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"Steiny" was in the audience that day and gathered up the guitar and case, he finally sold it in 1998.

BTW: Phil was a soft spoken guy and did not smash it into a million pieces, but the top did break.

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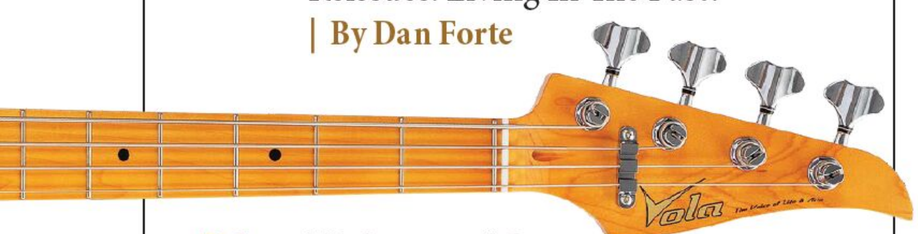

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A '70s kid with older brothers whose vinyl collection included the Doors and Bob Marley, he took to guitar as a teen and later used it (and an version of ProTools) to carve a career as a composer for syndicated television. | ***By Ward Meeker***

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READER MAIL

ERUPTION, ET AL

Having read several Van Halen-centric books over the last few years – the good (Ted Templeman's bio, Greg Renoff's fantastic *Van Halen Rising*) and the not so good (Noel Monk's unpleasant *Runnin' with the Devil)*, I was happy to read Wolf Marshall's perceptive analysis of Van Halen's debut in the March issue's "Fretprints."

I bought that album early in 1978, based on the cover and without having heard a note. It's rare that you hear an album and immediately think, "Things just changed," but that was clearly the case. The opener, "Runnin' with the Devil" had a few moments where I thought, "Whoa! That was cool!" But it did nothing to prepare me for "Eruption," the sound of an aural seismic shift.

Wolf clearly illustrated many of the approaches and moments that made this album so groundbreaking, as he so often does in his columns. It's always appreciated!

Frank Moriarty
New Castle, Delaware

TROWER TRIUMPH

I just received the March issue and really liked the "First Fret" interview with Robin Trower. I've been hearing "Joyful Sky" on the blues station quite a bit; it's a great song and would be a great James Bond theme. Sari Schorr's voice just sounds perfect.

I love your publication and send subscriptions to several friends, one of whom I played with in a garage band in the mid '60s. Another goes to Sam Skinner, a luthier friend who studied under Randy Wood; I will encourage him to send photos for the "Readers Gallery."

Keep up the good work!

Pete Dawkins
Dunwoody, Georgia

WORTHY WEDDINGTON

Excellent and long overdue article by Michael Wright on the Yamaha Weddington in the March issue.

I have owned two Weddington Customs, two Classics, and one Special, and can add some information. The piece states all models had one-piece mahogany bodies, but only the Custom did; the Classic and Special had two-piece mahogany bodies with a center seam. Also, the Classic and Special had three-piece necks while the Custom had a five-piece laminated neck of mahogany and maple. The 1992 Yamaha catalog shows the five-piece laminated Custom neck and one-piece body, but doesn't show or say anything about the body or neck of the other models, beyond wood type.

While resarching the Weddington several years ago, I spoke with designer Rich Lasner, and he confirmed these details for me.

Nicholas Athens
Murray, Utah

(Ed Note: Thanks for the clarification, Nicholas. Michael acknowledges his error regarding the Custom version's neck construction, and appreciates the other details you offer, especially given that he experienced several investigative dead-ends.)

SEND LETTERS TO

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FIRST FRET

MISSISSIPPI JOHN HURT MUSEUM BURNS

A 200-year-old shack in Carroll County, Mississippi, that was once home to the legendary country-blues singer/guitarist Mississippi John Hurt and had been converted to a museum honoring him was destroyed by fire on February 21. Hurt was born in the late 1800s and lived most of his life in the all-Black town of Avalon. He first recorded music in the 1920s but didn't achieve recognition until being rediscovered during the folk revival in the '60s. Until his death in '66, he enjoyed a taste of fame while playing at colleges, coffeehouses, and at the Newport Folk Festival.

Under the guidance of Mary Frances Hurt and the Mississippi John Hurt Foundation, his legacy will take new form to include educational programs and events that honor his legacy and introduce his music to new audiences. She has established an online effort to raise funds for its support; Steven Van Zandt's teachrock.org donated $10,000 toward its goal of $50,000. To learn more, visit gofundme.com and search for Hurt's name.

GC MUSIC FOUNDATION TO HONOR ISLEY

The Guitar Center Music Foundation, a nonprofit that donates instruments to music education and music therapy programs, will hold a benefit concert honoring Ernie Isley, guitarist in The Isley Brothers. The event will take place April 4 at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, in Los Angeles.

The Isley Brothers are members of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and have their names on Guitar Center's Rock Walk. At the event, Ernie Isley will be presented a Lifetime Achievement Award

HONOR THY FATHER

VG will honor fathers in this year's July issue, distributed just prior to Father's Day, June 18. The feature relies on reader submissions, so if you would like to be included, send a photo of you and/or your dad with your favorite guitars (shot or scanned 4" x 6" at 300 dpi and saved as a .jpg) along with a caption by May 10 to ward@vintageguitar.com, with "Dad's Day" in the subject line. If you submit a short video of you and/or your dad playing, we may use it on social media.

Johnny A. with the Custom Shop Strat built specifically for his Beck-Ola tribute shows.

JOHNNY A.

Beck-Ola: Johnny Plays Jeff

The passing of Jeff Beck affected few people as much as it did Johnny Antonopoulos.

"It had the same impact as when I heard John Lennon died," said the Grammy-nominated guitarist whose career included seven years as guitarist and musical director for J. Geils Band front man Peter Wolf before launching a solo act as Johnny A. in 1999.

"It wasn't until Jeff passed that I felt that same kind of vacancy. Part of it was because he was still active and vibrant, still on his game."

Beck had always been a part of his life.

Mississippi John Hurt: Bernard Gotfryd/Library of Congress. Johnny A.: Ryan Piorkowski.

"He came along when I was discovering guitar, and I had never seen anyone so connected with their instrument."

In 2000, Antonopoulos opened for Beck at the State Theater in Portland, Maine. The legend passed in January of '23, and later that year, Antonopoulos' agent suggested a tribute. At first, he resisted, in part because of how others have interpreted Beck's music.

"To me, something gets lost in the translation," he said. "Jeff Beck was such an emotive player. There was sarcasm, angst, humor, and sensitivity in this playing, and he never played the same way twice. So, I wasn't really interested. I've always been much more into writing my own music or interpreting other artists' material in my own way."

The agent persisted, though, pointing out that Antonopoulos had played with a latter-day version of The Yardbirds. But...

"I thought there would be a lot of criticism and a lot of arm-folding in front of the stage," he said. "When you ask most pros who their favorite rock player is, they'll say 'Jeff Beck.' There's nobody who phrased like him, that had a touch like his."

Finally capitulating, Antonopoulos laid out the condition that, "The only way I'm going to approach this is the way I did with the Yardbirds – pay respect to the guitarists and try to capture the spirit of what they were about, but maintain my own voice. I was going to do the thing that, as a fan, I would need to hear, but I've got to leave some of my own blood on the stage."

The Beck-Ola project was born.

Antonopoulos assembled a five-piece band with the realization that, "There's a lot of front-loading by every member to learn the material before we get together, because the musicians I know don't have endless days to rehearse."

To gauge interest and make it worth everyone's time and effort, he planned six to eight dates in a two-week period. Formation of the band started with the rhythm section of Antonopoulos' current trio – bassist Dean Cassell, who has been playing with him intermittently since the mid '70s – and drummer Marty Richards, who played with jazz vibraphonist Gary Burton for 10 years before joining Duke Robillaird, The J. Geils Band, and The Joe Perry Project. Steve Hunt, who has played with Alan Holdsworth, Stanley Clarke, and Billy Cobham, is on keyboards, and Mike Gill from the White Snake/Deep Purple tribute band Beyond Purple, will handle vocals.

Antonopoulos' amp for the gig is a Fender Tone Master Pro Guitar Workstation running to matching powered cabs because, "I'm crazy for consistency. The Tone Master Pro is giving me the most options with the least amount of effort."

Fender Custom Shop builder Austin McNutt created a one-off Strat for the shows, with hotter pickups, an original Wilkinson roller nut, custom Sperzel locking tuners, and a Wilkinson VS1300 vibrato tailpiece modified to accept a traditional Fender-style arm. A concentric Master pot controls all three pickups, with the Volume on the ring and Tone in the dome because, in playing Beck music, "There's a lot of maneuvering volume, tone, pickup selection, and vibrato. This way, I can control the Volume knob with my pinky finger and manipulate the Tone control with my index finger and thumb. The five-way is directly under the Tone so I can just flick my pinky finger and don't have to move my hand."

The Custom Shop's Jay Nelson painted the Strat a metallic version of the avocado green borrowed from a picture of a 1955 Porsche.

The band's seven-show tour begins April 19 in Beverly, Massachusetts, and will include 21 of Johnny's favorite songs from 11 Beck albums, 60 percent of which will be instrumental. ***– Bob Dragich***

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IN MEMORIAM

MIKE LEWIS

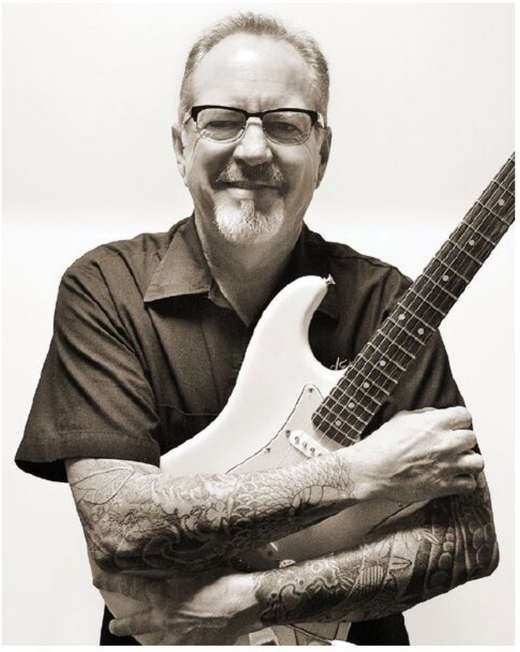
Mike Lewis, a longtime employee at Fender who most recently served as Vice President of Product Development in the company's Custom Shop, died March 6.

Lewis' music career began in 1969, when his first professional gig was backing Chuck Berry on an opening slot with the Rolling Stones. A year later, he began working as a session player in New York City, where he was also involved in the off-Broadway scene and played venues such as Carnegie Hall and Madison Square Garden.

In the mid '70s, Lewis moved west and played in bands in Los Angeles and Santa Cruz. Several years later, he moved to Virginia, where he opened Charlottesville Music and became a Fender dealer.

In 1991, Lewis was hired by Fender to work in telephone sales and joined the company at its new headquarters in Scottsdale, Arizona. He was quickly moved into product development, where as Marketing Manager in 1992/'93 he led the team working on the DeVille and Vibro-King amps, the latter with a circuit designed by Bruce Zinky. After moving into guitar development, he guided design of the Lone Star Stratocaster, the company's first production version with a humbucking pickup. When the company assumed control of marketing, production, and distribution of Gretsch guitars in 2002, Lewis strived to ensure that the brand's instruments remained true to the originals; he and Senior V.P. of Marketing (later Senior V.P. of Business Affairs) Ritchie Fliegler took a particularly good-sounding 1959 6120 to a medical imaging lab for scans, hoping to learn its secrets.

In the years that followed, Lewis assumed multiple roles;



Mike Lewis

after learning to write code, he spearheaded development of Fender's first online store and oversaw its website.

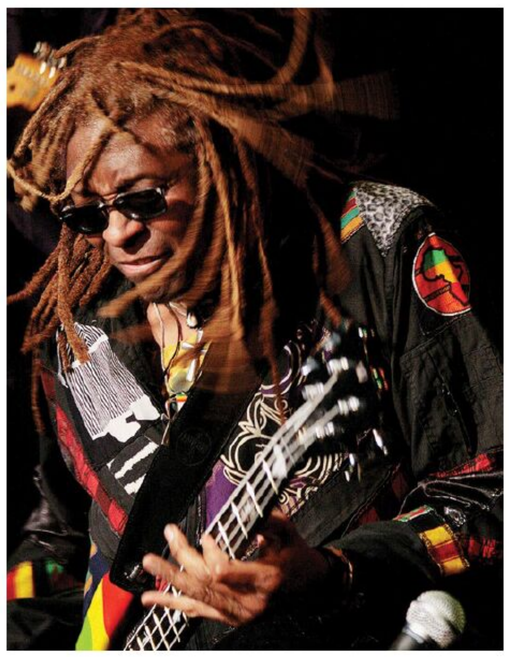
Veterans on the shop floor especially appreciated Lewis' deep understanding of the company's history.

"Mike was my first real boss as I became his assistant and worked on launches for the Lone Star and Roadhouse Strats as well as the Jimmie Vaughan signature model," said Chris Gill, who retired as Director of Sales Operations in 2022, after 30 years with the company. "He was a sensei in many ways and taught me to understand products and marketing. He studied everything with a deep passion. He was my true mentor, and most of all, my trusted friend."

"Mike was an artist; he was a gifted guitar player, but he was also an expert photographer and fine-painter," Fliegler added. "When [former Fender CEO] Bill Schultz would talk to Mike and the rest of our gang – we called ourselves the Black Sheep Squadron – he'd say, 'I'd rather teach you guys business than try and teach business guys about what a guitar is. You've spent your lives loving these and using them. Your depth of knowledge is impossible to impart.'

"When Mike had conversations with Billy Gibbons, Jimmie Vaughn, or whichever superstar player, it was certainly business, but it was also a peer-to-peer conversation about instruments, problem solving, and shared experiences."

"Mike's strong vision, cultivated over decades as a player, shaped his approach," said Justin Norvell, Fender's Executive Vice President of Product. "His wealth of experience, perspective, and wisdom became the foundation he brought to Fender. He didn't just work here, he lived and embodied the spirit of the brand." ***– Ward Meeker***



T.M. Stevens

T.M. STEVENS

Thomas Michael (T.M.) Stevens, a world-renowned bassist whose career saw him back artists in a range of styles, died March 10 after suffering with dementia for several years. He was 72.

Stevens was raised in the Bronx, where his mother played 45s by James Brown, Marvin Gaye, Gladys Knight & the Pips, and other artists. As a pre-teen, he spent time in a Boy Scout troop in Harlem. Its leader, Leon Charlie, was a guitarist into jazz players like Wes Montgomery and George Benson, and offered to show Stevens how to play. Soon after starting lessons, Stevens gravitated to bass. Charlie helped Stevens get a Zimgar bass from a musician in the neighborhood, and he used it to learn. Attuned to the instrument, he would take the subway to Harlem to watch James Brown at the Apollo Theater, catching every show during the singer's extended runs, often more than one per day. He became a fan of Bootsy Collins and James Jamerson as well as Chuck Rainey, Willie Weeks, Ron Carter, Buster Williams, Michael Henderson, and others.

His first gigs were in funk bands in Minneapolis. In 1979, he played bass on two albums by jazz guitarist Yoshiaki Masuo as well as singer/songwriter/multi-instrumentalist Narada Michael Walden's *The Dance of Life*. In '81, he moved to Los Angeles to be near the studio scene and recorded an album with the band The Space Cadets. In '85, he played on Brown's last major hit, "Living in America" (that's his vocal doing the title line in the chorus) and the following year joined the Pretenders in time to record *Get Close* with its hit single, "Don't Get Me Wrong."

Stevens' style reflected influences ranging from Collins to John Paul Jones, Larry Graham to Noel Redding, and his career was marked by collaborations with some of the biggest names in the music industry, including Prince, Joe Cocker, Cyndi Lauper, Steven Van Zandt, Billy Squier, Tina Turner, Taylor Dayne, and Billy Joel. In 1993, he was one of the notable guests on funk-rock guitarist Steve Salas covers/tribute album *The Electric Pow Wow*, then joined Steve Vai's band, Vai, to record *Sex & Religion*.

From '95 to 2007, Stevens recorded six solo albums and guided the tribute effort *Black Knight – Deep Purple Tribute According to New York*. For the last 30 years of his career, he was a Warwick endorser. ***– Ward Meeker***

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ROGER GLOVER

Time Machine

Deep Purple's 1972 album, *Machine Head*, is one of rock's totemic monsters, especially its best-known track, "Smoke on the Water," and its guitar riff. The new *Machine Head: Super Deluxe Edition* box set includes the remastered original album, new mixes by Dweezil Zappa, and archival and previously unreleased live material.

Bassist Roger Glover reminisced with *Vintage Guitar* about making *Machine Head* (on which he played a Rickenbacker 4001) with the esteemed lineup that included vocalist Ian Gillan, guitarist Ritchie Blackmore, keyboardist Jon Lord, and drummer Ian Paice.

After the fire, the band worked briefly at the Pavilion, a theater in Montreux, correct?

Yeah. (Montreux Jazz Festival founder) Claude Nobs, despite the fact that his whole life was burning up in smoke, concentrated on helping us. He got us into the Pavilion, which is a small venue. We set up on the stage and we got all the wires and microphones set up, had a break for a meal in the evening, and started jamming around. Somewhere around midnight, we had this rough riff. If a jam sounds promising, we'd work a bit on the arrangement. We managed to do one take only before the police stopped us because we were keeping the town awake. So that was that. It took another five days to find another place – a difficult thing to do in a small, sleepy town on the edge of Lake Geneva.

Which is why you were forced to do the rest of the album at the Grand Hotel, a vacation spot that was closed for the season.

Right, and we went there short one song. We said, "Let's listen to that thing we did at the Pavilion." It was very bare-bones. There was nothing added to it. It was just four of us – basically all the instruments playing – and we thought, "Well, it's close enough. Let's just use that." Then Ian and I figured we'd write about our adventures in Montreux, the whole fire thing. We wrote "Smoke on the Water" in about 10 minutes, because it's pretty conversational. It's accurate, even if a little poetic license was used. We never thought much about it, to be honest; it was just another album track. Obviously, the song that went on to define us. We didn't know that at the time.

The band produced *Machine Head* and you went on to produce other artists and had production credits on some later Purple records. What do you recall about that facet, and recording engineer Martin Birch, who later became a well-known producer?

We knew what we wanted, but I didn't know what production was; I learned a lot from Martin. I just loved making music. To me, production is just part of performing, as is being the engineer and writing lyrics. It's all one great big wodge of stuff. If you feel like you want to hear something, you make it happen.

The recording circumstances are part of the *Machine Head* legend, so would it have lost some of its magic if it was recorded traditionally in a sterile studio environment?

Absolutely. But that's what studios did. They took sound away. They controlled it too much. Our concerts were pretty wild. Crazy-sounding, loud and vicious, and aggressive and exciting. We wanted to bring that into the studio somehow. The idea was to record an album in a venue, not in a studio.

If we didn't quite achieve it, it's because, to me, the album sounded a bit muddy considering we were after this huge, echoey sound. But whatever it was, it worked. It certainly would've been different if we'd done it in a proper studio.

The fire changed everything. It took our time away, but brought the band together in a way we wouldn't have if we were all living at home, traveling to the studio at night.

You basically did *Machine Head* in two weeks.

In a way, that was great because it was all instinct. People don't listen to their instincts enough, especially musicians, because they're always trying to be better than they are... or at least *I* do (laughs)! The instinct of the first shot, your first aim, that's you on-target.

I remember saying to Jon on a train going to a gig after we finished *Deep Purple in Rock*, "The album could have been better." He turned to me and said, "No, it couldn't. If it could have been better, it would've been better. It is what it is. Leave it alone, get used to it, and move on." And that was good advice. There's no such thing as perfection, thankfully. ***– Bret Adams***

Glover and others further discuss the making of *Machine Head* in this month's "Pop 'N Hiss," page 40.

Roger Glover: Giannis Negris/Alamy.

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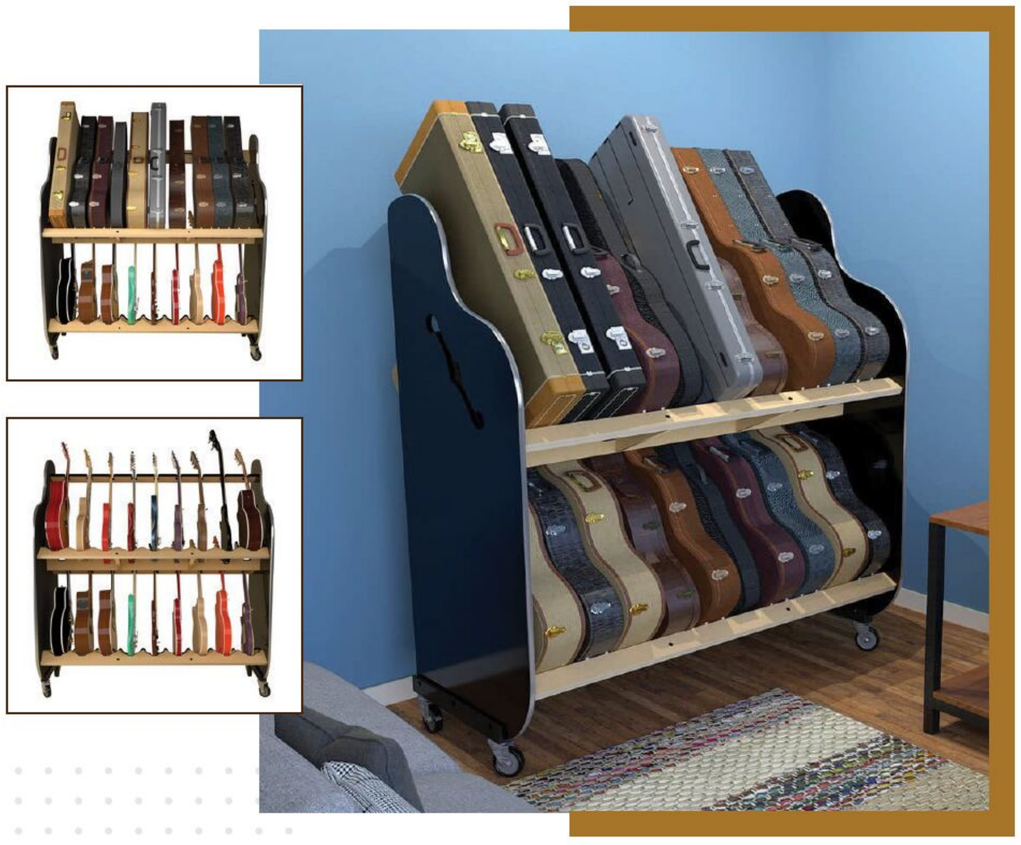

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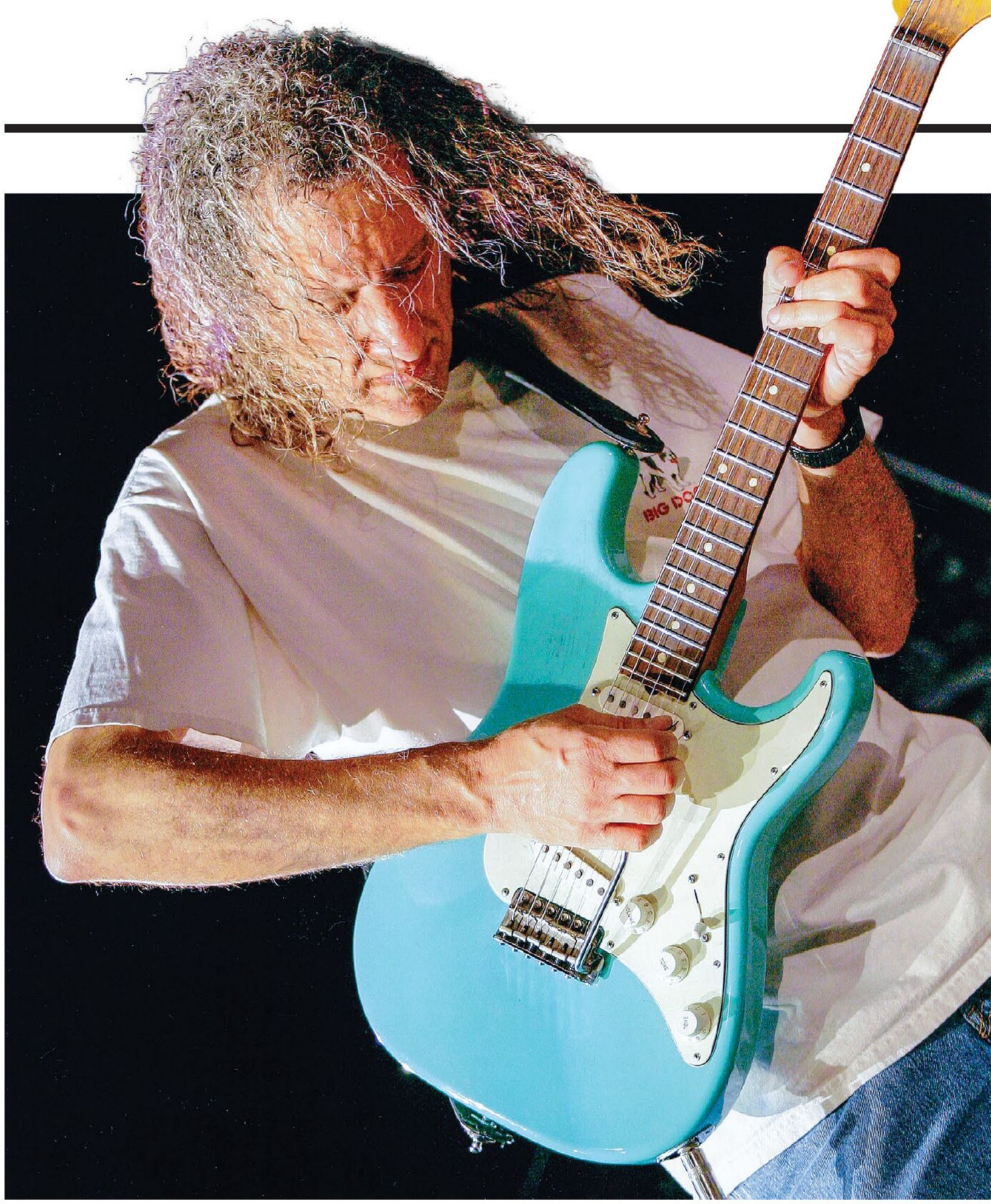

SCOTT HENDERSON

Voodoo Carnival

Scott Henderson continues to blow minds with his ever-evolving guitar mastery. From his early years blending bop and Holdsworth to his magical Jeff Beck-meets-SRV blues-fusion machinations, Henderson brings it all together on *Karnevel!*. It's a trippy jazz-rock adventure with loads of guitar, humor, and a killer rhythm section. *VG* met with Henderson to discuss the highlights.

There's connective tissue between *People Mover* and *Karnevel!*.

For these kinds of records, I pretty much do it a tune at a time. I don't have a whole-album concept. I'm trying to write something different every time I sit down. I try to make the tunes different from each other. At the end, I have 10 or 11 tunes, and I try to arrange them in some kind of order that makes sense.

How did you approach crafting the sound?

We played a lot of this music for two tours before we went into the studio, and by then it felt very natural. So many things happened to these tunes on the road. What bassist Romain Labaye plays on the album is superior to anything I wrote for him on a chart. It's not even a contest. Same with the drums – Archie Ligonnière always comes up with killer stuff. After these guys add their personalities, the music sounds quite a bit different than what I originally came up with. That's why we like to tour; night after night, I come up with cool things I never would have thought up in my room. If I like them, they become part of the tune.

On "Sky Coaster," Labaye drops out. It's just you and Ligonnière playing drums. Was that improvised on tour?

That was written as a duet for guitar and drums. We get into these little rhythmic things together, and it's a lot of fun. It's more about the rhythms than the notes. There's no key, and I can play anything I want. As long as it's rhythmically interesting, that's what I care about.

You've added some cool effects to your arsenal.

There's a song called "Bilge Rat" – all those weird noises you hear on the left side are coming from the Empress Zoia. I loved that patch so much, and it was such an integral part of the song that I reached out to the guy who wrote that patch and paid him a hundred bucks (laughs). I thought, "This patch is like another musician, and he should be paid!" Guys write these patches and give them away on the internet. I felt like this guy was comping me during the whole song.

What's the deal with the sitar?

It's a Jerry Jones Electric Master Sitar – the one I used to record "Manic Carpet" on *Vibe Station*. I spent more time tuning it than playing it; the intonation is terrible (laughs), but it sounds great on the record. That's straight into my Fender Bandmaster with no pedals.

How about overdrive pedals?

My main pedal was the RC Booster, but sometimes I'd put a Roger Mayer Voodoo-1 Classic in front of it to get a little more bass and punchiness. Putting a Vodooo-1 before it is an old Mike Landau trick. If you put the Voodoo-1 before a Tube Screamer or RC Booster, it adds big low-end girth. I also use an original Klon Centaur, which is one of my favorites. I also used the L.A. Sound Design Buffer/Boost by Dave Phillips. It doesn't have quite as much gain as the RC Booster, but it's really big-sounding.

Which amps are you using?

My 1971 Marshall plexi and a Bandmaster modded by John Suhr; he added a Master Volume to the Marshall. I'm also using Kerry Wright cabinets and IRs of them captured at York Audio, in Nashville. I can't tell which is the speaker and which is the IR.

You created a horn section with guitars.

"Covid Vaccination" is a tribute to Tower of Power. I love that band. Every horn on that is a different pedal. Rather than play chords like I do live, I tackled it like a horn arrangement. I used a wah half-opened, and a distortion pedal for the trumpet sound, a fuzz for the saxophone, and a Trombetta Rotobone for the trombone. I also tuned way down and used a fuzz tone for a sax part. I took horn-arranging lessons from Tower of Power. I'm pretty happy with the way it came out. ***– Oscar Jordan***

Scott Henderson: A. Ikaniewicz.

KINGA GLYK

Real-Life Bass

Like a tightrope walker, bassist Kinga Glyk finds a delicate balance between funk-fusion virtuosity and wicked, booty-moving grooves. Deploying her trademark Fender Jazz and occasionally a Gibson EB-3, Glyk has repeatedly proven herself a gifted player, yet never lets that stop the beat. The 27-year-old's latest is *Real Life*, featuring the wildly infectious single "Fast Life." To learn more, *VG* checked in with Kinga from her home in Poland.

You're an acclaimed bassist, but there aren't many solos on the album.

Our intention wasn't necessarily to make a "bass collection"; instead, we envisioned it as a compilation of great songs that are capable of telling a story. We love bass and enjoy its prominent role, but with *Real Life*, we collectively agreed with [producer] Michael League that bass doesn't have to be the primary or up-front instrument.

As a composer and fellow bassist, what did Michael League bring to this project?

He took care not only of the music, but also was an amazing host, bringing people together effortlessly. Michael has a keen ability to read the room and understand what is needed in certain moments. The fact that he is a bass player allowed us to enjoy the process of finding the best solutions for bass lines. I have learned a lot from him, and hope this isn't the last time we create music together.

"The Friend You Call" brings Weather Report to mind. Are they a big influence?

Absolutely. My influences come from various sources, including Weather Report, Yellowjackets, Toto, Earth, Wind & Fire, Queen, and Stevie Wonder, even though they fall into different music genres. I love beautiful songs from the '70s and '80s, and I appreciate the power that music can convey. I remember watching a video of Jaco Pastorius playing with Weather Report, and it fueled my passion for playing bass even more. But also, thinking about what inspires me, I've come to realize that as much as music can profoundly impact how I hear and create it, life experiences and everything around us play an equally significant role.

As a composer, what makes a good fusion instrumental?

It wasn't my first goal to make memorable songs, but more to stay fully authentic and be open to explore, follow my heart, and find deeper meaning of what music can be. I'm happy that these pieces have melodies that people can remember.

Melody aside, "Unfollower" and "That Right There" both have sick, distorted bass lines.

We used some pedals, sometimes attempting to make the amp sound distorted. [Engineer] Nic Hard and Michael were exploring different sonic possibilities while I played the line. I enjoyed the process of discovering the variety of sounds, trying to find the most-interesting ones. For clean tones, the cascading harmonics in "Island" is about more the power of a good delay and stereo spread.

What is the solo instrument we hear on "Fast Life" and "Swimming in the Sky"?

The first solo in "Fast Life" was played by Casey Benjamin on the aerophone, a unique instrument. It's like a wind instrument you blow into, but what's interesting is it has different sounds. In "Swimming in the Sky," Caleb McCambell played the first solo on a synth, and Casey played the second one on the aerophone. Because it's a wind instrument, it makes the notes sound even cooler and stronger, very powerful.

"Opinions" is a beautiful closing song, with layers of keyboards and that aerophone over your bass.

Originally, "Opinions" had a longer section at the beginning. However, we decided to use only the outro for the final record because the other part didn't quite match the overall vibe. The song revolves around the theme of believing in your own ideas. It encourages never doubting yourself, even when faced with criticism. What I'm trying to convey is the importance of occasionally sticking with an idea – musical or otherwise – and seeing it through, even if someone doesn't initially approve. The value of the idea may still be there.

In addition to being the bassist, you're also a bandleader. How do you keep your musicians happy in the studio and touring while contributing their best?

Juggling those roles is not easy; I've been learning for a few years and still have lots to improve. Feeling responsible for everything can be a bit much; I'm working on staying calm and enjoying it, because too many tasks can take away the joy. The happiness of the musicians who play with me is very important. I want them to be happy and excited about performing the music, so I try to listen to what they say and play. I want to find the right balance between having a vision and giving people space for their ideas. In this band, we are a team, and we need each other. ***– Pete Prown***

Kinga Glyk: Peter Hönnemann.

D.K. HARRELL

Blues Boy

B.B. King may be gone, but on *The Right Man*, D.K. Harrell picks up the baton and carries that legendary sound into the future. A native of Rustin, Louisiana, Harrell nails many of King's nuances, along with mixing in his own, creating a formidable package of electric blues. As a bonus, B.B.'s "The Thrill is Gone" bassist, the great Jerry Jemmott, holds down the low-end throughout. Even better, D.K. is on the road throughout the U.S. and Europe.

Talk about B.B. King.

Oh man, B.B. King is the king, and his *Blues Is King* is the record I owe the most to. It shows both his connection with the audience and how raw he can get on the guitar. I met him on January 19, 2013 at the Baton Rouge River Center Theater. B.B. had to be 87 at the time, but this was a good night for him and the show was almost sold out. At the end of the performance, I forced my way to the front and shouted, "Mr. King, Mr. King!" He looked at me and shook my hand; B.B. looked at my conked hair and said, "I used to look like that," and started laughing. When I hit the doors to go out, I burst out in tears of joy.

