tone that was very nice.

Strapped on, the Polara Thayil is beautifully balanced and exhibits none of the neck dive that plagues similar guitars. Weighing just over eight pounds, it's neither featherweight nor boat anchor, and most impressive is its ability to accommodate the tunings favored by Soundgarden and scores of other grunge bands—Drop D and Drop C produce great response with excellent stability.

The Polara Kim Thayil deserves attention from any hard-rock player looking for a break from the same-old. Perhaps now, the original will gain the respect it has been denied for so many years. — **Bob Cianci**

Price: \$899 Street
www.guildguitars.com



GEARIN' UP



WALRUS SLOER AMBIENT REVERB

Walrus Audio's SLOER Ambient Reverb offers stereo functionality with Narrow, Medium, and Wide settings as well as Square and Random modulation wave shapes. Its Stretch control allows adjustment of the sample rate of its DSP to lengthen reverb time, darken tonality, and introduce sample-based artifacts.



VOLA VASTI 5 STM J1

Vola's Vasti 5 STM J1 Steve Tréguier signature bass has an ash body and bolt-on maple neck with Vola's Modern C shape. Other details include a 45mm Graphtech nut, 24 medium jumbo stainless-steel frets, 35" scale, Vola SB5 pickups, controls for master Volume and Balance, three-band EQ, passive/active switch, Gotoh 303 SJ 5 bridge, and Gotoh tuners.



WARWICK GNOME I PRO 600

Warwick's Gnome i Pro 600 is a compact bass amp with 600 watts output, four-band EQ, and controls for Gain and Master volume. It measures 13.3" x 9.8" x 3.9" and weighs 6.6 pounds.

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



UPSCALE TOUCH

The Seymour Duncan '78 Model

In the late '70s, rock guitarists fell down the rabbit hole trying to achieve more sustain, harmonics, and extra crunch via pickup swaps. Seymour Duncan has created a new PAF that flashes back to those days, but designed to be more-sensitive to harmonics.

Previously only made to order for Custom

Shop customers, the Duncan '78 Model is now part of their regular inventory. With the ground-work of warmth and clarity laid by vintage humbuckers, Duncan added output but dined the EQ with a specific coil wind using 42-gauge plain-enamel wire. This, combined with a hand-calibrated Alnico II magnet and wax

Price: \$129; \$149
(nickel cover)
www.seymourduncan.com

potting, gives it unique character. The current version has four-conductor lead wires, allowing for wiring/splitting options. The bridge pickup has a DC resistance of 9k, while the neck is 7.9k.

While designed for superstrats with a nod to Edward Van Halen's early sound, it brought new life to our Les Paul Standard; plugged into an old Marshall combo, increased articulation was readily apparent using clean and dirty channels. A blanket of mud was lifted from the neck position, while the bridge yielded more-organic sizzle and overtones even when amp gain was pushed.

Overall, the '78s brought much more oomph, definition, and kick along with smoother midrange; chords crunched and popped, yet cleaned up well when rolling off the Volume control. They're lively and bring a range of sonic textures that would work great for blues, rock, hard-rock, and "jazz-adjacent" music. Speedy runs were thick and fierce, dirty chords with extensions sounded clear and robust, and pinch harmonics popped.

The Duncan '78s straddle vintage sweetness and warmth while also adding punch that never turns to mush, all with an upscale touch-responsiveness and craftsmanship. — **Oscar Jordan**

ECHO HEAVEN

The Boss Delay Machine DM-101

Love the simplicity and warmth of analog in your effects? Well, meet Boss' new Delay Machine DM-101, housed in a chassis that echoes their very first delay (the late-'70s DM-1) and with eight BBD chips in a 100-percent analog signal path.

Yes, DM-101 has digital brain that helps organize things and saves 12 presets, but it does so *without* touching tone. The box sports separate delay and modulation sides, stereo outputs, USB connectivity, tap tempo, and

four programmable memory locations that are footswitchable (and expandable to 127 locations via MIDI).

Using the Delay Machine can be simple; its presets are all excellent, including Modern, Multi-Head, Ambience, Pan, and more. There are 1200 milliseconds of delay in Classic mode, though there's no display to show the time. Delay Time, Intensity (feedback) and Delay Volume function as on any echo, while the Tap

Division button delivers cascading repeats. The modulation section adds cool wobbly textures, while Variation adjusts tonal character.

On the job, the DM-101 is full of analog goodness, delivering everything from slapback to deep, fat delays. If you want those holy grail echo-repeats of David Gilmour, The Edge, and Albert Lee school, they're all here.

It may carry a hefty price tag, but the Delay Machine DM-101 is an analog beast that delivers as promised. — **Pete Prown VG**



Price: \$499.99
www.boss.info

A collage of various vintage guitars, including hollow-body, solid-body, and bass models, displayed with their respective prices. The central logo for "GUITAR SHOWCASE San Jose" features a sunburst design and the text "Est. 1969".