Which other guitarists have inspired you?

Well, my first influence for guitar was John Lee Hooker, but I knew nothing about different tunings, so I stopped learning his style. In my opinion, Freddie King was like the wild version of B.B., with his fast licks, thunder-like voice, and aggression like a World War II tank. Freddie could play powerful bends in every song and make it sound brand new.

When I was 17 or 18, I visited the Stax Museum, in Memphis, and heard Albert King playing on their speakers; it was the instrumental "Cold Feet" and it was *killing*. I fell in love with Albert's style just like that.

What's the secret of a good wrist vibrato?

Shake it, don't break it! I'm kidding, but use more wrist; don't shake your arm or hand. Let the finger rest on the string with the right tension, then let the wrist do the work with ease. It takes time and patience to get it. I spent seven or eight years trying to get it right, even took a year break; I'd cringe 'cause I knew it wasn't right. Some players shake the neck hard or stiffly shake their finger, when it's all in the wrist.

Your tone is B.B. King-approved. Which guitars and amps did you use on the album?

I used my 1976 Gibson ES-355 TDSV Stereo "Christal," named after my mother, and also [producer] Kid Andersen's 1968 or '69 Gibson ES-355 on "Leave It at the Door." I don't care for pedals; I like getting all the amp's power and tone. Kid had me playing out of a silverface Fender Twin, I think from 1973. As for tone, I always experiment as I go along. Sometimes, music is like food: you may not like this or that, so you keep tweaking 'til something tastes good.

On "Not Here for a Long Time," there's more overdrive on your 355.

There really weren't any effects or pedals except for slight reverb. All I did was crank the Volume of the Twin up a bit, and played a little harder and added a little more mids than treble. I wanted it bright, but warm and more-aggressive rather than light or flowing. Again, I was adjusting the amp throughout the session.

On "Hello Trouble," you really nail that Memphis swing-blues sound. Are there any particular blues records that you strongly recommend?

When it comes to a bluesy Memphis sound, I'd say mostly everything that Albert King did at Stax Records, and Little Milton, as well. Albert has a song called "I Won't Be Hanging Around" and I really wanted "Hello Trouble" to have that feel. Some blues tells a story, and the horns are the binding of that book the story comes in. The horns hold it together.

As a young bluesman, does your music connect with listeners your age?

I think I'm crossing over more to the younger generation because I've had some fans as young as seven come up to me after shows and hug me, out the blue. I hand them a "Blues Is Life" guitar pick and their faces light up. When there are young people at my shows, like in their 20s, I'm happy because that means that their parents, grandparents, or friends hipped them to good music. What matters is that they're listening to the records that paved the way for today's blues. – ***Pete Prown***

D.K. Harrell: Derek Bridges.

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FRANK DIBUSSOLO

Jazz Master

Frank DiBussolo is an eight-time Grammy nominee who has been a featured soloist in the bands of Buddy Rich, Dizzy Gillespie, and Art Blakey. He has also accompanied Frank Sinatra, Diana Ross, Diane Caroll, and many of the finest entertainers in show business. Currently active as a performer and teacher in southeastern Pennsylvania, the jazz master recently sat for a talk with *VG*.

You've backed some of the biggest names in music. What is one of your favorite memories?

I was playing with Tony Bennett; it was a large band with a string section, and he recognized a good friend and his wife in the audience. He stopped the show and acknowledged his friend and remembers that the wife's favorite song is George Gershwin's "Embraceable You." He turns and asks if I could play it in F major. I say, "Sure..." and proceed to play a four-measure intro for him. He begins to sing and it was magical! His voice and my guitar, we didn't need anything else.

You play a couple of custom archtop guitars. What do they offer that you don't find in production instruments?

Those are designed and built by Frank Finocchio and Anthony DiDomenico with my physiology and playing style in mind, and they respond to my every need. They feel like they are an extension of me and allow me to express myself.

You produced the Great Guitars concert series of duets with Bucky Pizzarelli, Jack Wilkins, Jimmy Bruno, Howard Alden, and some of the world's other finest jazz guitarists. What do you like about a duo-guitar setting?

Playing guitar in duo is a joy because of the interaction and sound of the two players, and each player brings something different to the game, whether it's a voicing, substitute chord, or phrasing. It makes you listen more intensely and adjust accordingly. Bucky always thought two guitars were magic.

W hat do you specify in your string set?

I'm endorsing Mapes strings because they sound and feel right, and produce a balanced sound, even on the seven-string guitar that Anthony built for me. I use a nickel roundwound set, which is different from the flatwounds I played for many years; I like that they sound brighter, and I can compensate with the EQ to get that dark, woody sound I prefer.

The gauges are fairly heavy – .014 through .070 on the seven-string set – and they remain true for a long time.

What is your present live-gear setup?

My workhorse is my 2009 Via Strada built by Frank. My archtops are fitted with Kent Armstrong pickups and are all 15.5" wide with pressed tops, and are virtually feedback-free. I am so blessed to have these artisans hand-craft these instruments for me. I play them through Henriksen Bud 6 amps. This is the absolute best pairing of amp and guitar for a rich, woody traditional jazz guitar sound that I have found. I use no pedals, just a bit of reverb. I also use an Acoustic Image Clarus II head with Redstone or Henriksen cabinets for bigger venues.

What are your current activities and ensembles?

After playing and teaching for 59 years, I want to perform with people I like and admire. My dear friends for 50 years, bassist Bruce Kaminsky, drummer Bruce Klauber, and pianist James Del'Orifice, have been making music together for a long time! I love playing in my organ trio with Gary Staples and drummer Lorenzo Branca, and playing in trios and duos with drummer George Torello. A trio with bassist Martin Pizzarelli and guitarist Walt Bibinger is a joy, as is accompanying singers like Dr. Rick Boulay, the wonderful Jacqueline Ballarin, and the beautiful Sonia Weinman. Teaching, both in classes and private lessons, is still rewarding, and I plan to continue.

What advice would you give a guitarist learning to play jazz?

To new players, or even *seasoned* players, my advice for playing jazz is to learn melodies and know the lyrics (laughs)! Recognize the chord progression and how it supports the melody. Too many think playing on the changes of a song is jazz. It is *not*! The changes or progression can be found in many songs. The melody is the thematic material that makes a song unique. Improvisation, by definition, is a variation on a theme. Therefore melody should be the basis of the improvisation. Lyrics tell the player the mood of the song and how it should be phrased to achieve that mood. And always trust your ear! – ***Steve Walker*** **VG**

Frank DiBussolo: Laura Dombrosky.

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SOLIDBODY MVP

Gibson's Les Paul Model

BY GEORGE GRUHN AND WALTER CARTER

Its official name – Les Paul model – doesn't do it justice. After all, Gibson has made more than a hundred Les Paul models through the years. But call it by its nickname – "goldtop" – and everyone knows you're talking about Gibson's first solidbody electric guitar.

Like many important guitar stories, the goldtop story was not documented very well, and writers didn't start tapping the memories of the two primary figures in its development, Gibson president Ted McCarty and Les Paul himself, until more than 30 years after the fact. Ted and Les had been close in the 1950s but not so close from the '60s onward. Not surprisingly, two stories emerged. Ted said Gibson came up with all the design features then sought Les' endorsement, which resulted in the finish color and the tailpiece. Les said he and M.H. Berlin (head of Chicago Musical Instrument Company, Gibson's parent) came up with the design and Ted delivered it. The two stories seem mutually exclusive, but if you allow a margin of error for memories, omissions and egos, both accounts are true.

Gibson reacted immediately to Leo Fender's introduction of the Esquire in the summer of 1950, and by the end of the year, Gibson's Hollywood rep, Clarence Havenga, had a prototype solidbody in hand. In the meantime, McCarty was trying to lure Les away from his arsenal of customized Epiphones. Les had just set himself apart from other guitarists in the world with two multi-tracked instrumental hits, "Brazil" and "Lover." In 1950, he added his wife, Mary Ford, to his act, and his fortunes increased exponentially; in 1951, their recording of "How High the Moon" spent nine weeks at number one on the pop charts.

At some point, Les met with M.H. Berlin, and it was Berlin, a violin collector, who specified the carved top (Les preferred a flat top). During the prototype stage, Gibson settled on the maple top cap and mahogany body. McCarty explained that the maple cap was for sustain, the mahogany back for lighter weight. However, since greater sustain was always one of Les' goals, it would not be surprising if Les had some input into the maple/mahogany body.

A maple-top prototype guitar does exist, but its most interesting feature is its neck joint. The neckset angle is relatively flat, like that of the first production models, but the entire neck is set higher above the body, so the strings would be high enough to pass over a bar bridge like the one on Les' trapeze-style combination bridge/tailpiece (a later prototype of the Les Paul Junior also has this high-set neck). Gibson was familiar with Les' tailpiece, as there is one installed on the modified Epiphone Mary Ford is playing on the sheet music of their 1950 hit "Mockin' Bird Hill."

There was a misconnection between the maple-top prototype and the final version, however. Gibson set the neck deeper into the body, for better stability, but inexplicably failed to compensate for the lowered string

Photo: Robert Parks, courtesy George Gruhn.

The goldtop's page in Gibson's 1956 catalog.

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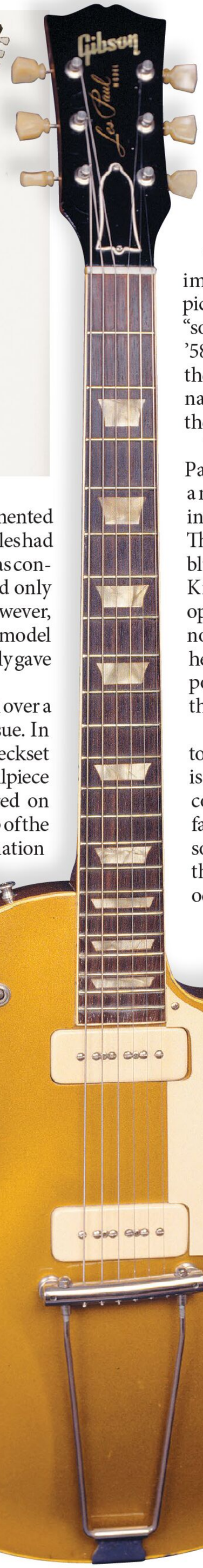


height. When McCarty presented the guitar to Les at the Delaware Water Gap, a resort where he and Mary were performing, it had Les' tailpiece but was virtually unplayable.

The crossbar that served as a bridge on Les' tailpiece was about 1/2" thick and it sat on height adjustment nuts. The neckset angle of the prototype (assuming it was the same as subsequent production examples) only allowed for a bridge height of 3/8". Even with the bar laying flat on the top of the guitar, the action was probably a full 1/16" higher at the 12th fret than Les was accustomed to.

Les, unfazed by the lack of woodworking tools, heated up the blade of a screwdriver over the burner of a stove and gouged out the top of the guitar so the crossbar of the tailpiece could be lowered. Now, with a playable instrument, Les signed what would become the most lucrative endorsement deal in the history of musical instruments.

In addition to the tailpiece design, Les asked for the point of the cutaway to be rounded off a bit, and he thought the gold would look good on the new model after seeing the finish on an ES-175 he'd ordered for a friend in 1951.

When the new Les Paul model shipped in March, 1952, the neckset angle hadn't changed. Gibson's solution was simply to flip the tailpiece over so the strings wrapped under the bar. The high bar forced most players to alter their right-hand motion, and made muting the strings with the heel of the right hand awkward, if not impossible.

Les was bound by the terms of his contract to play a Gibson, but it would appear he didn't like much of anything about his own model. He replaced the tailpiece with a standard Gibson unit and a presumably homemade bar bridge. He also installed DeArmond pickups and repurposed one of the control knob holes for a jack. When the Les Paul Custom was introduced in 1954, he had several made for his own personal use with a flat top.

In the meantime, Gibson implemented its own changes. The earliest examples had an unbound fingerboard, which was consistent with other Gibsons that had only single-ply binding on the top; however, the gold finish gave the Les Paul model an expensive look, so Gibson quickly gave it fingerboard binding.

Inexplicably, Gibson waited well over a year to fix the neckset/tailpiece issue. In 1954, the company changed the neckset angle to introduce a new bridge/tailpiece that was essentially a bar anchored on studs mounted directly into the top of the guitar. It wasn't perfect (for intonation adjustment, it wasn't even as good as the three-saddle system that Fender had been using since 1950), but the strings now wrapped over the bar, and the stud-mounted bridge provided better sustain than the trapeze.

When Gibson expanded the line to include the lower-priced Junior and fancier Custom in '54, the Custom sported a new "Tune-O-Matic" bridge designed by Ted McCarty and had adjustments for each individual string length. Again in an inexplicable delay, it was late '55 before the goldtop received the upgrade.

The next change was the last and most important: double-coil humbucking pickups, which replaced the original "soapbar" covered P-90s in mid 1957. In '58, with sales falling, Gibson changed the finish to Cherry Sunburst and the name to Les Paul Standard. With that, the goldtop era ended.

The goldtop's importance – like Les Paul's – is tricky to assess. The guitar was a moderate commercial success, but not in the way anyone would have predicted. The first guitarists who embraced it were bluesmen such as Muddy Waters, B.B. King, and John Lee Hooker – stylistic opposites of Les. Then, as now, virtually no guitarist bought a Les Paul because he wanted to play like Les. In fact, Les' popularity waned faster in the mid '50s than sales of the goldtop.

The historic importance of the goldtop as Gibson's first electric solidbody is obvious. Often overlooked in the cosmetic dazzle of the "'bursts" is the fact that the culmination of electric soldibody guitar design, signaled by the arrival of humbucking pickups, occurred with the '57 goldtop. The goldtop may not be the most highly sought vintage Gibson electric, but as the vehicle for the introduction and development of the Gibson solidbody as we know it today, it remains Gibson's most important electric model.

This feature originally appeared in the March '09 issue.

The SR22's control panel is similar to many of the classic two-channel British heads of the day.

FOWL PLAY

The Roost SR22

BY DAVE HUNTER

For a small chunk of terra firma in the northeastern Atlantic Ocean, Great Britain has turned out more than its share of noteworthy guitar amplifiers. Pro touring and recording guitarist Peter Stroud unearthed one unusual example.

Many an American guitarist besotted with the glamor of vintage British amps has indulged in downtime shopping for undiscovered gems while playing the British Isles. It's been decades since great bargains were to be found in Marshall, Vox, or Hiwatt creations, but the amps of Sound City, Selmer, Laney, Watkins, WEM, Domino, Kelley, Bird, Dallas, and others still generate excitement, and a great tone-per-pound ratio.

Roost amps of the early '70s to mid '80s were less-often seen on the western side of the pond, but generally well-respected by British guitarists, and this one put a smile on the face of Stroud, who in addition to his band, Big Hat, and stints with Don Henley, Sarah McLachlan, and Pete Droge, is best known as guitarist and music director with Sheryl Crow. In addition to being a first-call musician, Stroud was a co-founder of the boutique maker 65amps. Following a longstanding passion for British classics, in particular, he found a lot to love in this Roost head.

"I bought it 15 or 20 years ago from a Roost collector and player I met over there," Stroud tells *VG*. "I restored the power supply to protect the transformers because it suffered from hum and flabby low-end due to aged and dried [electrolytic] capacitors."

A model SR22 (later known as the SR100), it's a stout 100-watt design with four EL34 output tubes in the great British tradition.

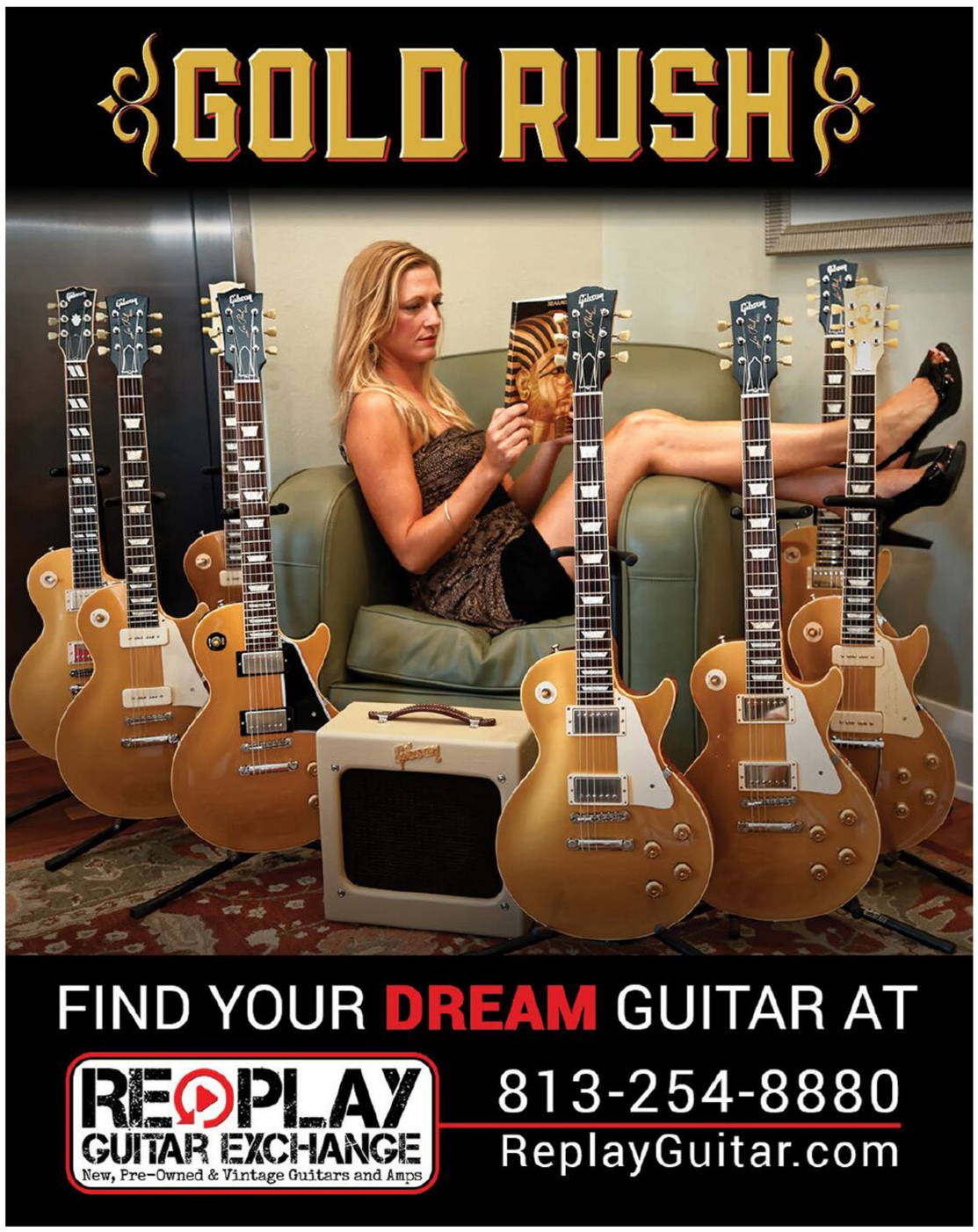
"I have not been able to pinpoint the exact year of build, but I'm thinking it's fairly early, from around '74 to '76," Stroud said. "It's labeled on the back, 'Type: AP,' which meant 'All Purpose.' It certainly fits that bill, making a great bass amp, and I am sure it would've served well for keyboards back in the day."

Guitar is where it really shines, though, and with gusto.

"It's exceptional, with a different sound and response compared to a Marshall or Hiwatt. It has a very effective and dynamic tone stack, with plenty of preamp gain that produces a different character versus using lower preamp-gain levels and pushing the power stage harder. It's the typical four

1974-'76 ROOST SR22 HEAD

- Preamp tubes: four ECC83 (a.k.a. 12AX7)
- Output tubes: four EL34
- Rectifier: solid-state
- Controls: Normal Volume, Brilliant Volume, Bass, Middle, Treble, Presence, Master Volume
- Output: approximately 100 watts RMS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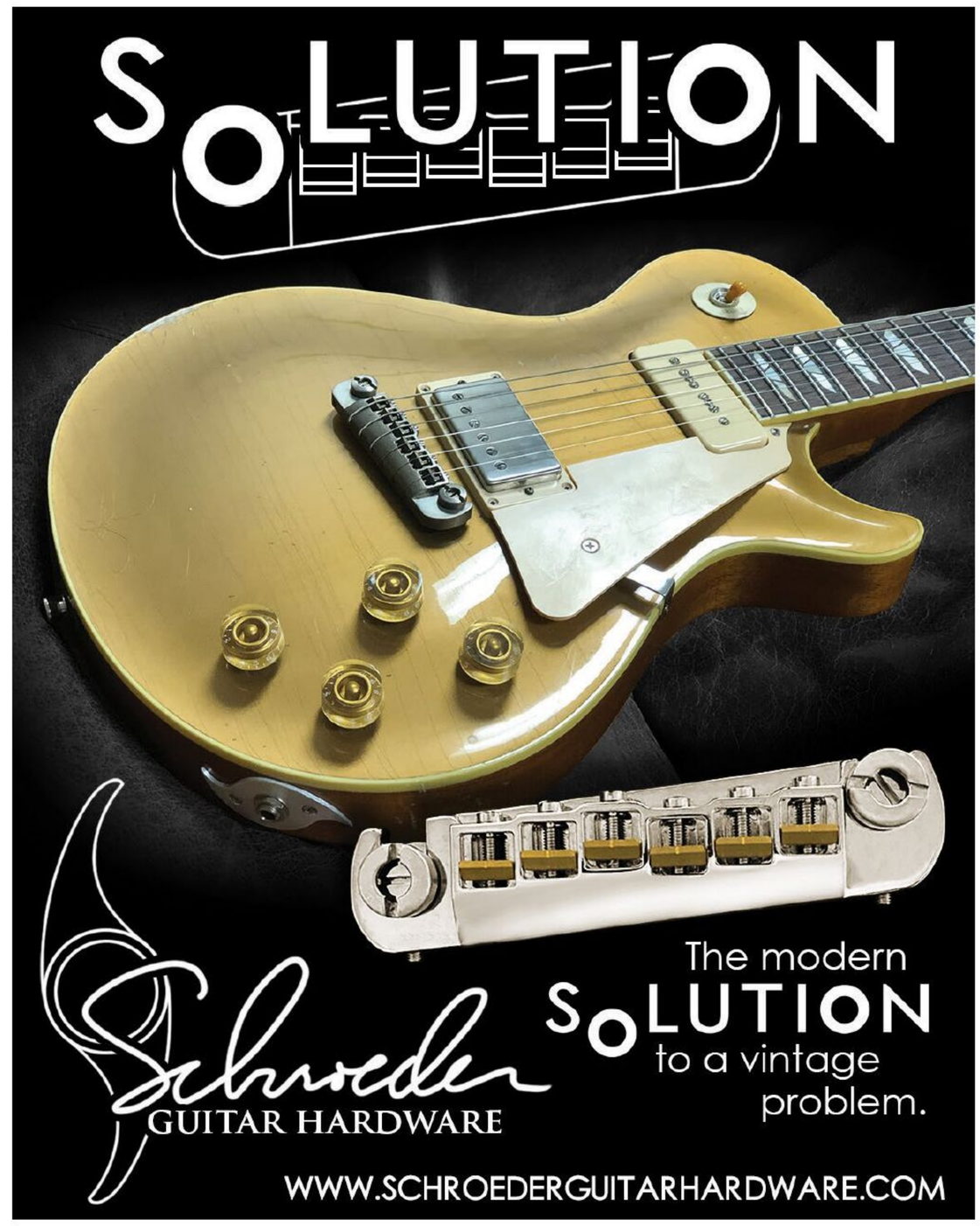
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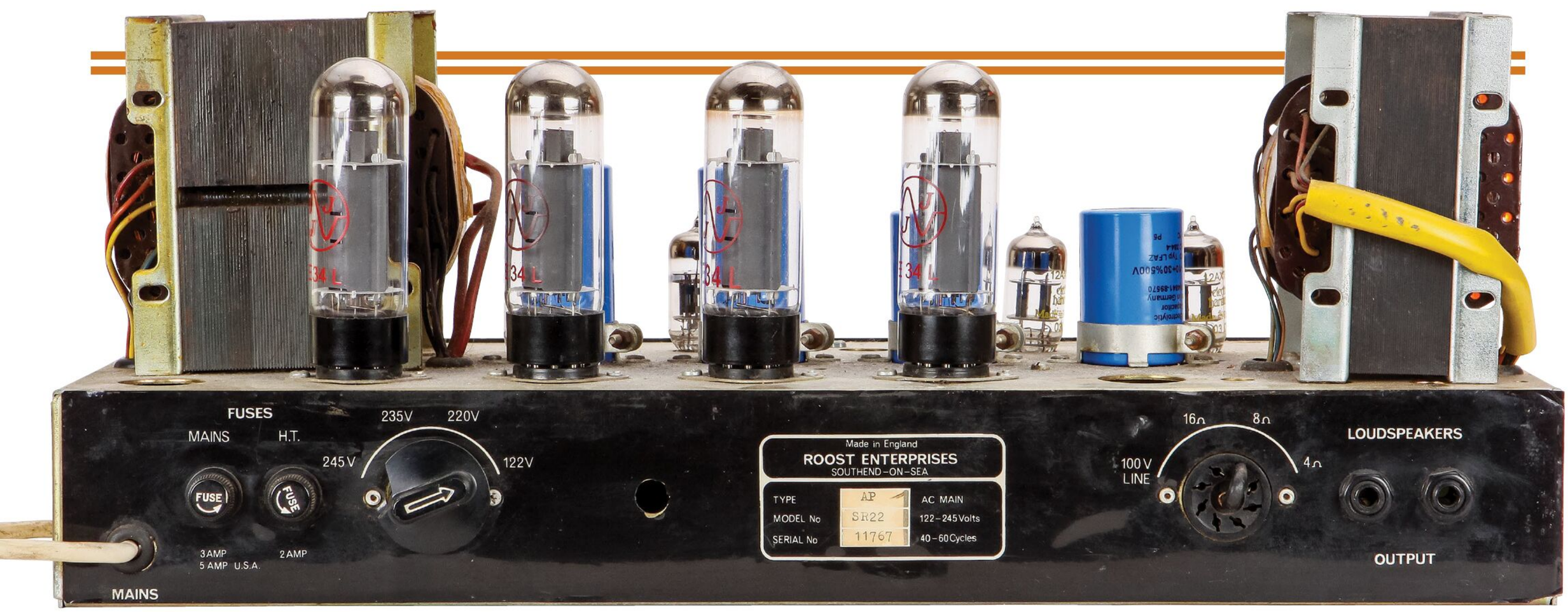


Four EL34 output tubes rise above a back panel with voltage and impedance selectors. The Roost Enterprises model plate indicates model and origin.

Bright and Normal inputs of the day, both useful individually or for [connecting with a jumper cable].

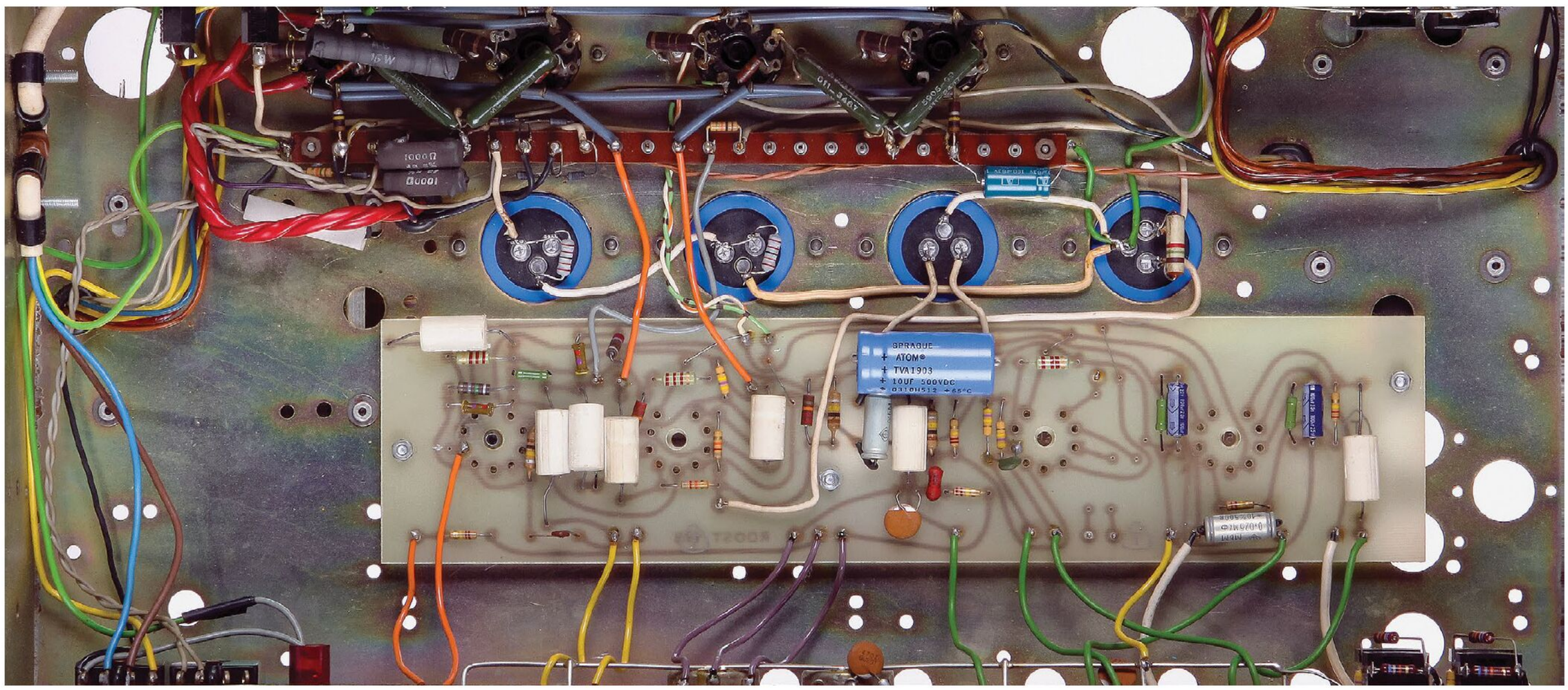
"And it is *loud*! I only use it with a power attenuator and two tubes pulled. The transformers are very stout, producing strong, tight low-end, tighter and more pronounced than a Marshall, but not as hard-sounding as the Hiwatt DR103 (*VG*, August '12). It's well-built and, after the cap job, feels bulletproof. I've used it on a couple of gigs, pushing it pretty hard."

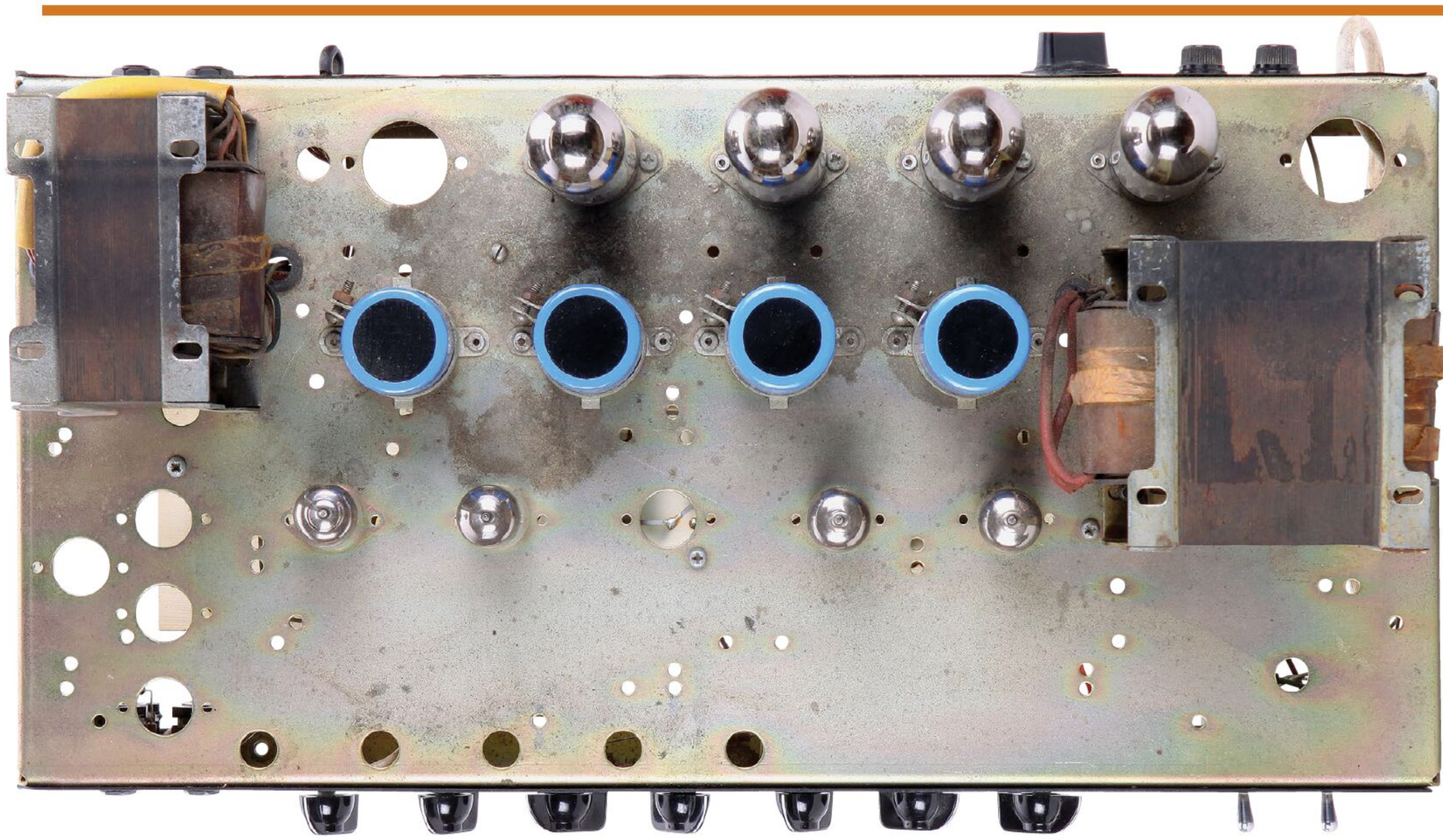
Roost Enterprises was founded by Brian Roost and Ron Bailey in 1972, in Southend-on-Sea, Essex, to build amps in the style of Hiwatt and Sound City. While the majority of guitarists today might consider Marshall the end-all of Brit-rock stacks of the '70s, many players of the era were looking for an even louder, punchier performance – something these brands excelled at. And as Stroud points out, Roost amps excelled in the volume department. By the '70s, Sound City amps were also manufactured in Southend-on-Sea, and there's speculation that the proximity might have led to an overlap of personnel, though there's little recorded history to verify that.

The styling of Roost amps was clearly designed to appeal to the Hiwatt and Sound City markets, given the business-like black covering, white piping, and black-and-white block "Roost" logo on the rectangular front badge. Control panels reflected the key features, with individual Volume controls for the Normal and Brilliant channels, shared Bass, Middle, Treble, and Presence, and Master Volume – a feature many amps had adopted by this time.

Inside, the circuits were also closer to the templates of those makers than to Marshall. While the earliest Roost builds used tag strips, the company moved on to printed circuit board (PCB) construction by the time this SR22 was built. Marshall, Hiwatt, Sound City, and others were also using PCBs by the mid '70s, so it was considered standard practice rather than some downgrading of effort, and Roost amps were still filled with

Except for the earliest amps, Roosts were made with PCBs, though still hand-wired with quality components.





Two hefty Partridge transformers flank the four large blue-can capacitors installed to keep the SR22 sounding its best.

quality components, all hand-wired to the traces of these boards.

From the company's start through when this SR22 was made, Roost was using the acclaimed Partridge transformers also used by Hiwatt and Sound City. Circa 1978, Roost switched to Drake transformers, which also appeared in many Marshall amps. The chassis was sturdy stuff, too; made from folded steel, it was punched to allow for the six EL34s of the 150-watt bass amp, and extra preamp-tube holes to enable the reverb that was added to some models.

Most estimates indicate Roost made only around 300 amplifiers between its inception and 1978. Partway through that run, Brian Roost left the company. In '79, it was bought by Futuristic Aids Limited (FAL), a company based in Leeds that made budget solid-state amplifiers, and manufacturing was moved north.

In 2017, Soundlite Equipment revived the Roost brand in West Yorkshire, initially making speaker cabinets but with the intent of reintroducing tube amps made to the original designs. Inquiries as to status received no replies as of this writing. **VG**

Classics

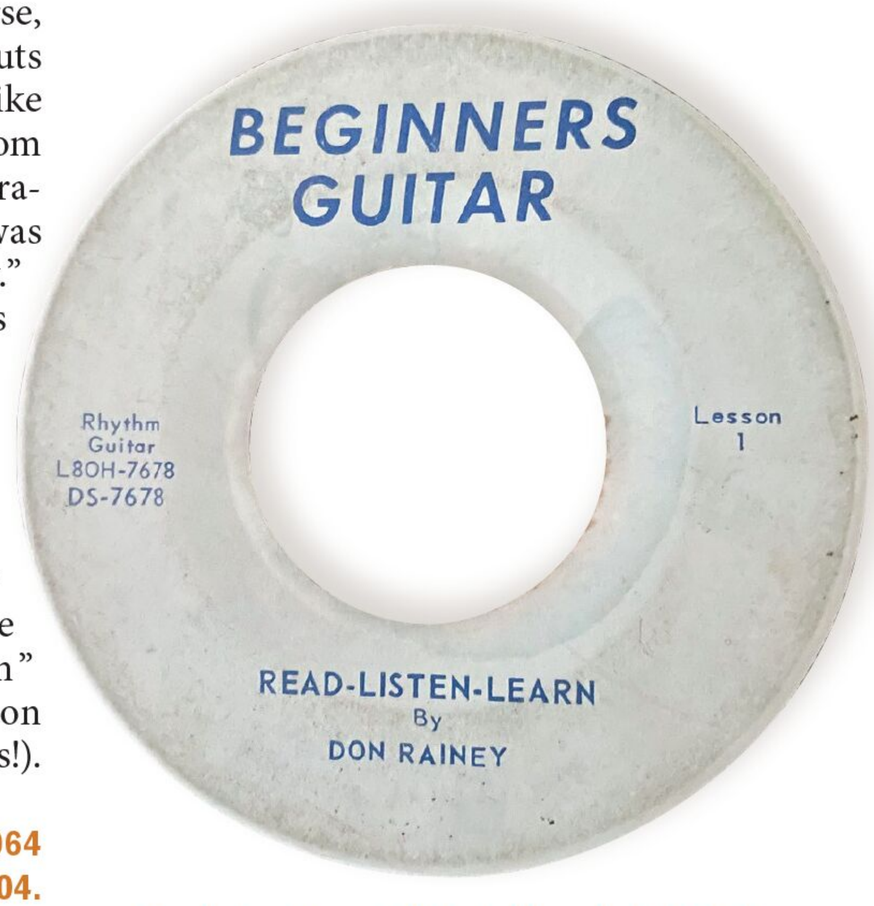
One of the 73 million people tuned in to watch the Beatles play "The Ed Sullivan Show" on February 9, 1964, 11-year-old Joe Bigley was also among the throng of kids who immediately started begging their parents for a guitar.

Joe Bigley's 1964 Silvertone 604.

"They were so incredibly mesmerizing with their accents, hair, and swagger that annoyed my folks," said Bigley. "Of course, young people went nuts for them. It was like turning the page from the old, staid generation to one that was vibrant and new."

The band's three Sullivan appearances that month ignited a cultural phenomenon now known as "the guitar boom" (a.k.a. the reason you're reading this!).

Before that, guitars – mostly Fenders, Martins, and Gibsons – were largely relegated to the back corners of stores that sold pianos, horns, and woodwinds. Built for serious players, they were also priced beyond what parents of daydreaming kids were willing to tender.



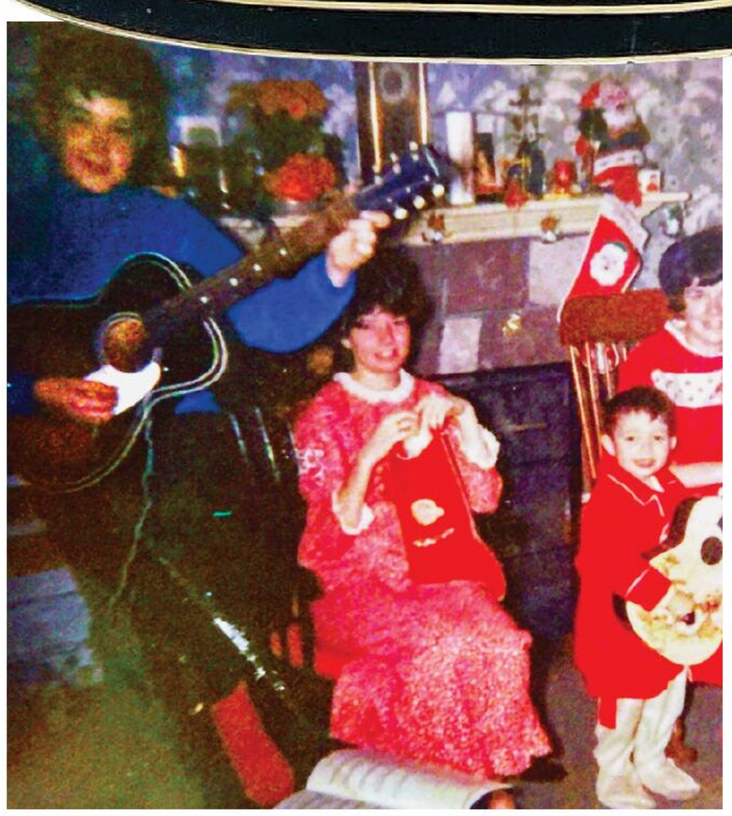
The instructional 45 that shipped with Model 604 package was of limited use, though Joe Bigley credits the instructor for doing his best to teach tuning, notes, and basic chords.

Fortunately, those kids had the Sears catalog.

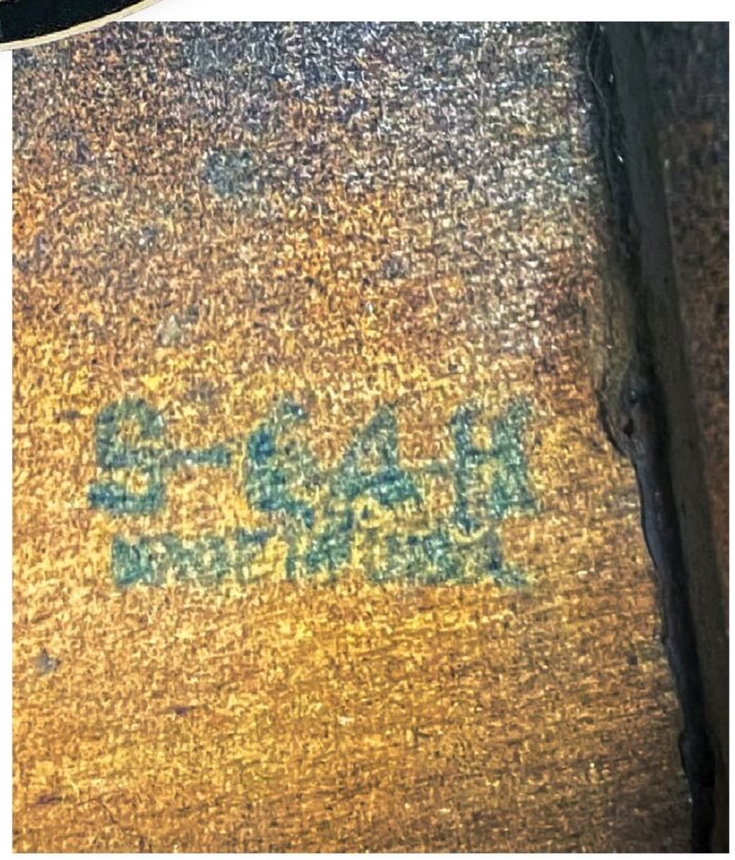
"Nobody would ever say Sears was cool, but in the '60s, they realized that youth culture was becoming a major market, so they added products like guitars and 'mod' clothes," said Bigley. "They were the biggest store around, but ours didn't carry instruments, so I'd thumb through the catalog; I remember the big one always arrived a month or so before Christmas."

Gazing longingly at the Silvertone guitars with their fancy finishes and multiple pickups, his curiosity centered on an acoustic.

"I vividly recall the Model 604 being promi-



Joe Bigley with his shiny new 604 on Christmas Day, 1964, with sisters Maureen and Kathy and two-year-old brother, Tim, "strumming" a stencil guitar.



Visible through the sound hole, but barely legible, the guitar's ink-stamped serial number, S 64 H.

nent on the page," Bigley said. "They marketed it as the perfect beginner guitar, brilliantly packaged with a pick, a cord strap, and a 45-rpm instruction record, all for $15.95 (laughs)! It *really* appealed to me – the fancy sunburst finish with fancy black on the outside. It was *so* much cooler than the blond folk guitars."

Taking scissors to the page, he handed a clipping to his parents, who promptly suggested putting the guitar on his Santa list. Proving wishes *do* come true, it appeared under the tree that year.

"I was so thrilled," said Joe. "I must confess, though... I snuck down and found it in the basement closet before Christmas (laughs), then pretended to be very surprised that morning. We had just moved to suburban New Jersey and most of my new friends had guitars; if I hadn't got one, I would've been *very* bummed."

He started lessons straight away.

"Myself and several of my friends were taught by a really nice guy named Mr. Murphy, who drove to our homes and gave 45-minute lessons for $1.10. He taught from a series of books called *Guitar Playing Made Easy for Everyone*, which was okay but had corny songs like 'On Top of Old Smokey' and 'The Carnival of Venice.'

"He sensed my disdain for that stuff, so one day he brought *The Rock & Roll Guitar Book*, which mostly taught open chords and notes in the open position – no theory, no concept of keys. But he also showed me songs I *wanted* to learn, so I was motivated. A few times, he took me to other students' homes and we'd play together. That was cool."

While it served admirably in those first months, the 604 "... was not a fine instrument," Bigley said. "The fretboard was stained to look like ebony, and it wore off pretty quickly. I never had a case for it and always leaned it against the wall, so the neck warped. Plus, the fretboard was flat, so it was all but impossible for my little hand to play barre chords, and the action was high even before the bridge started pulling away from the top. Also, the pick that came with it was the thickness of a cough drop (laughs)."

Made for Sears by the Chicago jobber Harmony, Joe's 604 has a date code "S 64 H" and "Made in USA" ink-stamped inside the body, visible through the sound hole.

"The H is a production date from the second half of the year," said Bigley, who has been fascinated by the guitar as an instrument and cultural symbol ever since that February night. "In the first half of the year, that code would've been an F."

After a few months of lessons, Joe started eyeing electric guitars.

"Mr. Murphy pushed me to get a Fender Mustang, but those were 'student' guitars, and I wanted something wild, with three pickups, because that'd make me play better, right? So, I saved $80, then went to a local discount store and bought a Teisco knockoff of a Jaguar along with a crummy Concordia amp. Mr. Murphy wasn't pleased (laughs) – told me it was 'junk.'"

By the time he entered high school in 1966, Bigley had dismissed Mr. Murphy and was jamming with friends.

"In '67, I formed a band called The Mirage of Sound," he recalled. "We all lived in different towns, so our parents had to drive us to rehearsals, which didn't happen very often. Still, we had fun messing around with songs like 'The Letter,' 'Let's Live for Today,' and 'Kicks.' We didn't even try Beatles or Stones songs, as it would have been a disaster (laughs). We never got past the practice stage."

Now, he routinely strums a handful of much better guitars.

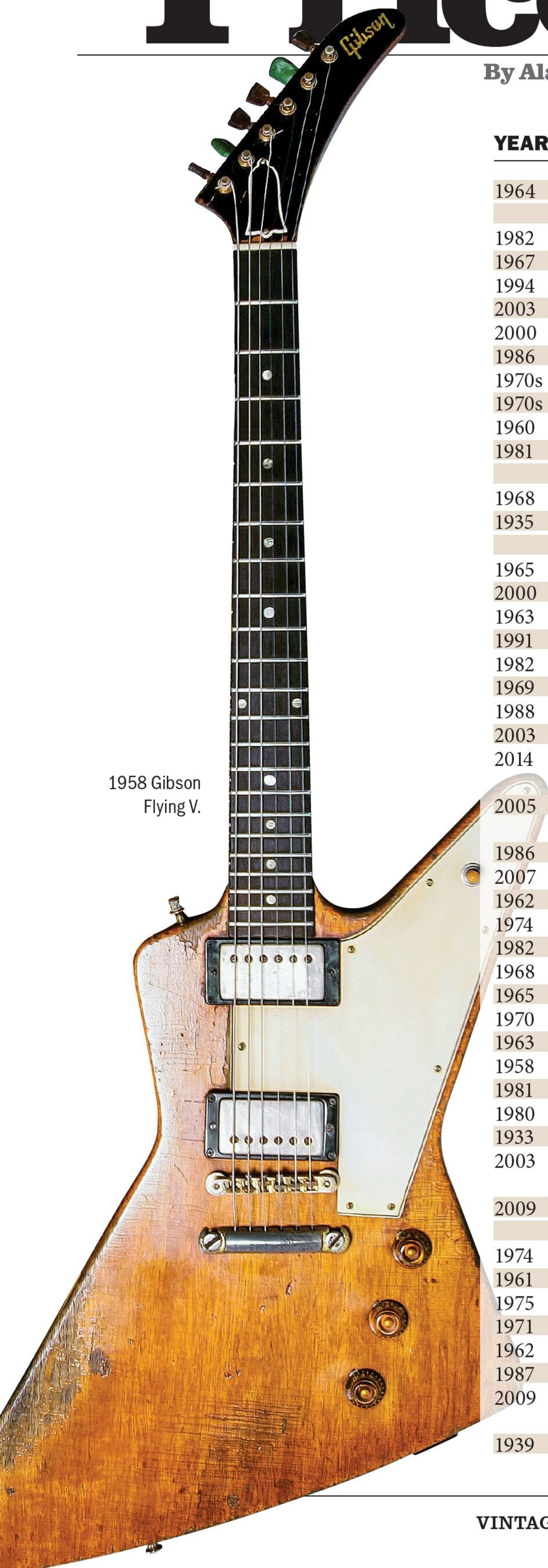
"These days, relics like the 604 are common wall art in blues clubs," he said. "And it must have some lasting appeal, because there's a modern version with a rosewood fretboard, spruce top, and electronics."

Faux flame, lower-bout-only sunburst, and strip tuners speak to the 604's student-guitar quality.

Joe Bigley penned a 2008 VG feature on a Belgium-based guitar museum. Read it at www.vintageguitar.com/3817/lord-bizarre.

Price Guide

By Alan Greenwood & Ram W. Tuli



1958 Gibson Flying V.

YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND. LOW	EXC. COND. HIGH
1964	Airline Acoustic			
	Res-O-Glas Resonator		$1,000	$1,500
1982	Ampeg Distortion A-1		$150	$200
1967	Apollo Electric	Various models	$1,500	$2,000
1994	B.C. Rich ST-III (U.S.A.)	New Rico era	$850	$1,250
2003	Blade Texas Series	Deluxe	$500	$650
2000	Brian Moore i2000 Series		$850	$1,100
1986	Charvel Model 4/4A		$1,000	$1,500
1970s	Colorsound Power Boost		$600	$800
1970s	Dallas/Dallas Arbiter Wah Baby		$750	$975
1960	D'Angelico Excel/Excel (Cutaway)	Natural	$30,000	$40,000
1981	Electro-Harmonix			
	Digital Rhythm Matrix DRM-15		$350	$500
1968	Epiphone Broadway (Electric)	Natural, Cherry	$2,250	$3,000
1935	Epiphone Emperor			
	(Acoustic Archtop)	Natural	$10,000	$13,000
1965	Epiphone Olympic Double (Solidbody)	Cherry or sunburst	$2,000	$2,500
2000	Fender American Series Jazz V		$1,075	$1,400
1963	Fender Esquire	Common Color	$25,000	$32,500
1991	Fender Prodigy	Made in USA	$1,125	$1,500
1982	Fender Squier Standard Telecaster	1st logo or JV serial	$1,250	$1,625
1969	Fender Stratocaster	Sunburst	$15,000	$20,000
1988	Fender Paisley Stratocaster	MIJ	$1,500	$2,000
2003	Fender Hot Wheels Stratocaster	Made for Hot Wheels	$2,500	$3,000
2014	Fender '56 Stratocaster			
	(Custom Shop)	Heavy Relic	$3,000	$4,000
2005	Fender Crash Stratocaster	ECS painted by		
		John (Crash) Matos	$5,375	$7,000
1986	Fender '72 Telecaster Custom	Japan	$1,375	$1,750
2007	Fender Joe Strummer Telecaster	Limited Edition	$1,000	$1,375
1962	Fender Telecaster	Common Color	$30,000	$40,000
1974	Fender Telecaster Thinline	Natural ash	$3,250	$4,250
1982	G&L G-200/G-201	Rear load	$3,250	$4,250
1968	Gibson Blue Ridge	Laminated Brazilian	$1,375	$1,750
1965	Gibson EB-0	Cherry	$2,200	$3,000
1970	Gibson ES-175 D	Various colors	$3,500	$4,500
1963	Gibson ES-335 TD	Sunburst, factory Bigsby	$20,000	$25,000
1958	Gibson Flying V		$365,000	$475,000
1981	Gibson Flying V I/V '83/Flying V		$2,500	$3,000
1980	Gibson J-45	Sunburst	$2,000	$2,500
1933	Gibson L-5/L-5N		$9,000	$12,000
2003	Gibson '60 Les Paul			
	Flametop/Standard '60s	Brazilian, figured	$12,750	$16,500
2009	Gibson Les Paul Standard			
	Michael Bloomfield 1959		$8,250	$10,500
1974	Gibson Les Paul Custom	Black or white, 3 pickup	$6,500	$8,000
1961	Gibson Les Paul Junior	Cherry, SG body	$5,500	$8,000
1975	Gibson MK-81		$1,500	$2,000
1971	Gibson SG Pro	P-90s, topmount	$1,750	$2,250
1962	Gibson SJN (Country-Western)	Square shoulder	$6,500	$8,500
1987	Gibson Thunderbird IV (Reissue)	Various colors	$1,700	$2,250
2009	Gretsch Electromatic			
	Hollow Body (5122/5422)		$550	$750
1939	Gretsch Synchromatic 300	Natural	$2,750	$3,500

Featured Survey Participant
John Majdalani with a new Gibson Custom Shop '59 ES-335.

YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND. LOW	EXC. COND. HIGH
1967	Guild M-85 II		$1,500	$2,000
1970	Guild Stratford A-350		$2,500	$3,250
1989	Hamer Centaura		$1,500	$2,000
1963	Harmony H73 Roy Smeck	Black or red, GA trem	$1,250	$1,625
1968	Hofner G5000/1 Super Beatle (G500/1)	LH	$2,500	$3,500
1974	Ibanez Rocket Roll		$2,000	$2,500
1961	Kay K6535 Value Leader	2 pickups	$450	$600
1986	Kramer Classic II		$850	$1,250
1951	Magnatone Starlet Model 107	Pearloid	$400	$550
1983	Marshall Model 1935/1935A/1935B Bass Cabinet	280 watts, black	$500	$750
11952	Martin 000-17		$4,500	$6,000
2013	Martin 000-45EC Eric Clapton Crossroads Madagascar		$11,500	$15,000
1980	Martin 00-28C		$1,625	$2,125
1890	Martin 0-42		$16,000	$20,000
2009	Martin D-18 75th Anniversary Edition		$3,500	$4,500
1986	Martin D-35P	Standard 5-ply b&w trim	$2,500	$3,250
2012	Martin DRS2 (Road/1 Series)		$625	$850
1977	Martin OM-45/ SOM-45/Special OM-45		$7,750	$10,000
2003	Matchless HC-30 Head	Jamison era	$2,250	$3,000
2006	Mesa-Boogie Road King Dual Rectifier Head	Series II	$2,550	$4,000
1967	Mosrite Gospel	Sunburst	$2,000	$2,500
1980s	MXR Distortion +	Block logo	$80	$100
1956	National Reso-phonic	Round neck, common finish	$1,875	$2,500
1984	Orville by Gibson	LP Standard	$1,750	$2,500
1989	Peavey Rudy Sarzo Signature		$550	$750
2010	PRS 513 Swamp Ash	figured ash, natural	$1,500	$2,000
1998	PRS	Standard 24	$1,500	$2,000
1971	Rickenbacker Electro EH-3 Lap Steel	6-string	$425	$550
1966	Rickenbacker Model 370/12		$12,000	$16,000
1985	Rivera TBR-1	Rackmount, 60 watts	$775	$1,050
2000	Santa Cruz OM (Orchestra Model)	Indian rosewood	$3,500	$4,500
1968	Silvertone Model 1420	5 watts, 1x8	$350	$500
1999	Steinberger XT-2/XZ -2 Spirit		$350	$500
2020	Supro Delta King 10	5 watts, 1x10	$350	$450
1998	Taylor 314		$1,250	$1,625
2017	Taylor Academy 12e		$450	$600
1961	Unique Model 460	35 watts, 2x12+2	$1,500	$2,050
1962	Vox AC15 Twin	Custom colors	$7,500	$11,300
1967	Vox Ultrasonic	12-string	$2,000	$2,500
1970s	Yamaha GC Series (Classical)	Higher-end	$1,250	$1,625

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1969 Guild M-85-II collecter grade - first model, hollow body in factory natural with 2 pickups OHSC $3800

1950 Tweed Super amp 'the 6L6 ' desirable one' - two owner . No changes!! W/cover $13,500 firm

1973 Gibson L5 CES CUSTOM- newer gibson pickups and inlayed tail - high flame - excellent - OHSC $9500

2005 Waterstone ME-1 (Rick 4005 style) greenburst ex+ OHSC $750

1980's Aria cardinal bass CS-380 TRANS BLUE VG+ W/gb $625

2000 PARIS SWING Nauges 'gypsy jazz' mandolin NOS MINT! W/tweed case $795

Gretsch Doublejet 'Broadway jade' with custom trem and Towner bar HSC EX $750

2008 GAMMA CUSTOM bass 'P' two tone pink . HSC EX $750

2 Don Teeter Original guitar repair . 'the Bible for any shop' W/ jackets - rare!!! $200

1940 National New Yorker lap steel wIOHSC, cable and rare vintage steel slide EX $850

1954 Magnatone 'deco' lapsteel, gray pearloid, OHSC W/ vintage slide $595

1984 Rickenbacker 4003 jetglo - all original, plays and sound amazing! Hi and low bridge covers OHSC $2500

1970's Gibson hardshell 'EB' bass case, purple plush VGC $200

Old sets of Grover 1930's 'butter bean' tuners $150

Diamond strings fake news t-shirt $38.95 while they last - which they won't

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Ritchie Blackmore and Deep Purple in the early '70s.

DEFINITIVE RIFFS

Deep Purple's *Machine Head*

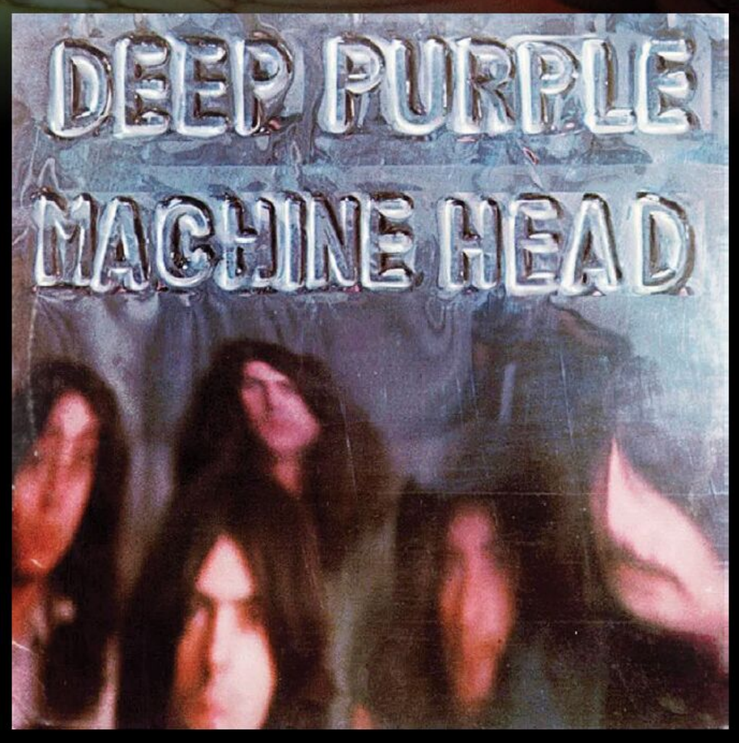
By Pete Prown

Now regarded as the "Beethoven's 5th" of rock and roll, "Smoke on the Water" became a surprise hit in the summer of '73 thanks to its simple, massive guitar riff. Despite being a hard-rock track, the first single from *Machine Head* reached #4 on the *Billboard* pop charts. That bulldozer riff, however, belied the album's genesis.

The quintet, working with engineer Martin Birch (in the Rolling Stones Mobile Studio van), planned to record in the empty Montreux Casino, hoping to conjure a live, ambient vibe. But those hopes were dashed on December 4, 1971, when "some stupid with a flare gun burned the place to the ground" during a show by Frank Zappa & the Mothers. Miraculously, no concert goers were hurt in the inferno.

The band decamped to another venue, Le Pavilion, which imparted the huge tones of "Smoke on the Water." But, neighbors complained about the volume and, after one quick session, Deep Purple was evicted. They ended up at the (closed for the season) Grand Hotel, where they set up mics, improvised baffles, then ran cables into hallways and guest rooms off the main lobby. Aside from the giant riff of "Smoke..." the sonic signature of *Machine Head* originated there.

"It was a ramshackle scene, as the musicians made do with what they had," singer Ian Gillan told writer Kory Grow for the liner notes of a new four-CD reissue. "We put the amps in separate bedrooms, and we were in a first-floor corridor. We had blankets and mattresses for sound baffles, and I sang at a microphone in the corridor, but I could hear everyone coming out of the separate rooms."



Deep Purple: Jeffrey Mayer/Pictorial Press/Alamy.

"It was very cold, and snowing every day," Purple's axe wizard, Ritchie Blackmore, told Grow. "To hear a playback in the Rolling Stones Mobile Studio, we would have to travel through about five bedrooms out onto a reception area, across a courtyard then up in the truck to listen to a playback. Needless to say, we didn't hear too many playbacks, as it was such an ordeal..."

When trying to figure out Blackmore's legendary Stratocaster tone on the album, a common error is to confuse his live rig with the studio setup. On tour, he usually plugged into a factory-modified 200-watt Marshall Major head and two cabinets. Yet we also know that Blackmore was fond of Vox AC30 amps for their warm, natural, dirty tone. In some interviews, he alludes to hiding Vox guts inside a Marshall housing then slaving it to the big Marshall head – in effect, using an AC30 preamp to fuel the Major's power amp and cabinets. But again, this was his *stage* rig.

Listening to the album now, you hear the difference between the power chords of "Smoke on the Water" versus almost everything else.

"We remember those riffs from *Machine Head* as being huge, and convince ourselves that they were recorded via some massive Marshall stack," said *VG* amp profiler Dave Hunter. "Largely, though, it's just that they sounded so big compared to much of what else was being recorded at the time, and because of the attitude put into them. Listening back today, they really don't sound stack-like at all."

To further clear the mystery, for a 2017 feature marking the album's 45th anniversary, Blackmore told *VG*, "I was using a 100-watt Marshall amp with four 12" speakers in the cabinet. I probably would've also been using the Vox at that time."

There was another piece of his sonic recipe that isn't often discussed – a germanium-transistor treble booster. "Yes, I used the Hornby Skewes treble booster," Blackmore slips in. "It was a [tabletop] box, not a floor pedal."

The essential "Smoke on the Water" riff – suspiciously reminiscent of a bossa-nova piano vamp from 1966's "Maria Quiet" (hear it on YouTube) – features him plucking double-stop fourths with his fingers, not a pick. His Marshall's tone is quite ambient, suggesting the cabinet was distance-miked, not up close. That gave this riff its huge girth, but his guitar solo is from the Grand Hotel sessions and likely deployed the secretive Strat/treble booster/Vox amp combination.

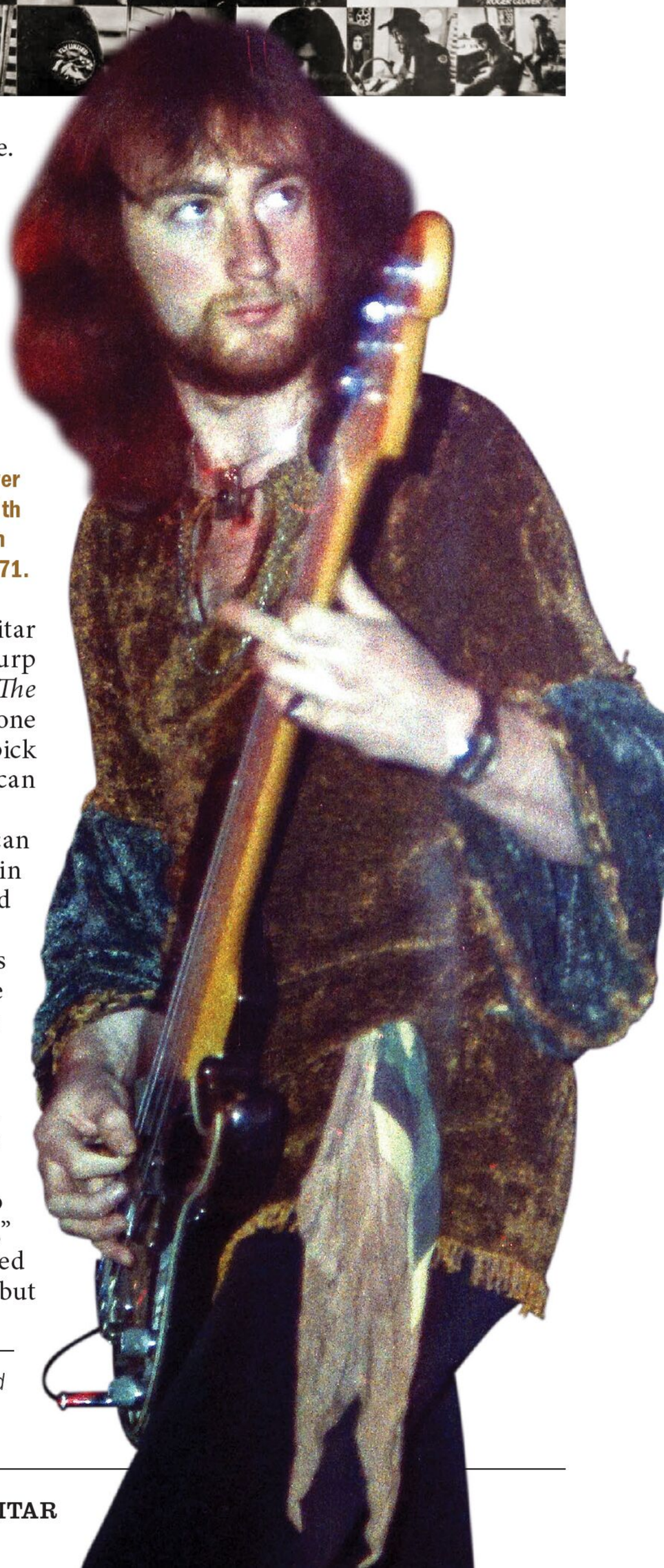
Rising guitarists were also in awe of the opening track, "Highway Star," for its tempo, Bach-inspired arpeggios, and Blackmore's proto-shred runs. This was high-speed metal and sported the double knockout of Jon Lord's virtuoso organ solo. For his break, Blackmore composed his parts in advance, overdubbing the Baroque arpeggios for brilliant technical effect.

"'Highway Star' is a crazy song for a guitar player," said guitar hero and lifelong Purp fan Joe Satriani in the documentary, *The Ritchie Blackmore Story*. "It makes everyone who thinks he's a guitar player need to pick up the guitar and say, 'If I'm that good – can I really do *that*?'"

More than a half-century later, we can listen to *Machine Head* and still revel in those seismic riffs from the dawn of hard rock and metal.

"The thing about Purple is we've always had great musicians," said Deep Purple bass master Roger Glover. "When I first met Ritchie Blackmore, Jon Lord, and Ian Paice, I was absolutely stunned by their ability. And that typifies what Purple is. We're not looking to be glorified – we're just looking to make good music."