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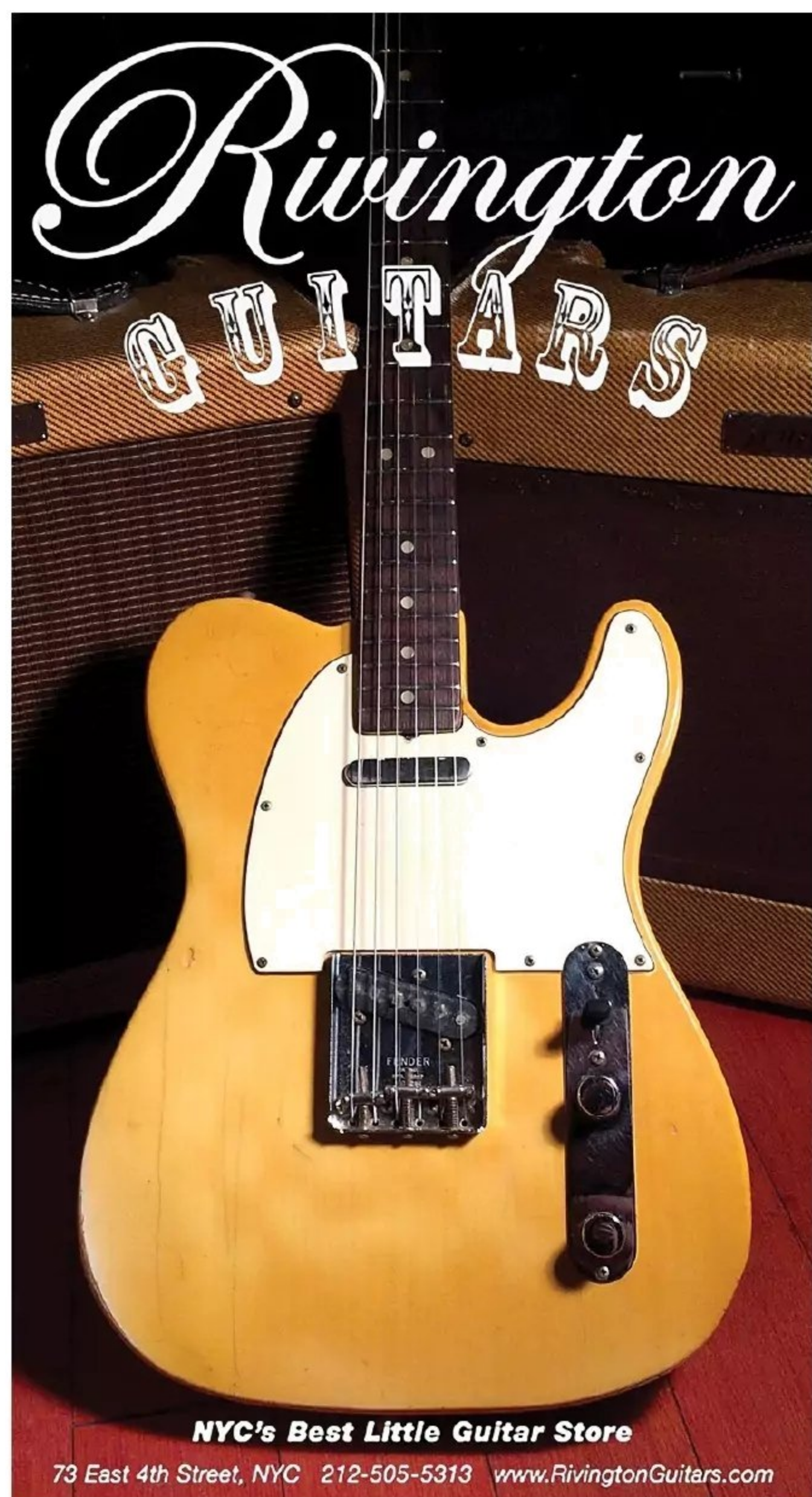
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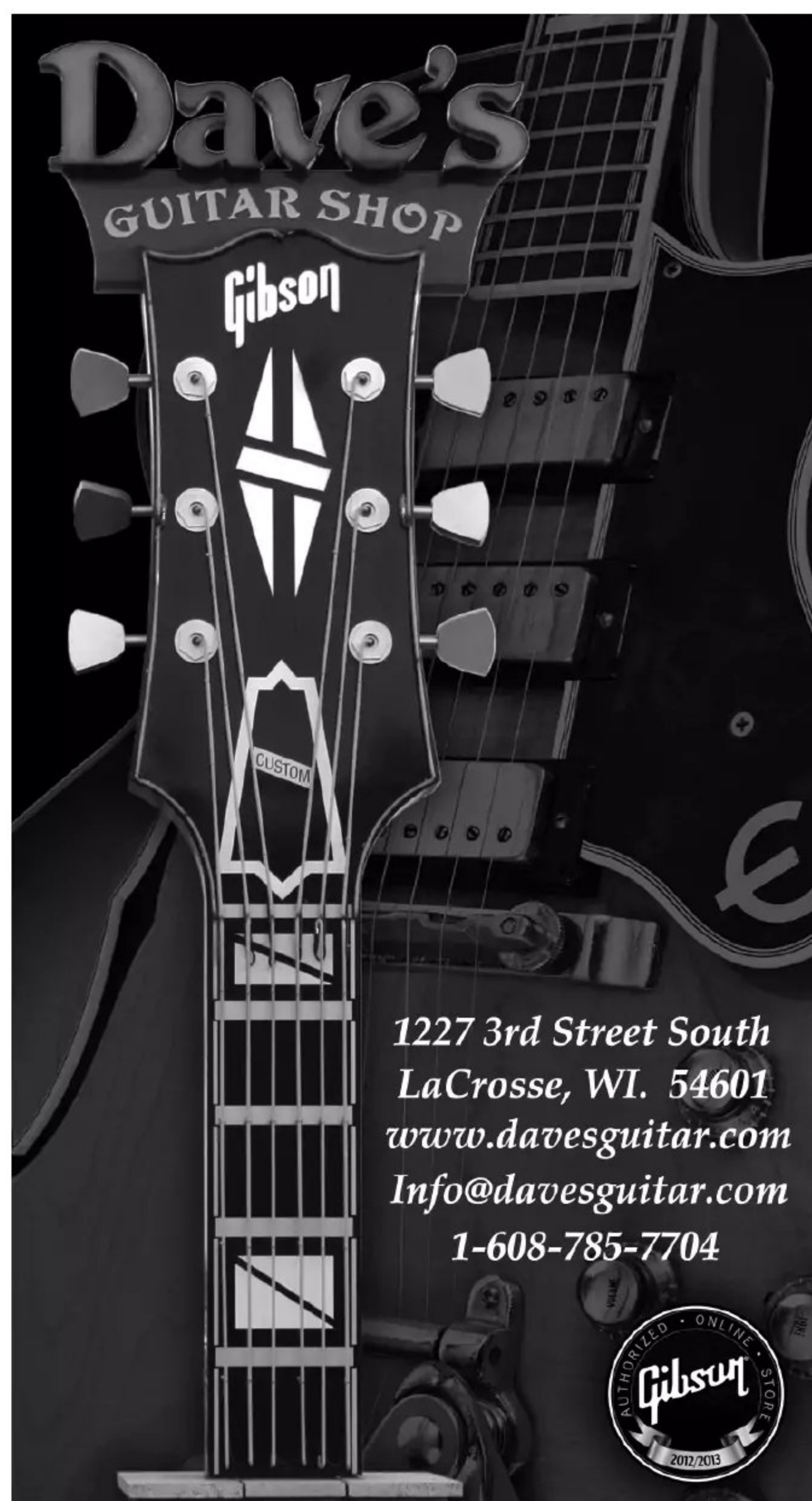
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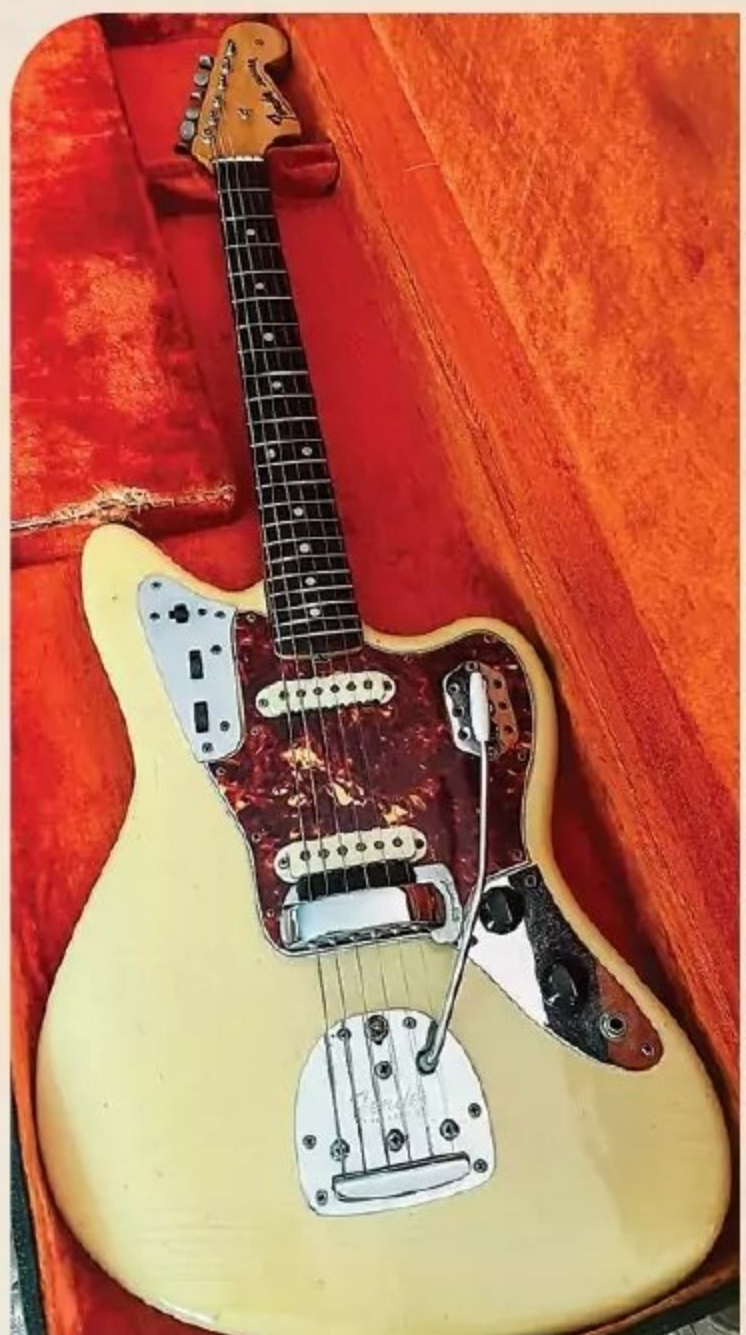