"*Machine Head* crystalized what to me back then *was* heavy rock and metal," Satriani added. "There's something cultured about it. It's gutsy, it's bluesy, it's soulful, but it's polished at the same time."



Roger Glover onstage with a Precision Bass in 1971.

Roger Glover further discusses the *Machine Head* sessions in this month's "First Fret."

Roger Glover: Gladstone/Wikimedia Commons.

The Beatles in 1966.

SONIC FLOODGATES

The Beatles' *Revolver*

By Wolf Marshall

If any rock album can be labeled "groundbreaking," it's the Beatles' *Revolver*. A sweepingly innovative masterpiece, it divides the '60s in half, evades categorization, anticipated *Sgt. Pepper* and the "white album," and launched myriad offshoots.

In early 1966, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr were at their creative zenith. For *Revolver*, they allotted more studio time than with any previous album; still, from just April 6 until June 22, 16 songs were recorded, mixed, and edited.

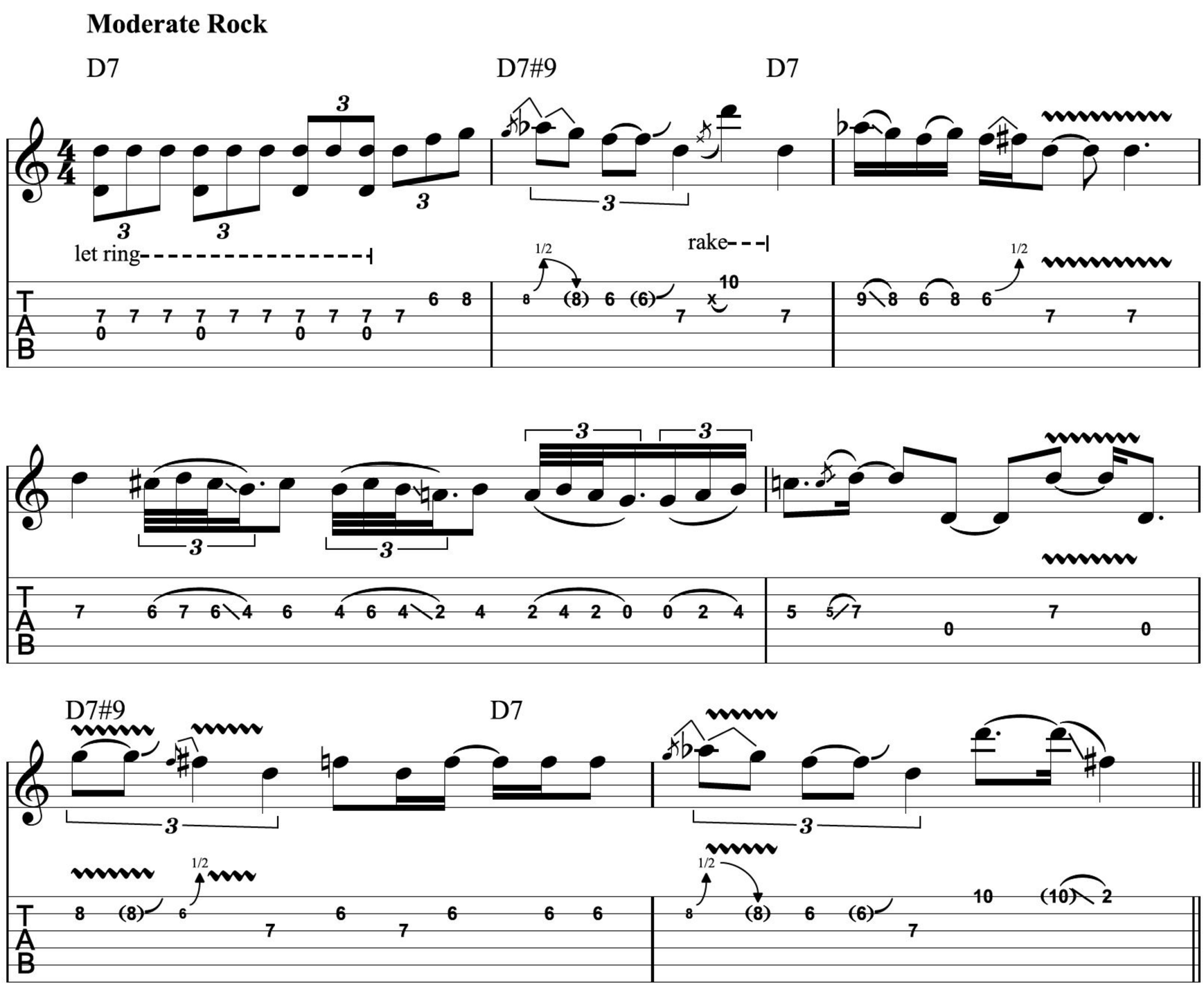
Revolver opened sonic floodgates by introducing tape loops, backward and vari-speed recording along with filtering and processing, string and horn orchestration, unusual instruments, sound effects, and world sounds. The studio, coupled with the imaginative input of engineer Geoff Emerick, became the "Sixth Beatle" in addition to the band and producer George Martin. Previously forbidden close-miking of instruments resulted in improved sonics. Starr's 22" kick drum, muffled with a sweater, was run through Fairchild 660 tube limiters/compressors for a heavier, more-present sound. Brass and strings were close-miked in "Got to Get You Into My Life" and "Eleanor Rigby." A speaker rewired as a microphone boosted McCartney's bass sound, unmistakable on "Paperback Writer," "Rain" and "And Your Bird Can Sing." Automatic Double Tracking (ADT), employing a second machine, was used to double vocal and instrumental parts with a slight delay (24-30 ms).

The Beatles' individuality, reflected in Harrison's three pieces and increasingly complex music like "Eleanor Rigby," "Got to Get You Into My Life," and "Tomorrow Never Knows" – none of which could be effectively rendered by a rock quartet – implied a coming breakup, though the Beatles' camaraderie was at its peak. The album's unorthodox music accompanied story lines of humanity, death, loneliness, philosophy, and altered consciousness; the latter informed the psychedelic bent of the counterculture and acid-rock movement, and supplanted the love-song themes of earlier Beatles pop. Moreover, American country/western and folk influences, prominent on *Rubber Soul* and *Help!*, were minimized giving way to experimentation, art-rock/prog-rock precursors, and outré sounds manipulated with studio technology.

The Beatles instrument arsenal grew in '66; Strats and Casinos ('64-'65), a Rickenbacker 4001S ('65), and Gibson J-160 were joined by new instruments including Harrison's SG Standard, Indian tamboura, and Burns Nu-Sonic bass, Lennon's '62 Gretsch Nashville, Fender Showman amps with 1x15 cabs, and a cream-tolex Bassman. Sonically conspicuous were Vox 7120 guitar amps with Dick Denney's modified Thomas Organ Super-Beatle 120-watt circuit with fuzz, Mid Range Boost (MRB) and tremolo/vibrato with hybrid solid-state preamp and tube power section, and a 4120 bass amp.

The guitar-dominated opener, "Taxman," expressed the Beatles' dissatisfaction with Britain's onerous taxation, and asserted Harrison's stature as composer, augmented by a ferocious solo accentuating McCartney's lead-guitar abilities. He previously played lead on "Drive

The Beatles 1966: DPA Picture Alliance/Alamy.



By 1966, it was customary to see Paul McCartney using his Epiphone Casino in the studio to demonstrate songs and parts and to play occasional lead and rhythm overdubs. On "Taxman," though, he played a solo that ranks as one of the best in Beatledom. His aggressive phrases through a distorted Vox split the difference between hard blues-rock improvisation and raga references. His first three bars are driving and rhythmic, with droning triplet figures, pentatonic melody, string bends, and incisive phrasing while measure 4 presents a descending/ornamented scalar sequence reminiscent of a sitar.

My Car," "Another Girl," and "Good Morning." Taped noises (Harrison's secretive count over slurred guitar notes, various sounds, and coughing) set the album's tone and a precedent fulfilled in *Sgt. Pepper* as crowd sounds. The R&B groove and emphatic D7#9 chord ("Purple Haze," anyone?) heightened its urgency. The final mix removed gimmicky vocal responses (heard on the 2022 *Revolver Special Edition* box set, "Take 11"), revealing how much was re-evaluated in the studio.

"Eleanor Rigby" was the first song without any member playing, only McCartney's lead vocal, Lennon and Harrison's harmonies, and Martin's aggressive arrangement for string octet, presaging future orchestrations. McCartney insisted the strings be given a "biting" quality, explicit in the marcato attack and minimal vibrato ("Take 2" on the box set). "Rigby" became one of the most-covered Beatles tunes, with versions by Aretha Franklin, Ray Charles, and Wes Montgomery.

"I'm Only Sleeping," Lennon's nod to everyday life, was made preternatural by Harrison's two-part backward guitar solos that depicted dreaming, sleepiness, and yawning.

The song began as an acoustic track with vibraphone ("Rehearsal") and simple harmonies added in "Take 2." A faster version was recorded as "Take 5" in preparation for the slower final. "Mono Mix RM1" unveils George's entire backward-guitars track.

"Love You To" embodied the Beatles' world-music proclivities, heralded Harrison's Indian influence and increasing sitar skills, included a guest tabla player, and contains their first deliberate meter change (4/4 to 3/4) (:55). It represents a middle ground between the simple hook of "Norwegian Wood" and more-complex arrangement of "Within You, Without You," and conveys rock intention with power chords and volume-swelled triads.

After *Revolver*, raga-rock trends flourished. The Stones ("Paint it Black") and Donovan ("Sunshine Superman") used sitar, and Indian gestures became part of rock's language, epitomized by Yardbirds' Jeff Beck ("Over, Under, Sideways, Down," "Shapes of Things").

"Here There and Everywhere," McCartney's debonair love ballad, was a last-minute composition that upped the ante of *Pet Sounds* with cluster-voiced background vocals, enriched chords, and thirds-related modulation of G to B^{b}. Textures and overdubs were spare and simple; in the bridge, Harrison complemented McCartney's clean chording by adding a melodic counterline on Rickenbacker 12-string (going to two amps).

Starr's song, "Yellow Submarine," was a whimsical, nautical-themed acoustic sing-along with childlike trappings, employing Lennon's processed vocal responses – at one point blowing bubbles in water, overdubs of effects from EMI's sound library, including chains, bells, whistles, sloshing water, clinking glass, and a brass-band passage replacing a guitar solo.

Needing one more song, "She Said, She Said" was recorded hurriedly at the end of sessions, Lennon's acid-rock narrative flaunted meter shifts – 4/4 to 3/4 – the second in their repertoire. McCartney didn't participate, but Harrison added bass lines on his Burns Nu-Sonic, overdubbing lead melodies to Lennon's guitar and harmonium parts, and drums. Though the arrangement was straightforward, the track introduced several tenets of prog rock.

McCartney's upbeat piano-driven piece, "Good Day Sunshine," alluded to Vaudeville and English cabaret, and rocked despite having no guitar. Saved by Martin's atmospheric ragtime/boogie tack-piano, it fell short of the campiness paraded later.

"And Your Bird Can Sing," Lennon's enigmatic rocker, established modern guitar practices and harmonic twists, with the band's craftsmanship evidenced in several takes. The first version was dominated by electric 12-string

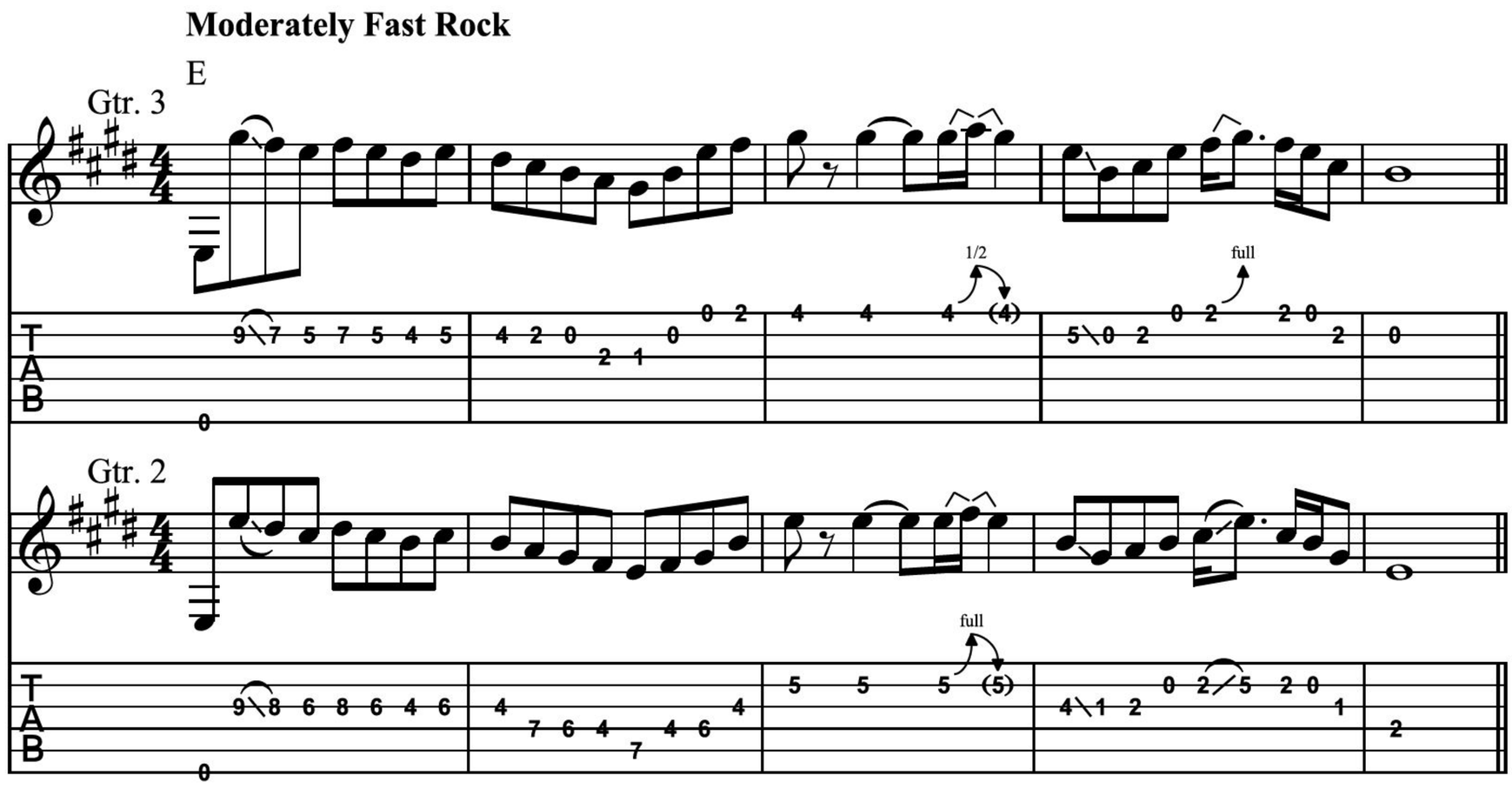
with distorted harmony-lead (Harrison/McCartney) only in the solo and outro ("Take 2"). A second version emphasized twin-guitar textures. In "Take 5," the duet is conspicuous and finally heard in the bridges, solo and outro (over vocal pads). On the original final, those vocal pads are removed and guitars overpower the arrangement. Ostentatious guitar harmony was uncommon in rock and foreshadowed trends in bands like Allman Brothers and Wishbone Ash.

"For No One," McCartney's melancholy piano song of unrequited love, was backed by drums, dubbed bass, percussion, and clavichord; it was guitar-less and featured a largely improvised French horn solo by Alan Civil.

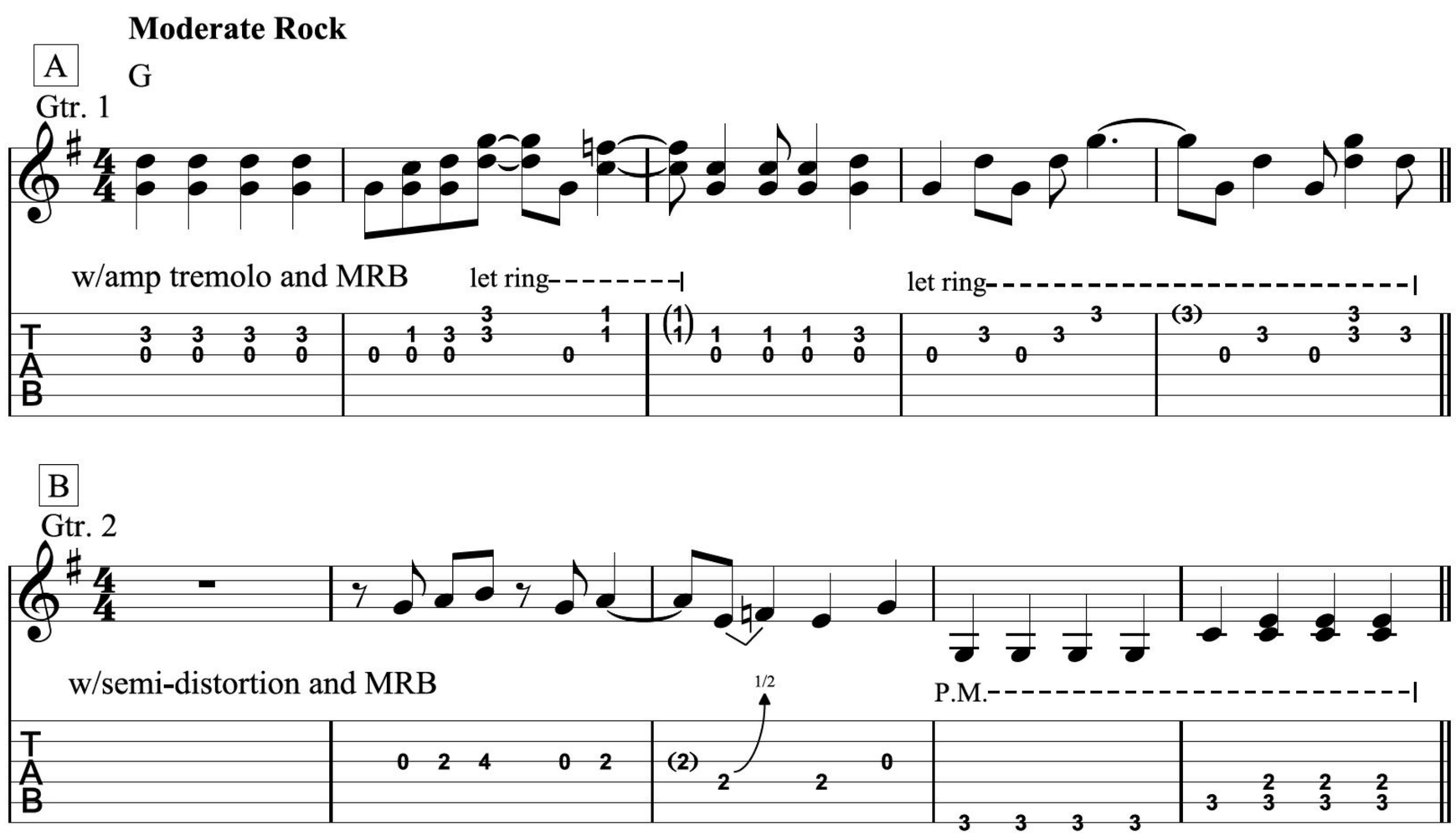
The bold Lennon rocker "Doctor Robert" overtly addressed drug use in pop culture, getting an appropriate rock-combo treatment with Lennon and Harrison's intertwined distorted rhythm/lead guitars laced with MRB, feel changes, and the juxtaposition of A and B tonal areas contrasting normalcy with a blissful state.

"I Want to Tell You," Harrison's third tune, continued the human interaction dynamic of "Think for Yourself" and underscored tension through altered-chord dissonance; the piano's prolonged emphasis on a half step in E7^{b}9. The track is further distinguished by Harrison's processed clean-Strat sound in the main riff, faded in at the intro.

McCartney's R&B number, "Got to Get You Into My Life," offered a template for horn bands like Chicago and Blood Sweat & Tears, but began as a guitar/drums/harmonium/vocal rendition ("First version, Take 5"). Familiar riffs appeared as guitar parts in the second version and by "Take 8" morphed into a horn section (three trumpets and two tenor saxes) with layered guitar exploiting MRB and tremolo. Guitar parts are buried in the final mix until the coda (1:49). They used horns again in "Good Morning" and "Savoy Truffle."



In '66, harmony guitars were a rarity, so the tour de force double-lead in "And You Bird Can Sing" must have been a revelation. The song marked an auspicious moment in rock history, leading to twin-guitar tactics of Scorpions, Thin Lizzy, Wishbone Ash, Allman Brothers, and even Metallica. After several attempts to portray the Lennon tune with jangling/capoed 12-string parts, the track was re-made two weeks later with a harder edge and laden with intricate harmony-guitar parts played by Harrison and McCartney on matching Casinos through distorted Vox amps.



"Got to Get You Into My Life" was the second song recorded on *Revolver*. Started as an exploratory acoustic piece with drums, vocals and harmonium, it was re-recorded the following day with Harrison's electric guitars colored with fuzz, distortion, and MRB. These foreshadowed horn riffs overdubbed later. This excerpt presents the coda break where guitars (with distortion, MRB and tremolo) were brought back in. Note the layering of two simple-but-elegant parts that contain motives and melodies interpreted later by saxes and trumpets.

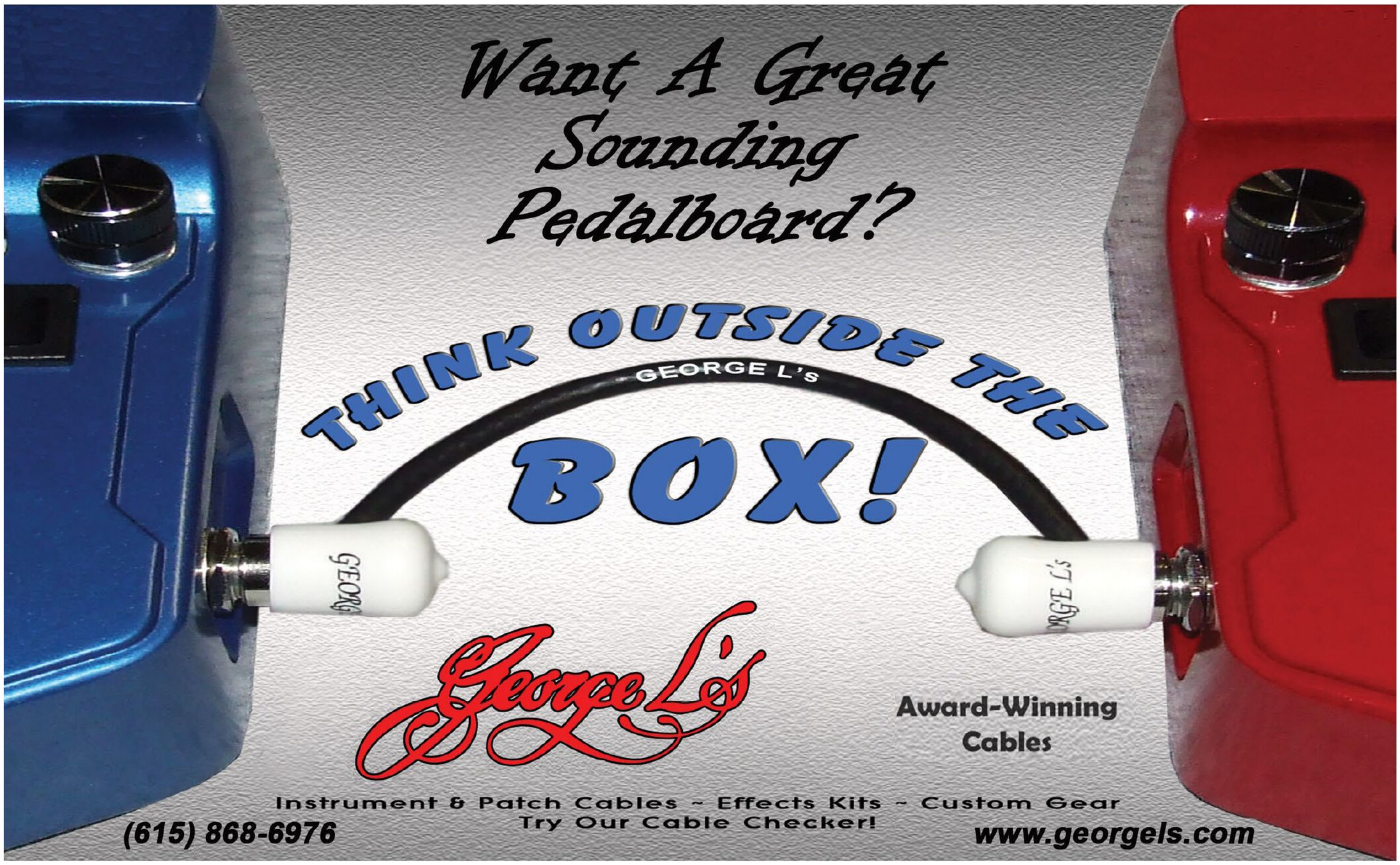
"Tomorrow Never Knows," the title a Ringo malapropism, conveys Lennon's stream-of-consciousness and musical travelogue of a dream world begun with "In My Life" and taken to greater heights with "Lucy in the Sky" and "Across the Universe." Anchored to one sonority layered with tape loops, backward guitar, and tamboura drone, it was the first song recorded, the most experimental, and ultimately the closer. Originally titled "Mark I," it adapted imagery from Buddhist text, *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and Timothy Leary's *The Psychedelic Experience*, something the Beatles were experiencing at the time. The basic track ("Take 1") was a slowed percussive tape loop and guitar ostinato with overdubs of Starr's muffled, compressed drums and Lennon's vocal through a Leslie speaker, heard only in the last verse of the final mix. To this were added Lennon's two-note bass riff, the tamboura drone, sustaining organ tone, Martin's honky-tonk piano (highlighted in the ending) and tape loops ("Mono Mix RM 11"). The song was played over a C pedal, simultaneously modal and atonal with no semblance of Western harmony – only brief superimposition of B^b/C, suggesting the collision of an Indian raga and Mixolydian mode. McCartney's avant-garde pursuits fueled his quest for novel sounds in rock. He recorded numerous tape loops at various speeds and directions (distorted guitar, laughter, rubbed wine glass, etc). Five were selected, fed back on tape machines in several Abbey Road rooms, and Emerick "...played the faders like a modern synthesizer," synchronizing loops in real time and flying them into the track. Harrison's backward-guitar solo, a pentatonic blues-guitar improvisation treated with fuzz, MRB, and Leslie, strengthened the otherworldly impression with its reversed envelopes. The landmark solo inspired Hendrix's approach on "Are You Experienced."

"Paperback Writer"/"Rain," recorded April 13-16, are part of the *Revolver* canon by virtue of boosted bass, vari-speed/backward tape effects, heavy MRB guitar tones, and innovative qualities. As composer, McCartney handled distorted lead/rhythm on the former with Harrison's chiming backbeat strums ("Take 1" and "Take 2"). The droning modal mood of "Rain" is maintained by Lennon's distorted chording (Drop G) and McCartney's emphatic pedal-point bass riff. A fast version ("Take 5") was recorded and slowed down for the master version, over which backwards vocals were added to the coda.

Most *Revolver* songs would have been impossible to perform in '66 without additional musicians, shuffling of roles, modern synth/sample techniques and effects processing, and elaborate stagecraft including miking sitar, tamboura, and piano. "Dr. Robert," "She Said," "Taxman" and "I Want to Tell You" *could* be played as quartet, but would be unconvincing. The Beatles never bothered trying; none were played in concert; *Revolver* is their first record to have that distinction.

Rubber Soul had similar limitations, but "Nowhere Man" and "If I Needed Someone" were performed onstage. And while *Soul* prompted the Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds*, *Revolver* was first Beatles album to throw down multiple gauntlets that no one band saw fit to pick up.

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 latest book is *Jazz Guitar Course: Mastering the Jazz Language*. Others include *101 Must-Know Rock Licks*, *B.B. King: the Definitive Collection*, and *Best of Jazz Guitar*. A list credits can be found at wolfmarshall.com. **VG**



BATTLE-SCARRED

A '57 Strat Goes Under the Knife

By Dan Erlewine

B.K. Vaught recently walked into my shop with a vintage Strat that had been modified and refinished. While its changes represented a bit of American history, the guitar deserved to be restored.

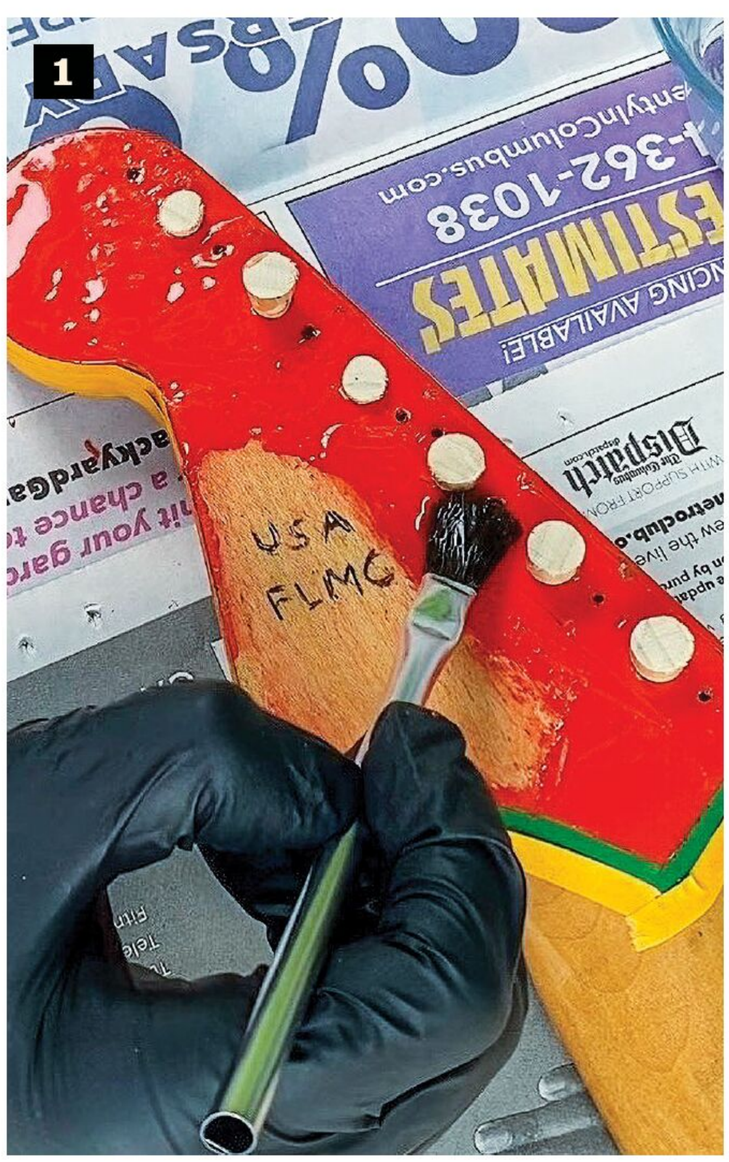
B.K. got it in the spring of 2022, while helping sort the estate of an uncle who had passed away. Among his belongings were dozens of guitars including a '53 Gibson J-45, a '60s Gretsch Chet Atkins Tennessean, and an assortment of '80s Fenders. This one caught B.K.'s attention because of the wear on its fretboard.

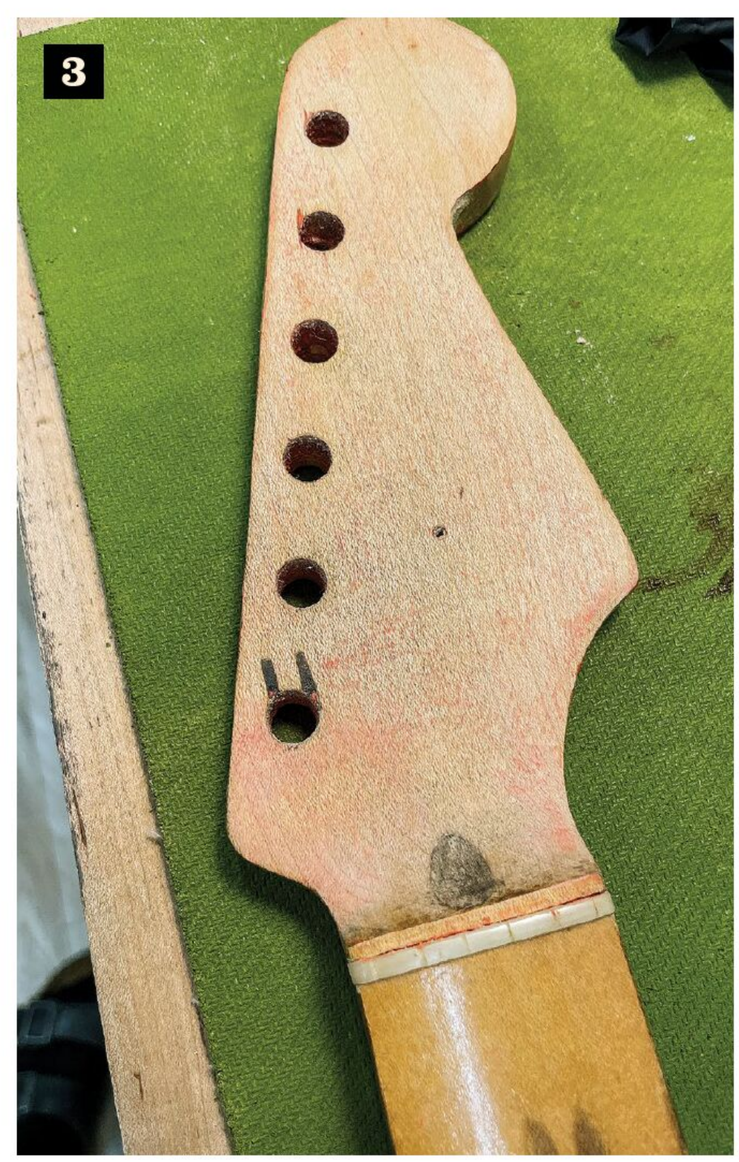
After he posted pictures online, someone suggested it might be a '57 Strat, so he took it to Gruhn Guitars for evaluation, and they confirmed the body was indeed from '57, while the neck had been modified and some components were original.

Cryptic knife-scratched engravings on the neckplate suggest it once belonged to a member of the U.S. Marine Corp, and it was oversprayed with what may have been an attempt at Fiesta Red, including an off-center stinger on the back of the headstock.

B.K. turned it over with instructions to strip the finish, replace the headstock decal, and do whatever else was needed to make it playable (and look closer to original). As you'll see, there was *a lot* to do, so I created a three-person team.

1) Elyse Kautz started by using chemical stripper to remove paint from the peghead,





starting on the back. She soon discovered why someone might have painted it; carved into the maple were the letters "USA" and "FLMC," matching the neck plate. To keep stripper from getting into the holes and perhaps leeching into the wood, she wedged dowel plugs into the tuner holes. Many colors – especially red – can float out of the wood and bleed into the new clear lacquer that will be sprayed over the area.

2) After the peghead was cleaned and dried, Elyse scraped and sanded the letters. After air-brushing some tint over the bare wood, it looked old and worn, like it should.

3) The paint also hid two large chips in the first tuner hole, likely from someone using the wrong tool to remove the original bushings. They had filled the chips with glue and just painted over it. I bleached the head *twice* after stripping it but you can still see how red pigment remained in the wood.

4) I filled the chips with maple then used an air brush to spray thin coats of golden brown/amber "shader" (clear Colortone stain mixed with lacquer thinner and a splash of clear lacquer) to hide some of the red. It also added an antique effect.

5) The pickguard and body cavities were

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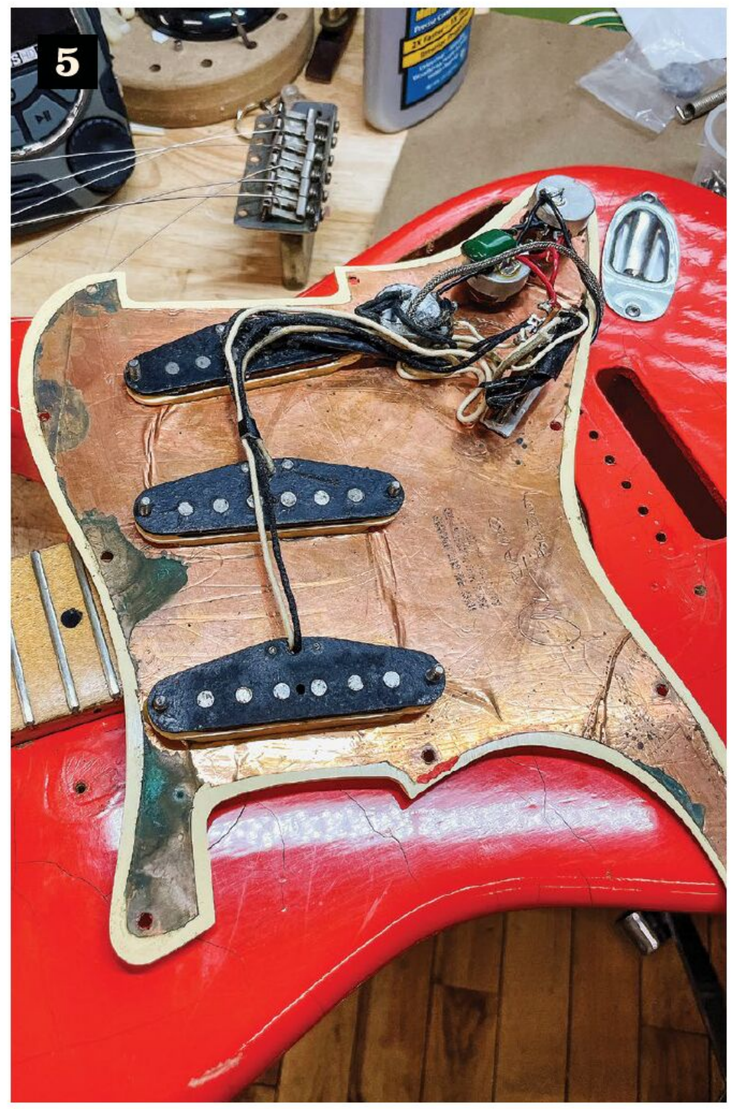
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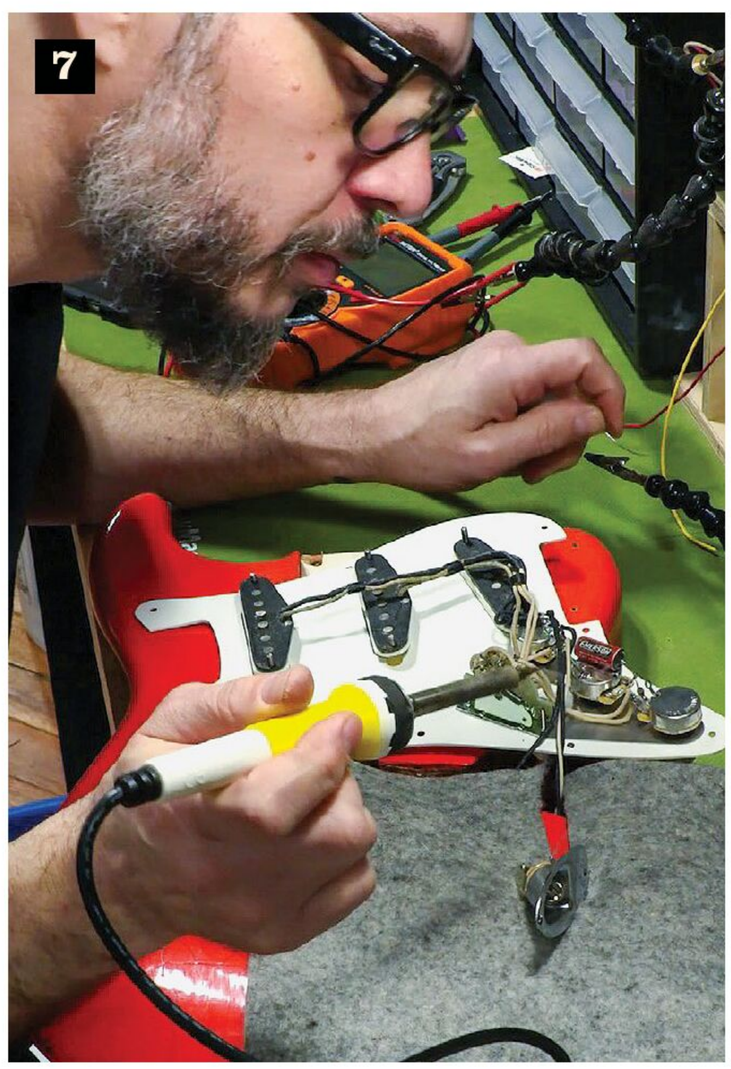
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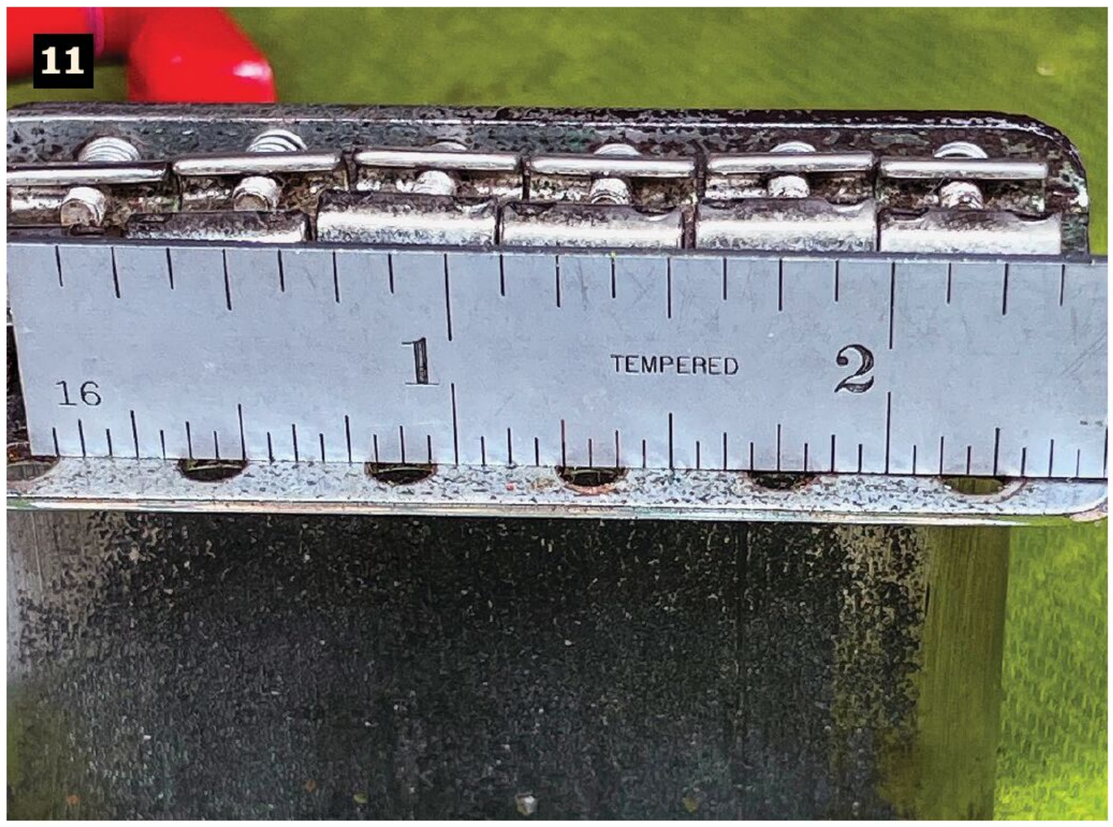

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shielded with copper foil. Because Gene Imbody had to rewire the pickup harness, we ditched the pickguard and used a StewMac aged-white pickguard and pickup covers.

6) The middle and bridge pickup were original, but the neck was a replacement that Gene swapped for a Duncan Vintage Staggered '50s he had on-hand.

7) He wired the pickups and harness with an Emerson paper-in-oil cap, StewMac CTS caps, and a five-way selector. After measuring the resistance of all three pickups, he decided to use the Duncan at the bridge and put the original bridge pickup at the neck. He had to flip polarity on the Duncan to make it match, but together, they sound like a dream.

8) Elyse gathered parts then installed the bushings and tuners.

9) I installed the string tree then applied the decal sent by the great folks at the Fender Custom Shop, who sent an appropriate version. While I was applying it, the middle of "Stratocaster" got twisted. I managed to unwind it, but the letters T, O, and C were damaged. After it dried, I chipped off what was left and chipped a few other places to make it look roadworn.

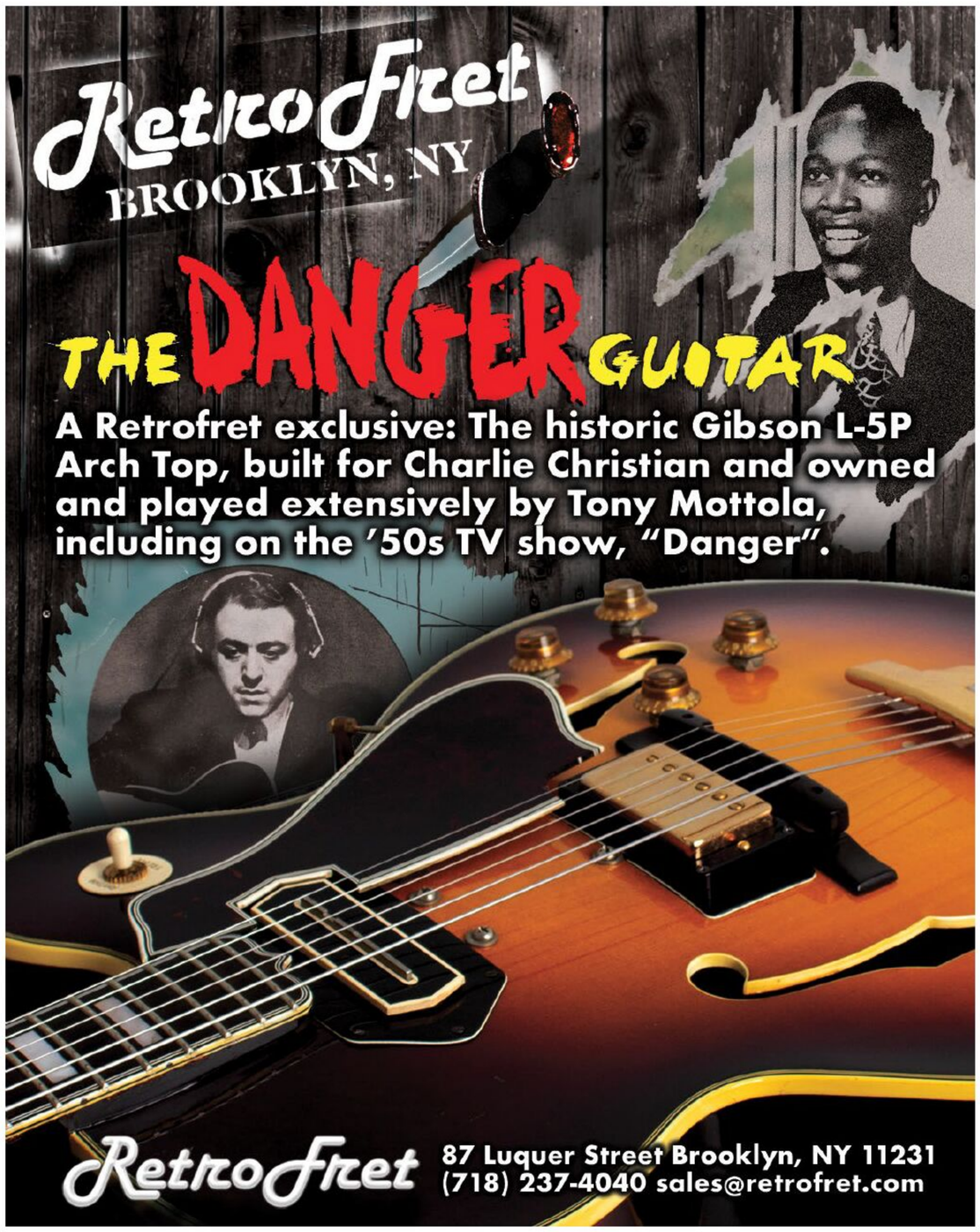
10) Strats from this era have fretboards that are narrower than most, enough so the strings are close to falling off the edges of the frets – especially up the fretboard. Adding fuel, this one was re-fretted and the ends were bevelled so steep that the frets had even less playing surface. The solution? Callaham's V/N Strat Bridge, which has the standard $2^{7}/_{32}$" mounting spacing, but narrower $2^{1}/_{16}$" string spacing...

11) ...versus the original's $2^{3}/_{16}$".

12) With a new bridge and bone nut, the '57 Strat is now playing great in the hands of its proud owner.

12

Dan Erlewine has been repairing guitars for more than 50 years. The author of three books, dozens of magazine articles, he has also produced instructional videotapes and DVDs on guitar repair. From 1986 through his retirement in late 2019, Erlewine was part of the R&D team, and company liaison for Stewart-MacDonald's Guitar Shop Supply. Today, he operates a repair shop in Athens, Ohio, as well as building replicas of the guitars he made for Albert King and Jerry Garcia in 1972. This column has appeared in *VG* since March, 2004. You can contact him at danerlewine@gmail.com.



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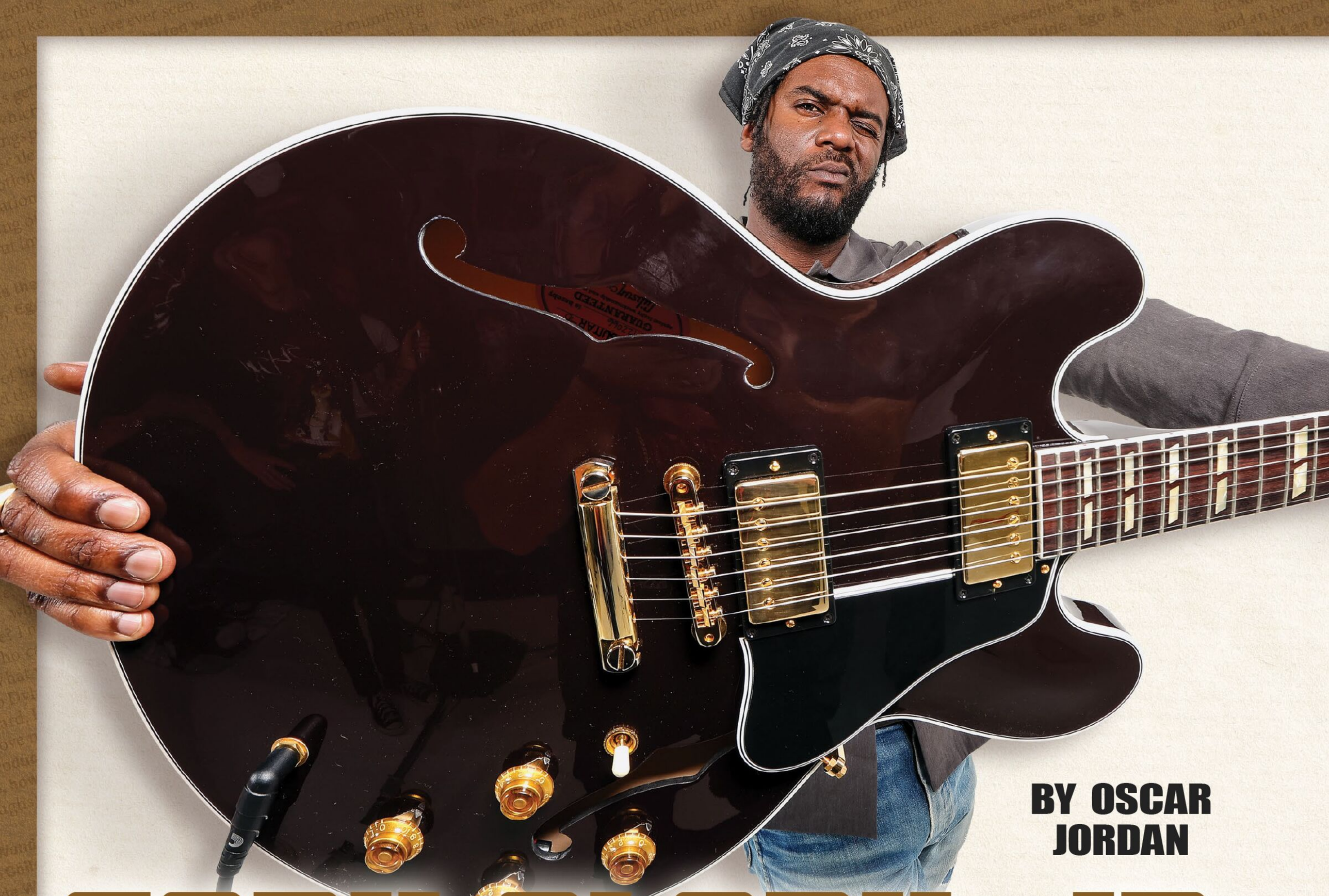


BY OSCAR JORDAN

GARY CLARK, JR.

IMAGES AND WORDS

Gary Clark, Jr. refuses to stay in his lane. More than a blues man, he's an artist whose latest album, *JPEG RAW*, explores the sweet convergence of black music from a multitude of eras. In Clark's world, '60s R&B falsettos collide with the fury of Freddie King, Grant Green's sultry post-bop extrapolations, and hypnotic bars that echo Kendrick Lamar. It's a galaxy of Octavia-drenched guitar solos finding kinship with samples from Sonny Boy Williamson, The Jackson 5, and Thelonious Monk. *And*, Stevie Wonder makes an appearance. Can you dig it?

Is *JPEG RAW* a concept album?

I don't know what it is. I was *trying* to come up with a concept, so in ways, it is. I went from being in the studio to flipping around and going on tour, so I'm still trying to figure it. I'm like, "Yeah, it could be if you really want to take it there." But to simplify it, I think the concept is about images. Most of where I was getting my information was from my feed, which was images, videos, news stories, and things people were sharing. It was all over the scale as far as tapping into each kind of emotion. There was humor, war, murder,

All photos by Gaston Jouany.

devastation, loss of a child, and protests. I was feeding off all this information. *JPEG RAW* is about images and information.

Your press release describes the title as an acronym for "Jealousy, Pride, Ego & Greed/Rules, Alter Ego & Words."

Yeah, I'm still objectively trying to make it all make sense. It's kind of hard to explain. It's just a thing in my mind that makes sense. Hopefully, it makes sense to others.

The range between a swamp blues like "Don't Start" and George Clinton on "Funk Witch U" is quite a journey.

Absolutely. I grew up in the iPod shuffle age. There was all kinds of stuff going on, and I appreciated it all. Somebody told me when I was a kid, "You gotta keep the blues alive." A lot of people told me, "Stay true to the blues!" At a certain point, when am I going to start staying true to me? I'm doing that right now. All the people who came before never stuck to doing that. What would happen if Muddy Waters and Bob Dylan didn't go electric? You can't go backward. I'm in my element creating things that move me.

It's like introducing genres of music to each other, "Hello, how are you? Nice to meet you."

Yeah (laughs). "Hi, this is your second cousin."

Stevie Wonder sounds so fresh on "What About The Children." How does one collaborate with Stevie Wonder?

I played on "Where Is Our Love Song," which was released in 2020. There was a lot of stuff going on at that time with George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor. It was a strange period. People were locked in the house. I got on the Internet to express my frustration, and then Stevie called me and said, "Gary! I hear you! Let's do a song about it!" I was like, "Okay, sure." So, he sent me a voice memo called "What About The Children," with him singing a riff. I was like, "Man, this is on!" It was like funky, blues, but it's Stevie Wonder, so it's all my favorite s**t from the source (laughs).

I built the track with my guys and interpreted the vibe and communication. Then we ended up in the studio with him. He worked so hard in the studio. I thought *I* was working hard, but seeing him do it was so fresh – so much energy. He sang his ass off for four hours to get it right. He took a break, came back, and did more. The next day, he came back and played harmonica. Then he played clavinet. It was the most badass, professional, coolest thing I have ever seen.

This started with singing a cellphone voice memo?

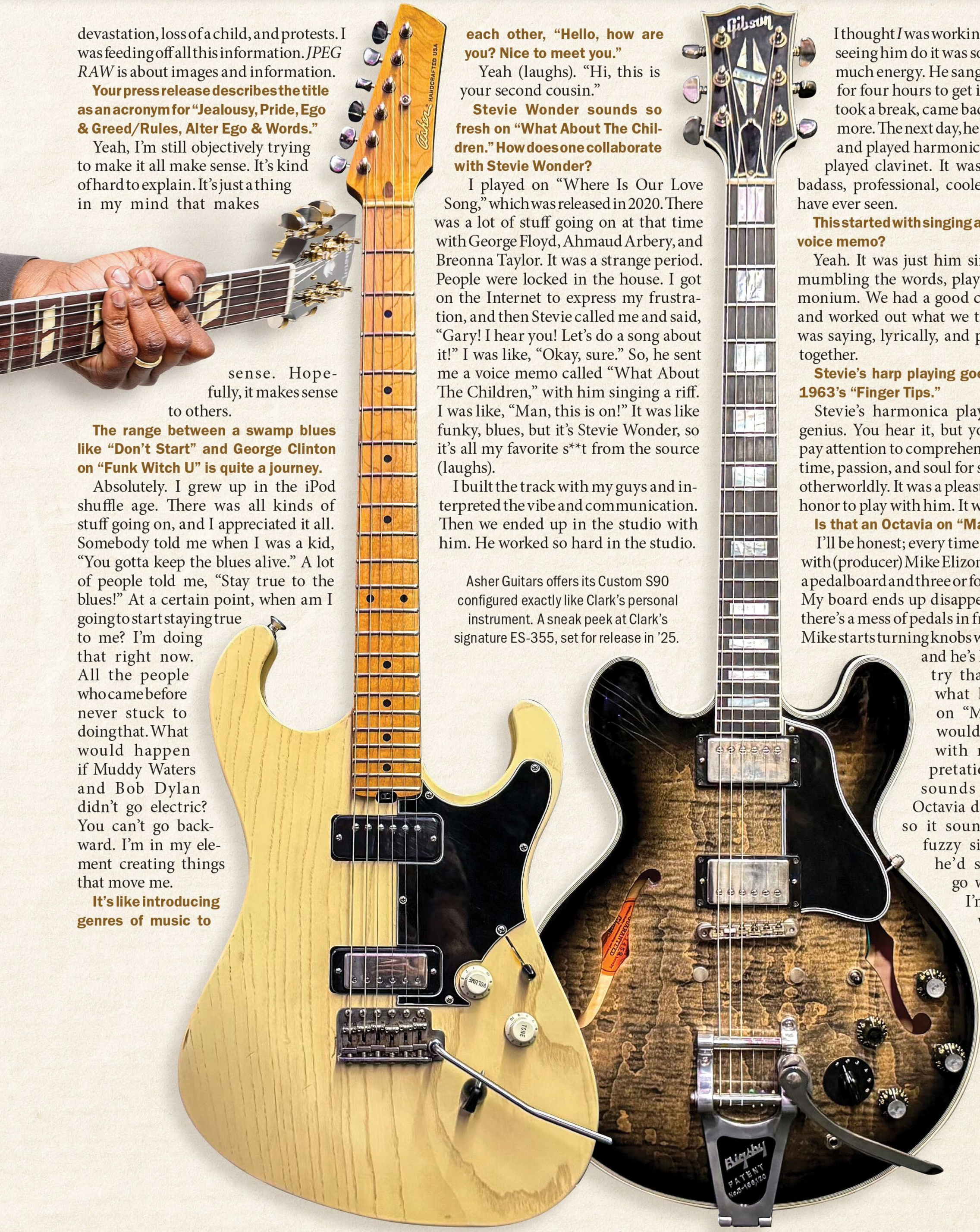
Yeah. It was just him singing and mumbling the words, playing a harmonium. We had a good chunk of it and worked out what we thought he was saying, lyrically, and put a story together.

Stevie's harp playing goes back to 1963's "Finger Tips."

Stevie's harmonica playing is so genius. You hear it, but you have to pay attention to comprehend it. That's time, passion, and soul for something otherworldly. It was a pleasure and an honor to play with him. It was so cool.

Is that an Octavia on "Maktub?"

I'll be honest; every time I hang out with (producer) Mike Elizondo, I bring a pedalboard and three or four guitars. My board ends up disappearing and there's a mess of pedals in front of me. Mike starts turning knobs while I play, and he's like, "Let's try that." That's what happened on "Maktub." I would come in with my interpretation of the sounds with an Octavia dialed back so it sounds like a fuzzy sitar. Then he'd say, "Let's go with that." I'm not sure what the



Asher Guitars offers its Custom S90 configured exactly like Clark's personal instrument. A sneak peek at Clark's signature ES-355, set for release in '25.

chain was, but it was powerful (laughs). I can't remember the name of the pedal.

That sound is usually pretty over the top. You found the right level.

I honestly thought it was too much. I was going to have Mike pull it back, but if it translates in the booth, I'll trust it.

Which guitar is on that track?

I used my Gibson 355 on that, and my signature Epiphone Blak and Blu Casino, my three-pickup P-90 SG, and a '61 SG reissue that Pat Smear gave me. I also used it on "This Is Who We Are" and "Triumph." I also used a Wide Sky P125 with P-90s. I had four or five guitars sitting next to me.

You also explore your clean Curtis Mayfield/Joe Pass side.

If you know, you know (laughs). That style has some of the most-beautiful playing ever. It's what got me into guitar in the first place. I did that on the interlude, "To The Ends Of The Earth." It's a straight influence from that era.

"Don't Start" is a filthy stomp. Where does that come from?

I already had the music, but the lyrics were inspired by a fight in a parking lot. It didn't involve me; I just heard about it. I knew a guy who knew a guy (laughs). It was a tough time – tense for sure. But I harnessed it into a song and transferred that energy. It's got some of that Son House, Howlin' Wolf, and Lead Belly in there. I found a 1941 National Dobro in this shop in Nashville. It was all busted up, had a broken bridge. I pulled that thing out, miked it up, and played. I used a fuzz and an open wah sound. Mike tweaked it, added EQ, and used an old ribbon mic and a Green Bullet mic on it.

We took a beautiful guitar, messed up the tone, squashed it, and made it sound nasty. I wanted to do something with an old-school blues, stompy, swamp thing, but in the now, using modern sounds – big amps and weird fuzzed out synths and stuff like that – sub-bass with a mix of synthesizer bass and a Fender Jazz bass. There's something cool about that. I used Toronzo Cannon's Cannon Dual Fuzz by Function Fx and a Park Fuzz. I also love the Universal Audio reverb and delay pedals. A lot of times when I'm just playing to get new sounds, I'll go into the Universal Audio Apollo Interface plug-ins console and mess around with that just to trip out and try things I wouldn't normally try.

Are you a Tube Screamer guy?

I like the sound of a Tube Screamer. I like that boost. Sometimes, during outdoor shows, my clean tone doesn't push or bite as much as I need, and it saves me every time. I can get that little kick I need. I find myself struggling with the midrange with hollow-body guitars. I've also been using the Maestro Ranger Overdrive and the Discoverer Delay for a few things.

Clark's Fender Vibro King is a 65-watt version he uses live and at rehearsal.

The production on *JPEG RAW* is earthy but clear.

I like a nice dive-bar sound – bark, character, and grit. It has to have character, flaws, and a story. I've had an internal battle with technology. Being able to do multiple takes of a guitar solo, after a certain point I'm beating my head up against the wall, "No! It's not right!" Jacob Sciba, my right-hand man, tells me, "Man, you got it in the third take (laughs)." I'm going, "Yeah, it was alright, but it could be this." Then you go back and hear the energy and the intention of it, and there may be some subtle flaw, flub, or mistake, but the intention and the emotion behind it is much more effective and powerful than a flawless, technically careful take. I battle with that all the time. Jacob is like, "That's enough already! You got it (laughs)!" He'll play it back, and I'll say, "It's good, but… (laughs)." 78 takes later, we go back to the third take. He's like, "See, I *told* you, dude!" "Yeah, you're right (laughs)."

Do you have a number one amp?

I'm still trying to figure that out, trying to find my tone. Some days I get it, other days I don't. I'm always trying different things. I'm like a mad scientist, "It's there! It's in here! It's me! It's the room! It's the temperature! It's the speaker! It's the microphone! It's the distance!" It's all right here. It's about me solving this puzzle.

I stick to my Vibro-King and my Ampeg that I can switch between 30 and 60 watts, running through a 2x10 Fender cab. I was at Arlyn Studios, in Austin, where they have this 100-watt Cesar Diaz beast of an amp. This was where I did most of the guitar solos. Every time in that place, that amp is alright. I'm trying to get them to sell it to me. It's my not-so-secret weapon. It's like a Dumble.

Ordinarily, I'm a Vibro-King guy. Through and through, I'm a Fender guy. I like the vintage Princetons and the reissues. I have them around the house and on the bus. I like the sound of the tubes. I was bullied into liking them from being in blues clubs (laughs). I had a 60-watt solid-state Crate combo and an Ibanez Blazer, and they were like, "What are you doing, kid!? You can't play Freddie King on that (laughs)!"

Because you play hollowbodies, do you have an issue with feedback on stage?

I've been fighting the battle of tone versus stage volume, because with hollowbodies you're gonna be fighting feedback every time. I've been trying quieter stage volume, but I've been disappointed with the lack of midrange and the bottom-end. It really bites onstage, and I have to deal with it.

It feels out of our control.

I'll tell you a story: I was in London for the Jeff Beck tribute, playing my 355. I did "Because We've Ended As Lovers" – one of my favorite songs. At rehearsal, the whole band is there – Clapton, Nathan East, Doyle Bramhall, II, and Rod Stewart is there with his shirt half unbuttoned, strutting around and just being a badass. Derek Trucks and Susan Tedeschi are there – Ronnie Wood... Everybody's there!

I'm trying to play this song, and my Bigsby

pops off (laughs). The guitar goes boing, boing! Everybody stops to look, and I'm just like, "Damn!" So, my tech gave me my backup. Thirty seconds into it, same thing happens. Boing! I have no more guitars. I have to take a break. I'm standing there guitar-less. Before that, I was messing with my tuning pegs. I'm blaming the plane, the weather, the altitude, and coming up with every excuse in the book.

Clapton is looking at me, shaking his head. He goes, "Gezer... Can I call you Gezer?" I say, "Sure." He says, "How many times have you seen me touch my tuning pegs in all the years you've known me and seen me play guitar?" I said, "Never." He says, "How many times have you seen me fumble with a whammy bar?" I said, "Never." He looks at me, looks around the room, then looks dead in my eyes and says, "Strat!" I was like, "Ohhhhh!" That was it (laughs). After that, I broke a string. It was not my day.

That being said, I am not converted. I'll be a Gibson/Epiphone guy until the day I leave this planet!

Even Clapton can't get you to switch?

It ain't gonna happen. I love them. I own them. However, the thing I'm going for is that snarly, P-90, hollowbody, humbucker thing with hair on it. That's the instrument I want to play most of the time.

You should write a book about guitar catastrophes.

I did "The Tonight Show" with Jimmy Fallon and The Roots. I was looking at my hands... You can't be ashy on television, so I go to hair and make-up and ask, "Can I get some moisturizer?" They give me the good moisturizer! I'm playing slide and holding a pick. We go for the first live take, and I notice my slide is slipping off my finger, and my pick is slipping out of my hand. I was like, "Oh, no!" I was struggling for dear life the whole time. Note to guitar players: Don't over-moisturize!

So, you're saying it's better to be ashy on live TV?

I'm saying I'll be ashy on TV if I can do what I need to do with this guitar – absolutely (laughs)! Funnily enough, I was playing a Bill Asher Custom S90 (laughs).

Particularly key to Clark's live sound are his signature Dunlop Cry Baby wah, Universal Audio Starlight Echo Station, and Function Parallax phaser/tremolo.

You sound like you, regardless of the guitar.

I got a chance to hang around with folks like Derek O'Brien and Hubert Sumlin in Austin, and they'd always say, [old-man voice] "It's about the feel! It's about your hands!"

Discuss the intent behind "This Is Who We Are," which was co-written by Naala, a singer/songwriter/producer from London.

The lyrics came down to being saved by Naala. I was writing lyrics and about to throw them in the garbage. I *loved* the music and was working on the solo but I didn't know what to do with it. It was the last thing we recorded and I backed myself into a corner. It was circulating for about a year with me trying to figure it out. Naala came in, and I was telling her, "I've always heard this song as if it were a dragon flame, medieval times, knight-through-the-forest thing."

She came up with part of the first verse. I was like, "Okay, yeah! Fighting a dragon! Slaying the demons!" We started to get somewhere with a different perspective. She saved it, and then it started flowing once we were in the studio. She laid down a vocal demo, and I was like, "You just gotta sing on this thing! It's a collaboration now. Thanks for coming in and helping with the lyrics, but now you're on the song with me, so let's go (laughs)!"