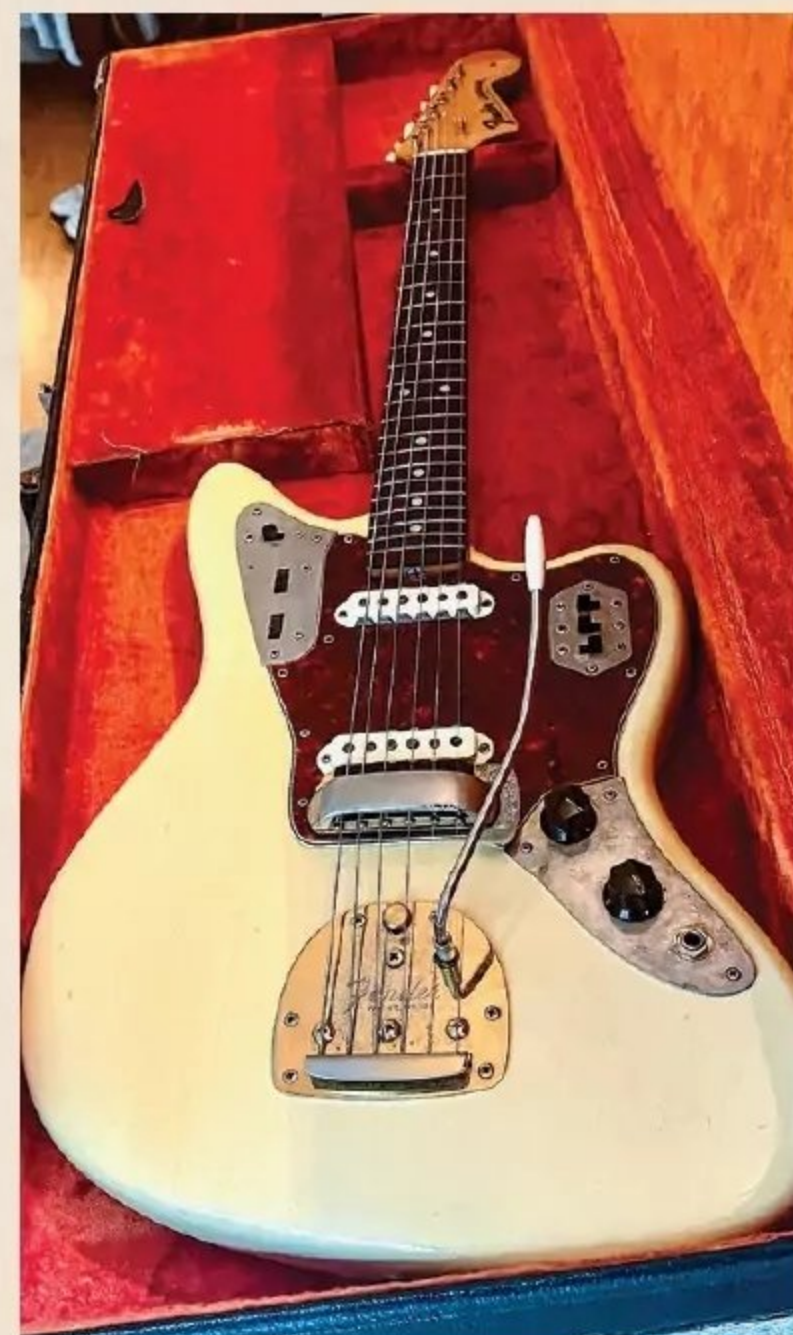
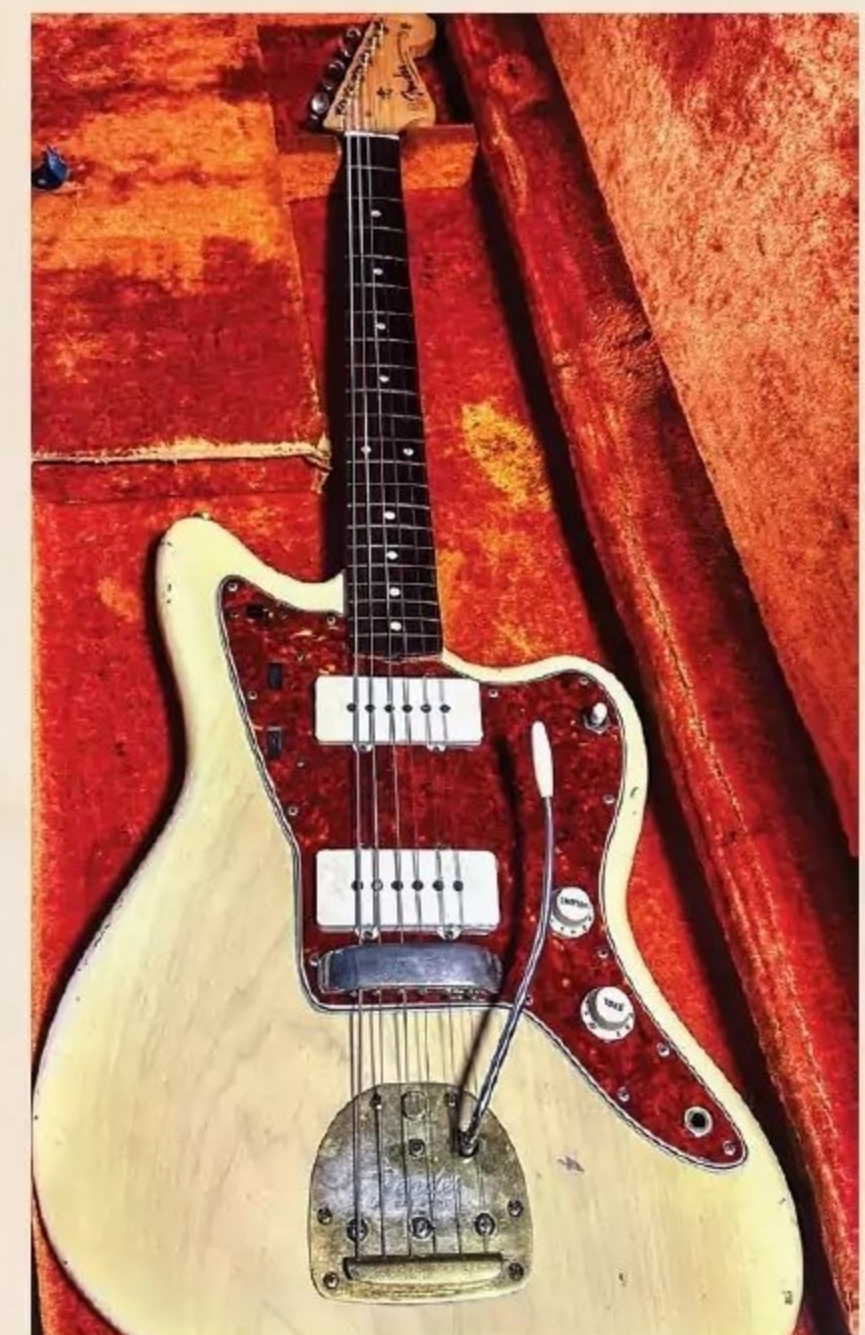
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-Scott Henderson