How about "Alone Together?"

The trumpet player is my guy, Keyon Harrold, out of St. Louis. He has worked on a couple of projects with me, so I knew he could add the thing needed to take it to the next level as far as evoking that emotion. "Alone Together" was another one of those things where I'm just sitting around with a beat machine and my guitar, trying to play like Grant Green and Wes Montgomery. I was sampling myself trying to play like that. So, I was like, "What would it be like to have all these other elements? Like have a backbeat thing meets swing?" I was experimenting. How could I do jazz, hip-hop, and blues as one thing? I turned it into a funky experiment. I was trying different rhythms. The next thing I knew, I was in the studio singing, "Why do we feel so alone together." It just kind of happened.

Sometimes, the best art comes from trusting your instincts.

Absolutely. You have to stay open, be receptive. Sometimes, I battle with forcing things. You try so hard, and you get so close. Then you have to take a step back, go for a walk, come back, and then… There it is! Creativity is a subtle, delicate thing. I let the guitar playing evolve. I realized I was frustrated with what I was doing as far as my playing. I was stuck, like, "Well, that's on you, big dawg! Get into it!" (laughs) So, I started listening to everything, doing music-theory research, and understanding modes. It was a thing that I never paid attention to before. Different guitars inspired me to play different things. It went from me getting my Gibson

175 and playing along to Johnny Hartman or John Coltrane. Any record I put on, I would play along. I'd pick up an Ibanez RG with the Floyd Rose and play along, just trying stuff (laughs)! Trying a different approach, to open my mind; "What would happen if I didn't stomp on a fuzz and stay in this pentatonic thing?"

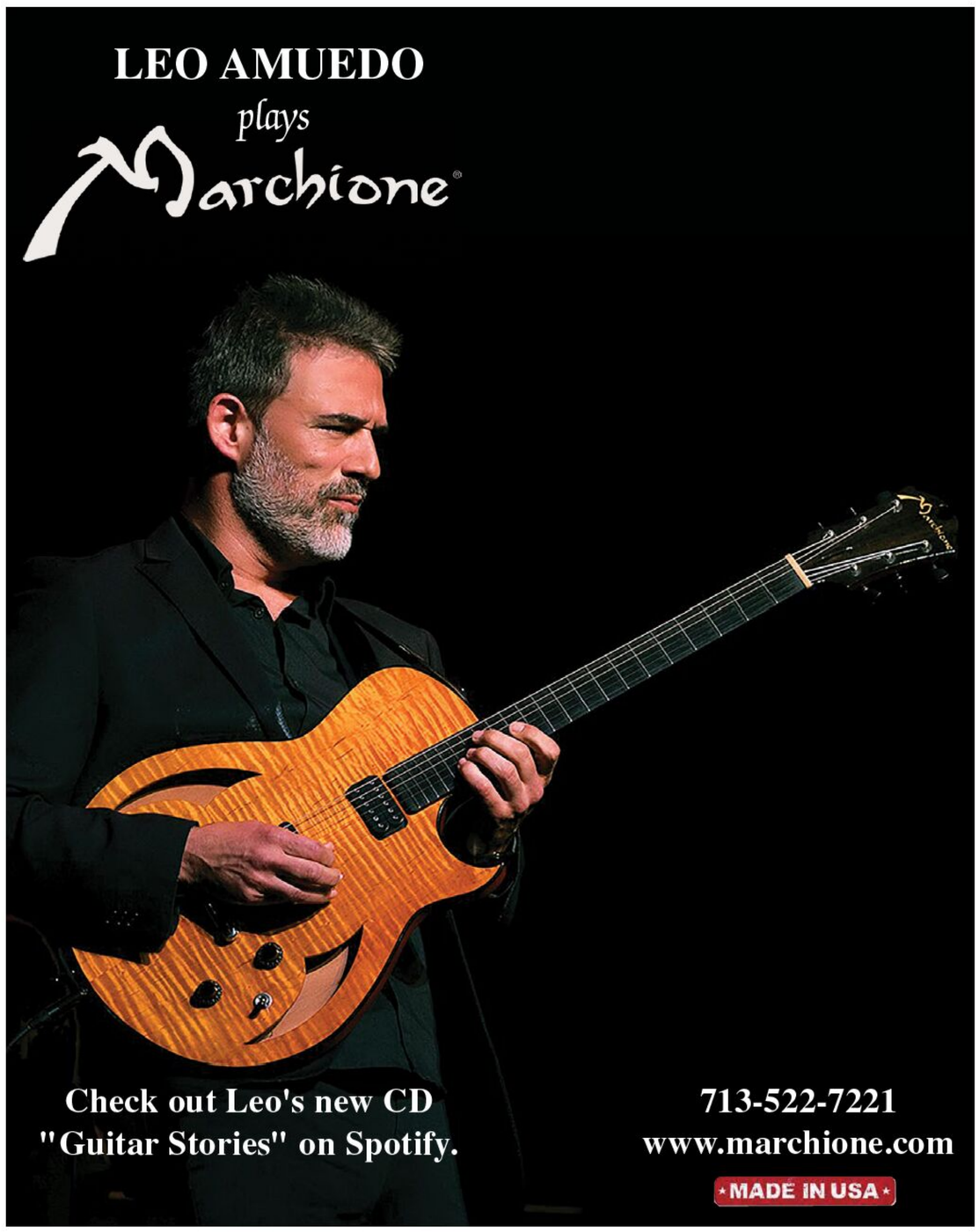
Clark's *JPG RAW* explores the convergence of black music from a multitude of eras with help from Octavia-drenched guitar solos.

It's difficult to imagine you onstage with a hot-pink Ibanez superstrat.

I felt nothing when you said that. What is that (laughs)? I think about image a lot, not because I want to, but because it's talked about. As you evolve, your image will change. You see the world differently, so you express yourself differently – whether it's a haircut, the shoes you wear, or type of pants. The size of the brim on your hat will change depending on how you feel. Part of the fun of it is being able to grow and evolve artistically, mentally, and physically – expressing yourself through clothing, song, or art. It's great to see elements of growth in an artist – or not (laughs).

You're touring North America this summer?

I'm going to be all over. I might be somewhere with a pink Ibanez and a Floyd Rose, so watch out! VG



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RICHARD TOZZOLI

UNDERSCORE OVERLORD

BY WARD MEEKER

A '70s kid with older brothers whose vinyl collection included the Doors and Bob Marley, Richard Tozzoli has fond recollections of the sounds – and smells – that emanated from the basement. But he didn't become a "guitar freak" until he experienced a concert.

"I was a Kiss fanatic, and my first big concert was them at Madison Square Garden on the *Dynasty* tour," he said. "Seeing Ace Frehley changed my world. After that night, I told my dad, 'I want to play guitar,' and he was kind enough to get me a tobacco-sunburst '81 Les Paul and a Marshall."

Young Rich soaked up lessons with a teacher he still knows well, then studied jazz during his freshman year of high school. And while hugely influenced by pop and rock at the time, he didn't learn songs from the radio or records.

"I never even learned any Beatles songs," he said. "I still don't know how to play any because my friends and I would invent music. We were a bunch of jammers who got together constantly, and I became a big fan of improvising jazz over fusion, doing weird time signatures. We were into Yes, Genesis, King Crimson; I was a *huge* Rushhead, and Jeff Beck was another huge influence. I remember lifting the needle on *Wired* over and over to learn the parts, and I still play some of the riffs we made up."

In the '90s, Tozzoli joined a New Jersey funk band using his leopard-print Hamer Chaparral running through a Mesa Boogie MK IV head and 2x12 Marshall cabinet. His next band played reggae, where learning to play chop chords (after growing up with drum machines) engrained an instinct for strong rhythm. And while he didn't realize it at the time, that gig seeded his interest in music creation beyond playing and writing, and put him on the path to becoming a composer

Used mostly for slide sounds, Tozzoli's '16 Firebird has pickups re-wound to original specs. It sits next to his Custom Shop Double Carve Les Paul.

for syndicated television. If you've watched "Swamp People," "Moonshiners," "Barnwood Builders," "Counting Cars," "Chasing Classic Cars," "First 48," or "Killer Cases" in the last decade, you've heard Tozzoli employing his stash of cool instruments and amps from his studio in River Vale, New Jersey.

"The most-creative music is on television, because the editors let you go all over the place," he said. "In fact, they *want* you to go all over the place. When you actually *listen* to television, you'll hear so many cool riffs and tones."

This summer, his riffs will color Discovery Channel's top-rated Shark Week programs.

What first piqued your interest in recording?

When I was 19, I bought a Tascam Porta 05 and got very into four-track analog recording and learning to capture guitar sounds. I bought Pro Tools in 1993, when it cost $17,000 and could record only 16 channels. I actually read the 500-page manual (laughs), so I was considered an "expert" at the time.

Once you'd invested in the software, were you becoming a recording engineer first, guitarist second?

I knew where digital recording was going and that it would be incredible. But I was also aware of "garbage in, garbage out," so I focused on production and recording.

Being an early adopter helped you score a gig working with Emerson, Lake and Palmer. How did you connect with them?

My good friend Will Alexander, who was Keith Emerson's long-time keyboard tech, brought me onboard. Will was also out with the Stones for many years. He knew that I was a Pro Tools guy who knew my s**t and had my own rig.

You went out on the road with them in the late '90s. What was your role?

I was helping them assemble the *Then and Now* album. We recorded parts of live shows then did mixing, editing, finalizing, and cutting up recordings from the early '70s as well as current material. I showed them the first Focusrite plug-in, as they had only known the hardware; I had a bunk in one of their tour busses, with my rig – a giant CRT monitor and Pro Tools (laughs) – and Keith, Greg, and Carl would stand behind me, asking all kinds of questions about how Pro Tools worked. That led to work in post-production in New York. I did tons of surround-sound work with Pro Tools and digital technology, which led to working with a lot of people I grew up listening to – David Bowie, Blue Oyster Cult, Billy Squier, Hall & Oates, and others. I was also working a lot with Al Di Meola, both in the studio and on the road. Al is an amazing player.

How did you get your first gig for a TV show?

Through Tom Pomposello, who was in charge of finding sounds at Nickelodeon and MTV; a friend showed him what I was doing and he brought us onboard. At that time, I was engineering and didn't think composing for TV could be a living; I was just doing it because it was fun; I could write music and be creative.

What was the first bit you wrote for Nickelodeon?

It was for their International Sound Library, which producers use to pull tracks, and they used my first one when they slimed kids on shows like "You Can't Do That on Television." Since then I've focused on underscores – music that happens *during* a show – along with sound design. Pomposello, who passed several years ago, taught me a valuable lesson that I still use almost

Tozzoli at Clubhouse Studios with his 2000 Les Paul Custom.

every day – what *not* to put into your music. Space is your friend.

The common perception is that people who score for film or TV do so on a keyboard.

Right, and here I am – a guitar player/composer working every day in television. But since getting into composing, I've always thought about guitar *production* versus guitar *playing*. They interweave; I have to think, "How am I going to get the point across for this show? Is it rock? Is it funk? Is it moody? Is it emotional? Is it a crime scene?" That's why I have 25 guitars and they all have a purpose.

Aside of that, I relentlessly study orchestration and use almost all of the string libraries out there. I also use real string players and orchestras, such as the Budapest Recording Orchestra. There's nothing like the feel, sound, and power of real players. Also, brass has the same timbre as distorted electric guitars, so they work really well with each other.

Do some of your guitars get more work than others?

Well, I'm a Les Paul guy going back to my first days with a guitar, so Les Pauls do my heavy lifting. I have five – mostly from the Custom Shop including a 1990 Custom and a 2011 '56 Goldtop with P-90s that do a lot of the hard rock/blues work. I also have two chambered ones that are funkier, lighter, and cleaner. One of them, a 2016 '58 reissue, has DiMarzios with the Jimmy Page wiring modification on a push/pull pot for that cool, almost-out-of-phase sound. My original tobaccoburst is now an open-E slide guitar.

Other than Les Pauls, what are your most-used?

I have a number of Telecaster copies built by Rob DiStefano, and they live in various open tunings with a variety of pickup types for different tones. For shows like "Moonshiners" or "Swamp People," I do a lot of open-tuning slide work, so I'll use the tobaccoburst, one of Rob's guitars, a resonator, or my Guild F-512 that lives in DADGAD. You can do a lot of creepy-sounding things with a 12 -string. I run them through Eventide H9s and H90s.

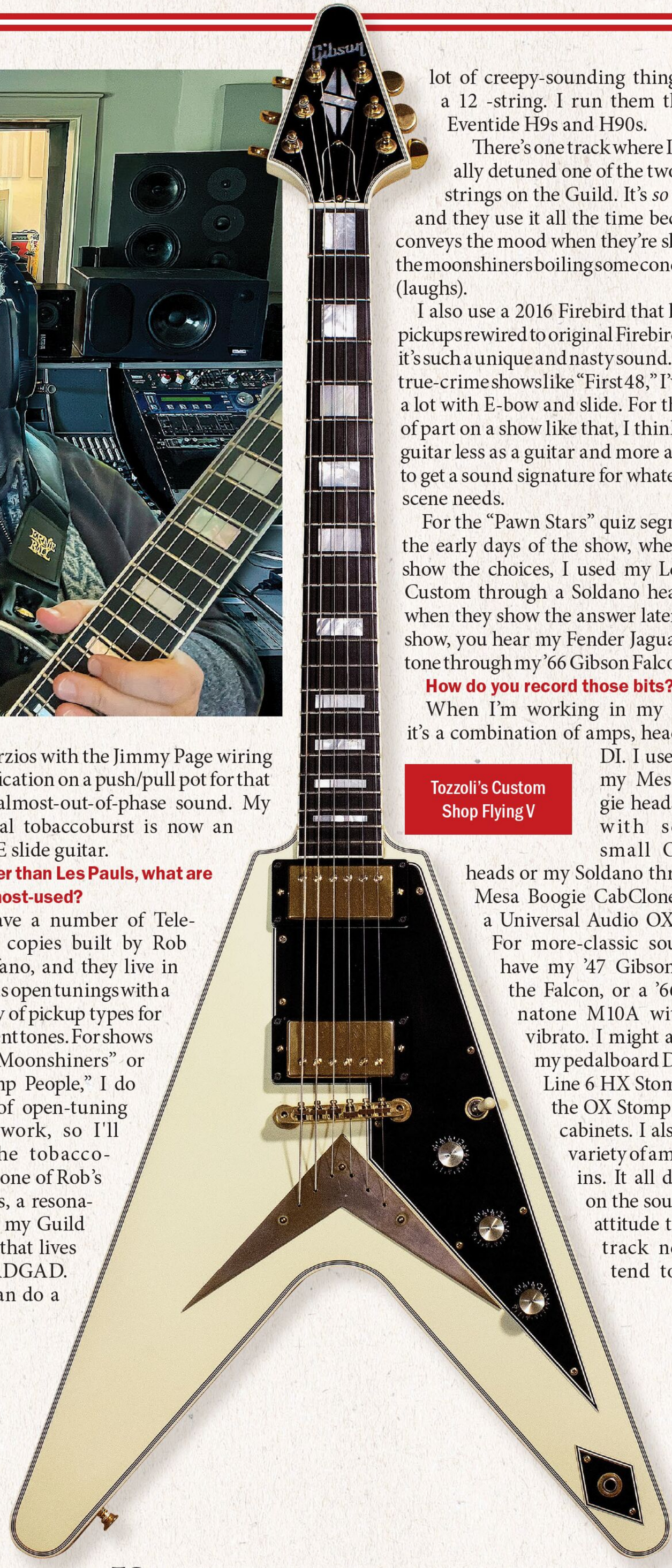
There's one track where I manually detuned one of the two low D strings on the Guild. It's *so* creepy, and they use it all the time because it conveys the mood when they're showing the moonshiners boiling some concoction (laughs).

I also use a 2016 Firebird that had the pickups rewired to original Firebird spec – it's such a unique and nasty sound. For the true-crime shows like "First 48," I've done a lot with E-bow and slide. For that sort of part on a show like that, I think of the guitar less as a guitar and more a means to get a sound signature for whatever the scene needs.

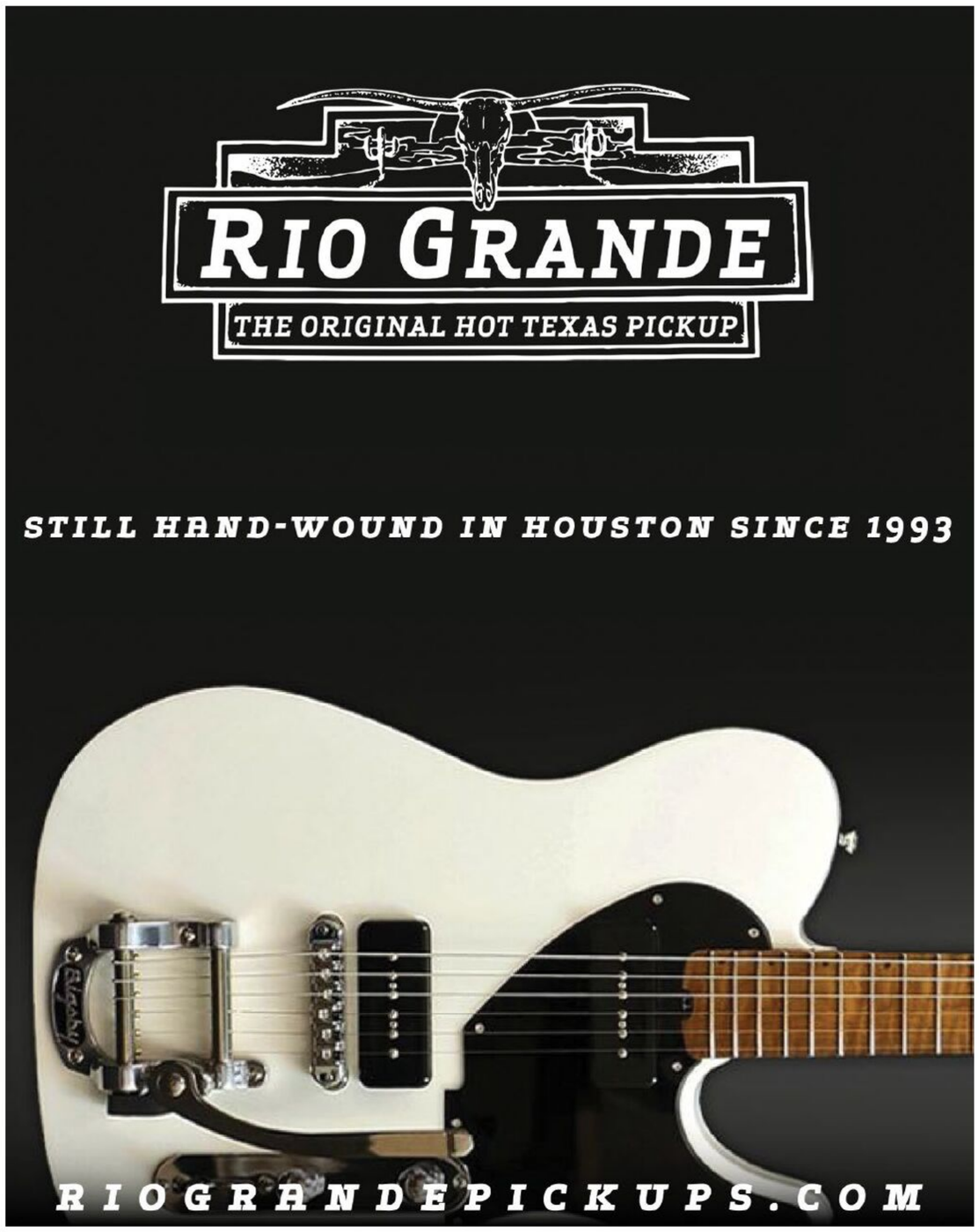
For the "Pawn Stars" quiz segment in the early days of the show, where they show the choices, I used my Les Paul Custom through a Soldano head, and when they show the answer later in the show, you hear my Fender Jaguar Baritone through my '66 Gibson Falcon amp.

How do you record those bits?

When I'm working in my studio, it's a combination of amps, heads, and DI. I use any of my Mesa Boogie heads along with several small Orange heads or my Soldano through a Mesa Boogie CabClone IR or a Universal Audio OX pedal. For more-classic sounds, I have my '47 Gibson BR-6, the Falcon, or a '66 Magnatone M10A with real vibrato. I might also use my pedalboard DI into a Line 6 HX Stomp with the OX Stomp for the cabinets. I also use a variety of amp plug-ins. It all depends on the sound and attitude that the track needs. I tend to work



Tozzoli's Custom Shop Flying V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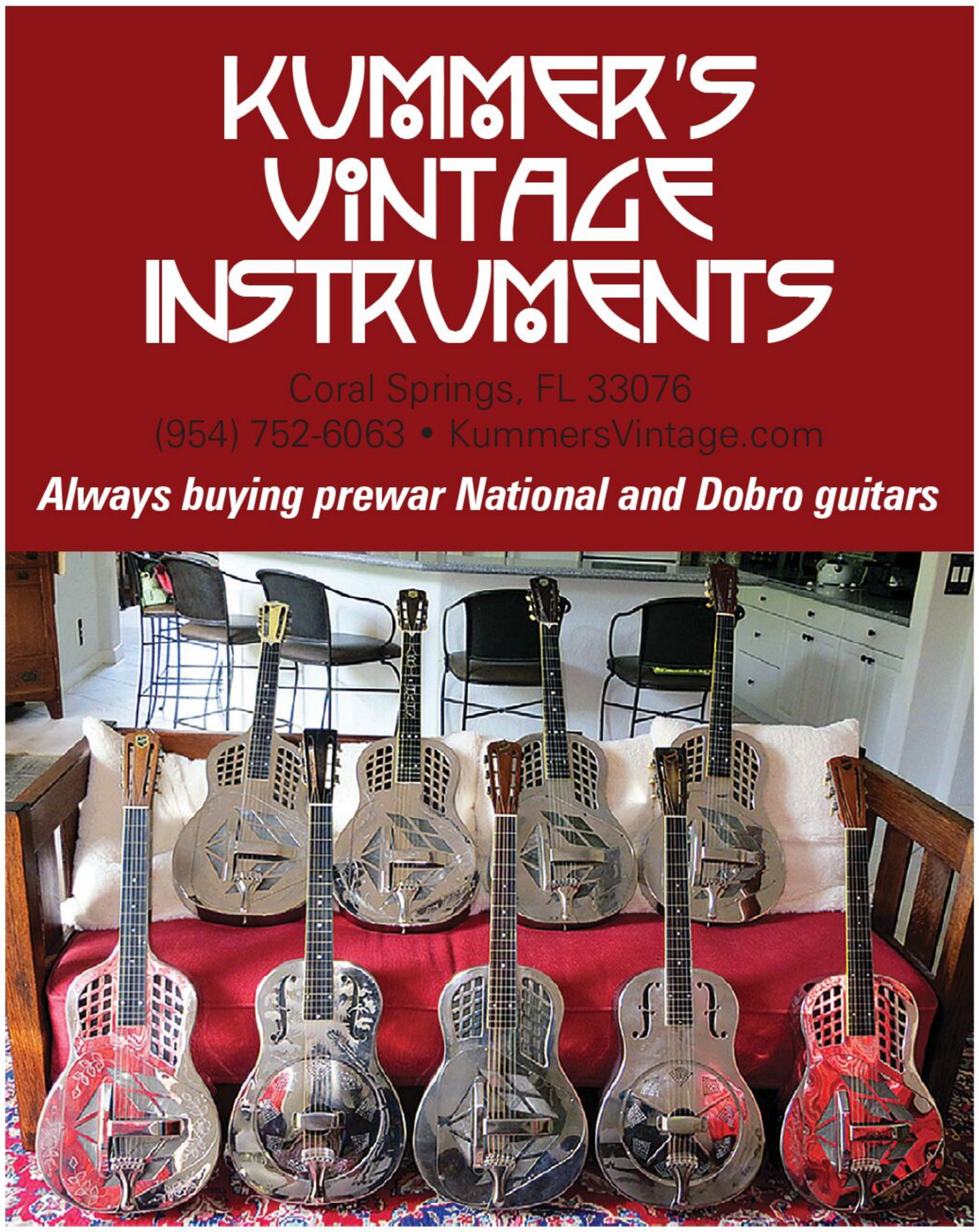
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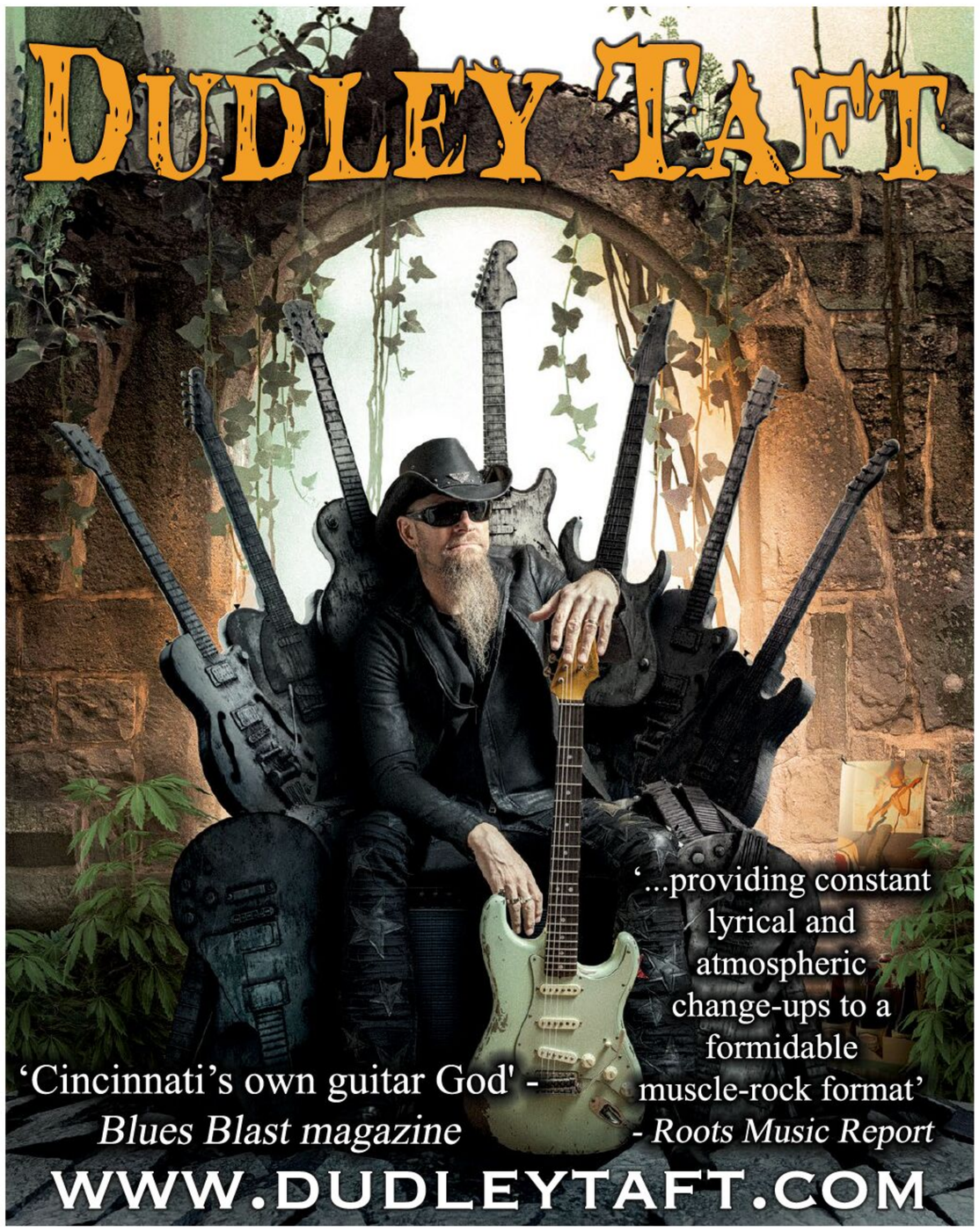
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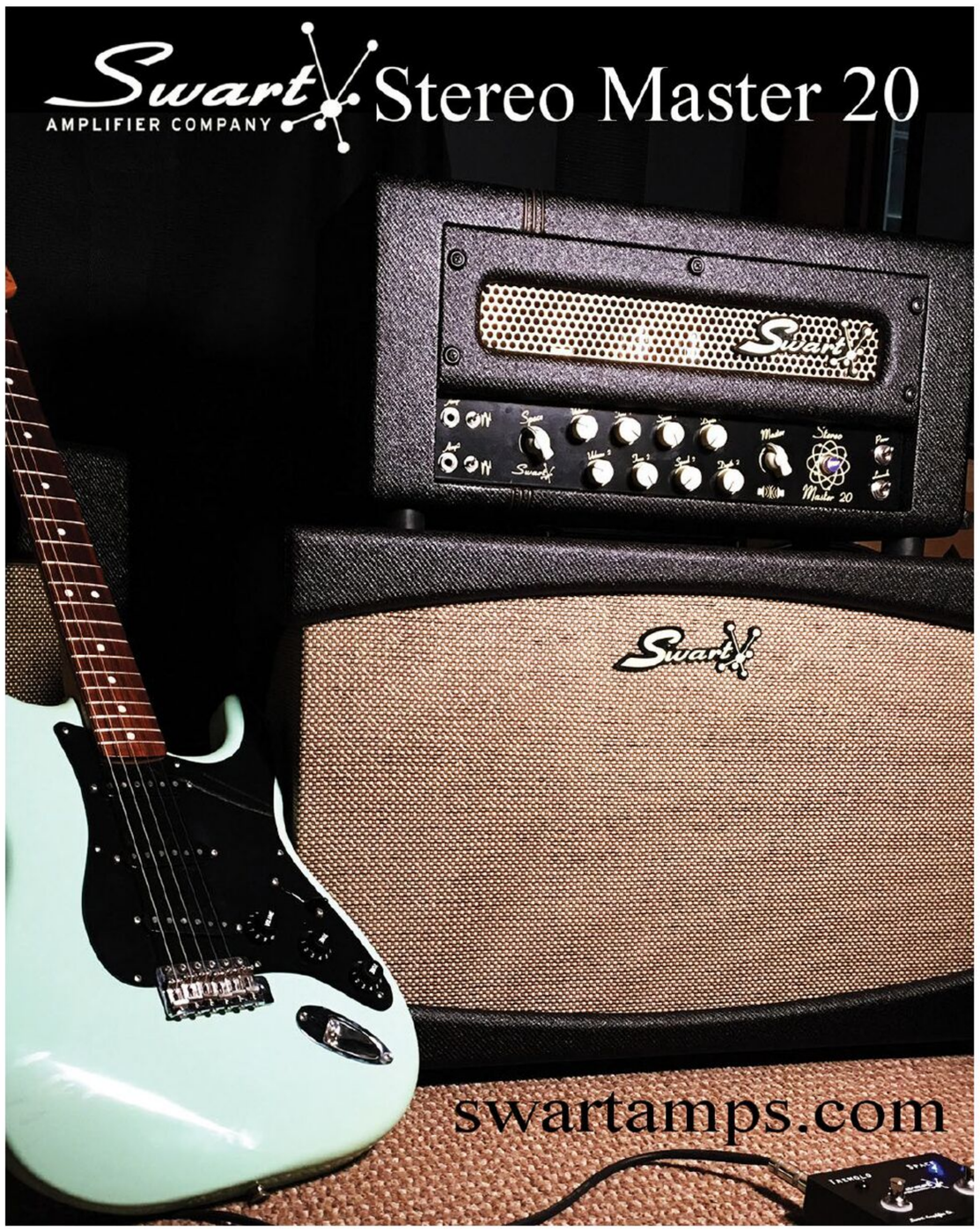
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The amplifier lineup at Clubhouse (left), and Tozzoli's '66 Magnatone M10A.

very fast so you have to know what gear delivers what.

When I want to turn up, I go to Clubhouse Studios, which is Paul Antonell's incredible studio in Rhinebeck, New York. He's got 25 or so vintage amps, a big live room, and a vintage Neve console. There, I tend to play through a variety of amps; I line up Boogies, Parks, Bandmasters, and Marshalls, do a pass, then swap to a different amp and a guitar for the second track. Same for the third. Each setup is its own sonic world. Over the years, my ears have tuned to the fine details of what each amps brings – and does *not* bring. It's what it *doesn't* bring that you really need to know.

I'm a big fan of moving air, which you *must* do to get wicked-heavy guitar sounds. It's a hell of a lot more fun to stand in front of a stack with my Les Paul than it is to play in front of my computer speaker (laughs). In front of an amp, your *attitude* is different and you *play* different.

For the Shark Week piece, did you make air move?

Yes (laughs)! You'll hear how I was right on the edge, *just about* to feed back. It's controlled chaos – almost unpredictable, just like a shark.

What was your setup for it?

That was my Mesa Boogie Mark IV through an Orange 4x12 and a number of pedals for incremental layers of distortion – I don't use just *one* – and a few layers of guitar. I get *wicked* guitar sounds that way. For one setup, I was standing in front of the cab with my Flying V with the low E string tuned to C because I recorded with the Budapest Orchestra tuned to C. For other layers, I used my seven-string ESP LTD Deluxe with the low string at C, my Les Pauls with an E-bow, and slide guitar.

When you work with Al Di Meola and Ace Frehley, you pick up nuggets; Ace was a master of double-tracking guitars with the Les Paul usually in the left channel and a Tele or Strats on the right, and I do a lot of double-, triple-, and quadruple tracking.

So the Shark Week piece was four layers of guitar and to build it more, I had Omar Hakim do drums – he's such a precise and powerful player, and really brought the house down! I don't just use loops; I work with a number of great drummers and they bring such great feel, and that's *so* important. There's a reason I use the real stuff as much as possible.

Talk about specific guitars you've used on specific shows.

On "Counting Cars" and "Chasing Classic Cars" you'll hear one of the Les Pauls running through a Mesa Boogie MK IV, the Mini Rectifier 25, or a Sans Amp Bass Driver and Avalon preamp and the Line 6 Helix.

Shows like "Ink Master" or "Forged In Fire" call for heavier music, so I'll grab my ESP and run through the Helix or a Line 6 HX Stomp.

For moodier shows like "First 48" or "Killer Cases," I'll use my Gold Tone Paul Beard signature resonator in open D, my Gibson Firebird with pickups re-wound to original spec for slide sounds, or the DiStefano guitars in various open tunings with E-bow, slide, and Eventide H9 and H90 pedals, often with additional delays and effects.

"Inkmaster" is definitely the seven-string ESP or a Les Paul in a dropped tuning, and the Line 6 Helix records them better than an amp.

Why is that?

Some instruments, like the ESP and my Agile eight-string guitars, have such low notes that speakers tend to crap-out with their low-end. It's a tighter sound, which is better for television.

One of your Les Pauls is a 2009 Custom Shop '59 Double-Carve...

That's my *favorite* guitar because it does everything. It's extremely light, funky and clean, but it *can* get nasty and gritty. It's a very particular sound that combines sonic elements of a 335 and a D'Angelico. Everybody who plays it loves it.

Where and when did you get it?

About three years ago at Moe's Guitars, in Hawthorne, New Jersey. Moe is very good about letting me know when he gets stuff that would interest me. I got it because he knew I was looking for a chambered Les Paul, and this one is extremely special.

What typically spurs you to look for a new or different guitar?

I'll get a different guitar just to feel its energy. I'm all about moving instruments, and I want players to exchange their energy.

When I first played my Flying V, with its baseball-bat neck and giant frets, I wasn't a fan. But I did what I needed to do with it. I feel instinctively that it's time to get something else, and so I'll have Moe move it for me.

A *relationship* with a guitar is important.

I have always felt that way, which is why my guitars are always clean, tuned up, and ready to go. I'm a freak when it comes to

intonation, and I don't let strings get funky. They're my source of income, what I reach for every day. Each has their own personality and sonic character. They each make you play differently based upon the neck, feel, and pickups. If I don't use one for a while, I'll typically sell it and get something new. Guitars don't want to sit in a closet, they want to be played.

Do you do your own maintenance?

I'm terrible at that (laughs). The analogy I always use is Mario Andretti doesn't change his own oil. I rely on my shop and especially someone who specializes in Gibsons, so Moe and Mary Ellen take care of it for me, or the great Matt Hayden, who does a lot of work with Al Di Meola. You have to have a great team.

What's on your calendar?

I'm doing a lot of work out of Australia, believe it or not, which produces big-truck shows, UFO shows – all kinds of crazy fun s**t. For the UFO shows, I can get wild with the E-bows and the backward guitars. The big-truck stuff is all good ol' Gibson sounds with tremolo and vibrato and stank, which is what P-90s do, right?

Part of the fun of being a TV composer is working a lot, experiencing differentiation on a daily basis. Some days, I do three kinds of music; maybe something with the E-bow to some super-clean funk sound followed by something hard and heavy. Every show has its own sonic character, and it's really important for me to not have any ego about parts or production. My responsibility is to deliver to the emotion of a show without ego or prejudice. And that's one of my specialties.

How do you begin a composition? Do you watch raw video or do they send you scenes?

I know the parameters for the show, and I'll turn on the TV and find the show and watch a few episodes so I know, "They like this, they like that..." I'll also have notes from the production team. A lot of it is also instinct and experience.

From having done thousands of tracks, I know what works. It's a fun, very distinct, unique way to use guitar for a living.

You also record your own bass tracks...

Yes, bass signal is equally as important as guitar for my work, especially for riff tracks.

Tozzoli's primary Les Pauls: a Custom Shop '56 Goldtop, Custom Shop Double-Carve, Custom Shop Chambered '58 reissue, and his '81 Standard in tobaccoburst.

I have a '70 Precision Bass and two DiStefano Mustang copies with flatwounds; one has a single coil like the original, the other has humbuckers. Rob built one for me based on the '51 Precision, and he winds his own pickups.

For "Ink Masters" and shows that have heavy drums, I use distorted bass. I also have a DiStefano Precision clone that has a low B fourth string instead of an E. That way, I can follow my seven-string riffs and get nastier tone. I love playing bass almost as much as guitar.

What do you run basses through?

I have a Tech 21 Sans Amp Bass Driver and a second channel that feeds a Mesa Boogie Mini Rectifier, which splits between a Sans Amp into an Avalon and a Mesa 4x12 IR that is one of my favorites. Mesa heads can deliver some nasty ass bass sounds.

For bass, do you use any actual cabs?

Yeah, the same cabs as with guitars – an Orange and a Marshall. When I record at the Clubhouse, the whole place moves. Those cabs give a nasty, cool sound that translates well, even to TV speakers.

Some cool irony emerged when you worked with Ace Frehley on *Anomaly*.

Yeah, I did some engineering for Ace, and he played my tobaccoburst Les Paul on a solo I cut with him for "Pain In The Neck." We set up one of his EVH 5150 heads through a Marshall cab and I used a Royer R-122V tube mic and a Sennheiser 421. No pedals, just guitar, cable, amp. He ran a few passes then took a break. In Pro Tools, I cut up ideas from those takes then played it back for him. He worked from those pieces and nailed it in his own way. Ace is really good in the studio and only needs a few takes. It came through in the natural feel of his playing. He's a great talent and became a friend. **VG**

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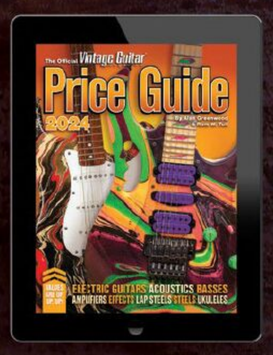

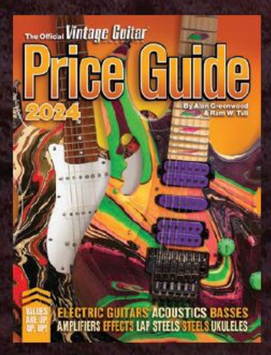

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2024

APRIL

West Coast Guitar Show – NorthWest, Saturday, April 6th, 2024 from 10am - 3:30pm at the Renton Community Center - Renton, WA. For more info contact Bruce Adolph 253-445-1973 bruceadolph@mac.com

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 Talarico at (412) 716-8411, scotpro@comcast.net or visit www.guitarshowusa.com.

The Indiana Guitar Show, April 13-14, 2024, 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 **(See Advertisement on page 69.)**

Central Coast Guitar Show, Saturday, April 20, 2024 at the Veterans Memorial Building, 801 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 from 10am-4pm. For more info, contact: Ed Miller, (805)431-3067

Elmira Vintage Guitar Show, Sunday, April 21, 2024, ++11am-4pm at the Woolwich Memorial Centre, Elmira, Ontario , Canada. Go to www.elmiravintageguitarshow.ca for more information

Mega Monster Guitar Show, Sunday April 28 from 10am-4pm at the Galaxy Banquet Center, 201 Park Centre Dr., Wadsworth, OH 44281. For more information contact Jerry Mullins at jmullins@rcrg.net or 330-354-7627

MAY

Dallas International Guitar Festival, May 3-5, 2024 at the Dallas Market Hall, 2200 N Stemmons Fwy, 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

Good Times Magazine Guitar/Instruments/Audio Show, Saturday May 4, 2024.10AM to 4PM. Freeport Recreation Center, Freeport NY. (New Promoters...same Venue as in the past) Buy-Sell-Trade. Contact Rich Branciforte 516-233-9916 or GTMag@Optimum.Net.

Sarasota Guitar and Amp Show, May 24-26, 12pm -5pm (dealer day) May 24, 9am - 6pm May 25-26 at the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium, 801 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34236. Contact: Kevin Wood at 941-993-3098 or visit Sarasotaguitarshow.com **(See Advertisement on page 68.)**

JUNE

Guitarfest Guitar Show, June 9th at the Summit County-Fairgrounds Arena, 229 E Howe Rd. Tallmadge, OH 44278. Hrs 10am -6pm. For moreinfo visit www.guitarfestguitarshow.com

Amigo SoCal World Guitar Show, June 15-16, 2024, OC Fair & Event Center, Arlington & Fairview St., Costa Mesa, CA. For more info call Larry at (918) 288-2222, amigoshows@stringswest.com, www.amigoguitarshows.com.

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.

Saratoga Springs Guitar Show, Sunday June 30, 2024 from noon to 4pm at the Saratoga Springs City Center, 522 Broadway, Saratoga Springs NY. For more info call Peter Occhineri (860) 983-6774, email – NortheastGuitarExpo@gmail.com, website – www.NortheastGuitarExpo.com

SEPTEMBER

Kalamazoo Music Instrument Swap, Sunday September 8, 2024 from 10am-4pm at the Kalamazoo County Expo Center, 2900 Lake St. Kalamazoo, MI 49048. Contact Shawn VanSteeland at 517-410-6409 or visit www.musicinstrumentswap.com

Illinois Guitar & Gear Expo, Sunday September 22, 2024 at the Kankakee County Fairgrounds 213W 4000S Rd. Kankakee,IL 60901, 10am – 3pm For more info, visit: https://www.illinoisguitarexpo.com/

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

OCTOBER

Mesquite 2024 - formerly Guitarlington, October 19-20 at the Mesquite Convention Center, 1700 Rodeo Dr, Mesquite, 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

Ferris State University Music Instrument Swap, Sunday October 20, 2024 from 10am-4pm at the Interdisciplinary Resource Center (IRC), 1301 S State St. Big Rapids, MI 49307. Contact Shawn VanSteeland at 517-410-6409 or visit www. musicinstrumentswap.com

NOVEMBER

Ann Arbor Music Instrument Swap, Sunday November 3, 2024 from 10am -4pm at the Eastern Michigan University Student Center, 900 Oakland St., Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Contact Shawn VanSteeland at 517-410-6409 or visit www. musicinstrumentswap.com

Midwest Music Gear Swap presentsits Fall Swap meet, Sunday November 17 at Emidio's Event

Center, 48 E Bath Rd, Cuyahoga Falls, OH from 10am to 4pm. Contact Corey at midwestmusicgearswap@yahoo.com or 330-753-5050

2025

JANUARY

2025 Winter Ohio Guitar Show, Sunday, January 12, 2025 at the Makoy Center 5462 Center St, Hilliard, OH43026. Show hours 11:30-5:00. For more info, contact Marc at (740)797-3351 or go to guitardigest@frontier.com, www.ohioguitarshows.com. Ohio Guitar Show on Facebook and Instagram

MARCH

Illinois Guitar & Gear Expo, Sunday March 9, 2025 at the Kankakee County Fairgrounds 213W 4000S Rd. Kankakee,IL 60901, 10am – 3pm For more info, visit: https://www.illinoisguitarexpo.com/

JUNE

2025 Summer Ohio Guitar Show, Sunday, June 8, 2025 at the Makoy Center 5462 Center St, Hilliard, OH43026. Show hours 11:30-5:00. For more info, contact Marc at (740)797-3351 or guitardigest@frontier.com, www.ohioguitarshows.com. Ohio Guitar Show on Facebook andInstagram

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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'65 Olympic White "Tortoise Shell Pickguard" 100% original
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'69 Blond/Rose neck 100% original, Amazing tone!!
'70 Sunburst/Rose neck 100%original in Near Mint condition
'71 Lake Placid Blue/4 Bolt Rose neck 100% original!!
'71 Olympic White/4 Bolt Rose neck only refrets changed nut, Super clean!!
'72 Natural 1Strings tree Maple neck 100% original in Mint condition, Super rare!!
'74 Blond Rose neck Gold Hardware 100% original in Mint condition, Super rare!!
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Walter Trout

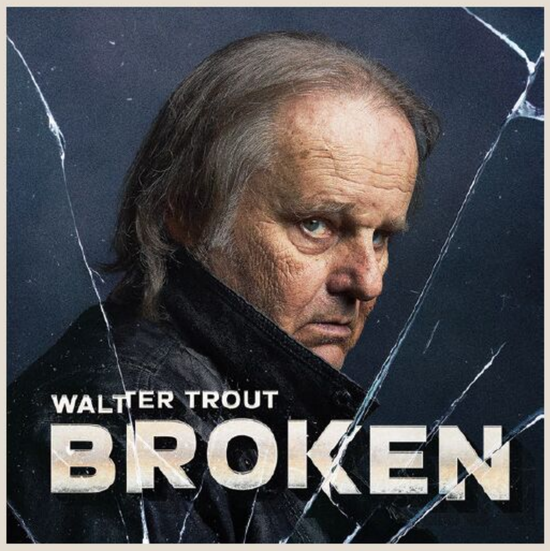
MORE TO SAY

With his reputation long established, Walter Trout has nothing to prove, but a good deal more to say, vocally and instrumentally.

The blues remain at the heart of all 12 of the moody tracks on this extended set. Fortunately, Trout didn't go overboard with guests and instead chose quality material, nearly all of it original.

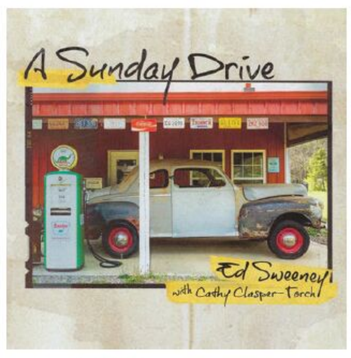
Beth Hart's smoky voice complements Trout's world-weary lead vocals and playing on the title track. Will Wilde's articulate, rocking harp enhances the hard-driving "Bleed," a perfect foil for Walter's smoldering solo. He lets it rip around vocals by Twisted Sister's Dee Snider on "I've Had Enough," while harp and resonator guitar enhance the haunting "Turn and Walk Away." On "Heaven or Hell," his evangelical vocal meshes with snarling, feverish solos.

Trout is not above adding new sounds, like the electric sitar that gives "Talkin' to Myself" a different feel and texture. The lower-key love ballad "I Wanna Stay" blends an eloquent, sensitive vocal with a brief, yet emotive instrumental statement.



Walter Trout
Broken

Walter Trout is a master who, in 2024, transcends virtuosity. He knows exactly what to say instrumentally, *when* and *how* to say it and, most importantly, when to step away. ***– Rich Kienzle***



Ed Sweeney with Cathy Clasper-Torch

A Sunday Drive

Don't let the relaxed, back-porch vibe and unaffected vocals fool you; Ed Sweeney is an adept instrumentalist and interpreter of American and British folk music. On his ninth album, the repertoire ranges from Southern hymns to the Beatles; even the "The Mickey Mouse Club March."

For most of the cuts, Sweeney is paired with Cathy Clasper-Torch's violin, spotlighted on "Lament For The Death Of The Reverend Archie Beaton," best known by fiddler Natalie MacMaster. On "Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie," she weaves *erhu*, a bowed instrument with two strings, around Sweeney's sparse banjo. Sweeney offers a sturdy rendition of the hymn "When I Get Home," learned from a recording by Elizabeth Cotten. The original fingerpicking instrumental "A Little Traveling Music," reminiscent of Reverend Robert Wilkins' "Prodigal Son," bops along as befits its title.

On "Walking Boss," Sweeney plays clawhammer banjo in the manner of Clarence Ashley, his source for the Appalachian tune. Of "While My Guitar Gently Weeps," the New Englander writes, "George Harrison's melody is so provocative, you don't need to sing to feel its emotion," and the guitar-violin instrumental treatment proves him right.

This charming collection should not go unnoticed. ***– Dan Forte***

Robby Krieger & The Soul Savages

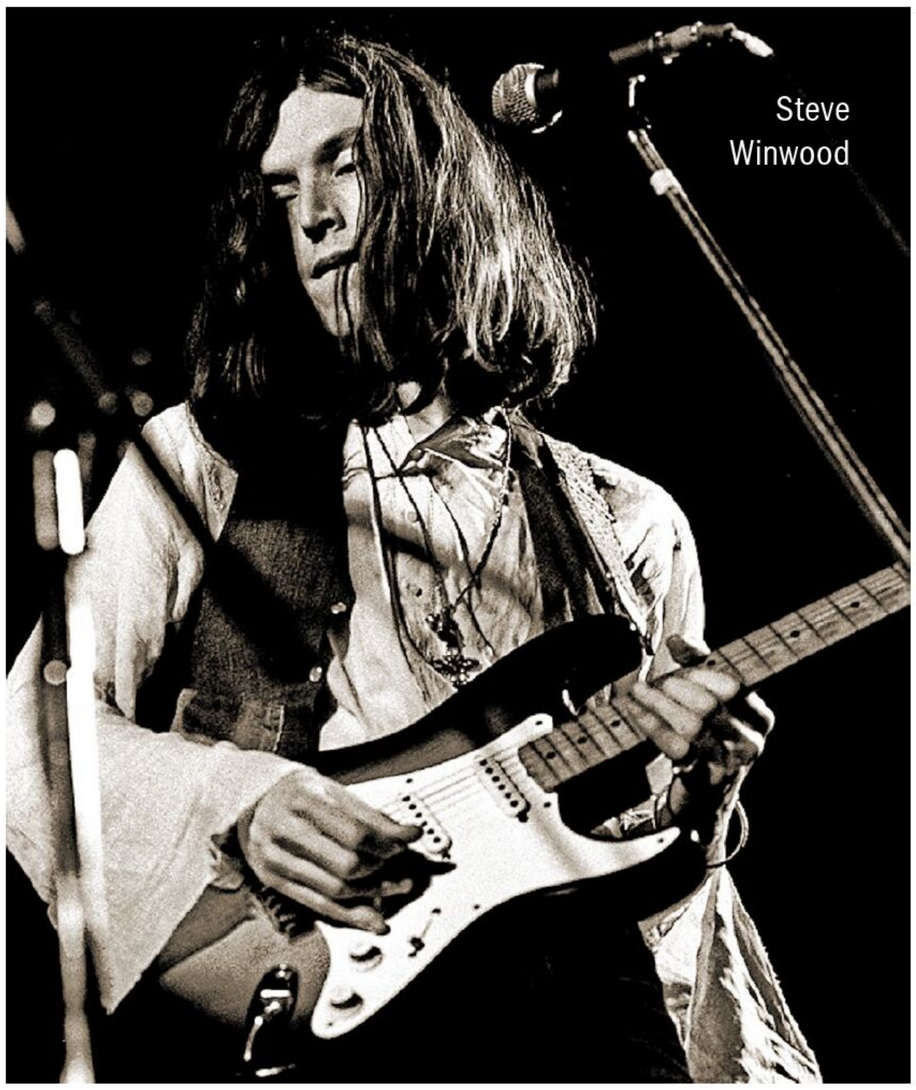
Robby Krieger & The Soul Savages

A diversity of musical influences directly led to the Doors' groundbreaking sound in the '60s. In the same light, the debut from guitarist Robby Krieger's new quartet includes 10 playful instrumentals, grooving on many of those soul, jazz, rock, and blues inspirations in still-fresh ways. Joining Krieger in this musical adventure are veterans with impressive résumés – bassist Kevin "Brandino" Brandon, keyboardist Ed Roth, and drummer Franklin Vanderbilt.

This living, breathing platter resulted from the friends leisurely jamming in Robby's studio, and it shows. No pressure – just music made for the sheer joy of it. You hear every bit of Krieger's signature style here, including his fingerstyle playing, nimble slide, earthy blues, and jazz-fusion. Overall, his creamy solos and slide blend well with Roth's melodies.

"Shark Skin Suit" is terrific, dizzy jazz/funk. "Samosas & Kingfishers" mesmerizes with a fluid groove and Krieger's creamy slide solo. "A Day in L.A." radiates sunny smooth jazz with liquid slide; Krieger is gifted as both a rhythm and lead guitarist. This fact is evident on "Contrary Motion," with a standout piercing guitar melody. "Bouncy Betty" features one of Krieger's longer, more-expressive solos, while "Ricochet Rabbit" brings loose, jazzy guitar. ***– Bret Adams***

Walter Trout: Leland Hayward.


Steve Winwood

REISSUES: LIVING IN THE PAST?

By Dan Forte

Reissues have always been around in the form of greatest hits and best-of packages. But after then-independent Rhino Records started cross-licensing tracks from major labels to create anthologies and compilations in the '80s and '90s, the majors realized there was money to be made by dusting off their own tapes. Music listeners benefitted from CDs with bonus tracks, alternate takes, and improved sound.

These days, it seems there's a fresh reissue per day, and I had to wonder if the trend had gone too far when I got a press release announcing *The Best of Milli Vanilli (35th Anniversary)*. You remember them; their Grammy for Best New Artist was revoked after it was revealed that the pair of pretty faces in padded shoulders didn't sing, play, or write any of the music. Is this something that warrants an encore?

Fortunately, there are plenty of bona fide artists truly worth revisiting.

Steve Winwood was a child prodigy, and when Spencer Davis first encountered him, he was playing in his father's dance band, still wearing his school uniform, including the short pants. Davis scooped up 14-year-old "Stevie" and his brother, Muff, for the Spencer Davis Group, with the younger Winwood singing, playing keyboards and guitar, and soon co-writing hits like "Gimme Some Loving" and "I'm A Man."

Because his other talents are so staggering, to this day, fans are often surprised when he straps on a guitar and proves more than worthy on it, too. But he was the Davis Group's main lead guitarist, well evidenced on the band's *A's and B's, 1964-1967*, chronicling the singles and EPs during Winwood's brief-but-prolific tenure. Since the band's British output was much larger than their American releases, this is a must for Davis/Winwood fans.

Originally a blues and R&B outfit, their 1964 debut single, a cover of John Lee Hooker's "Dimples," features 16-year-old Stevie's soulful vocal. Their fifth single, "Keep On Running," finally dented the American charts and featured Winwood's distorted guitar hook. It was the flipside of the follow-up "Somebody Help Me," that first showcased his lead guitar as a blues-rock contender; "Stevie's Blues" was released three months before John Mayall's *Blues Breakers* album featuring Eric Clapton, who was already flooring crowds at club gigs. Winwood's fat-toned 15-second intro cements a position too often overlooked, as a great among British blues guitarslingers. Never a shredder, his maturity belied his teen years.

Other cuts showcasing the six-stringer include "Neighbour, Neighbour," "Dust My Blues" (sung by Davis), and "On The Green Light." Winwood departed the group to form Traffic, followed by Blind Faith, and later enjoyed a platinum solo career. But this double-CD's 37 tracks illuminate the beginnings of one of rock's brightest lights.

Another youngster channeling raw emotion through his guitar was Dave Davies of **The Kinks**. I interviewed Dave for my August '23 column, "Dave Davies' Kinky Journey," following the release of the band's self-curated compilation *The Journey, Part 1*. *The Journey, Part 2* is now out, and, like its predecessor, I highly recommend it.

As before, well-known hits mingle with album cuts and obscurities. The two CDs, which contain 34 tracks as opposed to the vinyl's 27, are not sequenced chronologically, instead grouped along older brother Ray's thematic "journeyman," with liner-notes commentary from the brothers and drummer Mick Avory. "Till The End Of The Day," from '65, was often a set opener, and it takes that spot here. A heavy riffer in the manner of "You Really Got Me," it features one of Davies' treble-to-spare solos.

Dave's versatility shines as he adapts to the many moods and stylistic turns of Ray's songwriting. There's a banjo-like acoustic on 1970's "This Time Tomorrow," and *Preservation Act 2*'s "Scrapheap City," sung by Dan Hicks alumnus Maryann Price, points to his country influence. Of the droning, Indian-inflected "See My Friends," Avory writes, "I think we were the first popular band to attempt anything like this."

The three-song "New Victoria Suite" from '75 shows what a tight unit the Kinks were live, including Dave's extended solo on "Slum Kids." From the early days, "I Need You," with its "You Really Got Me" riff played backward and sputtering solo, is perhaps Dave's crowning achievement.

Not as recognizable, singer **Genya Ravan** was a bit of a pioneer. In 1964, her Goldie & the Gingerbreads were the first all-female group signed to a major label, and were produced by Shel Talmy, of Kinks and Who note. Resurfacing in the late '70s, she released two strong hard-rocking albums, *Urban Desire* followed by *…And I Mean It*, both available again.

A Springsteen-esque take on tougher '60s girl groups like The Ronettes and Shangri-Las, they hold up today, as does the guitar playing. On the latter, Mick Ronson solos on a duet with Ian Hunter, while the former features one Ritchie Fliegler, best-known in the guitar community for his books on amps and role in the guitar industry, but also a veteran of Lou Reed, Tom Verlaine, Alice Cooper, and others. Ritchie is still active, but listen to him rip way back when.

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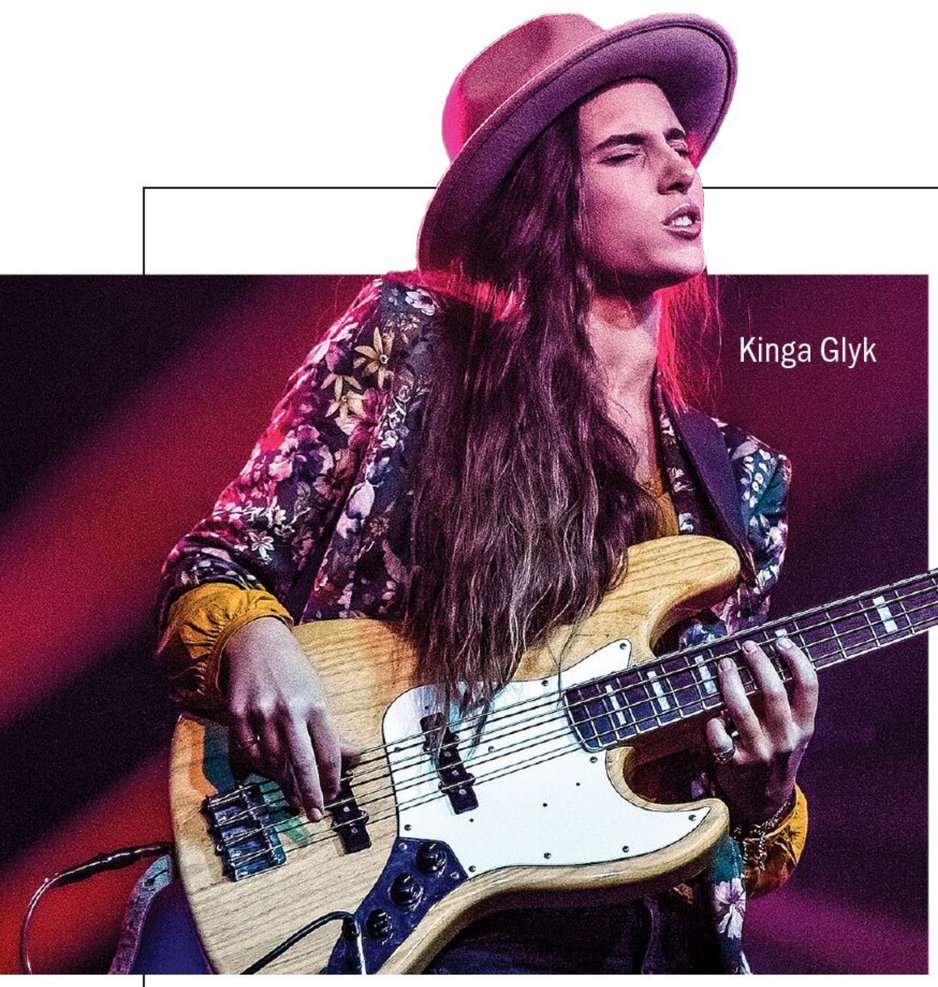
Steve Winwood: Heinrich Klaffs/Wikimedia Commons.


Kinga Glyk

Jussi Jaakonaho

Scott Henderson

Sebastià Gris
Oli, All i Julivert

With John Fahey's early work, steel-string guitar became more than an instrument; a veritable genre of solo instrumental acoustic guitar was born. But since then, from Kottke to Hedges, Bensusan to Ackerman, folk to new age, there've been countless imitators, too often sacrificing melody for licks and two-chord vamps.

The most negative thing you can say about an artist is they're "uninteresting." Thankfully, that's not the case with Gris on this sophomore effort. Hailing from Majorca (now living in Barcelona), the Spanish guitarist injects his attention-holding compositions with jazz and classical influences, and his facility never distills into chops – at least not for their own sake. "Temps Enrere" has an almost Tin Pan Alley feel in waltz time, before shifting to powerful flamenco strums. "Clickbait" is as quirky and good-natured as its title suggests, and the only non-original, "Lonesome Road Blues," adds bluegrass and angular jazz lines to the Appalachian standard.

Gris also proves that all one needs is a good instrument (by Barcelona luthier David Sole) and decent acoustics. The album's title translates to "Oil, garlic, and parsley" – appropriate since Gris recorded it in his kitchen. ***– DF***

Kinga Glyk
Real Life

Melding fusion, funk, Euro-pop, prog, and the ethereal, bassist Kinga Glyk's first album in four years features peppy grooves, high-level bass playing, and keyboard sounds that stir the imagination. Dreamy synths integrate with bass etudes, airborne harmonics, sweeping pastoral movements – and funkalicious slapping.

Produced by Michael League (of Snarky Puppy) and backed by a killer squad of brainy musicians, *Real Life* is a meditation with serious bass playing. For mature aficionados, it harkens to the '70s electronic experiments of Stevie Wonder, Herbie Hancock, Billy Preston, and Joe Zawinul. Still, there's plenty of phenomenal bass playing, like on "The Friend You Call," "Not Real," and "Funny Bunny." Dig the aerophone solos by Casey Benjamin.

Perhaps too synth-heavy for some, *Real Life* uses technology to elicit moods that heighten the aural experience. Heavy on the humanity, ditties like "Sadness Doesn't Last Forever," "That Right There," and "Opinions" put the kibosh on the opinion that electronics lack feel.

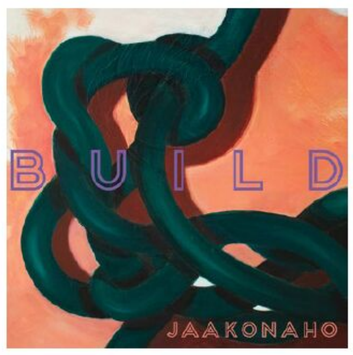
Glyk is a gifted, nimble player with stories to tell, and she forgoes the urge to record songs that showcase bass chops for their own sake. Instead, she's a visionary who also happens to play killer bass. ***– Oscar Jordan***

Scott Henderson
Karnevel!

Scott Henderson continues his evolution with 11 songs blurring the lines between rock, bop, and psychedelia. Enlisting bassist Romain Labaye and drummer Archibald Ligonnière (from 2019's *People Mover*), *Karnevel!* continues to push his sonic envelope. It's a window into Henderson's harmonic brain as he bops, swings, and accents his way through blues tropes and mind expansion. His toe-to-toe guitar battle with drummer Ligonnière on "Sky Coaster" may inspire – or cause – guitarists to switch instruments.

Recorded live in the studio, Henderson starts with the sounds of the traveling carny; the title track is mysterious and ominous as Henderson conjures ambient atmospherics before kicking in with the main theme. Sitar sounds double the guitar here and on a few other compositions. On "Haunted Ballroom," Henderson uses his whammy bar to dip, growl, and scream, later transforming de-tuned, rubbery blues lines into full-blown slide ecstasy.

Henderson's signature sound is smooth, thick, and effortless as he navigates syncopated accents over the funky "Covid Vaccination." Beautiful chord melodies abound on the solo piece "Greene Mansion," while "Acacia," with its luscious fretless bass, is a guided tour into the mind of one of fusion's most innovative guitarists. ***– OJ***



Jaakonaho
Build

Finnish master Jussi Jaakonaho (*VG*, April '18) is back with a collection of beguiling guitar instrumentals. Stylistically, you're not sure whether it's instro, slow post-rock, or the soundtrack to a movie that doesn't exist. Jussi is content to weave tapestries of sound alone in the studio (though bringing guests from Wilco and Morphine). Secondly, his approach isn't about traditional lead or rhythm guitar; Jussi's mission is to craft rich moods and atmospheres.

Kinga Glyk: Andreas Lawen/Fotandi/Wikimedia Commons. Scott Henderson: A. Ikaniewicz.

Richie Faulkner

Listen to the opener "Build," which starts with synthesizers, then evolves into a thick fuzz melody (for that cool sound, Jussi deployed a Novo Serus T guitar through a Walrus Audio Kangra Fuzz and Ekdahl Moisturizer spring reverb). "Beauty Box" is a master class in moody Nordic textures, using clean arpeggios to sketch a framework. In the background, listen for cascading echo repeats and dashes of talkbox. "Magnetic" is driving rock, with layers of overdriven guitar harmonies over an Adrian Belew-like drum groove. "Drive" offers acoustic textures matched with mournful slide guitar, evoking a ghostly Finnish forest.

While Finns are notorious for their melancholy moods, Jussi Jaakonaho channels it into a thing of emotion and beauty. *Build* is lush – and highly rewarding – guitar journey. ***– PP***

Judas Priest
Invicible Shield

Fifty years since their 1974 debut, *Rocka Rolla*, Judas Priest keeps heading to the highway with original members Rob Halford, guitarist Glenn Tipton, and bassist Ian Hill. Produced by gifted metallurgist Andy Sneap, *Invicible Shield* is extra-crunchy, defying the fact that Halford and Hill are 72 and 73 years old, respectively, and Tipton, a venerable 76. Completing the picture is young fretmaster Richie Faulkner, who rips edge-of-your-seat solos in the left speaker while Tipton delivers old-school chomping on the right – it's a thrilling combination.

The accent is on blitz-tempo material; "Panic Attack" is a 4x12 thudfest, perfect for rush-hour driving. Halford can still scream with the best of 'em, while Faulkner adds post-Randy Rhoads fury, and Tipton brings vibrato bar dives and two-handed arpeggios. The title cut stands out for Thin Lizzy-style guitar harmonies and the quintet's brute-force riffing.

With material and production delivering classic Priest, there are no surprises on *Invicible Shield*. It's relentless, brutal – and terrific fun for fans old and new.