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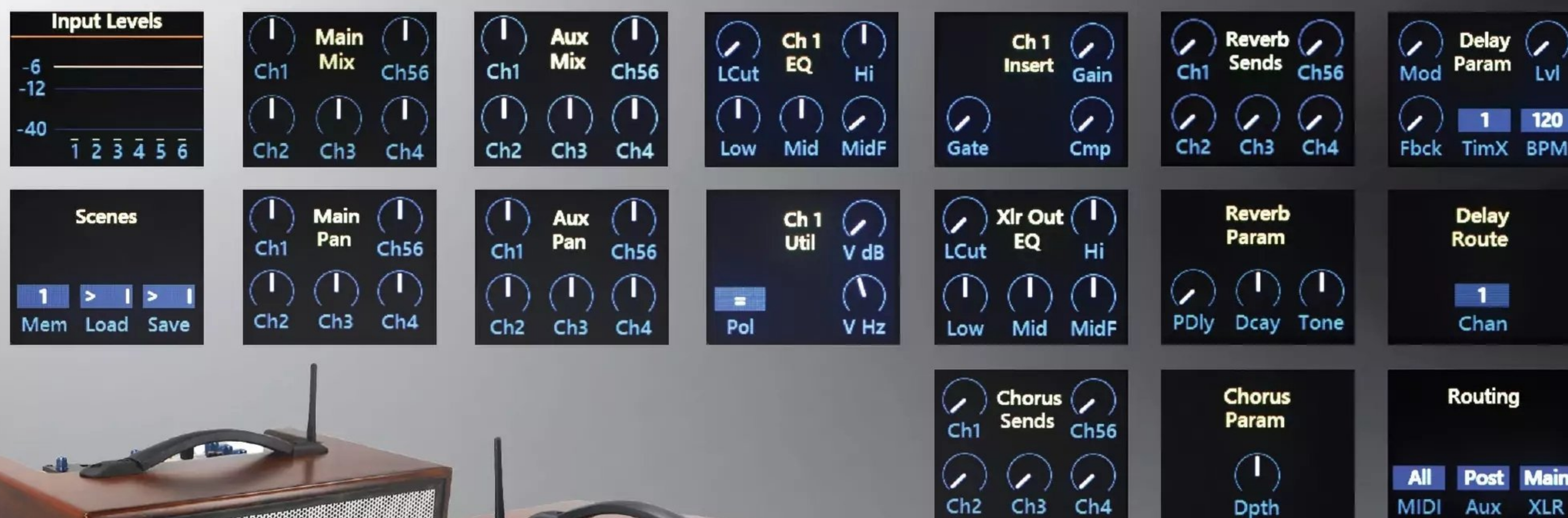
	
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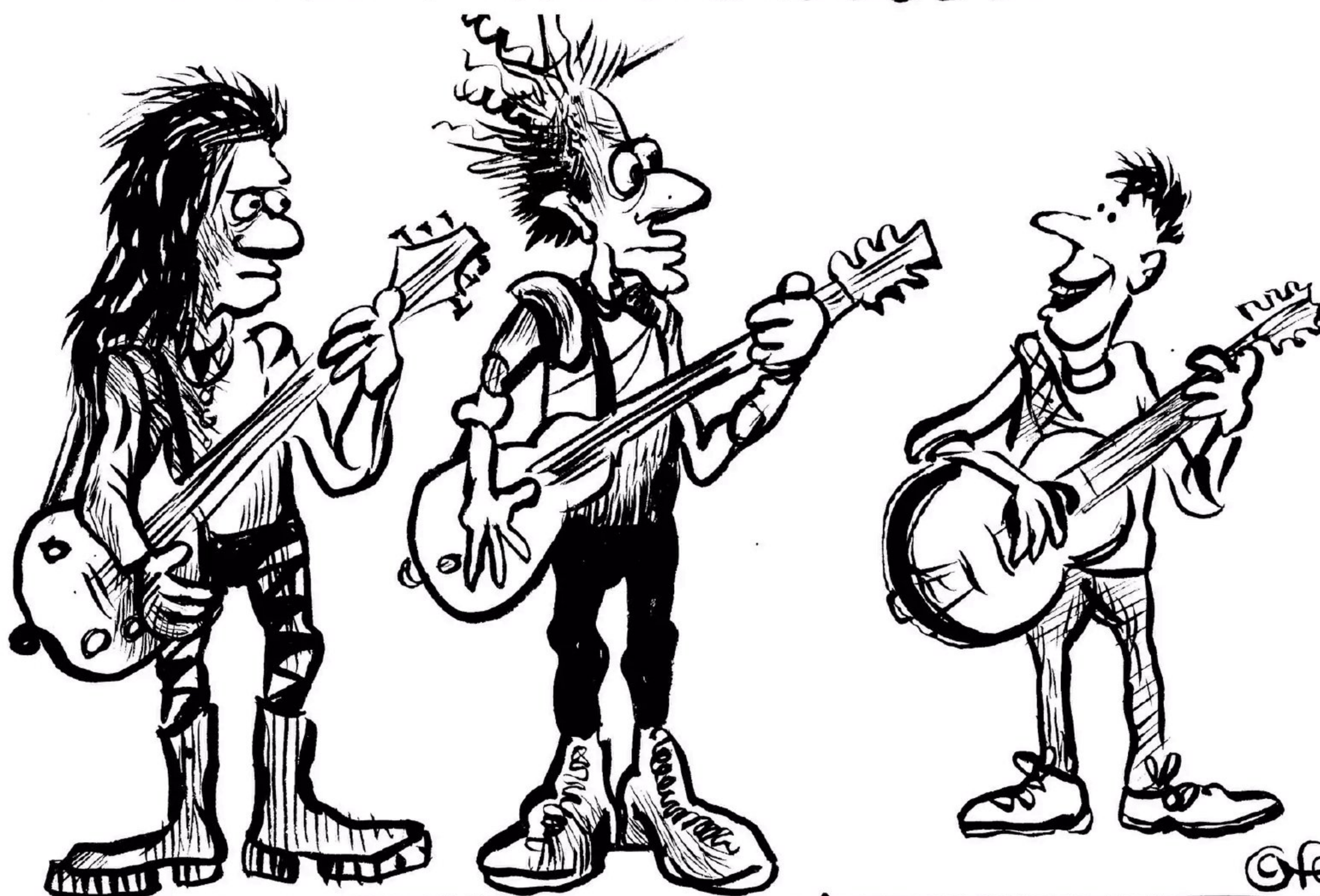
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01 Jay Tiller has a justifiable fondness for guitars with aluminum necks. Here are his '78 Travis Bean TB1000, '76 Kramer 450 G, a Veleno made from NOS parts, and '79 Kramer DMZ 3000.