Again, it's hard to believe three members are septuagenarians, but that speaks to Priest's insatiable desire to keep rockin' – *hard*. ***– Pete Prown*** **VG**

Richie Faulkner: S. Bollmann/Wikipedia.

extra EXTRA

LAURENCE JONES
Bad Luck & the Blues

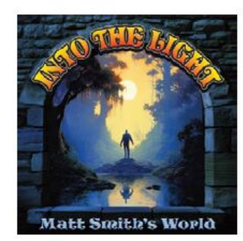
Jones' plays blues with a hard-rock attitude – certainly more Pat Travers than Pat Hare. The Englishman uses PRS Silver Sky guitars and Marshall amps, adding a snarling riff to the title cut. "Don't You Leave Me This Way" bleeds the cosmic atmospherics of Trower and Hendrix, while "Woman" and "You're Not Alone" focus on melody and groove. *Rockin'!* ***– BA***

BEX MARSHALL
Fortuna

Brit songstress Bex Marshall combines blues-rock, roots, and swampy grooves in an indelible package. Vibey hollowbodies, saucy vocals, and a pack of London heavyweights support an album of sensuality and fire. Highlights include "Lay Down and Die," "Preaching to the Choir," and "Jungle," where dirt, reverb, dobro, and drama coalesce into fine entertainment. Bex plays guitar like she means it. ***– OJ***

JANE GETTER PREMONITION
Division World

Jane Getter's latest is a melody-oriented affair offered while doing what she does best – progressive jazz-rock fusion. Her band consists of the mighty Alex Skolnick (Testament) on guitar, bassist/singer Paul Frazier, drummer Gene Lake, keyboardist Adam Holzman, and vocalist Randy McStine. Wrathful riffs, artful arpeggios, and effervescent guitar effects dominate 11 tracks with excellent arrangements. Highlights include "Waiting For The Light." ***– OJ***



MATT SMITH'S WORLD
Into The Light

Smith is a prolific guitarist, bandleader, producer, and author of instructional material. Recording and co-writing in Texas and New York, he achieves an upbeat feel, lyrically and melodically, at times recalling '70s bands like Chicago and Tower of Power. Sweeping bends ride over a New Orleans groove on "Possibility," while "Measure of a Man" weaves fat tones through psychedelic-era Beatles. ***– DF***

WYATT ELLIS
Happy Valley

Fourteen-year-old Tennessee mandolinist Ellis stands out for flawless picking that stresses musicality over hot licks overkill, and for writing and co-writing all 12 instrumentals, each featuring a guest. Most are mandolinists; Marty Stuart sits in on "Blue Smoke," Sierra Hull on "Grassy Cove." Other tracks include Alan Bibey, Danny Roberts, Lauren Price, and Mike Compton. "Get Lost" features guitarist Jake Workman. ***– RK***

ZAKK SABBATH
Doomed Forever, Forever Doomed

Witty band-name aside, Zakk Wylde's Sabbath project is surprisingly strong. With Zakk nailing Ozzy's vocal inflections and Iommi's riffs, Zakk Sabbath doesn't reinvent the wheel, but modernizes it via the guitar hero's fleet-fingered runs. "War Pigs" hits like a sledgehammer, while "Electric Funeral" brings epic metal. There's no rationale for this tribute beyond the fact that it expertly delivers the doom. ***– PP***

VAUNTED VIBE

The D'Angelico Excel Style B Archtop

Reintroduced in January '24, D'Angelico's Style B replicates design details from several of the archtops John D'Angelico first built in the 1930s.

The elegant aesthetics and Art Deco touches of his initial Excel line are well-preserved here, alongside a few smart updates for trad jazz players of this century. While the original line was conceived as an acoustic jazz guitar, this update owns the floating DeArmond Rhythm Chief pickup mod adopted by players who wanted to be heard in a band setting, and shaves girth from the chunky neck of yore. With the Style B, you can wrap your hands around a modern C neck and capture the vaunted D'A vibe.

Floating pickups like the DeArmond are designed to preserve the sound of an unadulterated acoustic top, which the Style B maintains with a floating ebony bridge, bottom-mounted "two bar" tailpiece, and pots on the pickguard. In the case of Style B's laminated top, back and sides, it's a somewhat closed and controlled sound, ideal for punchy rhythms and round, burpy leads. Before your nose goes up about the laminate, note that it's also helpful for taming feedback on a hollowbody; it contributes to the guitar's tight bottom, great for articulating low chord voicings. And, of course, it's a major factor in affordability.

Price: $1,699.99
www.dangelicoguitars.com

The three-piece neck is topped by an ebony fretboard sporting 20 frets along a 24.75" scale. Dovetailed to the jumbo body at the 14th fret, it's realistically playable to 12th position.

While the Style B is designed to "excel" (sorry) as a rhythm instrument, its fast, comfortable neck begs you to blow. You'll also appreciate the balance and fullness of the DeArmond, which lures chord-melody playing. Jazz players won't be surprised that the Style B's tone shone most brightly through solid-state and acoustic amps, which opened its woodier acoustic qualities.

D'Angelico has simultaneously released the EXL-1, replicating a later single-cut that became the envy of L-5 owners, and a favorite of giants such as Johnny Smith and Chet Atkins. ***– Rich Maloof***

Price: $99
www.jhspedals.info

SWEAT EQUITY

The JHS Pedals Notaklön

Given their place in the market as elite collectibles approaching $10,000 asking prices, it's no surprise the Klon Centaur has long been copied by other builders. The best value of the bunch is JHS Pedals' solderless DIY Notaklön kit.

DIY not your thing? Fear not; a passing familiarity with Legos is all you need, as assembly consists of sticking two finished circuit boards into its housing and bolting them down (*and* there's a video tutorial). Set aside a half-hour or so and you can do this. There's even silicone goop to conceal the "mythical" diodes.

The pedal has knobs identical to the original – Volume, Treble, and Gain – along with a switch (labeled "-/+") that engages the Shamrock mod JHS gave its Klon KTR to increase overall boost by +4db.

Plugged in, the Notaklön offers an impressive version of the smooth, open sound and rounded treble famous in the original. Shamrock increases punch in overdrive, particularly midrange.

At just one percent of the cost of a vintage Centaur, the JHS Notaklön offers a virtually identical sound signature at an undeniably bargain price. ***– Bob Dragich***

INVASION, REFINED

The Dr. Z Z-80

Built for the Beatles to use as a bass amp on their mid-'60s U.S. stadium tour, the Vox AC80 proved unreliable. When country music star Brad Paisley got his hands on one decades later, he loved its tone but also found it couldn't keep up on tour. So, he asked friend (and longtime amp builder) Mike Zaite to create a new version. "Dr. Z" gladly accepted the challenge and, after six years of refinement, introduced the Z-80.

Price: $3,599 (head); $4,999 (with matching 2x12) www.drzamps.com

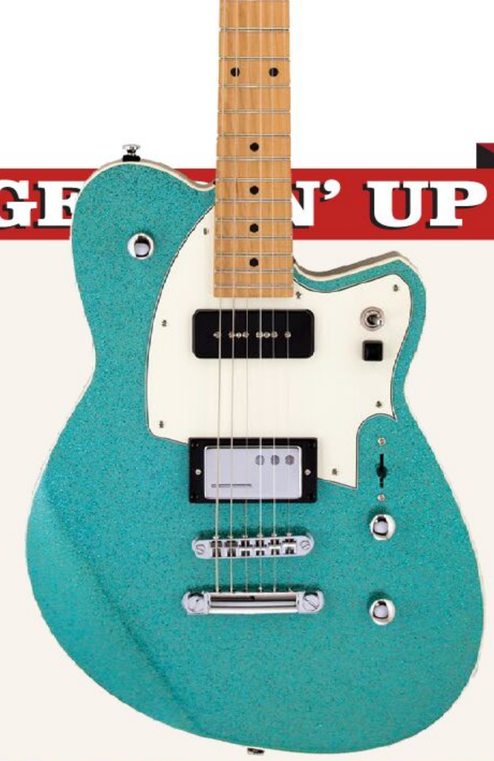
A single-channel/80-watt head, the Z-80 is powered by four cathode-biased EL34s in a unique design where each tube is self-biasing; many cathode-biased amps with push/pull configuration use a shared resistor, but this one has an individual bias resistor for each EL34. That tweak is integral to the amp's sound and feel. The preamp has two 12AX7s and a 12AU7, and the Z-80 adds controls for Mid and Master Volume along with a Metro Zero Loss effects loop and a stouter power transformer. Its matching semi-open 2x12 cabinet houses a pair of Celestion Gold Alnico speakers.

With a Telecaster plugged in and the amp's Volume at 10 o'clock, Master Bass, Mid, and Treble all at 1 o'clock, the Z-80 delivered ultra-chimey clean tones with juicy harmonics and fantastic string-to-string definition. Tones were bright, articulate, and snappy, but never harsh – perfect for chicken picking. Every note was wrapped in round, swirly harmonics; the effect was even more-pronounced with chords, where individual notes blended such that even dissonant chords sounded musical. With a Les Paul plugged in and the Master and Volume at 3 o'clock, classic Vox crunch erupted from the 2x12 with even more chime and compression that remained clear and articulate. The Alnico Celestions certainly help deliver chime, but the Z-80 also sounded fantastic plugged into a 2x12 with Celestion's ceramic-magnet G12T-75s, though it offered slightly less chime, tighter bottom, and more overall aggressiveness.

The magic of the Z-80 lies in its feel and picking dynamics; notes explode from the pick and bloom into sustain before descending. Dynamics are a huge part of the playing experience, and the Z-80 cleans up or gets dirty simply by adjusting pick attack.

The Z-80 is not just a copy of the AC80, but a refined, reimagined design that captures the soul of the original but takes its tone to another level. – ***Charlie Wilkins***

GEARIN' UP



REVEREND CHRIS FREEMAN

The Reverend Guitars Chris Freeman signature model has a korina body, maple neck and fretboard, controls for Volume, Tone, Bass Contour, and a "kill" button next to its three-way selector. Pickups are a Railhammer Nuevo 90 (bridge) and P90.

SUPRO AMBASSADOR CUSTOM

The Supro Ambassador Custom is a 50-watt 2x10 combo with Mercury Magnetics transformers, Mallory capacitors, switchable Class A (35 watts)/AB (50 watts) output stage with EHX 5881/6L6WGC tubes, tube-driven spring reverb, and custom BD10 Supro speakers built by Celestion.

D'ADDARIO HUMIDIPAK ABSORB

D'Addario's Humidipak Absorb uses humidification packets enclosed in a pouch and placed in the instrument case, where the company says it will remain at 45 to 50 percent relative humidity for two to six months.

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

PRECISE PEDIGREE

Vola's ZVA 4P MF

Crafted in Japan, Vola's ZVA 4P MF bass combines ideas from famed forefathers the Jazz and Precision, including a slinky maple neck and slim nut. Add a 9.5" radius and Modern C profile, and you have what could be called a "highly grab-able" neck.

So, did Vola pull it off?

A double-cut with alder body, 34"-scale maple neck, maple fretboard, 40mm Duracon nut, and 21 frets, our tester was dressed in Charcoal Frost finish with a tortoise pickguard and dot inlays. Hardware includes a Gotoh 303 SJ 4 Bass bridge with string-through-body configuration, a string tree, and Gotoh GB707 tuners. For accurate intonation, a zero fret is part of the package.

Price: $1,129
www.volaguitars.com

The Vola's five-knob array looks daunting, but is pretty straightforward with a mini-switch that jumps between active and passive modes and controls for master Volume, Balance (which blends between its proprietary J- and P-styled pickups) and Treble, Middle, and Bass, which work in active mode. Played passively, there's no roll-off tone. Instead, the Balance knob provides shading and texture. The active section, however, is so much fun you might only use the passive mode if the battery fails mid-gig.

On the job, the ZVA 4P MF does well. Its neck plays effortlessly, evoking a mix of vintage goodness with later Asia-built evolutions courtesy of Yamaha and Ibanez. The carved, sturdy four-bolt neck joint allows upper-fret access, while the narrow neck provides a fast playing surface. Nicely set up and ready to go right out of its gig bag, the Vola was stage-ready.

The ZVA 4P MF is a solid performer with a fun neck and robust tones, especially in active mode. As you'd expect, the large alder body has some heft – north of 9.5 pounds – but that goes with the overall concept.

The Vola brand may not be familiar, but its MIJ pedigree is genuine and there's obvious craftsmanship and attention to detail. Go thump one. ***– Pete Prown***

Price: $1,693 (head); $1,995 (combo) www.lerxstamps.com

TONE FLOW

The Lerxst Chi Combo

Following his collaboration with Mojotone on a limited-edition amplifier, legendary rock guitarist Alex Lifeson has launched a line of signature tube amps under the Lerxst brand, manufactured by Mojotone in North Carolina.

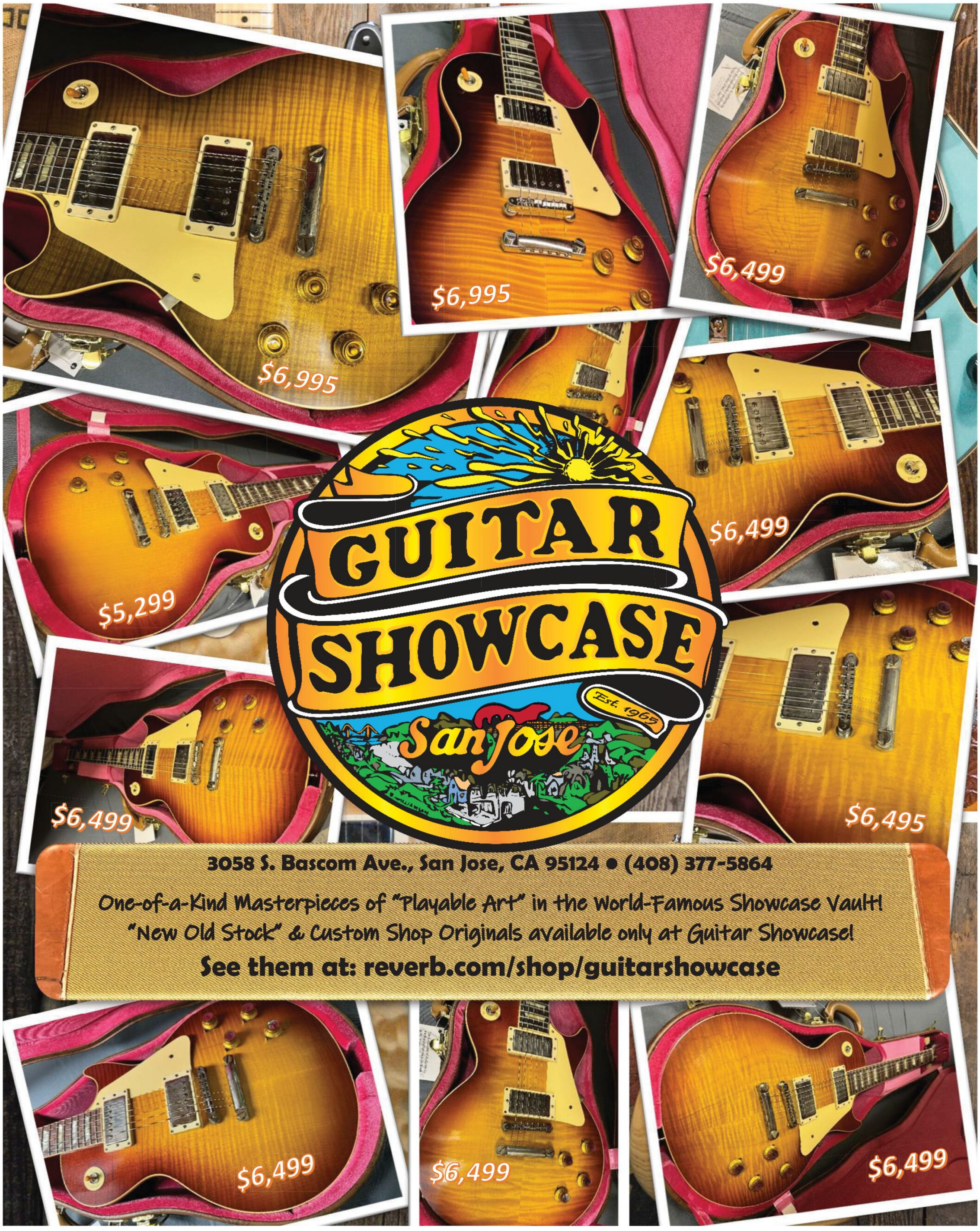
The Chi 1x12 combo is a descendant of the Lerxst Omega; a 30-watt/two-channel amp powered by a pair of 6L6 tubes, 12AX7 preamp section, and universal three-band EQ, it also has an effects loop. Its control panel is straightforward, with Input Gain, Lead Master (gain), push/pull Output Master, Treble, Middle, Bass, and Prescence. The Chi is wrapped in silver tolex with red and black accents, and an illuminated Starman logo/power-on indicator. The combo version has a 12" Mojotone Greyhound.

Plugging a PAF-loaded Les Paul into the Chi's clean channel revealed warm, round, musical tones with exceptional string-to-string note separation and bouncy feel. Input Gain set to 2 o'clock, Lead Master dimed, and EQ controls flat (at noon) resulted in clear, musical tones with a bold character and ample body. The sound remained full at any EQ setting and never seemed thin.

Engaging the Lead channel via the Output Master push/pull (the function is also footswitchable) unleashed a thick, British crunch with effortless, singing sustain and responsive feel. Gain spanned from a subtle breakup to searing, harmonic-rich lead tones. Most surprising, even at its highest gain settings, the Chi retained exceptional clarity and openness. Cranking the Output Master and setting the Lead Master to 3 o'clock produced a remarkably open, defined tone with bite that never became too compressed.

The Lerxst Chi offers a compact, portable platform for guitarists seeking professional-grade tube tones. Its quality of construction, versatility, and Lifeson signature voicings make it a compelling option.

Whether you're a seasoned Rush fan or simply a tone aficionado, the Chi is well worth checking out. ***– Charlie Wilkins VG***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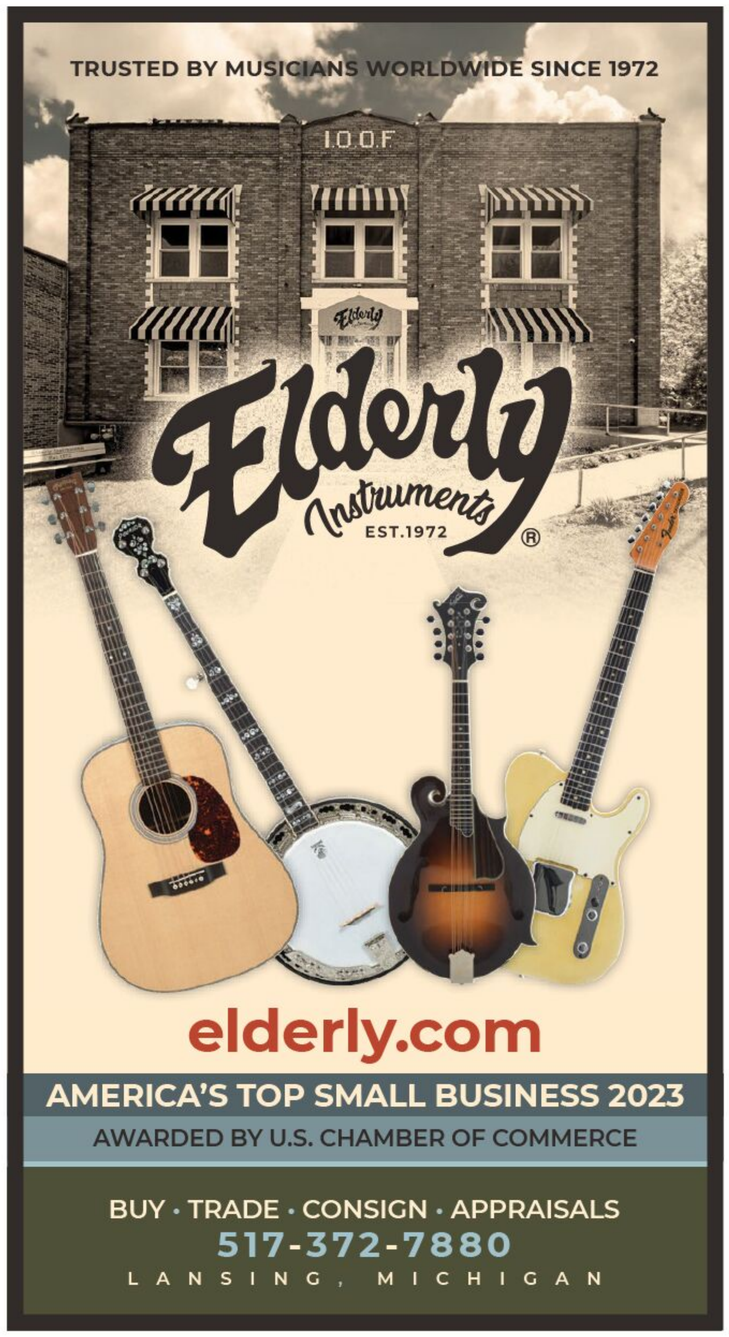

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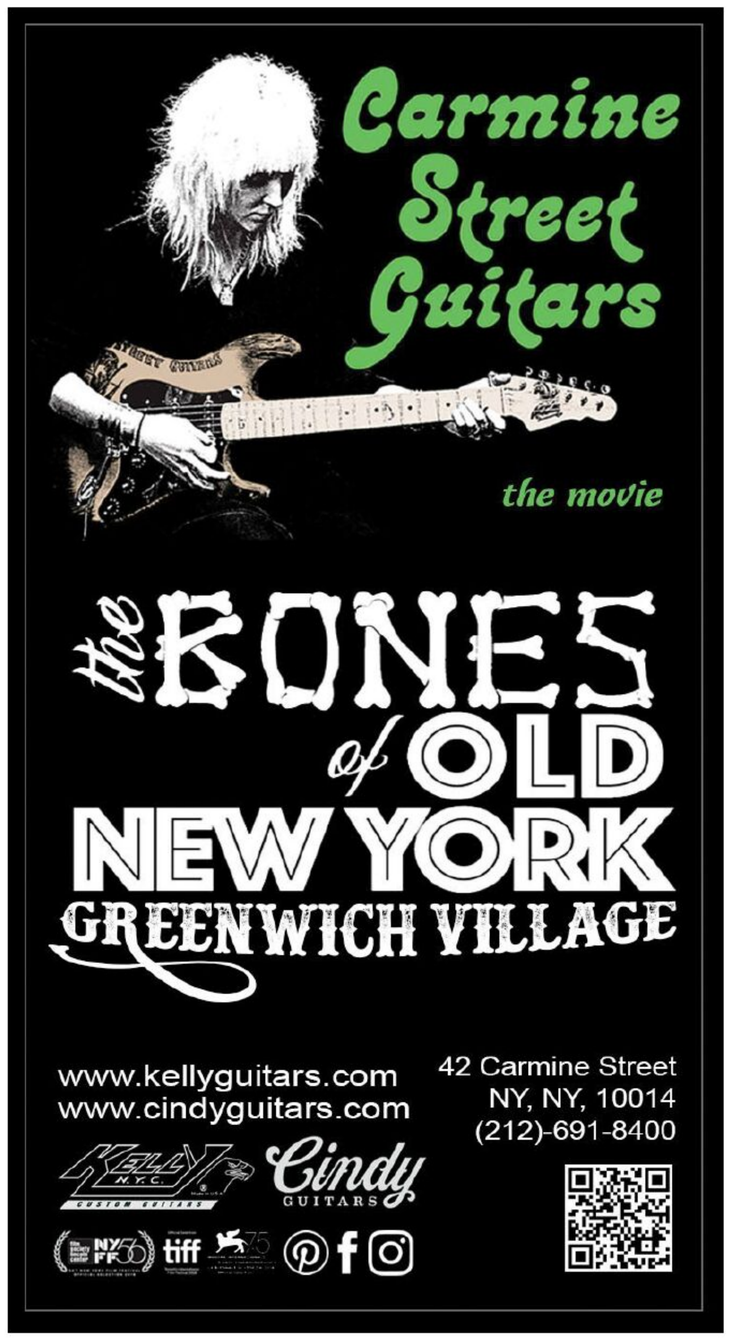
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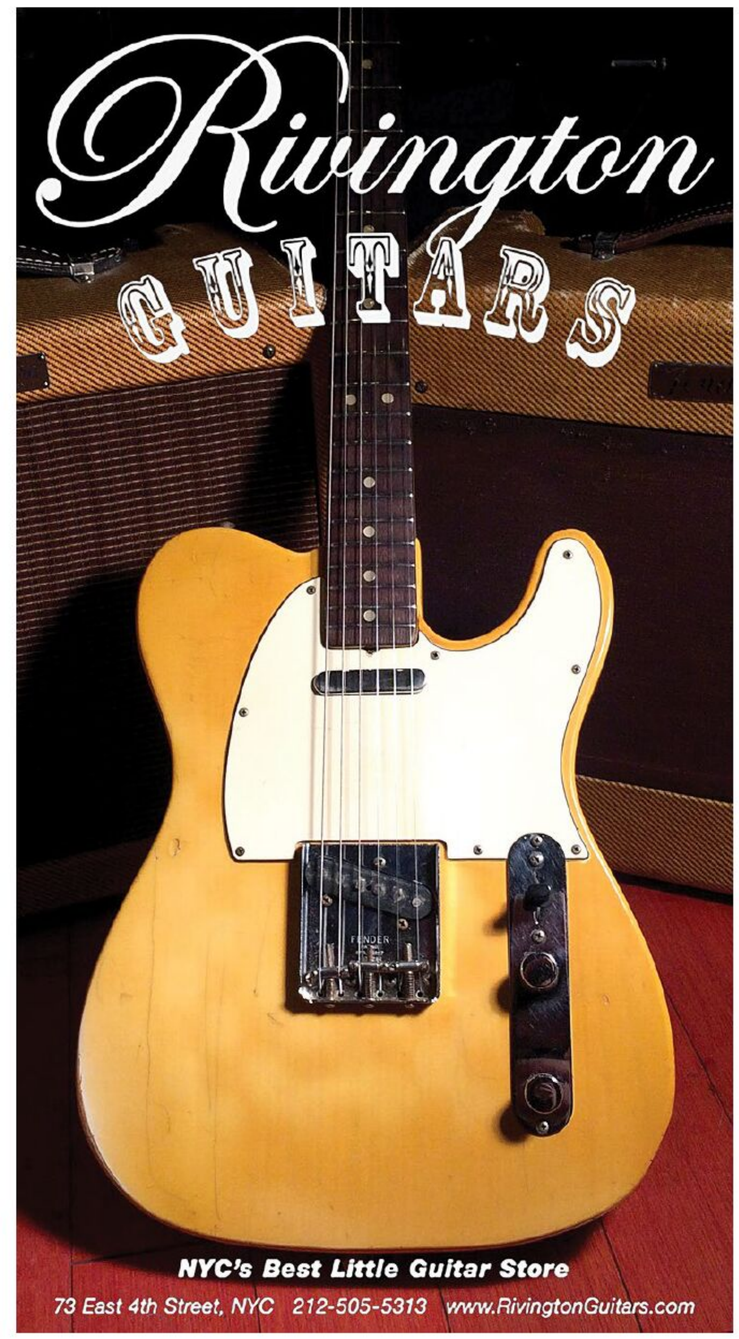
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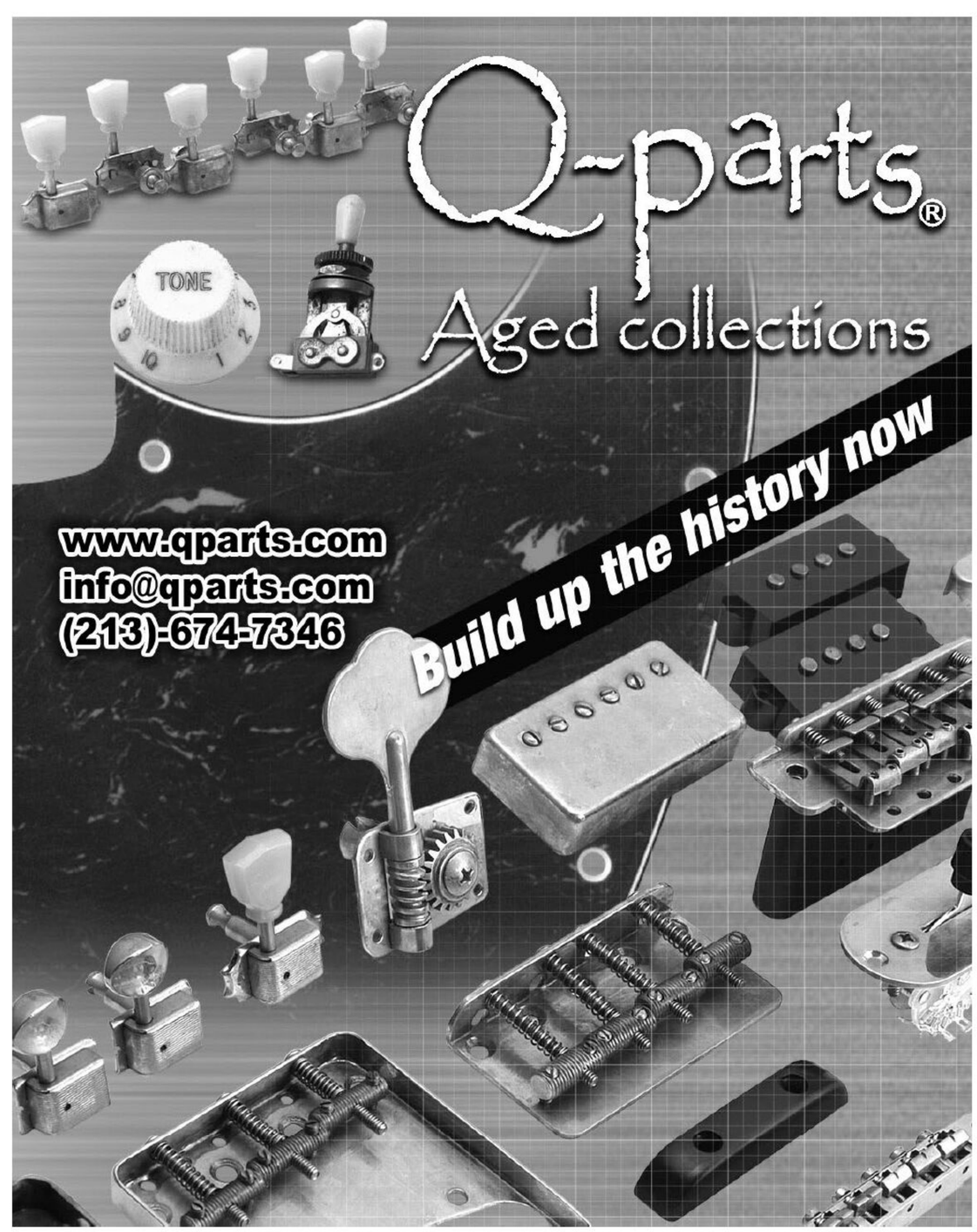
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01 *VG*'s Pete Prown enjoys this quartet of PRS planks, including his #1 axe at left – an '08 Starla with Sheptone AB Custom humbuckers and a Bigsby. The rest are a '94 McCarty, a newly acquired '22 Silver Sky, and an '87 Custom 24.

02 Gus George sent this look at his collection of "hammers and screwdrivers." In the rack at top right are his '64 Jazz, '84 Rick 4001, and '72 Tele Bass. On the floor are a '65 Strat, '64 Precision in sunburst, '03 Les Paul Standard, '59 Gibson EB-2, Custom Shop Precision, '65 SG, '65 Precision (in Lake Placid Blue), and a '79 Les Paul Custom. His amps are by Sovtek, Fender, Orange, Gibson, and Ampeg.

03 "I love me some *Vintage Guitar* magazine!" says George Jusaites, who shares that love with this look at his '47 Rickenbacher Electro Model B.

04 Jeff Miller's bass collection includes this (from left) a 1980 Moonstone Exploder, '84 Alembic Exploder, and '86 Hamer Blitz. The amps are 1990 SWR Super Redhead and a Peavey Headliner 600.

05 Michael Alonzi ain't lyin' when he says, "My '61 Les Paul Junior and '62 Deluxe are a pretty decent beginners rig."

SEE MORE PHOTOS ON WWW.VINTAGEGUITAR.COM

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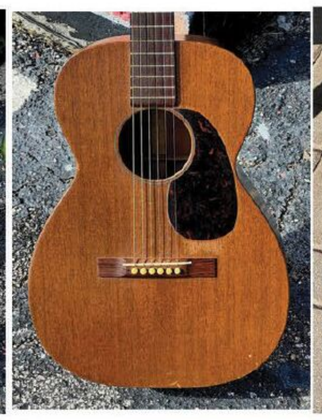
1941 Martin 0-15
Tortoise Headstock

1947 Martin 000-21
rare Tapered Braces !

1958 Martin 00-18
1 of the best ones !

1965 Martin D-28
"Brazilian Rosewood"

1968 Martin D-28
"Brazilian Rosewood"

1967 J. Pimentel R.
Requinto "Brazilian"

1959 Gibson Les Paul
Junior tons of tone !

1966 Gibson SG Custom
fabulous "Polaris White"

1970 Gibson Les Paul
Deluxe the 1st issue

1974 Gibson SG Custom
a beat sweet rare axe !

1978 Gibson Les Paul
Custom Silver'burst

2008 Gibson Les Paul
SG'61 VOS Reissue

2008 Gibson LP Std.
R8 Murphy-aged 50th

2003 Gibson Les Paul
by Miami's "Rick Garcia"

1956 Fender Tweed
Twin Amp Low Watt

1957 Fender Tweed
Tremolux quite rare !

1959 Fender Tweed
Vibrolux very desirable.

1962 Fender Princeton
Brown Tolex its Minty

1980's Mesa Boogie
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1990's Trace Elliot's
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1951 Kay M-1
Upright Bass

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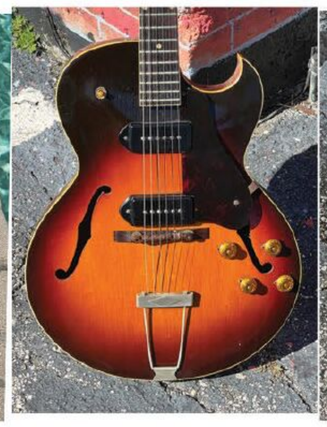
1953 Epiphone Zephyr
Emperor Regent

1950 Stromberg
G-3 Cutaway 1 of 6

1957 Gibson L-5C
Factory Acoustic

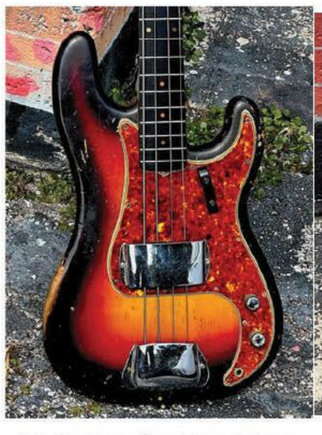
1956 Gibson ES-140TN
3/4 Mint w/orig.case


1959 Gibson Prototype
ES-125TCD 1st one !

1967 Gibson ES-125TDC
1 owner from new

1968 Gibson L-7CES
1-off Sharp Cutaway

1958 Kay Barney Kessel
Pro "In The Wrapper"


1960 Fender Precision
Bass 1 owner Slab Neck

1964 Fender Jazz Bass
Factory "Fiesta Red"

1966 Fender Precision
Bass Perfect "Ice Blue"

1969 Fender Jazz Bass
Rare Factory Black

1964 Gibson EB-2D
rare "Argentine Gray"

1964 Gibson EB-3 Bass
Beat Sweat Original

1978 Music Man
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