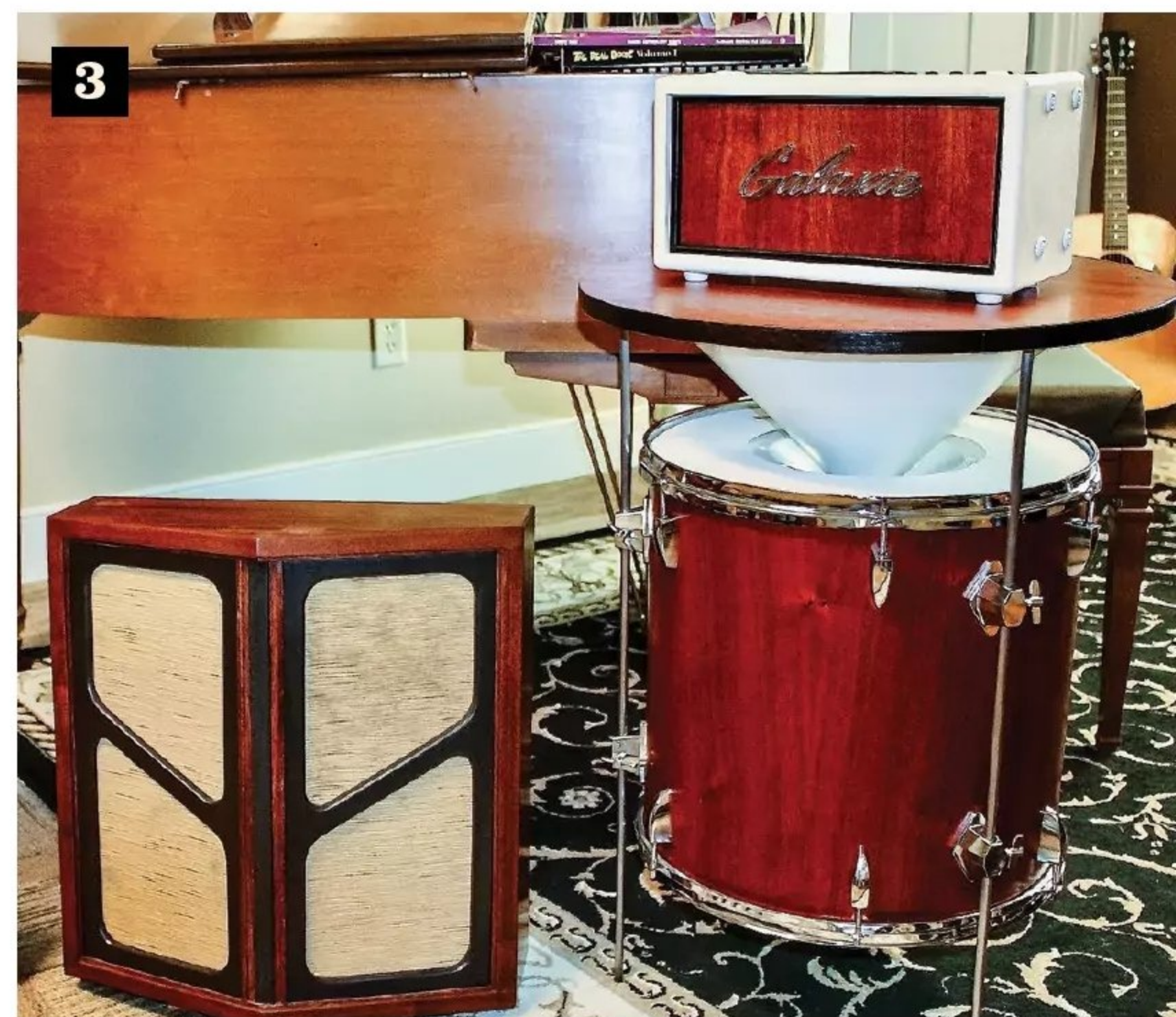
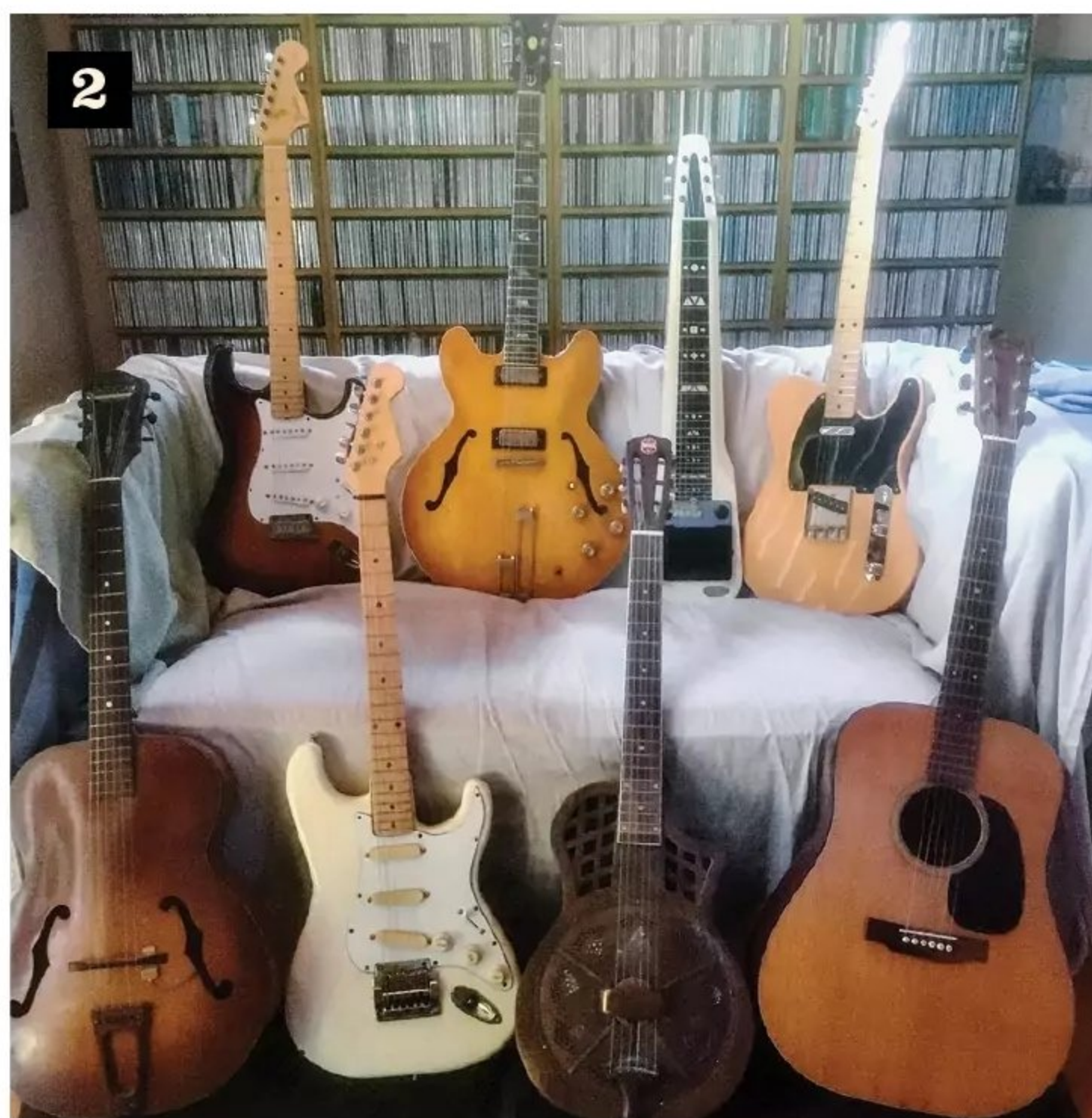
02 Dave McClary's current lineup includes (front, from left) a 1945 Harmony Patrician, Michael Dolan double-cut, Republic metal reso, and a '71 Martin D-18. In back are a '90 Strat '67 reissue, '69 Epi Riviera, '58 Supro lap, and a Squire '50s Classic Vibe Tele.

03 Two of Fran Barnes' homemade amps were inspired by those recently profiled in VG. His V-front vaguely resembles the '52 Fender Super (November '22) and has four 8" speakers, while his Satellite (Teisco Checkmate 30, April '23) has a downward-facing 12" speaker and a compression driver powered by a 60-watt outboard amp repurposed from a Tanglewood T60.

04 Pete Scaltrito has been collecting guitars and amps since the '60s. He had this modern Les Paul painted by a graphic artist who works for a sci-fi magazine.

05 After an inebriated bar patron knocked his vintage National Style O off its stand at a gig in the '90s, Randy Barnett decided the guitar should stay home. To replace it, he restored the remnants of a Kay Model 90 with surprisingly good results (middle) that inspired him to build two more using Kay "cadavers." "They all had the same basic body shape, which made sense given that Chicago manufacturers used only a handful of body molds," he said. His second build was a MOTS guitar, so he went with it.

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